

From skills boost to countering drug-terror: PM Modi outlines key initiatives at G20

Chennai.(Agency)

Prime Minister Narendra Modi used the opening session of the G20 Summit in Johannesburg to deliver an expansive call for a reset of global development priorities, urging member nations to embrace models that are inclusive, sustainable and rooted in civilisational wisdom.

With Africa hosting the summit for the first time, he said the moment demanded a rethink of how the world measures progress, especially for regions that have long faced resource deprivation and ecological imbalance.

Speaking in the session on "Inclusive and sustainable economic growth leaving no one behind," the Prime Minister said India's principle of Integral Humanism offered a template for more balanced growth. He also rolled out three major proposals aimed at reshaping cooperation on knowledge, skills and security across continents.

GLOBAL TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE REPOSITORY

Opening his pitch with a call to preserve time-tested models of sustainable living, PM Modi proposed a Global Traditional Knowledge Repository under the G20. India's own Indian Knowledge Systems initiative, he said, could serve as the foundation for a platform that catalogues eco-balanced and culturally grounded practices from communities worldwide.

The repository is intended to ensure that traditional

wisdom, whether on health, environment or social cohesion, is documented, shared and passed on to future generations at a time when the world is grappling with climate stress and rapidly shifting lifestyles.

G20-AFRICA SKILLS MULTIPLIER INITIATIVE

Emphasising that Africa's rise is essential for global

pipeline of talent across sectors and unlocking large-scale employment opportunities. Modi linked the proposal to India's long-standing partnership with Africa, recalling that it was during India's G20 Presidency that the African Union was inducted as a permanent member.

GLOBAL HEALTHCARE RESPONSE TEAM

PM Modi also pushed for a G20 Global Healthcare Response Team, calling for a pool of trained medical experts from member nations who can be rapidly deployed during health emergencies and natural disasters. He said collective preparedness was essential to build resilience and ensure quicker on-ground action during crises.

COUNTERING THE DRUG-TERROR NEXUS

Raising concern over the global spread of highly potent synthetic drugs such as fentanyl, the Prime Minister warned of their consequences for public health, social stability and security systems worldwide.

He called for a dedicated G20 Initiative on Countering the Drug-Terror Nexus, designed to bring financial, governance and security frameworks together. The initiative will focus on dismantling drug-trafficking networks, cutting off illicit money flows and weakening a key source of funding for terror groups, a challenge he said required unified global action.



progress, PM Modi announced an ambitious skills programme directly aimed at the continent's youth bulge. He proposed the G20-Africa Skills Multiplier Initiative, built on a train-the-trainer model and jointly supported by all G20 partners. The target: one million certified trainers in Africa within the next decade. These trainers, in turn, are expected to help skill millions more, creating a

pipeline of talent across sectors and unlocking large-scale employment opportunities. Modi linked the proposal to India's long-standing partnership with Africa, recalling that it was during India's G20 Presidency that the African Union was inducted as a permanent member.

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Ready to back Nitish Kumar government, but...: Owaisi's Seemanchal condition

Patna.(Agency)

AIMIM chief Asaduddin Owaisi said he was ready to support the Nitish Kumar-led Bihar government, provided that the long-neglected Seemanchal region receives justice. Addressing a gathering in Amur, Owaisi, whose party emerged as the dark horse by winning five seats, asserted that development should not remain confined only to capital Patna and tourist hotspot Rajbir.

"We are ready to extend our support to Nitish Kumar's government, but the Seemanchal region must get justice," Owaisi said. "For how long will everything be centred around Patna and Rajbir? Seemanchal continues to

suffer from river erosion, large-scale migration and rampant corruption. The government must address these issues," the AIMIM chief further said.

5 SEATS IN SEEMANCHAL REGION

Seemanchal, in the Northeastern part of Bihar, has a high fraction of Muslim population and is one of the most backward regions in the state. The region witnesses floods every year due to the overflowing of the River Kosi. Nearly 80% of Seemanchal's population lives in rural areas. The 24 constituencies in the Seemanchal region have gone

largely with the NDA, with the bloc bagging 14 seats. Despite a thumping win for the NDA in Bihar, Owaisi-led AIMIM held its ground in the region, winning five seats - the same as its 2020 tally. However, four of AIMIM MLAs defected to the RJD after the 2020 polls.

This time, Owaisi said he would monitor his party's MLAs and announced an accountability-driven plan. "Our five MLAs will sit in their respective constituency offices twice a week and send me photos with their live WhatsApp location. It will show exactly where they are," Owaisi said. "We will try to start this work within six months. I will also try to visit once in six months," the AIMIM chief said.



Congress power tussle intensifies as rival camps rush to Delhi in bid to sway high command

As DK Shivakumar and Siddaramaiah loyalists scramble for numbers and hold parallel strategy meets, high-stakes lobbying reaches Delhi with both sides seeking Kharge's nod on the leadership question.

BENGALURU.(Agency)

Leadership change is turning out to be a political cliffhanger in the ruling Congress with MLAs from the Deputy Chief Minister and KPCC president DK Shivakumar's camp exerting pressure on the party high command, and Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's camp - led by PWD Minister Satish Jarkiholi -- countering it with a dinner meeting with ministers on Thursday night.

An indisposed Shivakumar, who was restricted to his home for the last two days, has chalked out a strategy with his younger brother DK Suresh to reach out to the MLAs to impress the party high command with numbers for a show of strength, sources said. On Friday afternoon, Shivakumar even visited Bengaluru Central Jail to meet



MLAs Vinay Kulkarni and Veerendra Puppy - both undertrials facing charges of murder and money laundering, respectively. Meanwhile, some legislators, including Magadi MLA HC

Balakrishna, appealed to the high command to clear the air.

Dinner meets, Delhi visits: High drama unfolds over leadership tussle

According to party sources privy to the unfolding drama, Shivakumar is wooing neutral MLAs who wish to abide by the party high command's decision, hoping it would benefit him if it comes to the numbers game. Shivakumar's brother-in-law and Kunigal MLA Dr Ranganath led a team of MLAs, with the tacit support of his Vokkaliga compatriot and Agriculture Minister N Cheluvarayaswamy, to meet AICC president Mallikarjun Kharge in New Delhi on Thursday night. They appealed to Kharge to make Shivakumar CM as per the agreement that was reportedly reached when the party

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Bhopal.(Agency)

In his first public address since his surprise resignation as the country's vice-president in July 2025, Jagdeep Dhankhar heaped praises on the RSS and made a cryptic reference to his recent past. Addressing a gathering at an RSS event in Bhopal on Friday evening, the former vice president said, "I cannot skip my duty for catching the flight and friends. My recent past is proof of it." He made the remark when a man approached him during the event and reminded him about the timing of his return flight to Delhi.

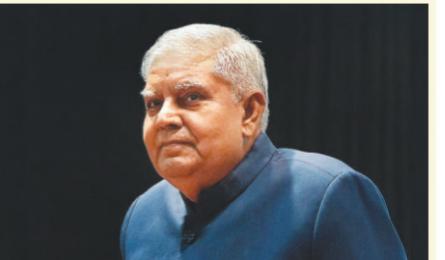
Dhankhar was the chief speaker at the launch of senior RSS leader Dr Manmohan Vaidya's book *Hum Aur Yeh Vishwa*.

Praising the RSS, Dhankhar said, "We live in an age where perception dictates everything, no matter how much you deny it. We are in the era of information warfare; god forbid anyone gets

caught in the trap of narrative. Once one gets caught in this chakravyuh (trap), it's very difficult to get out. I'm not citing my own example."

While criticising "RSS bashers" and praising the Sangh, Dhankhar claimed, "It (RSS) works for humanity and the world's welfare. This book is an eye-opener and dismantles the long propaganda and continuously propagated myths portraying the RSS as ultra-right and anti-minority. They have even gone to the extent of linking it to the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi. The untenability of all this now stands fully exposed, but they are still sticking to it."

"The book explains the concept of *Rashtriya Dharma*. The RSS, the most stabilising force in Bharat, works for humanity and global welfare. Dr Pranab Mukherjee, who adorned the office of President and was one of the tallest statesmen of his time, went to Nagpur on July 1, 2018...look at the level of criticism then, the extremity of criticism, crossing all bounds, calling it blasphemous. And Pranab Da, by just one sentence, put that controversy to rest when he visited the birthplace of Dr Keshav Baliram Hedgewar," he said.



TMC MLA's Babri Masjid Declaration Sparks Fury; Religious Leaders Demand Arrest, Announce Bounty

New Delhi.(Agency)

Just days before the historic flag hoisting atop Ram Mandir's pinnacle on November 25, a shocking declaration from a West Bengal TMC MLA has ignited a nationwide controversy that threatens to explode into a full-blown crisis. Saints and religious leaders have erupted in fury, with one prominent saint placing a staggering Rs 1 crore bounty on the MLA's head. The controversy erupted after Trinamool Congress (TMC) MLA Humayun Kabir announced that a foundation stone for a "Babri Masjid" would be laid in Murshidabad district on December 6.

Rs 1 Crore Reward For "Capital Punishment"

Ayodhya's Jagadguru Paramahans Acharya has strongly reacted to TMC MLA Humayun Kabir's statement about building a Babri Masjid in Bengal. He issued a serious

warning, saying anyone who kills the MLA will be given a reward of Rs 1 crore. Acharya's rage didn't stop there. He issued a dire warning that sent shockwaves across the political establishment: "If even a single brick is laid anywhere in the name of Mughal invaders, that person will not be spared. We will not tolerate it."

Supreme Court Verdict Ignored, National Unity Threatened

Acharya condemned Kabir's statement as a direct assault on the Supreme Court's final verdict that settled the Ayodhya dispute. "When the Supreme Court has delivered its judgment and the matter is considered closed, there is no need for any contrary action," he thundered. "Any attempt to lay a brick in Babur's name at any location can create unnecessary controversy and those taking such steps will face deadly consequences."

**Demands For Sedition Case And Immediate Arrest**

Jagadguru Paramahans Acharya has demanded that the government file sedition charges against the MLA and send him to jail immediately. Sharing similar sentiments, Ram Janmabhoomi Trust member and former MP Ram Vilas Vedant said, "No power in the

world can now build another Babri Masjid anywhere in India. Prime Minister Modi has given the slogan for communal harmony, national unity and peace."

Even Muslim Leaders Reject The Provocation

In a stunning rebuke that cuts across religious lines, Iqbal Ansari, a key litigant in the Ayodhya case, condemned Kabir's statement. "Temples and mosques are not places for politics," Ansari said firmly.

"The Supreme Court gave its verdict on Ayodhya, which all Muslims respected. The court also allocated land for a mosque. Therefore, people don't need to do politics in the name of mosques," Ansari warned that politicians deliberately exploit religious issues for electoral gain. "Our belief is that the politics of temple-mosque and religion-caste is not right for the country."

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News box

ED attaches Vatika plot in money laundering probe, flags fraud in four projects**Gurgaon.(Agency)**

Enforcement Directorate (ED) has provisionally attached a 1.35-acre commercial plot worth Rs 108 crore in a money-laundering case linked to Vatika Limited in the city. The action stems from multiple FIRs filed by Delhi Police's Economic Offences Wing against the company and its promoters — Anil Bhalla, Gautam Bhalla, and others — for alleged criminal conspiracy, cheating and inducing investors with promises of high and assured returns. The probe agency has found that the company collected funds for four major future commercial and mixed-use projects in Gurgaon and Faridabad by offering attractive returns till completion and lease-rental payouts thereafter. Midway through execution, it allegedly stopped paying the assured returns and failed to hand over units or complete the projects, leading to allegations of misappropriation and wrongdoing.

Investigators have also identified procedural lapses, including failure to renew licences from directorate of town and country planning (DTCP) and delays in meeting project completion timelines. According to ED, these lapses contributed to the company's inability to fulfill its commitments. The probe has revealed 659 investors collectively invested ₹248 crore across four projects — Vatika Inxt City Centre Tower D, E, and F, Vatika Towers Tower C and Vatika High Street (part of V'lanter) in Gurgaon and Vatika Mindscapes Tower-C in Faridabad. The agency said it had earlier attached properties worth ₹68.59 crore, an order later upheld by the adjudicating authority. With the new attachment, the total value of provisionally attached assets in the case now stands at approximately ₹176 crore. ED has also filed a prosecution complaint before special PMLA court in Gurgaon against Vatika Limited, its promoters and several group companies. The complaint alleged laundering of proceeds of crime generated through fraudulent collection of investor funds.

The agency stated the investigation is under way, indicating that more actions could follow as it continues to examine fund flows, project delays, and alleged misuse of investors' money.

289 held in Gurgaon in 15 days as police step up heat on criminals**Gurgaon.(Agency)**

Around 700 criminals were arrested during the last 15 days across the city and Faridabad, while eight murders were averted and a large haul of arms and contraband have been seized, said police. Gurgaon police arrested 289 notorious criminals, identifying 290 targets during Operation Trackdown conducted between Nov 5 and 20. Besides those arrested under Operation Trackdown, Gurgaon police also arrested 303 other criminals. In Faridabad, 84 wanted criminals were arrested under the same operation and 320 others, who were accused in other cases. The operation was aimed at dismantling organised crime networks, arms smugglers, drug traffickers and repeat offenders. DCP Arpit Jain said, "We are using the best technology possible, including artificial intelligence for crime detection and face recognition. We are also coordinating with the RWAs and the society guards for better policing. Operation Trackdown has significantly dented the influence of criminal gangs in the district and bolstered public safety." A strong surveillance mechanism is in place against gangsters and armed offenders recently released from jail, officials said. Detailed lists of such individuals have been circulated to police stations, intelligence units and special staff to ensure regular verification and electronic tracking. Officials said hotspot areas are under intensified watch and preventive action is being taken wherever required to maintain peace and order. City police opened 75 new history sheets and updated 118 others, placing hundreds of habitual offenders under continuous surveillance.

AQI out of 'severe' zone, but smoky haze still lingers over Noida**Noida.(Agency)**

After two days of 'severe' air, the city's AQI improved marginally to 'very poor' on Friday, but it still remained gripped under a shroud of haze. In Ghaziabad, however, the air quality remained 'severe' for the sixth day on trot. Noida's AQI shifted to 394 from 408 on Friday, while in Greater Noida the air quality remained in the 'very poor' category at 353, against 380 the day before. Air quality showed little change in Ghaziabad at 422 from 430.

Meanwhile in Delhi, the capital recorded the 16th very poor day in Nov as the AQI settled at 364 on Friday. It was 391 a day earlier. According to data from the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) portal, both Sector 125 (AQI 432) and Sector 116 (AQI 422) recorded 'severe' air on Friday, while Sector 1 (AQI 395) and Sector 62 (AQI 338) were in the 'very poor' range. In Greater Noida, Knowledge Park V (AQI 405) recorded 'severe' air, while Knowledge Park III (AQI 304) was in the 'very poor' category. In Ghaziabad, three out of four air monitoring stations recorded 'severe' air, with Loni recording the worst AQI at 462, followed by Sanjay Nagar (AQI 432), and Indirapuram (AQI 405). Vasundhara was the only station that recorded 'very poor' air at 387.

According to the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology, surface winds on Friday came from the north with calm conditions initially, gradually increasing up to 5 kmph during the afternoon. The wind speed later increased to less than 8 kmph during the evening. On Saturday, surface wind is likely to come from the northwest direction at less than 5 kmph in the morning. The speed is expected to rise to less than 10 kmph from the northwest in the afternoon before decreasing to less than 5 kmph during the evening and night. While stage III of CAQM's Graded Response Action Plan remains in force across Delhi-NCR, violations have been rampant and the region has witnessed a significant improvement in AQI. Meanwhile, maximum temperature was 28.2 degrees Celsius on Friday while the minimum settled at 11.2 degrees Celsius, one degree below normal. Forecasts show the minimum temperature is likely to dip and may reach 8-10 degrees Celsius by Tuesday.

Yamuna pollution: SC-led panel finds lapses in Noida's claims, says drains not tapped, STPs on**Noida.(Agency)**

A joint committee set up by the Supreme Court to verify Noida Authority's claims on controlling sewer discharge into the Yamuna through Kondli irrigation canal has found significant gaps in the city's submissions. In its report submitted on Tuesday, a team comprising CPCB and UPPCB officials flagged "gross misrepresentations" after ground inspections. The Supreme Court is expected to take up the findings on Dec 3 in a civil appeal filed by Noida Authority against the NGT's Rs 100-crore environmental penalty for allowing untreated sewage to flow into the Kondli canal and ultimately the Yamuna.

The NGT had also imposed Rs 50-crore fine on the Delhi Jal Board (DJB) for releasing untreated sewage into the Yamuna. In Nov 2022, the SC stayed the NGT orders. In Aug, it directed the CPCB and UPPCB to verify the claims of compliance by Noida and DJB.

The joint committee confirmed that 30

drain locations had been correctly geotagged on Google Maps, but said Noida's claims on drain tapping were inaccurate. "A feasibility study was carried out through NEERI, but the tapping work is yet to begin," the report noted. Noida had told the Supreme Court its sewer network is linked to eight STPs with a combined capacity of 411 MLD, all with operational tertiary treatment plants. During the committee's Sept 17 visit, the team found work was underway to tap drains D6 and D7, both of which flow along Jagannath Mandir Marg and discharge into the Kondli canal near the Kribhco colony. The panel added that infrastructure to tap drain D20 along Dadri Main Road existed, but could not be verified due to heavy rain during inspection. The committee reported that the in-situ wetland in Sector 50/51 showed higher chemical oxygen demand (COD),



biochemical oxygen demand (BOD), total suspended solids (TSS), phosphorus and nitrogen at the outlet than the inlet, indicating poor treatment. It noted better performance at the NSEZ-Dadri crossing wetland, with removal efficiencies of 62.2% (BOD), 57.5% (COD) and 89.7% (TSS). At the Advant Tower (Sector 142) wetland, efficiencies were lower at 41.9%, 28.1% and 75.2%, respectively.

