

### Decline in Government school enrolment worrying: Mayawati

The Sikh Times  
Sanjay Kumar

Lucknow, May 21: Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) chief Mayawati has raised serious concerns over



the sharp decline in student enrolment in Government schools in Uttar Pradesh and criticised the state government's ongoing crackdown on private madrasas. She termed the developments as a blow to the goal of accessible education for the underprivileged and called for an immediate shift in policy. In a post on social media platform X, Mayawati pointed out that enrolment in primary and upper primary Government schools in UP dropped

from 1.74 crore in 2023-24 to 1.52 crore in 2024-25 — a decline of approximately 22 lakh students. "Such a poor condition of the government school system is serious and worrisome. The Government must pay proper attention to the importance and need of education," she said. Mayawati also criticised the government's stance on private madrasas, which often provide low-cost education in underserved areas. "Instead of supporting the private madrasa system, which is part of an affordable and accessible education model, the Government is shutting them down by declaring them illegal. This is an unfair and unnecessary step that will only weaken the foundation of basic education," she stated, urging the Government to reconsider its attitude toward madrasas. She added that while the condition of government schools is alarming across several states, the situation in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar is particularly dire.

### MPs team sent to some countries with no stakes in India-Pakistan issue

Mumbai, May 21: Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Sanjay Raut on Wednesday claimed that the Centre sent multi-party delegations of MPs to visit several countries that have nothing to do with the Indo-Pak issue following 'Operation Sindo'. He said the government is instead interested in "showmanship rather than substance". Speaking to a regional news channel, Raut asked, "What is the need to send delegations to countries that have nothing to do with the India and Pakistan issue? The selection of nations like Liberia, Congo, and Sierra Leone raises serious questions." He was referring to a delegation led by Kalyan MP Shrikant Shinde of Shiv Sena, headed by Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Eknath Shinde, that left for the UAE earlier in the day and is also expected to visit a few African nations. "The way these delegations are being dispatched is not right. Countries with no geopolitical relevance to the India-Pakistan conflict are being chosen, which shows the government is more interested in showmanship rather than substance," Raut said. The Rajya Sabha MP emphasised that the Modi government was using foreign trips as a means to create global optics rather than serious diplomatic engagement after 'Operation Sindo'.

### PM Modi to inaugurate 103 redeveloped Amrit Stations in 18 states today

The Sikh Times  
Navdeep Singh Sahni

New Delhi, May 21: Prime minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate 103 redeveloped Amrit Stations on today in 86 districts across 18 states developed at a cost of over ₹1,100 crore. Modi took to X and said, "Today, 22nd May is a landmark day for India's railway infrastructure. The Amrit Stations will boost comfort, connectivity and celebrate our glorious culture!" He is set to visit Bikaner to inaugurate the redeveloped Deshnoke station under the Amrit Bharat Station scheme and flag-off Bikaner-Mumbai express train. He will lay the foundation stone, inaugurate and dedicate to the nation multiple development projects worth over ₹26,000 crore and also address a public function in Palana. "Over 1,300 stations are being redeveloped with modern facilities, designed to reflect regional architecture

and enhance passenger amenities under the Amrit Bharat Station Scheme," a statement from the government said. The redeveloped Amrit stations across

its network, making railway operations more efficient and environment friendly.

In line with this, Prime Minister will lay the foundation stone of Churu-Sadulpur rail line (58 km) and dedicate to the Nation Suratgarh-Phalodi (336 km); Phulera-Degana (109 km); Phalodi-Jaisalmal (157 km) and Samdrabar (129 km) rail line electrification," the statement said. Modi will also lay the foundation stone for construction of three vehicle underpasses, widening and strengthening of National highways. He will also dedicate seven roadways projects in Rajasthan. The roadways projects, worth over ₹4,850 crore, will facilitate smoother movement of goods and people. The highways extend up to the Indo-Pak border, enhancing accessibility for security forces and strengthening India's defence infrastructure.

Modi will also lay the foundation



India integrate modern infrastructure with cultural heritage, passenger-centric amenities including those for Divyangjan and sustainable practices to enhance the travel experience. Indian Railway is marching towards 100% electrification of

### CM inaugurated the Jail Training Academy in Karnal

The Sikh Times  
Sanjay Arora

Chandigarh, May 21: Haryana Chief Minister Sh. Nayab Singh Saini today announced a major recruitment drive in the Prison Department, declaring that around 1,300 posts of jail warders will be filled shortly to further strengthen the state's judicial and correctional system. Also, medical and paramedical vacancies in the Prison Department, as well as essential staff positions for the newly built Jail Training Academy in Karnal, will also be filled soon. The Chief Minister made these announcements after inaugurating the Jail Training Academy in Karnal, which aims to provide comprehensive training to prison personnel with a focus on reform, rehabilitation, and modernization. The academy, spread over 6.35 acres and constructed at a cost of ₹3.29 crore, incorporates energy-efficient and temperature-optimized techniques. He also announced that new jails will be constructed in

Panchkula, Dadri, and Fatehabad, with an investment of approximately ₹300 crore. Furthermore, a Gausala will also be started in the premises of the District Jail, Karnal. Addressing the gathering, the Chief Minister said that the new jail training academy marks the beginning of a transformative approach in the correctional system. "This is not just the inauguration of a building, it is a change of perspective, the beginning of a new vision. Our prisons must become centers of change, revival, and reconstruction, not just punishment," he said. He said that the newly built academy will offer induction training for new recruits and refresher courses for existing staff, ensuring that prisons department officers and officials are trained in modern technologies, human rights, and psychological aspects of inmate reform. With changing times, it is essential to equip our jail employees with not just the tools of discipline, but also the spirit of empathy, justice, and social rehabilitation, he added.

The Chief Minister said that India is undergoing a profound transformation under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Sh. Narendra Modi. He said that the nation is moving steadily towards becoming a developed and technologically empowered India. A recent example of this was witnessed during Operation Sindo, where the world recognized India's technical expertise, operational efficiency, and strategic skill. He said that technology is

playing a pivotal role in enhancing transparency and accountability in governance and public administration. In line with the goals of Digital India, Haryana is also moving towards establishing Smart Jails, where modern tools and systems will improve prison management. As India progresses into Amritkaal, he expressed confidence that this academy will emerge as a pillar of reform and innovation in the justice and correctional system. Earlier, the Chief Minister also visited an exhibition displaying various products created by jail inmates. Speaking on the occasion, Cooperation and Jail Minister Dr. Arvind Sharma praised the progressive initiatives being undertaken by the Prison Department under the leadership of Chief Minister Sh. Nayab Singh Saini. He said that Haryana's jails are being modernized and equipped with the latest technology to improve overall management and ensure better rehabilitation outcomes. Highlighting the evolving role of prisons,



### Two of seven all-party delegations depart for Southeast Asia, Africa

The Sikh Times  
Naresh Malhotra

New Delhi, May 21: Two of the seven multi-party delegations, which will inform interlocutors around the world about India's approach to combating Pakistan-sponsored terrorism and explain the rationale behind Operation Sindo, departed for Southeast Asia and Africa on Wednesday. The seven delegations will fan out to different regions of the world over the next few days and interact with ministers, political leaders, lawmakers, think tanks and the media to raise the heat on Pakistan for its support for cross-border terrorism directed against India. They will also underline the need to hold Pakistan and its military establishment accountable for supporting terror groups. The first delegation led by Janata Dal (United) MP Sanjay Kumar Jha left on Wednesday morning for a five-nation visit. The team includes Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) MPs Aparajita Sarangi, Brij Lal, Hemang Joshi and Pradhan Baruah, Trinamool Congress MP Abhishek Banerjee, Communist Party of India (Marxist) MP John

Brittas, Congress leader and former foreign minister Salman Khurshid, and former ambassador Mohan Kumar. "Zero tolerance against

terrorism!" external affairs ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said in a social media post about the departure of the first delegation as "part of India's diplomatic outreach on #OperationSindo". He added, "The delegations will be visiting Indonesia, Malaysia, the Republic of Korea, Japan & Singapore to affirm India's resolve on combating terrorism in all its forms." The second delegation led by Shiv Sena MP Shrikant Shinde left later in the day and will travel to the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Liberia, Congo and Sierra Leone. This group includes BJP MPs Bansuri

Swaraj, Atul Garg and Manan Kumar Mishra, Indian Union Muslim League MP Mohammed Basheer, Biju Janata Dal MP Sasmrit Patra, BJP leader SS Ahluwalia and former ambassador Sujan Chinoy. Members of both these delegations were briefed ahead of their departure on Tuesday by foreign secretary Vikram Misri, who highlighted India's "new normal" in tackling cross-border terrorism as exemplified by the military strikes under Operation Sindo on terrorist infrastructure in territories controlled by Pakistan, people familiar with the matter said. Misri also told members of the delegations that India will no longer allow terrorists to carry out their activities under the cover of Pakistan's "nuclear blackmail" and that the Pakistani military establishment will have to pay a price for attacks through its terrorist proxies, the people added, on condition of anonymity. The delegations were also asked to raise the world community's lacklustre record in holding the Pakistani military and intelligence community to account despite considerable evidence provided by India that linked it to past terror strikes such as the 2008 Mumbai attacks and



the 2019 Pulwama suicide bombing, the people said. The delegations were also briefed on India's decision to keep the Indus Waters Treaty in abeyance till Pakistan "credibly and irrevocably" abjures its support for cross-border terror. External affairs minister S. Jaishankar, currently on a three-nation visit to Europe, dialled his Bahraini counterpart Abdullaftaf bin Rashid Al Zayani to discuss India's campaign against terrorism ahead of the arrival of another all-party delegations in the West Asian country. "Discussed the challenge posed by terrorism and the need to combat it resolutely," Jaishankar said in a social media post. An all-party delegation led by BJP MP Bajayant Panda is set to travel to Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Algeria from May 24. The issue of countering terrorism was also raised by India at a virtual meeting of the council of ministers of the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) on Wednesday. P. Kumaran, secretary (east) in the external affairs ministry, who led the Indian delegation at the meet hosted by Sri Lanka, said that terrorism "must be unequivocally condemned" by all states.

## NEWS BOX

**KC Hospital faces shortage of lifesaving drugs and staff; Lokayukta summons health officials**

**BENGALURU.** The Karnataka Lokayukta has issued summons to the Principal Secretary and Commissioner to the Department of Health and Family Welfare for failing to respond to the notice issued by him on several deficiencies found in the state-run KC General Hospital in Malleswaram.

Directing them to appear in person on June 23, Lokayukta Justice BS Patil also cautioned that it is inevitable for him to issue a warrant if they fail to respond to the summons. Following a complaint, Justice Patil and his team made a surprise visit to the hospital on November 29, 2024. He found several deficiencies, including that there were no lifesaving drugs, doctors and staff were not attending duty on time, not marking attendance, not declaring the cash in the register, referring patients to buy medicines from private stores though the medicines were available in the hospital, demanding bribes, not maintaining hygiene, etc.

He then brought the issues to the notice of the concerned officials of the Department of Health and Family Welfare. Despite receiving the same and also notice and reminders sent later, the Principal Secretary and Commissioner allegedly failed to respond. Irate over the same, the Lokayukta issued summons to them.

**35-year-old woman dies by suicide; SI husband under scrutiny in Karnataka**

**BENGALURU.** A 35-year-old woman allegedly died by suicide at her residence in HBR Layout in the early hours of Tuesday. The incident occurred within the jurisdiction of the Govindapura police station.

The deceased, Shalini, was a contract employee at a premier research institute. Her husband, Nagaraj, a sub-inspector, is currently posted at the KG Halli police station. The couple had been married for nine months, despite opposition from Shalini's family. This was Shalini's second marriage, and she had a son from her previous relationship.

Shalini was found hanging at her residence. Before the incident, she had informed Nagaraj of her intention to die, saying she would end her life by coming under a train. A patrolling team had, however, found her alone at night and sent her back home. She is suspected to have taken the extreme step after being sent home. Both Shalini and Nagaraj hailed from Ilkal in Bagalkot and had known each other since high school. Shalini pursued an MSc while Nagaraj studied engineering. She was said to have financially supported him during his police exam preparations. Shalini had earlier accused Nagaraj of cheating her with a false promise of marriage, following which she filed a complaint at the Konanakunte police station. However, it is alleged that Nagaraj has been living separately for the past two months due to strained relations. According to police sources, Shalini took the extreme step as he had stopped visiting her.

**Telangana Dy CM Bhatti visits Bengaluru to inspect major underground cabling project**

**HYDERABAD.** Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka on Tuesday visited Bengaluru for an in-depth review of the city's large-scale underground cabling initiative undertaken by the Bangalore Electricity Supply Company Limited (BESCOM). The visit is part of the state government's ongoing efforts to modernise urban infrastructure and enhance the reliability, safety and aesthetics of power supply systems in rapidly expanding metropolitan areas.

As part of the visit, a high-level review meeting was held with BESCOM officials. Presentations were made by Pankaj Pandey, MD, Karnataka Power Transmission Corporation Limited and Bengaluru Electricity Supply Company, along with his team. They briefed Vikramarka on the overhead (OH) to underground (UG) power conversion Project — considered one of India's most comprehensive urban power infrastructure transformations.

Launched in 2018-19, the project has already converted over 7,400 kilometres of 11kV OH lines and thousands of kilometers of low-tension lines into UG or aerial bunched (AB) cables. A key innovation has been the installation of Optical Fiber Cable (OFC) ducts along UG routes to facilitate future telecom leasing, creating a potential revenue stream.

During the meeting, the deputy CM inquired about the project's design and implementation challenges. He also examined the financial structuring, which includes funding from the Asian Development Bank (ADB), Rural Electrification Corporation (REC), and other public sector banks. BESCOM officials reported that the UG conversion has already led to a reduction in technical losses and electrical accidents by up to 2%. He also sought details on the readiness of OFC infrastructure for commercial use to which BESCOM responded that while ducts are in place, last-mile coordination with telecom operators and Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) is still underway. The role of Ring Main Units (RMUs) in enhancing system reliability and reducing downtime during faults was also discussed.

## PWD to pursue heritage status for Kuttalam Palace after Madras HC affirms Kerala's ownership

**THIRUVANANTHAPURAM.** With the Madras High Court on Tuesday reaffirming that Kuttalam Palace in Tamil Nadu belongs to the Kerala government, the Public Works Department (PWD) is considering applying for heritage status and conservation grants to support its upkeep, subject to availability of funds. "We have been maintaining the palace for years, even as the ownership dispute with the Travancore royal family played out for nearly eight years. We secured a favourable verdict during the first LDF government's tenure and have been renting out the property since then," said Beena L, chief engineer, PWD (Buildings).

The HC's Madurai bench dismissed the royal family's petition claiming rights over the property. The verdict upheld the order issued by the Tirunelveli revenue divisional officer (RDO) saying the palace is owned by the state government.

The family had argued that the palace belonged to them, and wanted cancellation of the title deed issued by the TN government in Kerala's name. The RDO rejected the family's plea after which it moved the HC. Advocate General (AG) Gopalakrishna Kurup, who appeared for Kerala, said although the family could file an appeal, the verdict clarifying ownership could set a precedent for similar disputes involving



former royal properties.

"There are documents showing which properties the Travancore royal family was entitled to retain. Kuttalam Palace was not among them. Even the records of property transfers between royal families have no reference to the palace. In the 1991 will of Chithira Thirunal, the last ruling Maharaja of Travancore, Kuttalam Palace was not named as part of his estate. The court concluded the palace is not private property," he said.

The covenant signed during the transition to democracy required the royal family to retain only certain properties, with the rest going to the state. The assets taken by the family did not include the palace. The court also found that the family's documents lacked clear or accurate

details about the palace. It noted that the patta was issued in the name of the palace's caretaker who was appointed by the government. So, the family could not claim any right over it.

"The Madurai patta passbook records show the land was in the king's name and was officially transferred to the state government in 1996. The former royal family challenged this in 2010. The case was challenged again in 2019 and 2023 after further confirmations by the court in the state's favour. The latest ruling addresses those later appeals," the AG said.

In 2010, the TN government tried to claim the palace, but the court dismissed the case. In 2019, the Tirunelveli officer issued an order stating that 58.68 acres of land, which includes the Kuttalam and Dalawa palaces and all the buildings on it, belongs to the Kerala government.

After Kerala's formation in 1957, the ownership of the palace was transferred to the state government. A few years ago, the Kerala government spent over Rs 2 crore to renovate the buildings. The site functions as a guest house, Kuttalam Palace Rest House.

Besides the AG, Senior Government Pleader V Manu appeared for the Kerala government. There are indications the royal family may challenge the verdict in a division bench.

## Five kilometre road to TN's Perumal Malai not fit for girivalam, say devotees, want it fixed

**TIRUCHY.** Despite being popularly referred as the 'Then Thirupati' (southern Tirupati), devotees thronging Perumal Malai located off the Tiruchy-Perambalur state highway in Tiruchy, complain that the five-kilometre stretch that branches off the highway and leads to the foothills is too damaged for them to cover on foot.

Pointing out that the footfall at the temple goes up during every pournami girivalam, they urge immediate repairs to ensure a safe and easier trek for the devotees. P Rajavelu of Tiruchy said the five-kilometre stretch that branches off the state highway leads to foothills of Perumal Malai, encircling it for a particular distance.

From there, devotees have to climb 1,570 steps to reach the temple that is dedicated to



Prasanna Venkatajalapathi and is believed to be centuries old. "On every full moon day (pournami) of the Tamil calendar, those devotees unable to travel to Tiruvannamalai for the pournami girivalam instead visit Perumal Malai.

They walk around the hill, covering a similar

five-kilometre stretch. The present road, however, is damaged in several places, with loose gravel and uneven surfaces, making it difficult to walk even with slippers," he added. As devotees are forced to wear footwear while using the stretch maintained by the District Rural Development Agency (DRDA), many elderly ones avoid the ritual altogether, he further said.

Therefore, the authorities concerned should heed to devotees' requests and take immediate steps to restore the said stretch in order to ensure a smoother and safer pilgrimage, he said. When contacted, Thurairu BDO V Ravichandran assured necessary action to develop the 'girivalam' road at the earliest.

## Visakha Steel Plant employees go on strike to protest against mass layoffs

**VISAKHAPATNAM.** In protest against the termination of around 4,000 contract workers, the trade unions of the Visakhapatnam Steel Plant (VSP) called for a strike on Tuesday. The unions noted that over 70% of workers from key production departments participated in the strike. The relay strike by the unions is also ongoing.

Speaking during the protest, the workers alleged that the management tried to suppress the strike by deploying police forces inside the plant and attempted to intimidate the workers. According to union leaders, such a large-scale presence of police inside the plant has not been seen in the past 40 years. Vehicles were arranged to detain workers, and arrests were made to prevent the protest from escalating. Police reportedly arrested several union leaders around 9 am. These included CITU state general secretary N Ramana, CITU vice-presidents Somesh and U Appalaraju,



privatisation for over four years, production had never been disrupted until now. However, workers stated that the recent decisions by the management left them with no choice but to halt production. They questioned whether workers should remain silent in the face of mass terminations and asserted their legal right to strike.

