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India not neutral, is on side of peace

PM's message to Putin on Ukraine war

The Ukraine conflict featured prominently in the bilateral meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Russia's Putin. PM Modi reiterated that India was on the side of peace, and it was not the era of war.

New Delhi.(Agency)

Prime Minister Narendra Modi told Russian President Vladimir Putin that India was not neutral and was on the side of peace in the Ukraine war, reiterating the stance that he told Donald Trump earlier this year. During their much-anticipated bilateral meeting in Delhi on Friday, PM Modi praised Putin as a visionary leader and underscored that this "is an era of peace".

"India is not neutral. India has a side, and that side is of peace. We support all efforts for peace, and we stand shoulder-to-shoulder with all efforts for peace," PM Modi said as Putin sat beside him listening keenly.

'RUSSIA A TRUE FRIEND OF INDIA'

During their meeting, the bonhomie between the two leaders, which has played a crucial role in fostering a robust strategic partnership between Russia and India, was visible. The leaders have met 19 times in the past 11 years.

The Ukraine war, which has dragged on for four years, has made Putin some sort of a pariah, with the West imposing a host of sanctions on Russia.

The Russian President's visit to India comes at a time when the Trump administration has been striving to brok

Calling Russia a "true friend" of India, PM Modi



emphasised the importance of trust amid the rapid geopolitical churn.

"Since the Ukraine crisis began, we have been in constant discussion. From time to time, you, too,

as a true friend, have kept us informed about everything. I believe that trust is a great strength... The welfare of nations lies in the path of peace.

Together, we will lead the world towards that path," the Prime Minister said.

The Prime Minister also praised Putin for the warm welcome accorded to him in 2001, when Modi was the Gujarat Chief Minister. It was their first diplomatic interaction.

"I believe that the role you played in 2001 is a perfect example of how a visionary leader thinks — where they begin and how far they can take relationships. India-Russia relations are the finest example of this," he said.

During the visit, where Modi accompanied then PM Atal Bihari Vajpayee, an agreement was signed between Gujarat and Russia's Astrakhan region to boost cooperation in petrochemicals, trade, science and technology.

PUTIN THANKS PM FOR 'PERSONAL ATTENTION'

Putin, who was accorded a ceremonial welcome and a tri-services guard of honour, thanked PM Modi for his "personal attention" to the Ukraine issue.

Sharad Pawar's Family In Focus As Jay Pawar, Rutuja Patil Set To Marry: Who Are They?

Jay Pawar, the son of Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar, is all set to tie the knot with long-time friend Rutuja Patil in Bahrain. Spread over four days, the intimate celebration will have close friends and family members and a select few political associates.

The major ceremonies are scheduled from December 4 to December 7 at the luxury Jumeirah property in the Gulf nation, according to the wedding invite. Despite being one of the most influential political families in Maharashtra, the wedding is strictly private. According to sources familiar with the arrangements, the total number of invitees has been capped at around 400, making it significantly smaller than large political weddings.

Only two senior party leaders, Praful Patel, the National Working President of the NCP, and state party chief Sunil Tatkare, have reportedly been invited from Ajit Pawar's political circle.

The decision to keep the event intimate stemmed from the family's wish to avoid creating a large public spectacle, especially given the ongoing political sensitivities in Maharashtra, according to a report in Hindustan Times.

Who is Jay Pawar?

Jay Pawar, the younger son of Ajit Pawar and MP Sunetra Pawar, has so far kept a low profile compared to his politically active family. Until 2023, when the NCP split, Jay was primarily at the front and centre of the family's businesses in Dubai, according to a report in The Print.

Since the split, he has been involved in key election seasons. Jay campaigned for his mother in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections and later supported his father during the state assembly polls the same year, according to a report in Free Press Journal. His party functionaries describe him as "well-spoken and well-mannered" and someone now involved in "grassroots matters".



Cost of monopoly model

Rahul Gandhi slams Centre over IndiGo flight chaos

Rahul Gandhi has accused the Centre of enabling a "monopoly model" in aviation as IndiGo faces large-scale flight cancellations and operational disruptions.

New Delhi .(Agency)

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Friday criticised the Centre over utter chaos in the country's aviation sector due to IndiGo's flight cancellations and disruptions, blaming the problems on the government's "monopoly model." In a post on X, Lok Sabha Opposition Leader called for "fair competition" in the aviation sector to prevent such disruptions.

In the wake of IndiGo cancelling over 550 flights on Thursday alone and over 450 flights on Friday till now, disrupting the travel plans of hundreds of passengers, Gandhi said it is ordinary Indians who pay the price in delays, cancellations and helplessness.

"IndiGo fiasco is the cost of this Govt's monopoly model. Once again, it's ordinary Indians who pay the price - in delays, cancellations and helplessness," the Leader of Opposition said in a post on X.

Responding to Rahul Gandhi's 'monopoly' swipe at the government,

Congress MP Priyanka Gandhi Vadra supported her brother and said that most sectors in the country have been concentrated in the hands of a few.

"We all know that throughout the country, most things belong to a few people and that is the doing of this government, and that is not healthy. It's not healthy for the economy, it's not healthy for democracy, it's not healthy for the country," she said.

INDIGO FLIGHTS CHAOS CONTINUES

IndiGo, India's largest airline, is facing a major crisis, cancelling over 450 flights across key airports for the third consecutive day.

Out of these, 225 flights were cancelled at Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport alone, while Bengaluru's Kempegowda International saw over 100 cancellations and Hyderabad's Rajiv Gandhi International recorded 90.

The airline has attributed the disruptions to cabin crew shortages and other operational challenges and apologised to passengers on Thursday via X.



This facility will be India's first commercial-scale integrated ingot-wafer manufacturing unit, producing the essential building blocks for solar cells and modules.

New Delhi.(Agency)

Andhra Pradesh is poised to lead India into a new era of solar manufacturing by establishing the country's first integrated 6 GW solar ingot and wafer production facility in Anakapalli district. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed during a partnership summit has been converted into a project that has been approved by the State Investment Promotion Board (SIPB).

ReNew Photovoltaics, a subsidiary of ReNew Energy Global PLC, is investing Rs 3,990 crore to establish a greenfield plant at Rambilli in Anakapalli district. This facility will be India's first commercial-scale

integrated ingot-wafer manufacturing unit, producing the essential building blocks for solar cells and modules.



The proposal was approved by the Andhra Pradesh State Investment Promotion Board (SIPB), chaired by Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu,

on Thursday. It will now be presented to the Cabinet for final approval, likely next week.

The project aims to significantly reduce India's reliance on imported components, particularly from China, and support the country's ambitious renewable energy goals of achieving 300 GW of solar capacity by 2030. The world-class facility will be developed on approximately 130-140 acres of land, which has already been identified and will soon be handed over for construction. The plant is expected to be completed by March 2026, with commercial production commencing by January 2028.

"Not Here To Shout": Shashi Tharoor Schools Congress Over Parliament Chaos

Shashi Tharoor, who once fought to steer the party but lost to another south Indian stalwart, has snubbed the need for a ruckus to get heard in parliament.

New Delhi .(Agency)

Congress leader Shashi Tharoor has schooled the opposition over disruptions in parliament, putting his differences with his party colleagues out in the open yet again. The MP who once fought to steer the party but lost to another south Indian stalwart has snubbed the need for a ruckus to get heard in parliament.

"I have said this from the very beginning. My party leaders, including Sonia Gandhi, know this very well. I may be the lone voice in the party, but I have no doubts that people have elected me to represent them in parliament, not just to shout and create a ruckus. They have sent me to use my intelligence to speak for the nation and speak for them," he said. The Congress is expected to issue a strong rebuttal to what appears as one of their own toeing a pro-BJP line on the greatest national platform for



democracy. The parliament has been seeing disruptions over multiple issues since the Winter Session started

last Monday, including over the Opposition seeking discussion on the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of the voter lists and the flight chaos. BJP blames the Opposition for the disruptions, despite the Prime Minister warning against any drama in his pre-session speech.

Tharoor has in the past courted controversy over actions that could well be interpreted as taking on his party colleagues, including with praises for the prime minister. Giving party meetings a miss one after another is believed to have widened the gap between him and the senior leaders despite frantic attempts to firefight a prolonged crisis. He later downplayed the speculations, stating that he was in Kerala with his elderly mother, which is why he couldn't attend the party meetings in Delhi.

Thousands of IndiGo passengers across the country have been stranded for days as mass cancellations, rolling delays and grounded aircraft choke major airports, leaving them without clear timelines.

Kept waiting without certainty: Stranded IndiGo passengers' hours-long ordeal

New Delhi .(Agency)

For thousands of travellers, the past three days have felt less like a flight delay and more like a full-blown breakdown of IndiGo, India's busiest airline. At Delhi airport Terminal 3, the frustration is visible long before one reaches the check-in zone. People sit on the floor with children, others patrol conveyor belts hoping their luggage will surface, and long-haul passengers fret about missing visas, jobs, and connections.

Gumaam Singh, who booked an IndiGo flight to Canada, said the trip he planned months ago had suddenly "turned into an ordeal". He spent hours trying to get clarity on whether the flight would even take off. Several others around him -- headed to Dubai, China, and Toronto -- reported the same uncertainty. Their flights were repeatedly shown as delayed due to

"technical faults", only to be pushed further without explanation.

"Air travel has become trouble instead of relief. Because of so many cancellations and delays, passengers are facing extreme inconvenience," Gumaam Singh told TV, adding that both international and domestic flyers were stuck in the same uncertainty. Weather disruptions and a bomb threat earlier in the week have added pressure, but passengers said the confusion goes beyond that. Many complained that the airline offered no meaningful assistance. A man who came to drop off his daughter said her 2 pm domestic flight finally departed at 11.30 pm. Another traveller, Rishikesh Kumar, watched his 6 pm flight slide to 11.30 pm, and even then he was unsure it would depart. "You just keep waiting, but there's no surety or

clearance about when your flight will take off," he said. Advocate Shweta Kapoor described a night of sheer chaos.



"My flight was last night, and when we reached the Delhi IGI Airport, check-ins were happening, but none of the IndiGo counters were working. Multiple flights were delayed

and some were cancelled, but the passengers had not received their baggage yet. People were shouting. Our luggage had already been checked in. The flight was rescheduled three times, and then at 6 am the IndiGo app simply showed that it was cancelled. Even the staff looked confused," she said.

Passengers in Hyderabad reported a different kind of chaos, where misinformation added to the frustration. "I reached the airport at around 5 am and went to the IndiGo counter. They told me my flight was cancelled. When I showed my boarding pass, they confirmed it and sent me home. They noted down my details. At around 7 am, someone called me from the boarding gate, asking where I was because the flight was about to leave," she said.

News box

Man dies after his car hits a pole as he tries to avoid bull

Noida.(Agency)
A 35-year-old man died in a road accident near Chandu Budhera on Basai road after a stray bull suddenly appeared in front of his car late on Tuesday night. Noorgarh village resident Mahesh Kumar was travelling with his relatives to the city to attend a wedding. According to police, the accident occurred between 12.30am and 1am, when visibility on the stretch was poor. Kumar was behind the wheel when the animal appeared out of nowhere. In an attempt to avoid hitting the animal, he swerved, losing control of the vehicle. The car veered off the road and crashed into a streetlight pole with considerable force, causing severe damage to the car's bonnet.Kumar suffered grievous injuries. His relatives alerted police and tried to stop passing cars. A relative said, "Since he was wearing a seat belt, he got stuck and could not get out in time. However, the person on the passenger seat got out in the nick of time." The three relatives received minor injuries and were discharged after receiving treatment.A team from Farrukhnagar police station reached the spot and rushed him to a nearby hospital, where doctors declared him dead. Police officers said the accident appeared to be caused by a sudden obstruction from an animal, a frequent occurrence on roads connecting Pataudi, Farrukhnagar, and adjoining rural belts."The family members did not allege any foul play. Inquest proceedings under Section 194 of the BNSS have been initiated," a senior officer said. The officer added that old stray cattle have become an obstacle for night commuters.A couple of days ago, a biker died in Farrukhnagar after a nilgai or blue bull appeared in front of his vehicle. Residents of the area said that nilgai sightings have become common at night, often posing a threat to commuters.

Harnandipuram launch in 5 months, 336 hectares to be developed in phase 1

Ghaziabad.(Agency)
Ghaziabad Development Authority (GDA) has initiated satellite survey of the area earmarked for its Harnandipuram township, and work in the first phase of the project is likely to begin in five months. In this phase, the township will be developed on 336 hectares, of which 292 hectares will be acquired from three villages – Mathurapur, Shamsher, and Nangla Feroze Mohan Nagar.Of the 292 hectares to be acquired, 14 hectares will be acquired from Mathurapur village, 86 hectares will be acquired from Shamsher village, and 192 hectares from Nangla Feroze Mohan Nagar village. "For the land bank, we have got registries executed for 35 hectares of land, while we have received consent from farmers for another 85 hectares of land. In addition to that, we have LMC land, which will be assimilated. The land bank thus created will be good enough for the launch of the first phase of the township," said GDA vice chairperson Nand Kishore Kalal. Officials said that GDA has also set up a link on its official website, which will act as an interface with both stakeholders to sort out issues related to land acquisition. The step aims to do away with the rigour of seeking consent from the farmers, they said.On land acquisition, Kalal further said that the process is underway and land will be acquired with mutual consent from the farmers, adding, "There is a lot of misinformation among farmers over land acquisition. They understandably have apprehensions, and to bridge the gap between GDA and farmers, we have created a separate link on the GDA website where farmers can interact with development authority officials, and we will see to it that their apprehensions are allayed."