The committee also noted that UP Jal

Nigam has yet to take possession of the land earmarked for an STP in Khoda-Makanpur, delaying the start of construction. As a result, all wastewater from Khoda Nagar Palika continued to flow through Delhi before merging into the Kondli drain. Noida, in its reply, has said a lease deed for 16,000 sqm of land in Sector 62 had been executed in favour of Nagar Palika Parishad Khoda-Makanpur on Nov 29, 2024. The case dates back to 2018, when environmentalist

Abhishek Kusum Gupta filed a petition before the NGT over Yamuna pollution. In August 2022, the tribunal imposed environmental compensation on Noida Authority and the Delhi Jal Board. Noida challenged the order in the Supreme Court, which stayed the penalty but directed the authority to comply with the NGT's directives outlined in paragraph 29 of its judgment.

Wind speed picks up, air quality turns 'poor' in Gurgaon**Gurgaon.(Agency)**

The city's air quality showed a marginal improvement on Friday, with the average AQI easing from 302 (very poor) a day earlier to 288 (poor). The recovery was uneven across neighbourhoods. Sector 51 remained in the severe category at 349, Gwal Pahari logged 307, Vikas Sadan 280, and Teri Gram 214. Low wind speeds kept pollutants close to the surface, limiting the dispersal of particulate matter. Forecast models suggest this pattern may hold through the weekend unless wind direction or intensity shifts.

According to decision support system (DSS), Safdarjung recorded the lowest visibility of 800 metres between 8am and 9am on Friday, which later improved to 1,000 metres. Clear skies prevailed, with southeast surface winds blowing up to 8kmph over the past 24 hours. Calm conditions marked the early morning, followed by light, variable winds below 5kmph through the forenoon. The forecast for the next four days points to stable temperatures and recurring calm spells. On Saturday, shallow morning fog is expected. Maximum temperatures will range between 25 and 27°C and the minimum between 10 and 12°C. Winds from the west-northwest will stay below 5kmph early on, rising to under 10kmph in the afternoon before falling again at night. Sunday will see similar conditions, with shallow morning fog, clear skies, and maximum and minimum temperatures between 25 and 27°C and 9 and 11°C, respectively. Winds will follow the same pattern as Saturday. Monday is likely to bring shallow fog at most places and moderate fog in isolated pockets. Maximum temperatures may fall slightly below normal, settling between 24 and 26°C, while minimums will remain between 9 and 11°C. Light west-northwest winds under 5kmph will prevail in the morning, picking up modestly in the afternoon before weakening again.

Power utilities on Vyapar Kendra Road to be shifted to pave way for new metro corridor

will be shared equally between GMDA and GMRL to avoid delays in the metro project, which is already in the process of seeking approvals for land and utility shifting. The reversal track is an important part of the metro's operational design. It will allow trains terminating at Millennium City Centre station to turn around and re-enter service without blocking the main line. Earlier, GMRL had asked GMDA to widen the central median to 2.5 metres along this stretch to accommodate metro piers and avoid shifting the power infrastructure. GMDA said it could not alter the road design because of space constraints and the possibility of traffic bottlenecks if the carriageway was narrowed. It was then decided to shift the high-tension towers to create the required space. Meanwhile, GMDA is also planning to build an underpass at the Millennium City Centre

junction as part of its decongestion plan. The project received government approval earlier this month and is estimated to cost Rs 80 crore. A GMRL official said the metro agency is coordinating with GMDA because the proposed underpass is planned at the same junction where the reversal track pier is to be located. "The proposed underpass will overlap with the reversal track pier. Both projects need to be planned together, so the design will now be reconsidered jointly. Our consultants will examine structural options to ensure future construction is not obstructed. An integrated layout will be prepared," the official said. Work on the new metro line for Phase 1 between Millennium City Centre and Basai, with a spur to Dwarka Expressway, is also progressing, with test piles underway at several locations along the corridor.

Alert Axis Bank manager foils digital arrest bid, saves Rs 64 lakh of senior citizen in Gurgaon**Gurgaon.(Agency)**

A bank officer who noticed consecutive high-value money transfers from a customer's account and, thinking on her feet, intervened with recipient banks to keep them on hold helped foil a 'digital arrest' scam in which a senior citizen could have lost more than Rs 6 crore.

Thanks to Meet Sabharwal, a relationship manager with Axis Bank's Galleria Market branch, the Rs 64 lakh that the senior citizen had been coerced into transferring by the cyber gang — which impersonated Mumbai Police and CBI officers and told him over a call that they had found his involvement in "criminal activities" — was also recovered, police said. Sabharwal was on Friday given a Rs 20,000 reward by police commissioner Vikas Arora for his decisive action. Police said the senior citizen filed a complaint with Cyber East police station on Nov 18. In his complaint, he said the digital arrest gang had his phone and Aadhaar numbers and claimed they were linked to criminals. "The gang put him under digital

over video call on Nov 10 and managed to coerce him into redeeming mutual funds worth Rs 5.9 crore," a police officer said. The funds were to reach his Axis Bank account three days after the liquidation of the mutual funds. In the meantime, he was made to make two transfers from his Axis bank account on Nov 11 and 12. "The victim transferred Rs 20 lakh to an SBI account in Jamshedpur on Nov 11 and another Rs 44 lakh to an Axis Bank account at Bandra in Mumbai the next day," the officer said. At the Galleria branch, where he had his account, the unnatural transactions raised eyebrows. Unable to reach the account holder, Sabharwal contacted the Jamshedpur SBI branch and the Axis Bandra branch and got both transferred amounts kept on hold. He also had the Axis accounts of the senior citizen and his wife frozen to prevent any further transfers. Police said Sabharwal tried to reach the senior citizen multiple times, but the latter did not answer the calls "out of fear induced by the fraudsters". "He finally spoke to

Sabharwal on Nov 18 after the 'digital arrest' ended and disclosed details of the extortion, after which the RM persuaded him to file a police complaint," a police officer said. The fraudsters, frustrated about the transfers not coming through, appeared to have given up. The police team led by inspector Amit Kumar, SHO Cyber Crime East, that investigated the case was told by the manager of Axis Bank's Bandra branch that the account holder there, a part of the cyber gang, had been repeatedly inquiring about transfers and pressuring staff to unlock his account, which too had been frozen after Sabharwal raised the alarm. With cyber fraudsters preying on hundreds of Indians every day, Sabharwal's intervention underlines the critical role bank officers can play in thwarting suspicious money transfers, blocking them at source and making recovery much easier than the complex transaction web that cyber sleuths must track once the stolen money races through accounts.

Alert Gurgaon banker steps in to freeze transfers, thwarts Rs 6 crore digital arrest fraud**Faridabad.(Agency)**

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ACP (cyber) Priyanshu Dewan said police hold monthly coordination meetings with bank representatives. "We have been reiterating directions to curb cybercrime to bank representatives. Among them is strict KYC verification to prevent fake and mule accounts, immediate reporting of suspicious or large transactions, proactive communication with

customers regarding high-value debits, and monthly review of suspicious accounts and updated verification registers," he said.

THE SIKH TIMES

Edited, Printed, Published
Owned by Simmi Babbar
N-31, Dr. Mukherjee Nagar

Delhi-11009

Printed at Qaumi Patrika Printing
Press, A4/A-144, Tronica City
(Loni), Ghaziabad (Uttar Pradesh)

Corporate Office:

5, Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg,
Press Area, ITO, New Delhi

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RNI No. DELENG/2008/25465

3 booked for textile bizman's murder in Faridabad

The Sikh Times

Gurugram: A textile businessman died under suspicious circumstances in Faridabad's Ballabgarh area on Friday, with his family alleging that he was murdered by his business partners who poisoned him with a cold

as Sukhbir, a native of Janauli village in Palwal district. His brother Om Prakash lodged a complaint alleging that Sukhbir had started a cloth dyeing and printing factory, Jai Guru Enterprises, in May 2023 along with partners Sumit, Rajiv, Rahul, and

transferred Rs 56 lakh to Sumit's account and another Rs 15 lakh jointly to Sumit and Rajiv, at their request. Although Sukhbir and Mukesh repeatedly asked Sumit and Rajiv to open a joint account for the firm, their requests were ignored. Sumit allegedly ran the account in his own name and all the money deposited belonged to Sukhbir. When Sukhbir demanded repayment, Sumit and Rajiv reportedly prevented both him and Mukesh from entering the factory. On September 5, Om Prakash said, Sukhbir went to Sumit's house in Ballabgarh on the call of Sumit and Rajiv to settle

accounts. "Around 11 am, my brother phoned me saying that Sumit and his friends had mixed poison in his cold drink. Shortly afterwards, my nephew Atar Singh rushed him from Sahupura Jat Chowk to a private hospital. The doctors referred him to Delhi in a critical condition, but he died shortly after leaving the hospital," he alleged in the complaint. Inspector Nafe Singh, SHO of Adarsh Nagar police station, said an FIR has been registered against three accused. "The body has been handed over to the family after post-mortem. We are awaiting the post-mortem report and action will be

taken in accordance with the law," he said.

Pilot arrested for filming woman with spy camera

New Delhi: The Delhi Police have arrested a 31-year-old private airline pilot for allegedly attempting to secretly film a woman using a hidden spy camera in South-West Delhi's Kishangarh area. The accused, identified as Mohit Priyadarshi, reportedly admitted that he had been making such videos for his own gratification. The incident occurred on August 30 at Shani Bazar in Kishangarh village, where the complainant, a local resident, noticed an unknown man recording objectionable footage of her without consent using a device disguised as a lighter. A case was registered at Kishangarh police station and investigation initiated. With the help of CCTV footage and circulation of the suspect's photograph through the local intelligence network, he was traced and apprehended. The police said Priyadarshi confessed during interrogation. The lighter-shaped spy camera used in the offence was recovered from his possession.

Stabbed outside school, Delhi boy reaches police station with knife lodged in chest

New Delhi: Three minors have been apprehended for allegedly stabbing a 15-year-old boy outside his school in central Delhi's Paharganj area, police said on Saturday. The incident took place on September 4, when the injured boy reached the Paharganj police station with a knife lodged in his chest, police said in an official statement. He was rushed to Kalawati Saran Hospital and later referred to RML Hospital, where doctors successfully removed the knife from his chest, they said. Preliminary inquiry revealed that about 10-15 days ago, one of the accused minors was beaten by some boys and he suspected the victim of having instigated the assault. To take revenge, the boy and his two associates confronted the victim near his school gate and stabbed him, according to police. "One of the minors stabbed him with a knife while his associates restrained him. One of them even threatened the boy with a broken beer bottle before the stabbing," Deputy Commissioner of Police (Central) Nidhin Valsan said. A case has been registered under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita and the Arms Act at Paharganj police station in the matter. Through local intelligence and quick raids, all three accused, aged 15 and 16, were apprehended from the Aram Bagh area within hours of the case being registered, police said.

Mother Dairy slashes prices across dairy, processed foods

New Delhi: Mother Dairy on Tuesday announced a price reduction over select value added dairy products and processed foods (under Safal brand), effective September 22, passing on the benefits of the recent Goods and Services Tax (GST) rate cut directly to consumers. The wholly owned subsidiary of the National Dairy Development Board (NDDB) said the

move ensures that its entire range of products now falls under the nil or lowest 5 per cent GST slab. With the revised prices, ultra high temperature (UHT)

milk (toned; tetra pack) (1 litre) will retail at Rs 75, down from Rs 77, while UHT milk (double toned; pouch) (450 ml) will now cost Rs 32 instead of Rs 33

and paneer (200 gm) has dropped from Rs 95 to Rs 92. Butter (100 gm) will cost Rs 58 instead of Rs 62, cheese cubes (180 gm) will now cost Rs 135 instead of Rs 145, cheese spread (180 gm) will cost Rs 110 instead of Rs 120 and cow ghee jar (1 litre) has seen a major cut from Rs 750 to Rs 720. Milkshakes (180 ml) have been reduced from Rs 30 to Rs 28. Ice creams too have seen notable cuts — chocoo vanilla cone (100 ml) will now cost Rs 25, down from Rs 30, and strawberry crush tub (1 litre) has come down from Rs 330 to Rs 300. The company's Safal portfolio has also seen a uniform GST reduction from 12 per cent to 5 per cent across frozen snacks, jams, pickles, coconut water and tomato puree. Consequently, frozen french fries (400 gm) will cost Rs 95 instead of Rs 100, frozen aloo tikki (400 gm) Rs 85 instead of Rs 90 and frozen nuggets (300 gm) Rs 105 instead of Rs 110. Processed foods like lime pickle (400 gm) have been reduced from Rs 130 to Rs 120, coconut water (200 ml) from Rs 55 to Rs 50 and mixed fruit jam (500 gm) from Rs 180 to Rs 165. Announcing the revision, Manish Bandlish, Managing Director,

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NEWS BOX

US Threatens To Cut Intel, Weapons To Press Ukraine Into Peace Deal: Report

Kyiv. (Agency)

The United States has threatened to cut intelligence sharing and weapons supplies for Ukraine to press it into agreeing to the framework of a US-brokered peace deal, two people familiar with the matter said. The sources, speaking on condition of anonymity, said that Kyiv was under greater pressure from Washington than during any previous peace discussions, and that the US wanted Ukraine to sign a framework of the deal by next Thursday. "They want to stop the war and want Ukraine to pay the price," one of the sources said. Washington has presented Ukraine with a 28-point plan, which endorses some of Russia's principal demands in the war, including that Kyiv cede additional territory, curb the size of its military and be barred from joining NATO.

A delegation of senior US military officials met with President Volodymyr Zelensky in Kyiv on Thursday to discuss a path to peace. The US ambassador in Ukraine and the army public affairs chief travelling with the delegation described the meeting as a success and said Washington sought an "aggressive timeline" for the signature of a document between the US and Ukraine.

Don't Let AI Do Your Homework, Pope Leo Tells US Youth

world . (Agency)

Artificial intelligence may be a useful tool for learning, but don't use it for your homework, Pope Leo told about 15,000 US youth during a question-and-answer session on Friday. In a live video transmission from the Vatican to a national Catholic youth conference in Indianapolis, Indiana, Leo told the young people that AI is "becoming one of the defining features of our time." "Using AI responsibly means using it in ways that help you grow," said the pope. "Don't ask it to do your homework for you."

Leo, the first US pope, spoke for about 40 minutes with the youth in the first such event of his six-month papacy, answering questions about the Catholic faith and giving advice on how to make friends in school.

The pope, who has been ramping up criticism of US President Donald Trump's anti-immigration policies, also briefly spoke about politics.

He said Jesus wants Christians to be "people who build bridges instead of walls," invoking one of the late Pope Francis' strongest criticisms of Trump. "Please be careful not to use political categories to speak about faith, to speak about the Church," Leo told the young people. "The Church doesn't belong to any political party," he said. "Rather, she helps form your conscience ... so you can think and act with wisdom and love."

China Used India-Pak Conflict To Conduct "Real-World" Test Of Its Weapons: Report

world . (Agency)

China "opportunistically" used the India-Pakistan conflict in May to "test and promote" its defence capabilities, a bipartisan US commission has said in its annual report. The report by the US-China Economic and Security Review Commission, published on Tuesday, said that Beijing leveraged the four-day conflict to "test and advertise the sophistication of its weapons, useful in the contexts of its ongoing border tensions with India and its expanding defence industry goals". "This clash was the first time China's modern weapons systems, including the HQ-9 air defence system, PL-15 air-to-air missiles, and J-10 fighter aircraft were used in active combat, serving as a real-world field experiment," the report said. China then reportedly offered to sell 40 J-35 fifth-generation fighter jets, KJ-500 aircraft, and ballistic missile defence systems to Pakistan in June, the report said.

In the weeks after the conflict, Chinese embassies also praised the "successes" of its systems in the India-Pakistan clash, seeking to "bolster weapons sales", the report, which is based on committee hearings and research that includes publicly available information and media reports, said. The report also said that characterisation of the May conflict as a "proxy war" would overstate China's role as an "instigator".

China Ran Campaign To Discredit Rafale Jet After India-Pak Conflict China also ran a "disinformation campaign" to discredit the French Rafale fighter jet after the India-Pakistan conflict, the report said. According to French intelligence, China initiated a disinformation campaign to hinder sales of French Rafales in favour of its own J-35s, and it used fake social media accounts to propagate AI and video game images of supposed "debris" from the planes China's weaponry destroyed," the report said. It said that Chinese embassy officials convinced Indonesia to halt a purchase of Rafale jets already in process. China, however, rejected the report as "disinformation".

Trump and Mamdani go from adversaries to allies after White House meeting

WASHINGTON . (Agency)

President Donald Trump on Friday met the man who had proudly proclaimed himself "Donald Trump's worst nightmare," but he seemed to find the opposite.