AITUC leaders Minister Ravi, Sombabu, Ramireddy, HMS president U Appara, and INTUC leaders Vamsi and Bairreddy Apparao. Union leaders claimed that the sudden termination of thousands of contract workers, many of whom had been working at the plant for the past three decades, was arbitrary and violated labour laws. They alleged that both the Central and State governments were working to hand over the plant to private players and bring in new workers at lower wages, sidelining the experienced workforce.

Despite continued agitations against privatisation for over four years, production had never been disrupted until now. However, workers stated that the recent decisions by the management left them with no choice but to halt production. They questioned whether workers should remain silent in the face of mass terminations and asserted their legal right to strike.



**THOOTHUKUDI.** A majority of people who are to be relocated from Koodal Nagar to Ayya Nagar near Udangudi, as the locality has been acquired to facilitate construction of the ISRO project, refuse to shift to the new place saying the houses are of poor quality and that there are not enough amenities. The district collector has refused their allegations.

Over 2,300 acres of land were acquired from Padukapathu, Mathavankurichi, Pallakurichi villages for ISRO's rocket launch pad at Kulasekarapattinam. Among them is Koodal Nagar, which houses 40 families. As a part of the resettlement plan, the state government has constructed 40 houses for the Koodal Nagar families at Ayya Nagar in Udangudi. The newly built settlement is likely to be inaugurated soon.

While four families have agreed to move into the new place, the rest have refused, flagging several issues. Speaking to TNIE on the condition of anonymity, the residents said the construction quality is very poor and alleged that cracks have developed on the walls in several houses. After they raised the issue, the contractor had given it a thick coat of paint to hide the cracks, they alleged.

Another beneficiary said the new settlement lacks water supply. "There is only one tank for the entire 40 houses", he said. "We need an overhead tank and at least one public tap for every five houses," he demanded.

Another person said authorities had promised to build a compound wall around the houses, however, it has not yet been constructed.

## Girl's disappearance takes dark turn, mother held for murder in Kerala

**Four-year-old Kalyani's body was recovered from the Chakakudy river early on Tuesday, hours after she was reported missing on Monday night**

**KOCHI.** The disappearance of Kalyani took a dark turn after the police arrested her mother, Sandhya for allegedly killing the four-year-old by throwing her into the Chakakudy river at Moozhikulam near Puthencruz in Ermakulam. The arrest followed the recovery of Kalyani's body from the river in the early hours of Tuesday, hours after she was reported missing on Monday night. Police said the mother has not provided a clear reason for her actions.

Kalyani was the youngest daughter of Subash and Sandhya, who hail from Mattakuzhy near Puthencruz. Her 11-year-old brother is a Class 6 student in a nearby school.

As per police, Sandhya left home around 3pm



on Monday on the pretext of buying a regulator for their pressure cooker. On the way, she picked up Kalyani from the anganwadi where she studied. The mother and daughter boarded a bus plying from Thiruvankulam to Aluva to go to their house

in Kurumassery. However, upon reaching Kurumassery, Sandhya went to Moozhikulam, which is located on the banks of the Chakakudy river. Police said Sandhya travelled to Moozhikulam in a transport bus and returned in an autorickshaw. Its driver told police that Sandhya was alone when she boarded his vehicle.

"We have CCTV footage from Moozhikulam of Sandhya arriving with Kalyani. Later, she was seen returning alone. We have identified some witnesses. Their statements will be recorded soon," said Ermakulam Rural Police Chief M Hemalatha.

Around 7.30 pm, Sandhya returned to her home in Kurumassery and told her mother that Kalyani had gone missing during the bus ride.

## 95.86% candidates clear AP ICET

**VISAKHAPATNAM.** A total of 95.86% of candidates qualified in the AP Integrated Common Entrance Test (ICET)-2025. According to the results released by the Andhra University Vice-Chancellor, Prof. GP Raja Sekhar, in Visakhapatnam on Tuesday, out of 37,572 applicants, 34,131 candidates appeared for the entrance examination held on May 7 in two sessions. Of these, 32,719 candidates qualified. The examination was conducted across 94 test centres, including 93 in Andhra Pradesh and one in Hyderabad.

Among the 34,131 candidates who appeared, 15,863 were male and 18,268 were female. A total of 15,176 male candidates qualified, recording a pass percentage of 95.66%. Of the female candidates, 17,543 cleared the test, with a slightly higher pass percentage of 96.03%. Manoj Meka from Visakhapatnam secured the first rank with a top score of 197.914 marks. Dwarakacharla Sandeep Reddy from YSR Kadapa secured second rank with 179.5174 marks, followed by Sakala Krishna Sai from NTR district with 178.5175 marks. Valluri Sairam Satvik from Hyderabad attained the fourth rank with a score of 175.6945 marks.

Ravuri Madhurya from Guntur, the only female candidate in the top five, secured fifth rank with 175.4529 marks. Sheikh Bashirunnisa from Anakapalli secured sixth rank with 175.3132. Valipu Ajay Kumar, who secured the seventh rank in the ICET 2025 with 174.1794 marks, completed his B.Tech in Computer Science from IIIT, Sri City during 2018-2022.

He is currently preparing for UPSC and APPSC competitive examinations. Hailing from Tirupati district, his father works as a head constable at the Gajulamandam Police Station. Notably, Ajay secured the 1st rank in the Sri Venkateswara University (SVU) region. The AP ICET-2025 was conducted by Andhra University on behalf of the APSCH to facilitate admissions into MBA and MCA courses across the state.

## THE SIKH TIMES

Edited, Printed, Published  
Owned by Simmi Babbar  
N - 31, Dr. Mukherjee Nagar  
Delhi-110009  
Printed at Qaumi Patrika Printing  
Press, A-4/A-144, Tronica City  
(Loni), Ghaziabad (Uttar Pradesh)  
Corporate Office:  
5, Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg,  
Press Area, ITO, New Delhi  
Editor-in-Chief  
Gurcharan Singh Babbar  
Mob : 9654077232, 9971359517  
Website : [www.thesikhtimes.in](http://www.thesikhtimes.in)  
Email : [sikhtimesindia@gmail.com](mailto:sikhtimesindia@gmail.com)

RNI No. DELENG/2008/25465

**Legal Advisors:**  
Advocate Mohd. Sajid  
Advocate Dr. A.P. Singh  
Advocate Manish Sharma  
Advocate Pooja Bhaskar Sharma

## Fixed power charges hiked 76% for industries in Gurgaon

Gurgaon, Haryana discoms have increased the monthly fixed charges for industries by 76% even as the industry association has opposed the move, saying it could severely damage Haryana's industrial competitiveness, particularly impacting micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs). Maintaining that "industry cannot be penalised for inefficiencies it did not create," it has demanded the formation of a joint task force (JTF) to review the tariff order to provide relief to MSMEs. Fixed charges for industry increased from Rs 165 per kVA per month to Rs 290 per kVA per month, an increase of Rs 125 per kVA per month. With the increase in fixed charges, small enterprises with a 100 kVA sanctioned load face an increase of Rs 15,500 per month, while mid-sized firms could see their energy bills rise by over Rs 40,000 monthly. The hike in tariff and fixed charges will total an additional burden on the state's industry, as calculated by the industry association, exceeding Rs 2,100 crore annually — Rs 1,195 crore under DHBVN and an estimated Rs 950 crore under UHBVN.

The industry pointed out that in March 2021, both discoms (DHBVN and UHBVN) reported a combined profit of around Rs 800 crore. However, in the latest submission before Haryana Electricity Regulatory Commission, both the discoms showed a cumulative loss of around Rs 4,800 crore — DHBVN reported a loss of Rs 2,800 crore and UHBVN reported a loss of Rs 2,000 crore. Progressive Federation of Trade & Industry (PFTI) chairman Deepak Maini said, "This turnaround from profit to loss in just four years comes despite the utilities consistently reporting a downward trend of AT&C losses. He said no adequate public reasoning or audit disclosure has been made available to justify this deterioration. They alleged that figures related to AT&C (aggregate technical & commercial) losses, particularly for the domestic category, may have been over-optimistically reported, possibly masking inefficiencies or misreporting trends over time. 'Industry cannot be penalised for all this,' Maini said.

## MCM chief sets 15-day deadline to clear garbage mounds from key dumping site in Manesar

Gurgaon, MCM commissioner Ayush Sinha set a 15-day deadline for officials to clear waste at the IMT Sector 6 dumping site. Officials said that around 4,000 metric tonnes (MT) of waste is lying unprocessed at the Sector 6 dumping site. Following his site inspection on Monday, the commissioner sought information about the waste processing operations there. Sinha sought details regarding the disposal of refuse-derived fuel (RDF), compost, and inert materials generated during waste processing at the other disposal site in Sector 8. Sinha also asked for documentation of certificates received from the disposal locations, data on daily waste intake at the site, and the quantity



being processed. Officials mentioned that the corporation has created a site in Garhi village where waste is currently being dumped at. "I ordered that the Sector 6 site be cleared from one side and divided into two parts using a tin shed or precast wall to allow fresh waste to be dumped there. Waste from Manesar and nearby villages is disposed of at the Manesar hill site. Moreover, waste collected during road sweeping should be dumped at the Sector 6 site, and the legacy waste at this site should be cleared within the next fifteen days," said the MCM commissioner. The commissioner directed officials overseeing the Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM) to process and clear legacy waste at the Sector 6 site as soon as possible.

## Teen dragged to Ghaziabad hotel by lover, tied up & gang raped by three

Ghaziabad, An FIR was registered against three men for allegedly raping a 14-year-old girl they knew after forcibly taking her to a hotel in Navyug market. A complaint filed by the girl's father said the accused, one of them a relative, tied her up and took turns to sexually assault the minor. They made a video of the girl and used it to blackmail and threaten her against going to the cops. So far, cops have detained one of the accused.

A senior police officer told the family submitted a complaint on May 17, but later retracted it. They also submitted a video statement, wishing to retract it. On Monday, the family again approached police commissioner J Ravinder Goud and sought action.

DCP City Dhawal Jaiswal said the girl underwent a medical test later that day, and her statement will now be recorded before a magistrate. In his complaint, the girl's father claimed that the minor was out to buy groceries on May 12 afternoon when she met an acquaintance, allegedly her boyfriend, who offered to help her pick the goods and took her to a hotel in Navyug market. The father said that once outside the hotel, the girl felt something was off and refused to go in.

"But the accused dragged her into a room in the hotel and raped her. The accused then called two of his friends, one of them the girl's relative, who tied her up and took turns to rape her," the complaint said. The third accused, who runs the hotel, got married two days after the crime. The complainant said the three men recorded a video of the girl, which they used to leak online if her family went to the cops. The accused also took her at gunpoint and threatened to kill her family.

Sacred, the girl did not speak to her family for three days, but eventually broke down before her mother on May 15. DCP City Dhawal Jaiswal said an FIR was registered under the BNS sections 70 (2) (gang rape), 115 (2) (voluntarily causing hurt), 127 (2) (wrongful confinement), and 351 (3) (criminal intimidation) and sections of the PoCo Act. "We have detained the girl's boyfriend for questioning. We are waiting for the girl's medical report," he said.

# After 10-year delay, land acquired for NH8-Pataudi Rd link, to tackle snarls in Gurgaon

Gurgaon. A 200-metre bottleneck near Bestech Ananda in Sector 81 has been finally resolved, marking the end of a decade-long deadlock.

GMDA officially took possession of the stretch on Tuesday, following a Supreme Court verdict in favour of HSVP, clearing the way for uninterrupted road connectivity between Delhi-Gurgaon Expressway and Pataudi Road. A breakthrough came on Monday when the verdict paved the way for GMDA to take possession of this land parcel and begin road construction. The long-standing hurdle on the crucial Rampura Chowk-Pataudi Road has triggered daily traffic snarls and posed serious safety concerns for commuters. The patch, sandwiched between redeveloped sections on either side, remained untouched for years due to land ownership disputes.

GMDA chief engineer Arun Dhankar said, "Work on this road was long held up due to the missing link of this 200-metre portion under litigation. GMDA took

possession without delay and commenced construction work on Tuesday. Once completed, this will bring huge relief to commuters." The 66-crore redevelopment project includes a six-lane main carriageway along with service roads, drainage, footpaths, cycle tracks, and green belts.

According to GMDA, the main carriageway work on the disputed stretch will be taken up on priority and is expected to be completed within 15 days, with additional works including drainage and service road to follow. Though redevelopment of the 5.6km road — which links new sectors to NH8 — began in Feb 2022 with an Aug 2023 deadline, GMDA was not able to revamp the road as planned, missing several deadlines. This 200m stretch on the main carriageway was held up due to litigation before the apex court.

Commuters and residents of the surrounding new sectors long complained



relocated. An HSVP official said, "Efforts are being made to resolve each and every issue."

Once we get the necessary clearances, we will hand over the remaining land parcels to GMDA for further development. Residents welcomed the long-awaited development, calling it a breakthrough after years of struggle. Bestech Grand Spa RWA secretary Geetha Venugopal said, "For over six years we kept hearing that the matter was stuck in court and nothing could be done. Finally, that ordeal is over. This is a huge relief for thousands of families in the new sectors. We now hope the road is constructed without any more delays."

Bestech Ananda RWA joint secretary Shakti Singh echoed the sentiment. "We have knocked on every door over the years. During monsoon, the stretch outside our society would turn into a nightmare. With this clearance, not just the road but proper drainage will finally be in place. This is a lifeline for new sector residents."

about the pothole-ridden and uneven stretch, which became a persistent chokepoint and a road safety hazard, especially during the monsoon.

While the resolution of the main carriageway bottleneck will certainly ease the commuting woes, other challenges still remain. There are three to four unresolved patches on the service roads, where land ownership issues are yet to be settled.

Additionally, a temple structure located on the main carriageway is yet to be

## Indian Pittas to Paradise Flycatchers: Rare summer migratory birds flock to Aravalis



Gurgaon. Indian Pitta, Indian Golden Oriole, Indian Paradise Flycatcher, Blue-tailed Bee-eater, Blue-cheeked Bee-eater, Pheasant-tailed Jacana, Common Cuckoo — the birding fraternity is spoilt for choice. Summer migratory birds are filling the woods with their songs and bright colours. Bird watchers are reporting sightings of several species since it is that time of the year when flocks of summer migratory birds visit Mangar, Bhondsi, Aravali Biodiversity Park, Chandu and Budhera fields.

While a few of these birds soon make their way further north, some choose to stay in the Aravalis to breed. According to experts, birds travel to the Aravalis during this season every year as the region still has a comfortable space and an abundance of food for these winged creatures.

Airport, which will start operation this year. Officials said extensive illegal constructions and farmhouses on the Yamuna floodplains made an elevated road more feasible.

It is for general information that I, hitherto known as SABA W/O MOHAMMAD URFAN R/O R-21C- THIRD FLOOR, PUL PEHLADPUR DISTRICT- SOUTH DELHI, DELHI-110044 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as SABA URFAN.

It is for general information that I, hitherto known as MANEESH KUMAR YADAV alias MANISH YADAV alias YADRAM S/O GHAMMAN R/O 3 and 4 Plot No. 4 3rd Top Floor, Gali no-2, West Guru Angad Nagar, Laxmi Nagar, PO: Laxmi Nagar, DIST: East Delhi, Delhi -11092 have changed my name and is SUNITA GUJALA which may be amended accordingly.

It is for general information that I, hitherto known as SABA W/O MOHAMMAD URFAN R/O R-21C- THIRD FLOOR, PUL PEHLADPUR DISTRICT- SOUTH DELHI, DELHI-110044 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as SABA URFAN.

It is for general information that I, hitherto known as MANEESH KUMAR YADAV alias MANISH YADAV alias YADRAM S/O GHAMMAN R/O 3 and 4 Plot No. 4 3rd Top Floor, Gali no-2, West Guru Angad Nagar, Laxmi Nagar, PO: Laxmi Nagar, DIST: East Delhi, Delhi -11092 have changed my name and is SUNITA GUJALA which may be amended accordingly.

It is for general information that I, hitherto known as SABA W/O MOHAMMAD URFAN R/O R-21C- THIRD FLOOR, PUL PEHLADPUR DISTRICT- SOUTH DELHI, DELHI-110044 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as SABA URFAN.

It is for general information that I, hitherto known as SABA W/O MOHAMMAD URFAN R/O R-21C- THIRD FLOOR, PUL PEHLADPUR DISTRICT- SOUTH DELHI, DELHI-110044 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as SABA URFAN.

It is for general information that I, hitherto known as SABA W/O MOHAMMAD URFAN R/O R-21C- THIRD FLOOR, PUL PEHLADPUR DISTRICT- SOUTH DELHI, DELHI-110044 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as SABA URFAN.

It is for general information that I, hitherto known as SABA W/O MOHAMMAD URFAN R/O R-21C- THIRD FLOOR, PUL PEHLADPUR DISTRICT- SOUTH DELHI, DELHI-110044 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as SABA URFAN.

It is for general information that I, hitherto known as SABA W/O MOHAMMAD URFAN R/O R-21C- THIRD FLOOR, PUL PEHLADPUR DISTRICT- SOUTH DELHI, DELHI-110044 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as SABA URFAN.

It is for general information that I, hitherto known as SABA W/O MOHAMMAD URFAN R/O R-21C- THIRD FLOOR, PUL PEHLADPUR DISTRICT- SOUTH DELHI, DELHI-110044 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as SABA URFAN.

It is for general information that I, hitherto known as SABA W/O MOHAMMAD URFAN R/O R-21C- THIRD FLOOR, PUL PEHLADPUR DISTRICT- SOUTH DELHI, DELHI-110044 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as SABA URFAN.

It is for general information that I, hitherto known as SABA W/O MOHAMMAD URFAN R/O R-21C- THIRD FLOOR, PUL PEHLADPUR DISTRICT- SOUTH DELHI, DELHI-110044 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as SABA URFAN.

It is for general information that I, hitherto known as SABA W/O MOHAMMAD URFAN R/O R-21C- THIRD FLOOR, PUL PEHLADPUR DISTRICT- SOUTH DELHI, DELHI-110044 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as SABA URFAN.

It is for general information that I, hitherto known as SABA W/O MOHAMMAD URFAN R/O R-21C- THIRD FLOOR, PUL PEHLADPUR DISTRICT- SOUTH DELHI, DELHI-110044 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as SABA URFAN.

It is for general information that I, hitherto known as SABA W/O MOHAMMAD URFAN R/O R-21C- THIRD FLOOR, PUL PEHLADPUR DISTRICT- SOUTH DELHI, DELHI-110044 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as SABA URFAN.

It is for general information that I, hitherto known as SABA W/O MOHAMMAD URFAN R/O R-21C- THIRD FLOOR, PUL PEHLADPUR DISTRICT- SOUTH DELHI, DELHI-110044 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as SABA URFAN.

It is for general information that I, hitherto known as SABA W/O MOHAMMAD URFAN R/O R-21C- THIRD FLOOR, PUL PEHLADPUR DISTRICT- SOUTH DELHI, DELHI-110044 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as SABA URFAN.

It is for general information that I, hitherto known as SABA W/O MOHAMMAD URFAN R/O R-21C- THIRD FLOOR, PUL PEHLADPUR DISTRICT- SOUTH DELHI, DELHI-110044 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as SABA URFAN.

It is for general information that I, hitherto known as SABA W/O MOHAMMAD URFAN R/O R-21C- THIRD FLOOR, PUL PEHLADPUR DISTRICT- SOUTH DELHI, DELHI-110044 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as SABA URFAN.