Parties flag gaps in EF distribution, Ghaziabad scrambles to trace ‘absent, dead’ voters

Noida.(Agency)
The district administration has intensified checks in areas where 40% of voters are listed as ‘absent’, ‘shifted’, ‘dead’ or ‘duplicate’ (ASD). A total of 102 officials have been assigned to booths with high ASD counts. Additional district magistrate (finance/revenue), Saurabh Bhatt who is overseeing the exercise, said the deployment is meant to bring precision to the most error-prone segments."Booths where ASDs cross the 40% mark need close attention," he said. "Each officer has been asked to cover five to six booths and verify at least 50 households." He added that this is the only way to ensure that genuine voters are not wrongly flagged and that the rolls remain credible.Officials told political representatives that the Election Commission has activated a rollback feature for accidental inclusions. If a BLO mistakenly categorises an eligible voter as ASD, the ERO can correct the record and re-enable the form on the BLO's app.Bhatt said this safeguard was essential for a district where migration is unusually high. "Ghaziabad sees constant movement in and out of Delhi. Errors are bound to occur. What matters is that we correct them quickly," he said.Party representatives have flagged a sharp discrepancies in areas like Khoda and Makanpur under the Sahibabad assembly constituency, where large numbers of residents have moved out in recent months. In Booth 536 of the Sahibabad assembly, fewer than 100 of the 750 registered voters have received their enumeration forms. Party representatives have warned that close to five lakh voters might face rejection if forms are not secured on time.Bhatt acknowledged the challenge and said 40 supervisors have been posted in Sahibabad to accelerate outreach. Municipal staff are also helping BLOs trace voters in dense clusters."We're focusing on households that are hardest to track," he said. He has urged political parties to activate their BLAs and work closely with BLOs.District election officer and DM Ravindra Kumar Mander said that all enumeration forms have been distributed, 54% have been digitised, and physical mapping stands at 38.43 percent.Mapping means that these many voters' names have been linked to the 2003 electoral rolls, that is, either their names or their progeny's names are found in 2025 electoral roll as well as 2003 roll.

Drop in mercury, low wind speed: Air quality nears ‘very poor’ zone

Gurgaon.(Agency)
The city's air quality worsened on Thursday, with the AQI touching 293 at 4pm, up from Wednesday's average of 282. According to Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), the city's air quality index has been on a steady upward trend all week.Teri Gram reported the highest AQI at 325, followed by NISE GwalpPahari, which recorded 294, and Sector 51 and Vikas Sadan, which reported 265 and 293, respectively. Calm winds and falling temperatures in early Dec usually trap pollutants near the surface. Forecasters said PM2.5 levels could rise further if the current conditions persist.Winds remained northwesterly at up to 18kmph on Wednesday and around 10kmph through Thursday forenoon. An HSPCB official said the situation was being closely monitored. "Local conditions are becoming less favourable for dispersion, so even routine emissions are showing up more sharply. We may see further build-up if winds stay weak," he

said.Meanwhile, India Meteorological Department (IMD) has forecast mainly clear skies with mist or haze at night. Maximum temperatures are expected to remain between 22 and 24°C on Friday, staying below normal. Winds will continue from the northwest at up to 15kmph in the afternoon before slowing to about 10kmph in the evening. Saturday is likely to bring shallow morning fog and lower minimum temperatures of 4 to 6°C. The cold conditions are expected to continue on Dec 5 and 6, with partly cloudy skies and morning fog. Temperatures are likely to rise gradually by Dec 7 and return closer to the normal. The mixing depth is expected to remain low at around 1000 metres on Dec 4 and 5, dropping to 750 metres on Dec 6 before slightly increasing to 800 metres on Dec 7. The ventilation index will be between 4500 and 6000 m² per second during this period. Any value below 6000 m² per second combined with winds under 10

kmph is considered unfavourable for dispersing pollutants, which means little improvement is expected in the coming



days.Air quality is likely to stay in the ‘very poor’ category from Dec 4 to 7. The extended outlook for the following six days also indicates ‘very poor’ conditions. Meanwhile, Delhi woke up to the coldest morning of the season on Thursday with the minimum temperature dropping to 5.6 degrees Celsius, four notches below

Senior MCG officers carry out work at Bandhwari in Haryana without nod, face action

Gurgaon.(Agency)
The Haryana urban local bodies (ULB) department has initiated disciplinary proceedings against seven senior officers of MCG.The officers, including the former chief engineer and superintending engineer, allegedly executed major waste-management works at the Bandhwari dumpsite without obtaining the required administrative approval. The action pertains tothree projects involving remediation and reclamation of legacy waste at the Bandhwari site, including 500,000 metric tonnes (MT) each for Phase-5 and Phase-6 and 400,000 MT for Phase-7. According to the official communication, the govt has decided to proceed under Rule 7 (major penalty) of the Haryana Civil Services (Punishment & Appeal) Rules, 2016. The officers named in the notice include Manoj Yadav, then chief engineer; Vikas Malik, then superintending engineer, MCG; Ashish Singla, chief medical officer, MCG; Nilesh Kumar, executive

engineer, MCG; RK Mongia, assistant engineer, MCG; Sunil Kumar, accounts officer, MCG; and Vijay Yadav, district revenue officer (DRO), MCG.



The ULB department, in a letter to MCG commissioner Pradeep Dahiya, said on Thursday that despite repeated reminders, the civic body had not submitted the required drafts of the charge sheets — for execution of work without administration's approval — for nearly four months, despite having access to all relevant records."You were requested to send the draft of the charge sheet to be served to the aforementioned

officers/officials," the letter said. The govt has taken serious note of this delay and has again directed the commissioner to send the charge sheets along with certified copies of supporting documents within seven days. Officials warned that failure to comply may lead to the matter being escalated to senior authorities due to non-compliance with govt orders. “Moreover, the office of chief secretary, Haryana, is pressing hard to supply a copy of charge sheets of the said officers/officials. You are, therefore, once again requested to send the draft of charge sheets along with certified copies of relevant documents to the govt through a special messenger within seven days from the issuance of this letter positively, failing which the matter will be brought into the knowledge of senior officers on account of non-compliance of govt order and you will be responsible for the adverse consequences, if any," the letter added.

Punjab and Haryana high court reopens building violation case, owners in Gurgaon’s DLF 1-5 can file objections

Gurgaon.(Agency)
The long-running issue of illegal construction and commercial misuse of residential properties in DLF 1 to 5 has taken a significant turn once again.The Punjab and Haryana high court has now directed the town and country planning department to invite objections from all plot and house owners who were previously served notices.All affected homeowners have been given time till Dec 31 to file their objections or representations before the enforcement office. No objections will be accepted beyond the deadline.With the matter now back in the HC, the town and country planning department will compile objections and subsequently provide hearings to all affected homeowners. A status report will then be filed before the court, which has set a 45-day window for completion of the process. The next

hearing is scheduled for Jan 15.Reaffirming the department's position, district town planner (enforcement) Amit Madholia said, "Illegal construction and commercial activities violate the Haryana Development and Regulation Act. All further action will strictly follow court directions and will be conducted with full transparency."Madholia has also urged residents to go through the lists carefully and verify whether their plots appear in the violation categories. "Residents must attach their name, address, contact number and all supporting documents related to the legality of their construction. While filing their reply, homeowners must also ensure that they submit the approved building plan, occupation certificate and recent photographs of the house. These records are essential for us to assess each case fairly."The HC order comes after the Supreme Court on Oct 28 set aside the

former's earlier order and remanded the matter for fresh hearing.Acting on the HC's oral directions issued during the Nov 26 hearing, the enforcement wing of the town and country planning department has issued a detailed public notice, uploaded it on the department's official website and published it in leading national dailies. Madholia said, "We have initiated the process immediately as per the HC's instructions. The public notice has been released widely to ensure that not a single affected resident remains uninformed."According to the public notice, a comprehensive survey conducted earlier across DLF 1 to 5 detected violations in 4,183 plots and houses, including illegal construction and unauthorised commercial activities. This survey report had been submitted before the HC on Jan 22, 2025.

normal. However, no cold wave is declared.Meanwhile, the air quality improved within the very poor level due to strong winds. During the first half of the day, it hovered around poor levels, but later deteriorated to very poor. An average air quality index of 304 was recorded at 4pm against 342 on Wednesday.At 5.6 degrees Celsius, the city recorded the lowest minimum temperature this season and also the lowest minimum for Dec in the first week of the month in at least 15 years, as per data since 2011. On Dec 1, the city recorded 5.7 degrees Celsius, which was then a record during the same period.IMD expects a cold wave in isolated parts of the city on Friday under the impact of chilly northwesterly winds. IMD classifies it as a cold wave if the minimum temperature is below 10 degrees Celsius while its departure is also 4.5 degrees Celsius or more below normal.

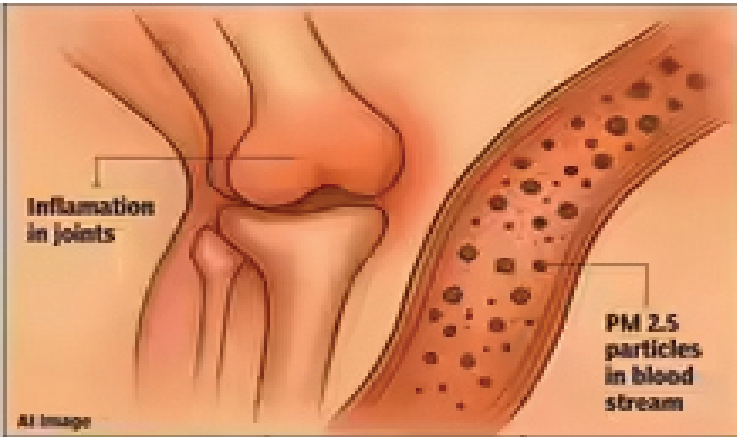
Haryana imposes Rs 45cr in green fines, recovers less than 1%

Gurgaon.(Agency)
Haryana imposed more than Rs 45 crore in environment compensation (EC) on over 400 industrial and commercial units, over three years, but the state govt recovered less than 1% of the penalties.While Rs 44.87 crore remains unpaid, over Rs 42 lakh was recovered against the penalty imposed for violations ranging from illegal mining and dust emissions to unapproved construction and untreated wastewater discharge. The outstanding EC pertains to cases filed between 2021 to 2024.While recovery has been negligible, several violators have either shut operations, changed ownership, moved locations or challenged the penalties — slowing down enforcement.Only six violators across all districts made any payment at all, the highest being Rs 10.45 lakh from a company in Gurgaon, according to records accessed through a Right to Information (RTI) query, with almost every unit on the list depositing nothing despite repeated notices.A senior Haryana State Pollution Control Board official said, "We are aware that recovery has been slow, especially in cases where units have shut down or moved operations. Teams have now been instructed to use revenue-recovery measures, including property attachment and to pursue pending cases more aggressively." A major share of pending dues comes from stone crushers and mining units in Charkhi Dadri, Mahendragarh, Bhiwani, Faridabad and Jind, many of which owe between Rs 7 lakh and Rs 40 lakh each.These units are among the largest contributors to dust pollution and land degradation but have not cleared their EC liabilities. Another sizeable group consists of textile-dyeing and washing units in Gurgaon, Faridabad and Panipat. Most of them were fined Rs 14.26 lakh for operating without permissions, releasing untreated effluents or repeatedly flouting closure directions. The list also includes ready-mix concrete plants, banquet halls, hotels.

PM2.5 triggering joint pain even in those never diagnosed with arthritis, say docs

Gurgaon.(Agency)
Toxic air isn't just affecting lungs. Its effects are showing up in the body's joints, even in those who have never been diagnosed with arthritis, according to doctors, who are seeing an unusually high number of patients coming to them with joint pain, swelling and stiffness this winter.

The cause, according to them, is PM2.5 particles that enter the bloodstream, triggering inflammation. The immune system then releases cytokines, chemical messengers involved in fighting infections.During high pollution, cytokine levels go up, leading to increased inflammation throughout the body, including in the synovial fluid that cushions joints, according to doctors. This inflammation irritates the synovial lining, resulting in stiffness and hindering smooth movement of joints. Cartilage, which regenerates slowly, becomes more vulnerable. For people with arthritis, this



exacerbates their symptoms, while for others, it induces pain resembling early arthritis.Dr Rajiv Ranjan Kumar, a rheumatologist at CK Birla Hospital in Gurgaon, said pollution spike due to fine particulate matters like PM2.5 is causing "systemic inflammation" affecting musculoskeletal system in ways typically seen only during winters.This season's spike, according to rheumatologists, is sharper and earlier because pollution levels have stayed

persistently high.Older adults and women are being hit hardest as their thinner and less elastic cartilage. Women also experience more frequent flareups, partly because hormonal fluctuations make their immune response more reactive during pollution episodes.From a respiratory perspective, Dr Piyush Goel of Narayana Hospital in Gurgaon said, "PM2.5 is composed of heavy metals, industrial toxins, and vehicular emissions that do not remain confined to lungs.

Once these particles enter the bloodstream, they target organs with vulnerabilities, including joints. Prolonged exposure leads to persistent inflammation." A 37-year-old teacher in Sector 48 faced stiffness in fingers and knee pain after two weeks of ‘poor’ air quality. Blood tests revealed elevated inflammatory markers, despite no prior history of arthritis.Similarly, a 58-year-old Delhi resident, who had managed arthritis with medication for years, found it difficult to get out of bed after consecutive weeks of smog. Her rheumatologist told her that her symptoms coincided with a rise in PM2.5 levels. Using an air purifier and limiting outdoor activities helped stabilise her condition.A 45-year-old construction supervisor from Faridabad reported swelling in his ankles and wrists during weeks of exposure to on-site dust and smog. Doctors attributed this to constant exposure to PM2.5

mixed with dust and cement particles, which intensified inflammation.