The Republican president and New York City's Mayor-elect Zohran Mamdani were warm and friendly, speaking repeatedly of their shared goals to help Trump's hometown rather than their combustible differences. Trump, who had in the past called Mamdani a "100% Communist Lunatic" and a "total nut job," spoke openly of how impressed he was with the man who had called his administration "authoritarian." "I think he is going to surprise some conservative people, actually," Trump said of the democratic socialist as Mamdani stood next to him in the Oval Office. The meeting offered political opportunities for both men. For Mamdani, a sit-down offered the state lawmaker — who until recently was relatively unknown — the chance to go head-to-head with the most powerful person in the world. For Trump, it was a high-profile chance to talk about affordability at a time when he's under

increasing political pressure to show he's addressing voter concerns about the cost of living. Until now, the men have been political foils who galvanized their supporters by taking on each other, and it's unclear how those backers will react to their genial get-together and complimentary words. "We're going to be helping him, to make everybody's dream come true, having a strong and very safe New York," the president said. "What I really appreciate about the president is that the meeting that we had focused not on places of disagreement, which there are many, and also focused on the shared purpose that we have in serving New Yorkers," Mamdani said. Mamdani and Trump said they discussed housing affordability and the cost of groceries and utilities, as Mamdani successfully used frustration over inflation to get elected, just as the president did in the 2016 election. "Some of his ideas are really the same ideas that I have," the president said of Mamdani about inflationary issues. The president brushed aside Mamdani's criticisms of him over his administration's deportation raids and claims that Trump

was behaving like a despot. Instead, Trump said the responsibility of holding an executive position in the government causes a person to change, saying that had



been the case for him. He seemed at times even protective of Mamdani, jumping in on his behalf at several points. For example, when reporters asked Mamdani to clarify his past statements indicating that he thought the president was acting like a fascist, Trump said, "I've been called much worse than a despot." When a reporter asked if Mamdani stood by his comments that Trump is a fascist, Trump interjected before the mayor-elect could fully answer the question. "That's OK. You can just say yes. OK?" Trump said. "It's easier. It's

easier than explaining it. I don't mind." Trump stepped in again when a reporter asked Mamdani why he flew to Washington instead of taking transportation that used less fossil fuels. Mamdani, who takes office in January, said he sought the meeting with Trump to talk about ways to make New York City more affordable. Trump has said he may want to help him out — although he has also falsely labeled Mamdani as a "communist" and threatened to yank federal funds from the city. But Trump on Friday didn't sling that at the mayor. He acknowledged that he had said he had been prepared to cut off funding or make it harder for New York City to access federal resources if the two had failed to "get along" only to pull back from those threats during the meeting. "We don't want that to happen," Trump said. "I don't think that's going to happen." Afterward, Mamdani's former campaign manager and incoming chief of staff Elle Bisgaard-Church told NY1 that the pair clearly disagreed on some issues but were able to find common ground on things like reducing crime.

Major MAGA Figure Quits US Congress After Falling Out With Trump Over Epstein

United States. (Agency)

US lawmaker Marjorie Taylor Greene, an influential figure of the far right, announced Friday she is quitting her seat in Congress, one week after President Donald Trump pulled his support for the former staunch ally.

In a video posted online, the 51-year-old Republican congresswoman from Georgia elected in 2020 said she had "always been despised in Washington DC and never fit in." Greene said she did not want her supporters and family to endure "a hurtful and hateful primary against me by the President we all fought for, only to fight and win my election while Republicans will likely lose the midterms."

"I will be resigning from office with my last day being January 5, 2026," she said. Greene had previously been a standard-bearer of Trump's Make

America Great Again (MAGA) movement, but the president announced he was withdrawing all support for "Wacky" Marjorie" on



November 7. He followed up again the next morning with multiple posts on his Truth Social platform attacking Greene as a "lightweight" and even a "traitor" to the Republican Party.

The former key political ally to Trump subsequently said she was being targeted by a wave of threats.

The shock move by Greene was the clearest sign yet of a growing split in MAGA world, in churn over strong Democratic victories in this month's off-year elections, and Trump's chummy White House meeting earlier Friday with leftist mayor-elect Zohran Mamdani. The movement has been particularly riven over Trump's flip-flop on the case of convicted sex offender Jeffrey Epstein, whose web of contacts allegedly included several American elites. "Standing up for American women who were raped at 14, trafficked and used by rich powerful men should not result in me being called a traitor and threatened by the President of the United States, whom I fought for," Greene said.

'You May Not Believe': US Driver in 911 Call After Bald Eagle Drops Cat Through Windshield

Bangladesh Earthquake .(Agency)

A US driver was left shocked and narrowly escaped injuries after a cat fell from the sky and crashed through their car windshield. In a 911 call, the unidentified driver, who was riding along a highway near the Great Smoky Mountains National Park in North Carolina, said a bald eagle had dropped the feline on the passenger side of the car. The incident took place on US Route 74 in Swain County, near Bryson City, which is about 65 miles southwest of Asheville, according to a report in The Guardian. As per the audio recording of the exchange, the driver told the dispatcher that they might not

honestly," the dispatcher calmly responded. "I had a witness who was like, 'That is the craziest thing I've ever seen,'" the caller added while reeling from the crash.



As the driver continued narrating the incident, the 911 responder offered some assurance, saying, "Oh my goodness. Let's see. I've heard crazier." The driver confirmed that the cat died and was lying on the other side of the

road.

Eagle Knocks Out Drone

This is not the first instance when a bald eagle has made headlines in the US. In 2020, a bald eagle took down a government drone at a Michigan lake. Environmental quality analyst Hunter King was piloting a Phantom 4 Pro Advanced quadcopter drone to map the erosion of the shoreline when he noticed the signal was fading. A few seconds later, the device started spiralling down towards the lake after a bald eagle tore off the device's propeller. The department stated that the incident "could have been a territorial squabble with the electronic foe, or just a hungry eagle". According to the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), there are around 316,700 bald eagles in the US, which is considered endangered since the 1980s.

Khashoggi's widow and Democrats demand release of call transcript with Trump and Saudi crown prince**Saudi intelligence officials and a forensic doctor killed and dismembered Jamal Khashoggi at the Saudi Consulate in Istanbul in 2018.**

WASHINGTON . (Agency)

The widow of Washington Post journalist Jamal Khashoggi called Friday for the release of the transcript of a 2019 phone call that President Donald Trump had with Mohammed bin Salman, joining Democratic lawmakers who are raising questions about whether Trump personally benefitted from his embrace of the Saudi crown prince.

Hanan Elatr Khashoggi appeared on Capitol Hill on Friday morning on the heels of Trump's dismissal of U.S. intelligence findings that Prince Mohammed most likely had culpability in the October 2018 slaying of her husband. Trump also lavished the Saudi ruler this week with

some of Washington's highest honors for a foreign dignitary, deepening the business and military relationship between the two nations. Saudi intelligence officials and a forensic doctor killed and dismembered Jamal Khashoggi at the Saudi Consulate in Istanbul in 2018. "There is no justification to kidnap him, torture him, to kill him and to cut him to pieces," Hanan Elatr Khashoggi said Friday during an emotional news conference. "This is a terrorist act."

The demand in Congress for the Trump administration to release the call transcripts is being led Rep. Eugene Vindman, a freshman Democrat from Virginia who was deputy legal adviser to the National Security Council during Trump's first term. Vindman, who has reviewed the transcript of the phone call with Prince Mohammed, declined to go into specifics of the classified document Friday, but said it used "the terminology of quid pro quo, the ensuing benefits that the president reaped." The Democratic lawmakers also pointed out that Trump's

family has extensive business dealings in Saudi Arabia that at times have benefitted from the prince's direct involvement. The situation carries echoes of Trump's first impeachment over his July 2019 call with Volodymyr Zelensky, in which he asked



the new Ukraine president to do him a "favor" in investigating his presidential rival, Joe Biden. At the time, Trump ended up releasing a transcript of the call with Zelensky in which he also said he would withhold \$400 million in military aid. Vindman, then at the security council, also

reviewed that call. He said that out of all the calls he reviewed in his job, the calls with Zelensky and Prince Mohammed stood out as the most concerning. He called the transcript of the call with the Saudi ruler "shocking." "The Khashoggi family and the American people deserve to know what was said on that call," he added.

During Prince Mohammed's state visit this week, Hanan Elatr Khashoggi has tried to serve as a reminder of her late husband's brutal killing. Originally from Egypt, Khashoggi received political asylum in the U.S. in 2023 and currently lives in Virginia. She cast the demand for the transcript as a continuation of his work standing up for human rights and criticizing Saudi rulers. "I need to know what is the truth in this conversation," she said.

When asked if the White House would release the transcript, White House communications director Steven Cheung in a statement called Vindman "a bitter back-bencher who nobody takes seriously. He is a serial liar and was part of the hoax relating to the perfect Ukraine call, in which the Ukrainian president said so himself."

New Close-Up Shots From Dubai Show Tejas Wreckage Engulfed In Flames

WASHINGTON . (Agency)

Dubai Air Show attendee captured the moment the Tejas fighter jet crashed during a flying demonstration, bursting into a ball of flames, sending up a plume of thick black smoke. The crowd at the Al Maktoum International Airport, who had gathered to witness the air show, is seen jumping out of their seats to look at the crash and capture it on their mobile phones.

Abu Bakr, a real estate advisor, had gone to attend the Dubai Air show because of his interest in it. One of the videos captured by Bakr shows the final moments of the Tejas aircraft before it crashed.

A single-seat Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Tejas fighter jet was executing a negative G turn before it slammed the ground. The aircraft transitioned from a negative G manoeuvre into a roll, which is another aerobatic display manoeuvre. However, it was flying at a very low altitude at this stage, and the roll appears to not have been a snap or quick roll that could have enabled the aircraft to enter horizontal flight. The aircraft seems to have lost some altitude during the manoeuvre. By the time the aircraft was able to get wings level after completing the barrel roll, the vertical speed of the aircraft (the rate of the speed at which it was descending) was too high, and the aircraft crashed and smashed into the ground. The jet started to go lower and lower. We thought the pilot would pull up the jet, but it crashed on the spot," Bakr said recalling the incident. The plane went down at around 2:10 pm local time, according to eyewitnesses and videos sourced by The pictures and videos shared by the attendee show the fighter jet engulfed in flames and then covered in clouds of thick black smoke. In close-up shots, the jet is seen descending and then lying on the ground in flames. Post crash images show the wreckage - charred, mangled remains of the crashed jet.

What Is Negative G Manoeuvre

Negative G in aviation refers to forces acting on an aircraft and its contents in the opposite direction of normal gravity. These forces are typically experienced during aerobatic manoeuvres, sudden descent, or severe turbulence. If not properly managed, negative G can lead to disorientation or loss of consciousness due to blood pooling in the head. Pilots undergo specific training to manage and mitigate the effects of negative G forces during flight operations. Wing Commander Namansh Syal Died In Dubai Tejas Crash

Wing Commander Namansh Syal, the Indian Air Force pilot, died in the Tejas fighter jet crash. The 34-year-old pilot was a native of Patiyalkar village in the Kangra district of Himachal Pradesh. He is survived by his wife, also an IAF officer, their six-year-old daughter and his parents.

NEWS BOX

Ex-Air India pilot booked for drawing Rs 2.8 crore salary while on DGCA deputation

Mumbai. (Agency)

Vile Parle police earlier this week registered a case against a former Air India pilot for allegedly drawing salary and allowances worth nearly Rs 2.8 crore from the airline while he was serving on deputation with the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA). The complainant, Vyakant Rao, 64, a retired Air India employee, lodged a private complaint with Andheri metropolitan magistrate court, which directed Vile Parle police to register an FIR. Police have booked Capt Atul Chandra under IPC sections for cheating, forgery, criminal breach of trust, criminal breach of trust by a public servant, and using fake documents as genuine.

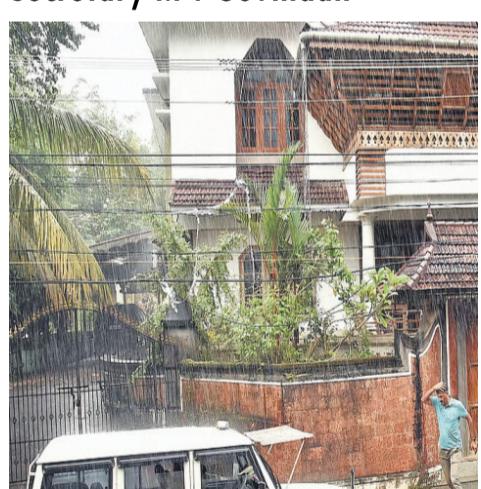
When TOI contacted Capt Chandra, he said he had no knowledge of an FIR being registered against him. The matter pertains to the period from 2014 to 2017 when Capt Chandra joined DGCA on deputation as the chief flight operations inspector (CFOI). The CFOI and other officials deputed to the DGCA from airlines are paid a salary by the DGCA and not their parent airline to avoid conflict of interest. However, Capt Chandra allegedly drew a salary from both the DGCA and Air India, which was a govt-owned carrier back then. Rao alleged Chandra made a wrongful gain of around Rs 2.8 crore. TOI reported the matter in Jan 2019. The FIR was filed following a complaint by Rao alleging Chandra, who worked as a DGCA flight operations inspector from 2014-2017, continued to receive payment from Air India despite rules.

Autorickshaw destroyed, two injured in elephant attacks in Kerala

KOCHI. (Agency)

Two incidents of wild elephant attacks spread panic in Vadattupara and Kottappadi panchayats of Kothamangalam on Thursday. A herd of wild elephants attacked the autorickshaw of Anilkumar, of Vadattupara, when he was returning after dropping a passenger at Thalukandam tribal settlement at 7 pm on Thursday. The autorickshaw was completely destroyed. Meanwhile, a herd of 7 wild elephants attacked two bike riders at Vaveli in Kottappady panchayat on Friday morning. K V Gopi, 66, of Kulanattukuzhi, and his relative Ayyappankutty, 62, were injured in the attack. According to Gopi, an elephant hit the bike with its trunk and the two fell on the road. Both were shifted to a private hospital in Kothamangalam. Kothamangalam MLA Antony John who visited the injured said the forest department will provide financial aid to Gopi and Ayyappankutty.

Party will not protect anyone in gold theft case, says CPM state secretary M V Govindan



THIRUVANANTHAPURAM. (Agency)
Facing attack from all corners, CPM state secretary M V Govindan has reiterated that the party would not protect anyone in the Sabarimala gold theft case. The culprits must be punished, he said. "It is the declared position of the CPM that not even a speck of gold must be misappropriated."

The party stands with the devotees. The chief minister had stated in the assembly that stern action would be taken. We did not take the issue on the basis of party politics. CPM has welcomed the arrests made by the special investigation team. The real culprits must be brought before justice, he said. He also made it clear that the party would examine whether there was any lapse on the part of individuals in discharging duties entrusted to them by the LDF government.

"It would be applicable to all to whom it is applicable." However, Govindan said that CPM would consider disciplinary action against former TDB president and party leader A Padmakumar only if the court finds him an offender.

"Now he is only an accused in the case. How can we say that he is an offender? Dismissing the opposition's allegations, he claimed that the Sabarimala issue would not have any effect on the local body election. People know that the intention of the government was sincere."

The government could have taken a political decision on the appointment of the new TDB president. However, the government went for a consensus choice. He also said the party does not intend to inquire about the gold theft since it does not involve any organisational issues.

Two women in Hyderabad fail to report rape of minor, listed as accused

HYDERABAD. (Agency)

They did not commit the sexual assault—but their silence has made them accused in the eyes of the law. Two women in Hyderabad have been charged in a POCSO and SC/ST case for failing to report the wrongful confinement of a minor girl they knew was in danger. The incident occurred in November 2024 under Jubilee Hills police limits, and a charge-sheet was recently filed in the local court. Police said a 42-year-old man, Reyyi Raja Reddy, committed penetrative sexual assault on the minor between October 31 and November 5, 2024.

Kumari (name changed) and Swathi (name changed) are accused of wrongful confinement and of not informing the police despite knowing the girl was being held. Raja worked as Kumari's driver, while Swathi was the security guard at the apartment.

Both women have been charged under Section 211 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), which deals with intentionally withholding information about a crime, and under Section 33 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), which requires anyone aware of an offence to immediately alert the nearest magistrate or police officer. Jubilee Hills ACP



P Venkatagiri told TNIE that it is the duty of every citizen to inform the authorities about a crime. "Silence is also a crime," he said. Police initially registered a missing case on November 1 after the victim's mother lodged a complaint. When officers questioned residents, including Kumari and Swathi, both claimed ignorance. On November 6, the girl returned to her mother and revealed the assault.

She was immediately shifted to the Bharosa Centre for support.

According to the police, the victim said Raja and Kumari, under the guise of taking her to a wedding ceremony, took her in a car, bought clothes for her and then confined her on the second floor of a flat for five days, where Raja repeatedly assaulted her. Swathi allegedly supplied food to the girl while she was locked inside. Based on her statement and supporting evidence, POCSO and SC/ST sections were added to the case before police filed the charge-sheet. The case highlights provisions under

Sections 31, 33 and 40 of the BNSS, which outline the public's duty to assist police and magistrates. The law also empowers private individuals to apprehend an offender if they witness a cognisable offence and hand them over to the police. A few months ago, the then West Zone DCP SM Vijay Kumar publicly appreciated a citizen who caught a robbery suspect and turned him in.

MBA graduate, two others held in drug case; cash, SUV confiscated

CHENNAI. (Agency)

Three men, including a London-educated MBA graduate, were arrested by the Anti-Narcotics Intelligence Unit (ANIU) and the Thirumangalam police on Thursday in a drug case. The police seized Rs. 27.5 lakh in cash, a car, OG ganja, and multiple mobile phones during the operation. According to the police, the arrests came after ANIU teams tracked down the absconding suspects based on earlier intelligence. The accused have been identified as Sarath (30), the MBA graduate and the Managing Director of a furniture firm in Vanagaram; Srinivasan (27), a B.Com, LL.B



graduate who was allegedly carrying around 10 grams of OG ganja; and Sarbudeen Mohammad Masthan (44), from whose vehicle the cash, phones and SUV were recovered. Sarbudeen worked as a manager for a popular actor many years ago, the police said. The probe began on Wednesday when police detained Dhyaneshwaran (26) at Park Road in Thirumangalam with four LSD stamps. His interrogation reportedly revealed a wider network of distribution, leading to Thursday's arrests.