It is for general information that I, hitherto known as SABA W/O MOHAMMAD URFAN R/O R-21C- THIRD FLOOR, PUL PEHLADPUR DISTRICT- SOUTH DELHI, DELHI-110044 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as SABA URFAN.

It is for general information that I, hitherto known as SABA W/O MOHAMMAD URFAN R/O R-21C- THIRD FLOOR, PUL PEHLADPUR DISTRICT- SOUTH DELHI, DELHI-110044 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as SABA URFAN.

It is for general information that I, hitherto known as SABA W/O MOHAMMAD URFAN R/O R-21C- THIRD FLOOR, PUL PEHLADPUR DISTRICT- SOUTH DELHI, DELHI-110044 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as SABA URFAN.

It is for general information that I, hitherto known as SABA W/O MOHAMMAD URFAN R/O R-21C- THIRD FLOOR, PUL PEHLADPUR DISTRICT- SOUTH DELHI, DELHI-110044 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as SABA URFAN.

It is for general information that I, hitherto known as SABA W/O MOHAMMAD URFAN R/O R-21C- THIRD FLOOR, PUL PEHLADPUR DISTRICT- SOUTH DELHI, DELHI-110044 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as SABA URFAN.

It is for general information that I, hitherto known as SABA W/O MOHAMMAD URFAN R/O R-21C- THIRD FLOOR, PUL PEHLADPUR DISTRICT- SOUTH DELHI, DELHI-110044 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as SABA URFAN.

It is for general information that I, hitherto known as SABA W/O MOHAMMAD URFAN R/O R-21C- THIRD FLOOR, PUL PEHLADPUR DISTRICT- SOUTH DELHI, DELHI-110044 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as SABA URFAN.

It is for general information that I, hitherto known as SABA W/O MOHAMMAD URFAN R/O R-21C- THIRD FLOOR, PUL PEHLADPUR DISTRICT- SOUTH DELHI, DELHI-110044 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as SABA URFAN.

It is for general information that I, hitherto known as SABA W/O MOHAMMAD URFAN R/O R-21C- THIRD FLOOR, PUL PEHLADPUR DISTRICT- SOUTH DELHI, DELHI-110044 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as SABA URFAN.

It is for general information that I, hitherto known as SABA W/O MOHAMMAD URFAN R/O R-21C- THIRD FLOOR, PUL PEHLADPUR DISTRICT- SOUTH DELHI, DELHI-110044 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as SABA URFAN.

It is for general information that I, hitherto known as SABA W/O MOHAMMAD URFAN R/O R-21C- THIRD FLOOR, PUL PEHLADPUR DISTRICT- SOUTH DELHI, DELHI-110044 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as SABA URFAN.

It is for general information that I, hitherto known as SABA W/O MOHAMMAD URFAN R/O R-21C- THIRD FLOOR, PUL PEHLADPUR DISTRICT- SOUTH DELHI, DELHI-110044 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as SABA URFAN.

It is for general information that I, hitherto known as SABA W/O MOHAMMAD URFAN R/O R-21C- THIRD FLOOR, PUL PEHLADPUR DISTRICT- SOUTH DELHI, DELHI-110044 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as SABA URFAN.

It is for general information that I, hitherto known as SABA W/O MOHAMMAD URFAN R/O R-21C- THIRD FLOOR, PUL PEHLADPUR DISTRICT- SOUTH DELHI, DELHI-110044 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as SABA URFAN.

It is for general information that I, hitherto known as SABA W/O MOHAMMAD URFAN R/O R-21C- THIRD FLOOR, PUL PEHLADPUR DISTRICT- SOUTH DELHI, DELHI-110044 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as SABA URFAN.

It is for general information that I, hitherto known as SABA W/O MOHAMMAD URFAN R/O R-21C- THIRD FLOOR, PUL PEHLADPUR DISTRICT- SOUTH DELHI, DELHI-110044 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as SABA URFAN.

It is for general information that I, hitherto known as SABA W/O MOHAMMAD URFAN R/O R-21C- THIRD FLOOR, PUL PEHLADPUR DISTRICT- SOUTH DELHI, DELHI-110044 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as SABA URFAN.

It is for general information that I, hitherto known as SABA W/O MOHAMMAD URFAN R/O R-21C- THIRD FLOOR, PUL PEHLADPUR DISTRICT- SOUTH DELHI, DELHI-110044 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as SABA URFAN.

It is for general information that I, hitherto known as SABA W/O MOHAMMAD URFAN R/O R-21C- THIRD FLOOR, PUL PEHLADPUR DISTRICT- SOUTH DELHI, DELHI-110044 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as SABA URFAN.

It is for general information that I, hitherto known as SABA W/O MOHAMMAD URFAN R

## NEWS BOX

## Pakistanis came to India to create problem: Ethiopian envoy on Pahalgam attack

**world.** In a rebuke of cross-border terrorism, Ethiopian Ambassador to India, Fesseha Shawel Gebre, condemned the April 22 terror attack in Pahalgam, Jammu and Kashmir, attributing full responsibility to Pakistan. The assault, which left 26 civilians dead, was carried out by Pakistan-backed terrorists, sparking outrage both within India and amongst its international partners.

Speaking to ANI, Ambassador Gebre praised India's composed yet firm response, calling it "very responsible" and underscoring the shared values between Ethiopia and India in the global fight against terrorism. "It is not Indians who went to Pakistan to create a problem; it is the Pakistanis who came to India to create a problem," he said, directly calling out Islamabad's involvement. "The terrorists were identifying people with religion. This is terrible. This is unacceptable," Gebre stated, expressing concern over the targeting of civilians based on their faith.

The Ambassador further revealed that an Indian delegation is expected to visit Ethiopia by the end of May to brief on the incident. "Like India, Ethiopia is also fighting terrorism in East Africa," he added, expressing solidarity with India's counterterrorism efforts.

The April 22 terror attack, executed by Pakistan-backed terrorists, prompted India to launch 'Operation Sindoor' on May 7, targeting nine terror camps in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK).

## 'No permission needed': Iran's supreme leader Khamenei slams US nuclear demands

**world.** Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei on Tuesday dismissed US criticism of Tehran's nuclear program, asserting that Iran does not need permission to enrich uranium and calling American statements "nonsense."

"They say, 'We won't allow Iran to enrich uranium.' That's way out of line," Khamenei declared during a memorial for the late President Ebrahim Raisi, who died in a helicopter crash last year. "No one in Iran is waiting for their permission. The Islamic Republic follows its own policies—and will stick to them." "For the Americans to say, 'We won't allow Iran to enrich uranium,' is utter nonsense. We aren't waiting for anyone's permission. The Islamic Republic has certain policies, and it will pursue them," Khamenei wrote on X (formerly Twitter).

Khamenei's remarks come amid ongoing indirect talks between Iran and the US, though he expressed doubt about their outcome. "Yes, indirect negotiations were held during Raisi's time too, just like now," he said. "But they didn't go anywhere—and we don't expect much from the current ones either. Who knows what will happen?"

Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmail Baghaei told the state-run IRNA news agency that "no definitive decision has been made about the next round of negotiations," adding that "the Islamic Republic of Iran is reviewing the matter while considering the U.S. side's contradictory and constantly changing positions."

## Nottoway Plantation fire unearths deep pain over enslavement of Africans

**world.** A fire engulfed the historic Nottoway Plantation in White Castle, Louisiana on May 15, 2025, leaving behind only ashes and a storm of public reaction. The mansion, built in 1859 by sugar planter John Hampden Randolph with the forced labor of enslaved Africans, was the largest remaining antebellum house in the American South.

At over 53,000 square feet, it had long stood as both a historic site and a lightning rod for controversy over its romanticized portrayal of slavery-era wealth.

As flames consumed the towering white pillars and grand verandas—once used to host weddings and luxury events—video footage quickly spread across social media and news platforms.

For some, the destruction was a loss of architectural heritage. For many others, particularly Black Americans, it represented long-overdue justice and a symbolic end to a legacy of oppression.

Memes and celebratory posts flooded the internet. One clip of the fire set to Usher's "Let It Burn" went viral, while others added ASMR-style sound design to the crackling wood. In a widely shared post, historian Mia Crawford-Johnson shared a grinning selfie from across the river, writing, "Went and watched Nottoway Plantation burn to the ground!"

While fire officials confirmed the blaze was likely caused by an electrical fault and found no signs of arson, the emotional impact ignited intense debate.

Preservationists mourned the loss, citing the skill of the enslaved craftspeople whose work had been erased in the fire. But critics pointed to how the plantation had for years downplayed its brutal origins, often omitting or sugarcoating the experiences of those who were enslaved there.

Dr Andrea Livesey, a historian who visited Nottoway in 2019, noted that the site's museum offered just a single placard on slavery, one that disturbingly claimed enslaved people were "treated well for the time." As of this writing, the plantation's official website makes no mention of either its enslaved history or the fire that destroyed it.

# US intel indicates possible Israeli attack on Iranian nuclear facilities: Report

**world.** New US intelligence indicates that Israel is preparing to strike Iranian nuclear facilities, multiple American officials familiar with the matter have said, CNN reported. However, it was not clear whether Israeli leaders had made a final decision. Officials stated that they are not certain that Israel has decided to attack yet. Inside the US government, there are different opinions about whether Israel will actually go ahead with a strike, the report claimed. The decision may depend on how Israel views the ongoing talks between the US and Iran about Iran's nuclear program.

"The chance of an Israeli strike on an Iranian nuclear facility has gone up significantly in recent months. And the prospect of a Trump-negotiated US-Iran deal that doesn't remove all of Iran's uranium makes the chance of a strike more likely," one source familiar with the intelligence said as quoted by CNN.

The US believes that Israel may be

preparing for military action. This involves weapon mobilisation and wrapping up air force exercises. But others stated that these movements may be mere pressure tactics from Israel to make Iran abandon its nuclear project.

### AMID RISING TENSIONS, WILL US-IRAN TALKS WORK?

President Donald Trump has threatened to take military action, which the US is prepared to do, if the talks on Iran's nuclear program are not successful. Trump has set Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, Iran's leader, a 60-day deadline for progress in the talks. It is more than 60 days now since that deadline was set.

A high-level Western diplomat reported that Trump said the US would only allow a few more weeks for the talks before resorting to military action as reported by



CNN. However, the current official US position is to prioritise diplomacy.

### TEHRAN STRUGGLES AMID SANCTIONS AND STRIKES

Iran is now weaker than ever. Its air defences and missile factories were bombed by Israel in October. Sanctions and damage to the Iranian allies also weakened the country. US officials report

that Israel regards this as an opportunity to act.

The US is stepping up intelligence activities to aid Israel if it attacks. A source familiar with the Trump administration, however, said the US likely won't assist Israel in attacking Iran's nuclear facilities unless Iran creates a significant provocation, the report added. Israel can't defeat Iran's nuclear program alone. It requires US assistance, including midair refuelling for its aircraft and high-yield bombs that can penetrate deep underground.

For now, negotiations between the US and Iran are at a standstill. The US demands that Iran suspend uranium enrichment, which is applicable to the production of nuclear weapons yet also applicable for civilian use. Steve Witkoff, the US envoy leading the talks, said, "We cannot allow even 1% of an enrichment capability" in any deal.

## No growth, just loans: Pakistan seeks \$4.9 billion from world after securing IMF deal

**world.** Pakistan's economy grew by just 2.68% in the fiscal year 2024-25, falling short of its target of 3.6%, according to a report by ARY News. The report came after a meeting of the National Accounts Committee, led by the Secretary of Planning.

According to ARY News, the report was revealed during a meeting of the National Accounts Committee, chaired by Pakistan's Secretary of Planning. The meeting revealed that the country's economic output reached USD 411 billion, with per capita income increasing to USD 1,824. Sector-wise performance varied, with agriculture growing by 1.8 per cent during the first three quarters, while the industrial sector declined by 1.14 per cent.

Notably, the services sector posted a strong growth of 39 per cent between July and March, as per ARY News. In parallel, Pakistan is preparing to raise USD 4.9 billion in external commercial financing for the next fiscal year (FY2025-26), according to sources familiar with the matter. As



part of its financing plan, the government intends to secure USD 2.64 billion in short-term loans from commercial banks at expected interest rates of 7-8 per cent, without strict conditions or performance benchmarks, as per ARY News.

An additional USD 2.27 billion is also expected to come through long-term borrowing arrangements from commercial banks. Efforts are underway to tap four major international banks. This includes a proposal to obtain USD 1.1 billion from the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (ICBC), along with USD 500 million each from Standard

Chartered Bank and Dubai Islamic Bank.

Meanwhile, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has set a goal for Pakistan to increase its foreign reserves to USD 13.9 billion by the end of June. The State Bank of Pakistan currently holds around USD 14 billion, which is enough to cover three months of imports.

This month, Pakistan's central bank cut its key policy rate by 100 basis points to 11%, citing an improved inflation outlook and resuming a series of cuts from a record high of 22%, following a brief pause in March, to support growth.

The latest national accounts aggregates for fiscal 2024/25 showed the size of the economy at 114.7 trillion rupees (\$410.96 billion) up from 105.1 trillion rupees (\$371.66 billion), the committee said. Pakistan's manufacturing sector growth slowed to a seven-month low in April, with the HBL Pakistan Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) easing to 51.9 from 52.7 in March, weighed by concerns over global trade.

## Joe Biden went a decade without prostate cancer screening, his office confirms



**world.** Former US President Joe Biden had not received a test for prostate cancer, known as a PSA, for more than a decade before he was diagnosed with an advanced form of the disease last week, a spokesperson said on Tuesday. The latest comments from the former Democratic president's camp come amid questions from Republicans and some health professionals about why his cancer was not caught before reaching an advanced stage.

Biden, 82, has also faced broader questions about whether he and his allies withheld critical information from the American public about his ability to serve in the White House. A new book, "Original Sin," details widespread concerns about Biden's mental acuity amongst aides as he pursued reelection last year.

"President Biden's last known PSA was in 2014," the Biden spokesperson said on Tuesday. "Prior to Friday, President Biden had never been diagnosed with prostate cancer." A PSA test, or prostate-specific antigen test, is a blood test that is used to screen for prostate cancer. Some health professionals consulted by Reuters expressed surprise at the diagnosis given that most prostate cancers are detected at an earlier stage and that presidents undergo thorough health monitoring.

Still, others said it is not unusual to discontinue testing for prostate cancer in older patients because the test is less reliable in that age group. Prostate cancer has a much higher survival rate than most other cancers.

In 2012, the US Preventive Services Task Force recommended against PSA-based screening for prostate cancer in men of all ages. The task force reversed the recommendation in 2017, advising against screening for men older than 70. Biden, who ultimately abandoned his reelection bid and left office in January, was in his early 70s at the time of his 2014 screening.

"It is very reasonable to discontinue PSA screening at age 72, regardless of health status, or significantly decrease the frequency of screening," said Dr. Scott Eggener, a urologic cancer specialist and professor of surgery at the University of Chicago. Biden's office said he had been diagnosed on Friday with "aggressive" prostate cancer that had spread to his bones. Cancers that have spread, or metastasized, are considered stage 4, the most advanced.

## Trump deports dozens of Asian migrants to South Sudan in violation of court order

**world.** The Trump administration has violated a federal court order by deporting at least a dozen migrants to South Sudan without giving them a chance to contest their removal, according to attorneys and a US District Judge.

The deportations, revealed in an emergency court motion on Tuesday, targeted Vietnamese and Burmese nationals, some of whom do not speak English fluently and had little to no understanding of the legal proceedings against them.

US District Judge Brian Murphy, who previously barred the administration from deporting migrants to third countries without written notice and

a meaningful opportunity to object, expressed serious concern in court. "Based on what I have been told, this seems like it may be contempt," Murphy said, addressing a Justice Department attorney during a tense hearing in Boston.

The emergency motion details how one Burmese client was quietly removed to South Sudan despite limited English proficiency and no clear communication from authorities. Another Vietnamese migrant "appears to have suffered the same fate," according to the filing. Attorneys believe at least 10 more migrants were deported in the same manner. The deportations

occurred in violation of Murphy's earlier injunction, which was issued to prevent swift and potentially dangerous transfers of migrants to countries other than their own, particularly when those countries pose risks of torture or persecution.

Attorneys are now demanding that the court order the return of those deported and take immediate steps to block future violations. The development underscores a renewed confrontation between the federal judiciary and Republican President Donald Trump's administration, as it pushes forward with mass deportations central to his hardline immigration agenda.

## OnlyFans in crosshairs: Sweden criminalises purchase of custom sexual content

**Sweden has banned the purchase of custom-made sexual content on platforms like OnlyFans, criminalising remote paid sex acts under its prostitution laws. Pre-made content remains legal; law takes effect July 1.**

**world.** In a step to update its prostitution laws for the digital age, Sweden has passed a new law criminalising the purchase of custom-made sexual content online, including that on platforms like OnlyFans. The law, which comes into effect on July 1, targets "on-demand" sex acts for money — even if performed

remotely. "This is a new form of sex purchases, and it is high time that we modernise the Sex Purchase Act," said Social Democrat MP Teresa Carvalho, who backed the bill that passed with a large majority in parliament.

The law explicitly criminalises paying for a person to perform a sexual act in real-time on request, while still allowing users to buy or view pre-made videos and material legally. It also prohibits profiting from or promoting such performances, in line with Sweden's broader legal framework that criminalises buying sex but not selling it.

The idea is that anyone who buys sexual

acts performed remotely should be penalised in the same way as those who buy sexual acts involving physical

Sweden already prohibits paying for sex, with violators facing up to one year in prison. Swedish law penalises buyers while protecting sex workers. Pimping, for example, carries a four-year prison sentence. According to the New York Post, the move is similar to the SESTA/FOSTA law passed in the United States under the Trump administration, which similarly cracked down on digital facilitation of sex work. "It mirrors SESTA/FOSTA in its impact on online sex workers, limiting platforms and income," said Yigit Adin, activist at the European Sex Workers' Rights Alliance, speaking to Netpolitik.org.



## NEWS BOX

**Andhra Pradesh HC stays PT warrant against Vamsi in illegal mining case**

**VIJAYAWADA.** The Andhra Pradesh High Court on Tuesday stayed the PT warrant against former MLA Vallabhaneni Vamsi pertaining to an illegal mining case filed by Gannavaram police. Justice Dr Yi Lakshmana Rao ordered the stay until the final hearing on Vamsi's anticipatory bail petition on May 22. The case stems from a complaint by a Krishna district mining official, accusing Vamsi and associates of illegal mining in Bapulapadu and Gannavaram rural mandals, allegedly causing major financial losses. Police registered the case on May 15, prompting Vamsi to seek anticipatory bail.

The former legislator's counsel, senior advocate S Sriram, argued that a PT warrant would undermine the bail plea and urged the court to grant protective measures, while Advocate General Dammalapati Srinivas assured non-enforcement until the court's ruling.

After hearing both sides, Justice Lakshmana Rao adjourned the case to May 22, extending the stay on the PT warrant.

**Embrace yoga as household practice: Andhra Health Minister to people**

**VIJAYAWADA.** Health Minister Y Satya Kumar Yadav has called for every family in the State to embrace yoga, citing its centuries-old benefits as a holistic solution to modern-day stress and health challenges. In a statement issued on Tuesday, ahead of the month-long 'Yogandhra-2025' campaign starting Wednesday, the minister highlighted yoga's global acceptance and its significance in addressing contemporary lifestyle issues.