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Fat Udaipur wedding 'funded' by Rapido driver: How money trail led ED to Rs 331 crore 'mule' account

New Delhi: Investigating a trail of more than Rs 331 crore deposited in a bank account over eight months in an illegal betting app-linked money-laundering case, ED officials landed at the doors of a bike-taxi driver working with a well-known cab aggregator to earn two square meals a day. The stunned investigators lost no time to detect that this was a classic case of a "mule" account being used to pump dirty money. Officials said that the Enforcement Directorate (ED) stumbled upon the Rapido bike driver while investigating the 1xbet online betting-linked money-laundering case. It was found that the driver's bank account received deposits worth Rs 331.36 crore between August 19, 2024, and April 16, 2025,

the officials said. Alarmed by the 'suspicious' multi-crore-rupee transactions in a short period of eight



months, the federal agency conducted a raid at the address provided in the driver's bank records. The sleuths found out that the driver lived in a two-room shanty in a modest Delhi locality and

remained out of his house the entire day as he drove his bike to eke out a living. What further attracted the

could be summoned for questioning soon. The driver is understood to have told the ED investigators during his questioning that he neither knew anything about the bank transactions nor could he identify the bride, groom or their families whose wedding event in Udaipur was "funded" through his account. The ED suspects that the driver's bank account was a "mule" platform. A mule account is used to funnel illicit funds generated from financial crimes and the actual owner is not its user. Such accounts are created using fake or hired KYC, where someone lends their account in lieu of a commission. The ED found that the account received "large" deposits from multiple unidentified sources and these were "swiftly" re-routed to other suspi-

cious accounts. One of the sources of the funds sent into this bank account is linked with illegal betting, the officials said. The agency is now verifying more sources and destinations of the transactions that took place in this account. The agency had

recently attached assets worth crores of rupees of former cricketers Shikhar Dhawan and Suresh Raina as part of the 1xbet probe, even as it questioned a number of other cricketers and celebrities.

PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN TO THE PUBLIC AT LAST THAT MY CLIENT SH. BABU RAM S/O SH. SHYJO RAM R/O NAYA GAON RANIPURA, VTC, RANIPURA, P.O. BHARNI, SUB. DISTRICT TANK, DISTRICT TANK, RAJASTHAN 340401 168, DWARKA, NEW AND AT PRESENT H.NO.211, KAKROLA VILLAGE, SECTOR DELHI 110078, HAS BEEN DISOWNED/DEBARRED HIS SON NAMED SH. RAHUL KUMAR & HIS WIFE SMT. KIRAN ALL RESIDENT OF H.NO.211, KAKROLA VILLAGE, 110078, FROM ALL HIS MOVEABLE AND 168, DWARKA, NEW DELHI SECTOR IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES AND CANCELLED ALL HIS RELATIONS WITH THEM IN FUTURE AS THEY ARE NOT OBEYING AND RESPECTING MY CLIENT AND MY CLIENT WILL NOT BE RESPONSIBLE FOR ANY ACTS COMMITTED BY THEM AND IF ANY ONE DEALS WITH/HER OWN COSTS AND RISKS. MY CLIENT SHALL NOT BE HELD LIABLE OR RESPONSIBLE FOR THE SAME IN ANY MANNER IN FUTURE.

PRITAM KUMAR ADVOCATE
Seat No.8, Hall No.5, Third Floor, Lawyers Chambers, Dwarka Court Complex, Sector-10, New Delhi-110075.

NAME CHANGE

It is for general information that I S K SAKHIL RAHAMAN S/O ADUDAR RAHAMAN R/O A-740, 2ND FLOOR, LAL QUARTER, KRISHNA NAGAR, EAST DELHI, DELHI-110051, declare that name of my minor son has been wrongly written as SK MAHRUF in my minor son's namely SEKH MAHRUF RAHAMAN aged 17 years in his 10th Class educational documents and Aadhaar Card No. 20427900083. The actual name of my minor son is SEKH MAHRUF RAHAMAN which may be amended accordingly. It is certified that I have complied with other legal requirements in this connection.

NAME CHANGE

I, Sudeesh Kaushik W/o Bimal Kumar Kaushik R/o 2046 1st floor, Edocon colony, Opp. Jurassic Park, Sector 19, Sonapat, Sonapat, Haryana 131001 have changed my name to Sudeesh Kumar Kaushik for all future purposes.

NAME CHANGE

I, hitherto known as KM ZEENAT FARVEEN alias ZEENAT RUKHSANA DIO ABDUL GHAFOR W/O MAULA BAKHSH R/O F-11/8, JOGABAI EXTENSION, BATLA HOUSE, ZAKIR NAGAR, OKHLA, NEW DELHI-110025, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as ZEENAT RUKHSANA for all purposes.

NAME CHANGE

I, Amit Garg R/O HOUSE NO. J-13/6, NEAR INDIAN BANK, RAJOURI GARDEN, NEW DELHI-110027, changed my son's name from Kartik Garg to ayan Garg. my name mentioned in my LIC POLICY NO. - 115708301 as KARTKEY GARG. and my name mentioned in my AADHAR CARD NO. 3545 9360 6087 as AYAN GARG. His all documents belong to ayan Garg in adhar card No. 354593608087, his name ayan Garg in future.

NAME CHANGE

I, SUNITA wife of Shri Ram Singh Fogat (service No. JC-367494A, Rank-Sub) resident of Flat No. 74, Pocket-1, Phase-1, Sector-13, Dwarka, Netaji Subhash Apartment, NSIT Dwarka, South West Delhi-110078, declare that my date of birth was wrongly mentioned in my husband's army service record as 15.05.1964 instead of 25.05.1964. And my real and correct date of birth is 25.05.1964.

PUBLIC NOTICE

LR No. 340221/2025
MAHINDER SINGH/S/O SH. GOPI LAL, HOUSE NO-9587/10, GAW-SHALA BARADARI KAMALA NAGAR MALKA GANJ, NORTH WEST, Delhi -110007, have LOST MY ORIGINAL PROPERTY (1) Document No 1921 Year 18.07.2005, Item No 1 S/No 99/2 Land Measuring 37 Guntas, Item No 2 S/No 99/4 Land Measuring 21 Guntas, (2) Document No 2569 Year 22.08.2005, Item No 1 S/No 99/2 Land Measuring 18 1/2 Guntas, DNH-1.0921-2005-06 Stored in CD NO DNH D 55 in the Office of the Sub-Register-Devanahalli. (3) DN7-1-02569-2005-06 Stored in CDNO DNH058 in the Office of the Sub Registrar Devanahalli. Lands Situated in Devanahalli Village, Kasaba Hobli, Devanahalli Taluk Bangalore Rural District Karnataka. Ph 9958168128, sonasystemdelhi@gmail.com

NAME CHANGE

I, hitherto known as PIRAJI S/O KASHI NATH R/O 84, NEAR VASANT APARTMENT, VASANT VILLAGE, VASANT VIHAR-1, SOUTH WEST DELHI-110057 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as PIRAJI ADHANGLE.

NAME CHANGE

I, hitherto known as SANTOSH S/O PIRAJI ADHANGLE R/O 84, VASANT VILLAGE, VASANT VIHAR, NEAR VASANT APARTMENT, VASANT VIHAR-1, SOUTH WEST DELHI-110057 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as SANTOSH ADHANGLE.

NAME CHANGE

I, hitherto known as MANGLA W/O PIRAJI R/O 84, VASANT VILLAGE, NEAR VASANT APARTMENT, VASANT VIHAR-1, SOUTH WEST DELHI-110057 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as MANGLA ADHANGLE.

NAME CHANGE

It is for general information that I, Chhotu Bhuia S/O Faudari Bhuia R/O Mq-634, Sector-B, NCL Dudhichua Colony, Singrauli, Madhya Pradesh-468688, declare that name of mine and my father has been wrongly written as Chatu Bhuia and Faudari Bhuia respectively in my Service Record of Northern Coalfields Limited. The actual name of mine and my father is Chhotu Bhuia and Faudari Bhuia respectively, which may be amended accordingly.

NAME CHANGE

I, Ranjeet Kumar S/O Raja Ram Prasad R/O H-N-171, Village-Darigan, Thana-Sasaram, Darigan Sasaram Rohas, Bihar - 821113, have changed my minor son's name from Akshit Anav Aged 07 Years to Shivansh Pranav forever

NAME CHANGE

I, Ranjeet Kumar S/O Raja Ram Prasad R/O H-N-171, Village-Darigan, Thana-Sasaram, Darigan Sasaram Rohas, Bihar - 821113, have changed my minor daughter's name from Hey Sri aged 06 years to Shrinika Pranav forever

NAME CHANGE

I, hitherto known as SUBARTO ROY alias SAMEER ROY S/O SUNIL ROY R/O Tower No-26, Flat No-502, Omxase Shubhangar, Sector-4-A, Bahadurgarh, Jhajjar, Haryana-124507, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as SAMEER ROY.

NAME CHANGE

I, SHIMPI MEGHAVANSHI W/O KULDEEP MEGHAVANSHI R/O 5192 UGF, B/S, LP Kh. No. 322, Neb Sarai, Neb Sarai, Neb Sarai, Neb Sarai P.O. IGNOU DIST: South Delhi Delhi-110068 have changed the name of my minor son BHAVYA MEGHAVANSHI aged 10 years and he shall hereafter be known as ADITYA MEGHAVANSHI.

NAME CHANGE

I, hitherto known as PRIYANKA V. KUMAR alias PRIYANKA DIO VIJAY KUMAR R/O 245, Gali No-8, Joshi Road, Karol Bagh, Central Delhi, Delhi-110005 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as PRIYANKA

One dead, three hurt in accident in Faridabad

Gurugram: In a tragic accident, a man was killed and three others seriously injured when a speeding SUV collided with a sedan on the service lane of the Delhi-Mumbai Expressway in Faridabad. The sedan was destroyed in the crash. An FIR has been registered against the SUV's driver, who was also injured. According to a complaint filed by Sunny, a resident of Ghazipur village in NIT Faridabad, his uncles Mahavir and Mahesh, along with their nephew Ravindra, were returning from a wedding in Amipur late Wednesday night. While the sedan was making a U-turn under the Delhi-Mumbai Expressway flyover near Sector 14-17 on the bypass road, a speeding SUV, coming from Ballabgarh, struck the car. The impact was so severe that the sedan was extensively damaged and its engine was dislodged. "In the accident, Mahesh died on the spot while Mahavir, Ravindra, and the SUV driver Shubham were injured. The injured are receiving treatment in a private hospital. Mahesh was a workshop operator," Sunny stated in his complaint. Eyewitnesses said after hitting the sedan, the SUV smashed into the roadside grills. One of its wheels also detached in the collision, injuring the SUV's driver. "An FIR has been registered against Shubham, the SUV driver, who is also undergoing treatment in hospital. A further probe is underway," said Inspector Madan Singh, SHO of the Sector 17 police station.

Rangpuri waterbody to be revived using treated water

New Delhi: The Delhi Development Authority (DDA) will soon begin work on a project to revive a dry waterbody in Rangpuri using treated wastewater from a sewage treatment plant (STP) in Vasant Kunj. The initiative, recommended in the newly released drainage master plan, aims to restore waterbodies that have disappeared over the years. Officials said the plan involves laying ductile iron pipelines from the STP in Vasant Kunj's E2 Block to a pond located at Kharsa No 660 in Rangpuri village, which remains dry for most of the year. A senior official said a contractor would be appointed to oversee the work, including arranging materials, labour and site access after assessing ground conditions. He added that the treated water would meet required standards and would be suitable for groundwater recharge and ecological improvement. Officials noted that such systems also help store excess monsoon run-off, reducing pressure on drains during heavy rainfall. The project, estimated to cost about Rs 7 crore, is expected to be completed in roughly three months. At present, treated water from the STP is discharged into drainage lines. The proposed pipeline will instead channel a steady flow directly to the Rangpuri waterbody. The drainage master plan has recommended similar interventions across Delhi to revive traditional ponds and lakes, particularly as the city struggles with recurrent monsoon waterlogging.

DATE OF BIRTH CHANGE

I, BARUN YADAV Father of MITH-ILESH KUMAR residing at VILL-DHORIAIYA, PO-DHORIAIYA, DIST-BANKA, BIHAR-813224, in my son's service records my date of birth wrongly mentioned as 12/05/1968 instead of my correct date of birth as 01/01/1969 vide affidavit dated 05/12/2025 before Notary Public, Delhi.

DATE OF BIRTH CHANGE

I, MEENA DEVI mother of MITH-ILESH KUMAR residing at VILL-DHORIAIYA, PO-DHORIAIYA, DIST-BANKA, BIHAR-813224, in my son's service records my date of birth wrongly mentioned as 17/10/1974 instead of my correct date of birth as 01/01/1973 vide affidavit dated 05/12/2025 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE

I, Juliana spouse of No. JC812768H Rank Subedar Name Md Amir Hussain R/O Yairpok Ningshounal Mayai Leikai, PO Yairpok P.S Andor Imphal East District Manipur Pin 795149 have changed my name from Juliana to Juliana Chiele vide affidavit dated 05 December 2025 before Patilaha House Court, New Delhi.

NAME CHANGE

It is for general information that, I, VINET YADAV S/O MAIKU LAL YADAV R/O 41 A1 2nd Floor, Gali No-6 Jwala Nagar, Delhi, Shahdara, Shahdara, Po- Shahdara Dist-North East Delhi-110032 declare that name of my father has been wrongly written as AJAY KUMAR SINGH in my PAN CARD NO-ACPPY8230K and VOTER ID CARD NO-ZSX2207256 that name of my father and my mother has been wrongly written as AJAY KUMAR SINGH and ANITA DEVI in my 10th Class Educational Documents. The actual name of my father and my mother are MAIKU LAL YADAV and CHAM-PA DEVI respectively which may be amended accordingly.