On Thursday evening, the police detained two other men from the social media management company who were let go after an inquiry. AIADMK on Thursday night had alleged that the two men were "illegally" taken into custody by plainclothes policemen.

Guntur police bust MDMA drug racket, two arrested

Acting on orders, sub-inspector Mahesh Kumar and his team conducted surveillance at the location and found the accused Vishal Singh Chauhan and Battula Srinivas loitering suspiciously and were detained.

VIJAYAWADA. (Agency)

Guntur police busted MDMA drug racket and arrested two persons involved in an MDMA drug-supply racket on Friday.

Speaking to mediapersons, South zone Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) Bhanodaya

said that both the Eagle team alerted Nallapadu CI Vamshidhar received credible information about suspected drug-peddling activity near the



Y-Junction at Ankireddyapalem village.

Acting on orders, sub-inspector Mahesh Kumar and his team conducted surveillance at the location and found the accused Vishal Singh Chauhan and Battula Srinivas loitering suspiciously and were detained.

Upon inspection, police found 11 grams of

MDMA and a case was registered under Section 80(r/w 21(c) of the NDPS Act.

During the investigation, Vishal Singh revealed that he was acquainted with a Bengaluru-based drug peddler named Sanjay. He said Khaja, a resident of Guntur city, has been purchasing from him and recently placed an order with Sanjay, who entrusted Vishal with 11 grams of MDMA, offering him Rs 2,000 to deliver the consignment to Khaja in Guntur.

Vishal knowingly agreed and travelled from Bengaluru on the night of November 19, arriving the next day near Ankireddyapalem.

Meanwhile, Khaja and his associate Vijay Sagar (alias Vijay) instructed Khaja's driver, Battula Srinivas, to pick up Vishal from the location.

"As Srinivas and Vishal were heading to meet Khaja and Vijay, police arrested them," said the DSP Bhanodaya. She further said SP Vakul Jindal has instructed to intensify surveillance in all public places to curb ganja and other narcotic substances.

Maintenance not a 'debt', can't abuse insolvency law to avoid paying wife: Bombay HC

Ahmedabad. (Agency)

Bombay high court on Thursday dismissed as misconceived a husband's plea to be declared insolvent under the Presidency Towns Insolvency Act of 1909 and also for a stay of a 2021 Mumbai family court order to pay his wife Rs 25,000 per month as maintenance. Justice Jitendra Jain held that seeking a stay of the family court order, the husband, under the guise of insolvency proceedings, would undermine its very purpose and also that the insolvency law can't be allowed "to be abused". The HC added that the conjoint reading of the provisions of the Act bar the HC from passing an order on mere invocation of the law. The court analysed various provisions of the Act as well to hold it would not apply to the husband's case. It also referred to a Mysore HC ruling that held that the maintenance payable under the family court cannot be a

"debt" "Can't abuse insolvency law": Maintenance arrears of ₹22L dismissed as misconception of a man's plea seeking to be declared insolvent, the Bombay HC said the plea under Section 14(1)(A) on the ground that his "debt" due to pending maintenance is over Rs 500, is not maintainable. Justice Jain said the Mysore HC ruling, which said maintenance is not a debt but amoral duty, applied squarely and husband's advocate did not argue his case was distinguishable. A 2014 marriage between the man, a dance teacher from the suburbs, and a south Mumbai woman landed two months later into legal trouble. The wife had moved the family court, which in 2021 directed the husband to pay maintenance effective June 2015. The husband said he earns around Rs 15,000 monthly, a claim the family court rejected, and the arrears are over Rs 22 lakh which he can't pay. The provision he

invoked under the Pre-Independence Act is that since his debt as provided by the statute is over Rs 500, he be declared insolvent. Justice Jain after hearing his lawyer said the husband seeks to take the shield of "insolvency" to protect himself from the sword of the family court order. The insolvency law cannot be allowed "to be abused", the HC said. It would "embolden the debtor (husband) to escape liability through insolvency proceedings". The wife had filed for execution—enforcement—of the maintenance order which the husband wanted the HC to stay by claiming insolvency. HC also said the Insolvency Act provisions invoked by the husband "cannot be abused to seek stay of the family court order granting maintenance when the petitioner himself has challenged that order in Criminal Revision Petition".

Chinese fishing net planks collapse, five German tourists fall into water in Kochi

KOCHI. (Agency)

Five German tourists suffered minor injuries when they fell into the Vembanad lake after the Chinese fishing net planks they were standing on collapsed at Fort Kochi on Friday. According to police sources, the injured were rescued by the fishermen who were tending to their Chinese fishing nets, with those passing by in their fishing boats lending a hand. Fort Kochi police have registered a case over the incident.

"The tourists were saved by the low tide," said Vijesh K V, a Union government-certified tour guide and local resident. "Or else, the tourists would have been swept away into the sea as the area has strong currents." He blamed the inexperience and a lack of caution on the part of the guide who had accompanied the German tourists.

"Usually, such trips are conducted by native guides who know the dangers and also the precautions that need to be taken when



getting on such apparatuses. But the tourists had hired a north Indian guide who had no

knowledge of the Chinese fishing nets," he

pointed out. Vijesh explained that since these

Chinese fishing nets are fixtures in the lake, the dampness eats into the wooden structure. "They lose their strength. So, planks won't be able to hold a lot of weight."

Normally, the number of visitors taken out to the Chinese fishing nets is around two or three. Here, the guide took eight tourists, and their combined weight caused the planks and the supporting structure to collapse," the guide said. According to Antony Kureethara, Kochi corporation councillor from Fort Kochi, the tourism department and the civic body are to be blamed for the incident.

"Time and again, it had been highlighted that the Chinese fishing nets needed urgent repair and renovation. But no step has been taken so far. And now, such an incident has happened," he said.

Connecting India's two-speed economy

The parallel analysis of some key indicators reveals a sharp and persistent divergence in India's growth story. The National Statistics Office's Index of Industrial Production for September 2025, when combined with the RBI's Industrial Outlook Survey for July-September 2025, highlights a troubling conflict. Industrial growth is being vigorously driven by investment and capital goods, but is being held back by uneven household demand, particularly in mass-market segments.

Simply put, while metal beams, electrical machinery, and motor parts are accelerating India's industrial complex, the underlying sentiment paints a picture of a 'divided engine'. Investment is thriving, supported by policy and corporate confidence, but mass consumption is disturbingly lagging. This divergence presents a central challenge to policy makers: how to synchronise these two disparate growth trajectories and ensure the current investment boom translates into inclusive prosperity.

Headline figures confirm industry's structural resilience. The IIP grew 4 percent this September. The manufacturing sector contributed much of this growth, expanding by a respectable 4.8 percent. Within this, high-weight industries—notably, basic metals and electrical equipment—acted as the primary accelerators, strongly signalling active industrial investment and infrastructure activity.

IIP's 'use-based' classification helps us distinguish clearly between long-term capacity creation and immediate consumer behaviour. The 10.5 percent surge in infrastructure and construction goods reflects a strong policy dividend arising from continued government capital expenditure. This public spending acts as a powerful counter-cyclical tool, generating demand for fundamental industrial inputs like steel and cement. Capex-led momentum is directly driving higher output for basic metals (12.3 percent growth) and electrical equipment (28.7 percent)—sectors that form the backbone of industrial capacity creation and productivity enhancement. Crucially, the 4.7 percent growth of capital goods affirms that businesses view the infrastructure push as structural and enduring, justifying significant fresh investment commitments. This is perhaps the most optimistic signal: the private sector is derisking its long-term bet on India's growth potential. Furthermore, the strong 10.2 percent growth in consumer durables reflects entrenched urban affluence, with higher incomes confidently deployed toward discretionary, large-ticket spending. This investment focus, while crucial, also provides the context for the RBI's optimistic survey results. The central bank's survey adds the manufacturers' lens, offering structural relief and future-oriented confidence that helps understand this duality better. The survey reports easing pressures from the cost of raw material, financing cost, and salary outgo in July-September 2025-26. This reduction in input inflation and debt burden is a massive win for corporate balance sheets.

This is the key analytical connection: falling operating costs, combined with robust output in capex-linked sectors, directly implies higher profit margins and stronger financial liquidity for core industries. This explains how high-margin sectors like basic metals and auto components (which grew 14.6 percent) can sustain such high output and confidence, creating a virtuous cycle on the supply side. The corporate mood regarding the future remains overwhelmingly optimistic. The RBI's Business Assessment Index rose to a comfortable expansionary territory, while the Business Expectations Index for the subsequent quarter remained stable at a highly expansionary level. Manufacturers are confidently predicting improved demand conditions all the way into April-June 2026. Underpinning this hope is the expectation that current infrastructure spending will eventually unleash pent-up consumer demand, supported by regained pricing power. Manufacturers anticipate the market will be resilient enough to absorb price increases, which is a critical indicator of genuine economic strength. Importantly, this long-term confidence is also reflected in a strong employment outlook.



Terrorism rooted in rancour, distrust

Probe into Delhi car blast shows that even doctors are not immune to radicalisation

THE blast that killed 15 people near the Red Fort on November 10 came as a rude shock not only to our muscular government but also to citizens across the country. A terror module allied to the Pakistan-based Jaish-e-Mohammed was unearthed. Most of those arrested so far are doctors. What is so surprising? The common man can't imagine that those whose noble profession expects them to serve the public can play a part in terror activities. Among the accused are Muslim doctors from states/UTs such as J&K, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana and West Bengal. There is tough competition for seats in medical colleges. Studies continue for over five years, and if students wish to specialise in any branch of medicine, it entails another two years or more. Having spent the best years of their youth preparing for a profession that is all about curing patients and saving lives, why would they turn to killing or maiming innocent people? The answer lies in the motives of other terror modules that have been busted over the years. Abhinav Bharat was a lone module surprisingly embedded in the majority community; it was unearthed by Maharashtra's Anti-Terrorist Squad. Its members resorted to terrorism because they were dissatisfied with the steps taken by the ruling BJP against jihadi terrorists. Deep anger drove even those who were advantageously placed in the political sphere. So, what about those who had already got a raw deal? The ground was prepared for rancour and hate to thrive when the Muslim-majority J&K was deprived of statehood and condemned to an inferior status by those who should have welcomed it into the ranks of the secular and the equal. It was a rude reminder to the people of the state-turned-UT that they could not be trusted. The Modi-Shah duo could not stop boasting about the transformation it had engineered in J&K. The UT was flooded with more troops and paramilitary forces, expecting thereby that cross-border terrorism and separatism among the Kashmiris would be curbed. That happened initially because of the surprise factor. It took a few years for the disgruntled elements to regroup, but the inevitable rejection has surfaced and become a reality.

Legendary statesman Atal Bihari Vajpayee had approached this ticklish and perennial Hindu-Muslim problem with much thought and finesse. He placed his trust in AS Dulat (R&AW chief in 1999-2000), who had cultivated a lasting friendship with Farooq Abdullah. The Abdullahs have been largely responsible for the Kashmiri Muslim siding with India in its territorial dispute with its Muslim-majority neighbour Pakistan. But the present BJP-led government had other plans. It decided to use aggression to subdue the native Kashmiri Muslim and prove to its supporters that it was a strong government, unlike the Congress-led UPA and even the Vajpayee dispensation.

Such an approach rarely works. If citizens do not welcome the prospect of brotherhood, there is no way that the Indian State — or any State, for that matter — can rule except by force. Terrorism sprouts in such settings. The Irish Republican Army kept the British Army on its toes for a century and more in Northern Ireland. It was an uneasy peace that was enforced till the British government decided to change tack and began to concentrate on winning hearts and minds instead.

Some of the main conspirators in the Red Fort blast case are from Pulwama, which had witnessed a suicide bombing

America's support for stern action against terrorists according to the law of the land. Reading between the lines, it can be guessed that he advised against another round of Op Sindoor. It would be foolhardy to enter into an armed conflict with our nuclear-armed neighbour. We may suffer some loss of ego and pride but that would be a small price to pay in the backdrop of the progress we have made through infrastructure development and economic advancement during PM Modi's reign. The investigation into the Red Fort case has been entrusted to the National Investigation Agency, presently led by Sadanand Date,



in February 2019 that claimed the lives of 40 CRPF personnel. India retaliated with the Balakot airstrikes. Earlier this year, Operation Sindoor was our successfully executed reply to the Pahalgam terror attack. The Indian Air Force and the supporting ground forces carried out their jobs with precision by dismantling several terror hideouts in our neighbour's territory. Unfortunately, our Prime Minister could not restrain his euphoria and threatened to repeat Op Sindoor if and when Pakistan dared to sponsor terror across the border again. Neither warring neighbours nor major world powers will be able to cope with the consequences of never-ending hostilities in the Indian subcontinent. After the Delhi car blast, US Secretary of State Marco Rubio issued a statement praising India's "studied response" and success in identifying terror modules within the country. He voiced

easily one of the best IPS officers I have come across in my years in the police and after my retirement. He is an officer with a conscience — fair, just and honest to the core. He will deliver the culprits to the courts and hope that justice is done. The terror module had planned attacks all over India. Its tentacles had spread far beyond Haryana and the AI Falah University where it incubated. At least one major task has been achieved as several smaller modules have been neutralised, but the strife will continue in the foreseeable future. Distrust between Hindus and Muslims has existed for centuries, and I dare say the animosity will not disappear in a hurry. But a modus vivendi has to be worked out for the simple reason that even a muscular regime cannot just wish away 15 per cent (Muslims) of India's population. Lynchings, bulldozer justice, allegations of love jihad — all this has to stop.

Data protection rules a work in progress towards trust economy

The rules empower citizens by giving them the right to correct or withdraw their data and by demanding greater accountability from entities that process it

With the rollout of the long-awaited data protection rules, the Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023 has entered the implementation stage, marking a shift in how personal information will be handled in India's expanding digital ecosystem. The government has adopted a phased rollout: some provisions take effect immediately, while the full framework will be operational over the next 18 months. In this first phase, companies must publish privacy notices in clear, accessible language, appoint grievance officers, and establish data-retention and deletion systems. At the heart of the rules lies the principle of informed consent — entities must clearly state why they are collecting personal data and how they intend to use it. Added safeguards for children and persons with disabilities underline the intent to give individuals meaningful control over their digital footprints. The rules provide guidance on retention and deletion of data. Any organisation collecting personal information must ensure it is erased once its purpose is fulfilled and notify individuals before deletion. In the event of a data breach, companies must report the incident to the authorities within 72 hours. The framework also

introduces consent managers — government-approved platforms that will allow users to view, modify, or withdraw permissions in one place. These systems must be in place by November 2026, potentially reshaping how people monitor and manage their data across services. The government has, however, granted itself exemptions to process personal data, including that of minors, for



specific State functions such as delivering services, issuing certificates, and granting licences. While these carve-outs have triggered concerns among privacy advocates, the rules do require government agencies to follow defined standards when handling such data. The balance between public interest and personal privacy will depend on how these exemptions are exercised and overseen. Despite apprehensions, the arrival of a formal data protection regime is both necessary and overdue. The rules empower citizens by giving them the right to correct or withdraw their data and by demanding greater accountability from entities that process it. At a time when personal information is routinely misused for fraud, profiling, and manipulation, the emphasis on accuracy, consent, and security is timely. The possibility of state overreach remains a legitimate concern, but it should not overshadow the value of a comprehensive protection framework. As implementation unfolds, real-world challenges will emerge, offering opportunities to refine and strengthen the system further.

In fine balance: An assessment of Justice Gavai's raj

Justice Gavai deserves appreciation for asserting the judiciary's independence, as the strike-down of the Tribunal Reforms Act showed. But his verdict on presidential reference missed a cardinal point.

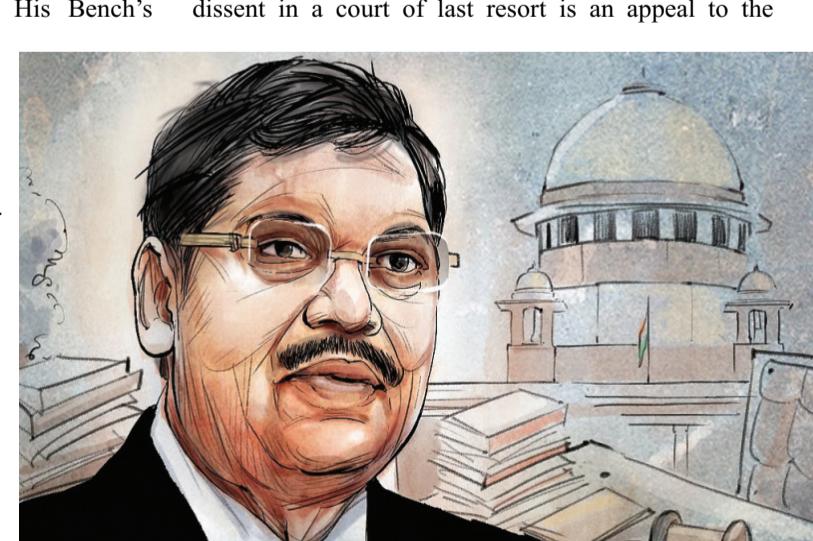
In his 1958 essay on the need for judges to retire, James C Sheppard used the memorable phrase "the age of judges and judges of the ages". The 52nd Chief Justice of India, B R Gavai, retires on November 23 on account of his age. 'Judges of the ages' emerge only rarely, based on the seminal contributions made to the nation and to humanity at large. It requires courage, conviction, and a great level of judicial integrity, accompanied by all other judicial virtues. Let's start the summation of Justice Gavai's era near its end. His latest pronouncement, on the presidential reference, realised the issues correctly, yet provided no solutions. Though the permissibility of judicial review over gubernatorial delay was acknowledged in Thursday's judgement, by rejecting the idea of deemed assent, he negated the pragmatism in the Tamil Nadu governor's case. Deemed assent is a constitutional imperative in situations of extreme delay. It also averts the situation of erring governors facing action for contempt of court. The Constitution Bench led by Justice Gavai missed this cardinal aspect.