The 'Yogandhra-2025' initiative, which culminates with the International Day of Yoga on June 21, aims to engage approximately 2 crore people across Andhra Pradesh. The main event will take place along the scenic stretch from Ramakrishnapuram (RK) Beach to Bhimunipatnam Beach in Visakhapatnam, expecting over 2.5 lakh participants.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who championed the global recognition of International Yoga Day through the United Nations, has agreed to attend as the chief guest, following a proposal by Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu.

The countdown to 'Yogandhra-2025' begins tomorrow with District Collectors launching awareness drives to educate people about yoga's benefits and the significance of International Yoga Day. On the occasion, the health minister emphasised Naidu's vision to make yoga a household practice, given its proven physical, mental, and spiritual benefits.

Highlighting the pressures of competitive modern life, Satya Kumar Yadav noted that yoga addresses psychological distress, unhealthy habits, and rising disease burdens by fostering mind-body harmony.

**Modernised Karimnagar railway station set to open May 22; PM to inaugurate**

**In addition to Karimnagar, two other railway stations in Telangana — Begumpet and Warangal — will also be inaugurated on the same day.**



**KARIMNAGAR.** Karimnagar Railway Station has been completely modernised under the Amrit Bharat Scheme at an estimated cost of Rs 26.6 crore. Prime Minister Narendra Modi is scheduled to inaugurate the station virtually on May 22.

In addition to Karimnagar, two other railway stations in Telangana — Begumpet and Warangal — will also be inaugurated on the same day.

Along with the station's modernisation, the Union government has also spent an additional Rs 2 crore beyond the allocated budget for roads and other facilities around the station.

Union Minister of State for Home Affairs Bandi Sanjay Kumar highlighted the Centre's continued focus on railway development in Telangana.

He stated, "We have invested over Rs 32,940 crore in the development of railways in Telangana. In just the past year, Rs 5,336 crore has been allocated."

He further stated, "The Nacharam Railway Terminal has been constructed beautifully. Work at Secunderabad Railway Station is progressing with an investment of Rs 750 crore, while Nampally Railway Station is being modernised with Rs 350 crore. It's shameful that the Congress and BRS leaders fail to acknowledge these developments."

# Woman who duped man of Rs 1.03 crore with fake ISRO job promise denied anticipatory bail

**The court said the IO's report indicates that fake appointment letters created by the petitioner in the name of ISRO have to be recovered from her.**

**BENGALURU.** A woman, an alleged habitual offender who cheated men under the guise of getting them jobs, including in Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) after collecting huge amounts of money, was denied anticipatory bail by a city court as custodial interrogation is required. Among three cases registered in three different districts, the latest is against accused Vinutha ME, a resident of Govindarajanagar, for allegedly cheating a man after collecting Rs 1.03 crore by promising to get him a graphic designer's job in ISRO. "As per notice, the petitioner was required to appear before the investigation officer (IO) on May 9. The petitioner was served notice for appearance, which she has not complied with. It is worthwhile to mention Section 35(4) of BNSS, which states that when such a notice is issued to any person, it shall be the duty of that person to comply with the notice. But the



petitioner appears not to have complied. Under these circumstances, this court is of the firm opinion that the petitioner is not entitled to anticipatory bail," said Jayaprakash A, Judge, 66th Additional City Civil and Sessions Court.

The court said the IO's report indicates that fake appointment letters created by the petitioner in the name of ISRO have to be recovered from her. It also indicates that the petitioner is involved in similar cases registered in Kollegal police station and the Chikkamagaluru town police station, which shows she is a habitual offender. Under these circumstances, if she is released on bail, there are chances of her committing similar offences, and also of her absconding, which disentitles her from obtaining anticipatory bail, the court said. According to complainant Sanjay N, he had rented out the ground floor of his house in Laggere to the accused. In August 2024, the accused came to his residence at Nagarbhavi and convinced him to get a graphic designer's job at ISRO, and took Rs 37 lakh from him. She also got a fitness certificate from Victoria Hospital, but he did not receive any appointment order.

## Nearly all of Tamil Nadu facing high or very high heat risk

**CHENNAI.** Tamil Nadu has emerged as one of India's most heat-vulnerable states, with nearly 90% of its districts falling under high or very high risk categories, according to a new report released by the Council on Energy, Environment and Water (CEEW) on Tuesday. With 46% of its districts in the very high-risk category and another 43% classified as high risk, TN faces a multifaceted challenge. The state ranks fifth nationally on the Composite Heat Risk Index (HRI), a data-driven assessment that integrates climatic, demographic, socioeconomic, and land-use factors to evaluate district-level heat vulnerability. The HRI is based on the IPCC's AR5 risk framework, which combines three core components: hazard, exposure and vulnerability.

In TN's case, the hazard component has intensified significantly over the last decade. Districts like Kanniyakumari and Ramanathapuram have seen a sharp increase of nine to 10 very hot days per summer (defined as days exceeding the 95th percentile of historical maximum temperatures), and an additional

seven to nine very warm nights. Such nocturnal heat events reduce the human body's ability to recover from daytime heat, increasing risks of cardiovascular and respiratory illnesses.

Although TN is a coastal state with naturally high humidity, recent data shows that relative



humidity has increased even during peak summer months, particularly in interior districts. This reduces the effectiveness of sweating as a cooling mechanism, worsening heat stress, said Madhavan Nair Rajeevan, vice-chancellor of Atria University and former

secretary at the Ministry of Earth Sciences.

"Urbanisation has also been factored into the index. The report incorporates satellite-derived land-use and land-cover data, which shows a sharp expansion of built-up areas in cities like Chennai, Coimbatore, Tiruchirappalli, and Madurai. In

Chennai, this has led to a measurable rise in nighttime minimum temperatures and a shrinking diurnal temperature range," CEEW researchers said.

The state has formally recognised heatwaves as a disaster eligible for mitigation funding, yet most of its Heat Action Plans lack data-backed vulnerability assessments.

Sudha Ramen, member of the State Planning Commission, acknowledged that there are gaps in availability of data in general to effectively tackle the issue, but Tamil Nadu is taking measures to mitigate the heat stress on its population. "Department of Public Health has given an advisory to all the private hospitals to have an exclusive data reporting mechanism, especially for people who come with ailments that would have been caused due to heat stress," she said.

## Madras HC upholds Kerala government's right over Courtallam palace

**The petition was filed by Moolam Thirunal Ramavarma, a descendant of the Travancore King, represented by his power of attorney Adithya Varma.**



The TN government has also contended that the Courtallam palace was never retained by the Maharaja and was only handed over to the Government of Travancore-Cochin, and subsequently, as its successor, the Kerala government is entitled to the property, the judge noted and passed the order. The title of the property had been wrongly mutated to the name of caretaker Damodara Pandian in 1994 and based on an application made by Kerala, the DRO had changed the title to the government's name.

Challenging this, the royal family had moved the court in 2015 and the court had remitted the matter back to the DRO to be considered afresh after granting reasonable opportunity to the parties concerned. Based on the order, the DRO had issued notice to all interested parties, conducted an inquiry and found that the mutated patta was in order, which has been challenged in the present petition.

## Bar associations fall under ambit of RTI Act, rules state information panel in Kerala

**THIRUVANANTHAPURAM.** Bar associations in Kerala will come under the ambit of the Right to Information (RTI) Act, the State Information Commission has ruled. State Information Commissioner Sreekumar M issued the ruling on a petition filed by Adv T K Sathyaran against the Kozhikode Bar Association, after the latter refused to respond to his RTI query. Sathyaran alleged the association denied reply on the grounds that they were not covered by the RTI Act. The Kozhikode district collector informed the commission

that the association was functioning rent-free in a government-owned building located on government land. The commission then observed that this could be construed as indirect funding by the government and therefore the bar association comes under the ambit of Section 2(h) of the RTI Act, 2005, and becomes a public body.

The commission observed that bar associations in Kerala, which are thus part of the judiciary and operate through indirect appropriation of public property, are covered by sections 2(h)(d) and 2(h)(ii) of the RTI Act, 2005. The commission has asked the Kozhikode Bar Association to provide an explanation within 15 days so as not to attract penalty as per Section 20(1) of the RTI Act for not providing a timely reply to the petitioner.

The commission observed that the associations have to function with the transparency and accountability expected from a public institution.

**MADURAI.** Upholding the right of Kerala over the Travancore Palace in Courtallam, the Madurai Bench dismissed a plea made by the Royal family of Travancore claiming title over the structure.

The petition was filed by Moolam Thirunal Ramavarma, a descendant of the Travancore King, represented by his power of attorney Adithya Varma. He challenged an order passed by the Tirunelveli district revenue officer on September 25, 2018, confirming the mutation of the title of the property to the name of the Kerala government and sought to restore it to the name of the Maharaja of Travancore. Justice PB Balaji observed that the petition is a false case set up to knock off the property that is lawfully vested with the state. He pointed out that the petitioner was relying on the Covenant dated May 27, 1949, entered into between the Rulers of Travancore and Cochin with the Government of India for the

purposes of confirmation of the United

States of Travancore and Cochin. Though in the said covenant, it was made clear that the ruler of each coveting state shall be entitled to full ownership, use and enjoyment of all private properties, the palace was not among the list furnished by the Maharaja of Travancore regarding the properties which he wished to retain, the judge noted. He also accepted the contention of the additional advocate general of Kerala Gopala Krishna Kurup that the palace was never a private property and Kerala had exercised its rights over it as early as in 1937.

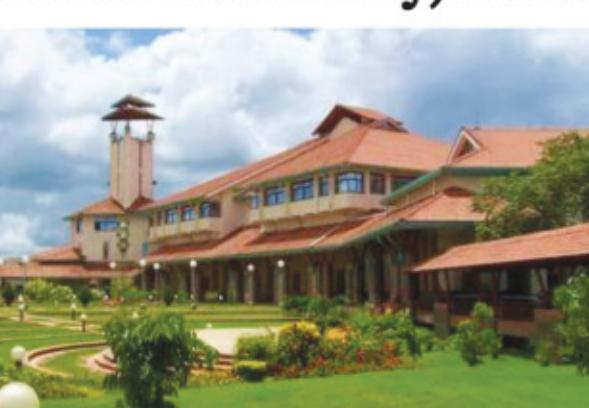
## IIM Kozhikode cuts ties with Turkish university, cites national interest

**Originally signed in September 2023 for a five-year term, the MoU had aimed to foster academic collaboration, primarily through student exchange programmes between the two institutions.**

**KOZHIKODE.** As India recalibrates its international academic collaborations in line with national interests, the Indian Institute of Management Kozhikode (IIMK) has taken a decisive step by terminating its Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Sabanci University, Turkey.

The move comes in response to Turkey's public support for Pakistan amid heightened diplomatic tensions with India, prompting a firm reaction from Indian academic institutions. Originally signed in September 2023 for a five-year term, the MoU had aimed to foster academic collaboration, primarily through student exchange programmes between the two institutions. However, given the evolving geopolitical landscape, IIMK has chosen to unilaterally terminate the agreement.

In an official statement, IIMK said the suspension of ties was a direct consequence of the "current



geopolitical situation involving Turkey". The institution has also formally communicated its decision to Sabanci University and has requested the immediate removal of IIMK's name and association from all Turkish university records, websites, and affiliated platforms.

Commenting on the development, Professor Debashis Chatterjee, director of IIMK, said: "At IIM Kozhikode, we place utmost importance on aligning our global engagements with the national interest.

The decision to annul the MoU with Sabanci University has been taken after careful consideration and is in keeping with our institutional responsibility to uphold the values and priorities of our nation. We remain committed to fostering international collaborations that reflect mutual respect, strategic alignment, and shared national values."

The move comes as several other Indian academic institutions are reassessing international collaborations in light of national security and diplomatic sensitivities. IIM Kozhikode's firm stance underscores a broader trend of Indian institutions prioritising geopolitical awareness in shaping international academic partnerships.

**Heavy rain lashes Karnataka, more showers expected**



**BENGALURU.** Heavy rain disrupted normal life in several parts of Karnataka on Tuesday. According to the India Meteorological Department (IMD) bulletin, seven districts — Uttara Kannada, Udupi, Dakshina Kannada, Kodagu, Shivamogga, Chikkamagaluru and Hassan — will have extremely heavy to heavy rainfall, hailstorm and strong surface winds.

On Tuesday, heavy rains lashed Udupi city and others parts of the district, damaging roads and properties. Rainwater gushed into several houses and commercial establishments. Two cars parked in the parking lot of Udupi railway station were damaged owing to a tree fall at 8.45 am. Due to caving in of the road in Laxminda Nagar in Manipal, vehicular movement was disrupted. Many parts of Udupi district continued to receive heavy downpour throughout the day. Udupi recorded 32.9 mm rain in the 24-hour period that at 8.30 am on Tuesday. In neighbouring Dakshina Kannada district, several low-lying areas were inundated. Due to a mudslide near the Mangaluru International Airport runway, rainwater filled with mud entered houses at Adyapady. Fishermen have been advised not to venture into the sea. Meanwhile, rain battered Hassan flooding several areas. Hemavathi reservoir recorded an inflow of 25,888 cusecs owing to continuous rainfall in the catchment area.

Meanwhile, an orange alert has been issued for Dharwad district for three days starting May 21. In Uttara Kannada district, a 65-year-old man who had survived the Shirur landslide in July 2024, died on Tuesday after being struck by lightning. Thammangouda was struck by lightning when he was outside his house at Ulluvare village. Davanagere also received good pre-monsoon showers.

## India strikes, Trump blinks: Tale of two powers

TWO developments in the last 10 days — first, the swift punishment to Pakistan in Operation Sindoor and India's diplomatic measures earlier; second, the recall of high tariffs by the US on China — will affect global realignments. India met the strategic objectives of the operation, which included the destruction of Pakistan's terrorist infrastructure; setting up a new deterrence against terror attacks; inflicting considerable damage to Pakistan's key airbases and establishing military superiority and ability to strike wherever it wanted.

Without crossing the LoC or the International Border, India launched missiles and drones on May 7 at Pakistan's nine terror bases, some deep inside the country, in a calibrated, measured and responsible manner, hitting its targets with few civilian casualties. Pakistan's Air Defence (AD) system failed to intercept the missiles. More than 100 terrorists, including some top leaders of the Lashkar-e-Taiba, Jaish-e-Mohammed and Hizbul Mujahideen such as Abu Jundal, Hafiz Mohammed Jameel, Khalid and Mohammed Hassan Khan, were killed in the strikes. Their close links with the Pakistan army were visible as senior army officials attended their funeral.

When Pakistan tried to launch missile and drone attacks against Indian airbases on the night of May 7-8, the multi-layered Indian AD system comprising the indigenous Akash, Akash missiles, air defence guns, Russian S-400 and Israeli Barak 8 easily neutralised Pakistan's Chinese, Turkish and indigenous missiles and drones. As a result, the Indian airfields, logistic installations and military infrastructure remain largely unaffected by the enemy's retaliation.

The ISRO's 10 satellites working round the clock played a stellar role in informing the Indian armed forces about the enemy's positions, military infrastructure and bombing attempts.

India's BrahMos missiles were able to bomb the Sargodha airport near Rawalpindi by confusing its radars with pilotless aircraft. It sent shockwaves in the neighbouring Kirana hills that house Pakistan's nukes and the Pakistan army headquarters in Rawalpindi. The Indian satellites could see the blind spots in the Chinese and American AD systems, including radars, and Indian missiles struck those positions with pinpoint accuracy. That is when Pakistan got alarmed and contacted its American friends and the Chinese 'iron brother'.

The BrahMos caused massive damage to a number of other Pakistani airbases, too, including those at Chaklala, Bholari and Jacobabad (near another nuke site in Chagai Hills), destroying a Pakistani AWACS parked at Bholari. Indian military officials have shown satellite images of these damages in public briefings. Pakistan, China and American lobbies have made considerable efforts to portray the success of the Pakistani bombing efforts by alleging that Pakistan had hit five Indian fighter aircraft, including three Rafales, one Mirage and one Sukhoi, in its initial raids, but they have not been able to present any corroborating evidence. India dominated the air space and maritime theatre, with aircraft carrier Vikrant and other accompanying ships positioned at a comfortable distance from the Karachi port.

After the ceasefire, PM Narendra Modi told Pakistan that Operation Sindoor had only been paused. Any further terror attack by Pakistan would be considered an act of war by India and India would retaliate at a time and place of its choosing. He added that India would not accept Pakistan's nuclear blackmail and the Indus Waters Treaty would remain in abeyance till Pakistan ceased cross-border terrorism against India. India can draw multiple lessons from this operation. First, that future wars will be more technology driven and India must stay ahead of its adversaries in the adoption of new technologies, training and networking of different platforms. Second, Pakistan's nukes are no barrier to a conventional war. Three, India must send more satellites for full scanning of the military infrastructure of its adversaries and establish a robust GPS. China plans to send 300 satellites by 2030 in low orbits for high-resolution images. India must become more atmanirbhar in every field by pursuing research, innovation and new technologies.

## Indian Navy stood tall in Operation Sindoor

The Indian maritime services deployed a powerful task force within hours of the Pahalgam terror attack

OPERATION Sindoor has served as a compelling demonstration of India's growing military capabilities in several key areas. The technical means to acquire intelligence of targets deep inside the opponent's territory; to strike them with long-range missiles with pinpoint accuracy — all the while maintaining a multi-layered, impervious air defence of its own assets. This capacity for waging "non-contact warfare", using guided weapons and unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) without ground troops or air forces crossing borders, marks a paradigm shift in warfare. In this context, maritime power has, historically, specialised in employing strategies that aim to achieve political objectives through their presence and "non-contact" force projection rather than by engaging in direct combat. Decades ago, Admiral Sergey Gorshkov (Commander-in-Chief, Soviet Navy, 1956-85) had described the perennial utility of naval power: "Demonstrative actions by the fleet, in many cases, have made it possible to achieve political ends without resorting to armed action, merely by application of pressure and threat of military operations."

The Indian Navy's (IN) 2015 maritime strategy offers, in detail, various options for potential force projection. These include maritime strikes with carrier-borne aircraft or long-range weapons like the ship-launched BrahMos, or the ship/submarine-launched Klub land-attack missiles. In order to apply "strategic leverage, including economic and psychological pressure", the strategy also envisages disruption/denial of the adversary's use of the sea for military purposes and maritime trade. The IN, while drawing up its contingency plans for Operation Sindoor in coordination with sister services, would have taken note of Pakistan's maritime vulnerabilities stemming from its geography, relatively limited naval capabilities and economic dependence on key coastal infrastructure. Pakistan's 1,000-km-long coastline, stretching mostly across the troubled province of Balochistan, hosts just a handful of ports. Of these, only Karachi, Port Qasim and Gwadar handle merchant ship traffic, while Ormara is a naval base and the rest are fishing harbours. Pakistan's economy, already strained, relies heavily on maritime trade,

mostly through Karachi and Port Qasim. Disruption of shipping traffic to and from these ports, even temporarily, can cause a significant impact on Pakistan's economy, industry and military operations, apart from affecting public wellbeing and morale.

