

'Complete lie': Cong rubbishes Rajnath Singh's remark on Nehru wanting to build Babri Masjid with public money

New Delhi.(Agency)
The Congress on Wednesday hit back at Defence Minister Rajnath Singh's claim that Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel "opposed" Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru's proposal to use government money to construct Babri masjid. Party MP Manickam Tagore called his statement a "complete lie". Tagore said, "It is a complete lie by Rajnath Singhji. We all know that Pandit Nehru and Sardar Patel had a cordial relationship, and Pandit Nehru's logic was simple: public money should not be spent on mosques, temples, churches, or gurdwaras. It should be people's contribution..."

What did Rajnath Singh say?

Singh on Tuesday claimed, "When Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru raised the issue of spending money from the government treasury on the Babri masjid, if anyone opposed this, it was Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, born of a Gujarati mother. And at that time, he did not allow the Babri Masjid to be built with government funds."

Addressing a gathering in Vadodara's Sadhli village as part of the Rashtriya Ekta Yatra to mark the 150th birth anniversary of Sardar



Patel, Singh also said when Nehru opposed the renovation of Somnath temple in Gujarat, Patel reminded him that the money was to be spent from a Trust.

Singh said, "Nehru raised the issue of rebuilding the Somnath Temple. When the question of reconstruction was raised, Sardar Patel, in a calm but firm voice, clarified that the Somnath Temple was a different matter. The public has donated lakhs... A Trust has been formed, and not a single paisa of the government's money has been spent on this project. This was established by Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel..."

Congress demands proof of Rajnath Singh's claim

Reacting to Singh's statements, several

Opposition leaders referred to them as "lies." Congress MP Pramod Tiwari, speaking to ANI, expressed that he was deeply hurt by Singh's statements. "I am only hurt that Rajnath Singh is saying this, maybe he has gotten affected by their party, or is being forced to say such things. Nehru made him (Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel) Deputy Prime Minister and Home Minister... Rajnathji, this statement does not go with your history or your personality."

Congress MP Imran Masood also said, "He [Rajnath Singh] is in the government, he should provide some documents. We have documents that Sardar Patel wrote a letter against the mentality of their (BJP's) parental organisation and banned it... It is unfortunate when those in government spread such false narratives in the country." Nationalist Congress Party-Sharad Pawar (NCP-SP) MP Fauzia Khan, sharing her views outside the Parliament, said, "If he [Jawaharlal Nehru] wanted to, his intentions were not bad in my opinion. But for the construction of a mosque, funds can only be collected from those who pray there. So what are these people gaining by raising this useless question?"

Congress MP Manish Tewari said, "Rajnath Singh should focus on strategic challenges instead of twisting and turning history to suit his narrative."

Another Congress MP, Imran Pratapgarhi said, "Where did he even get such information from? He is the Defence Minister of the

country. He has been a Chief Minister. He is considered a serious political figure, not like Modi ji. So he should at least maintain that dignity that whenever you make such statements, especially in a historical context, you must have factual evidence for it."

High Court denies Prajwal Revanna's life term suspension, interim bail in rape case

New Delhi.(Agency)

The Karnataka High Court on Wednesday rejected former MP Prajwal Revanna's application seeking suspension of his life sentence and interim bail in the first rape case registered against him at the Holenarsipur Rural Police Station in Hassan district. A division bench of Justice KS Mudagal and Justice T Venkatesh Naik said it was not a fit case to grant bail, observing, "Weighing the material on record, the gravity of the offence, and considering the effect on other pending cases against the appellant, if the appellant is released on bail, this court is of the considered opinion that this is not a fit case for granting suspension of sentence and

bail," Live Law reported.

The bench noted that multiple cases of sexual abuse were pending against Revanna and highlighted that the victim had not initially reported the incident due to his political and economic influence. It added that releasing him on bail could lead to tampering with witnesses in connected trials.

Senior Advocate Sidharth Luthra, appearing for Revanna, argued that the prosecution's case was weak, that the evidence lacked linkage, and that the accused was facing a "media trial". He pointed to alleged discrepancies in electronic, medical and forensic evidence and argued that the delay of three to four years in reporting.

Pollution being tackled as an emergency mission: CM Rekha Gupta

The Sikh Times
Simmi Kaur Babbar

New Delhi, 03 November: Chief Minister Rekha Gupta has said that any negligence in pollution control in the national capital will not be tolerated. She stated that her government is treating pollution as an emergency mission and is making determined efforts to bring it under control. The Chief Minister made it clear that government institutions showing laxity in pollution control will not be spared. The Delhi Pollution Control Committee (DPCC) has been instructed to issue challans and impose heavy penalties on agencies failing to maintain pollution and cleanliness standards. She has also ordered FIRs against departments conducting



unauthorised road-cutting and failing to restore roads properly. A high-level review meeting on pollution control was held at the Delhi Secretariat under the Chief Minister's chairmanship. Ongoing measures against air pollution were reviewed, and all departments were directed to work on a war footing in the coming days. The meeting was attended by Environment Minister Manjinder Singh Sirsa, Chief Secretary Rajiv Verma, and senior officials from PWD, MCD, DDA, Environment and Forest, DSIIDC, Delhi Metro, NBCC, Power, and DUSIB. The Chief Minister emphasised that while the long-term fight against pollution will continue, immediate measures must be intensified urgently. All departments have been directed to identify and fill potholes within 72 hours. Road-maintenance agencies have been instructed to ensure that no road remains broken. The Chief Minister expressed strong displeasure over certain departments showing irresponsibility and directed DPCC to issue challans against negligent government bodies. Contd.....page 3

To counter Samajwadi's PDA narrative, RSS to launch Hindu outreach programme in UP

New Delhi.(Agency)

The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) is preparing a major Hindu outreach programme in Uttar Pradesh, set to run from late December through the end of February, as part of a coordinated effort to counter the Samajwadi Party's PDA (Pichhuda-Dalit-Alsankhyak) narrative.

Beginning 20 December, RSS cadres will roll out a Grih Sampark Abhiyan, during which they will visit households across villages and cities. The plan, discussed earlier in a coordination meeting involving BL Santosh and Arun Kumar, aims to

highlight the organisation's 100 years of work during its centenary year. In January, RSS and BJP workers will intensify their public outreach by distributing Ram Temple calendars and images, using them as tools to strengthen connect with families across the state.

From 20 January to 20 February, the organisation will hold a series of Hindu Sammelans aimed at consolidating the Hindu community—particularly Dalits, extremely backward classes, and other backward groups. These events



will take place in multiple cities, with an additional large-scale programme planned in Lucknow as a Vishal Hindu Sammelan. Both RSS and BJP workers will participate,

focusing on expanding their reach among Dalit and backward-caste households. These initiatives have been positioned internally as a counter-strategy to the PDA narrative, and were presented as the RSS-BJP's "PDA counter plan" during the recent meeting. The same meeting also discussed projecting Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath as the key face of all these programmes, using his public presence to reinforce the Hindutva message throughout the outreach campaign.

Threatened, pressured: Mahua Moitra says Odisha cops threw out Bengali workers

New Delhi.(Agency)

Trinamool Congress MP Mahua Moitra on Wednesday accused police in Odisha's Nayagarh district of forcibly removing four Bengali-speaking Muslim traders despite their Aadhaar and voter ID cards proving they were Indian citizens. In a video message, the Trinamool leader warned the officers, saying, "You will pay for your actions. Watch out."

The Trinamool Congress had earlier accused the Odisha Police of arbitrary detention and harassment of Bengali-speaking migrant workers. State authorities have, however, dismissed the claims.

In her video, Moitra stated that the four workers, who had been residing in Nayagarh for the past 18 years, were "illegally rounded up" on November



27. "Some of their fathers had also worked in Nayagarh before them. They are poor people who earn their livelihood by selling winter garments and other items," she added. She accused the police of falsely labeling the workers as

Rohingya or Bangladeshi and taking them to the station despite their valid documents. After repeated requests, the police released the workers, but warned them to leave the state within 48 hours. "They (police) threatened and pressured them. The landlords forced them out of their accommodation, making them abandon belongings worth Rs 2 lakh. They had to leave overnight," she said.

"We are taking this to court. You have absolutely no right to evict Bengalis who are legally earning their livelihood in your state. In Bengal, we treat lakhs of Odia cooks, gardeners, plumbers, and other workers with respect and dignity," Moitra added. On Tuesday as well, Moitra raised the same issue in a post on X, drawing the attention of Nayagarh SP S Susree to the matter.

Expensive socialism: Karnataka BJP slams Siddaramaiah over Rs 43-lakh Cartier watch

BENGALURU.(Agency)

Karnataka BJP hit out at Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Wednesday, calling him a "fake socialist" after he and Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar were seen wearing luxury Cartier watches during their breakfast meeting. Sharing images of the watches on X, the BJP claimed that Siddaramaiah's watch alone was priced at Rs 43 lakh.

"Mr. @siddaramaiah, your definition of Socialism seems to come with a very high price tag. While the people of Karnataka struggle with drought and crumbling infrastructure, our 'Simple Socialist' CM flaunts a Santos de Cartier," wrote the BJP. The party also circulated an old photograph from 2016, when Siddaramaiah was seen wearing a Hublot watch that Janata Dal

Secular leader HD Kumaraswamy had claimed was worth Rs 70 lakh. At the time, the BJP demanded a probe, raised the matter in the Assembly, and approached the Enforcement Directorate. Siddaramaiah later clarified that the Hublot was a gift from a doctor friend based in the Middle East, who handed over his own watch after the Chief Minister admired it.

Reacting to the latest images, BJP spokesperson Pradeep Bhandari said on X that the "common man's messiah" image did not match the luxury on Siddaramaiah's wrist. He claimed the watch cost Rs 39,80,093.63 and said two leaders who often spoke about "austerity" and "pro-poor governance" were displaying "Swiss-luxury edition" social justice, "Rahul Gandhi style".



HARD-EARNED MONEY

Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar also responded to the controversy, saying he had purchased his Cartier watch during a visit to Australia. "I bought this watch in Australia and paid Rs 24 lakh for it on my credit card. Please check my transaction, it is my hard-

earned money," he said. "I don't know about Siddaramaiah's watch. He has every right to have a watch. His son or wife might have given it. He has the capacity to buy a watch. What is there in that watch?" he said.

He added that watches had sentimental value in his family. "My father had about seven watches. He used to like watches; when he died, who has to wear them? Either me or my brother," he said.

'QUESTION YOUR OWN LEADER'

Congress MLA Rizwan Arshad criticised the renewed charge, saying the BJP was "selectively targeting" the Chief Minister. He said the party avoided questioning the Prime Minister's "luxury accessories", including Cartier sunglasses, expensive watches, high-end suits, jackets, and pens costing.

Karnataka BJP launched a fresh attack on Chief Minister Siddaramaiah over a Cartier watch it claimed was worth Rs 43 lakh. The party also revived the 2016 Hublot controversy. Congress MLA Rizwan Arshad accused the BJP of selective targeting.

News box

Pay 11% interest to buyer for delay in handover of flat, Haryana Real Estate

Gurgaon.(Agency)

Haryana Real Estate Regulatory Authority (H-Rera) has directed Godrej Real View Developers to pay 10.8% compensation per annum to a Lucknow couple for delayed possession of their flat in Godrej Meridien-I in Sector 106. The order passed by member Ashok Sangwan, came on a complaint filed by Malik Ram and Sarita Verma of Gomti Nagar, Lucknow. The couple moved to H-Rera under Section 31 of the Real Estate (Regulations and Development) Act 2016. Rera rejected the builder's arguments citing Covid 19 and pollution-related construction bans as force majeure beyond the six-month relief already granted. Finding the promoter in violation of sections 11(4)(a) and 18(1) of RERA, H-RERA ruled that the allottees, who paid nearly the entire consideration, are entitled to monthly interest from March 30, 2023, until the permissible cut-off linked to possession. According to the complaint, the allottees booked a second-floor flat in Tower 2 of Phase I for around Rs 1.75 crore under a construction-linked plan. By May 2024, the couple had paid nearly Rs 1.74 crore. According to the agreement for sale executed on Sept 27, 2019, possession of Phase I was to be offered by Sept 30, 2020. H-Rera revised the due date to March 30, 2023, after granting a six-month extension. The developer said that there was no delay and the project was affected by nationwide lockdowns, labour shortages, cost escalations and repeated construction bans in NCR. It said that the occupation certificate was obtained on March 31, 2023, an offer of possession was issued in May 2024 and the conveyance deed was executed in Nov 2024 before physical possession was handed over on Nov 27, 2024. The Authority, however, rejected these justifications. It held that beyond the six-month Covid extension already granted through notification, recurring seasonal pollution-related curbs were foreseeable and could not be invoked as fresh force majeure grounds. The order noted that the promoter failed to offer possession with the revised deadline.

Fraud leaves Gurgaon woman Rs 94k short after false credit claims

Gurgaon.(Agency)

A woman lost Rs 94,000 after fraudsters tricked her into believing that money had been mistakenly transferred to her bank account and needed to be returned. She transferred the amount through Google Pay after receiving fake credit messages, only to later discover that no such funds had ever reached her account. She has filed a complaint at the Manesar police station. According to her complaint, the victim, a resident of Kherki Daula, received a call on Oct 1, followed by messages claiming that an erroneous transfer had been made to her account. Assuming it was genuine, she sent back the money via UPI. She made two transfers, including Rs 49,000 to a Paytm-linked account in the name of Nilu Kumari and Rs 45,000 to another UPI ID, totalling Rs 94,000. When she realised the messages were fabricated and no amount had been credited, she reported the fraud on the national cybercrime portal and informed her bank. A case has been registered against an unidentified person under Section 318(4) (cheating by dishonestly inducing delivery of property) of the BNS.

Brakes on e-buses as UP rethinks procuring 500 vehicles in one go

Noida.(Agency)

The Rs 675-crore e-bus project, proposed to improve intracity connectivity and link Noida International Airport in Jawahar Lal Nehru with major residential, commercial and industrial hubs across Noida, Greater Noida and the Yamuna Expressway, has hit a roadblock just weeks before the airport's inauguration later this year. The three development authorities have expressed reluctance to move ahead with procuring 500 buses in a single phase, citing high viability gap funding (VGF) burden, inadequate infrastructure and delay in the formation of Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV).

Officials said a fresh assessment was already underway, with YEIDA likely to start with about 50 buses, Greater Noida with 15, and Noida with a reduced fleet. The numbers are likely to be scaled up based on demand and infrastructure. The final call now rests with the state govt, which will weigh whether to halve the fleet size or redesign the rollout plan. The e-buses project, proposed last 2024 for the first time, was to run on 25 routes, of which 15 were in areas under Noida Authority, seven under Greater Noida Authority and the rest under Yamuna Expressway Authority areas. In June, the Directorate of Urban Transport selected two operators, Travel Time Mobility India and Delbus Mobility, to run the service under the gross cost contract model.

Noida Authority was subsequently assigned the role of a nodal agency, responsible for setting up the SPV, GBN Green Transport Limited, that would run the service jointly for the three authorities. The SPV was to manage fare collection, revenue, payments to operators, and route operations, while the selected companies would be paid on a per-kilometre basis. However, officials have now raised concerns about managing a large fleet—300 for Noida and 100 each for Greater Noida and YEIDA—and are now pushing for a phased rollout. The three authorities also have not signed contracts with the two shortlisted operators—an essential requirement under procurement norms—and the validity period of the selection has now expired. Officials flagged that Noida does not have functional charging stations, while Greater Noida and YEIDA do not have bus depots. The existing bus terminals in Sectors 82 and 91 in Noida need charging points before e-buses are rolled out. The Botanical Garden terminal also requires upgrades for e-bus operations. Without charging facilities and depots, officials said even limited deployment would not be possible. Financial projections have also slowed the project. The RFP expects each bus to run 200 km daily, generating Rs 145 crore annually, against operating costs of over Rs 370 crore, leaving a Rs 225-230 crore gap.

Roads to be cleared of stray cattle, dairies to face FIRs for violations

Gurgaon.(Agency)

MCG has launched a comprehensive campaign to pick up stray cattle from city roads with a stern warning that no dairy operators should leave their animals on roads. Repeated advisories have been ignored by operators, prompting the corporation to tighten enforcement. "Any dairy operator found letting cows roam on roads will face an FIR and fines. Leaving animals in public places poses a threat to public safety," mayor Raj Rani Malhotra said at the campaign launch on Monday. MLA Mukesh Sharma and mayor Raj Rani directed officials to intensify the drive, stating no laxity should be shown in the crackdown. Residents like Rajesh Gera from Surya Vihar, the situation has become increasingly dangerous, compelling him to file complaints repeatedly. Over the past six months, he has submitted at least 10 complaints through platforms like Urban Local Bodies (ULB) app and MCG's social media channels. The chaos arises due to



MCG's poor timing in dispatching personnel to remove cattle from roads after residents report the problem. "While MCG teams do respond, they often arrive

after the cattle have moved on. Cows roam here early in the morning. MCG teams often arrive only in the afternoon," Gera added. Prachi, a commuter said, "We

can't walk to local markets as cows take over roads, and there is always the fear they may turn aggressive. It should not be so tough for the authorities to resolve this." It was in August that ULB minister Vipul Goel set a 15-day deadline to resolve the stray cattle menace in the city. Goel had told MCG to ensure effective and swift action to remove cattle roaming on roads, asking them to send these strays to cow shelters. However, the problem still persists, officials said, primarily because of dairy owners leaving their cattle on roads. MCG has been urging residents to report cattle menace on roads by calling the helpline at 1800-180-1817. Officials now hope that a collaborative effort between the administration and the public will finally bring relief to neighbourhoods that have long been plagued by stray cattle. The civic body manages two cow shelters in the city, where these animals are relocated after being removed from streets.

Gurgaon choking on smog: 3 of 4 monitoring stations in city record 'very poor' air

Gurgaon.(Agency)

The city's air quality index (AQI) rose to 277 (poor) on Tuesday from 275 recorded a day ago. Of the four CPCB monitoring stations in the city, three have already entered 'very poor' zone. NISE Gwalpahari and Teri Gram were the worst at 327 (very poor), followed by Sector 51 at 301 (very poor). Meanwhile, Vikas Sadan's reading was 159 (moderate). Health advisories warned that sustained exposure to these AQI levels can trigger breathing discomfort for most people and pose higher risks for those with asthma or chronic respiratory illness.

Officials said what happens over the next three days will depend largely on winter's grip. As temperatures drop and winds ease, the atmosphere becomes more stable. That's when two indicators matter most — mixing height and ventilation index. Mixing height is essentially the height up to which the atmosphere can churn and dilute pollutants. A higher mixing height gives pollution more vertical room to disperse; a lower one traps it close to the ground. The Decision Support System projects mixing heights over Delhi-NCR to fall from 1,150 metres on Dec 2 to around 1,000 metres on Dec 4 and 5, which narrows the space available for dispersion. The ventilation index combines that height with wind speed. It needs to be above 6,000 m/s for pollution to clear effectively. Forecast values for Dec 2 to 5 stay between 2,500 and 5,200 m/s, all well below the safe threshold. An HSPCB official said the signs are not encouraging. "When wind speeds drop and the mixing height collapses, the pollution load simply sits over the city. Even small emissions start showing up as sharp spikes. The coming days look unfavourable, and we expect air quality to slip into the very poor," the official said. Meanwhile, in Delhi, the air quality worsened to the upper reaches of very poor as wind speed dropped. The AQI, on a scale of 0 to 500, was recorded at 372 at 4 pm — considered the day's standard reading — up from 304 a day earlier. It deteriorated further to 390 by 8 pm.