This week, his Bench also struck down the Tribunal Reforms Act, 2021 whose provisions attempted to create executive dominance in India's tribunal system. As such, it was an assertion of judicial independence. As a judge of the apex court, Justice Gavai was part of the Bench that validated the abrogation of the special status of Jammu and Kashmir. By the time it was decided, the case had practically become infructuous, as the state's special status had been irrecoverably abolished by then. Again, he was part of the Bench in the Association for Democratic Reforms (2024) case that struck down the dubious scheme of electoral bonds. His endorsement to the 2016 demonetisation scheme in 2023 was practically inconsequential; the delay in adjudication was, however, not attributable to him. He has acted in situations that were ostensibly unjust and inconceivable. In *Rahul Gandhi vs Purnesh Ishvarbhai Modi* (2023), it was a Bench led by Justice Gavai that stayed the conviction

and sentence of the leader of the opposition in the Lok Sabha. The court considered the serious ramifications on Section 8(3) of the Representation of the People Act, 1950, contemplating disqualification of parliament membership based on the conviction. He upheld not only the right of an elected MP, but also that of the electorate who wanted him to represent them. His Bench's intervention averted an unprecedented tragedy of an MP being disqualified for the conviction and maximum punishment imposed in a case based on a private complaint. The bail order he issued to activist Teesta Setalvad also had a libertarian message. With *In Re: Directions in the Matter of Demolition of Structures (2024)*, dealing with states' unsanctioned bulldozer action on its citizens' properties, he reminded the states how their mischief overturned the very idea of the rule of law — one of the fundamental principles of our democracy. The partial stay granted by him on the Waqf (Amendment) Act, 2025 reflected his readiness to interfere in cases of majoritarian onslaught, so as to keep a fine balance between parliament's power and the limitations imposed on it by the Constitution.

In environmental cases, at times, only extreme judicial postures can lead to moderate solutions. The requirement for environmental clearance before commencement of potentially hazardous projects was underlined in a 1994 Environment Impact Assessment Notification issued by the Centre, followed by another notification in 2006. The Vanashakti judgement of May 2025, which prohibited the Centre from granting 'ex post facto' environmental clearance was a radical measure intended to protect the nation's fragile

ecosystems. That Chief Justice Gavai chose to review and recall the judgement at the behest of the Centre and others is highly dispiriting. Justice Ujjal Bhuyan's dissent in the case is an exposition of the fragilities of the course adopted by the Chief Justice. Charles Evans Hughes, Chief Justice of the US in the 1930s, said, "A dissent in a court of last resort is an appeal to the



brooding spirit of law, to the intelligence of a future day." Chief Justice Gavai's indulgence towards 'green crackers' during this year's Diwali also had an adverse impact on Delhi's already contaminated air. Like many of his predecessors, Chief Justice Gavai occupied the highest position in the country's judiciary only for a short period. Yet, this was a significant time when India's judicial system began to transform itself into an executive court and an executive's court, as scholar

Gautam Bhatia called it. How far this Chief Justice could assert against a mighty executive is a pertinent question. On the judicial side, he could do it in many cases, though not in all. On the administrative side, by acting as the master of the roster, he permitted a Bench led by Chief Justice designate Surya Kant to allow the special intensive revision (SIR) to happen in Bihar, without addressing the basic legal challenge against the process based on the provisions in the Representation of the People Act. Now SIRs in several other states are coming up for consideration before the Supreme Court. Allotment of cases to a particular Bench cannot be a matter of public opinion. The impact of the rulings by any Bench on the country's democracy cannot be lost sight of. This is how the Chief Justice, as the master of the roster, becomes a centre-point of attention, even in cases where he was not a party. Chief Justice Gavai maintained the online court system, the most radical administrative reform in the Supreme Court initiated by the previous Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud. Chief Justice Gavai's reluctance to facilitate enough number of Constitution Benches has been a matter of concern. In conclusion, one may not be able to describe him as a judge of the ages. He did his best to distance himself from a self-intensifying executive. His gesture against post-retirement avenues for judges, made in the public domain, is remarkable. The judicial maturity that he presented in the shoe-gate incident was commendable. Pursuant to the offensive act, in a caste-ridden society, he placed himself above such prejudices with an ethically-strong silence. He did not give an impression of acting in tune with the regime's dictates. After all, we live in an age when judges who try to disassociate with the regime of the day deserve to be appreciated and acknowledged on that count alone.

NEWS BOX

Ricin terror plot: ATS finds videos of terror suspect

Ahmedabad. (Agency)

The Gujarat Anti-Terrorism Squad has found digital evidence, an ISIS flag and incriminating literature in connection with the ricin mass-casualty plot uncovered after the arrest of three terror suspects near Adalaj toll plaza on Nov 9. Two videos found by ATS show movements of Dr Ahmed Mohiuddin Sayied — the terror mastermind and on whom material to make ricin was found — in Ahmedabad. Two days later, Sayied (35) was arrested with two others — Azad Suleman Sheikh (20), and Mohammad Suhail Mohammad Saleem Khan (23).

The videos, filmed after dark, are said to be from Nov 7. In one, Sayied is seen coming out of a hotel near Sidi Sayyed Masjid in Ahmedabad's Mirzapur area, carrying a seemingly heavy bag to a car. In the second, he is seen walking along the street and entering a dead-end lane near the hotel. Sources in the ATS said the videos are evidence that Sayied was in the city before his arrest. Deeper investigations into the case have revealed cash transactions to buy material and machinery to make ricin. Digital literature titled, 'How to Stay Anonymous' shared during a conversation between one of the accused and his handler on a social media platform, has also been recovered, officers said on Friday. The team found an ISIS flag and digital evidence from the home of Suhail. Sayeed's social media display profile, a screenshot of which was shared by ATS, had a similar flag, officers said, adding that Suhail had also sent a parcel to Suleman Sheikh. ATS is investigating what the parcel contained.

Saiyed, the prime accused in the terror plot targeting key spots across the country, is a doctor from Hyderabad, while Azad Suleman Sheikh is a tailor from Shamli, Uttar Pradesh, and Mohammed Suhail Mohammed Saleem Khan is from Lakhimpur Kheri, also in UP.

MTC launches drive to promote bus use in Chennai

CHENNAI. (Agency)

The MTC on Friday launched 'Bus First', an initiative aimed at improving the reliability and efficiency of public transport by giving priority to buses in city. The campaign was inaugurated by Deputy Chief Minister Udhayanidhi Stalin at Anna Square in the presence of Transport Minister SS Sivasankar, Transport Secretary Shunthongam Jatak Chiru, MTC MD T Prabhushankar and officials.

The initiative is being supported by the GCC, the Commissionerate of Transport and Road Safety, the Greater Chennai Traffic Police, and ITDP India. According to Prabhushankar, the initiative seeks to establish buses as the backbone of urban mobility, promote greater respect for public transport among all road users, and ensure buses receive priority on the roads. The goal is to reduce delays caused by traffic congestion and encourage more people to use public transport by improving its reliability.

MTC buses remain the lifeline of Chennai's transport system, carrying around 35 lakh passengers daily.

Sikhs in Telangana to mark 350th martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur

HYDERABAD. (Agency)

Sikhs in Telangana will commemorate the 350th Martyrdom of the Ninth Sikh Guru, Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Sahibji, on a large scale from November 23 to 30. The week-long observance will honour Guru Tegh Bahadurji's sacrifice for religious freedom through Nagar Kirtans, Vishal Kirtan Darbars and mass congregations.

The events will be organised under the aegis of the Prabandhak Committee, Gurudwara Saheb Sitaphalmandi, Secunderabad, in coordination with all Sikh Gurudwaras across Telangana. Alongside the martyrdom commemoration, the Gurudwara will also observe the 350th Gurta Gaddi of Sri Guru Gobind Singhji,



marking his installation as the tenth Sikh Guru. Committee chairman Harpal Singh and others announced that a Kirtan Darbar will be held on November 23 from 11 am to 2.30 pm. A colourful Nagar Kirtan will be taken out on November 25 from Gurudwara Saheb Secunderabad at around 4.30 pm. A Vishal Kirtan Darbar will also be held on November 30 from 10.30 am to 5 pm at NTR Stadium, Indira Park.

Provogue auction: EOW registers cheating case in Mumbai

MUMBAI. (Agency)

The Economic Offences Wing (EOW) of Mumbai police has, on the basis of a complaint by the former managing director of Provogue, registered a Rs 90 crore cheating case against a few former employees of the company, a resolution professional and Arpit Khandelwal, director of Plutus Investments and Holding Pvt Ltd. According to the FIR lodged by Nikhil Chaturvedi, former managing director of Provogue, the accused caused a Rs 90 crore loss by undervaluing assets, failing to recover dues, and manipulating the liquidation process. The company's Damai factory caught fire in 2014, after which its loan account with Union Bank of India turned into a non-performing asset (NPA). The bank initiated proceedings under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, and Amit Gupta was appointed as resolution professional (RP), whose job is to manage the insolvency resolution process.

In 2023, the company was sold through an e-auction to Plutus Holding. The FIR states that export receivables worth Rs 32.71 crore, which



arose from overseas transactions between 2018 and 2023, were not recovered. It further alleges that the true valuation of its subsidiary Elite Hong Kong, which was reportedly worth Rs 54.72 crore as per the 2017 to 2018 financials and held two immovable properties in Hong Kong, was knowingly suppressed in the liquidation valuation report.

The FIR states three independent valuers were not provided complete balance sheets and other relevant documents for valuation. While the value of Elite Hong Kong was suppressed and hidden under "other asset", in 2022, Arpit Khandelwal of Plutus obtained financial benefits of crores of rupees by selling one of

two immovable assets of Elite Hong Kong, the FIR mentions.

Rakesh Rawat, who was the sole director of Elite Hong Kong, and former employee Sameer Khandelwal conspired with the Plutus director to undervalue assets of Provogue India Limited and its subsidiary during proceedings before the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT), the FIR states. It also states that the liquidation process was stalled for nearly two years, which allegedly enabled Plutus to acquire assets at a significantly depressed price.

Rakesh Rawat said he has no information of the FIR being filed. Vivek Toshniwal, CEO of Plutus, said, "It may be noted that none of these individuals are directly or indirectly related or associated with Plutus Investment and Holding Pvt Ltd, which acquired Provogue through the e-auction process of NCLT in March 2023 on no liability basis after failure of multiple previous e-auction attempts. It seems that this FIR has been filed with malafide intent after 2.5 years of completion of the due NCLT process and attempts to undermine and question the process and regulatory authority of NCLT."

Ulsoor Lake revamp gets Rs 82 crore boost with Kalyani, walkways and water-cleaning upgrades

BENGALURU. (Agency)

The historic Ulsoor Lake is set for revamp at an estimated budget of Rs 82 crore. Bengaluru Central City Corporation, under which the water body falls, will have a Kalyani (temple pond) with an artistic touch that will have ritual points and an elevated viewing deck. The revamp includes an open air theatre, shaded walkways and landscaping.

According to an official from VIMOS, an environmental engineering and water purification system firm that jointly developed the design and Detailed Project Report (DPR) along with Prestige Group, said that under the 15th finance component, Rs 25 crore was released for the contractor who is executing the work, and the Gabion Wall in Phase-I is almost complete. So far Rs 9.5 crore has been spent on the wall. The upper level of the northern part of the lake will have a walkway made out of gravel, and at the edge of the lake premises, concrete up to three feet will be added and grill fencing will be installed. "The



Minor Irrigation department has released Rs 40 crore for water management. Apart from that, the state government has released Rs 20 crore. About 98 per cent of the funds mentioned in the DPR are already available, and this will help in the completion of the project at the earliest. By March-end, the development activity at the northern part of Ulsoor Lake will

be completed, and work on the southern side will be taken up," said an engineer from VIMOS. The project includes cleaning the water with level differences introduced for gravity-based filtration using terraced wetlands, bioswales, and cascading pools that naturally cleanse the water. For security, CCTVs will be installed. To prevent floating materials from entering the lake through the drain from the MEG side, a trash barrier will be installed. "The islands will be developed, and plants will be added. The place will not be used for any recreation activity and restricted for humans," said the engineer. The official also added that the Karnataka Tank Conservation and Development Authority (KTCDA) has given its approval for developmental activities like bund strengthening, retaining walls, and others hence, there is no hurdle for development.

Tamil Nadu govt submits draft SOP for political meetings to Madras HC



KOCHI. (Agency)

CHENNAI: The state government has submitted the draft standard operating procedure (SOP) to be followed during political meetings and other large gatherings. Additional Advocate General J Ravindran on Friday informed the first bench of Chief Justice Manindra Mohan Shrivastava and Justice G Arul Murugan that the SOP was submitted in the court on Thursday as per the directions issued during previous hearing.

The court asked him to share the copy of the draft SOP with the petitioner, TVK, and implead petitioners AIADMK and Desiya Makkal Sakthi despite the AAG expressing unwillingness to share the draft

with unrecognised political parties such as TVK. It adjourned the hearing to next week for taking a final decision on the SOP. Ravindran informed the court that the draft was framed by taking into account the suggestions and objections submitted by the political parties. The counsel appearing for TVK told the court that almost all the obligations, as set out in the draft, were on the political parties and not on the government authorities. Calling for transparency in processing the applications submitted by parties seeking permission to hold rallies, he suggested creation of a website for this purpose and the details of applications, and the orders passed on them by.

Passenger cooks noodles in train using electric kettle; Central Railway fumes

MUMBAI. (Agency)

A recent viral video of a woman cooking instant noodles in a household electric kettle inside the AC coach of an express train has sparked a sharp reaction from Central Railway, which has decided to initiate action against the passenger and the social media channel. We have identified the Instagram handle where the video was originally posted and will soon be able to trace her location using travel details, CCTV footage, and social media records," said a CR official, adding that action will be taken under Section 147 (1) of the Railways Act for trespassing on any part of a railway without legal permission or misusing railway property after lawfully entering. According to sources, the video was originally posted on the Instagram handle of Sarita Lingayat.

In the clip, recorded on Nov 20, the woman is seen plugging a household electric kettle into the AC coach's charging socket — meant strictly for low-power devices such as mobile phones and laptops — and using it to cook noodles. She is also heard joking about being able to "set up a kitchen anywhere" and claims she is preparing tea for over 15 people. The video went viral on various social media platforms, amassing hundreds of thousands of views, with several users tagging railway

authorities and flagging it as a serious fire hazard. On Friday, CR's official X handle @Central_Railway posted a statement warning that the use of kettles, immersion rods, or any heating appliances inside trains is strictly prohibited.



Railway officials said such devices typically draw 1000–2000 watts, far beyond what the 110V, low-amperage sockets in coaches are designed to handle. Overloading can lead to short-circuits, fire, or tripping of breakers, affecting lights, fans, and AC systems and endangering passengers on board. Despite warning stickers near each socket, officials said similar misuse has been reported earlier as well, with offenders fined or even detained under provisions of the Railways Act.

Eknath Shinde set to open guardian minister's office in BMC HQ

MUMBAI. (Agency)

More than two years after BJP's Mangal Prabhat Lodha took up office space at the BMC headquarters, Dy CM Eknath Shinde is getting ready to take charge of the Mumbai City guardian minister's office in the HQ ahead of civic polls, which are likely to be held in Jan 2026.

Lodha was Mumbai City guardian minister in the Shinde-led Mahayuti govt between mid-2022 and Oct 2024 and had opened an office in the BMC in 2023. After the Oct 2024 assembly polls, the office has remained unoccupied. Since it is designated as the guardian minister's office, Shinde, who is now guardian minister for the city in the Devendra Fadnavis-led govt, has requested

that he get the same chamber. Shinde's staff will operate from the office to receive citizens' complaints and interact with visitors. Sena functionaries will not sit there in his absence, though elected Sena representatives like MLAs and MPs are expected to use it through the week.

Civic sources said Shinde is slated to inaugurate the office around Dec 2. On Thursday, former Sena MP Rahul Shewale and former Sena corporator from Wadala Amey Ghole visited the BMC headquarters to inspect the office premises. Senior Sena functionaries said Dy CM Shinde has directed them to open the office as early as possible. "We have conducted a site visit and identified the office. We will open it by



next week. Shinde has asked us not to wait for a formal opening and start resolving people's issues there immediately. So we will ask our people to work out of there and help

Plastic usage persists as ban not effective in Vijayawada

VIJAYAWADA. (Agency)

Even as officials claim to have intensified measures to curb single-use plastic across Vijayawada, the ground situation paints a different picture.

Plastic use continues unabated in almost every corner of the city, with carry bags, cups, and disposable packaging flooding markets. Far from the strict enforcement promised by municipal authorities, on-ground checks remain weak, sporadic, and largely ineffective. Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu had announced a complete ban on single-use plastic in 17 major urban local bodies, including Vijayawada, from October 2. Following the directive, officials initially launched a series of raids and seized banned plastic items from several shops. However, the momentum seems to be fizzling out within weeks. With enforcement teams no longer seen on the ground, plastic products have made a strong comeback not just in commercial hubs but across markets, roadside stalls, and residential localities.

From street vendors and flower markets to fruit stalls, tiffin centres, and hotels, the use of banned plastic is widespread.