As far as naval strength goes, the IN is a diverse and substantial force organised into two fleets, each fielding an aircraft carrier and a cohort of missile-armed destroyers and frigates as well as fleet support vessels. India's submarine force of nuclear and diesel-powered submarines is strategically deployed on both seabeds. The Pakistan Navy (PN) is relatively smaller and lacks many of these key assets.

While the IN aspires to play the role of a blue-water navy, with power-projection capabilities across the Indian

conflict has lingered in the Pakistani psyche, and PN units did not venture forth during Operation Sindoor.

Today, a major advantage accrues to the IN from its comprehensive capability for "maritime domain awareness". This is a dynamic framework that receives inputs from satellites, aircraft, UAVs, ships and coastal radars to compile a real-time operational picture of all activities at sea in the region. The availability of "situational awareness" on a 24x7 basis in all three dimensions enables the IN to keep track of the adversary's moves and respond with alacrity to any suspicious activity. The PN lacks a similar facility.

"Naval compellence" has, historically, been a useful instrument of state policy to influence the behaviour of others and force an adversary to do something he does

not want to do, or to stop him from doing something that he intends to do. This is achieved by the deployment of coercive sea-based forces, which may or may not involve actual violence. During media briefings by the three armed forces, the Director General of Naval Operations announced that within hours of the Pahalgam terror attack, the IN had deployed a powerful task force composed of destroyers, frigates and submarines, led by the aircraft carrier, INS Vikrant, in the Arabian Sea, south of Karachi. Posing a serious challenge in numbers and capability to the Pakistani fleet, this force established a de facto blockade, confining PN units to their harbours. Units of the task force are

understood to have conducted live missile firing drills to revalidate crew readiness and ensure operational preparedness of units.

From its location in international waters, where it could have remained poised for prolonged periods, the IN carrier group acted as a force for "compellence". Through rapid deployment and strategic positioning of overwhelming maritime power, India confined Pakistan's navy to harbour, disrupted its maritime operations and reinforced its dominance in the Arabian Sea. The IN task force had ample firepower to target ships, harbours and shore facilities with missiles having a range up to 300-450 km at sea. But the Navy, true to its sobriquet of the "Silent Service", has not said so.



Ocean and beyond, the PN's focus is primarily on coastal defence and maintaining credible maritime deterrence against India through a strategy of "sea denial". Although the past few decades have seen both navies growing in size and capabilities, the IN has managed to retain its significant edge. In the 1971 war, India's maritime power had played a key role in the outcome of the operations in both theatres of war. In the west, it had undertaken two attacks with ship-launched surface-to-surface missiles, inflicting attrition on the PN and heavy damage to the Karachi port, bringing its operations to a halt. In the eastern theatre, the IN's carrier-borne aircraft had ranged far and wide over East Pakistan and inflicted heavy damage on ports, shipping and riverine traffic. The trauma of this

## A win for the environment

SC verdict overruling post-facto environmental clearances underlines that sustainable development is not a zero-sum game



Environment clearances are guardrails that ensure developmental projects do not injure ecosystems, wildlife and natural resources and harm people's health. One of the defining elements of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Rules of 2006, these screenings were meant to enable policymakers to strike the right balance between the imperatives of development and sustainability. The precautionary principle behind this provision has, however, been substantially undermined in the past eight years. In 2017, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change issued a notification that allowed developers to obtain an environmental clearance after beginning work on a project. The notification provided a one-time window to defaulters to comply with due procedure. However, in the process, it inaugurated a regime of post-facto clearances, which was consolidated in 2021 when the Centre issued an Office Memorandum (OM) to

"identify" and "handle" violation cases. Now, the Supreme Court has called out the government for "going out of its way... to protect those who harm the environment". On May 16, a two-judge-bench struck down the 2017 notification and the 2021 OM.

The verdict is not the first time that the SC has admonished the Centre for diluting the EIA. In Common Cause vs Union of India (2017), a two-

judge-bench ruled that the government had committed "serious lapses" in allowing large-scale mining to be "carried on without forest and environmental clearances". Such "violations of laws and policy need to be prevented," it underlined. Three years later, in Alembic Pharmaceuticals vs Rohit Prajapati, the Court held that post-facto clearances go against the "fundamental principles of environmental jurisprudence", and that they were an "anathema to the EIA notification". Then, in January last year, the SC stayed the 2021 OM. However, as an analysis by this newspaper in February revealed, the regulatory laxity precipitated by the 2017 notification allowed more than 50 defaulting projects to go unpunished — coal, iron and bauxite mines, steel and iron factories, cement plants and limestone quarries were approved without proper scrutiny of their impacts on people's health and ecology.

## Why the world ignored role of Turkiye in Indo-Pak conflict

Op Sindoor has shown that global powers, even while backing India diplomatically, may turn a blind eye to the Pak-Turkiye partnership



Turkiye has dismissed it as a routine refuelling stop and categorically denied the use of the plane for sending arms, the timing and parallel Turkish support for Pakistan through this conflict have raised significant doubts. This was followed by the visit of a high-level delegation led by Turkish intelligence chief to the Pakistan air force headquarters on April 30. Finally, the TCG BUYUKADA, a Turkish naval warship, arrived at the Karachi port on May 5 and remained docked till May 7. These developments suggest that the Turkish support went beyond the symbolic messaging of solidarity from the leadership and was a deliberate effort to bolster Pakistan's military capability and deterrence against India. However, a report by India Today published after the ceasefire has added a concerning layer to the Turkish

involvement. The report, quoting unidentified sources, suggests that two Turkish military operators, who helped Pakistan coordinate drone attacks on India after May 7, were reportedly killed during Operation Sindoor.

While neither Turkiye nor Pakistan have confirmed this, the embedding of Turkish military advisers in a combat operation reveals an alarming edge of their military partnership and compels New Delhi to review Ankara's role in the recent standoff and recalibrate its approach.

Turkiye's ability to bolster Pakistan's military posture without direct accountability reflects a broader involvement in their global engagements. Both countries have managed to straddle competing power blocs for their own interests. Nowhere is this more visible than in the two countries' simultaneous engagements with the

US, China and Russia. Islamabad and Ankara have long leveraged their geographical positioning in South Asia and West Asia to become indispensable assets in varying engagements of these superpower rivals.

Pakistan became a key player for the US in 2001 with its operations in Afghanistan. Since then, the US has provided Pakistan with military equipment, including tanks, surveillance radars, fighter jets, missiles and drones. When the US halted defence sales to Pakistan, China emerged to fill the vacuum. As Islamabad's all-weather ally, Beijing has expanded Pakistan's arsenal with a steady supply of weapons, many of which were used in the recent standoff against India.

Turkiye, a NATO member, is a major American partner in the region, housing strategic American military bases and receiving key military equipment, including fighter jets, tanks, ships and other hardware. At the same time, Turkiye has managed to diversify its military partnerships by getting its hands on the Russian S-400, a sophisticated surface-to-air missile system. Finally, Turkiye is also a member of the Chinese Belt and Road Initiative and a part of the "Silk Road Economic Belt" route that travels through Central Asia, Iran and Europe.

Due to these parallel engagements, many argue that the US-Turkiye partnership had hit an all-time low, but with Donald Trump back at the White House, this partnership has received a new impetus. Despite Turkiye's overt role in the Indo-Pak standoff, Washington has reaffirmed its defence ties with Ankara by announcing a \$350-million missile sale just days after the ceasefire between India and Pakistan. This should definitely be a cause of concern for New Delhi, especially in light of the growing military cooperation between Turkiye and Pakistan. Operation Sindoor has not only bared the depth of the Turkiye-Pakistan military partnership but also shown that global powers, even while backing India diplomatically, may turn a blind eye to this partnership to suit their own strategic calculus.



# Female pet

owners may be less likely to die of stroke

Can pets be good for your health? Possibly yes, a study suggests. U.S. women over age 50 and generally healthy were less likely to die of

cardiovascular events like stroke if they had a cat or dog, the researchers found.

After accounting for the increase in physical activity required of dog owners, owning a cat

instead of a dog was still tied to a lower risk of death from stroke.

The researchers studied almost 4,000 adults age 50 and older without major illnesses who

participated in the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES) in 1988 to 1994 and who reported their pet ownership.

Participants also answered questions about physical activity, weight and height, cigarette smoking and other health risk factors. More than half were overweight or obese. About 35 percent of people owned a pet, most often a dog. Pet owners tended to be younger, more often were married, and more often were white.

According to the National Death Index, as of 2006, 11 of every 1,000 non-pet owners had died of cardiovascular disease, compared to about 7 of every 1,000 pet owners.

Specifically for stroke, male pet owners were just as likely to have died, but female pet owners were about 40 percent less likely to



blood pressure as well," said senior author Jian Zhang of the Jiann-Ping Hsu College of Public Health at Georgia Southern University in the U.S.

"I strongly believe that putative benefits of keeping a dog have not yet fully translated into reality, and we found that pet owners did not walk pets, certainly dogs, more often than others," Zhang said. "This explains why owning a dog did not reduce CVD mortality among dog owners."

Cat owners may have a personality that protects their hearts, rather than cats actually having a concrete effect on heart health, he said.

"We are short of overall assessment of the associations of companion animals with human health, and our study should not be interpreted to encourage more people to own pets, either dog or cat," Zhang said. "Pets are good, but have to be kept responsibly."

"In my study, there was a tendency for pet owners to have a higher risk of dying," said Dr. Richard F. Gillum of Howard University College of Medicine in Washington D.C., who was not part of the new study but did study the same NHANES surveys.

Most findings show no association between pets and survival, he said.

"Data from NHANES are really inadequate to settle the question, since one can only determine there was a pet in the household, but not the number of pets or whether the study participant was the owner, cared for it or interacted with it," Gillum said. "So we need to wait for better studies before making any firm conclusions about pets and survival among their owners."

"Even if there were a reduction of death from stroke among women with cats, of what importance is that in public health terms if they are just as likely to die as other women, just from another cause," he said.

have died of stroke.

Most of this association was driven by cat ownership, according to results in High Blood Pressure and Cardiovascular Prevention.

"Anecdotally, we believe that walking a dog is good for heart, reducing life pressure and

## Pamper your pets with these pro tips

Our pets are an integral part of our families and deserve all the special care that we can provide. And that is the primary reason why we need to take our pets for regular check-ups at veterinary clinics that are qualified and equipped to give them all that they need. We spoke to pet-care professionals in the city, to list out some special pro tips that can help your four-legged friends...

### Ensure they stay well-hydrated

Pratapsinh Gaekwad, who is extremely passionate about animals and also owns a specialty pet-care clinic, says, "Ensure that your dog stays hydrated by adding extra water to some meals, in order to increase the

### Be consistent with feeding regime

It is important to try and be consistent with your feeding regime — two meals a day, at the same time every day, with no snacks, should be sufficient.

### Use palatable probiotics

Avoid curd as many patients can be slightly lactose intolerant and this can actually irritate the gut when had in large quantities, suggests Hannah. She adds, "A couple of teaspoons a day can be used as a probiotic but actually goat's yogurt or kefir are better and more palatable."

### Get a dental check-up done

Opt for a full dental scale and polish to make gnashers sparkle. Gaekwad adds, "This is not just a cosmetic procedure, a full examination of all the teeth is undertaken, assessing all the gum margins. Removing plaque which is basically bacteria and sugar will help reduce systemic disease."

### Give them supplements

"Supplements such as coconut oil are fantastic for your pet's coat and joints. They have a good ratio of omegas so really help nourish the skin, heart muscle and joints as well," says Hannah.

### Dealing with heat stroke

Exercise is very important for pets but it is essential to not overdo it in the summer months. Heat strokes can be serious. Keep walks early in the morning before 8 am and late in the evening after 7 pm. Signs of heat stroke include lethargy, vomiting, disorientation and in extreme cases, collapse. The first thing to do is cool down with towels soaked in room temperature water. Immediately after, pay a visit to the vet.

### Keep in mind

Take personal grooming seriously. Get a mani-pedi for your pets — get their nails clipped. Get a de-worming done prior to a vacation. Vaccinating against infectious diseases such as rabies, leptospirosis and canine distemper not only protects yourself but also your fellow canine companions.



water content. Flavouring their water with some chicken broth may encourage them to drink more as well.

### Give them ice-cubes to snack on

Ice cubes make tasty zero calorie snacks for dogs, and you can always jazz them up by making flavoured ones by freezing some chicken broth in an ice cube rack, suggests Gaekwad.

### Deal with osteoarthritis

Hannah Victoria Myburgh, head nurse at a South Mumbai veterinary hospital says, "For the older patients who suffer from osteoarthritis and creaky joints, green lipp mussel extract is a fantastic natural analgesic. Adding glucosamine chondroitin supplements into the diet really helps with the maintenance of healthy joints and bones."

A typical Indian wedding has day-long ceremonies and even longer guestlists running into hundreds.

Mind you, they are people who are close to the family and cannot be ignored. However, things are changing now as couples are choosing to have intimate celebrations with only a chosen few present on their special day. These millennials prefer to curb the unnecessary costs to avoid burdening their families. Instead, the money saved is spent on more constructive investments like a house or travelling together to their dream destination. If you are one of those planning to have a wedding celebration that is private, here are a few things to keep in mind...

### BOOK A SMALL VENUE

When you have a small venue and people come to know about it, they will understand that you want to avoid a crowd. It is a subtle hint to those who expect to be invited for it, that you are not ready to host a big wedding.

### KEEP THE RITUALS SIMPLE

Most Indian weddings have elaborate rituals - sangeet, mehendi, haldi among other thing. It is better to keep things simple by focusing only on the main wedding rituals or else design them as per the size of the venue as you don't want to make your guests feel uncomfortable.

### HOME IS THE BEST

The most comfortable option is to get married in a cosy home. If your house is not big enough,

you can always ask a friend who has a bigger house to help you out. An attached terrace always works best. This also makes sure that you're not in a situation where

you have to explain about restricting the celebration to immediate family and close friends.

After the wedding rituals, make sure to take everyone

out for an elaborate lunch or dinner to avoid unnecessary speculation.

### HAVE MULTIPLE CELEBRATIONS

Everyone expects a huge reception after the wedding, but if you don't want to have that either, opt for small multiple celebrations.

You and your spouse can have separate office parties, while you can also plan one each with extended families from both the sides.

having a wedding in the same town, try to hire a stand-alone bungalow instead of the typical hall or hotel set-up.

Look for a farmhouse located on the outskirts of the town you stay in. It will give you lots of space and at the same time be a close-knit affair.

### PLAN AN OUT-OF-TOWN WEDDING

Sometimes having a wedding at the place you reside in, will



Friends can be combined or given separate parties depending on how you both want it. However, ensure that both of you attend all these parties.

### G O UNCONVENTIONAL

However, if you cannot

a v o i d

see a large number attending it. Avoid that and half the crowd goes out of the list.

Go for a destination wedding, which invariably means that the celebration is a small, intimate affair; it also limits the number of guests you want to invite.

This kind of wedding allows you to give personal attention to all your guests, as well as provide you with enough me-time.



# Interim bail for Ashoka professor over Op Sindoor post after court's 'publicity' rap

**Ali Khan**  
**Mahmudabad of**  
**Ashoka**  
**University was**  
**arrested last**  
**week after his**  
**social media post**  
**on Operation**  
**Sindoor was**  
**perceived as**  
**critical of the**  
**armed forces.**

New Delhi. The Supreme Court on Wednesday granted interim bail to Ashoka University Professor Ali Khan Mahmudabad over his controversial post on Operation Sindoor but refused to stay the investigation into the case. While granting the interim relief, a bench of Justice Surya Kant and Justice NK Singh blasted the professor for the timing of his remarks, calling it "dog whistling" and an attempt to get "cheap publicity".

"We direct the petitioner be released on interim bail... Having regard to the contents of two alleged offending online posts, we are satisfied that no case for staying the investigation is made out," the court said.

#### COURT DIRECTS SIT FORMATION

The court also directed the Haryana top cop to constitute within 24 hours a Special Investigation Team (SIT) comprising senior IPS officers for a further probe. However, the court said the officers should not be from Haryana or Delhi and one should be a woman. "To understand the complexity and for proper appreciation of the language used in the post, we direct DGP Haryana to constitute a SIT



comprising three IPS officers who do not belong to Haryana or Delhi," the bench further said.

#### IMPOSES RESTRICTIONS

The court also imposed certain conditions on Mahmudabad, barring the professor from posting or making any speech on the case. He also cannot make any remarks in connection

to the Pahalgam terror attack and the subsequent hostilities between India and Pakistan. The court also ordered the professor to surrender his passport. Mahmudabad was arrested on May 18 and was sent to 14-day judicial custody by a Haryana court on Tuesday. His post was perceived as critical of the military and disrespectful to the women officers, Colonel Sofia Qureshi and Wing Commander Vyonika Singh, who led the media briefings on Operation Sindoor.

#### 'RIGHT TO FREE SPEECH FINE, WHERE IS THE DUTY?'

During the hearing, the Supreme Court, however, didn't mince any words while pulling up the professor, saying his remarks amount to "dog-whistling" and he should have used "neutral and respectful" language. "The entire projection is that he is anti-war, saying families of Army people, civilians in border areas suffer. But some words have double meanings also," the court said. The court said while everyone had freedom of speech, such occasions (during India-Pakistan tensions) should not be used to garner publicity.

## Centre can reclaim land declared waqf under waqf-by-user principle, court told

New Delhi. The Centre on Wednesday told the Supreme Court that it was legally empowered to reclaim properties that are declared waqf under the contentious 'waqf-by-user' principle. Presenting his arguments a day after the Muslim side made their submissions, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta asserted that nobody could claim right over government land. "Nobody has the right over government land... There is



a Supreme Court judgment which says the government can save the property if it belongs to the government and has been declared as waqf," Mehta said.

The 'waqf-by-user' provision, which has been done away with in the new law, allows a property to be treated as waqf based on its long-term use for religious and charitable purposes, even without formal documentation.

Mehta's assertion came as the Supreme Court was hearing petitions challenging the Waqf law, which expands government oversight in regulating waqf properties.

## Court orders appointment of domestic violence Protection officers within 6 weeks

**NEW DELHI.** The Supreme Court on Tuesday mandated all states and Union Territories to appoint designated Protection Officers within six weeks in order to improve the enforcement of the Protection of Women against Domestic Violence (DV) Act.

The bench, comprising Justice BV Nagarathna and Justice Satish Chandra Sharma, took note of the lack of appointed Protection Officers in many regions and issued clear instructions for states and UTs to designate "one officer of the Women and Child Development Department or the Social Welfare Department at every District and Taluka level" under the Act.

The Protection Officers are the first point of contact for women subjected to physical, mental, sexual, or financial violence within the family. These officers are responsible for ensuring appropriate action, initiating legal proceedings, and monitoring the safety and welfare of the affected women.

Despite the DV Act being in force for two decades, its implementation remains uneven across the country. The issue stems from several states assigning the responsibilities under the DV Act to officials already handling the Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS), which includes child welfare and protection duties. Senior advocate Shobha Gupta, representing the NGO "We the Women," argued that these officers are overburdened and unable to manage the workload, leaving vulnerable women and children unsupported. "Designating ICDS or Anganwadi workers as PO will not be enough," Gupta submitted.