SUPPLY AND APPLICATION OF 3-PART COMPOSITE HIGH VOLTAGE INSULATED COATING

E-Tender Notice No. TRD/LMG/23 of 2025-26 dated: 03-12-2025. E-Tenders are invited by the undersigned for the following works: **Tender No. EL-TRD-NFR-LMG-OHE-MOD-45 Dated: 03-12-2025.** Name of work: Supply and application of 3-part composite high voltage insulated coating under FOB/ROB/IGR bridges to prevent flashover and tripping due to inadequate electrical clearance, suitable for 25 kV AC traction system in Lumding Division. **Tender Value:** ₹ 3,14,300/- **Date & Time of closing of tender:** 15:00 hrs. on 25-12-2025. The complete information of above e-tender will be available in website www.irops.gov.in

Sr. DEE/TRD/Lumding

NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY

Serving Customers With A Smile

PROVISION OF MACHINE SIDING AND EXTENSION OF CESS

E-Tender Notice No. 104/W-2/APDU dated: 03-12-2025. E-Tenders are invited by the undersigned for the following works: **Tender No. 26-AP-II-2025.** Name of work: Tipkal-Provision of machine siding and Extension of cess at Tipkal under ADEN/Fakiragram Jn. at New Bongaigaon. **Tender Value:** ₹ 71,86,796.91/- **Earnest Money:** ₹ 1,43,700/- **Date & Time of closing of tender:** At 15:00 hrs. & opened at 15:30 hrs. on 26-12-2025. The complete information of above e-tender will be available in website www.irops.gov.in

DRM (W), Alipurduar Jn.

NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY

Serving Customers With A Smile

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform general public at large that our client, **Mr. Ved Prakash S/o. Mr. Ashok Kumar** who have approached **Aadhar Housing Finance Ltd.** for Home Loan of the Entire Upper Ground Floor (without roof rights), Property Bearing No. TRD-269-C, Gali No. 19, Area Measuring 50 Sq. Yds., i.e. 41.805 Sq. Mtrs., Out of Kharsa No. 455, Situated at Tughlakabad Extn., New Delhi-110019.

1. Sale Deed Dated 15.07.2015 executed by **Mr. Kundan Kumar S/o. Mr. Nanender Prasad Singh and Mrs. Neelam Devi W/o. Mr. Pappu Mehto** in favour of **Mr. Sunil Kumar S/o. Mr. Ajit Singh** in respect of Entire Upper Ground Floor (without roof rights), Property Bearing No. TRD-269-C, Gali No. 19, Area Measuring 50 Sq. Yds., i.e. 41.805 Sq. Mtrs., Out of Kharsa No. 455, Situated at Tughlakabad Extn., New Delhi-110019. (Regd. As Doc No. 6362, Book No. 1, Vol No. 13901, Dated 15.07.2015, Pages 175-184, SRO - V).

It is to mention that the above-mentioned document is lost. And the said property is going to be mortgaged in **Aadhar Housing Finance Ltd. Office at, Pusp Vihar.** All persons, if any, including bank, financial institutions, or any party/ies having any claim (Objection to Kharsa Number), demand, right, interest in respect of or against the said property or any part thereof by way of inheritance, assignment, mortgage, charge, possession, lien or otherwise, are hereby required to make the same known in writing within 7 days with the documentary evidence from the date of publication, failing which the said claim of the person/s, if any will be considered waived and settled.

Ms. Rani Shipree (Advocate)

Office Add: H. No. T/181, UGF,

Shukar Bazaar, Uttam Nagar, New

Delhi-110059

NAME CHANGE

I, hitherto known as PIYUSH S/O AJAY SINGH R/O P-161, PILLANJI VILLAGE, SAROJINI NAGAR, NDMC, DELHI-110023 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as PIYUSH BAISOYA. It is certified that I have complied with other legal requirements in the connection

NAME CHANGE

I, hitherto known as GANGA RAM S/O RAM KISHAN R/O E-119/13, JHUGGI RAVI DAS CAMP, I P EXTENSION, SHAKAR PUR, DELHI-110092 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as DOMI PASI. It is certified that I have complied with other legal requirements in the connection

NAME CHANGE

I, Ganga Sagar Thakur S/O Thakkan Thakur, R/O RZG-30, G/F, Nihal Vihar, Nangloi, West Delhi, Delhi-110041, have changed the name of my minor son Sorav aged 16 years and he shall hereafter be known as SORAV THAKUR.

NAME CHANGE

I, Savitri Devi Kadian W/O Ram Singh Kadian R/O Flat No 602, Sun Tower-B, Shipra Sun City Indrapuram, Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh-201014 Have changed my name to Savitri kadian for all future purposes.

NAME CHANGE

I, JASLEEN KAUR KHOKAR D/O GURU SEWAK SINGH R/O H.NO-1/2650, GALI NO-3, MANDOLI ROAD, RAM NAGAR, SHAHDARA, DELHI 110032, have changed my name to JASLEEN KAUR for all future purposes.

NAME CHANGE

I, hitherto known as GANGA RAM S/O RAM KISHAN R/O E-119/13, JHUGGI RAVI DAS CAMP, I P EXTENSION, SHAKAR PUR, DELHI-110092 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as DOMI PASI. It is certified that I have complied with other legal requirements in the connection

NAME CHANGE

I, hitherto known as PIYUSH S/O AJAY SINGH R/O P-161, PILLANJI VILLAGE, SAROJINI NAGAR, NDMC, DELHI-110023 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as PIYUSH BAISOYA. It is certified that I have complied with other legal requirements in the connection

NAME CHANGE

I, palak D/O shashi bhusan bhardwaj R/O B-72 street no 2 ghazipur village east delhi delhi 110036 changed my name to palak bhardwaj.

NAME CHANGE

I, Eram Khushnudi W/O Khushar Parwez R/O 41-B Pocket 12, Jasola, New Delhi 110025. Changed my name to Atram Khushnudi.

NAME CHANGE

I, Ganga Sagar Thakur S/O Thakkan Thakur, R/O RZG-30, G/F, Nihal Vihar, Nangloi, West Delhi, Delhi-110041, have changed the name of my minor son Sorav aged 16 years and he shall hereafter be known as SORAV THAKUR.

NAME CHANGE

I, Savitri Devi Kadian W/O Ram Singh Kadian R/O Flat No 602, Sun Tower-B, Shipra Sun City Indrapuram, Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh-201014 Have changed my name to Savitri kadian for all future purposes.

NAME CHANGE

I, JASLEEN KAUR KHOKAR D/O GURU SEWAK SINGH R/O H.NO-1/2650, GALI NO-3, MANDOLI ROAD, RAM NAGAR, SHAHDARA, DELHI 110032, have changed my name to JASLEEN KAUR for all future purposes.

NAME CHANGE

I, hitherto known as GANGA RAM S/O RAM KISHAN R/O E-119/13, JHUGGI RAVI DAS CAMP, I P EXTENSION, SHAKAR PUR, DELHI-110092 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as DOMI PASI. It is certified that I have complied with other legal requirements in the connection

NAME CHANGE

I, hitherto known as PIYUSH S/O AJAY SINGH R/O P-161, PILLANJI VILLAGE, SAROJINI NAGAR, NDMC, DELHI-110023 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as PIYUSH BAISOYA. It is certified that I have complied with other legal requirements in the connection

NAME CHANGE

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NAME CHANGE

I, JASLEEN KAUR KHOKAR D/O GURU SEWAK SINGH R/O H.NO-1/2650, GALI NO-3, MANDOLI ROAD, RAM NAGAR, SHAHDARA, DELHI 110032, have changed my name to JASLEEN KAUR for all future purposes.

NAME CHANGE

I, hitherto known as GANGA RAM S/O RAM KISHAN R/O E-119/13, JHUGGI RAVI DAS CAMP, I P EXTENSION, SHAKAR PUR, DELHI-110092 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as DOMI PASI. It is certified that I have complied with other legal requirements in the connection

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NEWS BOX

Putin Ordered 2018 Novichok Poisoning Of Ex-Russian Spy: UK Inquiry

London. (Agency)

Russian President Vladimir Putin must have ordered the Novichok nerve agent attack on Russian double agent Sergei Skripal in 2018, in a "reckless" display of power that led to the death of an innocent woman, a UK public inquiry concluded on Thursday.

Skripal was found along with his daughter Yulia slumped unconscious on a public bench in the southern English city of Salisbury in March 2018 after Novichok was applied to the front door handle of his nearby home.About four months later, mother-of-three Dawn Sturgess, 44, died from exposure to the poison after her partner found a counterfeit perfume bottle which Russian spies had used to smuggle the military-grade nerve agent into the country, the inquiry said.

'OVERWHELMING EVIDENCE OF RUSSIAN STATE INVOLVEMENT'

The Skripals, and a police officer who went to Skripal's house, were left critically ill from its effects, but recovered.In his conclusions, the chair, former UK Supreme Court judge Anthony Hughes, said he was certain a team of GRU military intelligence officers had attempted to murder Skripal, who sold Russian secrets to Britain and moved there after a 2010 spy swap. I have concluded that the operation to assassinate Sergei Skripal must have been authorised at the highest level, by President Putin," Hughes said in his report. "The evidence that this was a Russian state attack is overwhelming."Russia has always denied any involvement, casting the accusations as anti-Russian propaganda.Responding to the report's findings, the Russian embassy in London said in a statement on the Telegram app that its ambassador had visited Britain's foreign ministry to "categorically reject baseless and senseless accusations, including those directed" against Putin.

Asim Munir Gets More Powerful, Becomes Pak's 1st Chief Of Defence Forces

WORLD . (Agency)

Pakistan President Asif Ali Zardari has approved the appointment of Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir as the country's first Chief of Defence Forces (CDF) for a period of five years.Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's summary recommending Munir for both Chief of the Army Staff (COAS) and Chief of Defence Forces (CDF) was approved, the Pakistan President's office said in an X post."President Asif Ali Zardari approved the appointment of Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir as COAS concurrently as CDF for 5 years," the official X handle of the President of Pakistan said in a post.This comes after a lot of speculation over Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's willingness to hand over more power to Munir, as the Sharif government was supposed to notify the appointment of the country's first Chief of Defence Forces on November 29, the day Munir's original three-year term as army chief ended.The Chief of Defence Forces' role was established last month under the 27th Amendment to the Constitution, aiming to centralise military command. Additionally, the Pakistan president also approved a two-year extension in the service of Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmad Babar Sidhu, which will take effect from March 19, 2026.

Asif Ali Zardari conveyed his best wishes to both Pakistan Armed Forces officers.Asim Munir, who was promoted to the Field Marshal rank this year, will also simultaneously hold the office of the Chief of Army Staff, along with his duties as CDF. He is only the second military officer in the country's history to hold the Field Marshal title after Gen. Ayub Khan, who led Pakistan during the 1965 war with India.

Israel Launches Fresh Strikes On Lebanon After Warnings

WORLD. (Agency)

Israeli raids hit south Lebanon on Thursday as its military said it was striking Hezbollah weapons storage facilities, a day after Lebanese and Israeli civilian representatives held their first direct talks in decades.Despite a November 2024 ceasefire that was supposed to end more than a year of hostilities between Israel and the Iran-backed militant group, Israel has kept up strikes on Lebanon and has also maintained troops in five south Lebanon areas it deems strategic.The visit from Sunday to Tuesday of Pope Leo XIV had provided Lebanon with a window of reprieve from Israeli air strikes, which had intensified in recent weeks, and the pontiff urged an end to hostilities during his visit.But on Thursday, the Israeli army said it "began conducting strikes on Hezbollah terror targets in southern Lebanon", after warning it would strike buildings in south Lebanon's Mahrouna and Jbaa.It subsequently issued warnings that it would strike further Hezbollah "military infrastructure" in Majadal and Baraasheet, also in the south.Lebanon's official National News Agency said "Israeli warplanes launched a strike on the town of Mahrouna" while other raids targeted buildings in Jbaa, Majadal and Baraasheet.An AFP photographer saw smoke rising from the site of the strike in the town of Jbaa.

-Living in shock

"It's a completely civilian area. We're used to Israeli threats from time to time," local official Yassir Madi told journalists, including AFP.

"As for the damage, there's not a window within 300 metres that didn't break. Everyone is living in shock," he added.

Meanwhile, the Israeli military said it struck "weapons storage facilities belonging to Hezbollah" located in the "heart of the civilian population".

Abortion in Afghanistan: 'My mother crushed my stomach with a stone'

With terminations banned and contraception scarce, desperate women turn to dangerous home methods as doctors face scrutiny and fear arrest

KABUL. (Agen

When Bahara was four months pregnant, she went to a Kabul hospital to beg for an abortion. "We're not allowed," a doctor told her. "If someone finds out, we will all end up in prison."Abortion in Afghanistan is illegal and you can be locked up for having or assisting one.But Bahara was desperate. Her jobless husband had ordered her to "find a solution" -- he did not want a fifth daughter."We can barely afford to feed" the girls as it is, Bahara, 35, told AFP. "If it was a boy, he could go to school and work."But there are no such prospects for a girl, with women banned from secondary schools,

universities and most jobs since the Taliban returned to power in 2021.

So Bahara took a neighbour's advice and bought -- for the equivalent of two dollars - - a herbal tea at the market made from a type of mallow that induces contractions.

The bleeding was so bad she had to go back to the hospital. "I told them that I had fallen, but they knew I was lying because I had no marks on my body. They were angry but did not report me," said the mother-of-four.

"They operated and removed the remains of the foetus. Since then I have felt very weak."The plant she used can be "very risky", said ethnobotanist Guadalupe Maldonado Andrade from the California State Polytechnic University, Pomona. A wrong dose can cause organ damage and severe haemorrhaging.