Illegal forest route to Aravali land with PLPA cover blocked in Faridabad

Gurgaon.(Agency)

An access route cutting through a forest patch was dug up to stop vehicles from moving through protected Aravali land. The forest patch near Celebration Garden in Faridabad is notified under the Punjab Land Preservation Act (PLPA). The road near Celebration Garden is 1.5km in length. "The closure was overdue. This access had to be closed to prevent further degradation inside the notified area," Faridabad divisional forest officer Surender Dangi said. Dangi pointed out that the route lies squarely within notified forest land and was never meant to function as a public approach road. This comes days after a banquet hall in Surajkund was demolished. The venue was hosting events despite lacking clearances to operate in an eco-sensitive zone. Officials say that restricting access at Celebration Garden is meant to stop "this cycle before it hardens into a precedent". The stretch, which quietly became a shortcut for visitors and service traffic, lies inside a zone where even minor alterations to terrain are barred under sections 4 and 5 of the PLPA.

The road widened over time because of regular movement to nearby commercial facilities. Soil was compacted, vegetation disturbed and fresh tyre tracks were visible on the adjoining forest floor, according to officials who inspected the



site last week. With pressure on the terrain rising because of the ongoing wedding season, the department decided to close access. Earthmoving machines were used to create a long earthen barrier cutting off the path. The move comes at a time when the Surajkund-Badkhal-Ankhir belt is facing a wave of commercial activity pushing into protected Aravali pockets. Only days ago, Mahipal Garden, a banquet

hall, was demolished after inspections found paved areas and boundary structures built on forest land without mandatory permissions. These incidents form a pattern. Complaints have steadily risen about banquet halls, party venues and farmhouses either occupying or depending on PLPA-covered land. Many rely on forest tracks to transport guests, décor and supplies, gradually turning informal footpaths into motorable roads. The Aravali foothills in Faridabad have been under heavy scrutiny since the Supreme Court's July 2022 order directing Haryana to remove all illegal construction on land notified under PLPA sections 4 and 5. Despite multiple drives, encroachments remain widespread across Ankhir, Anangpur, Lakkarpur and Mewla Mahalpur, partly because individual owners have secured interim stays.

Teams will now monitor the barricaded stretch to ensure no fresh tracks are carved around it. More closures may follow if similar misuse is detected in other PLPA zones.

Haryana to roll out new transfer policy to streamline posting of teachers

Gurgaon.(Agency)

The Haryana govt is all set to roll out a new teacher transfer policy. Teacher Transfer Policy, 2025, which has been approved, now replaces the earlier policy issued on August 2018. The new framework aims to ensure a "demand-based distribution" of teachers and heads of schools across the state while safeguarding students' academic interests and improving transparency and job satisfaction for teaching staff, state government officials told TOI. The policy applies to all teachers working on core posts in govt schools under the school education department and also extends to the teachers on non-core posts, who choose to participate voluntarily or are required to do so in the general transfer drive. Transfer orders are issued after

approval and implemented within 10 days of the completion of the drives. Special provisions include exemptions for protected teachers nearing retirement or undergoing critical medical treatment. Aggrieved employees may submit representations through the Sugam Sampark Portal within 15 days of the order.

A key feature is the clear definition of minimum tenure and prescribed tenure. Minimum tenure is one year at a particular school, enabling a teacher to voluntarily participate in the transfer drive. Prescribed tenure consists of five years at a school or 15 years in a block, making participation mandatory. For this tenure, extraordinary leave and child care leave are included, though service on a

non-core post in a block does not count for school postings. The new policy covers a wide range of cadres for both the rest of Haryana and the Mewat cadre, including principals, headmasters, elementary school headmasters, head teachers, PGTs, TGTs, masters, PRT/JBT and C&V teachers across all subjects.

The merit-based system for allotting posts assigns a composite score of 80 marks, with age contributing a maximum of 60. Special factors are allotted up to 20 marks, covering gender, marital status-related categories, spouses of military and paramilitary personnel, debilitating diseases, differently abled teachers or children, couple cases and negative marks for major penalties. The general

Long-term fix remains stalled, MCG set to restart stopgap waste pickup in Gurgaon

Gurgaon.(Agency) MCG is once again relying on temporary measures for managing door-to-door waste collection. The civic body has now initiated a fresh process to hire four agencies — one for each zone — to manage doorstep waste collection for just six months beginning Jan 2026.

The stopgap arrangement is expected to cost MCG over Rs 12 crore. This comes nearly six months after its contract with a private firm handling door-to-door waste collection expired. This latest scramble marks more than 18 months of short-term contracting after MCG terminated its deal with Ecogreen in June 2024 over poor performance. The firm, brought in as a one-year replacement, also failed to deliver, forcing the corporation into a cycle of "temporary arrangements" that residents say has created "inconsistent collection and mounting garbage issues".

Officials admit the corporation is still waiting for the revised



request for proposal (RFP) that would allow it to float a new, comprehensive tender for a long-term collection system. For now, the city will continue to rely on yet another round of interim agencies while a long-term solution remains caught in bureaucratic delays. "MCG has not learnt any lessons from past mistakes as it hires agencies which don't have adequate resources and experience," Lalit Suraj Bhola, a resident of Sector

9A, said. Without approval from the urban local bodies (ULB) department, the city continues to operate in limbo. The scope of work for these agencies includes waste collection and the transportation of the waste to the secondary waste collection points in the city. An MCG official said, "We haven't yet received any approvals from the ULB in writing. After we receive a revised RFP from the ULB

department, we will make a new proposal to hire agencies for doorstep waste collection and it will be a long-term project with dedicated agencies responsible for waste collection. Till that project takes off, we have to commence a temporary project so that the residents don't face any problem."

Even as the city's waste management challenges deepen, MCG's inability to establish a stable, accountable collection system has drawn criticism from residents and waste experts.

"Hiring agencies for a shorter period makes these agencies less accountable since no agency will make an investment for a shorter span of time. It is ultimately the residents who have to make the arrangements and pay from their own pockets for the services which should have been provided by the civic body," added Sector 9A resident Bhola.

However, founder of the citizens' group 'Making Model Gurugram' Gauri Sarin said,

"There is a lot of money at stake and the MCG cannot afford to go wrong now."

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Demand letter submitted to the Chief Minister for cancellation of Panchayatization/Privatization Policy of Rural Water Supply Schemes

The Sikh Times Malagar khamano

Fatehgarh Sahib, 3, December 0 As per the decision of PWD Water Supply Coordination Sangharsh Committee Punjab, Technical and Mechanical Employees Union Reg Branch Sri Fatehgarh Sahib under the chairmanship of Branch President Tarlochan Singh Chunni submitted a demand letter to the Chief Minister of Punjab through Constituency MLA Sri Fatehgarh Sahib. Giving information to the press, General Secretary of the organization Didar Singh Dhilwan said that the policy of Panchayatization was implemented as the

first phase by the previous governments to privatize the basic water facilities of the people of the rural areas. Due to which hundreds of schemes that were given under the Panchayats have become ruins and most of the schemes have reached the verge of completion. Machinery worth crores of rupees is being wasted on these schemes. This anti-people policy is also being implemented by this government, due to which not only the people of rural areas will lose their drinking water facility, but also the drinking water will be taken over by corporate houses. They said that a memorandum was given regarding the demands of



canceling this policy, restoring rural allowance, regularizing the employees working continuously

menting the old pension scheme, implementing the cashless health scheme, releasing the arrears of

state president Malagar Singh Khamano, Sukhram Kalewal, Baljit Singh Hindupur, Harjinder Singh Khamano, Lakhvir Singh, Karam Singh Chunni, etc. leaders were present.

NAME CHANGE

I Prabhjot Singh S/o Gurbax Singh Sur/R/o 215 FF SHIV NAGAR, GALI NO 12, JAIL ROAD, HARI NAGAR, DIST: West Delhi, Delhi-110058 have changed my name to Prabhjeet Singh Sur for all future purposes.

NAME CHANGE

I KALASH CHANDRA VERMA S/o SURESH CHANDRA VERMA

Permanently residing at GILA KI NAGAL NAYLA JAIPUR, RAJASTHAN-303012. Presently residing at FLAT NO-188, SECOND FLOOR, SURYODAYA APARTMENT POCKET-8, SECTOR-12, DWARKA, NEW DELHI-110075 have changed the name of my minor daughter LAVYANSHI KALASH aged 10 years and she shall hereafter be known as LAVYANSHI VERMA.

NAME CHANGE

I, hitherto known as LALIT KUMAR KOHLE alias LALIT KUMAR KOHLE LALIT S/O KRISHAN KUMAR KOHLE R/O C-23 Raj Nagar Pitampura Near Rani Bagh, Delhi-110034 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as LALIT KOHLE.

NAME CHANGE

I hitherto known as KANWARJIT SINGH alias KANWARJIT SINGH MAKKAR S/o SURJIT SINGH, R/o A17/02, Printers Apartment Plot No. 18, Rohini Sector-13, North West Delhi, Delhi-110085 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as KANWARJIT SINGH MAKKAR, for all future purposes.

NAME CHANGE

I, Malkhan s/o. Jaipal Singh R/o/house no.32022 ranjeet Nagar patel nagar central Delhi.110008 Have changed my name to Malkhan Singh all future purpose.

NAME CHANGE

I CHANDER SHEKHAR S/O KULDEEP SHARMA R/O FLAT NO-100, SECOND FLOOR Gali NO-10-11 VASDEV NAGAR PRATAP NAGAR MALKI GANJ NORTH DELHI DELHI-110007 HAVE CHANGED NAME TO CHANDER SHEKHAR SHARMA

NAME CHANGE

I, Mahiyya D/o Suresh D/o Suresh Maitly R/o 754, Nav Sansar Vihar, plot 4, sector 22, dwarka - 110075 have changed my name to Deepi Mahiyya for all future purposes.

NAME CHANGE

I, Ishaan Kumar S/o Rakesh Kashyap W/o Mr. Jai Bhagwan is the owner of a Freehold Residential House area measuring 71 Sq. yds. i.e. 59.36 Sq. mtrs. out of Total area 235 Sq. yds. Out of Khasra no. 996, Situated at Subhash Nagar, Village Ghukna, Pargana Loni, Tehsil & Distt. Ghaziabad, U.P. by virtue of Sale Deed dated 09.07.2025 Doc. No. 8187, Book no. 1, Vol. no. 44508, Pages no. 361-382, R.S. IV, Ghaziabad, in the chain documents below mentioned documents not available i.e. Death Certificate of Late Mr. Hansraj & Probate Order of Will dated 25.04.1997, our client is declaring that any other Person does not have any right over the said property, and same property sold too be Mr. Ramesh Ranjan which is to be financed by IndusInd Bank Ltd. Branch: Janakpuri, Delhi. My minor Son namely Piyush, aged 6 years in his 10th class educational document. The actual name of mine is Sanjeev Kumar respectively, which may be amended accordingly.

NAME CHANGE

I, SAMIT BAGHLA S/O ASHOK KUMAR BAGHLA R/O 8-804-SIS-PAL VIHAR, SECTOR-49-SOUTH CITY-II, GURGAON, HARYANA-122018 HAVE CHANGED MY MINOR SON NAME FROM SHAU-RYA TO SHAU-RYA BAGHLA FOR ALL FUTURE PURPOSES

NAME CHANGE

I, PREETI D/O PAPAN KRISHAN SHARMA R/H NO 10 B 64 A SHIV MANDIR GALI NO 12, NEAR AKHARE WALI GALI MAUJIPUR NORTH EAST DELHI, DELHI-110053 I HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO PREETI SHARMA FOR ALL FUTURE PURPOSES

NAME CHANGE

I, SANDEEP S/O PRITHI PAL R/o/HOUSE NO 298 NEAR B.P.T.P. BUILDING TIGRA SECTOR-57 SAMASPUR GURGAON HARYANA-122003 I HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO SANDEEP TANWAR FOR ALL FUTURE PURPOSES

NAME CHANGE

I, SIDDARTH VERMA S/O TULSI DASS VERMA R/o H.No.137, Sector-21 C, Near Maran Sharma School, Faridabad Haryana -121001, have changed my name to SIDDHARTH VERMA permanently.

NAME CHANGE

I, SAMIR KHATOON D/o RAMESH BABU RAMSITTE R/o 470 E/2 MS BLOCK, HARI NAGAR, MAYA PURI, DELHI - 110064 I have changed my name to NAVEEN BABU RAMSITTE Permanently for all future purpose

NAME CHANGE

I, HARISH S/O PURAN CHAND SHARMA R/O PLOT NO - 7 AND 8/F/F FRONT SIDE BLOCK L-EXTN MOHAN DURGAM UTTAM NAGAR DELHI-110059 , I have changed my name to HARISH SHARMA Permanently for all Future purpose

NAME CHANGE

I, RAHUL MISHRA S/o Satya Dev Sharma R/o R-10, Gali No.9, Madan Puri, West Sugr Pur, Delhi-110046, have changed my name to RAHUL SHARMA permanently.

NAME CHANGE

I, SATYA DEV MISHRA S/o LATE. Sh. Babu Ram Sharma R/o R-10, Gali No.9, Madan Puri, West Sugr Pur, Delhi-110046, have changed my name to SATYA DEV SHARMA permanently.

NAME CHANGE

I, SANDEEP KUMAR GROVER S/o Krishan Baldev R/o 25/18, Tilak Nagar, Delhi-110018, have changed my name to SANDEEP GROVER permanently.

NAME CHANGE

I, Garima W/o Ishant Malhotra Add. 11024/ GF Dori, Wan Karol bagh Delhi 110005 changed my name Garima Malhotra.

NAME CHANGE

I, Ishant Kumar Malhotra S/o Rajender Kumar Add 11024/ GF Dori Wan Karol bagh Delhi 110005 Changed my name Ishant Malhotra

NAME CHANGE

I, No-14445153A Rank-HAV NAME-KISHAMIT ALI, residing at, MOHALA-AULAD GANJ, PO- SUNDI, DIST-HARDOI, UTTAR PRADESH-241403 is serving in the Army. My mother's name has been mistakenly recorded as SARWARI BANO in the Army records, my mother's correct name is SHARVARI, my mother's date of birth has also been mistakenly recorded as 01/07/1952 whereas my mother's actual date of birth is 01/01/1949. Therefore my mother's name and date of birth should be correctly recorded in the army records.

NAME CHANGE

I, Mithu Lal Singh, S/o Ram Kumar, H.no-263, Kno.1173, Ground Floor, (Radha Vihar), Gali No. 9, Savita Vihar Village Mukundpur, Badli, North West Delhi, Delhi - 110042 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Mithu Lal.

NAME CHANGE

I, Mithu Lal Singh, S/o Ram Kumar, H.no-263, Kno.1173, Ground Floor, (Radha Vihar), Gali No. 9, Savita Vihar Village Mukundpur, Badli, North West Delhi, Delhi - 110042 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Mithu Lal.

NAME CHANGE

I, Jitendra Sheetal A. D/o Anthony Sharath Naveen R/o 40/1, 1st Cross, PNS Layout, Kammanahalli, VTC, Bangalore North, PO: St. Thomas Town, District: Bangalore, Karnataka -560084, have changed my name to Jitendra Sheetal.

NAME CHANGE

I, Mamata Praveen Hallal D/o Naganaoguda and W/o Kallangoda R/o 8/ C-2, Kotekoppa, Hesaraghatta, Dist: Shivamogga, Karnataka -577419, have changed my name to Mamata N Channagoudra.

NAME CHANGE

I, I hitherto known as AMREEN KHAN W/o AFAJAL ALI residing at D-6, Gali No-2 Near Kalyan Cinema, Chauhan Bazar, Jaffarpur, PO: Seelam, Dist: North East Delhi, Delhi-110053 declare that name of my father has been wrongly written as Nazir Sharif in my Aadhaar Card No. 566453660266. The actual name of my father is Nazir Sharif.

NAME CHANGE

I, EKJOT SINGH S/o GURVINDER SINGH, R/o A-2/113, First Floor, Rajouri Garden, West Delhi, Delhi-110027, declare that name of mine and my minor daughter has been wrongly written as EKJOT SINGH and GURMEHAR KAUR respectively, which may be amended accordingly.

NAME CHANGE

I, I hitherto known as AMREEN KHAN W/o AFAJAL ALI residing at D-6, Gali No-2 Near Kalyan Cinema, Chauhan Bazar, Jaffarpur, PO: Seelam, Dist: North East Delhi, Delhi-110053 declare that name of my father has been wrongly written as Nazir Sharif in my Aadhaar Card No. 566453660266. The actual name of my father is Nazir Sharif.

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NAME CHANGE

I, I hitherto known as AMREEN KHAN W/o AFAJAL ALI residing at D-6, Gali No-2 Near Kaly

NEWS BOX

Top US diplomat claims Trump deserves credit for 'very dangerous' peace deals like India-Pakistan

World. (Agency)

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio on Tuesday claimed that President Donald Trump has "brokered several peace deals, including the very dangerous ones like India and Pakistan", arguing that the president deserves "tremendous credit" for reshaping America's foreign policy. During a Cabinet meeting at the White House, Rubio said for the first time in decades, American foreign policy was guided solely by whether it made the US "safer, stronger and more prosperous." "If it is, he's (Trump) for it. If it doesn't, he's against it. And that sort of clarity is transformational," he said. "Not to mention all the other peace deals, very dangerous ones like India and Pakistan or Cambodia and Thailand, and so on.. Mr President, I think you deserve tremendous credit for the transformational aspect of our foreign policy," Rubio said. Earlier, at the Cabinet meeting, Trump repeated his claim that he had resolved several global conflicts, including between India and Pakistan, as he asserted that he should get the Nobel Peace Prize for each of the "eight wars" he has ended. "We ended eight wars... But we're going to do one more, I think, I hope," Trump said, referring to the Russia-Ukraine conflict. Trump has repeatedly claimed that within the first eight-nine months of his second term in the White House, he resolved conflicts between India and Pakistan, Thailand and Cambodia, Armenia and Azerbaijan, Kosovo and Serbia, Israel and Iran, Egypt and Ethiopia, Rwanda and Congo. He also credits himself for resolving the Israel-Hamas conflict. White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt told reporters on Monday that Trump will host Congo President Felix Antoine Tshisekedi Tshilombo and Rwanda President Paul Kagame to sign a "historic peace and economic agreement" brokered by the US president.

'We don't want them': Trump rages against Somali immigrants

WASHINGTON. (Agency)

US President Donald Trump raged Tuesday against Somali immigrants, saying they should be unwelcome in the United States as he highlighted the long woes of the African country.