While various state governments cited logistical challenges such as recruitment, training, and funding as obstacles to appointing dedicated officers, Justice Nagarathna noted, "Maybe it's an ideal long-term situation that a cadre may be created, but we cannot say someone else cannot come and help in the meantime."

The Court also directed the Central Government and the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) to support the Act's enforcement. The bench instructed NALSA's Member Secretary to coordinate with state and UT legal services authorities to publicise the availability of free legal aid and advice for vulnerable women at the district and taluka levels.

## India's Banu Mushtaq wins International Booker Prize for 'Heart Lamp'

New Delhi. Indian author Banu Mushtaq and translator Deepa Bhasthi won the International Booker Prize for fiction Tuesday for "Heart Lamp," a collection of 12 short stories written over a period of more than 30 years and which chronicle the everyday lives and struggles of women in southern India. The award was announced by bestselling Booker Prize-longlisted author Max Porter in his role as chair of the five-member voting panel, at a ceremony at London's Tate Modern.

It is the first time the award has been given to a collection of short stories. Bhasthi is the first Indian translator — and ninth female translator — to win the prize since it took on its current form in 2016. Mushtaq is the sixth female author to be awarded the prize since then.

Written in Kannada, which is spoken by around 65 million people, primarily in southern India, Porter praised the



"radical" nature of the translation, adding that "It's been a joy" to listen to the evolving appreciation of the stories by members of the jury.

"These beautiful, busy, life-affirming stories rise from Kannada, interspersed with the extraordinary socio-political richness of other languages and dialects," said Porter. "It speaks of women's lives, reproductive rights, faith, caste, power and oppression."

The book, which beat five other finalists, comprises stories written from 1990 to 2023. They were selected and curated by Bhasthi, who was keen to preserve the multilingual nature of southern India in her translation.

Mushtaq, who is a lawyer and activist as well as writer, told a short-list reading event on Sunday that the stories "are about women — how religion, society and politics demand unquestioning obedience from them, and in doing so, inflict inhumane cruelty upon them, turning them into mere subordinates."

The 50,000-pound (\$66,000) prize money is to be divided equally between author and translator. Each is presented with a trophy too. The International Booker Prize is awarded every year. It is run alongside the Booker Prize for English-language fiction, which will be handed out in the fall.

## India's Operation Sindoor outreach starts, 2 delegations head to Japan, UAE

New Delhi. As India's Operation Sindoor global outreach starts today, two delegations led by Sanjay Jha and Shrikant Shinde are scheduled to leave today. Sanjay Jha's delegation will depart for Japan at 11:40 AM, while Shrikant Shinde's delegation will leave for the UAE at 9 PM. Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri briefed the members, MPs and former parliamentarians of three of the seven all-party delegations. The delegations will leave for foreign capitals to convey India's strong stand against Pakistan-sponsored terrorism.

"While India is committed to peace, it will not tolerate any terror attacks on its soil and will hit back as part of its 'new normal,'" Misri told them, according to sources.

JD(U) leader Sanjay Jha, who is leading a delegation to Japan, Singapore, South Korea, Malaysia, and Indonesia, told reporters after the briefing that their



message to global leaders would be that "India has decided enough is enough." He said Pakistan has repeatedly acted like "a thief asked to probe his own crime" whenever India trusted its assurances on taking action against terrorism. Shiv Sena MP Shrikant Shinde, heading the delegation to the UAE and several African nations, said they would present evidence of Pakistan's involvement in terror attacks not just in India but abroad,

highlighting its role in crimes against humanity.

Congress leader and former Union minister Salman Khurshid, who is part of the delegation led by Jha, clarified that the decision to halt military actions was taken mutually by India and Pakistan, with no third-party mediation - countering US President Donald Trump's earlier claim.

Commenting on the briefing, Khurshid said, "There was no interference by anyone (in understanding between India and Pakistan), there was no mediation. But when such things happen in the world, different people try to send a message. But whatever has happened, has happened only between the two nations. When the matter escalated, it was between our two nations. When it ended, it ended between the two nations. It was initiated by the Pakistan DGMO, they said that we should end this. We said that it should be done if they are ready."

## Who is Banu Mushtaq, Kannada writer who made history with International Booker?

**Banu Mushtaq scripted history by becoming the first Kannada writer to win the coveted International Booker Prize. With this achievement, Mushtaq now joins an elite list of Indians who have won the coveted prize since its inception in 1969 -- including V.S. Naipaul, Salman Rushdie, Arundhati Roy, Kiran Desai, Aravind Adiga, and Geetanjali Shree.**

**New Delhi.** In a historic achievement for Indian literature, 77-year-old Kannada writer, lawyer, and activist Banu Mushtaq has bagged the prestigious International Booker Prize for her short story collection, Heart Lamp. Mushtaq scripted history by becoming the first

Kannada writer to win the prestigious prize. The anthology -- a collection of 12 stories -- chronicles the everyday struggles of Muslim women in Karnataka, spanning three decades from 1990 to 2023.

In her acceptance speech, Mushtaq, hailing the stories of the women she poignantly portrayed in her work, said, "This is not just my victory, but a chorus of voices often left unheard."

Deepa Bhasthi, who translated the collection into English, was also awarded the International Booker Prize alongside Mushtaq.

With this achievement, Mushtaq now joins an elite list of Indians who have won the coveted prize since its inception in 1969 -- including V.S. Naipaul, Salman Rushdie, Arundhati Roy, Kiran Desai, Aravind Adiga, and Geetanjali Shree.

#### WHO IS BANU MUSHTAQ?

Hailing from Karnataka's Hassan, Mushtaq

wrote her first short story in middle school. She took the writing world by storm when her first story was published at the age of 26 in a popular Kannada magazine, Prajamata. According to her profile on The Booker Prize platform, she has authored six short story collections, a novel, an essay collection and a poetry collection.

In an interview with the Booker Prize Foundation, Mushtaq revealed that she

Population of Asiatic lions in Gujarat see over 32% rise, reveals 2025 census



New Delhi. The population of Asiatic lions in Gujarat rose from 674 to 891 as per the 2025 census, Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel said. The new figures mark a rise of 217 lions, or an increase by over 32% in their numbers, over five years following the last census conducted in 2020. The 16th Asiatic lion census was conducted over four days from May 10 to 13, covering 35,000 square kilometres across 11 districts of Gujarat, PTI reported.

The exercise was carried out in two phases. A preliminary survey took place on May 10 and 11, followed by the final population count on May 12 and 13. Around 3,000 volunteers, including regional, zonal and sub-zonal officers, enumerators, assistant enumerators and inspectors, participated in the operation, according to an official release.

The census covered 58 talukas across the districts of Junagadh, Gir Somnath, Bhavnagar, Rajkot, Morbi, Surendranagar, Devbhoomi Dwarka, Jamnagar, Amreli, Porbandar and Botad.

Asiatic lions, a distinct sub-species, are found only in Gujarat's Gir National Park and the surrounding districts.

This edition of the five-yearly lion census, first conducted in 1936, used closed-circuit television (CCTV) surveillance for the first time along with traditional direct sighting methods. The Direct Beat Verification (DBV) method, also known as the block count method and used since 2000, was also employed.

## Lawyers Unwilling To Work During Vacations, Blame Judiciary: Chief Justice



New Delhi. Chief Justice of India B.R. Gavai on Wednesday said lawyers don't want to work during vacation but the judiciary is blamed for the backlog of cases. A bench comprising Chief Justice B.R. Gavai and Justice Augustine George Masih got miffed when a lawyer urged listing of a petition after the summer vacation.

The first five judges are sitting through the vacation and continuing to work, yet we are blamed for the backlog. In reality, it is the lawyers who are unwilling to work during the vacations," the CJ said.

Recently, the top court issued a notification on the benches that will function during the upcoming summer vacation, rechristened as "partial court working days", from May 26 to July 13.

Significantly, there will be two to five vacation benches sitting during the partial court working days and even top five judges, including the CJ, will be holding courts during this period.

According to earlier practice, there used to be only two vacation benches during the summer vacation, and senior judges were not supposed to hold courts. The notification outlined the weekly allocation of justices across benches. From May 26 to June 1, the CJ, Justices Suryakant, Vikram Nath J.K. Maheshwari and B.V. Nagarathna will be heading the five benches respectively. During this period, the supreme court registry will remain open from 10 am to 5 pm for all officers and staff. The registry will be closed on all Saturdays (except July 12), Sundays, and public holidays.

drew her inspiration from the Dalit movement, farmers' movement, language movement, women's struggles, environmental activism in the seventies while growing up in Karnataka.

"My direct engagement with the lives of marginalised communities, women, and the neglected, along with their expressions, gave me the strength to write. Overall, the social conditions of Karnataka shaped me," she was quoted as telling the Booker Prize Foundation.

When questioned about her work, Mushtaq told the Booker Prize Foundation that she doesn't engage in "extensive research" as she draws inspiration from real-life interactions. "...my heart itself is my field of study," she said.

A champion of women's rights, Mushtaq was inspired and moved by stories of women who came up to her for help. She has also raised her voice against religious and caste oppression.

# Pros and cons of Working abroad

**Working in a foreign country is a unique experience filled with new learnings, four professionals from diverse fields, who took up stints abroad before moving back to India, share their experience of working overseas**

## Aasit Shah

I don't consider any of my experiences in the US particularly appalling. In fact, the US proved to be a great training ground for me. I was working in the Silicon Valley and that favoured me in terms of weather since we had a good number of sunshine days.

Dignity of labour is extremely high in the US. Even though there is hierarchy in terms of designations, I loved the personal connect one can have with their seniors. You can walk in and out of your senior's cabin any time. Work-life balance is excellent so much so that sending professional emails on a weekend is frowned upon. Organisations are extremely flexible. There were days when I could work from home. Since the US is considered to be the melting-pot of the world, I got the opportunity to work with people from different migrant communities there. And that was a great learning experience. I didn't miss India much because there are too many Indians around in the valley. So, for me, it was a home away from home!

## Pan kaj Khot

Working in the UAE had its own upside and downside. The biggest benefit for me was to receive a tax-free salary, which is very rare. Companies in Dubai ensure that their employees have a perfect work-life balance. A major benefit of working in Dubai is that a number of international organisations have their offices there. So apart from helping you mingle with professionals from different cultures, it also enables you to understand the working styles of different countries.

The city is strategically located and has great infrastructure. Restaurants in Dubai offer cuisines from all over the world making the place a gastronomic delight.

On the flip side, house rents are too steep. Furthermore, if you don't have any family or friends, it can get boring and

difficult.

## Kavita Gupta

When I think about my working stint in the UK, I am filled with mixed feelings. First, I worked for Nokia. The environment there was professional, yet friendly. Flexibility was granted, when required. What I particularly liked was the blurring of hierarchy in terms of accessibility. One could approach one's bosses anytime. Being able to interact with people from different countries was a great advantage too. Work-life balance was perfect and working beyond clocking hours was not appreciated. However, when I moved to another company and got pregnant six months into the job, it didn't go well down with my boss. My profile was changed and I didn't find that fair.

## Guatam Parekh

The first thing that really impressed me about Singapore was the minimalist bureaucracy. Be it taxes of work permit or anything, government authorities are very cooperative.

Every job or labour is treated with respect and this takes professionalism in the country to another level. Singapore being a first world country, infrastructure and connectivity are highly developed; both railways and roadways are well connected making travel hassle-free. I was part of the event industry there and the best thing was that clients treated me as their associate and not merely a vendor. It was a ritual for us to take our clients out for dinners post events. Professionally, it was a great bonding exercise.

Technology is highly evolved in Singapore, so during events, each department knew their job to the T and that made our work easy. Since the country had professionals from all over the world, I got to learn a lot from people from varied cultures. Finally, Singapore is a welcoming country and doesn't let you feel homesick. My stint there was amazing.



## The struggles of a single mother

**Mirror writer and single mom Anjana Vaswani chats with three others of her tribe on raising kids alone with one eye on blood pressure.**

Two months ago, just days before the final round of admissions to kindergarten and Grade 1 under the Right to Education quota, panicking single mothers flocked to BMC help centres. Their applications had been rejected because the fathers' income certificates were missing. The mothers' certificates weren't acceptable as substitutes.

It made newspaper copy, but ask a single mother, and she'll tell you niggles like these are a regular part of her life. Official paperwork that can be a nightmare in our patriarchal system is just the garnish on a gateaux of stress, guilt, feelings of isolation, stigma and self-doubt. Is her health likely to be impacted negatively in the long run?

The answer though obvious is now confirmed by a study published in the Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health which assessed over 25,000 women across 15 countries. It focused on women who had children before the age of 18 and also examined, "whether doing it alone is worse in countries with relatively weak social and safety nets."

Vital point, because our social structure may just be our redeemer. Not only does it alleviate the guilt when you leave your child with a grandparent, it allows us time for a fitness routine which, together, may render studies such as these altogether inapposite. This means you don't get to write us off yet.

As I see friends, many, a lot younger than me, negotiating around the rose garden of marriage with aching backs and knees, and thyroid problems (frequently also treating the headaches of family politics), I feel confident that we have at least as good a shot at health and longevity as any of them.

'Suddenly, health became top priority'

Anita Khera, stay-at-home mum

My daughters are now 14 and 11, but when I separated, they were nine and six. Since we had lived abroad for a while, moving to Mumbai post-divorce made it more challenging. We were grappling with a whole different culture, for one. I didn't even realise my health was headed downward. At the time, it appeared like a bout of illness. In the first three months, I lost enough weight to drop to an unhealthy size zero. It was only when I ended up fracturing my arm that I



realised my health was crying out for attention.

The consistent aches and pains, I realised, arose partly due to the stress that accompanies moving home, and of course, separating from someone you've been with for 12 years; 14 in my case if I count the courtship. No matter what anyone says, it's scary to be on your own after all those years. You wonder, will I be able to provide for us? Will my children be all right? Seeing my father cry, I remember, was very hard for me - the hurt that the divorce had caused him.

That I returned to a city where my siblings lived meant I could blend easily into their social circle. I found comfort in pouring my heart out to old friends. I sought out self-help literature. Carolyn Myss' Why People Don't Heal and How They Can helped me. There's a comprehensive table in the book that connects ailments to emotional issues.

Interestingly, after the split, since I was aware that I was the only one around for my kids, I began taking my health very seriously. I never missed an annual check-up and exercised regularly. That's a habit that has stayed with me.

'I made a career out of the split'

Nivedita Raval, behavioural psychotherapist

Twenty six and pregnant with my second child when my husband sought divorce in 1991, I had hoped then for a reconciliation. It wasn't until 2004 that I finally gathered the courage to confide in extended

family and friends about my single status. Single parenting is the toughest thing I have known, more so in the absence of family support. It was tough being mum and dad. The children's education, wellbeing, happiness. These became priority.

Although I had worked in corporate jobs in Singapore, I was uncomfortable with the idea of leaving the kids in the care of a maid. I was petrified of child molestation and other possibilities. So, I decided to pursue psychology and set up a private practice after acquiring a Master's degree and then a Doctorate while the children were still in senior school.

I'd be driving them back and forth from tuitions, I'd supervise their homework, and put up with the occasional last minute requests: 'Mommy, I need 20 buttons for art work. Now.' I remember running to JW Marriott at 9 pm once to ask if I could buy the needle-and-thread home-kits they offer in guestrooms. I got 10 packets. The rest of the buttons the kids needed came off my shirts.

At one point, I supplemented my income by offering therapy to call centre employees during the graveyard shift. Social life was naturally sacrificed. In the last 23 years, I'd estimate that I must have attended about 10 social events. I did get into a relationship but ended it when I realised that he was not father material. Diwali, Christmas and Easter holidays were spent alone since the kids holidayed with their father.

But, having worked with single mothers who tend to develop acute depression, insomnia, even cancers and metabolic syndrome illnesses linked to diabetes, high blood pressure and heart conditions, I recognised my loneliness. I knew that I had to make a concerted effort to stay fit. I pursued Mallakhamb, yoga and swimming with dedication. It set the tone for the challenges that every day would bring.

Yes, I still continue to combat insomnia and some food intolerances. Today, I'm a step-parent too, blessed with four children and two puppies, and have a successful practice that boasts celebrity clientele.

'It's tough to stay fit as a sandwich generation member'

Ragashree Porecha, sales professional

I kicked off my career with a monthly pay cheque of Rs 3,500 when I got divorced in 1995. It was a huge support to know that my family was there for my daughter. Still, there were heartbreak moments when she'd complain that, unlike her, other kids always had mommy around. But by the time she got to the third

grade, she began to feel pride in the fact that her mother was a successful professional.

Working had other advantages too. My first boss, with whom I worked for 15 years, was a bit of a health nut. She'd insist that I walk to work and back. Having been a juvenile diabetic, this helped me because otherwise, health would not have been priority. I know that, back then, I avoided visiting the doctor as far as possible. Health check-ups were erratic, but the walking kept my blood pressure and cholesterol levels in check. Over the last two years, however, after the demise of my mother, I'm now responsible not just for my daughter but my father too. And with that, my fitness has taken a beating. My blood pressure shot up over the last nine months, and sugar levels were erratic. I've developed hypothyroidism and my shoulders freeze up sometimes. But I know this is temporary. With years of work experience at luxury brands, I hope to have a job waiting for me when I'm able to take it, and I am working on rebuilding my immunity.

## Is loneliness making your pets depressed?

**Owners of two-and-a-half-year-old Browny, whose habit of chasing her tail turned into a 24X7 obsession, panicked and took her to a veterinarian. The vet directed them to an animal behaviourist who diagnosed Browny with boredom and separation anxiety. After months of treatment Browny's behaviour has turned normal.**

Leaving your pets alone at home

for long periods, ignoring them or spending insufficient time with them can take a toll on them and cause serious health issues. In recent times many pets have been facing issues of separation anxiety, obsessive compulsive disorders and in extreme cases even self destructive behaviour, say city based pet psychologists and pet behaviourists.

Priti Chauhan, a pet behaviourist and therapist for the last 10 years, said, "Every week I get two to three similar cases. Along with treating the pets, we also counsel the owners so that they do not repeat the same mistakes. In most of these cases the pets get affected due to suffering caused by their owners leaving them alone at home for long durations.

At one point, I supplemented my income by offering therapy to call centre employees during the graveyard shift. Social life was naturally sacrificed. In the last 23 years, I'd estimate that I must have attended about 10 social events. I did get into a relationship but ended it when I realised that he was not father material. Diwali, Christmas and Easter holidays were spent alone since the kids holidayed with their father.

has continuous access to water. Tying the pet is a no-no but if you have to, then make sure the place doesn't get direct sunlight. Also, it is important to stimulate the pet physically and mentally. Apart from regular exercises like walks, running or playing the ball which will drain him physically, ensure you take your pet to a nearby park, hill or any place outdoors where he can get



Veterinary surgeon and behaviour counsellor Dr Shivshankar Chikodi, said, "It is good to train your pet if you are going to leave him alone for long hours. The training can ideally start at two years of age. Initially one should start keeping the pet alone for a period of 15 minutes which can gradually be increased to two hours and longer."

## Sensex jumps 700 points despite global headwinds. What's driving the rally?

New Delhi. Benchmark stock market indices rallied sharply on Tuesday morning, defying weak global cues and a massive bout of foreign selling. The BSE Sensex jumped 687.83 points to 81,874.27 by 10:18 am, while the NSE Nifty50 surged 214.15 points to 24,898.05.