Vendors openly hand out carry bags without any hesitation or fear of penalties. Activists argue that the enforcement model itself is fundamentally flawed. The ban was intended to target wholesalers and manufacturers, the real sources of plastic circulation, but officials continue to focus only on small traders and pushcart vendors. The wholesalers and manufacturers, who are the primary suppliers of banned carry bags and disposable items, remain largely unregulated and unmonitored, and their supply chains are rarely inspected. This has become largely symbolic, with little real impact. Activists allege that authorities have failed to trace supply chains, conduct checks at godowns, or seize stock from bulk distributors. As a result, banned plastic continues to pour into the city in large quantities, making enforcement at the retail level pointless.

authorities and flagging it as a serious fire hazard.

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A political observer said, "Ahead of BMC elections, Sena seems to be playing catch-up with BJP. The BJP's guardian minister had used such an office for over two years. Sena has had little impact or presence in the BMC, especially in terms of public interface. So this seems to be an outreach attempt. This is more of optics as the BMC poll code of conduct will be announced soon and no real work can be done from this office after that."

Tejas Air Crash 2025: A Look Back At Air Show Disasters Worldwide

New Delhi.(Agency)

A Tejas fighter jet crashed on Friday afternoon during a high-speed aerial demonstration at the Dubai Air Show. The crash occurred at the Al Maktoum International Airport at 2:10 pm, killing the pilot, Wing Commander Namansh Syal, aged 34. According to the Indian Air Force (IAF), the indigenous fighter jet was performing a low-altitude manoeuvre when it lost control and plummeted to the ground.

This incident adds to a long list of air show tragedies worldwide.

Poland Air Show, 2025

A Polish Air Force F-16 fighter jet crashed during a rehearsal for the Radom Air Show in August 2025. The jet went out of control during a tight-turn manoeuvre at low altitude, killing the pilot.

Pakistan Day Air Show, 2020 A US-built F-16 jet crashed in a wooded area near Islamabad while rehearsing for a military

parade for Pakistan Day air show. The aircraft lost control during a low-altitude manoeuvre, killing the pilot, Wing Commander Noman

Shoreham Air Show, 2015

A Hawker Hunter T7 warbird crashed onto a main road during an aerial display at the Shoreham Airshow at Shoreham Airport, England, killing 11 people and injuring 16 others. The pilot, Andy Hill, was critically injured but survived.

Bournemouth Air Festival, 2011

Flight Lieutenant Jon Egging was killed when his Hawk T1 aircraft plunged to the ground near Bournemouth Airport in Dorset during a display. An inquest heard that Egging was probably close to unconsciousness before his plane hit the ground. Shoreham Air Show, 2007

A vintage World War II Hawker Hurricane fighter crashed during a mock "Battle of



Britain" aerial display. According to the Air Accidents Investigation Branch (AAIB) report, an unplanned barrel-roll manoeuvre was performed when it went into a steep dive and crashed. This incident claimed the life of the Pilot and

reports.

Skipliv Air Show, 2002

In what was one of the deadliest air show accidents, a Sukhoi Su-27 fighter jet lost control and crashed into the crowd, killing 77 people and injuring over 500 others. Both pilots survived with minor injuries.

Moscow Air Show, 1992

Two MiG-29 jets collided mid-air during a display. Both pilots ejected safely, but debris from the collision fell dangerously close to spectators, according to

Paris Air Show, 1973

The Tupolev Tu-144 supersonic jet lost control during a demonstration flight and crashed, killing six crew members and eight spectators. The plane broke apart in the air while performing extreme manoeuvres and fell into the town of Goussainville, France. The crash effectively ended the development program of the Tupolev Tu-144. Akram.

Made In China, Turkey, Supplied To India Via Pak: Major Arms Racket Busted

New Delhi.(Agency)

The police in Delhi have busted a major international illegal arms smuggling racket that was supplying weapons made in China and Turkey to India. The syndicate, linked to Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), was smuggling high-end pistols from Pakistan into India using drones, officials said. The police arrested four key members of the gang, including a wanted criminal, Mandeep, of Punjab, and two of his close aides, Rohan and Monu, both from Uttar Pradesh. The police also recovered 10 expensive foreign pistols and 92 live cartridges. Mandeep, who is associated with the Sonu Khatri gang, has numerous criminal cases registered against him, including for murder. Investigation has revealed that the drones dropped the consignments of weapons at designated locations. The consignments were wrapped in carbon paper so that they are not detected by scanners. The members of the gang were then instructed to collect the weapons from these drop locations and deliver them to Delhi. These weapons were then supplied to criminals in Delhi and surrounding states, officials said. The police are now working to determine the number of weapons they sold in India and the gangs or individuals who were involved. The main operator of the racket is said to be Jaspreet, alias Jassa, who is based in the US and maintains direct contact with his handlers in Pakistan, sources said. Security agencies are also investigating the other members of the gang and their links using mobile phones, bank details, and social media records. Security in Delhi and other parts of the country has been increased following a blast in the national capital last Monday. 15 people were killed and many others injured when a Hyundai i20 car driven by a suicide bomber, Umar un Nabi, exploded near the Red Fort, popularly known as Lal Qila, on November 10. Hours before the blast, Jammu and Kashmir Police had announced that it had cracked an interstate and transnational "white-collar" terror module, linked to the Pakistan-based Jaish-e-Mohammed and the Ansar Ghazwat-ul-Hind, an al-Qaeda-affiliated terror group, in the illegal racket.

Website-design error: Al-Falah University responds to false accreditation charge

New Delhi.(Agency)

Faridabad's Al-Falah University, already under scrutiny after officials linked members of its medical college to the November 10 Red Fort blast, has now responded to a show-cause notice from the National Assessment and Accreditation Council for displaying long-expired accreditation grades on its website. Last week, NAAC pulled up the university after it showcased "A Grade" accreditation for its Engineering and Education colleges from 2013 and 2011, even though both certifications had lapsed years earlier. Each was valid for only five years, expiring around 2018 and 2016. The university has admitted the error, blaming 'oversight' and "website-design lapses", and has removed the claims following NAAC's directive. For the moment, the council isn't pursuing further action, though it has issued notices to about 25 other institutions in a broad over 200 doctors and staff at Al Falah University are under the scanner of the investigative agencies following the blast in a car near the Red Fort on November 10 which killed 15 people and injured several others. A transparency push. One of the doctors at the varsity-cum-hospital, Dr Umar-un-Nabi, is alleged to have acted as a suicide bomber while driving an explosive-laden car on November 10.

Security agencies have been conducting frequent checks at the university, which sources said had long-standing links with terror operatives. Fugitive Indian Mujahideen bomber Mirza Shadab Baig -- wanted for a series of explosions in 2008 -- was a former student of the Faridabad-based university. Several doctors of the university have been arrested in connection with the Delhi blast.

Gratuity Eligibility Reduced To One Year From Five In New Labour Rules

New Delhi.(Agency)

The Union government has announced changes to India's labour laws, reducing the minimum service requirement for fixed-term employees to receive gratuity from five years to one year. The move forms part of a wider overhaul unveiled on Friday, November 21, which rationalizes 29 existing labour laws into four labour codes.

Eased Gratuity Norms

Among the most significant changes is the easing of gratuity eligibility, a shift expected to reach a large and diverse workforce. Under earlier rules set by the Payment of Gratuity Act, fixed-term employees qualified for the benefit only after five years of continuous employment. The new codes relax this requirement, allowing fixed-term employees (FTEs) to access gratuity after completing a single year of service. Here, the intention is to ensure parity between fixed-term and regular staff. The updated provisions guarantee

FTEs the same salary structure, leave entitlements, medical benefits and social security coverage as permanent workers. The government believes this alignment "promotes



direct hiring and reduces excessive contractualisation," the centre said in a statement. Fixed-term employees are hired for a set period or for a specific project. The new rules aim to treat them more like permanent staff. The changes also cover informal, gig, platform workers, migrant labourers and women employees.

Understanding Gratuity

Gratuity is a lump-sum financial payout employers make to workers as a gesture of appreciation for extended

service. Traditionally, employees received it upon resignation, retirement or another form of separation after fulfilling the mandatory five-year period.

With the reworked rules, fixed-term staff will no longer have to wait that long. The government expects the shorter eligibility window to give employees stronger financial stability, particularly during job changes.

New Labour Codes Replace Outdated Laws

India's patchwork of labour rules dates back to the pre-Independence and early post-Independence decades, when economic conditions were vastly different.

While many nations have modernised and merged their labour laws over the years, India continued to rely on a mix of fragmented and sometimes outdated legislation spread across 29 Central Acts. This created compliance challenges for employers and uncertainty for workers.

Who Was Wing Commander Namansh Syal, Pilot Who Died In Dubai Tejas Crash

New Delhi.(Agency)

Wing Commander Namansh Syal, the Indian Air Force pilot, died when a Tejas fighter jet crashed during a flying demonstration at the Dubai Air Show on Friday. The aircraft -- a single-seat Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) developed by Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) -- went down at around 2:10 pm local time, according to eyewitnesses and videos sourced by Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu expressed grief over the death of Wing Commander Namansh Syal, calling it "heartbreaking and heart-rending." The nation has lost a brave,

dutiful, and courageous pilot. I express my deepest condolences to the bereaved family members," he wrote on X (formerly Twitter).

"I pay heartfelt tribute to the indomitable bravery, dedication to duty, and commitment to national service of brave son," Sukhu added. Who Was Namansh Syal? The 34-year-old pilot was a native of Patiyalkar village in the Kangra district of Himachal Pradesh. Syal is survived by his wife, also an IAF officer, their six-year-old daughter and his parents. Syal did his schooling at Sainik School, Sujanpur Tira, in Hamirpur district, as reported by the

news agency PTI.

His father, Jagarnath Syal, too served in the Indian Army before working as a principal in the education department, the news agency ANI reported. "Namansh Syal's parents are currently at the Sular Air Force Station near Coimbatore in Tamil Nadu," Ramesh Kumar, a relative of Wing Commander Syal, told the news agency. His wife, who also serves in the IAF, is in Kolkata for a course. His father, Jagannath Syal, served in the Indian Army's Medical Corps and later worked in the education department, retiring as a principal.



FAKE EXPORTS & DIVERTED DUTY-FREE IMPORTS

The ED case stemmed from a 2023 CBI FIR against Garg and seven others, including Mumbai-based Titan Sea & Air Service Pvt Ltd and its directors. The FIR relied on findings of the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence, which flagged large-scale misuse of Free Trade Warehousing Zones in Maharashtra. According to officials, Titan Sea & Air Service was permitted to import materials duty-free for re-export under the SEZ Act. Instead, between 2015 and 2017, the company allegedly diverted PVC resin and betel nuts -- imported from Dubai and Indonesia -- into the domestic market without paying customs duty.

China Used India-Pak Conflict To Conduct "Real-World" Test Of Its Weapons: Report

China tested its modern weapons systems for the first time during the India-Pak conflict in May.

New Delhi.(Agency)

China "opportunistically" used the India-Pak conflict in May to "test and promote" its defence capabilities, a bipartisan US commission has said in its annual report. The report by the US-China Economic and Security Review Commission, published on Tuesday, said that Beijing leveraged the four-day conflict to "test and advertise the sophistication of its weapons, useful in the contexts of its ongoing border tensions with India and its expanding defence industry goals." "This clash was the first time China's modern weapons systems, including the HQ-9 air defence system, PL-15 air-to-air missiles, and J-10 fighter aircraft were used in active combat, serving as a real-world field experiment," the report said. China then reportedly offered to sell 40 J-35 fifth-generation fighter jets, KJ-500 aircraft, and ballistic missile defence systems to Pakistan in June, the report

said. In the weeks after the conflict, Chinese embassies also praised the "successes" of its systems in the India-Pak clash, seeking to "bolster weapons sales", the report, which is based on committee hearings and research that includes publicly available information and media reports, said.

Why Are NRIs Hating Mamdani? Because He Threatens Their 'AmeUS Man Quits AI Startup Founded By IIT Graduates On Day 1, CB British Family's Vande Bharat Train Journey Experience Viral Railway Group D 2025 Exam: Admit Card, City Slip Out? Check They Took Their First Flight: India-Origin Techie Shares EmoThe Rich Will Get 'Fit', And Poor Will Be Lectured - That's The Woman Who Gave Indian Children In Saudi Arabia A ClassroWhy Are NRIs Hating Mamdani? Because He Threatens Their 'AmeUS Man Quits AI Startup Founded By IIT Graduates On Day 1, CB British Family's Vande Bharat Train

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campaign" to discredit the French Rafale fighter jet after the India-Pak conflict, the report said. "According to French intelligence, China initiated a disinformation campaign to hinder sales of French Rafales in favour of its own J-35s, and it used fake social media accounts to propagate AI and video game images of supposed 'debris' from the planes China's weaponry destroyed," the report said. It said that Chinese embassy officials convinced Indonesia to halt a purchase of Rafale jets already in process. China, however, rejected the report as "disinformation". "This so-called 'commission' that you mentioned always harbours ideological bias against China and has no credibility to speak of," Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning said while responding to a question on the Rafale disinformation campaign at a media briefing. "The commission's report itself is disinformation," she added.

NEWS BOX

IND vs SA, 2nd Test: New captain, same old luck as Rishabh Pant loses toss

New Delhi. (Agency)

India's wretched luck with coin tosses continued, even with a new captain at the helm, as Guwahati made its Test debut on Saturday. Fortune evaded Rishabh Pant when he walked out to lead India in the second and final Test of the series against South Africa at the Barsapara Stadium. Pant flipped the coin, Temba Bavuma called heads, and the call proved correct. Pant became India's 38th Test captain and the first wicketkeeper-batter to lead the side since MS Dhoni. South Africa chose to bat, seizing the early advantage on what is expected to be a good sporting pitch in Guwahati. With a red-soil base, the surface is forecast to assist batters for the first two days before offering something to the spinners. It was India's eighth lost toss in their last nine Tests. Shubman Gill, who missed the Guwahati Test due to a neck injury, lost every toss in a five-match series in England earlier this year. Despite the rub of the green not going his way, Gill led India to a 2-2 draw in what was his maiden series as Test captain. Gill won a toss against the West Indies in Delhi in October but lost a crucial



one against South Africa in the first Test of the ongoing series in Kolkata last week. South Africa capitalised on the advantage on a difficult pitch, which had uneven bounce and plenty of assistance for the spinners, and India failed to chase 124 in the final innings, when batting became a lottery.

Pant had been expected to bring about a change in India's fortunes at the flip of the coin, but things did not go to plan. "We feel the wicket is good for batting. But at the same time, bowling first is not a bad option either," Pant said, playing down the impact of the toss.

INDIA MAKE TWO CHANGES

India made two changes to their playing XI, bringing in Sai Sudharsan for Axar Patel and Nitish Kumar Reddy for Shubman Gill.

Greatest return catch Watch Mitchell Starc's age-defying effort in Ashes 1st Test

New Delhi. (Agency)

Mitchell Starc has been conjuring up magic in the first Ashes Test in Perth. After rattling England with seven wickets on Day 1, the left-arm quick produced a sensational return catch that dominated headlines on Saturday at Optus Stadium. Starc pulled off a scarcely believable grab to dismiss England opener Zak Crawley for 0, striking in the first over of an innings for the second time in the match. Ashes 1st Test, Day 2 Updates | Scorecard Starc pitched it full and Crawley, feeling the pressure of still being without a run in the Test, threw his hands at the drive. The ball took an inside edge and popped up. Starc, completing his follow-through, flung out his left hand and clung on. Losing his balance, he tumbled to the turf but kept



the ball securely off the ground. Social media lit up in praise of the Australian, with many wondering whether it might be one of the greatest return catches ever taken. The wicket gave Starc his eighth of the match and provided Australia with an early breakthrough after they had conceded a 40-run first-innings deficit. It completed a pair for Crawley, who had fallen for 0 in the first innings when edging Starc to the slips.

Remarkably, it was also the first time in Test history that the opening partnerships in the first three innings of a match all failed to register a run. Crawley's two ducks bookended another 0 at the top of the order — Australia debutant Jake Weatherald bowled by a blistering Jofra Archer yorker. At 35, Starc has been asked to shoulder the pace attack following the absences of captain Pat Cummins and veteran Josh Hazlewood. The senior seamer, who retired from T20Is to prioritise Test cricket, responded superbly, tearing through England on Day 1. He reached 100 Ashes wickets and recorded the second-best innings figures by an Australian fast bowler in an Ashes Test.

**Bavuma's quiet captaincy, no superstars: Jonty Rhodes on South Africa's resurgence**

South Africa's resurgence in Test cricket is built on belief, resilience, and a new leadership identity under Temba Bavuma. With historic wins at home and abroad, the Proteas are redefining what it means to be a modern Test powerhouse.

TBILISI. (Agency)

South Africa's rise in Test cricket has been anything but ordinary. When conversations turn to dominance in the longest format, the spotlight usually falls on India or Australia—teams with established legacies, depth, and consistency. Yet, over the past few years, South Africa has quietly constructed a compelling case for itself, emerging not with loud declarations but with steady, resolute

performances across formats. Their resurgence wasn't sudden burst but a slow build rooted in resilience. Final appearances in the 2024 T20 World Cup and the 2025 Women's ODI World Cup, along with a semifinal run in the 2023 ODI World Cup, had already shown signs of a shift. For decades, the "chokers" tag shadowed South African cricket, but the Temba Bavuma-led side decisively buried that narrative by winning their first-ever World Test Championship title for the 2023–2025 cycle—beating Australia, no less, in a performance etched in history. Crucially, that landmark achievement did not mark the end of their upward trajectory. South Africa carried their momentum into unfamiliar and challenging conditions. After falling 1–0 behind in Pakistan, they levelled the series with conviction in Rawalpindi. From there, they travelled to India—the toughest away examination in modern Test cricket—and stunned the hosts with an emphatic win in the first Test in Kolkata. Now, in Guwahati, they arrive not as underdogs but as genuine contenders. The belief underpinning this side mirrors the transformation former Indian

captain Virat Kohli once envisioned for his own team: a unit capable of competing anywhere in the world. South Africa are now embodying that philosophy, with Bavuma at the heart of it. In an exclusive conversation



with Sports Today, former South African star Jonty Rhodes reflected on how this transformation took shape, contrasting the fears of his playing days with the confidence of the current squad. "Twenty years ago, when I was still playing cricket, if we travelled to India, we'd arrive with our nerves already shot," Rhodes recalled. "We'd be wondering how much the ball

would spin past the bat, feeling uncomfortable, and honestly not believing we could take 20 wickets." According to Rhodes, that psychological barrier was perhaps South Africa's biggest challenge in the subcontinent. While talent was abundant, belief wavered. That's where the modern setup has seen its most significant shift.