Trump's heated remarks come as a scandal unfolds in the state of Minnesota where prosecutors say more than \$1 billion went to non-existent social services, largely through false billing by Somali Americans.

In Somalia "they have no anything, they just run around killing each other," Trump told a cabinet meeting. "Their country's no good for a reason. Their country stinks, and we don't want them in our country," he said. Trump has a long history of deriding minorities and rose to political prominence spreading false conspiracy theories that former president Barack Obama was born in Kenya rather than the United States. Trump has often played up fears of the white majority of losing political and cultural power. "We're at a tipping point," Trump told the cabinet meeting. "We could go one way or the other, and we're going to go the wrong way if we keep taking in garbage into our country."

Trump said that Somali Americans "contribute nothing" and he berated Ilhan Omar, an outspoken Democratic congresswoman from Minnesota who is originally from Somalia. "Ilhan Omar is garbage. Her friends are garbage," Trump said. "Let them go back to where they came from and fix it."

Omar later wrote of Trump on X: "His obsession with me is creepy. I hope he gets the help he desperately needs." Trump last week ended protections against deportations of Somalis in place in the United States since 1991, when Somalia descended into anarchy.

Prosecutors are investigating several plots to steal taxpayer money in Minnesota, including by groups that falsely claimed to be feeding children during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Indian National Gets 2 Years Jail For \$1.17 Million US Medicare Fraud

Washington. (Agency)

An Indian national who admitted to orchestrating a multimillion-dollar Medicare fraud through a Washington-based diagnostic lab was sentenced to two years in federal prison, US Attorney Charles Neil Floyd announced. Mohammed Asif, 35, who was taken into custody on April 10, 2025, at Chicago O'Hare International Airport as he attempted to board an international flight, has been ordered to pay \$1,174,813 in restitution. He now faces likely deportation after completing his sentence.

Asif pleaded guilty on September 4 to conspiracy to commit health care fraud tied to the operations of American Labworks LLC, a now-defunct diagnostic testing laboratory in Everett, Washington. US District Judge James L. Robart, delivering the sentence, described the \$1,174,813 fraud loss as "a significant amount of money. It was money that was siphoned out of the Medicare system, which is designed to treat the elderly and the poor... (The defendant) lacks moral character as a knowing participant in the fraud... He is someone the public needs to be protected from." Prosecutors said Asif and his co-conspirators billed Medicare for COVID-19 and other respiratory tests that were neither ordered nor performed. US Attorney Floyd said, "Mr. Asif participated in a scheme to steal more than a million dollars from Medicare -- funds that are meant to be used for important medical care." He added, "Regrettably, schemes like this one are not unique. Medicare is a constant target of fraud, and the harm to the United States and taxpayers is substantial."

Deadly Asian floods no fluke but climate warning, scientists say

HANOI. (Agency)

Southeast Asia is being pummeled by unusually severe floods this year, as late-arriving storms and relentless rains wreak havoc that has caught many places off guard. Deaths have topped 1,200 across Indonesia, Sri Lanka, and Thailand, with more than 800 still missing in floods and landslides. In Indonesia, entire villages remain cut off after bridges and roads were swept away. Thousands in Sri Lanka lack clean water, while Thailand's prime minister acknowledged shortcomings in his government's response. Malaysia is still reeling from one of its worst floods, which killed three and displaced thousands. Meanwhile, Vietnam and the Philippines have faced a year of punishing storms and floods that have left hundreds dead. What feels unprecedented is exactly what climate scientists expect: A new normal of punishing storms, floods and devastation. "Southeast Asia should brace for a likely continuation and potential worsening of extreme weather in 2026 and for many years immediately following that," said Jemilah Mahmood, who leads the think

tank Sunway Centre for Planetary Health in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Asia is facing the full force of the climate crisis. Climate patterns last year helped set the stage for 2025's extreme weather. Atmospheric levels of heat-trapping carbon dioxide jumped by the most on record in 2024. That "turbocharged" the climate, the United Nations' World Meteorological Organization says, resulting in more extreme weather. Asia is bearing the brunt of such changes, warming nearly twice as fast as the global average. Scientists agree that the intensity and frequency of extreme weather events are increasing. Warmer ocean temperatures provide more energy for storms, making them stronger and wetter, while rising sea levels amplify storm surges, said Benjamin Horton, a professor of earth science at the City University of Hong Kong. Storms are arriving later in the year, one after another as climate change affects air and ocean currents, including systems like El Niño, which keeps ocean waters warmer for longer and extends the typhoon season. With more moisture in the air and changes



in wind patterns, storms can form quickly. "While the total number of storms may not dramatically increase, their severity and unpredictability will," Horton said.

Governments were unprepared

The unpredictability, intensity, and frequency of recent extreme weather events are overwhelming Southeast Asian governments, said Aslam Perwaiz of the Bangkok-based intergovernmental Asian Disaster Preparedness Center. He attributes that to a tendency to focus on responding to disasters rather than preparing for them. "Future disasters will give us even less lead time to prepare," Perwaiz warned. In Sri Lanka's hardest-hit

provinces, little has changed since 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, said Sarala Emmanuel, a human-rights researcher in Batticaloa. It killed 230,000 people. "When a disaster like this happens, the poor and marginalized communities are the worst affected," Emmanuel said. That includes poor tea plantation workers living in areas prone to landslides. Unregulated development that damages local ecosystems has worsened flood damage, said Sandun Thudugala of the Colombo-based non-profit Law and Society Trust. Sri Lanka needs to rethink how it builds and plans, he said, taking into account a future where extreme weather is the norm.

Videos of logs swept downstream in Indonesia suggested deforestation may have made the floods worse. Since 2000, the flood-inundated Indonesian provinces of Aceh, North Sumatra and West Sumatra have lost 19,600 square kilometers (7,569 square miles) of forest, an area larger than the state of New Jersey, according to Global Forest Watch.

Deep-sea search for Malaysia Airlines Flight 370 to resume December 30

KUALA LUMPUR. (Agency)

Malaysia's transport ministry said Wednesday that the deep-sea hunt for Malaysia Airlines Flight 370 will resume December 30, renewing hopes of finally locating the jet that vanished without a trace more than a decade ago.

The Boeing 777 plane disappeared from radar shortly after taking off on March 8, 2014, carrying 239 people, mostly Chinese nationals, on a flight from Malaysia's capital, Kuala Lumpur, to Beijing. Satellite data showed the plane turned from its flight path and headed south to the far-southern Indian Ocean, where it is believed to have crashed. The transport ministry said in a statement that U.S.-based marine robotics firm Ocean Infinity will

search intermittently from December 30 for a total of 55 days, in targeted



areas believed to have the highest likelihood of finding the missing aircraft. "The latest development

underscores the government of Malaysia's commitment in providing closure to the families affected by this tragedy," it said. Malaysia's government gave the green light in March for a "no-find, no-fee" contract with Ocean Infinity to resume the seabed search operation at a new 15,000-square-kilometer (5,800-square-mile) site in the ocean. Ocean Infinity will be paid \$70 million only if wreckage is discovered. The search was halted in April due to bad weather.

An expensive multinational search failed to turn up any clues to its location, although debris washed ashore on the east African coast and Indian Ocean islands. A private search in 2018 by Ocean Infinity also found nothing.

US, Russia find 'no compromise' on territory after Ukraine talks

world. (Agency)

High-stakes US-Russia talks on ending the war in Ukraine failed to yield a breakthrough on Tuesday, as the Kremlin said "no compromise" had been found yet on the key question of territory. Russian President Vladimir Putin met US President Donald Trump's son-in-law Jared Kushner and special envoy Steve Witkoff in the Kremlin, after earlier signalling that his forces were ready to fight on to achieve Russia's initial war goals.

The meeting is a crucial moment for Ukraine in what could be a fraught week following days of frantic diplomacy. At the heart of it is a US plan to bring peace, which has since been revised under pressure from Kyiv and its European backers. On occupied Ukrainian territories, "so far we haven't found a compromise, but some American solutions can be discussed," top Russian presidential aide Yuri Ushakov said after the Moscow meeting. "Some proposed formulations do not fit us, and work will continue," he added. Trump said progress on ending the nearly four-year-long war would not be easy. "Our

people are over in Russia right now to see if we can get it settled," he said during a cabinet meeting at the White House. "Not an easy situation, let me tell you. What a mess." In an interview broadcast Tuesday night on Fox News, US Secretary of State Marco Rubio said talks with Russia "have made some progress" to end the war with Ukraine. It was not clear exactly when the interview had been recorded. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said on Monday that any plan must end the war for good, and not just lead to a pause in the fighting that began with Moscow's offensive in February 2022. He also said in a social media post that "there will be no simple solutions". "What matters is that everything is fair and transparent. That there are no games played behind Ukraine's back. That nothing is decided without Ukraine -- about us, about our future," he said. Moscow rejects amended plan

Kushner and Witkoff were to present Putin with the new version of the US plan, which has been hammered out after the initial version raised fears in Kyiv and elsewhere in Europe that it

made too many concessions to Moscow. Ushakov said the initial US plan was broken down into four parts, which were discussed during the five-hour meeting in the Kremlin. "There were some points we could agree on," the top Putin diplomatic aide said, but "the president did not hide our critical, even negative, stance on a number of proposals." Putin has demanded that Kyiv surrender territory Moscow claims as its own. The Kremlin also rejects any European force in Ukraine to monitor a truce. In his social media post, Zelensky said "the most difficult questions are about territories, about frozen (Russian) assets... And about security guarantees. Still, the talks in Moscow were "useful". Ushakov said, and Russia and US positions did not become farther apart after it. Russian pressure Putin appeared to send a hawkish message shortly before the US talks began. He said that Pokrovsk -- an east Ukrainian stronghold that Russian forces say they recently captured -- was a "good foothold for solving all the tasks set at the beginning of the special military operation.

Indian man charged with criminally negligent homicide after crash kills two in Oregon

NEW YORK/WASHINGTON. (Agency)

An Indian man who entered the US illegally three years ago has been charged with homicide after two persons were killed when a semi-truck he was driving collided with their car. Rajinder Kumar, 32, has been charged with criminally negligent homicide and reckless endangering.

William Micah Carter, 25, and Jennifer Lynn Lower, 24, were killed in the road accident. The US Department of Homeland Security (DHS) said Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) has lodged an arrest detainer for Kumar. The Oregon State Police said its officers responded to a two-vehicle crash in Deschutes County on the night of November 24. Preliminary investigation indicated that a freightliner commercial motor vehicle and trailer operated by Kumar was stopped in a jackknifed position, blocking both lanes of travel. A car being driven by Carter struck the trailer of the freightliner as it was stopped perpendicular to the lanes of travel at highway speeds. Both Carter and Lower were declared dead at the scene while Kumar



was reportedly uninjured. "The highway was impacted for approximately seven hours during the on-scene investigation. Dark conditions and a lack of active emergency warning equipment is being considered a primary contributor to the crash," The Oregon State Police said. Kumar was arrested for Criminally Negligent Homicide and Reckless Endangering and lodged in the Deschutes County Jail. Describing Kumar as a "criminal illegal" from India, DHS said he entered the US illegally near Lukeville, Arizona, on November 28, 2022. Kumar was released into "our country under the Biden administration and issued a commercial driver's license by Gavin Newsom's Department of Motor Vehicles. How many more senseless tragedies must take place before sanctuary politicians stop allowing illegal aliens to dangerously operate semi-trucks on America's roads," Assistant Secretary Tricia McLaughlin said. This is the fourth instance in recent months where Indians who entered the US illegally have been involved in dangerous and fatal highway crashes while driving trucks. In August, ICE lodged an arrest detainer for Harjinder Singh following his arrest for three counts of vehicular homicide while driving a semi-truck in Florida.

FBI offers \$50,000 reward for information on Indian national who murdered woman, son from India in 2017

NEW YORK. (Agency)

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) is offering a reward of up to USD 50,000 for information about an Indian national wanted for his alleged involvement in the 2017 murder of an Indian woman and her six-year-old son, with authorities here urging the government of India to extradite the suspect. Nazeer Hameed, 38, has been charged with the murder of Sasi Kala Narra, 38 and her son Anish Narra inside an apartment in Maple Shade, New Jersey in March 2017. In February this year, Hameed was charged with two counts of First Degree Murder, two counts of possession of a weapon for an unlawful purpose and unlawful possession of a weapon.

US authorities have said that Hameed returned to India six months after the killings and remains there to this day.

As the investigation into the killings proceeded, he was identified as a person of interest after it was revealed he was stalking the husband and father of the victims, Hanumant Narra, Burlington

County Prosecutor's Office (BCPO) said in a statement. A state warrant was issued for Hameed's arrest and the FBI is offering a reward of up to USD 50,000 for information leading to Hameed's arrest or conviction. Information about Hameed is listed on FBI's Most Wanted website.

Authorities said the motive for the killings has not been definitively established. The next step will be to bring Hameed back to the United States to face prosecution.

New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy said that last week he "called and sent a letter" to Indian Ambassador to the US Vinay Kwatra "requesting the assistance" of the Government of India in Hameed's extradition. Stressing that the "heinous crime shocked" the state, Murphy said New Jersey stands ready to cooperate fully with the Ministry of External Affairs, Ministry of Home Affairs, as well as the Justice Department, State Department and FBI "to facilitate the extradition process in

accordance with both Indian law and the terms of our bilateral treaty." Murphy conveyed his "profound gratitude" to Kwatra for his "prompt attention to this



matter and for the continued partnership between our governments." Last month, Burlington County Prosecutor LaChia Bradshaw and Maple Shade Police Chief Christopher Fletcher announced the charges against Hameed, the result of eight years of tireless partnership in the quest for justice, they said. On the evening of March 23, 2017, officers from the Maple Shade

Police Department were called to an apartment complex after the bodies of Sasi Kala and Anish Narra were discovered inside their home, the BCPO statement said. An autopsy determined they each died from multiple slash wounds to their necks. Anish Narra was nearly decapitated by his attacker, and the post-mortem examination revealed several defensive wounds on the bodies of both victims. "The scene that day was unimaginable," Fletcher said in the statement. "Those who responded saw the carnage of a mother and her young child who spent their final moments fighting for their lives." Hameed lived in the same apartment complex as the Narras and worked in the same IT company as Hanumant Narra. The announcement of the charges against Hameed was delayed while investigators attempted to gain additional evidence and worked with federal law enforcement partners to seek his extradition from India, authorities said.

NEWS BOX

Man held for cheating woman cop of gold, cash in TN

**CHENNAI. (Agency)**

A 36-year-old man from Dharmapuri was arrested by the Anna Nagar All-Women Police on Tuesday on charges of cheating a woman police constable of cash and gold after entering into a relationship with her under the pretext of marriage. The police have seized gold, silver ornaments, mobile phones, and multiple SIM cards from him. The 33-year-old constable, who lives in Kilpauk after separating from her husband, began receiving persistent text messages from an unknown number belonging to Singaravel, the accused, a few months ago. They developed a close rapport and he gradually convinced her to part with money on the pretext of starting a business for their future.

Believing him, she gave him Rs 3.4 lakh and a gold chain weighing six sovereigns over a period of time. When he allegedly demanded Rs 3 lakh more, she became suspicious. As she delayed payment, he reportedly threatened her. Realising she had been duped, she filed a complaint on Monday.

HMDA expects Rs 5000 crore from Neopolis land auctions

**HYDERABAD. (Agency)**

Delighted by the response from the first and second rounds of e-auctions of four high-value prime land parcels in Neopolis Layout at Kokapet last week, which generated revenues of Rs 2,708 crore, the remaining two prime parcels will go under the hammer on December 3. The state government expects over Rs 1,200 crore from these plots. Plot 19 (4 acres) and plot 20 (4.04 acres), totalling 8.04 acres, in survey numbers 239 and 240, will be auctioned between 11 am and 2 pm through MSTC Limited on Wednesday. HMDA has fixed a minimum upset price of Rs 99 crore per acre.

On November 24, two land parcels measuring 9.90 acres fetched over Rs 1,356 crore. Plot 18 (5.31 acres) fetched Rs 137.25 crore per acre, while plot 17 (4.59 acres) received Rs 136.50 crore per acre.

Similarly, on November 28, Plot 15 (4.03 acres) and Plot 16 (5.03 acres), totalling 9.06 acres, fetched over Rs 1,352 crore. One acre fetched a record Rs 151.25 crore, and another fetched Rs 147.75 crore per acre.

HMDA will also auction one plot in Golden Mile Layout (1.98 acres) and two plots in Moosapet (14.66 acres) on December 5. It has fixed a minimum upset price of Rs 75 crore per acre for Moosapet and Rs 70 crore per acre for Golden Mile Layout. Overall, HMDA expects over Rs 5,000 crore from these auctions.

Trouble continues for Swadeshi Darshan 2.0 at Varkala temple

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM. (Agency) The controversial Varkala Dakshin Kashi project launched at the ancient Janardhana Swamy Temple under the Swadeshi Darshan 2.0 scheme has run into fresh trouble with the Varkala municipality slapping yet another stop memo on Tuesday demanding immediate halt of the initiative.

The municipal authorities had on September 25 served the first stop memo to the tourism department over the project, which aims to improve basic facilities and enhance the overall pilgrim experience, citing procedural lapses, including lack of approval from the local body, Kerala Coastal Zone Management Authority (K CZMA), Kerala State Disaster Management Authority (KSDMA) and Geological Survey of India (GSI).

Varkala municipality secretary Mithran G told TNIE that the Uralangal Labour Contract Cooperative Society, the implementing agency, launched piling activities and excavation of the Varkala Cliff, a geo-heritage site certified as ecologically fragile by a GSI study report, without securing mandatory nod from the K CZMA and KSDMA.

A day after receiving the first stop memo, the tourism department convened an online meeting on September 26 and assured all that only minor work and site preparation will be carried out. However, Mithran said their recent site inspection revealed that there was extensive soil removal using JCB and piling work was also under way.

"The tourism authorities had assured such works will be carried out only after getting the clearance from the municipality," he said. This prompted the civic body to issue the second stop memo.

Bengaluru North City Corporation to document, relocate street dogs as per SC order

At the ABC Monitoring Committee meeting, officials were directed to use the WVS app to map street dog locations during sterilisation and vaccination drives.

BENGALURU. (Agency)

Following the Supreme Court direction on listing of street dogs by various institutions like schools, colleges, hospitals, factories, playground, bus depots and others, at North City Corporation, 802 such institutions have responded, and overall 1,042 such dogs have been identified. The dogs will be relocated to shelters as per the SC order.

Meanwhile, Pommala Sunil Kumar, Commissioner, Bengaluru North City Corporation, said that the details and locations of all street dogs within the Corporation limits will be documented using the Worldwide Veterinary Service (WVS) app.

Addressing the Animal Birth Control (ABC) Monitoring Committee meeting at the City Corporation office in Byatarayanapura on Tuesday, he instructed officials to use the WVS app to identify street dog locations during sterilization and vaccination programmes.