The broad-based rebound came after Monday's steep fall and was driven by value hunting in mid- and smallcap stocks, even as global investors remained wary due to rising bond yields and a US credit rating downgrade. Yet, domestic investors appear to be shrugging off the noise, with analysts pointing to increased value hunting and contrarian bets as key drivers of the rally.

"The recent market correction, particularly in mid- and smallcaps, has brought the index to a critical trendline support level. We're seeing signs of a hidden bullish divergence forming, which could spark a near-term reversal," said Aditya Gaggar, Director at Progressive Shares. He noted key levels for the Nifty at 24,900 on the upside and 24,535 on the downside, with Bank Nifty resistance at 55,700 and support at 54,550. The bounce also comes after a phase I profit booking that analysts say was overdue. Technical indicators had been stretched, and the correction helped normalise conditions, creating a setup for selective buying. Despite Monday's massive FII outflow of over Rs 10,000 crore—a sharp reversal from their May buying spree—analysts say the domestic outlook remains constructive. "Yes, the FII sell figure was a jolt, but the fundamentals haven't deteriorated," said Dr. VK Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist at Geojit. "We're still seeing the effects of strong Q4 earnings, moderating inflation, and the possibility of another RBI rate cut, all of which are supportive for equities in the medium term."

## Accenture promotions: 15,000 India staff finally get nod, says report

New Delhi. Accenture will promote nearly 50,000 employees worldwide in June this year, according to a report by Bloomberg News. This decision comes after the company delayed its usual round of promotions by six months due to a slowdown in demand for consulting services.

The global consulting and technology firm, which is headquartered in Dublin, had initially planned to roll out promotions in December 2024. But the move was pushed to June 2025 as the company faced weaker demand and uncertain business conditions.

### INDIA TO SEE HIGHEST NUMBER

Out of the 50,000 promotions, about 15,000 will take place in India. This makes India the country with the highest number of staff being promoted this time. According to the internal memo seen by Bloomberg, the company will also promote 11,000 employees across the Europe, Middle East and Africa region, and another 10,000 across the Americas. Accenture currently employs about 801,000 people around the world, as per its latest earnings report. That means about 6% of the company's global workforce will be promoted this June.

### SHIFT IN PROMOTION TIMING

The company's decision to delay promotions was part of a broader plan to manage costs during a time of falling demand. Like other large consulting firms such as McKinsey and Ernst & Young, Accenture hired heavily during the pandemic when demand for digital services was high. However, in recent times, business has slowed, forcing the company to take cost-cutting steps. In 2023, Accenture reduced its workforce by around 19,000 employees to adjust to lower client spending. Other firms have also made similar decisions. Bloomberg earlier reported that Deloitte is also planning job cuts in its government consulting team.

## Gensol's books under review: NFRA launches preliminary probe

New Delhi. The National Financial Reporting Authority (NFRA) has started a preliminary inquiry into the financial records of Gensol Engineering after fraud allegations surfaced. This was confirmed by NFRA chief Ravneet Kaur during an event on Tuesday. Ravneet Kaur, who also heads India's competition regulator, said that the inquiry was launched following a reference made by the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi). This step marks a widening of the ongoing investigation into the company, which began last month with Sebi's report. In April, Sebi took action against Gensol Engineering and its promoters, brothers Anmol Jaggi and Puneet Jaggi. The market regulator barred the two from accessing the stock markets and called for a forensic audit into the affairs of the company. Sebi's interim report suggested misuse of funds and poor corporate governance. According to the report, Gensol had borrowed Rs 977.75 crore from lenders. Out of this, Rs 663.89 crore was meant for buying 6,400 electric vehicles (EVs) that were to be leased to BluSmart, a related company. However, Gensol admitted in its response to Sebi in February that only 4,704 EVs had been purchased. This raised questions about where the rest of the loan amount had gone.

### ROLE OF AUDIT BODIES

The Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) is also looking into the matter. Last month, ICAI President Charan Singh Nanda said the institute would examine Gensol's financial statements and statutory audit reports for the financial year 2023-24. The ICAI will also review the financial records of BluSmart. If ICAI's Financial Reporting Review Board finds that the financial statements are not "true and fair", the case could be forwarded to the ICAI's disciplinary committee. This could lead to action against the company's auditors. Since the release of Sebi's interim report on April 15, Gensol's shares have fallen by more than 40% in the last month. On Tuesday, the shares closed at Rs 70.99 apiece on the BSE.

## Crisil projects 7-9% growth for India's auto component industry in Fy25

**CHENNAI.** India's automotive component sector is expected to register 7-9 percent revenue growth this fiscal, mirroring last year's performance, driven by sustained demand from two key segments—two-wheelers (2Ws) and passenger vehicles (PVs), particularly utility vehicles, which together account for nearly half of the industry's total revenue, according to rating agency Crisil Ratings. The aftermarket segment—sales of auto components as spares or replacements—which contributes at least 15 percent of the industry's total revenue, is also expected to grow steadily at 5-7 percent, according to a recent report by the rating firm.

The report further notes that moderate growth in commercial vehicle and tractor sales—which collectively contribute around 17 percent of industry revenue—will provide an additional boost to overall growth. However, weak demand for new vehicles in the US and Europe, which together represent about 60 percent of

India's auto component exports, could act as a dampener, the report cautions. Operating margins in the sector are projected to remain stable at 12-12.5 percent this fiscal, supported by the increasing share of high-margin components such as automated driver assistance systems (ADAS) modules, infotainment systems, and advanced braking systems. A decline in input costs—particularly of steel (45-50% share in input costs), aluminium (15-20%), and plastics (10-12%)—used for structural rigidity, weight reduction, and interiors, will further support profitability. However, the imposition of new tariffs could erode margins for companies heavily reliant on US exports, Crisil warns. Continued high capital expenditure will be funded primarily through internal accruals. Alongside tight control over working capital, this will limit dependence on external borrowing, keeping credit profiles stable.



An analysis by Crisil Ratings, covering automotive component makers that accounted for nearly 35 percent of the sector's total revenue of approximately ₹7.9 lakh crore last fiscal, supports this outlook. However, demand trends are expected to vary across the three key segments served by component manufacturers—original equipment manufacturers (OEMs), the aftermarket, and exports.

"Demand from automotive OEMs, which contribute two-thirds of total revenue, is expected to grow 8-9 percent this fiscal, with value growth outpacing volume growth due to rising safety, emission, and electronic content, especially in PVs and 2Ws," said Poonam Upadhyay, Director, Crisil Ratings. "The aftermarket segment will post steady 6-7 percent growth, supported by an ageing vehicle base. Export growth, however, is expected to moderate to 7-8 percent amid weak demand for internal combustion engine vehicles and a slowdown in electric vehicle (EV) adoption across the US and Europe," she added. While the US contributes only about 5% to total industry revenue, it commands a significant 28 percent share of export earnings and is currently the fastest-growing export market for auto components. The proposed 25% tariff by the US could significantly impact companies with high exposure to that market.

## Banks take 67% haircut in 1,194 insolvency cases yielding resolution

**New Delhi.** Lenders have recovered Rs 3.89 lakh crore against admitted claims of Rs 12 lakh crore through resolution plans under the Corporate Insolvency Resolution Process (CIRP) till March 2025, resulting in a recovery rate of 33%. This means on average bankers have taken a haircut of 67% from CIRPs which yielded in resolution. However, the recovery is 163% of the total liquidation value (Rs 2.30 lakh crore) of the companies which got resolved through insolvency resolution process.

The total number of insolvency cases yielding resolution plans rose to 1,194 by March 2025, up from 947 in FY2023-24. At the end of FY24, the total recovery was to the tune of Rs 3.36 lakh crore. Of the 1,194 cases, lenders in 172 cases had admitted claims exceeding Rs 1,000 crore.



While these large corporate debtors owed creditors Rs 10.24 lakh crore, the fair value of their assets at the time of entering CIRP was only Rs 1.95 lakh crore. Creditors in these cases realised 33.89% of their admitted claims, but 177.61% of the liquidation value. While a 67% haircut raises serious question over the efficacy of the IBC, the insolvency regulator –

Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI) – has said that the recovery amount does not account for potential future recoveries such as proceeds from personal and corporate guarantees, equity value, or avoidance transaction recoveries. It further says that significant portion of resolved case (40%) were previously defunct or with the erstwhile Board for Industrial and Financial Reconstruction (BIFR). In these cases, claimants realised just 19.03% of their admitted claims, though they achieved 151.92% of the liquidation value. On the liquidation front, 2,758 cases ended in liquidation as of March 2025. Of the total cases, 214 involved admitted claims exceeding Rs 1,000 crore, but had asset values of merely Rs 0.46 lakh crore, according to IBBI newsletter.

## Leela Hotels IPO details: Check price band, GMP, subscription and listing date

**New Delhi.** The IPO action on Dalal Street seems to have picked up pace as 2 IPOs are open for bidding this week and 3 will open next week. One of the three IPOs opening next week for subscription is Leela Hotels, aiming to raise Rs 3,500 crore through a book-built issue.

This comes at a time when Dalal Street has been performing well, with Sensex and Nifty having seen gains in the last month. Leela Hotels plans to raise Rs 2,500 crore by issuing 5.75 crore fresh shares. In addition to this, 2.30 crore shares will be sold by existing shareholders, bringing in Rs 1,000 crore through the offer for sale route.

Leela Hotels IPO will open for bidding on May 26, 2025 and will close on May 28, 2025. Price band for the IPO has been set between Rs 413 and Rs 435 per share.

The minimum lot size for retail investors is 34 shares. This means that the

minimum investment at the lower end of the price band would be Rs 14,042. If an investor bids at the higher end or the cut-off price of Rs 435, the minimum investment would come to around Rs 14,790.

Small non-institutional investors are required to apply for at least 14 lots or 476 shares, which works out to Rs

minimum investment at the lower end of the price band would be Rs 14,042. If an investor bids at the higher end or the cut-off price of Rs 435, the minimum investment would come to around Rs 14,790.

Small non-institutional investors are required to apply for at least 14 lots or 476 shares, which works out to Rs

minimum investment at the lower end of the price band would be Rs 14,042. If an investor bids at the higher end or the cut-off price of Rs 435, the minimum investment would come to around Rs 14,790.

Small non-institutional investors are required to apply for at least 14 lots or 476 shares, which works out to Rs

minimum investment at the lower end of the price band would be Rs 14,042. If an investor bids at the higher end or the cut-off price of Rs 435, the minimum investment would come to around Rs 14,790.

Small non-institutional investors are required to apply for at least 14 lots or 476 shares, which works out to Rs

minimum investment at the lower end of the price band would be Rs 14,042. If an investor bids at the higher end or the cut-off price of Rs 435, the minimum investment would come to around Rs 14,790.

Small non-institutional investors are required to apply for at least 14 lots or 476 shares, which works out to Rs

minimum investment at the lower end of the price band would be Rs 14,042. If an investor bids at the higher end or the cut-off price of Rs 435, the minimum investment would come to around Rs 14,790.

Small non-institutional investors are required to apply for at least 14 lots or 476 shares, which works out to Rs

minimum investment at the lower end of the price band would be Rs 14,042. If an investor bids at the higher end or the cut-off price of Rs 435, the minimum investment would come to around Rs 14,790.

Small non-institutional investors are required to apply for at least 14 lots or 476 shares, which works out to Rs

minimum investment at the lower end of the price band would be Rs 14,042. If an investor bids at the higher end or the cut-off price of Rs 435, the minimum investment would come to around Rs 14,790.

Small non-institutional investors are required to apply for at least 14 lots or 476 shares, which works out to Rs

minimum investment at the lower end of the price band would be Rs 14,042. If an investor bids at the higher end or the cut-off price of Rs 435, the minimum investment would come to around Rs 14,790.

Small non-institutional investors are required to apply for at least 14 lots or 476 shares, which works out to Rs

minimum investment at the lower end of the price band would be Rs 14,042. If an investor bids at the higher end or the cut-off price of Rs 435, the minimum investment would come to around Rs 14,790.

Small non-institutional investors are required to apply for at least 14 lots or 476 shares, which works out to Rs

minimum investment at the lower end of the price band would be Rs 14,042. If an investor bids at the higher end or the cut-off price of Rs 435, the minimum investment would come to around Rs 14,790.

Small non-institutional investors are required to apply for at least 14 lots or 476 shares, which works out to Rs

minimum investment at the lower end of the price band would be Rs 14,042. If an investor bids at the higher end or the cut-off price of Rs 435, the minimum investment would come to around Rs 14,790.

Small non-institutional investors are required to apply for at least 14 lots or 476 shares, which works out to Rs

minimum investment at the lower end of the price band would be Rs 14,042. If an investor bids at the higher end or the cut-off price of Rs 435, the minimum investment would come to around Rs 14,790.

Small non-institutional investors are required to apply for at least 14 lots or 476 shares, which works out to Rs

minimum investment at the lower end of the price band would be Rs 14,042. If an investor bids at the higher end or the cut-off price of Rs 435, the minimum investment would come to around Rs 14,790.

Small non-institutional investors are required to apply for at least 14 lots or 476 shares, which works out to Rs

minimum investment at the lower end of the price band would be Rs 14,042. If an investor bids at the higher end or the cut-off price of Rs 435, the minimum investment would come to around Rs 14,790.

Small non-institutional investors are required to apply for at least 14 lots or 476 shares, which works out to Rs

minimum investment at the lower end of the price band would be Rs 14,042. If an investor bids at the higher end or the cut-off price of Rs 435, the minimum investment would come to around Rs 14,790.

Small non-institutional investors are required to apply for at least 14 lots or 476 shares, which works out to Rs

minimum investment at the lower end of the price band would be Rs 14,042. If an investor bids at the higher end or the cut-off price of Rs 435, the minimum investment would come to around Rs 14,790.

Small non-institutional investors are required to apply for at least 14 lots or 476 shares, which works out to Rs

minimum investment at the lower end of the price band would be Rs 14,042. If an investor bids at the higher end or the cut-off price of Rs 435, the minimum investment would come to around Rs 14,790.

Small non-institutional investors are required to apply for at least 14 lots or 476 shares, which works out to Rs

minimum investment at the lower end of the price band would be Rs 14,042. If an investor bids at the higher end or the cut-off price of Rs 435, the minimum investment would come to around Rs 14,790.

Small non-institutional investors are required to apply for at least 14 lots or 476 shares, which works out to Rs

minimum investment at the lower end of the price band would be Rs 14,042. If an investor bids at the higher end or the cut-off price of Rs 435, the minimum investment would come to around Rs 14,790.

Small non-institutional investors are required to apply for at least 14 lots or 476 shares, which works out to Rs

minimum investment at the lower end of the price band would be Rs 14,042. If an investor bids at the higher end or the cut-off price of Rs 435, the minimum investment would come to around Rs 14,790.

Small non-institutional investors are required to apply for at least 14 lots or 476 shares, which works out to Rs

minimum investment at the lower end of the price band would be Rs 14,042. If an investor bids at the higher end or the cut-off price of Rs 435, the minimum investment would come to around Rs 14,790.

Small non-institutional investors are required to apply for at least 14 lots or 476 shares, which works out to Rs

minimum investment at the lower end of the price band would be Rs 14,042. If an investor bids at the higher end or the cut-off price of Rs 435, the minimum investment would come to around Rs 14,790.

Small non-institutional investors are required to apply for at least 14 lots or 476 shares, which works out to Rs

minimum investment at the lower end of the price band would be Rs 14,042. If an investor bids at the higher end or the cut-off price of Rs 435, the minimum investment would come to around Rs 14,790.

Small non-institutional investors are required to apply for at least 14 lots or 476 shares, which works out to Rs

minimum investment at the lower end of the price band would be Rs 14,042. If an investor bids at the higher end or the

## NEWS BOX

If I was MS Dhoni, I would say enough: Sanjay Bangar on CSK legend's retirement



New Delhi. Sanjay Bangar feels it is time for MS Dhoni to move on from the IPL after CSK loss to RR in Delhi on Tuesday, May 20. Dhoni's retirement from the IPL has been a topic of discussion over the past few years with the CSK legend himself being coy about the idea. Dhoni has always taken the 8-month gap after the IPL to see if his body is fit for another IPL season and said that he hasn't decided anything when it comes to the 2026 season. Speaking to ESPNcricinfo, Bangar said that if he was in Dhoni's shoes, he would call it a day after playing enough cricket and looking after the interests of the franchise.

The former India batting coach feels that there will never be an ideal time to retire if Dhoni is thinking that the transition for CSK will happen in his presence. Bangar said that the legendary wicketkeeper should make peace with the fact that the franchise will develop on its own even if he isn't there. "I mean, it all boils down to MS, but if I was MS, I would say enough. I've played whatever I wanted to play. I've looked after the interests of the franchise as well, if there is any, that was the motivation, but you know, you move on." "If you're thinking that the transition will happen fast, there's never an ideal time to pick. So you might as well have peace with the fact that, OK, even if I leave now, the franchise will develop on its own. Maybe it will take a year longer, but I'm not going to be here for the entire cycle. So that's how I would look at MS' position if I was in that position," said Bangar.

## Dhoni's IPL 2025 campaign so far

In the 13 matches he has played in IPL 2025, Dhoni has scored just 196 runs at a strike-rate of 135.17. Often the legendary wicketkeeper has come way down the order and even at No.9 during a match as CSK have struggled this season.

**Amidst rain threat in Mumbai, Parth Jindal wants MI vs DC clash moved out: Report**



New Delhi. Amidst the rain threat in Mumbai, Delhi Capitals co-owner Parth Jindal has requested the IPL to move the game out of the city in order to maintain consistency. The game is considered to be a virtual knockout as MI and DC are vying for the final playoff spot in IPL 2025. However, rain is all set to play spoilsport on Wednesday May 21 after heavy rains hit the city on Tuesday evening. The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has forecast more rain for the city and surrounding regions over the next few days, with a yellow alert being issued for the Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR), including Mumbai, Thane, and Kalyan-Dombivli through the week. This has forced Jindal to write to the IPL and make his request.

In an email, that was accessed by ESPNcricinfo, the DC co-owner pointed out that the "virtual quarter final is also expected to be washed out". Jindal's plea comes after the RCB vs SRH game was moved out of Bengaluru due to the incessant rain in the city. Jindal said it would be 'consistent' to move the MI vs DC game as well as there is a strong possibility of it being washed out.

"The forecast in Mumbai is for heavy rains and there is a strong likelihood that the game will be washed out," Jindal wrote. "Just as the game between RCB vs SRH has been moved out of Bengaluru in the quest for consistency and in the interest of the league it is my request that tomorrow's game also be moved to a different location as we have known for the better part of 6 days that the forecast for 21st in Mumbai is for heavy showers."

## What happens if the MI vs DC game is washed out?

If the game on Wednesday is washed out, both teams will share a point each, heading into their final league games. This means that MI will have 15 points while DC will have 14. Both teams will face PBKS in their final games.

If the game in Mumbai does go on and if MI win, then they will qualify for the play-offs. However, if DC win, neither team will qualify and the fight for the spot will move into their final league game.

DC will face PBKS on May 24 while MI take on Punjab two days later. PBKS have already booked their place in the play-offs.