Bahara's is not an isolated case.

Two other women AFP talked to during our months-long investigation also risked their lives to abort. Nesa took tablets toxic to the embryo and Mariam crushed her stomach with a heavy stone.Of the dozen women AFP talked to about their clandestine abortions, only five agreed to be



interviewed on condition we protected their anonymity and changed their names. Even outside Taliban circles, the fear of being stigmatised, and arrested, is strong in Afghanistan's deeply conservative society. With such a taboo, and no real statistics, Sharafat Zaman of the Afghan health ministry insisted "few" women are affected. The Taliban -- who follow a strict interpretation of Islam -- did not change the abortion laws when they returned to power in 2021.But officials check more often that terminations are not being carried out in hospitals, panicking doctors and pushing women to have abortions in secret, according to many health sector workers AFP interviewed.Several doctors said the

number of miscarriages has increased since 2021, which they suspect may conceal clandestine abortions given the injuries patients present and their psychological state.Two international medical organisations also said they noticed the same trend, while access to contraception has become more difficult.

"Budget constraints and the forced closure of family planning services endanger access to modern contraception," a UN source told AFP, saying less than half of Afghan women have access to methods such as condoms, implants or pills.

Afghanistan has one of the highest maternal and infant mortality rates in the world, with young women banned from training as midwives or nurses in medical schools since last year.While health ministry spokesman Zaman acknowledged the dangers of clandestine abortions, and that some women face "problems", he said it was not the government's fault.Abortion is permitted when the life of a pregnant woman is in grave danger. However, in practice it is rarely granted. For the Taliban abortion is "taking a life", Zaman said.

US military conducts strike on another suspected drug boat as probe into the first strike begins

WASHINGTON . (Agency)

U.S. Southern Command announced that it had conducted another strike against a small boat in the eastern Pacific Ocean on Thursday, following a pause of almost three weeks.It is the 22nd strike the U.S. military has carried out against boats in the Caribbean Sea and eastern Pacific Ocean that the Trump administration claimed were trafficking drugs.There were four casualties in Thursday's strike, according to the social media post, bringing the death toll of the campaign to at least 87 people.In a video that accompanied the announcement, a small boat can be seen moving across the water before it is suddenly consumed by a large explosion. The video then zooms out to show the boat covered in flames and billowing smoke.The strike was conducted the same day Adm. Frank "Mitch" Bradley appeared for a series of closed-door classified briefings at the U.S. Capitol as lawmakers began an investigation into the very first strike carried out by the military on

Sept. 2. The sessions came after a report that Bradley ordered a follow-on attack that killed the survivors to



comply with Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth's demands.

Bradley told lawmakers there was no "kill them all" order from Hegseth, but a stark video of the entire series of attacks left some lawmakers with serious questions.Legal experts have said killing survivors of a strike at sea could be a violation of the laws of military warfare.Bradley spoke to lawmakers alongside the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Gen. Dan

Caine, in a classified session. His testimony provided fresh information at a crucial moment as Hegseth's leadership comes under scrutiny, but it did little to resolve growing questions about the legal basis for President Donald Trump's extraordinary campaign to use war powers against suspected drug smugglers.

Lawmakers offered differing accounts of what they saw on the video.

Republican Sen. Tom Cotton of Arkansas said he saw the survivors "trying to flip a boat loaded with drugs bound for United States back over so they could stay in the fight."Connecticut Rep. Jim Himes, the top Democrat on the House Intelligence Committee, said, "What I saw in that room was one of the most troubling things I've seen in my time in public service." "You have two individuals in clear distress, without any means of locomotion, with a destroyed vessel," he said, adding they "were killed by the United States."

Trump ventures deeper into anti-immigrant language by calling people from Somalia 'garbage'

world.(Agency)

He said it four times in seven seconds: Somali immigrants in the United States are "garbage."It was no mistake. In fact, President Donald Trump's rhetorical attacks on immigrants have been building since he said Mexico was sending "rapists" across the border during his presidential campaign announcement a decade ago. He's also echoed rhetoric once used by Adolf Hitler and called the 54 nations of Africa "s---hole countries." But with one flourish closing a two-hour Cabinet meeting Tuesday, Trump amped up his anti-immigrant rhetoric even further — and ditched any claim that his administration was only seeking to remove people in the U.S. illegally."We don't want 'em in our country," Trump said five times of the nation's 260,000 people of Somali descent. "Let 'em go back to where they came from and fix it." The assembled Cabinet members cheered and applauded. Vice President JD



Vance could be seen pumping a fist. Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth, sitting to the president's immediate left, told Trump on-camera, "Well said."The two-minute finale offered a riveting display in a nation that prides itself as being founded and enriched by immigrants, alongside an ugly history of enslaving millions of them and limiting who can come in. Trump's U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement raids and deportations have reignited an age-old debate — and widened the nation's divisions — over who can be an American, with

Trump telling tens of thousands of American citizens, among others, that he doesn't want them by virtue of their family origin."What he has done is brought this type of language more into the everyday conversation, more into the main," said Carl Bon Tempo, a State University of New York at Albany history professor. "He's, in a way, legitimated this type of language that, for many Americans for a long time, was seen as outside the bounds."A question that cuts to the core of American identity

Some Americans have long felt that people from certain parts of the world can never really blend in. That outsider-averse sentiment has manifested during difficult periods, such as anti-Chinese fear-mongering in the late 19th century and the imprisonment of some 120,000 Japanese Americans during World War II.

Zohran Mamdani and the Louvre make the list of most mispronounced words of 2025

DALLAS. (Agency)

From the election of Zohran Mamdani to the intrigue surrounding the jewel heist at the Louvre, keeping up with this year's news also left some Americans struggling with pronunciations. That's put both the name of New York City's incoming mayor and the famed Paris museum on a list of the most mispronounced words in 2025.

The language-learning company Babbel and closed-captioning company The Captioning Group on Thursday released a list of the words that news anchors, politicians and other public figures in the U.S. struggled with the most this year, giving an overview of the people and topics that had Americans talking.

As Mamdani made his political rise, the democratic socialist's name often was mangled. When he takes office in January, the 34-year-old will become the city's first Muslim mayor, first born in Africa and first of South Asian heritage. Babbel said his name — which should be pronounced zoh-RAHN mam-DAH-nee — was most commonly mispronounced when people swapped the "M" and "N" in his last name.

Mamdani has said he doesn't mind if someone tries to pronounce his name correctly and misses but that some mispronounce it intentionally. During one mayoral race debate, he chided former New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo's pronunciation of his name, telling his opponent: "The name is Mamdani. M-A-M-D-A-N-I."The theft of France's crown jewels from the Louvre in October had many people mispronouncing the name of the world's most-visited museum. Babbel says the correct pronunciation is LOOV-ruh, with a very soft pronunciation on the "ruh," which can be a challenge for English speakers."A lot of these words come from different languages and so we have to adapt to a sound that we've never made before," said Esteban Touma, a linguistic and cultural expert at Babbel.

Other words and names on the list include:

— Acetaminophen, the active ingredient in the Tylenol, is pronounced uh-SEE-tuh-MIH-nuh-fen. President Donald Trump gave comedians plenty of material when he stumbled over the word as he implored pregnant women to avoid taking the painkiller despite inconclusive evidence about whether too much could be linked to autism.— Alex Murdaugh, the prominent South Carolina attorney who was sentenced to life in prison for the 2021 fatal shootings of his wife and son, is pronounced AL-ick MUR-dock. This year the case was dramatized in a series on Hulu.Mounjaro, pronounced mown-JAHR-OH, is part of a wave of diabetes and obesity medications that soared in popularity because of the weight people have lost while taking the injections.

Hong Kong university shuts student union after condolence message on deadly fire sparks scrutiny

HKBU cites "poor management" as it seizes facilities; union alleges ulterior motives amid sedition arrests after Tai Po blaze killed 159

HONG KONG. (Agency)

A Hong Kong university ordered its student union to shut down after a message was posted on campus expressing condolences and urging justice for the victims of a major fire, according to a letter publicly shared on Friday.The blaze that ripped through Wang Fuk Court in the city's northern Tai Po district last week killed at least 159 people and was the world's deadliest residential building fire since 1980.The Hong Kong Baptist University (HKBU) said it will



"suspend the operations" of the student union acting executive committee with immediate effect and take over their facilities, according to a letter shared on social media by the union on Friday.

The school cited reasons such as a lack of representation and poor financial management, which the union called "unfounded and arbitrary"."The

university's irrational action raises concerns about potential ulterior motives behind this forced suspension," the union said in a statement.Social media users circulated photos on Tuesday of a message stuck onto a student union-run notice board, nicknamed the "democracy wall", which expressed condolences for those killed in the fire.The unsigned message

continued: "We are Hongkongers. Urge the government to be receptive and respond to pulic demands so justice can be done."

The wall was blocked off with tall barricades on Wednesday, an AFP reporter saw.

Kevin, a HKBU student who declined to give his surname, told AFP at the time he found the noticeboard message to be "positive" and said it drew attention from students walking by before it was sealed off.The university did not respond to multiple requests for comment from AFP.

Authorities have warned against crimes that "exploit the tragedy" and have reportedly arrested at least three people for sedition in the fire's aftermath.Student unions at Hong Kong universities were once hotbeds of political activism and played a role in the city's huge and sometimes violent pro-democracy protests in 2019.They either shrank their operations or were shut down entirely after Beijing imposed a national security law in Hong Kong a year later, which critics say has curbed dissent.

NEWS BOX

Cyberabad, Rachakonda police websites restored

HYDERABAD. (Agency)

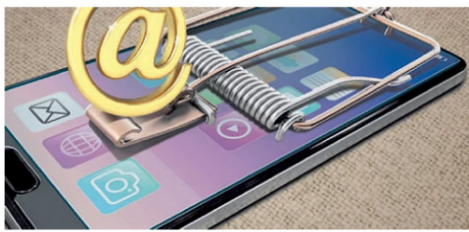
The official websites of the Cyberabad and Rachakonda police commissionerates were taken offline after users were unexpectedly redirected to gaming and betting pages, raising concerns of a possible security breach. Many also reported 'site can't be reached' errors, cutting off access to police station contacts and other services.

Cyberabad police said their website, unavailable since November 15, has now been restored following scheduled technical maintenance and security upgrades. Rachakonda officials said their portal was offline due to annual maintenance and a routine security audit.

The problem began after the police IT cell detected suspicious redirects, prompting the sites to be taken down as a precaution. A Delhi-based cybersecurity firm, working under NIC supervision, assisted in identifying and fixing the issue. Officials said there is no evidence of a data breach. Both portals were restored on Thursday after NIC completed testing.

The incident comes months after multiple data breaches in 2024 forced the Telangana Police to take down several internal systems for security assessments.

Five held for trafficking Indians for cyberslavery in Myanmar



HYDERABAD . (Agency)

The TGCSB arrested five men for allegedly trafficking Indian job-seekers to Chinese-run cybercrime syndicates in Myanmar, where victims were sold for USD 3,000-5,000 each.

Those held are Vasam Govardhan of Warangal, Banothu Madanali of Warangal district, Syed Mohammad Madani alias Max of Mysuru, Suggana Sudheer Kumar of Krishna district and Gangala Naveen of Hyderabad.

The arrests followed a November 22 complaint from two victims who were lured with overseas job offers, taken to Myanmar, stripped of their passports and forced into cyber-fraud operations.

On October 22, the victims and other Indians were intercepted by the Myanmar Army, detained for 25 days and later handed over to the Indian Embassy. After repatriation, TGCSB recorded statements and analysed devices, identifying the trafficking network. A Special Investigation Team was formed, and Look Out Circulars were issued for overseas handlers.

Police found that Govardhan ran an unregistered consultancy, YUGA, recruiting candidates through social media. Madanali had earlier worked in Myanmar's scam hubs, while Sudheer Kumar and Madani were linked to a Chinese-run firm, HS, which allegedly paid USD 3,000-5,000 per recruit. Victims were interviewed via Instagram or Telegram, flown through Bangkok and pushed into investment scams, digital-arrest fraud, OTP harvesting and romance fraud. Resistance brought torture, threats and extortion demands of up to USD 5,000. Cases were booked under the BNS, the Emigration Act and the IT Act, 2008.

Enforcement squads struggle as poll campaign materials flood city

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM. (Agency)

Local body polls are taking a heavy toll on the capital, with illegal flex boards and campaign materials defacing public spaces across Thiruvananthapuram. Medians, footpaths and even electric posts have been taken over by unauthorised campaign displays, despite the green protocol being in force.

There are four enforcement squads at the district level and 25 under the city corporation. However, officials say enforcement is proving extremely difficult this time. According to Suchitwa Mission



authorities, unlike Lok Sabha and Assembly elections, monitoring violations during local body polls is challenging as elections are held at the ward level.

Thiruvananthapuram district has 96 local bodies, including the district panchayat, the corporation, four municipalities, 11 block panchayats and 73 grama panchayats. With thousands of candidates in the fray, enforcement teams are able to carry out only random checks.

Adding to the challenges, the entire responsibility for conducting local body elections falls on the Local Self-Government Department. "Almost every official in local bodies has election duties as returning officer or assistant returning officer. Enforcement is just one among many responsibilities, making large-scale action difficult," an official said.

Speed certificate: Poonamallee-Porur metro corridor may get delayed

Despite the regulatory lag, CMRL maintains that civil works, systems integration and station readiness remain on track.

CHENNAI. (Agency)

The Chennai Metro Rail's push to open the first stretch of its Phase II corridor in December, from Poonamallee to Porur, is facing a key regulatory bottleneck, with the mandatory speed certificate from the Railway Design and Standards Organisation (RDSO) still pending.