He added that there are two ABC centres within the city corporation limits. The ABC centre at Medi Agrahara has 120 kennels, one isolation centre, and one monitoring unit. The Dasarahalli ABC centre has 54 kennels and one monitoring unit. In the current year, 2,925 street dogs have been sterilised.

Overall, 65% of the street dog population in North City limits has been sterilised. Additionally, hospitals in the city corporation limits currently have 4,350 rabies vaccines in stock.

Forty-eight places have been identified in North City for feeding street dogs.

Pune airport ranked 19th in India's international passenger traffic

Pune Airport has entered the top 20 list in the rating announced by the Bureau of Immigration despite its operational constraints of being under defence control and sharing its runway with the Air Force.

PUNE. (Pune) Pune airport has been ranked 19th in India in terms of international passenger traffic, according to a statement by Murlidhar Mohol, Minister of State for Civil Aviation, on Tuesday.

Pune Airport has entered the top 20 list in the rating announced by the Bureau of Immigration despite its operational constraints of being under defence control and sharing its runway with the Air Force, the minister said. The airport achieved the ranking with just two international routes, Dubai and Bangkok, Mohol said.

According to the statement, Pune's rising global connectivity reflects the city's growth as an IT hub and a rapidly expanding automobile hub driven by international industries in the Chakan MIDC region. Upgrades to the airport terminal, along with new facilities like the Aeromall and an expanded terminal building, have significantly improved passenger comfort, it said. "Under

the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the country's civil aviation sector has

few years, the facilities at the airport have been significantly enhanced to meet the expectations of international travellers," said Mohol.

Hailing the achievement, Santosh Dhone, Airport Director, Airports Authority of India, Pune Airport, noted that the future of Pune Airport looks very promising. He emphasised that the city provides a favourable environment for travellers, given its status as an educational hub and a major IT centre.

"With the pace at which our economy is growing, more people prefer air travel, and Pune has naturally become a key destination. In 2023-24, we had 9.5 million passengers. This increased to 10.5 million in 2024-25, and for 2025-26, we are expecting to cross 11.5 million. This growth trajectory shows how robust our aviation industry is," Dhone said.



witnessed exponential growth. In the last 11 years, the Central Government has built several new airports and carried out large-scale upgrades at existing ones. Pune International Airport is a great example of this. Over the past

Retd cop held for 'sexually assaulting' 9-yr-old girl

Based on the mother's statement, the police registered a case against the retired officer under various POCSO sections, including molestation, said a police official.

Mumbai. (Agency)

Kasturba Marg police arrested a retired police inspector for allegedly sexually assaulting a nine-year-old girl. The 68-year-old accused was produced in court on Monday and remanded to police custody till Wednesday.

According to police, the victim is a student of Class 3 and lives in the northern suburbs with her parents. The incident occurred on Sunday around 7:30 pm when the victim was going home in the lift at her building. The accused allegedly entered the lift too on the ground floor and sexually assaulted her.

The girl said she was scared, but narrated the incident to her mother on reaching home. Her mother immediately approached Kasturba Marg police station and narrated the incident to police personnel. Based on the mother's statement,



the police registered a case against the retired officer under various POCSO sections, including molestation, said a police official. "The accused retired around ten years ago as a police inspector. We

have been investigating the case and scanning through the CCTVs of the building and elevator to corroborate the incident. A medical test was conducted on the victim," said a senior officer from Kasturba Marg police station.

Bengaluru to get 4,500 more electric buses under PM e-Drive Scheme

236 electric vehicle charging stations have been set up across four major corridors in Bengaluru, the Union Minister of State for Heavy Industries said.

Bengaluru. (Agency)

Bengaluru Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC) will get 4,500 more electric buses under the PM's e-Drive Scheme with Convergence Energy Services Limited (CESL) finalising bids last month, according to Union Minister of State for Heavy Industries Bhupathiraju Srinivasa Varma.

The minister was responding to a question by Bengaluru South MP Tejasvi Surya in the Lok Sabha. Surya had sought details on the number of buses sanctioned, funds allocated, operational status, and the reasons for the delay.

In his reply, the minister said under the scheme, 4,500 e-buses have been allotted to BMTC. These buses are among the 10,900 e-buses for which bids were finalised

by CESL on November 14. Procurement and deployment of these buses are on.

Under the FAME-II Scheme, BMTC



received 1,221 e-buses and Rs 517.23 crore as central assistance. All 1,221 buses have been deployed. Bengaluru did not receive any buses under the earlier FAME Scheme, despite Karnataka getting 425 buses, the minister said. According to information

provided by the minister, 6,862 electric buses have been deployed in the state under the FAME-II Scheme and 13,800 under the PM e-Drive Scheme.

'236 charging stations set up'

In all, 236 electric vehicle charging stations have been set up across four major corridors in Bengaluru, the Union Minister of State for Heavy Industries told Bengaluru Central MP PC Mohan in the Lok Sabha. In a written reply, the minister said oil marketing companies (OMCs) have set up 236 EV charging stations across these corridors, including 109 on Bengaluru-Pune Highway (NH 48), 64 on Bengaluru-Hyderabad Highway (NH 44), 33 on Bengaluru-Mysuru Expressway (NH 275), and 30 on Bengaluru-Chennai Expressway.

Nine years after his extradition to India, Kumar Pillai seeks repatriation to Hong Kong

According to the police, in the 1980s, Pillai had graduated with a degree in textile engineering and lived in the eastern suburbs of Mumbai with his family.

Mumbai. (Agency)

NINE YEARS after he was extradited to India and over a year after being cleared of all charges, Kumar Pillai, an engineer who faced allegations of being a gangster, has sought to be repatriated to his 'home country', Hong Kong.

Pillai, who says he is a citizen of Hong Kong, has approached a special court last month stating that all the cases pending against him have ended in acquittals and he is not required in custody in India so he should be allowed to return.

"After being acquitted in all the cases, the applicant (Pillai) was not repatriated to Hong Kong and continue to stay in India with no status in India or visa for stay in India. The applicant states that he had applied with the FRRO

(Foreigners Regional Registration Office) for exit from the country as well as for valid Indian visa for entering but the same is not yet being approved. It is submitted that it was expected that after he was acquitted of all cases for which he was extradited from Singapore, the concerned police authorities ought to have taken steps to repatriate him to his home nation but despite the same, he continues to be in India," the application filed before the special court in November states.

"It is submitted that the current status of the applicant is not been authorised by any provision of law and due to inaction by the police machinery, the applicant had to face several hardships," the plea further adds, stating that he has

been left with no option but to approach the court seeking directions to the police to take



appropriate steps for repatriation to his home country. The court has directed the police to file a reply to his application, which will be heard on December 20.

The unlikely 'gangster'

According to the police, in the 1980s, Pillai had graduated with a degree

in textile engineering and lived in the eastern suburbs of Mumbai with his family. His father, Krishna Pillai, ran a club, and was murdered over a dispute, allegedly over his refusal to sell his establishment to a local politician. The police had claimed that Kumar Pillai swore revenge and got involved in Amar Naik's gang, before he left the country after 2007.

In 2016, when a team of Mumbai police officials went to get his custody in Singapore, he is alleged to have told them in chaste Marathi that he was glad they came and he could now meet his mother. Extradition and the cases against him Pillai's plea in court states that he was brought from Singapore in 2016 to be tried in three cases pending before the Mumbai Police

crime branch from 2009 to 2013. Two of the cases were filed in 2009 related to alleged extortion bids. In one of the cases, he also faced the stringent charge under Maharashtra Control of Organised Crime Act.

In 2020, the special court acquitted him in the first case, related to alleged extortion of an MLA from Vikhroli. It was claimed that the MLA had received a threat call from Pillai, while he was out of India, seeking Rs 75 lakh for a redevelopment project in the suburb. Pillai was acquitted by the court saying that there was not enough evidence to convict him.

In 2022, Pillai was acquitted in the second case, where he was similarly booked for making a threat call to a builder in 2009, demanding Rs 15 lakh.

Peacetime simulations for wartime speed

When General K Sundarji conceptualised Operation Brasstacks in 1987, India's security environment was intense, but still largely linear. The exercise was not merely a rehearsal of military manoeuvres. The three stages prior to Brasstacks IV involved national wargaming that brought together political leaders, bureaucrats, scientists, logisticians, and military commanders—a rare moment when the State thought collectively about war, governance, and national preparedness. At that time, Pakistan was only 16 years past the trauma of 1971—still adversarial, but conventionally outmatched. China was only in the early phase of Deng Xiaoping's Four Modernisations—emerging, but not yet shaping regional security dynamics. In that environment, it was logical that Brasstacks focused on massed conventional operations across geographically defined battle spaces. Today, that world is scarcely recognisable. Pakistan possesses nuclear deterrence, missile capabilities, and is expanding access to drones and other emerging warfare technologies. Its fiscal fragility and internal instability do not restrain its behaviour; they often incentivise asymmetric posturing. With diminishing leverage in Afghanistan, it has sought a reverse form of strategic depth through intelligence footprints and sympathetic networks in Bangladesh. China has evolved into a deliberate strategist, not merely supporting, but shaping Pakistan's threat profile. The contest is now multi-domain—cyber, informational, economic, diplomatic, and psychological—where narratives matter as much as capabilities. In this evolving environment, Operation Sindoor provided reassurance, exposing no visible strategic weakness. Yet, as every seasoned practitioner knows, public success does not erase private lessons. What is not visible is often more valuable. Every operation brings clarity—not only about our strengths, but also about our friction points and unseen vulnerabilities. Learning from those requires more than a review; it requires simulation, rehearsal, and refinement. That is the unique strength of wargaming. Unlike briefings or consultations, wargaming is an immersive learning tool. It does not merely present a situation—it forces decision, under pressure, uncertainty, and time constraints. It enables policymakers, diplomats, intelligence professionals, economists, and military planners to experience how crises unfold; and, critically, how their decisions shape consequences. It identifies institutional blind-spots, improves inter-agency understanding, and trains decision-makers to think in layers—not only about what the adversary might do, but why and when. The US, Japan, Israel, and China regularly simulate crises to refine decisions and strengthen strategic

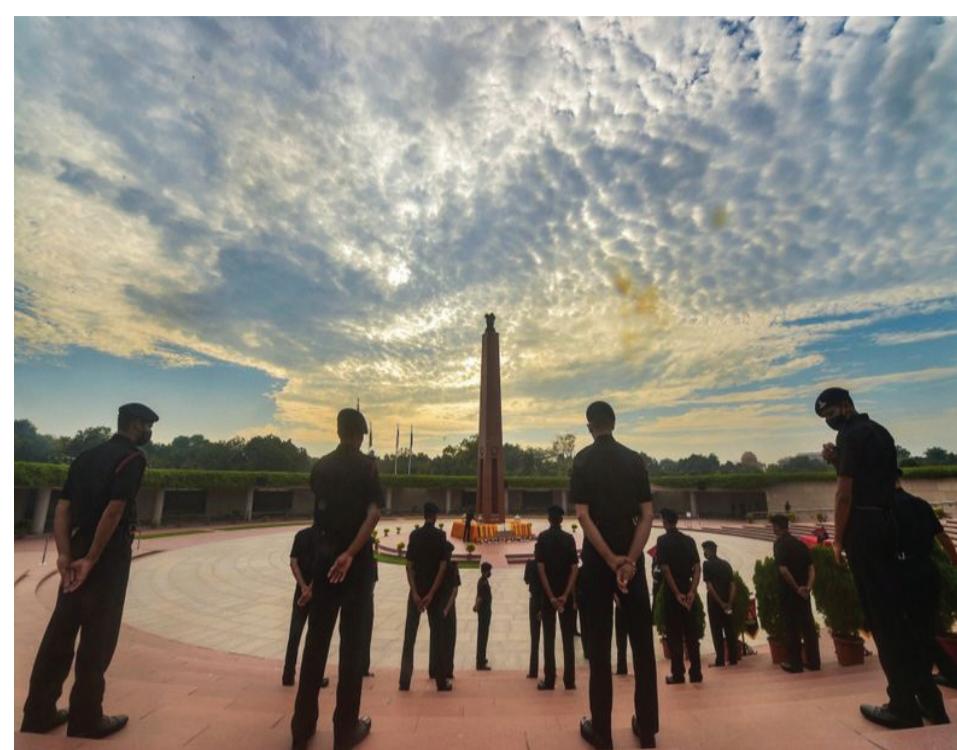
The Indian armed forces have long excelled in this domain. Wargaming and scenario planning are deeply ingrained from academy training to operational and joint command levels. Officers are habituated to visualise, simulate, and optimise responses. Table-top exercises in disaster management are a quasi-military extension of this method—integrating agencies across domains and teaching coordination as a habit. But while the military lives wargaming, the national governance ecosystem only visits it. That must change. The recent Delhi car blast was part of the same hybrid continuum—designed to probe resilience, shape perception, and exploit our cognitive blind-spots.

ON November 25, the Supreme Court declined to interfere in the Army's dismissal of Lt Samuel Kamalesan for refusing to enter the unit temple or gurdwara for mandatory functions. Kamalesan objected that as a Protestant Christian committed to monotheism, he could not enter the inner sanctum and perform puja, havan or aarti without violating his conscience. The case has attracted significant media attention in recent days, with sharply divided opinions. Critics of the court decision argue that it violates Article 25 of the Constitution, which guarantees the right to religious freedom. They say the judgment ignores the true strength of Indian secularism, which should protect both religious observance and conscientious abstention. In their view, individuals should not be forced to cross the line from secular inclusivity to coerced religiosity. Unfortunately, the case also took on a 'minority persecution' hue because the dismissed officer is a Christian. In a thoughtful piece, Sanjay Hegde, senior advocate at the Supreme Court, wrote in *The Hindu*, 'India's military unity has never been built on majoritarian comfort... Soldiers from minority faiths should never have reason to wonder whether they will be asked to cross a line that their beliefs prohibit.' There were critiques of a broader 'saffronisation' of India's military, citing examples of Hindu religious symbolism in unit names, ceremonies and leadership statements. This was seen as part of a larger pattern of shrinking space for minorities in India's public institutions, especially when claims of conscience clash with majoritarian religious practices.

Some of this criticism would appear logical to the public. However, the veteran community has universally supported the court's ruling. Having served for four decades in uniform, let me attempt to explain why Kamalesan's actions are institutionally unacceptable. The military is unlike any other profession. And there are two fundamental reasons for this distinction. First, militaries are entrusted with the exercise of ultimate violence on behalf of a nation and have the means of mass annihilation and power grab at their disposal. Irresponsible behaviour on their part could wreck society. Second, no profession demands the level of sacrifice from its members as the military does. Within this distinctive professional milieu, the military requires a coherent set of formal and informal norms and values to anchor its conduct. These values cannot be borrowed indiscriminately from the broader society but must

Religious rigidity can hurt military ethos

Lt Kamalesan's dismissal is a clear signal that, in the military, an officer's personal faith must remain just that—personal.



possess intrinsic relevance to the institution and be internalised by those who serve within it. A report by the US Army Research Institute for Behavioural and Social Sciences puts it this way, 'When the chips are down, there is no rational calculation in the world capable of causing an individual to lay down his life. On both the individual and collective levels, war is therefore primarily an affair of the heart. It is dominated by such irrational factors as resolution and courage, honour and duty and loyalty and sacrifice of self.' These 'irrational factors' are the soul of the military's values. Qualities such as honour, courage, loyalty, discipline and brotherhood are not incidental to military life, but are consciously cultivated, repeated and reinforced until they become second nature. They are instilled not because they possess abstract moral worth, but because the very effectiveness of a fighting force depends on them. Without these virtues, hundreds of soldiers would not unhesitatingly assault Tiger Hill during the Kargil War, knowing it would lead to the inevitable death of some of them. At the top of the military's ethical hierarchy sits the officer corps. For questions of military professionalism, the 'sociology of the military' has historically been, in essence, a sociology of the officer corps. It is their attitudes, behaviour and the standards they set that define the military ethos and how efficiently the military

performs its role. One enduring element of the Indian Army has been the relationship and trust between officers and soldiers. Stephen P Cohen, who wrote an excellent book on the Indian Army, states that the professional ethic of the Indian Army stems from the 'unique mystique of the relationship of the officer to the other ranks.' Anything that could potentially weaken a soldier's relationship and trust in the officer must be discouraged entirely. It is in this context that we must examine Kamalesan's case. Not from the point of religious identity and religious freedoms, but of its impact on the military's ethos and values, and the relationship between the officer and his soldiers. Some might ask if this issue is being exaggerated and that the actions of an individual officer are unlikely to have army-wide repercussions. I honestly cannot answer this with any conviction, but should we open a Pandora's box? Today, thousands of officers in the Indian Army serve in units where their soldiers belong to a different faith. If religious rigidity spreads and officers refuse to participate in religious functions with their soldiers, it would have a devastating effect on the military ethos and character. For those who express concern about the rise of majoritarian religious practices, it must be pointed out that Kamalesan's dismissal is a clear signal that, in the military, an officer's personal faith must remain just that—personal. Hegde has also stated that when duty meets conscience, the real test is not choosing one over the other but finding a way for both to coexist. But there is a real danger here. If conscience, which has a strong moral component of right and wrong, is equated with religious dogmas, we risk bracketing military professionals with sectarian actors, who forcefully seek to impose their personal religious interpretation. The military, as an institution, must also engage in deep introspection. There is no restriction on senior officers visiting religious institutions, but there is absolutely no reason for pictures of this private practice to be officially posted on social media, as is being increasingly seen. For a force that asks its members to subsume their identity in the service of the nation, even the appearance of endorsing any one faith can wound the quiet trust that binds a diverse military together.

Sengottaiyan's shift changes 2026 calculus

Scores of AIADMK functionaries and hundreds of grassroots loyalists from western Tamil Nadu have followed K A Sengottaiyan into TVK's fold.

With the 2026 assembly polls barely months away, Tamil Nadu's political chessboard has sprung a surprise. The fledgling Tamilaga Vettai Kazhagam (TVK), launched by matinee-idol-turned-politician Vijay, has pulled off a coup that few saw coming—the induction of K A Sengottaiyan, a veteran expelled from the AIADMK. The 77-year-old Gounder strongman from Gobichettipalayam, a trusted lieutenant of both MGR and J Jayalalithaa, has spent five decades mastering the art of booth-level mobilisation, alliance arithmetic, and Kongu Nadu vote consolidation. For him, the move implies a do-or-die showdown. He has staked his legacy on a party that has not yet fought an election and whose electoral machinery is still embryonic. Scores of AIADMK functionaries and hundreds of grassroots loyalists from western Tamil Nadu have followed him into TVK's fold. In return, Vijay has handed him sweeping organisational authority as chief coordinator of TVK's administrative committee and organising secretary for the western region—Coimbatore, Tirupur, Erode, and the Nilgiris—the terrain where the AIADMK, under



Edappadi K Palaniswami, once appeared unassailable. TVK rivals will revel in Sengottaiyan's track record to mock the new party's 'clean politics' slogan. After the AIADMK faced a rout in 1996, several senior ministers faced corruption charges. As the transport minister in the cabinet, Sengottaiyan was convicted in two corruption cases in 2000 and sentenced to jail, disqualifying him from

contesting polls. Though he staged a comeback once the legal storm passed, these stories remain etched in public memory. TVK brands itself the new principal opposition, hoping to inherit the anti-DMK space the AIADMK once monopolised. The ground reality may, however, look more fractured. The AIADMK-BJP alliance, despite internal contradictions, retains organisational depth and a loyal cadre base. The DMK, riding on welfare populism and a disciplined leadership under M K Stalin, appears comfortably placed to exploit the splintering of the anti-incumbency vote. Vijay's star power is undoubted, but his ability to convert fan clubs into a durable vote bank remains untested. By roping in a Kongu Nadu heavyweight, TVK has signalled it is willing to play the hard game of caste arithmetic and regional balancing. Whether this bold stroke consolidates the Gounder vote behind the new outfit or fragments it further will be one of the defining sub-plots of 2026. Surely, the entry of a battle-scarred veteran into a celebrity-led startup makes the three-cornered contest even more intriguing.