"Now, that's the key difference with this South African team," he said. "Sure, they struggle with the bat, scoring 150s or even less, but having 30 more runs on a turning surface in India shows the quality of our spin bowling and the shift in mindset." Rhodes credits much of this to Bavuma's leadership—steady, understated, and deeply effective.

"Arriving here believing you can compete with India—great side at home—says a lot about Temba Bavuma's captaincy," he added. "It's a quiet captaincy. It's not a team buzzing with superstars; they're just guys who go out and do the job. And on difficult surfaces, it's often those teams that pull together that come out victorious."

India seek revival in Guwahati under Rishabh, the captain

GUWAHATI. (Agency)

Thirteen months ago, a Test tour to India usually meant prayers and vibes. Sides came in hope but deep down they already knew that there was no point in hoping. Such was India's mastery in their own backyard.

Three Test losses spanning a 11-year period from 2013 to 2024. Each loss was a stop the press, an event inside the event because they were so rare. Each win was met with a shrug of the shoulder and more words on the artistry of R Ashwin, the magnificence of the bowlers, the artisan attributes of Ravindra Jadeja or the skills of Virat Kohli... you get the drift.

It came down to a shuddering halt at the hands of New Zealand. Across three games in Bengaluru, Pune and Mumbai, a very real sense of invincibility was punctured. When the Kiwis left these shores, the hosts knew they had to rebuild that lost aura. Players left, a captain moved on, a No. 4—a family heirloom in these

**England extends lead to 99 runs at lunch in Ashes opener**

PERTH. (Agency)

Mitchell Starc's extraordinary return catch didn't trigger another batting slide, with England instead managing to extend its lead to 99 runs at lunch Saturday in the Ashes series opener against Australia. Only two wickets fell on the second morning in Perth—one for each team. England took a 40-run first-innings lead after dismissing Australia for 132 in the sixth over when Brydon Carse dismissed Nathan Lyon.

The Australians had resumed on 123-9 on Day 2 in response to England's first innings of 172. Starc removed Zac Crawley before England had scored for the second time in as many innings. This time, though, Ben Duckett (28) and Ollie Pope (24) combined to lift England to 59-1 in its second innings at the interval. Duckett survived a rugged last over before

lunch. Immediately after charging at Scott Boland and being hit on the left forearm, he was given out lbw to the Australian fast



bowler. England reviewed the decision and ball tracking technology showed Boland's delivery had pitched outside the line, giving

Duckett a reprieve on the last ball before the break. Starc's stunning catch to dismiss Crawley for a pair was the highlight of a comparatively mild session in the context of the first test. He removed the England opener in the first over of the second innings a day after dismissing him in the first over of the match—that started chaotic opening day when 19 wickets for 295 runs in 72 overs. Starc, who took a career-best 7-58 on Day 1, was fully into his follow-through after a delivering a ball at around 140 kph (87 mph) and had the athletic ability to lunge to his left and take the catch at full stretch just above ground level to remove Crawley.

The Barmy Army of touring fans were in full voice on the second day, when another crowd of 50,000-plus was expected at Perth Stadium.

West Indies bowled out for 161 in the 3rd ODI against New Zealand

New Delhi. (Agency)

HAMILTON: The West Indies' bold decision to bat first after winning the toss backfired Saturday when the Caribbean side was bowled out by New Zealand for 161 in the third one-day international. First through Matt Henry with the new ball, then with effective use of the short ball and later with Mitch Santner's spin, New Zealand dismissed the tourists in 36.2 overs.

West Indies captain Shai Hope was happy to bat first on what looked to be a docile pitch at Seddon Park, dry and sparsely grassed. But there was a little swing early and, when that abated, New Zealand's persistence with a shorter length paid off as batters made a start but often fell to soft dismissals.

Henry dismissed Akeem Auguste and Keacy Carty within the space of three balls in the fifth over after the West Indies had made a bright start. The tourists scored at a run a ball through the first 10-over power play but lost three wickets in that period which exposed the middle order. Four wickets fell for 36

runs in the next 10 overs—the West Indies were 96-7—and the tail again was called on to come to the rescue. New Zealand holds an unassailable 2-0 lead in the three-match series after winning the first match by seven



runs and the second by five wickets. Henry first removed Auguste (17) with a back of a length delivery which the batter tried to pull and top-edged to Jacob Duffy. Carty was hurried by a short ball outside off stump which he tried, too late, to leave

deflecting the ball from the dangling bat onto his stumps. A good length ball from Kyle Jamieson undid John Campbell who made 26 from 24 balls. Campbell followed the ball outside his off stump and, when it straightened, edged to Michael Bracewell at slip. Hope looked set at 16 and was unlucky to be caught down the leg side by wicketkeeper Tom Latham off Zak Foules. Sherfane Rutherford made 19 before trying to ramp a short ball from Jacob Duffy which bounced more sharply than he expected. The ball flew to Mark Chapman running in from backward point. Mitchell Santner spun out Justin Greaves (1) and Matthew Forde (0) in the same over before Duffy bounced out Shamar Springer (12).

Roston Chase bolstered the innings with 38 from 51 balls before falling to a short ball from Henry which flew to Bracewell at extra cover. Khary Pierre, playing for the first time in the series, showed some defiance with an unbeaten 22, including two sixes before Henry finished the innings with the wicket of Jayden Seales. Henry took 4-43 and Duffy and Santer both took 2-27.

Yet another disappointing Ranji season for Tamil Nadu

It all started with a disappointing Buchi Babu campaign where lack of self-belief and not being able to field the best XI cost them.

SEVILLE. (Agency)

CHENNAI: When the Tamil Nadu Cricket Association (TNCA) began the preparation for the Ranji Trophy well in advance by organising the All-India Buchi Babu tournament, little did they know that their hopes of making the knockouts would come to an end only after the fifth game. Yet another season where their long-awaited Ranji dream failed to materialise.

It all started with a disappointing Buchi Babu campaign where lack of self-belief and not being able to field the best XI cost them. It was where the newly-appointed head coach M Senthilnathan, who will continue as red-

ball coach while M Venkataramana takes over the white-ball team, had a look at the players and made plans for the upcoming season. So when the Ranji Trophy came along, one expected the hosts to get off to a decent start against Jharkhand, but that was not to be. Ishan Kishan scored a magnificent century to inflict an innings defeat and that was just the beginning. Although it was clear that they would not have the services of B Sai Sudharsan, Washington Sundar, with R Sai Kishore also missing out, the rest did not rise to the occasion. The season began with B Sachin and N Jagadeesan as the new opening pair. Pradosh Ranjan Paul who used to bat lower down the order was promoted to No 3 followed by C Andre Siddarth. But the top six batters and No 7 Shahrur Khan failed not just against Jharkhand but also versus Nagaland in the next game. When every other team sealed a win against the North East team, TN fell flat with the ball despite centuries from Vimal Kumar and Pradosh. They ended up walking away with

a draw. They went on to lose two more games and drew against Uttar Pradesh, where Rinku Singh killed their hopes of making the knockouts. Through the season,



the inability to take timely wickets cost them dearly. S Ajith Ram was out of action and spinners DT Chandrasekar and J Hemchudeshan could not rise to the occasion. The problem for Tamil Nadu bowlers has been about the mind set more than skill. The problem is at the Senior

Division league where teams either play on flattest pitches or rank turners with spinners taking wickets for fun. Often teams used to bat for one and a half days and play out a dull draw. And when they are desperate for a win, they produce rank turners to get the desired result. One cannot overnight change the bowling style and start dictating terms at the First class level. Tamil Nadu fast bowlers have grown bowling on placid tracks in the TNCA league, so when they play away from home and when the wickets have something to offer for seamers they are not able to grab it with both hands. And once the ball becomes old, they struggle to contain or give breakthroughs. The batting group has not clicked as a unit. The youngsters have been good in patches but not consistent across the five rounds. With the likes of Vijay Shankar and B Aparajith moving to Tripura and Kerala, respectively, the rest have not stepped up. Batting at the top level is all about confidence and when the team is not doing well, the performance dips due lack of self-belief.

Weekly review: Heavyweights lift the market; India rebounds hard in a volatile period

CHENNAI.(Agency)

Indian equities spent the week navigating a tight mix of optimism and caution, with domestic strength repeatedly colliding with weak global cues and a volatile currency. The result was a market that swung between sharp dips and strong rebounds, but ultimately held its ground thanks to robust corporate earnings and steady buying in heavyweight stocks.

The week opened on a soft note. After a six-day winning streak, the Nifty 50 slipped below 26,000 on November 18 and the Sensex dropped over 270 points. Investors turned risk-averse as global markets weakened and hopes of an early US Federal Reserve rate cut faded. The mood was cautious, and sentiment remained fragile through the next session. Midweek, however, the tone flipped. Strong interest in index heavyweights — especially banks and large diversified conglomerates — pulled the indices back into positive territory. The Sensex pushed to a fresh 52-week high, and the Nifty climbed toward its yearly peak around 26,200. Steady domestic flows helped offset foreign investor hesitation, and the strength of India Inc's earnings season lent the market a firmer footing.

Corporate results remained a key positive driver. Companies across sectors — from financials and telecom to metals and discretionary consumption — continued to signal demand improvement, rising margins, and better pricing conditions. Cooling inflation and recent tax measures have boosted household purchasing power, allowing consumer-facing businesses to report stronger traction. Analysts expect this trend to support double-digit earnings growth in the second half of FY26.

But the recovery faced clear headwinds. Currency volatility returned to the forefront as the rupee weakened past 89 to the US dollar, triggering concerns over foreign outflows and cost pressures for firms reliant on imports or foreign currency borrowings. With US tech stocks under pressure and global liquidity tightening, foreign institutional investors remained selective. Domestic investors filled part of the gap, but the currency slide kept sentiment from turning fully bullish.

Weekly review: Gold shakes off the slump, closes the week on a rising note

CHENNAI.(Agency)

Gold prices in India spent the week moving in a narrow but noticeable pattern — starting with a dip, stabilising mid-week, and ending with a mild recovery. The week opened weak. On November 18, gold slipped as post-festival demand eased. Prices for 24-carat gold were around Rs 12,366 per gram,



while 22-carat and 18-carat also traded lower. This initial decline set the tone for a quieter start to the week. On November 19, prices picked up slightly. Gold gained a small amount across all purity levels, showing that the selling pressure had begun to ease. But the momentum didn't last long — by November 20, prices softened again, with 24-carat gold hovering around the Rs 12,470–12,490 range in major cities. Market reports showed only small variations across metros, as the broader trend remained flat. The mood shifted on November 21, when gold began to firm up. Prices rose modestly, supported by a more stable global backdrop and a slight improvement in safe-haven buying.

New Labour Laws To Empower Gig Workers, Women

New Delhi.(Agency)

The new labour laws will provide for inclusive growth and social security for gig workers and women, improving their participation in the country's workforce, said the government on Saturday. India has witnessed a major shift in its labour regulation framework with the implementation of the four consolidated labour codes. The four Labour Codes include the Code on Wages, 2019, the Industrial Relations Code, 2020, the Code on Social Security, 2020, and the Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, 2020.

The Code on Social Security, 2020, aims to ensure comprehensive and inclusive social protection for all sections of the workforce, especially gig and women workers. It "reflects the government's commitment towards inclusive growth and social security for all, in line with the vision of a Viksit Bharat by 2047," according to an official statement. For the first time, Social Security Code recognises gig and platform workers, establishing a Social Security Fund for their welfare. "The social security benefits have been extended to unorganised, gig and platform workers under Sections 113 & 114 of the Code on Social Security, 2020," the statement said. The Code calls for establishing a National Social Security Board to advise the government on formulating and monitoring suitable schemes for different sections of workers in the unorganised, gig, and platform sectors. The Social Security Fund will be used to provide benefits such as life insurance, disability cover, health and maternity benefits, and provident fund schemes for these workers.

Implementation of new Labour Codes to raise employers' costs but simplify compliance

As per the Ministry of Labour and Employment, the Labour Codes will bring major improvements in wages, workplace safety, social security, equality, and employee rights across several sectors

New Delhi.(Agency)

The implementation of the four Labour Codes, notified on Friday, is set to increase operating costs for large companies due to mandated higher wage-related expenses and stricter accountability for safety and working conditions. However, companies will benefit from simplified compliance requirements, including a single

registration, a PAN-India licence, and a single annual return. The Ministry of Labour and Employment replaced and streamlined 29 older labour laws with four Labour Codes—the Code on Wages, 2019; the Industrial Relations Code, 2020; the Code on Social Security, 2020; and the Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions (OSH) Code, 2020. As per the Ministry of Labour and Employment, the Labour Codes will bring major improvements in wages, workplace safety, social security, equality, and employee rights across several sectors.

"For employers, it means simpler compliance but also higher wage-related costs and greater accountability on safety and working conditions. For workers, it brings wider social security coverage, mandatory appointment letters, minimum wages for all, and stronger protections especially for women, gig workers and contract staff," said Suhail Nathani, Managing Partner, Economic Laws

Practice. The new regulations mandate that all employers issue appointment letters and ensure timely payment of wages. They also require that all



workers—including gig and platform workers—receive social security coverage such as PF, ESIC, insurance, maternity benefits, and pension. Under the new law, women are allowed to work at night in all occupations, subject to their consent and necessary safety measures. Gratuity eligibility has been reduced to

one year of continuous service instead of five, and fixed-term employees must be paid wages equal to those of permanent staff. These provisions are likely to increase employer costs across sectors.

For the first time, the law defines gig work, platform work, and aggregators. The regulations also mandate guaranteed minimum wages and access to basic facilities—such as canteens, drinking water, and rest areas—for MSME workers. For IT and ITES employees, salaries must be released by the 7th of every month. Equal pay for equal work has been mandated, and women's participation has been strengthened with the option to work night shifts in all establishments. For migrant workers in the textile sector—whether direct, contractor-based, or self-migrated—equal wages, welfare benefits, and PDS portability have been ensured. They can raise claims for up to three years to settle pending dues.

From gratuity to gig worker insurance: What new labour laws mean for employees

New Delhi.(Agency)

India's labour landscape underwent its biggest reset since Independence on November 21, 2025, when the government finally implemented the four labour codes. These codes, on wages, industrial relations, social security and occupational safety and health, replace 29 separate laws and bring India's decades-old labour framework under one consolidated, modern system.

For a workforce that has expanded at a record pace in the past few years, the timing is striking. Between 2017–18 and 2023–24, India added over 16 crore jobs. Unemployment fell from 6% to 3.2%. More than 1.5 crore women entered the formal workforce. But this new economy was still being governed by rules written for a very old one. The codes attempt to fix that mismatch by replacing a tangle of overlapping, outdated laws with a cleaner, digital-first framework. For the Indian workforce, this translates to clearer wages, stronger protections and wider access to benefits. For employers, the compliance maze of old filings, licences and multiple inspections gives way to a simpler, unified system. In this article, we unpack what these new labour codes really mean for salaries, job security, benefits and everyday working conditions.

GRATUITY AFTER ONE YEAR, AND A NEW DEFINITION OF WAGES

One of the most immediate changes comes from a uniform definition of wages, which now applies across all labour laws. This alone reshapes how companies structure salaries, allowances, and benefits. It also alters gratuity calculations.

Fixed-term employees, who form a huge chunk of India's modern workforce, become eligible for gratuity after just one year of service instead of five, a significant shift for sectors built on contract or project-based cycles. It may be noted that fixed-term employees are workers hired on time-bound contracts—common in IT, manufacturing, media, startups and project-driven sectors—where employment ends once the contract expires. Sudhakar Sethuraman, Partner at Deloitte India, calls this moment "a long-awaited structural reset." "The codes bring greater uniformity to wage structures and key employment-related provisions. The compliance framework is aimed at being simpler, consistent and easier for stakeholders to navigate," Sethuraman said. He added that the government is likely to roll out implementation in phases, as most states have draft rules ready and are now moving toward finalising them.

Gratuity in a year Only if you're a fixed-term employee. Here's what it means

New Delhi.(Agency)

One of the biggest talking points in the new labour codes is the promise of gratuity after just one year of service. It sounds like a major shift for every salaried worker, but the fine print matters. The benefit does not apply to everyone. It applies only to fixed-term employees, a category the government has tried to strengthen through the new framework.

WHAT IS FIXED TERM EMPLOYMENT?

A fixed-term employee is someone hired on a written contract for a specific period. The employment lasts only for the duration mentioned in the contract. Once that period ends, the job ends automatically without any formal termination process. This model is widely used in sectors that depend on seasonal demand or project-based work. Manufacturing units, textiles, construction, IT services, media production, logistics, hospitality and export-linked businesses rely heavily on fixed-term hiring because their

workloads often fluctuate. The labour codes say that fixed-term employees must receive wages, leave, hours of work and social-security benefits



equivalent to permanent workers. The intention is to ensure these workers are not treated as disposable labour but as part of the formal workforce.

WHAT IS GRATUITY?