The certificate, issued by the Railway Board, is essential before the Commissioner of Railway Safety (CRS) can inspect the line. Without it, the final safety audit required for commercial operations cannot begin, according to Chennai Metro Rail sources.

Metro officials, who have been working to meet an ambitious commissioning deadline, say they are in constant touch with both the Railway Board and the CRS office in Bengaluru to prevent further delays. The western corridor is expected to be a crucial link for commuters travelling between

Poonamallee and Chennai's expanding southern belt, and is projected to lift ridership sharply once operational.

"Usually, the speed certificate is provided



within a month. Now, it is taking time. We are closely following with the Railway Board and Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs with letters and discussion," a CMRL official said. The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs

official dealing with Urban transport projects could not be reached by.

Despite the regulatory lag, CMRL maintains that civil works, systems integration and station readiness remain on track. However, officials acknowledge that the holdup could compress the testing and fine-tuning window before the line opens to the public.

CMRL completed safety certification trials for the new Phase-II rolling stock between Poonamallee Bypass and Porur Junction stations. The trials-conducted by an independent RDSO team began on August 16, 2025 and assessed passenger comfort, traction performance and braking systems at speeds up to the design limit of 90 km/h. The RDSO team certified that the train's design and construction meet the standards required for safe stopping distances even when fully loaded.

Job fraud: Crime branch raids offices of travel agents in Nagpada, seizes 238 passports

Mumbai .(Agency)

THE MUMBAI crime branch Thursday conducted raids at the offices of nine travel agents in Nagpada for allegedly duping people by promising them jobs abroad.

The police seized 238 passports from these shops apart from other documents like 'offer letters' that were found in these offices. An officer said two owners of the agencies have been arrested and seven others have been named as wanted accused in the case.

A case has been registered under various sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita and the Immigration Act. An official said they received a complaint from the Protector of Emigrants (POE) office in Bandra on behalf of the Ministry of External Affairs in Delhi that several tours and travels in the Nagpada area

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In order to clear extra rush of rail passengers, Railways have decided to run following special trains as per details given below:-

04474/04473 Ghaziabad-Saharanpur Jn.- Ghaziabad Unreserved Special Express				04 Trips
Train No. 04474		STATIONS	Train No. 04473	
ARR.	DEP.		ARR.	DEP.
---	05:15	Ghaziabad	16:00	---
08:45	---	Saharanpur Jn.	---	14:00

Days of Run : 04474 Ex. Ghaziabad and 04473 Ex. Saharanpur Jn. on 06.12.2025 & 07.12.2025 (Saturday & Sunday)

Accommodation : General

Stoppages: Naya Ghaziabad, Guldhar, Duhai Halt, Muradnagar, Modinagar, Mohiuddinpur, Partapur, Meerut City, Meerut Cantt., Pabli Khas, Daurala, Sakhoti Tanda, Khatauli, Mansurpur, Jaruda Narara, Muzaffarnagar, Bamanheri, Rohana Kalan, Deoband, Talheri Buzurg, Nagal & Tapri Stations.

04476/04475 Ghaziabad-Saharanpur Jn.- Ghaziabad Unreserved Special Express				04 Trips
Train No. 04476		STATIONS	Train No. 04475	
ARR.	DEP.		ARR.	DEP.
---	16:30	Ghaziabad	16:20	---
20:00	---	Saharanpur Jn.	---	12:30

Days of Run : 04476 Ex. Ghaziabad and 04475 Ex. Saharanpur Jn. on 06.12.2025 & 07.12.2025 (Saturday & Sunday)

Accommodation : General

Stoppages: Naya Ghaziabad, Guldhar, Duhai Halt, Muradnagar, Modinagar, Mohiuddinpur, Partapur, Meerut City, Meerut Cantt., Pabli Khas, Daurala, Sakhoti Tanda, Khatauli, Mansurpur, Jaruda Narara, Muzaffarnagar, Bamanheri, Rohana Kalan, Deoband, Talheri Buzurg, Nagal & Tapri Stations.

04460/04459 New Delhi-Howrah Jn.-New Delhi Reserved Special Express				02 Trips
Train No. 04460		STATIONS	Train No. 04459	
ARR.	DEP.		ARR.	DEP.
---	18:15	New Delhi	08:20	---
23:30	---	Howrah Jn.	---	01:30

Days of Run : 04460 Ex. New Delhi on 06.12.2025 and 04459 Ex. Howrah Jn. on 08.12.2025.

Accommodation : 1st AC, 2 Tier AC, 3 Tier AC

Stoppages: Ghaziabad, Aligarh Jn., Tundla Jn., Etawah Jn., Govindpur, Prayagraj Jn., Janghai Jn., Varanasi, Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Jn., Bhabua Road, Sasaram, Dehri On Sone, Anugraha N Road, Gaya Jn., Koderma, Parasnath, Dhanbad Jn., Asansol Jn., Durgapur, Bardhaman & Bandel Stations.

04062/04061 Delhi Sarai Rohilla-Sabarmati-Delhi Sarai Rohilla Reserved Special Express				02 Trips
Train No. 04062		STATIONS	Train No. 04061	
ARR.	DEP.		ARR.	DEP.
---	08:10	Delhi Sarai Rohilla	23:00	---
00:30	---	Sabarmati	---	05:30

Days of Run : 04062 Ex. Delhi Sarai Rohilla on 06.12.2025 and 04061 Ex. Sabarmati on 07.12.2025.

Accommodation : 2 Tier AC, 3 Tier AC

Stoppages: Delhi Cantt., Gurgaon, Rewari Jn., Alwar Jn., Jaipur Jn., Kishangarh, Ajmer Jn., Beawar, Marwar Jn., Falna, Abu Road & Palanpur Jn. Stations.

04080 Hazrat Nizamuddin-Thiruvananthapuram Central Reserved Superfast Special Express				01 Trip
Train No. 04080		STATIONS	Train No. 04001	
ARR.	DEP.		ARR.	DEP.
---	13:35	Hazrat Nizamuddin	---	---
14:50	---	Thiruvananthapuram Central	---	---

Days of Run : 04080 Ex. Hazrat Nizamuddin on 06.12.2025

Accommodation : 1st AC, 2 Tier AC, 3 Tier AC

Stoppages: Kota Jn., Ratlam Jn., Vadodara Jn., Udhna Jn., Vasai Road, Panvel, Roha, Ratnagiri, Thivim, Madgaon Jn., Karwar, Kumta, Mookambika Road Byndoor, Kundapura, Udipi, Mangalore Jn., Kasaragod, Kannur, Kozhikkode, Shoranur Jn., Thiruv. Aluva, Ernakulam Town, Kottayam, Chengannur, Kayankulam, Kollam Jn. & Varkala Shivagiri Stations.

04002/04001 New Delhi-Mumbai Central New Delhi Reserved Superfast Special Express				02 Trips
Train No. 04002		STATIONS	Train No. 04001	
ARR.	DEP.		ARR.	DEP.
---	22:40	New Delhi	20:50	---
21:00	---	Mumbai Central	---	23:30

Days of Run : 04002 Ex. New Delhi on 06.12.2025 and 04001 Ex. Mumbai Central on 07.12.2025.

Accommodation : 1st AC, 2 Tier AC, 3 Tier AC

Stoppages: Mathura, Kota, Nagda, Ratlam, Vadodara, Surat & Borivali Stations.

For any kind of information and detailed time-table etc., passengers are requested to contact RailMadad Helpline No. 139 or may visit Indian Railways website <https://enquiry.indianrail.gov.in> or NTES App.

Please join us on



02439/02440 New Delhi-Martyr Captain Tushar Mahajan-New Delhi Reserved Vande Bharat Special Express				02 Trips
Train No. 02439		STATIONS	Train No. 02440	
ARR.	DEP.		ARR.	DEP.
---	06:00	New Delhi	23:00	---
14:00	---	Martyr Captain Tushar Mahajan	---	15:00

Days of Run : 02439 Ex. New Delhi and 02440 Ex. Martyr Captain Tushar Mahajan on 06.12.2025.

Accommodation : Chair Car, Executive Chair Car

Stoppages: Ambala Cantt., Ludhiana, Pathankot Cantt. & Jammu Tawi Stations.

05591/05592 Gorakhpur-Anand Vihar(T.)-Gorakhpur Special Express				04 Trips
Train No. 05591		STATIONS	Train No. 05592	
ARR.	DEP.		ARR.	DEP.
---	18:00	Gorakhpur	23:45	---
07:30	---	Anand Vihar (T.)	---	10:00

Days of Run : 05591 Ex. Gorakhpur on 07.12.2025 & 08.12.2025 (Sunday & Monday) and 05592 Ex. Anand Vihar (T.) on 08.12.2025 & 09.12.2025 (Monday, Tuesday).

Accommodation : 3 Tier AC

Stoppages: Khallibabad, Basti, Gonda Jn., Burhwal, Sitapur, Shahjahanpur, Bareilly Jn., Moradabad & Ghaziabad Stations.

09003/09004 Mumbai Central-Shakur Basti-Mumbai Central Superfast Special				04 Trips
Train No. 09003		STATIONS	Train No. 09004	
ARR.	DEP.		ARR.	DEP.
---	10:30	Mumbai Central	10:30	---
08:00	---	Shakur Basti	---	10:15

Days of Run : 09003 Ex. Mumbai Central on 08.12.2025 & 10.12.2025 (Monday, Wednesday) and 09004 Ex. Shakur Basti on 09.12.2025 & 11.12.2025 (Tuesday, Thursday).

Accommodation : 3 Tier AC & Sleeper

Stoppages: Borivali, Palghar, Vapi, Valsad, Surat, Bharuch Jn., Vadodara Jn., Ratlam Jn., Nagda Jn., Kota, Sawai Madhopur Jn., Gangapur City, Hindaun City, Bharatpur Jn., Mathura Jn., Kosi Kalan & Delhi Safdarjung Stations.

09497/09498 Sabarmati BG-Delhi Jn.-Sabarmati BG Superfast Special Train				04 Trips
Train No. 09497		STATIONS	Train No. 09498	
ARR.	DEP.		ARR.	DEP.
---	22:55	Sabarmati BG	12:20	---
15:15	---	Delhi Jn.	---	21:00

Days of Run : 09497 Ex. Sabarmati BG on 08.12.2025 & 10.12.2025 (Monday, Wednesday) and 09498 Ex. Delhi Jn. on 09.12.2025 & 11.12.2025 (Tuesday, Thursday).

Accommodation : 3 Tier AC

Stoppages: Mahesana Jn., Palanpur Jn., Aburoad, Marwar Jn., Ajmer Jn., Jaipur, Alwar Jn., Rewari, Gurgaon & Delhi Cantt. Stations.

02309/02310 Patna Jn.-Anand Vihar (T)-Patna Jn. Special Express Train				04 Trips
Train No. 02309		STATIONS	Train No. 02310	
ARR.	DEP.		ARR.	DEP.
---	20:30	Patna Jn.	14:00	---
15:00	---	Anand Vihar (T)	---	19:00

Days of Run : 02309 Ex. Patna Jn. on 06.12.2025 & 08.12.2025 and 02310 Ex. Anand Vihar (T) on 07.12.2025 & 09.12.2025.

Accommodation : 2 Tier AC, 3 Tier AC, 3 Tier AC Economy.

Stoppages: Danapur, Ara, Buxar, Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Jn., Prayagraj & Govindpur Stations.

02395/02396 Patna Jn.-Anand Vihar (T)-Patna Jn. Special Express Train				02 Trips
Train No. 02395		STATIONS	Train No. 02396	
ARR.	DEP.		ARR.	DEP.
---	20:30	Patna Jn.	14:00	---
15:00	---	Anand Vihar (T)	---	19:00

Days of Run : 02395 Ex. Patna Jn. on 07.12.2025 and 02396 Ex. Anand Vihar (T) on 08.12.2025.

Accommodation : 2 Tier AC, 3 Tier AC, 3 Tier AC Economy & Sleeper

Stoppages: Danapur, Ara, Buxar, Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Jn., Prayagraj & Govindpur Stations.

05563/05564 Darbhanga-Anand Vihar (T)-Darbhanga Special Express Train				02 Trips
Train No. 05563		STATIONS	Train No. 05564	
ARR.	DEP.		ARR.	DEP.
---	18:15	Darbhanga	23:00	---
21:15	---	Anand Vihar (T)	---	00:05

Days of Run : 05563 Ex. Darbhanga on 07.12.2025 and 05564 Ex. Anand Vihar (T) on 09.12.2025.

Accommodation : 1st AC, 2 Tier AC, 3 Tier AC, Sleeper & General.

Stoppages: Samastipur, Muzaffarpur, Hajipur, Chhapra, Ballia, Ghazipur City, Varanasi, Prayagraj & Govindpur Stations.



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Karnataka's breakfast parleys: Ice-breaker idlis to contain political steam

Whoever is watching the political developments in Karnataka is bound to be very confused. There are no familiar scenes that a power play usually throws up. The two principal protagonists, seemingly antagonists—Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and his deputy D K Shivakumar—are not directly punching each other. They have neither confirmed the crisis nor denied it. Their supporters have not taken to the streets. No lobby or caste groups have signalled unrest. None have paraded legislators, none have rushed to the Raj Bhavan, and unlike in the past, nobody has transported their flock to fancy resorts. Yet, the crisis is real and palpable.

With the loudness of a power grab absent, one wonders if this is a new way of doing politics in India, or if this is the end of politics? Is this about a dignified exercise, or is it a quiet mafioso-like operation, where no one really knows who is contracted to do the act, when, at what cost, and who eventually is assigned to pull the trigger. One would perhaps realise that the deed is done when a cold pool of blood draws a picture.