Tom Stoppard | Exit stage left, let the music play

For playwright Tom Stoppard (1937-2025), science had killed the old gods, and history the new ones. Facing the absurdity, he chose neither a fundamentalist retreat nor an ironic shrug. He cared because the alternative wasn't philosophically or aesthetically appealing

Few playwrights thought as hard—or as painfully, playfully—as Tom Stoppard about what keeps human beings going when all the old, reasonable reasons have collapsed. Stoppard, who saw the future in the past, returned repeatedly to three questions. If the universe is meaningless and god was always dead, why does anything matter? If history is a bloody farce, why bother being decent? And if consciousness or love is just chemistry, why do they feel so real? His play *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* (1966) begins with two bewildered minor characters from Hamlet waiting for a purpose that never comes. Probability collapses, coins land heads forever, and still they talk, still they try to make sense of the plot they dimly feel they inhabit. Their identical fate—death off-stage—was written by Shakespeare, but Stoppard gives them an inner life, and that life is unmistakably Kafkaesque. The conversation is the meaning: the heroic, doomed process of puzzling things out and carrying on. In *Arcadia* (1993), Stoppard collapses all three of his obsessions into one helpless, gutting stage picture. The play alternates between two eras in the same English country house. 1809-1812: Thomasina Coverly, 13 at the start and 17 by the end, is tutored by young scholar Septimus Hodge. While adults date, duel, and gossip, she quietly invents—centuries early—the mathematics of chaos theory. She grasps that the second law of thermodynamics dooms the universe to "heat death", a final state of disorder where nothing can ever happen again. The

night before her 17th birthday, Thomasina dies in a fire. A little too symbolic. But there it is. Cut to the 1990s. A literary historian, Hannah Jarvis, and a cocky academic, Bernard Nightingale, try to reconstruct what happened in that house two centuries earlier. They find Thomasina's exercise books, but most clues have been lost or misread. Time, like heat, flows only one way. Everything leads to the final three minutes. The lights do not change; the same table, the same chairs, the same room. But suddenly, both eras occupy the stage at once. On one side: Thomasina, in a Regency dress, asks Septimus to teach her to waltz before the party ends. They dance to a faint music drifting in from the next room. On the other side: Hannah, in modern clothes, is handed an old cassette by Gus, the nearly-silent teenage boy of the house. He presses play. The same waltz begins again, now scratchy and recorded. Gus offers his hand; Hannah, who has spent the play guarding her emotions, accepts. Two couples, 200 years apart, move to the same music in the same physical space, unaware of each other. The audience sees both at once. The equations Thomasina scribbled are correct: everything—stars, civilisations, love affairs, teenage geniuses—will dissolve into cold, featureless silence. Thomasina is already dead; Hannah will die soon enough. Even the waltz is a borrowed energy that will dissipate with the music. And yet for those 30 seconds, the dance actually happens. A dead girl and a living woman turn to the

same music, filling the same span of time. In classic Stoppard fashion, the only real thing is the sad beauty of transience. The puzzle has been solved. The pain and beauty persist. Stoppard's fascination with love and consciousness unravels.

The *Coast of Utopia* (2002), his nine-hour chronicle of Russian revolutionaries, is a laboratory for his

What remained was the naked human animal, stripped of guarantees, still capable of courage, curiosity, perhaps kindness. All his life, he wondered what it was to be human. That stance feels painfully relevant in 2025. We live in the absurd existential world Stoppard helped to map: algorithmic feeds instead of god, climate models instead of divine wrath, all announcing the same verdict—you are a speck, your feelings are epiphenomena, your species is a rounding error. The loudest contemporary responses are either fundamentalist retreat or ironic shrug. Stoppard offered a third option: look straight at the emptiness and choose to care anyway. Not because it pays, not because it's adaptive, but because the alternative is neither philosophically nor aesthetically appealing. In this sense his plays are not consolations but rehearsals: tragicomic models of how to think, talk, and even joke our way through a universe that will not explain itself. He showed that the dance matters because it is brief; the conversation matters because it is futile; decency matters because the world is unfair. Stoppard's work insists that meaning is not discovered but made, in real time, by fragile, temporary creatures who are acutely conscious that they are temporary. The waltz will end, the lights will go out, and the stage will be empty. But while the music plays, we might as well dance, solemnly celebrate, as perhaps in one's own constant funeral, the poetry of transience.



second question: if history is mostly cruelty and error, why choose decency? Herzen watches every noble idea curdle into terror and still ends with the exhausted, defiant line: "The future is disorder... but we have to want it anyway." Wanting decency, truth, and love when every empirical test says they are pointless—that was Stoppard's moral position. Born Tomás Stráüssler, Stoppard fled the Nazis as a child, grew rich and famous in the democratic West, and never let himself off the hook. Science had killed the old gods; history had killed the new ones.

NEWS BOX

IAF Sergeant among 2 killed as car plunges into khud near Bir-Billing

Ahmedabad. (Agency)

An Indian Air Force Sergeant was among two men killed, and two others suffered injuries when the car they were travelling in skidded off the road and fell into a khud at the world-famous Bir Billing paragliding site in Himachal Pradesh's Kangra district on the intervening night of Monday and Tuesday, police said.

Police identified the victims as Sergeant Naveen Chand of Malnu Bhavarna village and Rajeev Thakur of Saloh Naina Devi village, and the injured as Akshay Kumar and Mohit Kumar.

A police officer said, "The Sergeant had come to his house on leave, while Rajeev Thakur's kin said that he was to marry next month. A case was registered, and the police started an



investigation. "Preliminary investigations suggest the car driver lost control over the vehicle near the paragliding take-off site and plunged into a khud, killing two occupants on the spot and critically injuring two others," police said. "Overspeeding or poor visibility at night may have led to the mishap."

As locals immediately alerted the police, a rescue team reached the site, retrieved the injured from the khud and rushed them to a nearby hospital. Police said that they initiated an investigation to ascertain the exact cause of the accident. Preliminary information suggests that overspeeding or poor visibility at night may have led to the mishap. Further details were awaited.

GBA lists 11 properties for removal of unauthorised floors, deviations in Bengaluru

Lucknow. (Agency)

BENGALURU: The Bengaluru East City Corporation, under the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA), has started cracking down on errant property owners who construct buildings violating the sanctioned plan and adding unauthorised floors and tenements. It has listed 11 buildings that will face action. Already, action has been taken against five buildings in the Mahadevapura Assembly segment. One of the buildings in the Whitefield ward had its illegally constructed top floor demolished.

A senior corporation official said GBA is following up on constructions that have either violated sanctioned building plans or added unauthorised floors. Based on Rule 313, 248 (1), (2) and 356 passed by the previous Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike, notices were issued to owners seeking information. The corporation has directed the violators to either remove the violation on their own, or to force the corporation's hand into felling them.

East Corporation Commissioner DS Ramesh said action against two buildings has begun and soon the remaining ones will also face similar action. "The corporations have to take four months to follow the procedure. But owners take advantage of this and get a court stay. It takes time to get the stay vacated and proceed further," he said.

PUCL, family of custodial death victim Darshan demand judicial inquiry into Viveknagar police action

BENGALURU. (Agency)

Activists of People's Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL), Karnataka, and family members of Darshan, 22, who died due to the alleged torture by Viveknagar police, have demanded that a judicial inquiry be ordered into the case instead of a probe by the Criminal Investigation Department (CID). Following the illegal detention and custodial torture of 22-year-old Darshan, who died on November 26, the Viveknagar Police Inspector and three police personnel were suspended on Tuesday.

Addressing reporters here on Tuesday, YJ Rajendra, vice-president of PUCL, alleged that the police have been threatening Darshan's wife to withdraw the case after his death. She has also been offered money.

Darshan was allegedly illegally detained by Viveknagar police on November 12. He was allegedly tortured and assaulted, and later sent to a rehabilitation centre on November 16. On November 26, he died at the rehabilitation centre, Prof Rajendra said.

PUCL has formed a fact-finding team of advocates and members from various organisations. Though Darshan was illegally detained, the police did not give any memo to his family, PUCL members said. Darshan's mother Adilakshmi said though he suffered injuries, the police did not take him to hospital. She did not sign any consent form to send Darshan to the Unity Foundation Rehab Centre, they alleged.

BSF identifies 'hot spots' of Pak drone activity in Punjab: ADG

The officer added that special sensors capable of detecting underground tunnels in the Jammu sector would also be procured to foil infiltration attempts from the Pakistani side of the international border.

Chandigarh. (Agency)

The Border Security Force (BSF) has identified "hot spots" which see maximum drone activity from Pakistan as a "massive upgradation" of anti-drone systems being undertaken along the Indo-Pak border in Punjab and Jammu.

Addressing a press conference here, Additional DG of the BSF Western Command Satish S Khandare said, "The hot spots have been identified after forensic examination of all Pakistani drones intercepted and brought down along the border and their data analysed in a new drone forensic laboratory in Amritsar."

short article insertKhandare said the anti-drone systems along the Indo-Pak border in Punjab and Jammu would see a massive upgradation in days and months to come. "The existing multi-layered system integrates multiple sensors, including radar, electro-optical/infrared cameras and radio frequency analysers to detect, track and neutralise Pakistani drones."

The officer added that special sensors capable of detecting underground tunnels in the Jammu

sector would also be procured to foil infiltration attempts from the Pakistani side of the international border. "In 2025, BSF recovered 275 drones which came from Pakistan, seized more than 380 kg of heroin and more than 200

possible to go to the border due to waterlogging. Anti-national elements made attempts to take advantage of the situation, but BSF and Punjab Police conducted an operation and recovered arms," he said.

Answering a question, the ADG conceded that in this situation, with so many gaps and little manpower at disposal, it might be possible that certain gaps could have been exploited by anti-national elements. "Border domination coordination is done with all agencies. We have excellent coordination with the Punjab Police on where to deploy anti-drone systems," he said.

About technology being used by Pakistanis in their drones, Khandare said the drone technology is evolving, and so is the anti-drone technology. "Many times, there is no accurate result. What we have noticed since 2019 till now, the analysis shows that drone size has gone down. Consignment size has also gone down, and cheap drones are being used. Bigger drones had a more sound signature and could easily be detected," he said.



weapons, including sophisticated automatic rifles. Apart from this, 53 Pakistani intruders/smugglers were apprehended," the ADG said.

Referring to recent floods that affected Punjab, the ADG said that due to the floods, roughly 60 km of fencing was damaged at many places and washed away. "At some places, it was not

NFR Sets New Benchmark with Complete Biometric Integration in Ticket Checking Operations

The Sikh Times

Maligaon, 3rd December:

The Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) has achieved another significant milestone in its continuous drive to enhance system efficiency through modern IT interventions. NFR has achieved a significant digital milestone by successfully implementing 100% biometric Sign On/Sign Off system for all Ticket Checking Staff across 22 TTE lobbies, covering its five divisions. This digital system has been made fully functional at various major stations across the zone, such as Katihar, Kishanganj, Alipurduar Junction, New Bongaigaon, Rangiya Junction, Kamakhya, Guwahati, Dibrugarh Town and New Tinsukia, ensuring complete transparency and accountability in staff movement, attendance and duty compliance. The

introduction of biometric attendance has further strengthened the efficiency of Ticket

ensures better monitoring and optimal deployment of staff for train manning and onboard



Checking operations across NFR. With accurate, real-time attendance capture, the system

ice delivery. Increased checking efficiency has also contributed to higher revenue earnings by reducing ticketing irregularities. Additionally, improved staff presence in the field has led to a notable rise in window ticket sales, further boosting the railway's overall revenue.

To ensure smooth functioning, dedicated teams at both Divisional and Zonal Headquarters continuously monitor the biometric installations and real-time data from all lobbies. NFR remains committed to leveraging advanced digital technologies to enhance operational efficiency, improve passenger services and boost revenue. This marks another significant step toward a more transparent, efficient and technologically advanced railway network.

'Don't want our villages under MC': Sarpanches of several panchayats submit memorandum as dissent grows

Chandigarh. (Agency)

Opposition is steadily growing against the government's notification to include 15 panchayats of Mohali block within the Mohali Municipal Corporation (MC). On Tuesday, representatives from nearly a dozen villages gathered at village Mauli under the leadership of sarpanch Gursewak Singh. Following the meeting, they submitted a memorandum addressed to MLA Kulwant Singh at his office, where it was received by his son, councillor Sarabjit Singh Samana.

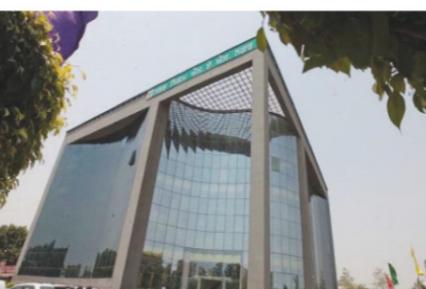
In their memorandum, the sarpanches categorically stated that they do not want their villages merged with the MC. "Our panchayats have been efficiently managing development works. We do not wish to be brought under the MC," the memorandum said. They warned that if their villages are not immediately removed from the corporation limits and the notification withdrawn, "residents of all affected villages will have no option but to come out on the roads in protest".

Those sarpanches present during the submission of the memorandum included: Gursewak Singh (Mauli), Tarnjit Kaur (Chilla), Harmandeep Kaur (Chhappar Chhidi Kalan), Harjit Kaur (Chhappar Chhidi).

Khurd, Gurjinder Singh (Ballomajra), Satnam Singh (Balongi), Jaspreet Singh (Landran), Kuldeep Kaur (Lakhnour), Kanika Sharma (Sambhalki) and Parvinder Singh (Namonajra). The sarpanches of Rudka and Kambali had already announced on Monday that they do not want their villages included in the MC jurisdiction. They asserted that 14 of the 15 panchayats are opposed to the merger and only the sarpanch of Balongi Colony is in favour of joining the corporation.

They alleged that the Department of Local Government failed to seek objections from any village before issuing the notification. When no panchayat passed a resolution seeking inclusion in the MC, why were we forcibly added, the sarpanches questioned.

They argued that merging with the corporation would "wipe out the identity of the villages" and expressed apprehension that villagers dependent on livestock rearing would lose their livelihoods, while residents would be burdened with property tax and building plan fees. They further said that village shramdal land would automatically come under the corporation's control.



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GJEPC forms non-profit in Surat for smoother diamond trade

Ahmedabad. (Agency)

The Gems and Jewellery Export Promotion Council (GJEPC) on Tuesday formed a subsidiary non-profit firm - Small Medium Development Organisation (SMDO) - to purchase rough diamonds from the Botswana government-run ODC (Okavango Diamond Company) and distribute them to small- and medium-sized diamond merchants in Surat.

Of the ten polished diamonds found in the world, eight are cut and polished in Surat, while Botswana is the second-largest rough diamond-producing country. Last month, GJEPC leaders visited Botswana with the President of India, Droupadi Murmu. They explored the possibilities of rough diamond supply in a meeting with diamond merchants.

Talking to The Indian Express, GJEPC Gujarat region president Jayanti Savaliya said, "De Beers mines 70 per cent of rough diamonds from the mines in Botswana, while the remaining 30 per cent are sold through the Okavango Diamond Company (ODC), run by the Botswana government. De Beers sells diamonds directly to its sight holders and through auctions. ODC also sells diamonds to different countries."

There are over 4,000 diamond manufacturing companies in Surat, where natural rough diamonds and lab-grown diamonds are cut and polished. Over 5 lakh people are engaged in cutting and polishing work.

Savaliya added, "We will form a board of around 10 to 12 members in SMDO, and make members who are small and medium players. The SMDO will collect the total demand for rough diamonds and place it with the ODC in Botswana. Once the rough diamonds are procured from ODC, we will be distributed to the members at preferred rates, as per their demands. Through these procedures, the small and medium diamond manufacturers will benefit."

He further added, "During our meeting with the Botswana government officials and ministers, we raised the issue of purchasing rough diamonds in large quantities to support the small and medium players of Surat. They agreed to the proposal."

Sources in the diamond industry said demand for cut-and-polished natural diamonds in the global market has declined over the last couple of years due to the Russia-Ukraine War, the Israel-Palestine War and US tariffs.

Shooting near Timber Market: Brother of Parry says 'was called multiple times on Snapchat, asked to come at site where he was killed'

Chandigarh. (Agency)

The family of Inderpreet Singh, alias Parry — a 35-year-old associate of gangster Lawrence Bishnoi who was shot dead near the Timber Market in Sector 26 on Monday evening — has alleged that the assailants had been carrying out a reccie of their residence for the past few days. Speaking to The Indian Express, Parry's elder brother, Harneet Singh, claimed that on Monday afternoon, Parry had received multiple calls from an unknown person on Snapchat, asking him to meet first in Sector 10 and then in Sector 26, where he was eventually gunned down. Harneet Singh, alias Harry, is also serving as Assistant Sub Inspector (ASI) in Punjab Police.

"At around 3 pm, we were sitting outside our house when Parry kept getting calls on Snapchat. The caller insisted on meeting him, first

at Sector 10 and then later at Sector 26," Harneet said. "I could recognise the ringtone — Parry had a different tone for Snapchat calls, but didn't know who was calling him."

Harneet further alleged that the white Creta car, believed to have been used by the attackers and later recovered by police, had been spotted near their home in the days leading up to the killing. "Someone had been doing a reccie of our house. I could sense it. The plan was clearly to win Parry's confidence by calling him out for a meeting and then ambush him," he said.

He added that the family now feels increasingly vulnerable. "We are under constant threat. We are easy

targets for the assailants," the ASI said, adding that amid the ongoing gang rivalry, Parry had been turned into a "soft target", as he was vulnerable too now.

Recalling Parry's long-standing association with Bishnoi, Harneet said the gangster had been known to their family since his college days in Chandigarh. "Lawrence was Parry's classmate. He used to visit our house, eat with us, and even stay with us during their college days," he recalled.