Gratuity is a lump-sum payment an employer gives an employee as a reward for long-term service. Under earlier laws, employees needed five years of continuous service to qualify. In most industries, fixed-term workers never reached that mark because their

contracts would end long before completion of five years. As a result, a large segment of India's workforce worked in formal roles but remained ineligible for this basic benefit.

WHAT HAS CHANGED UNDER THE LABOUR CODES

The Labour Codes introduce a new rule. A fixed-term employee becomes eligible for gratuity after one year of continuous service. This applies even if the contract ends at the end of that year. It is important to note that permanent workers still need five years of service to qualify. The reduced one-year rule has been created purely to cover the nature of fixed-term work. The government's reasoning is simple. If employers expect fixed-term staff to deliver the same output as permanent employees, then these workers should also receive meaningful social-security benefits. This closes a long-standing gap where contract workers contributed full-time effort but received no long-term financial benefit from their employment.

Fixed-term employees to get gratuity after 1 year of service under new labour laws

New Delhi.(Agency)

Fixed-term employees across sectors will now be entitled to gratuity after just one year of employment at an organisation and not after mandatorily completing five years as the Union government on Friday unveiled a major overhaul of India's labour framework. The government consolidated 29 existing labour laws into four simplified labour codes. According to the Union Labour Ministry, the restructuring is aimed at ensuring better wages, wider social security coverage and improved health-related protections for workers across sectors. A fixed-term employee is an individual hired under a contract that specifies a predetermined end date or terminates upon the completion of a specific task or project. The reforms extend to informal workers, gig and

platform workers, migrant labourers and women employees. One of the most significant announcements in this package concerns gratuity entitlement—a change that could impact millions of employees.

5-YEAR-LIMIT A THING OF THE PAST

Under the Payment of Gratuity Act, fixed-term employees previously became eligible for gratuity only after completing five years of continuous service in an establishment. With the new labour codes taking effect, this tenure requirement has been relaxed for Fixed Term Employees (FTEs). Such employees will now qualify for gratuity after completing just one year of service. The ministry clarified that the objective behind this change is to bring fixed-term workers at par with their permanent

counterparts. Under the updated rules, FTEs will be entitled to the same salary structure, leave facilities, medical benefits and social security measures as regular employees. The government expects these changes to discourage excessive dependence on contract staffing and encourage more transparent, direct hiring by companies.

WHAT IS GRATUITY?

Gratuity is a financial benefit paid by an employer to an employee as a token of appreciation for long-term service. Traditionally, this lump-sum amount was handed over when an employee resigned, retired or otherwise separated from an organisation after completing the mandatory five-year service period. With the revised framework, employees under fixed-term contracts will not need.

New labour codes: What changes for paid leave, work hours and health benefits

New Delhi.(Agency)

One of the biggest shifts under the new labour codes is around everyday working conditions, how long employees work, when they qualify for paid leave, how much overtime they can take on and what kind of health benefits they are entitled to. These changes apply across sectors and are designed to improve safety, reduce fatigue and make workplaces more predictable for millions of workers.

PAID LEAVE AFTER 180 DAYS, NOT 240

Until now, employees needed to complete 240 working days in a calendar year before qualifying for annual paid leave. The new codes cut that requirement to 180 days. That means a worker now becomes eligible for leave much earlier in the year, a big shift for those in manufacturing, textiles, retail, construction and other sectors where attendance rules were traditionally rigid. This shorter threshold, combined with a more flexible working-hour structure, is meant to ensure workers get enough rest and recovery. The government argues this will improve productivity and job satisfaction in the long run. WORKING HOURS ARE



BEING RESTRUCTURED

The familiar ceiling of eight hours of work per day and 48 hours per week stays in place. What changes is how those hours can be arranged. Governments can now formally allow different weekly structures, as long as the weekly cap is respected. This means an employee can legally work: 1) Up to 12 hours a day in a

four-day week; 2) Around 9.5 hours in a five-day week

3) Eight hours a day in a six-day week. Overtime still requires consent from the worker, and it must be paid at twice the normal wage rate. The earlier cap on overtime, 75 hours per quarter, is no longer fixed. State governments can set their own limits based on local needs.

This gives workers the option to earn more through overtime while keeping fatigue-related risks in check.

FREE ANNUAL HEALTH CHECKUPS FOR ALL WORKERS

Another major shift is health and medical coverage. Every employee above the age of 40 will now receive a free annual health checkup. This is part of a broader push towards preventive healthcare, especially in sectors where long hours, hazardous environments or physical strain are common. Industries stand to benefit as well. Lower absenteeism, early detection of health issues and reduced long-term medical costs are the outcomes the government is targeting. Plantation workers, specifically, will now have access to ESIC medical facilities, which was not uniformly available earlier. The government describes these changes as "pro-worker provisions" designed to detect illness early, reduce medical expenses and improve long-term health outcomes. The expectation is that healthier workers translate into higher productivity, better safety records and more stable employment relationships.

Shraddha Das

Reveals Why She Decided To Sign 'Search: The Naina Murder Case': 'Konkona Sen Was...'

Shraddha Das is currently basking in the success of 'Search: The Naina Murder Case', where she served us a power-packed portrayal of the ambitious and sharp Raksha. The series, which also stars Konkona Sen Sharma, is streaming on JioHotstar. Days after the release, in an exclusive conversation with News18 Showsha, Shraddha opened up about the project and revealed why she decided to be a part of it. "I feel like I am finally getting my due as an artist. And this was one role that was widely appreciated, critically, commercially, by the audience, from everywhere, whether it was my look, my performance, certain scenes, actually all the scenes. There are certain roles where you are appreciated for looking glamorous and sometimes you are appreciated only for your performance. And here it's like everywhere my character was loved, so there is nothing more satisfying than that as an artist after so many years," she said.

For Shraddha, the role wasn't just powerful, it was a dream come true. When asked what made her say yes to the project, she had a long list of reasons. She began with,

"Five to six things that obviously made me say yes. Number one was that it was being directed by Rohan Sippy sir, whose work I really love. The second thing was the production, which was Applause, which has belted out some of the best projects recently."

Another major reason was her deep admiration for her co-star, the magnetic Konkona Sen Sharma. She shared,

"Then it was Konkona Sen Sharma who was headlining the whole thing. To be working in a project where she is at the centre of, that was another reason." The character itself and the strength of the script sealed the deal for her. Describing her role, she said, "My character had a complete arc to it, from the beginning till the end, I had so much to do. I had a complete parallel leading track. And there were certain scenes where I could really bring out my performance."

A lover of political thrillers, Shraddha revealed her fondness for shows like House of Cards and her admiration for Robin Wright, proudly admitting she has binged the entire series multiple times. Her Bengali upbringing also played a role in shaping her interest in politics. She recalled, "Being a Bengali, my father and I would discuss a lot of politics."



Bigg Boss 19: Deepak Chahar Roasts Sister

Malti Chahar

After Entering BB House, Says 'Khaana Ye Hi Banayegi'

Malti Chahar's brother and cricketer, Deepak Chahar, has entered Bigg Boss 19 during family week. The latest promo shows Deepak Chahar's presence bringing a playful, light-hearted energy to the BB house. His entry leaves Malti surprised initially, and Deepak is later seen hilariously pulling her leg. He reveals that Malti has never cooked at home and announces that he will leave only after tasting the food she prepares. The other housemates joined in on the fun, and Gaurav Khanna joked that Malti is probably wondering why her brother entered the BB house.

Malti Chahar's Brother Deepak Chahar Enters Bigg Boss 19 House



The latest promo of Bigg Boss 19 shows Malti Chahar sleeping in the garden area when Deepak Chahar arrives and wakes her. Startled to see him standing in front of her, she jolts awake in surprise. Bigg Boss then welcomes Deepak into the house, while Malti hugs him. He is then seen telling other housemates, "Main is ghar mein sirf ek hi maksad se aaya hu. Meri behen ne zindagi mein ek roti ka tukda banake nahi khilaaya hai. (I have come to this house with only one purpose. My sister has never cooked even a single roti for me in her entire life)." Malti chimes in, saying

that he is lying. Deepak then continues, "Khaana ye hi banayegi. Khaana khaa ke jaunga main. (She will only cook food today. I will eat the food and then leave)."

After Kunickaa Sadanand offers him a glass of water, Deepak says, "Thank you so much, ma'am." He then roasts Malti and says that she didn't even give him a glass of water. The housemates were left in splits, and Gaurav Khanna added, "Mujhe aisa lag raha hai, Malti soch rahi hai ghar se koi kyu aaya. (It feels like Malti is wondering why someone has come from home)."

Family Week On Bigg Boss 19

Meanwhile, in the upcoming episode, viewers will also see Tanya Mittal's brother entering Bigg Boss 19 house. Apart from this, Shehzad's father will also join the housemates. Earlier, Ashnoor's father, Amaal Mallik's brother Armaan, Farrhana Bhatt's mother, Gaurav Khanna's wife Akanksha Chamola, Kunickaa's son Ayaan, and Pranit More's brother Prayag were seen entering the BB house.



Tanya Mittal Finds Dubai's Atlantis 'Downmarket,' Wants 'Something Better' For Her Wedding



It doesn't matter if you are a viewer of Bigg Boss 19 or not; if you have a phone and a social media account, you know who Tanya Mittal is. The social media influencer has become one of the most popular contestants of Bigg Boss, and it is her claims of being filthy rich and her luxurious habits that have made her one of the most talked-about contestants of the season. Recently, Farah Khan, with her cook Dilip, visited now-evicted contestants and popular influencer couple Awez Darbar and Nagma Mirajkar's home. In the latest vlog, Farah is seen talking to Nagma and Awez about their wedding plans and joking, "Aren't you getting married in Tanya Mittal's place in Gwalior?" to which Awez replied, "No, no, who knows if it actually exists or not."

To this, Farah quipped, "You should at least go to her house once. I'm waiting to go and do a house tour when she comes out." Nagma added, "She used to tell me that she went to Atlantis to do a reception for her marriage, but she wasn't happy." To this, the filmmaker questioned, "Did she think it was 'downmarket'?" and Nagma replied, "Yes, and she wants something better. And she said it will be a wedding of 21 days, so you have to come for one month."

The discussion didn't end here, as Farah continued, "What do you mean, a wedding of 21 days? What happens after that? Divorce?" Nagma laughed and clarified, "No, no, she meant the functions will last for 21 days."

What Does Tanya Mittal Do?

Tanya Mittal hails from Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh. She is an influencer, entrepreneur, podcaster, and former model. She has a following of over 2.5 million on Instagram and shares motivational posts, spiritual stories, and lifestyle content. Tanya was crowned Miss Asia Tourism 2018 and represented India at the Miss Asia Tourism Universe pageant in Lebanon, gaining recognition on an international level.

In Ivory Anarkali, Sara Arjun Impresses Fans And Ranveer Singh



Sara Arjun opted for a traditional ivory floor-length anarkali suit, beautifully blending simplicity and sophistication.

Sara Arjun's debut in Dhurandhar has already become one of the most discussed topics among cinephiles and the excitement only grows with every new glimpse the young actress shares. After winning hearts with her graceful appearance at the film's trailer launch, Sara has now offered fans a closer look at her style through a set of candid photos on social media.

In the newly shared pictures on Instagram, Sara smiles wholeheartedly as the camera captures her natural charm. Some shots show her in sweet, candid moments while others highlight her beauty as she strikes confident poses.

Sara Arjun's Outfit

Sara opted for a traditional ivory floor-length anarkali suit, beautifully blending simplicity and sophistication. The outfit was elevated further with oxidised silver jewellery and her minimal makeup took the overall glam to a whole new level. But the highlight of the post? Ranveer Singh's reaction. The superstar dropped a sparkling emoji in the comments, expressing his admiration for the young actress.

Ranveer Singh On Working With Sara Arjun

Sara and Ranveer's pairing in Aditya Dhar's directorial previously sparked a wave of backlash, particularly due to the 20-year age gap. Recently, at the trailer launch, Ranveer finally shared his thoughts on working with Sara. The actor said, "I'm lucky to be part of such a special moment for you. Sara, here is a prodigy. You will get to know. Some people, you know, they are just like a child prodigy. Once Dakota Fanning came to Hollywood. I think, Sara, it's a testament to the fact that you beat thousands of other candidates to land this part."

Further, Ranveer added, "It feels like she has done 50 films. She is so precocious as a person, as a performer. You are one of the finest actors that I have shared the screen with. You make me look better."

Packed with chilling action scenes and a gripping storyline inspired by true events, Dhurandhar is expected to witness one of the biggest openings of the year. Apart from the lead pair, the film boasts a strong ensemble cast featuring R Madhavan, Akshaye Khanna, Arjun Rampal and Sanjay Dutt in pivotal roles. The film is slated to hit theatres on December 5.

Impact of surface

Colour and design

On physical, mental, and social

Well-being



The colours and designs that surround us are more than just aesthetic choices, they have a profound impact on how we feel, behave, and connect with others. With the growing emphasis on health and wellness, interior surfaces play a transformative role in shaping our mental, physical, and social well-being. Surfaces such as laminates, with their diverse palette and unique textures, demonstrate how thoughtful design can elevate everyday spaces into havens of healing, creativity, and connection.

The tactile qualities of materials play a significant role in our physical experiences. Smooth, easy-to-clean surfaces contribute to improved hygiene and boost safety in our living environments. By integrating antimicrobial properties and ensuring durability, modern surface designs seamlessly blend form and function.



This balance not only makes spaces visually appealing but also supports physical health and well-being. Beyond their practical benefits, textures—whether they're soft and comforting or bold and stimulating—can deeply influence our perception, turning ordinary spaces into places of comfort and vibrancy.

Colour psychology reveals how hues can subtly influence our emotions and state of mind. Where cool blue and green colours are recognised for their calming effect on the mind, facilitating focus and relaxation, vibrant yellow and orange tones sit in contrast to spark energy and foster a dynamic, uplifting environment. Additionally, surfaces featuring natural patterns and motifs, as a hallmark of biophilic design, blur the line between interiors and exteriors, easing stress and fostering a sense of mental well-being by reconnecting one with nature. These design choices craft environments that actively shape and enhance users' emotional experiences.

Surfaces play a pivotal role in shaping the sensory experience of a space, in addition to their aesthetic and functional benefits. The interaction of light and surface finishes, for instance, can significantly alter how a room feels—glossy surfaces reflect light, creating a sense of openness and energy, while matte finishes absorb light, fostering a more intimate, calming atmosphere. These subtle alterations in perception enable designers to manipulate spatial dynamics, creating settings that

either invigorate or relax, depending on the intended effect.

By taking these sensory aspects into account, surface design becomes a potent tool for influencing how spaces appear and how they are experienced on an emotional level. The choice of colours and textures used in a space not only influences individual comfort but also defines social dynamics.

Warm, inviting colours and engaging textures, for instance, can create a welcoming atmosphere that encourages interaction and fosters a sense of community. However, harsh or uninviting surfaces might inhibit social involvement and contribute to a feeling of isolation.

By thoughtfully selecting and designing surfaces, spaces can be designed to enhance social connectivity, support positive interactions, and promote overall well-being among occupants. In essence, surfaces are not just backdrops but are active participants in how we live, work, and connect.

The interplay between material, colour, and texture has the power to transform spaces from mere functional zones into environments that nurture mental, physical, and social well-being. Through creative surface design, we can reshape interiors and influence the lives lived within them.



Add mulch, make pebble trays: Protect

Plants

Amid heatwaves



As the capital continues to battle the summer heat, like you and your pets, your plants and terrace gardens need extra care and attention too. We ask Delhi-based plant care experts for some tips. "Plants may experience heat shocks in this weather. The heatwave is harsh on everyone. The hot air burn up the leaves, making them crisp. Low humidity levels add to the stress. Tropical houseplants suffer the most because they thrive best in humid areas. The current situation is causing browning of leaves, pre-mature shedding of flowers and stunted fruit growth. Plants may experience heat shock and fail to survive," says Aditi Khattar, an urban landscape designer and founder of The Greenish Affair.

Annu Sharma, a plant expert and content creator (@plantsjunkies), says, "This year, plants are either drying up or their leaves are getting burnt due to high temperatures and hot air. Just like humans, plants also experience garm-sard if water is given during the day, damaging their roots. Indoor



plants are also affected due to the excessive use of air conditioners that lower the humidity in the room. I suggest plant parents make DIY pebble trays, fill them with water, and let their plants sit on them to enjoy much-needed humidity.

"While paying extra attention is crucial, some plants like money plant, monstera, areca palm, ZZ plant are still doing well indoors. Snake plant, syngonium, cactus, dragon fruit, jade, aloe vera are faring well outdoors in this weather," adds plant expert Varun Sharma.

Sanchaita, plantscape designer and owner of Baagh Bagicha in Noida, says, "Leaves are getting scorched in Delhi

summers even if they are kept in places that don't get direct sun. Plants like traveller's palms and ficus, which enjoy direct sun, are suffering too. I suggest moving plants to shaded places, to prevent them from drying out quickly. Adding cocopeat to your pots will help the soil retain moisture.

"Tending tips: Check your watering schedule—water your plants in the early morning hours or late evening to ensure absorption. Mulch the soil with organic materials like husk and coco peat to help the soil retain moisture. You can add organic kitchen scrap, wood chips or dried neem leaves. If your plants are getting sunburns, shift

them to a shaded area. If you have a sun-facing balcony or a terrace garden, use a green net providing 75% shade. Keep humidity-loving plants huddled together. Keep plants on top of pebble trays filled with water or use affordable, electric humidifiers to help plants stay healthy. Spray water on plants in the evenings. Avoid repotting plants, until necessary.

Plants take time to adjust after repotting and they may experience shock too, so it is not advised to repot plants during peak summers. Prune dead branches and leaves regularly.