In the Modi-Shah era, the BJP has perfected the art of leadership change in states without a mess or a whimper. First of all, it offers no clue about an impending change; and when it does, it shocks its own cadres because the person rewarded would have been outside anybody's reckoning. They have ensured that power and predictability are permanently divorced. This has built a mythology about their command and control. In such a political milieu, the Congress cannot be seen getting noisy and chaotic about its leadership games. Therefore, perhaps to ensure that there is no public blow-up, as a new art of suppressing tension, Siddaramaiah and Shivakumar have been put on a naïve diplomatic exercise where they get into each other's dining room, and into each other's mind. They serve and savour idlis, chutneys and chicken curry made from free-range fowls, and in all civility that looks troubled on the creases of their clothes, they come out and issue a joint statement. They mostly speak on the recipes of dishes served and all those that remained unserved. They dodge power-sharing questions and leave things as vague as they were when they went in. Rahul Gandhi has always practised an unconventional approach to political power, and this may be his new formula—to create more hug-and-handshake moments for warring leaders so that they forget their original intent. It is about testing the ‘mohabbat ka dukaan’ formula when desire and hate are simply expected to dissolve as you walk aimlessly for miles. Both Siddaramaiah and Shivakumar are old war horses who have, at different points in their careers, grabbed or managed power by forcefully staking claim. But now, they are being taught a new game of postponement and procrastination that has never been part of their decisive armouries. In 1996, 2004, 2008, and 2013, Siddaramaiah had beaten the drums of his claims to the chair. He had threatened to rebel, and actually rebelled. He changed parties and ideologies in pursuit of power. He nudged out opponents and set up their defeats. In 1996, he wanted to be chief minister in place of J H Patel. In 2004, he became bitter when N Dharam Singh was made CM. In 2006, he was expelled from the Janata Dal (Secular) because he plotted against his own party. In 2008, he wanted Mallikarjun Kharge's chair as opposition leader in the assembly.

A chance for the Army to look within

Lt Kamalesan case highlights tensions between an individual's faith and institutional culture

LT Samuel Kamalesan must have been a proud man when he was commissioned in March 2017 into the 3rd Cavalry, an old and illustrious armoured regiment which had won battle honours in the 1965 and 1971 wars. Little would the young officer have imagined that barely four years later, the Chief of Army Staff would order his summary dismissal for “acts of misconduct”. The case entered the public domain when Kamalesan challenged the decision in the Delhi High Court. The court dismissed his appeal, finding no reason to interfere with the Army's disciplinary action. Opinion is sharply divided between those who consider any hint of criticism of the armed forces as “unpatriotic” and others who feel that in a democratic system of civilian control, the military should be accountable to the people through their elected representatives. Another view, which remains muted (for fear of judicial displeasure), holds that court interventions in recent years have forced the armed forces to alter policies, with potentially adverse effects on morale, personnel management and combat effectiveness. However, the Kamalesan case has wider, societal implications that transcend the usual civil-military debates and merits an open discussion.

First, the facts of the case. Given the religious diversity within its ranks, the Indian Army has established the unique institution of “Sarva Dharma Sthal” (multi-faith centres) in almost every major unit and station, where soldiers of all faiths can pray and where religious functions are conducted. These functions are treated as “regimental parades” and attendance is compulsory for all personnel, irrespective of faith. Kamalesan's offence was that despite repeated counselling, advice and direct orders, he refused to attend these functions, claiming that his Christian beliefs did not permit him to participate in the worship of “other gods.” Viewing his persistent refusal as a serious breach of discipline and regimental ethos, the Army dismissed him from service.

The court's ruling prioritising unit cohesion over the officer's religious beliefs may be legally unassailable, but it has sparked a debate in civil and military circles. While Kamalesan has paid the price for breaching discipline, the episode highlights tensions between an individual's faith, tradition and the Indian Army's institutional culture amidst the current social churn.

Over the past two decades, India has seen religion assuming an increasingly prominent and deeply polarising role in

politics as well as society. This has been accompanied by assertive displays of religiosity. If the beard, hijab and burqa are seen increasingly in public, so are tilaks, vibhuti-smeared foreheads and sacred threads. Other consequences of this phenomenon include the incipient advent of segregation, ghettoisation and even persecution on religious grounds. Against this backdrop, we must remind ourselves that India's armed forces remain the strongest bond that holds our diverse and heterogeneous nation together. Apart from being defenders of the nation and its Constitution, they are also exemplars of unity, integrity, discipline and secularism for their compatriots. And while the Army remains the nation's most respected institution, it has retained practices that accentuate religiosity, caste and regional identities: recruitment on



caste/regional basis, religious functions treated as “regimental parades”, battle cries drawn from religious traditions and the sectarian identity of certain regiments.

India's Army is the last major military in the democratic world that officially organises combat units along lines of caste, community and religion. In 1949, the Brigade of Guards was specifically created as the first “all-India, all-class” unit, and many of the arms and services, like artillery, engineers, aviation and signals, have followed suit. However, a bulk of the Army — including the infantry — still follows a fixed class composition and recruits primarily from specific communities, castes or regions. Defended on the grounds of preserving “martial traditions” and signifying “regimental izzat”, these remnants of the colonial era now sit uneasily with the

Cyclone Ditwah reminds we are in the same boat

Coastal cities from Chennai to Colombo share the same vulnerabilities: rampant urban development, concretised flood plains, and stormwater drains treated as garbage bins

The devastation wrought by Cyclone Ditwah across Sri Lanka is not merely a tragic weather event; it is a stark indictment of its fragile infrastructure, patchy disaster communication, and long-neglected urban planning. Three days of torrential rain triggered by the cyclone caused one of the island's worst floods in decades and exposed several weak links: breached embankments, choked drains, and sprawling informal settlements on riverbanks that turned it into a catastrophe. Early warnings were issued November 22 onwards through text alerts, press conferences, and evacuation notices. Yet, many citizens first learned of the danger when floodwaters reached their doorsteps. Power cuts prevented phone-charging, language barriers muted the messaging in Tamil-speaking areas, and unclear evacuation protocols sowed confusion. Declaring a public holiday and a state of emergency when the storm peaked stranded many citizens, amplifying the chaos. Preparedness by Sri Lanka's Disaster Management Centre fell far short of expectations. Meanwhile, India's swift Operation Sagar Bandhu—deploying navy ships and IAF aircraft to deliver



tonnes of relief material and evacuate over 2,000 Indians stranded in the island nation—earned gratitude on both sides of Palk Strait. Over 150 persons were rescued from surging floodwaters.

The December 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami forced the littoral region to build a tsunami early warning system soon after. Two decades later, we still lack an equally robust, multilingual, hyper-local cyclone warning and

Republic's constitutional promise of equality and secularism. Although the Army has steadfastly maintained that during recruitment, no discrimination is made on the basis of religion, race and caste, the existence of “fixed class units” such as Sikh, Rajput, Jat, Mahar, etc. will make it increasingly difficult for it to ward off future political demands that may arise for creating, say, Ahir, Yadav or Kurmi regiments.

Historically, religion, caste and the “martial races” theory were useful weapons for the British to implement their treacherous policies of “divide and rule” in India. The British Indian Army, especially after 1857, deliberately nurtured religious and caste identities because it believed doing so enhanced loyalty and fighting ability. Temples, mosques and gurdwaras were built on regimental lines; pandits, maulvis and granthis were officially appointed, and religiosity deliberately indulged in. The policy succeeded in its narrow aim of preventing another large-scale mutiny, but it also froze certain social categorisations in time. Independent India inherited that structure and successive generations of officers have defended it as indispensable to morale and “esprit de corps.” While any criticism of the Army's customs and traditions is bound to sound heretical to many, an essential question begs an answer. At a time when society is showing fissures along religious lines, should India's Army continue to highlight distinctive identities based on ethnicity, caste and religion, or should it focus on “unity in diversity” as an uncompromising principle?

If exhortations to cast off our “colonial heritage” and overcome the “slave mentality” are to have any meaning, then a reappraisal of the Army's inherited organising principles should get priority.

Without suggesting abrupt or wholesale change, it is perhaps time to initiate a serious intra-Army discourse on three topics: (a) expediting expansion of all-India, all-class units, a process already accepted in principle, by the Army; (b) a review of compulsory attendance by all personnel at religious events that are organised; and (c) whether unit names that emphasise community identity can be supplemented or replaced by geographical or numerical titles.

Such steps, rather than diminishing the Army's elan and heritage, would actually strengthen its status as a truly national institution that belongs equally to every Indian, regardless of faith, mother tongue or caste. India's Navy and Air Force have embodied that ideal for 78 years, without any loss of elan or professionalism.

response architecture. A promising US-India collaborative forecast model under the US's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and India's earth sciences ministry must be fast-tracked and expanded to include Sri Lanka and other neighbouring countries.

Coastal cities from Chennai to Colombo share the same vulnerabilities: rampant urban development, concretised flood plains, and stormwater drains treated as garbage bins. Ditwah's lesson is brutal but clear—given climate change, every cyclone season can bring a ‘once-in-a-century’ flood until we stop building our cities as if the sea and the sky will forever remain calm. We cannot prevent the next Ditwah, but can refuse to be this helpless again. Invest in resilient embankments, clear the drains before the rains, map every vulnerable settlement, and create a warning system that speaks every language and reaches the last mile before the lights go out. The region that once joined hands against tsunamis must now urgently come together to handle cyclones more effectively.

Banishing the Maoist phoenix

Better coordination between security forces has brought Maoist extremism to its knees. Though the deadline to curb the menace seems within reach, leftist violence has a history of rising again and again.

What originated as a protest over land issues in West Bengal's Naxalbari developed into a highly violent revolutionary insurgency that killed a large number of security personnel, hundreds of civilians, and caused the loss of private and public property worth crores of rupees. By the mid-1970s, the original movement was decimated. But things changed about two decades later. A March 2001 conference of the People's War Group of the Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist), held at a secluded location in Dandakaranya, sought to create a common platform of Maoists and enlist the support of socially-oppressed classes. They sought to create ‘liberated’ guerrilla zones and a contiguous zone extending from Nepal to Karnataka and Tamil Nadu called the ‘red corridor’. From time to time, they also supported the secessionist struggles of Khalistan, the Northeast, Gorkhas, and Kashmir.

Acquiring military power, they unleashed terror across the country, compelling Prime Minister Manmohan Singh to concede that, by the second half of the 2000s, the Maoist menace had become the deadliest internal security threat. By 2010 end, they were able to demonstrate to the population of the ‘red corridor’ that it would be in their interest to toe the Maoist line or face consequences.

The security forces continued breathing down the Maoists' neck, and political and administrative steps slowly made the movement less grievance-driven. The ideology never really mattered to the poor tribal communities, but only to the movement's leaders, mostly from Andhra Pradesh

and Telangana. The creation of the Commando Battalions for Resolute Action or CoBRA at the Centre, modernisation of state police forces, and specialised training, followed by better coordination started yielding results.

This year witnessed a decisive upper hand for the security forces. The Union home minister's deadline to get rid of the menace was perceived to be realistic and feasible, and it galvanised the countermeasures by multiple agencies. Operation Black Forest virtually broke the back of the movement with large-scale seizure of weapons and explosives, besides the killing of over 30 cadres including top leader Basavaraju, the brain behind several deadly strikes. Since 2023, 401 Maoist cadres have been killed in encounters, 1,439 arrested and 1,356 surrendered. The impact was so substantial that Mallojula Venugopal alias Sonu, a surrendered central committee member, admitted that the armed struggle was no longer relevant. As more middle- and senior-level cadres leaders are surrendering, Maoists are now forced to abandon their traditional strongholds. The killing of Madvi Hidma, the most formidable guerrilla of the movement, along with his trusted bodyguards and wife Madakam Raje, followed by the killing of seven other cadres and the arrest of 50 of them across Andhra Pradesh demolished the elusive image of the diehard guerrilla. Hidma, who joined the movement at age 16 and rose meteorically to assume control of its central military commission, masterminded at least 26 deadly strikes including

the 2010 Dantewada assault that killed 76 CRPF personnel, the 2013 ambush that killed Mahendra Karma and a few other Congress leaders, the 2017 attack in Burkapal killing 25 CRPF personnel, and the Tekulguda ambush that caused 22 casualties



among the security forces.

Tech-savvy but not formally educated, he had the great advantage over other leaders due to his command over the Gonda language as a Bastar native. But moving to Andhra Pradesh proved to be his nemesis and the master tactician found himself unequal to the professionalism of the Greyhounds unit of the Andhra and Telangana police. He also underestimated the meticulous coordination among various agencies and states that had been perfected over a decade. The suggestion of a ceasefire has been rejected by the Centre and the extremists have been urged to surrender. The concerned states have launched a rehabilitation

policy under which protection and mainstreaming are to be ensured. This multi-pronged approach is likely to yield results and the declaration that India will be free of Maoist extremists by the end of March 2026 is likely to materialise. But it will be foolhardy to assume that all will give in easily. Splinter groups, in their desperation, might indulge in mindless violence and retribution, as was seen in the case of killing of Inspector Ashish Sharma, a highly decorated Madhya Pradesh officer, on November 19. Even otherwise, the Maoists are known to record their own setbacks and take corrective measures. Nobody imagined that the once-decimated movement would regroup and unleash relentless violence for close to two and a half decades in the new millennium. The only durable and long lasting solution will be removal of the socio-economic inequalities and mainstreaming of India's large tribal population without bruising their sensibilities. Regional imbalances should be addressed by distributing resources and development works. While providing infrastructure, ecological balance should be maintained and displacement should be avoided even if it is intended to create jobs. The security agencies should not lower their guard and should keep gathering intelligence.

The forces should also be encouraged to undertake civic projects in the affected regions and earn the trust of the local people. Remember, Left extremism has a history of rising from the ashes and regrouping at a tactically appropriate time.