Meanwhile, the Chandigarh Police are probing the alleged reccie, the Snapchat call records, and gang rivalry as possible motives behind the killing. Police round up four, question for over an hour

On Tuesday, the Chandigarh Police rounded up four persons in concern with the case and questioned them for over an hour. Police sources said that the rounded up persons belonged to a club, where Parry had been visiting. Meanwhile, IG (Chandigarh Police) Pushpendra Kumar said that the investigation is on, and different

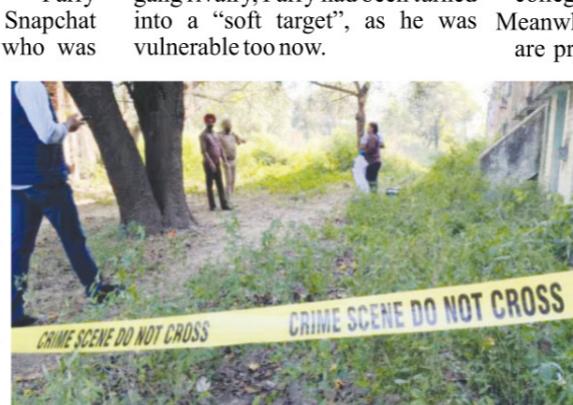
teams are working on it. The police are also verifying the audio clip purported to be of Goldy Brar, and also if there had been reccie of the victim's house before the incident.

Assailants Creta car recovered, CISL inspects it

The Chandigarh Police on Tuesday also recovered the Creta car used by the assailants in the crime. The car was recovered from Panchkula. The UT Police has also been coordinating with their Haryana and Punjab counterparts to trace the assailants. The CCTV footage of different areas in Panchkula and Mohali are being scrutinised.

Postmortem conducted at PGI, cremation tomorrow

The postmortem of Parry's body was conducted by the PGI doctors at the mortuary on Tuesday. The body will now be cremated by the family on Wednesday.



Flights hit across India as glitch impacts check-ins, chaos at Hyderabad airport

»A glitch in airport check-in systems caused widespread disruptions across India, leading to chaotic scenes at Hyderabad's Rajiv Gandhi International Airport.

New Delhi.(Agency)

Check-in systems at several airports experienced disruptions on Wednesday morning due to a system outage, according to a PTI report. Sources also informed PTI that some flights have been delayed due to the issues.

"Microsoft Windows reports major service outages globally. IT services/ check in systems at airports are impacted," passengers at Varanasi airport were informed via a notice. The notice revealed that at least four carriers, IndiGo, SpiceJet, Akasa Air, and Air India Express, were impacted at the airport. There were no immediate comments from Microsoft or the airlines. Airlines have reportedly resorted to manual check-in and boarding procedures to manage operations.

CHAOS AT HYDERABAD AIRPORT

This glitch likely contributed to chaotic scenes at Hyderabad's Rajiv Gandhi International Airport. A video from the airport showed a large crowd of passengers gathered around an airline helpdesk on Wednesday morning, seeking information about their flights.

Travellers were seen holding up tickets and mobile phones, raising their voices, and pressing staff for updates amid the delays.

Meanwhile, flight operations at Bengaluru International Airport were significantly disrupted, with four flights delayed due to late arrivals and several IndiGo services



were cancelled for operational reasons. The airline recorded a total of 42 cancellations on the day, including 22 arrivals and 20 departures.

Delhi International Airport Limited (DIAL) on Wednesday morning also posted an

advisory on X and said that some domestic airlines were facing operational challenges, which could lead to delays or schedule disruptions. "Our on-ground teams are diligently working with all stakeholders to ensure a seamless and efficient passenger experience," DIAL said in a post on X at 7:40 am.

AIRLINES SHARE UPDATES

Airlines also provided updates on the situation. Air India confirmed in an updated post on X that the third-party system has been fully restored, and check-in at all airports is now functioning normally.

The third-party system has been fully restored, and check-in at all airports is functioning normally. All our flights are

operating as per schedule. We thank our passengers for their understanding," Air India said in an updated post on X.

IndiGo, meanwhile, said it had faced several unavoidable flight delays and some cancellations in recent days due to a combination of technology issues, airport congestion, and operational requirements.

We have had several unavoidable flight delays and some cancellations in the past few days due to various reasons, including technology issues, airport congestion, and operational requirements.

Our teams are working diligently to ensure that operations normalise as soon as possible. Furthermore, we are offering alternate flight options or refunds to affected customer, as applicable," IndiGo said.

Delhi's min temp to fall by 2-3 degrees Celsius in next 3 days

New Delhi.(Agency)

The India Meteorological Department on Tuesday stated that the minimum temperature in the capital is likely to fall by about 2-3 degrees Celsius during the next three days. Additionally, cold wave conditions are expected to be witnessed in certain areas of Delhi on December 5.

In terms of the pollution levels, the air quality is expected to worsen further and as AQI in the city on Tuesday continued to be in the "very poor" category. After a fall in the temperature over the next three days, the subsequent 2-3 days are expected to see a rise by 2-3 degrees Celsius. The IMD release further noted that no significant change is likely in maximum temperatures during next 24 hours and both minimum and maximum temperatures are likely to be below normal (-1.6 to -0.3°C) to appreciably below normal (-3.1 to -0.5°C) during the above stated period.

In addition to that, a shallow fog is likely to be witnessed during morning hours between December 3 and 8. However, what's crucial is that the IMD said that there will be cold wave conditions at isolated places on 5th December 2025 over Delhi.

Talking about the same, Mahesh Palawat, Vice President of Meteorology & Climate Change said, "After the clearance of this Western Disturbance, we can expect cold northerly winds to once again reach Delhi and neighboring regions, leading to drop in night temperatures by 4-5 degrees around December 5. Cold wave conditions might grip some parts." He further said that it will also be the time when winds will pick up pace and might bring much needed relief from the poor air quality. "At present, light and calm winds combined with increased moisture levels have deteriorated air quality levels," he added. The AQI in the capital was recorded to be 392 on Tuesday.

Trade licence to merge with property tax

New Delhi.(Agency)

In a major reform aimed at improving ease of doing business, the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) on Tuesday approved a proposal to subsume the General Trade/Storage Licence (GTL), issued under Section 417 of the DMC Act, 1957 within the property tax payment system. The move will eliminate the need for a separate application or licence document for traders and business owners. Under the new system, the trade licence fee will be paid along with the annual property tax, and the payment receipt itself will serve as a valid General Trade/Storage Licence, subject to compliance with pollution control, fire safety and other statutory norms prescribed by concerned authorities.

Chaired by Delhi Mayor Raja Iqbal Singh, the House welcomed the decision as a major step towards transparent and citizen-centric governance. "This will bring immense relief to Delhi's business community by removing redundant processes and curbing avenues for harassment. By merging the licensing process with property tax, the MCD has made the system simpler, more transparent and truly business-friendly," he said. He added that the corporation remained committed to supporting honest taxpayers and ensuring smoother and more efficient governance.

"This move will reduce the compliance burden without compromising safety norms or revenue obligations," the Mayor said. As part of the reform, the licence fee has been fixed at 15 per cent of the applicable property tax of the premises. This replaces the earlier complex fee structure, which varied according to type of trade, area and category of locality.

Data analysis presented to the House indicated that the revised model would be revenue-neutral for the civic body while bringing greater fairness, predictability and uniformity for all categories of traders.

The reform is also expected to significantly reduce the need for field inspections, as licence fee assessment will no longer depend on multiple subjective parameters. Officials said the change would help curb rent-seeking practices while promoting a trust-based self-declaration system.

Apart from the trade licence reform, the House approved funding for a solid waste management project under the Union Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs' urban development fund. As part of this decision, the long-delayed 200-tonne-per-day biogas plant at Goyla Dairy will be revived.

Jamia teachers' body waits to reclaim office over a month after HC order

New Delhi.(Agency)

More than a month after the Delhi High Court restored the Jamia Teachers' Association (JTA) and allowed faculty members to reconstitute their long-stalled representative body, the university administration has yet to implement the order on the ground.

The office allotted to the teachers' association remains locked, with no approval from the vice-chancellor to hand it over, leaving teachers caught in administrative limbo despite a three-year legal battle.

On October 28, 2025, the High Court set aside Jamia Millia Islamia's 2022 decision to dissolve the JTA, calling the university's action "unjustified." The ruling reinstated the teachers' body after its abrupt dissolution in November 2022, a move that had effectively paralysed its functioning. For three years, the association's office stayed sealed, financial access remained blocked and elected members were prevented from

carrying out basic duties.

While the court's decision paved the way for the JTA general body to reconvene and elect a new executive committee, the process has stalled due to the administration's inaction. According to university sources, the



vice-chancellor has not yet granted permission to open the association's room, a requirement for initiating the reconstitution process. The room, they said, "continues to be locked exactly as it was during the suspension period."

A senior professor, requesting anonymity, said teachers have repeatedly approached the vice-chancellor to allow access to the office but have received no response. "We have reminded him several times.

Without access to the room, we cannot begin forming the executive committee or officially revive the association," the professor said. Vice-Chancellor Mazhar Asif did not respond to queries on the delay. The tussle dates back to November 2022, when Jamia Millia Islamia declared the JTA elections null and void, dissolved the association and suspended Professor Sonya Surabhi Gupta, who had served as the Returning Officer for those elections.

The administration had argued that the JTA's term had ended in May 2022 and that the elections were invalid – a position the High Court later rejected.

Chinese humanoid robot spying near India? Unverified clip sparks chatter

New Delhi.(Agency)

An unverified video circulating widely on social media has sparked speculation about the deployment of a Chinese humanoid robot along the India-China border. The footage, purportedly recorded by an Indian individual, shows a white, bipedal figure standing motionless on rugged, hilly terrain. Voices speaking in Hindi are audible in the background. While the video remains unverified, there is a lot of guesswork happening online over the possible escalating technological surveillance on the India-China border.



The location of the video, its authenticity, or if it is AI generated couldn't be independently verified by India Today Digital. The 33-second clip, which surfaced on Instagram and X on Tuesday, shows a white-coloured robot-like entity in what

appears to be a remote, mountainous landscape typical of the Line of Actual Control (LAC).

Netizens have dubbed it a "Chinese spy robot" straight out of a sci-fi movie, with some claiming it was spotted by Indian troops during a routine patrol near Arunachal Pradesh or Ladakh. Many even claimed that it could be an AI-generated video. However, there is no confirmation on it. "According to reliable sources, what appears in the video is not a humanoid robot, but rather a fixed surveillance device," said junshiguancha, who shared.

Mosque near Kolkata airport displaces runway threshold, affects operations: Centre

New Delhi.(Agency)

The Union Government on Wednesday officially acknowledged that a mosque located within the operational area of Kolkata's Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose International Airport is obstructing the full utilisation of the airport's secondary runway. The confirmation came in response to a question raised in the Rajya Sabha by BJP Bengal State President and Rajya Sabha MP Samik Bhattacharya. In a written reply, Minister of State for Civil Aviation Murlidhar Mohol informed that the mosque is situated in the approach area of the secondary runway (19R-01L), resulting in a displacement of the northern side threshold by 88 metres.

This displacement directly affects the safe extension and operational capacity of the runway. "Kolkata Airport has two parallel runways viz., primary runway (19L-01R) and secondary runway (19R-01L). The primary runway is



designated for regular, day-to-day airport operations. The secondary runway is used only when the primary runway is unavailable, such as during scheduled maintenance activities. A mosque is situated in the approach area of secondary runway which displaces the northern side threshold by 88 m," according to the written reply.

SECONDARY RUNWAY USABILITY IMPACTED

The Minister explained that Kolkata Airport operates two parallel runways: the primary (19L-01R) and the secondary (19R-01L). While the primary runway handles regular operations, the secondary runway is crucial during emergencies or when the main runway undergoes maintenance. However, due to the obstruction posed by the structure in its approach path, the secondary runway cannot be used to its full capacity. "A mosque is situated in the approach area of the secondary runway which displaces the northern side threshold by 88 m," the Ministry confirmed.

Congress's Renuka Chowdhury asked about dog in Parliament row. Her bizarre reply

Renuka Chowdhury, who sparked a row by bringing a dog to Parliament, brushed off questions about a possible privilege motion with a quirky "Bhau Bhau" before walking away.

New Delhi.(Agency)

Congress MP Renuka Chowdhury, who made headlines for bringing a dog to the Parliament on the first day of the Winter Session and then taking potshots at fellow lawmakers, offered a short, quirky response when asked about a possible privilege motion in the Rajya Sabha. When the media questioned her outside the parliament about the motion, she playfully said "Bhau Bhau" before walking away.

Chowdhury remained unfazed when pressed further. "If they want to bring a motion against me, let them. It doesn't matter to me. Former Prime Minister Vajpayee once came on a bullock cart. Dogs have great importance in Hinduism. I have not violated any rule," she said, dismissing warnings from BJP leaders. Speaking to the media outside

Parliament on Wednesday, the Rajya Sabha MP hit out at the government for focusing on the dog controversy instead of more pressing issues.

"People are dying because of pollution, BLOs are committing suicide, labour laws are being forced on us, the Sanchar Saathi app is being imposed, but Renuka Chowdhury's dog has rattled everyone. What can I say?" she remarked, adding that she would continue caring for animals.

The row erupted after Chowdhury drove into the Parliament complex with a dog in her car. Security staff reportedly stopped her at the gate and advised her not to take the animal inside, but she insisted on being allowed through. Although the dog was sent back shortly

afterward, its brief presence sparked a debate over Parliament protocol.

Chowdhury later defended her actions, saying she had rescued the puppy after "Those who bite are sitting inside

Parliament and running the government. Is there no problem with that? But if I care for an animal, it becomes a national discussion." Earlier, on Tuesday, BJP lashed out at Congress leaders Rahul Gandhi and Renuka Chowdhury over their comments on the dog in Parliament row, accusing them of insulting Parliament's dignity as well as MPs, security staff and officials.

BJP spokespersons Sambit Patra and Pradeep Bhandari said the Congress had "lowered decorum," urging Gandhi to introspect and alleging that his remarks demean even his own.



spotting it near an accident site.

"I was afraid it might get run over, so I picked it up and brought it here, then sent

NEWS BOX

How an IPL-styled league is bringing about a revolution in Pickleball in India

New Delhi. (Agency)

The KD Jadhav stadium in New Delhi witnessed the inauguration of an exciting league on Monday, December 1 in a brand new sport that is capturing the imagination of many people in India. The sport of Pickleball is slowly but surely making a big impression in India and certain stakeholders want to capitalise on that. In the modern sporting era, franchise-like leagues are mushrooming all over India. Be it the Indian Premier League in cricket, Pro Kabaddi League, Pro Panja League, Ultimate Table Tennis League, Indian Super League in football, there is a fixation on franchise-based leagues. Pickleball has now jumped into this with the new Indian Pickleball League that was inaugurated. An initiative by the Times Group, the Indian Pickleball League will see six franchises play in an IPL-style tournament for six days. There will be three



games on all the days from December 1 to 5. Then there will be the Qualifier, two Eliminators on December 6 followed by a final on December 7 and an All-Star Showcase on the same day. The teams involved will be Mumbai Smashers, Chennai Super Warriors, Lucknow Leopards, Bengaluru Blasters, Hyderabad Royals and Capital Warriors Gurgaon.

PICKLEBALL TO BOOST INDIA SPORTING IMAGE

Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta was in attendance as she inaugurated the Indian Pickleball League. Speaking about how the Indian Pickleball League will have an impact, the Delhi Chief Minister said, "Bharat has always been a country of sports. Efforts will be made to include pickleball in Delhi's school-level activities, games and sporting events to ensure the sport takes root in the Capital." Speaking about how Pickleball will make a difference to India's sporting image, Pickleball President Sameer Pathak assured the Delhi CM, "500 children from different schools will be in attendance and they will be inspired to become the next generation of Pickleball Stars."

IPBL BEGINS IN STYLE

The first match of the tournament started with Bengaluru Blasters taking on the Lucknow Leopards. If one has to look at a new league and Bengaluru starting, the mind goes back 17 years ago. In the IPL, a new cricket league, Royal Challengers Bengaluru opened the campaign against Kolkata Knight Riders.

Serena Williams denies tennis return despite re-entering anti-doping test pool

New Delhi. (Agency)

Serena Williams has categorically ended speculation about a potential tennis comeback after re-entering the International Tennis Integrity Agency (ITIA) anti-doping testing pool. The move prompted intense public debate, but Williams directly addressed the rumors by posting on X.

Williams' re-registration with the ITIA led to widespread interpretations that she might be preparing for a return to competitive tennis. According to the ITIA, players in the pool must provide daily whereabouts and remain available for random testing. Despite these requirements, Williams' public denial made clear that rejoining the pool does not signal an imminent return to the sport. The ITIA



confirmed to Reuters that Williams has re-entered the anti-doping pool, a process which requires athletes to comply with specific anti-doping protocols. She has not competed since her last appearance at the 2022 US Open. Williams is still listed under the category "retired players" on the ITIA official website. This reinforces her current status in professional tennis, even as her compliance with anti-doping regulations remains up to date with agency requirements.

Under ITIA rules, any player in the anti-doping pool would be eligible to compete again after six months of out-of-competition testing, should they choose to return. There has been no indication from Williams that she is considering activating this process. Recently, Williams shared images on social media of herself on court with her younger daughter, Adira River, which further fuelled speculation about her professional intentions. However, these personal moments have not correlated with any shift in her status as a retired athlete.

How Scott Boland bounced back from a horrendous first innings in Perth Pacer reveals

Scott Boland bounced back from a tough first innings in the first Ashes Test against England. He went on to pick a four-wicket haul in the second innings, playing a key role in Australia's win.

New Delhi. (Agency)

Australia fast bowler Scott Boland revealed how he bounced back from a horrendous first-innings performance during the first Test of the Ashes 2025-26 against England. Boland was taken to the cleaners on Day 1 of the series opener after England skipper Ben Stokes won the toss and opted to bat. The right-arm seamer leaked runs at an economy of 6.20, conceding 62 runs from ten overs. However, he bounced back phenomenally in the second innings, taking 4 for 33 in 11.3 overs. Recalling his spell on



Day 1 ahead of the second Test in Brisbane, Boland admitted that he had overpitched a lot, which resulted in a number of boundaries. Australia head coach Andrew McDonald had defended Boland after the first day, saying that the initial plans were to blame for his poor show. "I think Ronnie

(Andrew McDonald) is pretty nice to me there. I just had one of those days where I felt like I was over-pitching too much. Obviously, I wanted to start a little bit fuller than normal with the new ball, but I probably bowled seven or eight half-volleys and they all went for four. Some days half of them

Virat Kohli won't come back to Tests now: Kaif rules out retirement U-turn for star

New Delhi. (Agency)

Mohammed Kaif has claimed that Virat Kohli will never perform a Test retirement U-turn ahead of the Raipur Test between India and South Africa on Wednesday, December 3. Kohli retired from the longest format of the game ahead of the England tour after a storied career. There was speculation that BCCI were considering recalling Kohli to the Test team in the aftermath of India's 0-2 series against South Africa. However, BCCI brushed aside the rumours and Kohli himself said after the Ranchi ODI that he was focused on just one format. Speaking on his YouTube channel, Kaif said that the Indian batter is someone who has the habit of sticking to the decision that he makes and pointed out to how he never returned to RCB captaincy after leaving the post. "Kohli has a habit of sticking to the decision that he makes. There are many players who have reversed their retirements. But Kohli is not among them. Even after he left captaincy in the IPL, the last time people



told he should return as captain, but he did not. He made the decision and looked to back a junior and Patidar was the captain." "He has the guts that after he has taken the call, no matter what the reason is, he has taken it after thinking a lot, he will not come back now. People do want him but once these calls are taken, he is a man of his word, he will not come back," said Kaif.