# IPL 2025: Amidst heavy showers in Mumbai, Jayawardene hopes new IPL rule will help MI

**Mumbai Indians head coach Mahela Jayawardene expressed hope that the IPL's extended match window will help avoid rain disruptions as the team gears up for a crucial do-or-die clash against Delhi Capitals.**

New Delhi. Mumbai Indians head coach Mahela Jayawardene has hoped that a key rule change in the Indian Premier League will help them in their crucial match against Delhi Capitals. Mumbai are competing against Delhi Capitals for the final playoffs place this season. However, rain might play spoilsport in Mumbai's incredible push for the final. With India entering the monsoon season, it is expected that several matches will be affected by rain from now on. The Indian Cricket Board, keeping this in mind,

has extended the match time by one more hour. Jayawardene spoke about the same and hoped that teams will be able to play out their matches with the help of this rule. "Obviously the weather has been threatening most of the games, and it's a decision that they've collectively taken. If it helps, it helps, but if you have serious rain, I don't know whether the extra hours are going to help," Mahela Jayawardene said in the pre-match press conference in Mumbai.

Mumbai Indians have once again staged an incredible comeback in the Indian Premier League. After losing the first four of their five matches, Mumbai went on a belligerent run, courtesy of a complete effort by the team. Jayawardene was asked about the team's ability to make comebacks and said that they were "always in contention" to make the playoffs.

The five-time IPL winners will need a win against Delhi Capitals in Mumbai on Wednesday to book the fourth and final spot in the playoffs, with Gujarat Titans, Royal

Challengers Bengaluru, and Punjab Kings being the other three. However, a loss will mean MI will have to depend on the outcome of the contest between DC and PBKS on May 24.

"We were always in contention for playoffs



after we had that run.

For us, it's good to start the tournament (again) and play cricket, the guys have been waiting for this, training has been pretty good and just take one game at a time," Jayawardene told the media.

"It's in our control, it's a great position to be

here. The message from me for the boys was to make sure that we go through our routines, our processes, the way we train, the way we plan, and the way we've gone about this tournament."

"It's better to have it in our control than anyone else's and watch that situation, so we've played good cricket to deserve to be in that situation, and we'll go out and try and play our best game of cricket tomorrow," he added. Jayawardene confirmed that the team's England and South African players will be leaving in the next few days. While the English leave after the group stage, the South African stars will leave on May 26, the coach confirmed.

"The same is going to happen for most of those teams which have qualified already. They're going to be in the same situation so I haven't thought that far ahead," he said. "We've obviously named the three guys that we're looking at to bring. Two of them (Richard Gleeson and Charith Asalanka) are already here. I think Jonny (Bairstow) will arrive tomorrow (Wednesday)," he concluded on the matter.

## MI vs DC, IPL 2025 Preview: Predicted XI, team news and Mumbai pitch conditions

New Delhi. Hardik Pandya's Mumbai Indians (MI) and Axar Patel's Delhi Capitals (DC) are all set to cross swords in Match No.63 of the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2025 on Wednesday, May 21 at the iconic Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai. For MI, the equation is straightforward as a win would make them the fourth and final team to qualify for the playoffs. DC, the only other team fighting for the last spot, are in a must-win position. A loss would knock them out of the competition.

Even if they win their next game, they will have to look at the result of MI's last game against Punjab Kings (PBKS) to ascertain their fate. MI are also at an advantage since their net run rate of +1.156 is far better than DC's +0.260. Having won six out of their last seven matches, MI are in red-hot form. DC, on the other hand, looked amongst the first teams to secure a berth in the top four, but their campaign is in the doldrums after a string of defeats.

## MI vs DC: Head-to-Head

United and Tottenham have faced each other 176 times with the Red Devils holding a 90-43 advantage. 43 games between both sides have ended in a draw.

Incidentally, both teams have faced each other three times this season with Spurs winning all of them. Apart from completing a league double, Tottenham knocked United out of the League Cup as well.

## Manchester United vs Tottenham Hotspur: Team news

For Manchester United, there was a triple injury boost just ahead of the final on Tuesday. Joshua Zirkzee, Lenny Yoro and Diogo Dalot were able to train with the first-team ahead of the final. Zirkzee was initially thought to be ruled out for the season, but he was able to get back into the squad for the final in Bilbao on Wednesday.

## Manchester United vs Tottenham Hotspur: Head-to-Head

Mumbai and Delhi have met 36 times since their first meeting in 2008. MI are leading them 20-16. At the Wankhede Stadium, MI have a 7-3 lead. But in their last five meetings, DC have a 3-2 lead.

## MI vs DC: Team News

MI have recently signed Jonny Bairstow, Richard Gleeson and Charith Asalanka in place of Will Jacks, Ryan Rickleton and Corbin Bosch, who will all leave for national duties after the league stage. MI have had an impressive run of late, and it's unlikely that they will make a lot of changes to their playing XI. DC, on the other hand, can bring in young left-handed batter Sediqullah Atal in place of Faf du Plessis.

## MI vs DC: Predicted XIs

Ryan Rickleton (wk), Rohit Sharma, Will Jacks, Suryakumar Yadav, Tilak Varma, Hardik Pandya (c), Naman Dhir, Corbin Bosch, Deepak Chahar, Trent Boult, Jasprit Bumrah

## Impact Player: Karn Sharma

DC

Faf du Plessis/Sediqullah Atal, Abishek Porel (wk), Sameer Rizvi, KL Rahul, Axar Patel (c), Tristant Stubbs, Ashutosh Sharma, Vipraj Nigam, Kuldeep Yadav, T Natarajan, Mustafizur Rahman, Dushmantha Chameera

## Impact Player: Dushmantha Chameera

## MI vs DC: Pitch and Weather Conditions

The pitch in Mumbai has been good for batting as the average from six matches thus far in IPL 2025 is 182. Chasing teams have won four out of six times.

## Manchester United and

## Tottenham Hotspur are all

## set to square off in an

## exciting UEFA Europa League

## final in Bilbao on Wednesday,

## May 21. United and Spurs

## will be aiming to end a

## wretched 2024-25 campaign

## with some silverware.



place in the Champions League final, there is everything to play for both sides as they look to salvage some pride in an otherwise wretched campaign this season.

## Manchester United vs Tottenham Hotspur: Head-to-Head

United and Tottenham have faced each other 176 times with the Red Devils holding a 90-43 advantage. 43 games between both sides have ended in a draw.

Incidentally, both teams have faced each other three times this season with Spurs winning all of them. Apart from completing a league double, Tottenham knocked United out of the League Cup as well.

## Manchester United vs Tottenham Hotspur: Team news

For Manchester United, there was a triple injury boost just ahead of the final on Tuesday. Joshua Zirkzee, Lenny Yoro and Diogo Dalot were able to train with the first-team ahead of the final. Zirkzee was initially thought to be ruled out for the season, but he was able to get back into the squad for the final in Bilbao on Wednesday.

## Manchester United vs Tottenham Hotspur: Head-to-Head

Mumbai and Delhi have met 36 times since their first meeting in 2008. MI are leading them 20-16. At the Wankhede Stadium, MI have a 7-3 lead. But in their last five meetings, DC have a 3-2 lead.

## MI vs DC: Team News

MI have recently signed Jonny Bairstow, Richard Gleeson and Charith Asalanka in place of Will Jacks, Ryan Rickleton and Corbin Bosch, who will all leave for national duties after the league stage. MI have had an impressive run of late, and it's unlikely that they will make a lot of changes to their playing XI. DC, on the other hand, can bring in young left-handed batter Sediqullah Atal in place of Faf du Plessis.

## MI vs DC: Predicted XIs

Ryan Rickleton (wk), Rohit Sharma, Will Jacks, Suryakumar Yadav, Tilak Varma, Hardik Pandya (c), Naman Dhir, Corbin Bosch, Deepak Chahar, Trent Boult, Jasprit Bumrah

## Impact Player: Karn Sharma

DC

Faf du Plessis/Sediqullah Atal, Abishek Porel (wk), Sameer Rizvi, KL Rahul, Axar Patel (c), Tristant Stubbs, Ashutosh Sharma, Vipraj Nigam, Kuldeep Yadav, T Natarajan, Mustafizur Rahman, Dushmantha Chameera

## Impact Player: Dushmantha Chameera

## MI vs DC: Pitch and Weather Conditions

The pitch in Mumbai has been good for batting as the average from six matches thus far in IPL 2025 is 182. Chasing teams have won four out of six times.

## Mumbai weather report: Who qualifies for playoffs if MI vs DC gets washed out at Wankhede?



Delhi win their final match of the season vs PBKS by the biggest margin, they would not be able to catch MI.

## What are the chances of rain in Mumbai?

Rains are going to lash out in Mumbai on Wednesday as monsoon hits India earlier than expected. At daytime, there are 80 per cent chances of rainfall in the city, but that reduces down to 50 per cent later in the evening. As the day goes on, the chances of a clear sky will improve, but then it will simply be a race against time — on if the groundsmen will be able to get the outfield ready and safe.

## The Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai does not have as good a drainage system as the Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bengaluru and that might make things quite tricky on Wednesday.

Even if the rain is off, the groundsmen will be able to get the outfield ready and safe.

The Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai does not have as good a drainage system as the Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bengaluru and that might make things quite tricky on Wednesday.

Even if the rain is off, the groundsmen will be able to get the outfield ready and safe.

The Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai does not have as good a drainage system as the Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bengaluru and that might make things quite tricky on Wednesday.

Even if the rain is off, the groundsmen will be able to get the outfield ready and safe.

The Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai does not have as good a drainage system as the Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bengaluru and that might make things quite tricky on Wednesday.

Even if the rain is off, the groundsmen will be able to get the outfield ready and safe.

The Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai does not have as good a drainage system as the Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bengaluru and that might make things quite tricky on Wednesday.

Even if the rain is off, the groundsmen will be able to get the outfield ready and safe.

The Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai does not have as good a drainage system as the Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bengaluru and that might make things quite tricky on Wednesday.

Even if the rain is off, the groundsmen will be able to get the outfield ready and safe.

The Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai does not have as good a drainage system as the Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bengaluru and that might make things quite tricky on Wednesday.

Even if the rain is off, the groundsmen will be able to get the outfield ready and safe.

The Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai does not have as good a drainage system as the Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bengaluru and that might make things quite tricky on Wednesday.

Even if the rain is off, the groundsmen will be able to get the outfield ready and safe.

The Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai does not have as good a drainage system as the Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bengaluru and that might make things quite tricky on Wednesday.

Even if the rain is off, the groundsmen will be able to get the outfield ready and safe.

The Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai does not have as good a drainage system as the Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bengaluru and that might make things quite tricky on Wednesday.

Even if the rain is off, the groundsmen will be able to get the outfield ready and safe.

The Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai does not have as good a drainage system as the Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bengaluru and that might make things quite tricky on Wednesday.

Even if the rain is off, the groundsmen will be able to get the outfield ready and safe.

The Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai does not have as good a drainage system as the Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bengaluru and that might make things quite tricky on Wednesday.

Even if the rain is off, the groundsmen will be able to get the outfield ready and safe.

<div data-bbox="625 815 744

# Bhumi Pednekar's

## BTS Video From The Royals Is All About 'A Girl Living Her Life'

Bhumi Pednekar and Ishaan Khatter's starrer *The Royals* has been generating quite a buzz online since it was released. Although the romantic comedy show was released weeks back, the actors show no signs of slowing down sharing the behind-the-scenes (BTS) videos and appreciation posts for the co-stars. Speaking of which, the lead actress recently shared a montage video on her social media giving fans a glimpse of her fun time at the sets.

The Instagram video opens to show Bhumi standing by a pool wearing a stunning bikini and sarong. It then shifts to show the actress grooving with a team member, practising horse riding for a scene and smashing a chocolate bar with a hammer. Following this, she was again seen dancing. The video also captured moments of her enjoying the beautiful sunset at a beach, listening to a guitar tune and playing with a dog.

The entire video proves that she had enjoyed her heart out while shooting for the Netflix series. Sharing the video, Bhumi penned, "Just a girl living her life." Soon after the video surfaced online, fans and industry friends flocked to the comments section of the post to share their reactions.

Sister Samiksha Pednekar reacted, "Love love love." Rhea Chakraborty said, "What a girl." "STAR," Sumukhi Suresh posted, "Best girl, best vibe," wrote a user. Another commented, "You are beautiful, inside and out! Keep shining, @bhumpednekar." "Loved you in Royals. You look stunning. Waiting for the next season," said a user. Coming to *The Royals*, the Netflix series revolves around Aviraj Singh (Ishaan Khatter), a modern-day prince, and Sophia Kanmani Shekhar (Bhumi Pednekar), the ambitious CEO of a luxury homestay startup. The rom-com show depicts how the two fall in love while transforming the struggling haveli of Morpur into a unique luxury B&B experience.

Priyanka Ghose and Nupur Asthana's directorial boasts a stellar ensemble, including veteran actress Zeenat Aman, Dino Morea, Sakshi Tanwar, Chunky Panday, Nora Fatehi, Milind Soman, Kavya Trehan, Vihaan Samat, Udit Arora, Sumukhi Suresh, Lisa Mishra, and Luke Kenny. Talking about Bhumi Pednekar's upcoming projects, the actress will be next seen in the web series *Daldal*. The show, which will be released on Prime Video, will feature her in the role of a cop. The filming of the series has already been completed, but the release date is yet to be announced. She also has Karan Johar's grand historical drama *Takht* in her pipeline. Originally announced in 2020 with a star-studded ensemble including Ranveer Singh, Alia Bhatt, Vicky Kaushal, Kareena Kapoor Khan, Janhvi Kapoor, and Anil Kapoor, the filmmaker recently announced that the film has been shelved for now but not cancelled.



## Naomika Saran's Casual Chic Look Proves Style Runs In The Family

Rajesh Khanna and Dimple Kapadia's granddaughter Naomika Saran has not made her entry into Bollywood, but still enjoys a huge fanbase on social media. The youngster has almost 1.75 lakhs on Instagram and constantly drops lovely glimpses from her life. Besides that, every time she steps out of her home, her glimpses grab the entire attention. Be it her fashion sense or humble nature, social media users never miss complimenting the girl. In a video posted on Instagram, Naomika Saran was papped outside her residence in

camisole featuring thin straps and a deep neckline. She teamed it with a pair of comfy denim pants and white sneakers for utmost comfort during her movements. Subtle makeup with glossy lips added charm to her laid-back style. Meanwhile, she picked only a watch to accessorise her overall appearance. Additionally, a sleek ponytail wrapped up the look.

Soon after the video was posted, social media users began rallying in the comments section, complementing the diva's sweet appearance on the streets of Mumbai. One user wrote, "Preety preety." Another mentioned, "Beautiful face." Many others dropped appreciative emojis.

### Who is Naomika Saran?

Daughter of Twinkle Khanna's sister, Rinkie Khanna, who played the lead role in films like *Jis Desh Mein Ganga Rehta Hai*, *Yeh Hai Jalwa*, *Jhankar Beat* and *Chameli* and her businessman husband, Sameer Saran. Talking about her educational background, the young girl has completed her schooling in Mumbai, followed by her graduation from St. Xavier's College in the same city before moving abroad. As per the latest reports, she has been pursuing her higher education at New York University's Tisch School of the Arts and came to Mumbai during semester breaks. Naomika also shares a lovely bond with her nani, Dimple Kapadia and proof of the same was found in one of her social media posts.

Dropping glimpses from her graduation ceremony on Instagram, she penned, "Graduated with my favourite people by my side." And the opening frame of her post featured the legendary actress Dimple. The duo was seen sharing a cosy hug, leaving their fans awestruck.



Mumbai. She was seen exiting her home and walking towards her car parked on the other side of the road. During this time, when Rinkie Khanna's daughter was spotted by the paps stationed over there, she humbly waved her hands towards them and won many hearts.

For the casual day outing, Naomika opted for a pink



**'BC Aunty' Snehil Mehra On YouTuber Jyoti Malhotra's Arrest: 'It Is Really Shameful'**



Content creator and actress Snehil Mehra shared her views on the arrest of YouTuber Jyoti Malhotra after being accused of espionage. During an exclusive interaction with IANS, Snehil demanded that if found guilty, Jyoti should be severely punished for betraying her country. She told IANS, "When I learned about this, I found it to be really unbelievable- just like a plot of a Bollywood movie. But if the Indian Army has made such serious accusations against her, there must be some truth to it. And if these accusations turn out to be true after the investigation, then it is really shameful- the country in which you live, the people of which have made you a celebrity, if you work against that country, it will be considered treason. I believe she should be given a harsh punishment if proven guilty."

When asked if social media influences have been given too much freedom, she shared, "I belong to the film industry, and my years of experience say that we cannot shoot anywhere. If you wish to shoot a film, especially at a religious place like the Maha Kumbh or near a military base, then you need proper permissions. Similarly, I believe some regulations should be placed on the influencers, as the smartphones in our hands have turned everyone into an influencer."

"When the layer of permissions is imposed on these influencers, they will not be able to do such things. Just like censorship in the movies, there must be some rules and regulations in the world of social media," the actress added and stressed establishing accountability for such incidents.

Haryana YouTuber Jyoti Malhotra was recently arrested on charges of spying for Pakistan. Jyoti, who owns the YouTube channel "Travel with JO" was taken into custody on May 16. She will be questioned by the National Investigation Agency (NIA), the Intelligence Bureau (IB), and military intelligence officials.

## Cannes 2025: Ishaan Khatter Brings The Charm And Maybe A Plus One?



Looks like Ishaan Khatter has got a plus one at the Cannes Film Festival 2025. Any guesses? The actor who flew to France to attend the premiere of his film *Homebound* at the film festival is joined by his rumoured girlfriend Chandni Bainz. What made us think so? Well, it's Chandni's latest post on social media. She shared a picture on Instagram stories, featuring a glimpse of the picturesque lane in France. There is also a building with the signboard saying, "Cannes Riviera." Sharing the picture, Chandni wrote, "Hello Hello."

Before Chandni shared the picture, Ishaan Khatter turned the streets of France into his runway ahead of his debut at the Cannes Film Festival 2025. The actor dropped multiple images of himself in a post on Instagram from his time at the festival. Channelling his inner model, he made fans swoon over him with his killer looks and we are not complaining here. In the caption, he wrote, "Bonjour festival de Cannes."

Ishaan Khatter is set to make his red carpet appearance at the Cannes Film Festival this year for the premiere of his movie, *Homebound*. Directed and penned by Neeraj Ghaywan, the film is the official selection of Cannes 2025 in the Un Certain Regard category. It is bankrolled by Karan Johar. In the film, Ishaan shares screen space with Janhvi Kapoor. Earlier, the actor also penned a long post, expressing his excitement for the film's achievement. In a touching post on Instagram, he wrote, "We're 'HOMEBOUND' to Cannes babyyyyyy. A film that I knew was special from the moment it entered my life and my most challenging part yet. This is what dreams are made of. Pure intention, grit, compassion and truth. One of the proudest moments of my cinematic journey thus far."

As for Ishaan Khatter and Chandni Bainz's relationship, the duo has been reportedly dating for a year now. Speculations about their ongoing romance began in July 2024 when they made their first public appearance outside a restaurant in Mumbai. The rumoured lovebirds were seen stepping out of the eatery, holding hands, with Ishaan ensuring a safe passage for her towards their car.