WHAT MAKES KOHLI SPECIAL?

Premier League: Haaland creates history as Manchester City down Fulham in goal fest

Manchester City extended their winning streak over Fulham with a 5-4 victory, as Erling Haaland became the fastest player to reach 100 Premier League goals. Newcastle and Tottenham played out a 2-2 draw, with Cristian Romero scoring twice for Spurs, including a stoppage-time equaliser.

New Delhi. (Agency)

Manchester City defeated Fulham 5-4 at Craven Cottage, achieving their 19th consecutive win against the same opponent in English football. Erling Haaland reached a major milestone, becoming the fastest player in Premier League history to score 100 goals, accomplishing the feat in just 111 matches and surpassing Alan Shearer's previous mark by 13 games. The win keeps City in second place on 28 points, two



behind leaders Arsenal, while Fulham remain 15th on 17 points. City established a commanding 5-1 lead through goals by Haaland, Reijnders, Phil Foden (twice), and an own goal by Sander Berge. Fulham responded after falling behind, with Iwobi scoring and Chukwueze netting twice to narrow the margin. Fulham nearly completed the comeback, but Gvardiol made a crucial goal-line clearance in stoppage time to preserve Manchester City's advantage and secure all three

points. The result sees Manchester City remain second in the standings, two points adrift of Arsenal, while Fulham's position is unchanged at 15th. City's streak of 19 consecutive wins over Fulham is now the longest such run by any club against a single opponent in English football history. Haaland said after the game that he was proud to achieve the record and go past Shearer. "Proud moment, 100 club is a huge thing," he said. "To do it this quickly is amazing. I'm proud, I'm happy." "I've said it many times - a striker for City should score a lot of goals. That's my job, that's what I try to do. And I'm not bad at it! I should have had a hat-trick, I had a few chances. I need to practise."

ROMERO SAVES TOTTENHAM

In the other Premier League fixture, Newcastle United and Tottenham Hotspur played out an entertaining 2-2 draw. Newcastle controlled large parts of the match and went ahead in the 71st minute through Bruno Guimaraes.

South Africa came to India with purpose and belief, not just to compete: Tabraiz Shamsi

Tabraiz Shamsi feels South Africa's strong preparation and collective belief proved crucial in whitewashing India 2-0. He credited the team for overcoming previous challenges and scripting history.

New Delhi. (Agency)

Tabraiz Shamsi has revealed South Africa's secret behind their recent success in India. The Temba Bavuma-led side whitewashed India 2-0 on their home soil, registering just their second Test series win in the country.

South Africa had not won a single Test match in India on their previous two tours. However, the World Test Champions turned the tables on the Asian giants, first with a thrilling 30-run win in Kolkata, followed by a commanding 408-run victory in Guwahati. Speaking about South Africa's success, Shamsi credited the team for their preparations ahead of the tour. The wrist-spinner acknowledged how India had been one of the most challenging tours for them and praised the team for acclimatising to subcontinent conditions quickly.

"As a South African, we've had some difficult times touring India—four Test tours in the past—and in our last two series we were comprehensively beaten. So the guys put in a lot of work. They had good preparation going into this one. They toured Pakistan just before going to India, so they were already



getting used to subcontinent conditions," Shamsi told India Today. He also lavished praise on the team for performing collectively as a unit and on captain Temba Bavuma for handling the pressure of leadership. "What was really encouraging is that a couple of players stood out for us, but everyone else played strong supporting roles. They performed at crucial moments. Different guys scored runs, different guys

don't and you think it's going a little bit better," Boland was quoted as saying by ESPNcricinfo. After over-pitching too frequently in the first innings, Boland made smart adjustments in the second, altering both his line and length. He held the ball wider, enticing Pope and Brook into driving away from their bodies. "I was pretty happy with how I bounced back in the second innings. I sort of went back to my natural length—stuff that I know I'm really good at. I was obviously really disappointed with how I bowled in the first innings because generally I don't bowl too many half-volleys," he added.

Meanwhile, Boland has a phenomenal record in day/night Tests, having claimed 18 wickets from four matches (eight innings) at an average of 13.16, with best figures of 3 for 2. The 36-year-old will continue to play a pivotal role for his side in the absence of senior pros Pat Cummins and Josh Hazlewood, who will miss the second Test as well due to fitness concerns. Australia will aim for a 2-0 lead in the pink-ball Test beginning on 4 December at the Gabba in Brisbane.

Shubman Gill's injury rehab timeline: Star batter set for final test on December 5

New Delhi. (Agency)

India opener Shubman Gill's availability for upcoming T20I series against South Africa remains subject to fitness, as the star batter continues his recovery from neck injury. Gill has completed one unrestricted batting session at the Centre of Excellence (COE), responding well with no flare-up of symptoms. Over the next few days, he will undergo progressive batting and ground conditioning as part of his rehabilitation programme. Gill is scheduled to play his final RTP (Return to Play)



clearance match on 5 December 2025, which will determine his readiness for selection for South Africa T20Is beginning on December 9. Team management and medical staff remain cautiously optimistic, noting his steady progress and the importance of a fully fit Gill in the lead up to T20 World Cup 2026. India's T20I squad for the South Africa series is expected to be picked on Wednesday (December 3), but the selection meeting now hinges on Shubman Gill's fitness update. His participation in the T20Is is not ruled out and there remains a possibility that he could be available for the last two or three games, depending on how the specialists at the CoE (Centre of Excellence) assess his recovery timeline. Gill had retired hurt after he injured his neck while playing a sweep shot during India's first innings in the opening Test against South Africa at Eden Gardens and was briefly hospitalised in Kolkata. Though discharged the next day, he continued to feel discomfort, which ruled him out of the remaining Test and the ODI series.

took wickets. Temba Bavuma's leadership has been outstanding as well. Everything just seemed to come together, and the players had that belief that they could beat India," he said. The South Africa spinner also hailed the team for their immense belief in their ability to beat India at home and for showing that desire to topple the hosts through their on-field performances.

"This time around, the feeling within the team was completely different. Of course, they were World Test Champions, so you have to believe you can go to India and win. But the aura around the group wasn't one of simply going there to honour the fixtures or thinking, 'We'll fight, but India will probably win.' Instead, there was a real sense of purpose. Even when they were behind, the guys pushed hard. That attitude was really great to see," Shamsi explained.

Aadhaar-UAN Seeding For Filing Of ECR Deadline Over; Govt Says No Further Extension To Be Given

MUMBAI (Agency)

New Delhi: The Employees Provident Fund Organisation has issued circular regarding discontinuation of extension of timeline for mandatory Aadhaar Seeding with UAN for filing of ECR in respect of Establishments in the North East Region and Certain Classes of Establishments beyond 31 October 2025. The mandatory requirement for filing Electronic Challan-cum-Return (ECR) only for those members whose Aadhaar number is seeded and verified with their Universal Account Number (UAN) was introduced with effect from 01 June 2021. Considering the implementation challenges initially faced by employers and employees, several extensions were provided through the cited circulars and Ministry of Labour & Employment communications. These relaxations specifically covered: North East Region (NER): States of Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, and Tripura.

Specific Industries: Beedi-making, Building & Construction, and Plantation industries (including Tea, Coffee, Cardamom, Pepper, Jute, Rubber, Cinchona, Cashewnuts, etc.).

The latest extension, allowed the above categories time until 31 October 2025. EPFO has however noted that over the past four years, adequate opportunities have been provided to complete Aadhaar-UAN seeding and verification. Current pendency is marginal and continues to decline steadily. In order to prevent further dependency on recurring extensions, it has been decided not to grant any further extension, said EPFO.

The retirement fund body has also asked all Zonal Offices (ZOs) and Regional Offices (ROs) to immediately commence intensive sensitisation and awareness drives targeting the concerned employers.

Rupee shock drags markets lower as Sensex and Nifty slip into a cautious level

CHENNAI (Agency)

Indian equities spent most of Wednesday (December 3) on the back foot as persistent currency pressure and subdued global cues kept sentiment weak. The session opened without direction but quickly slipped into decline after the rupee once again breached the 90-per-dollar mark, renewing concerns over capital outflows and rising import costs. At 12.45 noon, the Sensex had fallen to about 85,138, down roughly 500 points, while the Nifty finished near 26,032, losing around 140 points. Selling was broad across sectors. Banking and financial stocks led the decline as investors reassessed the risks of currency volatility ahead of the RBI's upcoming policy review. Metals, manufacturing and energy-linked counters also retreated, reflecting worries about higher input costs in a weakening currency environment.

Information technology shares were the rare outliers, benefiting from a softer rupee that boosts the value of overseas earnings, and their gains helped cushion some of the broader market weakness. Through the day, traders avoided taking large positions, preferring caution ahead of key macro signals expected later in the week, including inflation readings and the central bank's policy outlook. With foreign flows turning uncertain and global markets offering little support, Wednesday's intraday trade pointed to market that is consolidating and bracing for potential volatility rather than committing to any directional move.

Corona Remedies IPO opens on December 8; price band fixed, GMP moves ahead | Details

New Delhi (Agency)

New Delhi: Pharma firm Corona Remedies, a book build issue of Rs 655.37 crore, will open for subscription on December 8, 2025 and close on 10th December. The issue is entirely an offer for sale of 0.62 crore shares of Rs 655.37 crore.

Corona Remedies IPO price band is set in the range of Rs 1008 to Rs 1062 per share. The retail investors are required to bid for a lot of 14 shares, for which a minimum amount of investment required is Rs 14,868. The investors applying in the NII category are 14 lots for which one has to invest Rs 2,08,152, bNII portion applicants are mandated to bid for 68 lots. Corona Remedies IPO GMP Corona Remedies IPO GMP stood at Rs 125 in the morning of December 3. With the price band of Rs 1062, the shares of the pharma company is estimated to be listed at Rs 1187 apiece, which indicates a listing of nearly 12 percent, investorgain reported. Pharma firm Corona Remedies is backed by private equity firm ChrysCapital. Anchor instors will be allocated shares on December 5. Corona Remedies' red herring prospectus filed with the SEBI, the company has revised its IPO size to Rs 655.37 crore, while earlier it had planned Rs 800 crore at the time of submitting draft papers in late April. Investors including Sepia Investments, Anchor Partners and Sage Investment Trust and promoters have announced plans to offload shares under the OFS route. Since it's an OFS, the company will not receive any proceeds from the public issue and the entire amount will go to selling shareholders. Corona Remedies IPO allotment, listing dates Corona Remedies IPO allotment is expected on December 11, 2025. The process of initiation of refunds is likely to take place on 12th December. The shares will be credited to the demat accounts of eligible shareholders on December 12, 2025. The shares will list on BSE and NSE with a tentative date 15 December. Corona Remedies business Corona Remedies, headquartered in Ahmedabad, is a pharmaceutical formulation company. The firm is engaged in the business of developing, manufacturing and marketing products in pain management, urology, women's healthcare, cardio-diabeto, and other therapeutic areas.

Are gold and silver heading towards record highs this week

Gold and silver prices in India have climbed sharply as the rupee lost ground against the US dollar, with market observers attributing these patterns to global economic indicators and currency stress.

New Delhi (Agency)

Gold and Silver Prices Rise as Rupee Weakens and Global Signals Turn Supportive. Gold and silver prices moved higher on December 3, 2025, helped by a weaker rupee and expectations of a rate cut in the United States next week. Both metals opened on a strong note and stayed firm through the morning session on the

Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX). GOLD STARTS THE DAY HIGHER

Gold opened 0.6% higher at Rs 1,30,550 per 10 grams, compared to the previous close of Rs 1,29,759. By 1.00 pm, gold was trading at Rs 1,27,950, showing a gain of 0.48%. Dr Renisha Chainani, Head of Research at Augmont, said the sharp fall in the rupee, moving past the Rs 90 per US dollar level—has added pressure on the currency. She said weak trade flows and uncertainty over a trade deal with Washington also contributed to the rupee's slide.

She noted that gold and silver have been gaining as fresh economic data from the US signals a mild slowdown. Dovish comments from Federal Reserve officials have strengthened expectations of a 25-basis-point rate cut, with traders assigning an 89% chance of this decision at the upcoming Fed meeting. GOLD TREND REMAINS BULLISH. Ponmudi R, CEO of Enrich Money, said

gold prices broke the previous day's high and touched a fresh peak near Rs 1,30,950. Prices are now moving towards the metal's lifetime resistance zone at Rs



1,32,294. He explained that the sharp move in the USD/INR towards 90.10 is the main reason for the strength in domestic gold. Even if global gold prices stabilise, the weaker rupee naturally boosts local prices because gold is imported.

SILVER HITS FRESH RECORD LEVELS Meanwhile, silver opened 1.21% higher at Rs 1,83,799 per kg, compared to its previous close of Rs 1,81,601. By 1.00 pm, silver was priced at Rs 1,77,495 per kg, rising 0.51%. Ponmudi said silver remains "exceptionally bullish", supported by strong global prices and the weak rupee. The metal hit a new all-time high near Rs 1,84,727, a sign of firm market sentiment. He said a steady move above Rs 1,84,000 could push silver towards Rs 1,86,000-Rs 1,88,000. In other words, both gold and silver are drawing strength from a mix of domestic and global factors. The rupee's weakness is pushing imported metal prices higher, while hopes of a US rate cut are supporting international gold and silver markets. With both currencies and global signals favouring precious metals, analysts expect prices to stay firm in the near term.

Currency crisis explained: Why is Rupee falling constantly

MUMBAI (Agency)

Rupee breached the 90-per-dollar mark for the first time on Wednesday, slipping to 90.11 in early trade and touching a fresh all-time low. The drop startled traders even though pressure had been building for weeks due to a mix of global and domestic factors. The fall has raised concerns across markets, importers and policy watchers, who are now looking toward the RBI's policy announcement on Friday for signs of relief. The currency has been hit by uncertainty around the India-US trade deal, rising import costs, high commodity prices and muted portfolio flows. A weaker rupee makes imports more expensive, increases inflation risks and raises costs for companies dependent on foreign goods, especially fuel and machinery. Jateen Trivedi, VP Research Analyst – Commodity and Currency at LKP Securities, said the absence of clarity on the India-US trade deal has played a big role in pushing the rupee lower. He said, "The rupee's fall below 90 is largely driven by the absence of a confirmed India-US trade deal and repeated delays in timelines. Markets now want concrete numbers rather than broad assurances, leading to accelerated selling in the rupee over the past few weeks." Trivedi added that record-high metal and bullion prices have made the import bill heavier, while higher US tariffs are hurting export competitiveness. "Muted RBI intervention has also contributed to the swift depreciation. With the RBI policy announcement on Friday, markets expect clarity on whether the central bank will step in to stabilise the currency. Technically, the rupee is deeply oversold, and a move back above 89.80 is essential for any meaningful recovery," he said.

TRADE DEAL UNCERTAINTY AND COSTLY IMPORTS

Traders say the currency has been under pressure ever since the back-and-forth on the India-US trade deal began. Without a clear timeline or details, the market has turned cautious, leading to selling in the rupee. At the same time, global prices of metals, crude and gold have risen sharply. India depends heavily on imported commodities, so any jump in global prices directly widens the country's import bill. This puts fresh pressure on the rupee and the current account deficit. Sectors such as mineral fuels, machinery, electronics and gems and jewellery have been among the most affected due to higher import costs.

LIMITED RBI INTERVENTION

A key question in recent weeks has been whether the RBI is deliberately stepping back to allow the rupee to settle at a new level.



minimum pension upward to at least Rs 7,500, as well as to introduce regular Dearness Allowance (DA) and restore higher pension benefits. During the recent Lok Sabha session, it was asked whether the government plans to raise the minimum pension, why EPS-95

pensioners are not given DA, and what measures are being considered to strengthen retirement security.

Minister of State for Labour and Employment, Shobha Karandlaje, addressed these concerns by clarifying that the government currently

has no proposal to increase the minimum pension to Rs 7,500. She pointed to the financial constraints of the EPS Fund, which, according to the latest valuation in March 2019, has an actuarial deficit, indicating that available contributions are not enough to meet future liabilities.

The government said that increasing the pension without a new funding model

could put additional pressure

on the fund's stability. While it

reiterated its commitment to providing

"maximum benefits," it also stressed

the need to safeguard long-term

sustainability and future liabilities.

However, the response offered no clear

steps or timelines.

Advance Tax Alert: Do You Need to Pay the 3rd Instalment By December 15 Find Out

CHENNAI (Agency)

The deadline for the third instalment of advance tax for the financial year 2025-26 is just around the corner, December 15. If you miss this crucial date, be prepared for possible interest and penalties under the Income Tax Act, 1961. For those unfamiliar, advance tax is nothing but paying your income tax in parts throughout the year instead of waiting to clear the entire amount while filing your income tax return. Paying on time helps you avoid last-minute stress and financial burden. Advance tax is mandatory for anyone whose total tax payable for the year after adjusting TDS comes to Rs 10,000 or more. Instead of paying it all at once, the amount is divided into four instalments across the financial year: 15 per cent by June 15, 45 per cent by September 15, 75 per cent by December 15, and 100 per cent by

March 15. This means that by the upcoming December 15 deadline, taxpayers should have already paid at least three-quarters of their estimated



annual tax. This system ensures smoother payments throughout the year and helps avoid a heavy tax load at the end. Who is required to pay advance tax?

Advance tax isn't limited to big corporations or high earners, anyone

with taxable income not fully covered by TDS must pay it. This includes:

- Salaried individuals who earn extra income through rent, interest, freelance work, or capital gains. Self-employed professionals such as doctors, lawyers, consultants, CAs, and freelancers
- Business owners and traders, including small and medium businesses. Investors earning taxable income from stocks, mutual funds, F&O, debt instruments, or crypto
- Many salaried people assume that the TDS deducted by their employer takes care of their entire tax liability. But if you earn anything beyond your salary, you are responsible for declaring that income and paying advance tax on it. Who doesn't have to pay advance tax?

Not everyone falls under the advance tax requirement. You are exempt if:

If it was forged, why not tell us: Man refutes insurer's fraud tag on sister's claim

A dangerous blood clot put Purvi Gupta in the hospital, and her family expected their insurer to stand by them. What they say they faced instead was months of paperwork, confusion and a fraud tag they insist they were never told about. This week's 'Claim Denied' story follows a family left stunned by the outcome.

New Delhi (Agency) When 29-year-old Purvi Gupta was diagnosed with Deep Vein Thrombosis (DVT) earlier this year, her family assumed their health insurance would step in as support. Instead, they say they found themselves navigating months of repeated document requests, shifting explanations, and, eventually, a fraud allegation they say they learnt about only after IndiaToday.in reached out to Star Health with questions. Purvi was admitted to

Parashree Speciality Hospital in Amaravati, Maharashtra, late on February 17, 2024. Her brother, Nikhil Gupta, says he informed Star Health the next afternoon, within the mandated 24-hour intimation window. The insurer acknowledged the notification and issued a claim number. The Gupta family has been insured with Star Health since 2017, while Purvi's own policy began in 2021 with a Rs 5 lakh cover and an annual premium of about Rs 6,000. This was their first-ever claim. The amount they sought was modest at around Rs 52,000, including roughly Rs 34,000 in hospital charges and the rest for radiology tests and medicines. According to Nikhil, the claims process quickly became a loop. Documents were submitted, then sought again. Case papers, clarification notes, hospital records, and declarations were emailed repeatedly and later submitted physically as well. Each follow-up call, he says, connected him to a representative who had no knowledge of previous conversations. By March, the

family received their first communication saying the claim "could not be admitted" due to incomplete documentation. Over the next several months, the same papers were requested repeatedly. Nikhil says, despite acknowledgements from the

reason mentioned.

INSURER ALLEGES FRAUD

After IndiaToday.in reached out to Star Health for comment, the insurer issued a formal statement offering a very different explanation. Star Health said the claim was rejected because it was found to be an attempted fraud. It alleged that the discharge summary submitted by the family was "forged," citing what it described as mismatched patient details, overwritten entries, manipulated dates, and a format inconsistent with the hospital's standard documentation. The insurer said its investigation team concluded that documents had been fabricated. Star Health added that it maintains a zero-tolerance policy for fraudulent claims and pointed to its claim settlement record, stressing that it pays genuine claims promptly. It also referred to rising instances of document manipulation across the industry. When contacted again with the policyholder's rebuttals, Star Health said it would not issue any further statements.



insurer. Five months after intimation, on July 18, the claim was still pending. On September 18, the company issued a final rejection, again citing "non-submission of required documents." At no point, according to the family, was any other

Avneet Kaur

And Shantanu Maheshwari's Love In Vietnam To Release In Korea On December 8

After connecting strongly with audiences in India, Rahat Shah Kazmi's cross-Asian romance Love in Vietnam is now set for its South Korea release — a key milestone for the India-Vietnam collaboration that has steadily earned attention across the region. The film, starring Shantanu Maheshwari and Avneet Kaur, has recently found traction among Korean viewers, helped by fan edits, social media buzz, and interest in its emotional tone and cultural mix. Korean singer Seaya, who also stars in the film, has added to the excitement with her latest track that has gone viral in Korea. Shantanu Maheshwari says the Korean release feels "surreal in the best way possible," adding, "For me, the most touching part is seeing how Korean fans are responding to the small emotional details in the film. They notice things we never expected anyone outside India and Vietnam to pick up, and that kind of sensitivity is rare." He adds, "I've always been curious about Korea's artistic culture, so the fact that our film is opening there feels like life coming full circle. I'd love to visit during the release, meet the audiences, and talk to them about what the film meant to them. I'm grateful for every bit of love coming our way."

Avneet Kaur calls this moment "a dream I didn't even know I had." Speaking about the Korean audience, she says, "What has moved me the most is how Korean viewers express affection. There is a grace in the way they admire stories and people, especially

Korean men and their chivalry. It's something the whole world smiles about, including me." She adds, "The idea that our film will now live in Korean theatres feels like a gift. I want to be there when it releases, just to soak in their energy and thank them for letting our story into their world. I feel nothing but excitement and gratitude." Inspired by the novel *Madonna in a Fur Coat*, *Love in Vietnam* marks an India-Vietnam partnership in Hindi cinema and stars Shantanu Maheshwari, Avneet Kaur and Vietnamese actor Kha Ngan in her Hindi debut, along with Raj Babbar, Gulshan Grover and Farida Jalal. Presented by Zee Studios and produced by Blue Lotus Creatives, Innovations India, Rahat Kazmi Film.



Ashnoor Kaur

Reacts To Malti Chahar Calling Her 'Selfish' In Bigg Boss 19: 'I Know Who I Am'

Popular television actress Ashnoor Kaur reacted to Malti Chahar calling her 'selfish' in the 'Bigg Boss 19' house. During an exclusive conversation with IANS, Ashnoor was asked to share her opinion on Malti reportedly calling her a 'kid and selfish' as she was exiting the house. Reacting to this, Ashnoor stated that everyone is entitled to their opinion. "I know who I am, and I don't let such remarks define me", she added. Ashnoor was evicted from the Salman Khan-hosted reality show for being violent with fellow housemate Tanya Mittal during the "Ticket To Finale" task. Given that Ashnoor's journey in "Bigg Boss" came to an end rather abruptly, Ashnoor revealed if there is anything she would have done differently inside the house? To this, she said that she wished someone had told her earlier that Tanya was hurt. She added that if she had known, she would have apologized immediately, and things might not have ended so abruptly. "I was only a week away from the finale, and it felt like my dream was suddenly snatched away," the 'Patiala Babes' actress added.

Sharing which contestants surprised her the most, either positively or negatively, Ashnoor shared, "Before entering the house, I didn't think I'd get along with Ayesha and Nagma, but they turned out to be absolute sweethearts. We connected instantly."

Disclosing that the show changed her perspective on friendships and alliances, the 'Yeh Rishtey Kya Kehlata Hai' actress said, "I found true friendship in Abhishek. And I also learned how some people can flip when situations get tough." Talking about her future plans after 'Bigg Boss', she shared that she has a New Year trip planned. "I've been celebrating it at Nanded Sahib Gurudwara for almost a decade now. There are also conversations happening professionally — things in the pipeline. When they materialise, you'll know."



On Their First Birthday, Shraddha Arya Reveals Faces Of Tiny Tornadoes' Siya & Shaurya



Shraddha Arya is marking the first birthday of her baby boy and baby girl by revealing their face to her millions of fans. Her twin babies, Siya and Shaurya, turned one on November 29. Just days after, the actress and her husband, Rahul Nagal, hosted an intimate, fun-filled bash to mark the special occasion. She took to Instagram on Tuesday, December 2, to share a series of photos from the celebration. This marks the first time Shraddha has unveiled her babies' faces on her social media account. Her post opened with a sweet family picture of Siya and Shaurya sitting on a table, looking cute as buttons in their birthday outfits. While the actress dressed her son in a white shirt and blue trousers with a matching bow tie, she chose a pink-and-blue frock for her daughter.

In the next picture, Shraddha, wearing a pink-coloured one-shoulder dress, was seen carrying her son in her arms, while her husband, wearing a white shirt, beige pants, and a pink jacket, carried their daughter. The following photos capture some adorable moments from the family of four.

Shraddha Gives Fans A Look Into Her Twin Babies' Birthday Celebration

One image captured the couple making a hand heart in front of a standee, which read, "Siya and Shaurya are One-Derful." The place was decorated with blue, pink, yellow, and white-coloured balloons. Shraddha also gave her fans a look at her twins' birthday cake, which was adorned with a rainbow and balloon details. She ended the carousel by offering a peek into the minimalist place where the celebration took place. In the caption, Shraddha wrote, "Sya & Shaurya, Our Tiny Tornadoes Are Officially ONE! #MommyDaddyLoveYouSoMuch."

Shraddha Arya Wished Her 'Forever Miracles' With Rare Pictures

Before revealing her kids' faces, the Kundali Bhagya actress marked their birthday by sharing a series of rare pictures from last year and calling her babies "forever Miracles." The photos were taken inside the hospital room after she gave birth. One tender moment showed her babies sleeping peacefully as she gazed at them with sheer adoration. In one photo, she was also seen getting visibly emotional while her husband hugged her.

Rupali Ganguly Is Rooting For Anupamaa Co-Star Gaurav Khanna: 'Jeetenge Aap Hi'



After weeks of unlimited drama, unexpected twists and turns, intense brawls, and heart-breaking evictions, Bigg Boss 19 is inching closer to its grand finale. As the Salman Khan-hosted show is just a week away from announcing the winner, family, friends, fans, and supporters are rooting for their favourite contestants. Now the latest one to extend support for a Bigg Boss contestant is Rupali Ganguly. Any guesses? The actress is supporting her *Anupamaa* co-star Gaurav Khanna, who is the first finalist of the controversial reality show after winning the *Ticket To Finale* task.

Rupali Ganguly Believes Gaurav Khanna Deserves To Win

At a recent event, the television actress admitted that she is fond of Amaal Mallik and loves the content *Farrhana Bhatt* and *Tanya Mittal* are giving, but Gaurav deserves to win the reality show. Responding to Buzzoka, she said, "I am very, very fond of Amaal. I love the content that *Farrhana*, *Tanya* and everybody have given. And Gaurav deserves to win. *Jeetenge toh aap hi, Kapadia ji.*" Gaurav Khanna played the role of Anuj Kapadia in *Rajan Shahi's* show *Anupamaa* for a long time. He was paired opposite Rupali, who plays the main role.

Grand Finale On December 7

With the last *Weekend Ka Vaar* wrapped after the eviction of Ashnoor Kaur and Shehbaz Badesha, Bigg Boss 19 now heads toward its grand finale on December 7. The episode will stream on JioHotstar at 9 PM and air on Colors from 10:30 PM. The top six contestants battling for the coveted trophy are Gaurav Khanna, Amaal Mallik, Tanya Mittal, *Farrhana Bhatt*, *Pranit More* and *Malti Chahar*.

Anupamaa's Current Storyline And Star Cast

Headlined by Rupali Ganguly, *Anupamaa* has been one of the highest-rated television shows since its premiere. With its gripping storyline, shocking twists and solid cast, the show has kept its fanbase glued to their screens. Promising even more drama, the recent track is gearing up to show the titular character, *Anupamaa* (played by Rupali), going to Mumbai and exploring the world of showbiz. Besides Rupali, *Anupamaa* also stars Adrija Roy, Alpana Buch, Shivam Khajuria, Rahil Azam, Manish Goel, Zalak Desai, Randeep Rai and others in pivotal roles. Various popular stars, including Sudhanshu Pandey, Gaurav Khanna and Paras Kalnawat, among others, left the show, but the show continues to earn love from fans.

Morning meetings. A hurried lunch. Afternoon presentations. Rush hour. Evening chores. No me-time. Little time for family. Welcome to the working professional's harried life in any Indian metro. But, it doesn't have to be that way. A changing world and an evolving economy are allowing jobs to be reinvented and many companies now rely on a network of experts working from anywhere. Even from Aluva, a small town near Kochi in Kerala.

In his new publication by Penguin, God's Own Office: How One Man Worked for a Global Giant from his Village in Kerala, James Joseph details how he started out from the backwaters of Kerala, climbed the corporate rung in America, and found his way back to his village to continue his successful career. Interestingly, Joseph accomplished the tallest achievement of his working life - winning Microsoft's highest award from CEO Steve Ballmer - after he returned to his village and started working from home in 2009.

In 2012, Joseph quit his job as director of Microsoft India, to set up JackFruit365, a company that supplies freeze-dried jackfruits across the world.

Here, he shares advice on how to work away from the maddening crowd and convince your boss and clients to be okay with it.

Strong conviction

There's always a strong current in your favour when moving from your hometown to a big city for work. But the current is against you when you move back. You need unwavering conviction as a family to complete this journey. In my case, the realisation came from a comparison of the first 20 years of my life and the last 20 years. The first 20, a life surrounded by nature, spirituality, farms and many generations of family and friends, prepared me to perform well in the professional world during the last 20. I was convinced that the opportunity to give those first 20 years to my children - without giving up my professional life - was a goal worth pursuing.

Double-up on your back-up

Working from home requires a lot of positive energy, and discipline. Let your family and friends know that you are working from home, not at home. Importantly, if you plan to relocate to a small town, ensure that your office is well versed with technology - use instant messenger for realtime interaction, online and video conferencing, desktop sharing, and remote access. You must also have easy travel connectivity to your base office.

Keep in mind that at God's own office, you are your own Chief Information Officer. It is your decision to work from home and not your employer's, so the onus is on you to make sure you are able to work without interruption. In an office, the onus is on the IT department to ensure digital connectivity. Plan your back-ups well - broadband connection and power supply. I work with a physical cable, a static telecom



department connection and a USB wireless connection.

Keep your secret

Ambient noise is the number one issue faced by employees who try to work from home in India. Customers and colleagues get annoyed when they hear vehicles honking, dogs barking, kids crying or construction work in the background. Ensure you have a sound-proof room to work out of. No one on a conference call needs to know whether you are working from home or another office.

Women can do it too

Women not returning from maternity break are one of the biggest risks faced by major corporations for their already lean leadership pipeline of female candidates. If I have proved to work effectively from the comfort of a home, that too in a village in India, women can do even better. Work from your home a few days a week before you start maternity leave and again when you are getting back. This could significantly improve your chances of getting back on the leadership pipeline.

Study the business model

Five years after returning to India, I gave up my job at Microsoft. Later, I was at a dinner when I wondered why chefs didn't use jackfruit - known as "vegetable meat" - instead of mushroom in vegetarian dishes. That is how I struck on the business idea. But, before you make your switch, study the business model and identify areas where you have significant strength and areas where you don't have expertise. I leveraged my marketing skills, professional networks, cash-flow

management and outsourcing experience for the venture. I clearly lacked experience in food processing and hence, outsourced that to a reliable partner. I leveraged my contacts and got various chefs at 5-stars to try new dishes using jackfruit.

For the consumer business, I used an online-only model. This allowed me to offer my product across India; more importantly, they pay first, then materials are dispatched.

Study the risk

There are risks involved in having a niche product like jackfruits. I analysed the overall scope for a jackfruit industry in India to see if it was worth my time. On the supply side, I learned that jackfruit worth Rs 2,000 crore is wasted in India every year. On the demand side, my trials with chefs convinced me that jackfruit can easily replace potato and apple in almost all dishes. The market for potato and apple is bigger than the total supply of jackfruits in India. These data points gave me the confidence to launch JackFruit365.

The financial aspect

I needed to keep in mind whether I could meet the financial commitments of my family and the new venture till I was able to draw a salary from the business. My cost of living

had come down by 30 per cent by moving from Bangalore to my village in Kerala. In four years, I was able to set aside a fund from this additional saving to cover both financial commitments. For the first few years, I managed the business with tight cash flow management, repositioned jackfruit from an inferior food to superior one with the help of the chefs, and through the social media marketing I ran.

Exploit social media

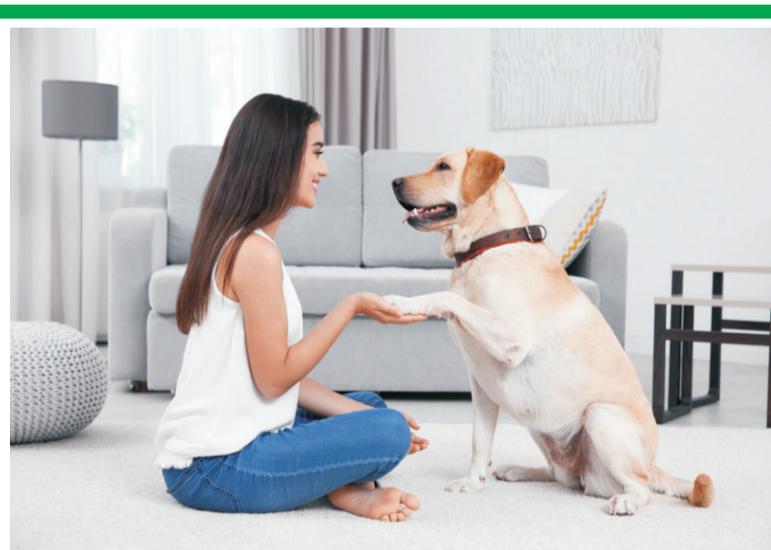
While I was working for Microsoft, I started mentoring three start-ups from the Kochi Start-up village and I have firsthand experience observing how these youngsters bring new business ideas to the market with relatively low capital investment. Mentoring them taught me how to leverage social media, crowd sourcing and e-commerce retail channels to keep my investments low at all levels. Mindhelix taught me how to use social media and blogs to reach consumers, WOW Makers taught me the power of crowd sourcing, (JackFruit365's logo and mascot was designed through their CrowdStudio venture), and Yummybay taught me the power of ecommerce (Yummybay is JackFruit365's online retail partner).

5 Things to ask yourself before getting a Pet

Pets are companions you can truly count on. From cheering you up to making you feel deeply loved, they will be your long-term companions. Hence, it is extremely important to be fully prepared before you get yourself a pet.

Namrata Jham, who recently adopted a 9-month-old cocker Spaniel says, "You need to be ready to give your pet all the love because it is like your own child. In return, you will receive unconditional love from them. To build that bond, you must ask yourself if you're really ready for this responsibility."

According to Jham, it is also important to



divide responsibilities amongst family members before getting a pet. "You need to segregate work. Take a call on who will train the dog and who will ensure that he gets his meals on time. If you decide all this beforehand, you will be more organised before you get your pet home." Here are a few questions you need to ask yourself before getting a furry friend home.

Do I have the time?

Having a pet is like having a baby. You need to ask yourself if you will truly have the time to walk your dog three times a day because having a pet means giving it ample amount of attention. You may think that making time will be easy but you need to consider the fact that it's a huge commitment and you don't want to let your pet down.

Can I afford a pet?

The expenses of owning a pet goes beyond basics like food, water and shelter. Regular veterinary care is of utmost importance to a pet. You have to ensure that your pet gets high quality food and exercises regularly. You would also have to invest in toys and treats so your pet feels energised and happy.

How do I choose the right dog? Take as much time as you want while choosing your pet. You are making a long-term commitment and hence, cannot make decisions in haste. Try and visit adoption events held in your city. If you wish to get one from a breeder, have in-depth conversations with them and see which one seems perfect for you.

Should I get a puppy or an adult dog?

Many would like to bring home a puppy because they want to mould him their way. You need to prepare yourself well in advance before getting a pet. Adult dogs might be better trained and are more developed. But they might come with behavioral issues that you must be ready to deal with.

Is my family ready?

It is imperative to know if your family will be comfortable with the idea of keeping a pet. If they're forced into it just because you want one, they will treat your pet differently. You need to make sure that your decision does not harm anyone. Moreover, you also have to ensure that no one in your family has a pet allergy.

Keep your Child stress-free after exams

Your child has probably not spent the last few months in front of the TV. Though you would not like him or her to get addicted to it, yet you can always arrange for a movie marathon in your house over the weekends or simply take your child out for a new film that he or she is interested to watch.

Do activities together:

Enjoy the time your child is spending at home by doing some activities together. Instead of

The exams have already taken a toll on your child's mind, so don't stress him or her more by asking them about it.

Here's what our counsellors have to say.

just getting your child enrolled into a hobby class, the two of you can enrol together and enjoy yourself doing some craft together. From dance classes to craft, cooking sessions, there are plenty to choose from.