NEWS BOX

Valsad man gets death for raping, killing minor

Lucknow. (Agency)

A SPECIAL POCSO court in Valsad on Thursday handed down the death sentence to a 42-year-old man convicted of kidnapping, raping and murdering a minor girl in 2023.

The court of Justice HN Vakil also directed that a compensation of Rs 17 lakh should be paid to the victim's family. The convict, who police identified as Razak Khan, is presently lodged at the Surat Central Jail.

Sources said that this is the second instance of capital punishment handed down by the same POCSO court. The first was in 2023, when another minor girl was raped and killed.

Surat District Government Pleader Nayan Sukhadwala said after the verdict on Thursday, "Bite marks were found on the victim's body. The clothes she was wearing were used by the accused to strangle her. CCTV footage shows that after the crime, the accused went to a nearby stall, drank tea and smoked a cigarette. The accused is the father of three children, and his youngest daughter is the same age as the victim."

He added, "The accused had been luring the victim with chocolates and biscuits every day for six days prior to the crime. The court had taken into consideration the circumstantial evidence, with medical evidence and statements of witnesses." The case dates back to October 23, 2023, when the girl left her house around 11:15 am to meet her grandfather. When she did not return after a few hours, her mother reached her father's workplace and found that the girl had left around 1.5 hours earlier. She and some neighbours searched for her, but to no avail. Later the same day, she approached the local police station and registered a kidnapping complaint.

Multiple teams of the Valsad district police soon reached the area and conducted a large-scale search operation. Over 250 local residents also joined the search. The girl's body was found lying in the bushes near a pond and was identified by her mother and grandfather.

Frames of Reality: Pune photojournalists chronicle lives of struggle and resilience

Pune . (Agency)

The untold stories of ordinary lives took centre stage as the Pune Shramik Patrakar Sangh marked its anniversary with a three-day exhibition at the Bal Gandharva Art Gallery on Jangli Maharaj Road. Open from December 4 to 6 (11 am to 8 pm), the exhibition features a compelling collection of photographs and videos capturing the grit, vulnerability and resilience of life across Maharashtra.

Held under the guidance of Sangh president Vijaymohan Patil and secretary Mangesh Phadtare, the exhibition brings together the work of over 40 photographers and video journalists from regional and national publications. It was inaugurated by senior Mumbai-based photographer Prashant Nakhale, who also delivered a talk on "The Challenges Before Photographers", focusing on the rapidly changing media landscape and the ethical dilemmas faced by those behind the lens.

Capturing life on the edge

The top photograph awarded at the exhibition was by Pavan Sadashiv Khengre, a photojournalist with The Indian Express Pune. His winning frame from Beed district captures the uncertainty faced by sugarcane farmers living under the constant threat of leopard attacks. The image reflects the fragile coexistence of humans and wildlife — farmers rising before dawn to toil in mist-covered cane fields where leopards often remain unseen.

Senior citizen strangles bedridden wife, hangs self in Bengaluru

BENGALURU. (Agency)

A 65-year-old mentally distressed man died by suicide after strangling his bedridden wife to death at their house in Subramanyapura police limits on Tuesday.

The deceased have been identified as Baby, 65, and her husband Venkateshan, a retired BMTC bus driver. The couple lived with their son Anil Kumar on 3rd Cross Road at Chikkagoudanapalya in Subramanyapura. Police said the incident came to light after Anil's wife returned home from school with their child around 12.45 pm on Tuesday. She found her father-in-law hanging from a ceiling fan and her mother-in-law lying unconscious on her wheelchair.



According to family sources, Baby suffered a stroke five years ago and was unable to move on her own. She also could not speak properly. Baby used a wheelchair to move around.

Unable to see Baby in this condition, Venkateshan used to quarrel at home frequently. He later slipped into depression and used to reportedly say, "I cannot see her in this condition. One day I will kill her and then end my life."

When his son and daughter-in-law were not at home on Tuesday, Venkateshan allegedly strangled Baby to death with the plastic rope and later hanged himself from the ceiling fan with the same rope. Subramanyapura police have registered a case.

Ahead of rail roko, Punjab Police conduct raids at homes of farmer leaders, KMM alleges repression

Kisan Mazdoor Morcha coordinator Sarwan Singh Pandher alleged that the crackdown began on Thursday night.

Ludhiana . (Agency)

Ahead of the proposed two-hour rail roko by the Kisan Mazdoor Morcha (KMM) Friday to press for the withdrawal of the draft Electricity Amendment Bill, 2025, the Punjab Police are conducting raids at the houses of farmer leaders and detaining several of them, sparking sharp reactions from the organisation.

KMM constituent BKU Ekta Azad's state president, Jaswinder Singh Longowal, along with other members, was detained at a police station in Sangrur.

Tejveer Singh, spokesperson of the BKU Shaheed Bhagat Singh Union, a constituent of KMM, said, "Raids have been conducted at more than 100 places in Punjab. Our KMM leaders, Makhan Singh Gill in Mohali, Kulwant Singh Behramke in Moga, Chamkaur Singh Usmaniwala in Ferozepur, and several others are under house arrest."

The KMM on December 2 announced Friday's rail blockade from 1 pm to 3 pm in 19 of 23 districts of Punjab, including Amritsar, Ludhiana, Jalandhar, Sangrur, Fazilka, Tarn Taran, Gurdaspur, Rupnagar, and Bathinda, among others. KMM coordinator Sarwan Singh Pandher alleged that the crackdown

began on Thursday night itself.

"Raids were carried out at the homes of several farmer leaders in districts including Amritsar, Gurdaspur, Hoshiarpur, Ludhiana, Rupnagar and Patiala. During the two-hour rail blockade, nearly 80 per cent of train tracks were not



scheduled to have any train movement, and only a few trains on main routes could have been affected. Despite this, the Bhagwant Mann government has resorted to the use of force," Pandher said.

Avtar Singh Dharam Singh Wala, press secretary

of the KMM from Moga, said the police arrived at his house at 5 am Friday. "Am I a criminal? This is not done. We are protesting against a draft Electricity Amendment Bill of the Union government that can lead to privatisation of the electricity board, about which the government itself is silent, and now they are not even allowing us to protest," he said.

"On one hand, the government is seeking votes in elections, and on the other hand, it is using repression against farmers, labourers and the general public who are protesting against the Centre's move to privatise public sector institutions," Pandher added.

The KMM appealed to everyone to strongly condemn the alleged repressive actions and urged the people of Punjab to come forward in large numbers to participate in the peaceful rail blockade.

"We appeal to all democratic and mass organisations to strongly condemn this repressive attitude and urge the people of Punjab to come forward in large numbers against this oppression and carry out their peaceful rail blockade movement with full force," Pandher said.

'Install CCTVs in all mosques, madrasas for national security': BJP's Meerut MP Arun Govil tells Centre

'CCTVs are installed in Saudi Arabia's Mecca, then why hesitate to implement the same security standards in India?' asked Arun Govil during the Zero Hour in Lok Sabha.

Lucknow . (Agency)

BJP's Meerut MP, Arun Govil, on Thursday urged the Central Government to consider installing CCTVs in the mosques and madrasas, citing national security concerns. He also called for the formulation of a draft national security policy in this regard.

During the Zero Hour in the Lok Sabha, Govil raised the issue as a matter of public importance. He stated that CCTV cameras were already installed in the temples, churches, gurudwaras, schools, colleges, hospitals, markets, and most other public places across the country. Govil emphasised that these cameras have proven beneficial for security, transparency, and crime prevention.

"However, this system is still not implemented in

mosques and madrasas despite them being major public and community places where security is equally important. It is noteworthy



that CCTVs are installed in Saudi Arabia's Mecca — the holiest site of Muslims — and in

madrasas there, due to security concerns. If this system can be adopted there (Mecca), why is there a hesitation in implementing the same security standards in India?" the actor-turned politician questioned.

Govil further urged the Central Government to draft a uniform national security policy mandating installation of CCTV cameras at all religious places to safeguard the security of 140 crore people of the country. "Because security is neither religious nor discriminatory. Security is always in the interest of the nation and human beings," he said.

Govil played the lead role in the popular television series 'Ramayan' in the 1980s, and since then, he has been the face of Lord Ram. Govil won the 2024 Lok Sabha elections in the first attempt, despite the margin being just a little over 10,000 votes.

Man & woman fell in love in Surat jail while serving life term, jumped parole, married; held from Haryana 5 years later

Surat . (Agency)

A man and a woman, who were convicted in two separate cases of murdering their respective spouses over 15 years ago, jumped parole and furlough in 2018-2019 and went into hiding. The duo, who met while serving their jail sentences in Surat Central Jail, got married and had a son, who is five years old now.

Luck ran out for the couple on Tuesday when the Special Operations Group (SOG) of the Gujarat police arrested them from Panipat in Haryana where they have been living since 2019.

The couple, identified as Mohammad Riyaz Mansuri, 38, a native of Bihar, and Kinnary Patel, 36, from Gujarat's Valsad, were brought back to the Surat Central Jail on Wednesday. The couple's five-year-old son is kept in a separate room at the jail.

According to police, the SOG tracked down the couple by tracing Call Data Records (CDR) of the man's sister, who lives in Bihar. Kinnary has been convicted for bludgeoning her husband Hitesh Patel to death in 2010 along with her boyfriend Manoj Patel and another accused identified as Vasu, who is still wanted in the case. Her boyfriend died

during the commission of the crime, police said.

On the other hand, Mansuri has been convicted for pouring kerosene over his wife and setting her ablaze in 2008, in the Limbayat area of Surat. His mother was also an accused in the case. The two were sentenced in the respective cases and sent to Surat Central Jail, where they met at the family members' visiting room and fell in love, said police sources.

Two murder cases

Kinnary's case goes back to December 29, 2010, when she was travelling along with her husband Hitesh, Manoj and Vasu in a car. According to police, she sprinkled chilly powder on her husband as Manoj struck him repeatedly with an axe on Dharampur road. After the murder, the car

they were travelling in crashed into a fence of a farmhouse. Manoj suffered a heart attack and died on the spot, while Kinnary and Vasu managed to escape. Before fleeing the scene, Kinnary repeatedly hit Manoj, her boyfriend, on the head with a stone, in an attempt to mislead the police into believing that the deaths resulted from an altercation between the two over her, police said.

Valsad police had registered an offence of double murder against Kinnary Patel and Vasu.



Pune police question Parth Pawar's partner Digvijay Patil in Mundhwa land deal probe

Surat . (Agency)

The Pune City Police, whose Economic Offences Wing (EOW) is probing alleged irregularities in the Mundhwa land deal, on Wednesday said they have questioned Digvijay Patil, partner of Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar's son Parth Pawar in Amadea Enterprises LLP, which is at the centre of the controversial transaction.

The land deal has been embroiled in controversy as the land in Mundhwa, which falls under the category of Mahar Watan land and was leased to the Botanical Survey of India, was sold to Amadea Enterprises LLP without the mandatory approval of the state government.

Pune Police Commissioner Amitesh Kumar confirmed that Patil was questioned by the EOW on December 1. Senior officials monitoring the probe said Patil is likely to be questioned again as part of the investigation. Patil is a relative of Parth Pawar. The Pune City Police said the FIR registered at Khadak police station, which was later transferred to the EOW, pertains to alleged irregularities involving two separate land parcels in Bopodi and Mundhwa. Both cases are linked by a common factor- suspended tehsildar Suryakant Yewale, who is accused of

UP now wants its tourism officers to have specialised degrees, English and Hindi proficiency

Lucknow . (Agency)

As part of the push to boost tourism in every district of the state, the Uttar Pradesh government is restructuring its Tourism Department by substantially increasing the number of field posts and imposing higher eligibility criteria for recruitment to these posts, including requirements for specialised degrees and proficiency in both Hindi and English.

"With 79 Tourism Information Officers, 38 newly created Assistant District Tourism Officers and 59 District Tourism Officers now forming a structured field-level workforce, we are putting in place the human capital needed to strengthen tourism management in every district. The enhanced qualifications, including specialised degrees in tourism, hospitality, mass communication and digital skills, will ensure that our officers are better trained, more responsive and aligned with global standards," Tourism Minister Jaiveer Singh told.

Officials in the department said the new posts were created a month ago to restructure the department, and that the new Subordinate Tourism Services Rules have now been notified to ensure the hiring of a more professional workforce.

According to the officials, focus is not just on major destinations, but is increasingly moving towards boosting tourism in every district, with heritage tourism, rural tourism, wellness tourism, spiritual tourism, and so on. A new professional and adequately staffed tourism system is expected to help improve visitor experience, accelerate destination development, and expand the local economy through hospitality, transport, crafts, and services, officials said.

Minister Jaiveer Singh said, "We are targeting that in the coming years, this strengthened institutional capacity will play a decisive role in positioning Uttar Pradesh as a major tourism-led contributor to the \$1-trillion economy vision."

issuing wrongful orders in both matters. The Mundhwa land parcel, which was earlier Mahar Watan which is a hereditary land grant had been in government possession and was leased to the Botanical Survey of India when its sale deed was executed in May this year.

It is alleged that Amadea Enterprises LLP, in which Parth Pawar and Digvijay Patil are partners, purchased 40 acres of land in the prime Mundhwa survey jurisdiction of Pune. As per rules, this category of land cannot be sold without prior approval from the state government. It is further alleged that the sale was executed at a significantly lower price and with a waiver of stamp duty.

Sheetal Tejwani, who held the power of attorney for the original 272 watandars of the Mahar Watan land in Mundhwa for its sale to Amadea Enterprises LLP, was questioned multiple times by the EOW before she was arrested on Wednesday.

A separate FIR has also been registered in connection with the Mundhwa land parcel at Bavdhan police station under the Pimpri-Chinchwad police against Digvijay Patil, Tejwani and Ravindra Taru, the now-suspended sub-registrar who registered the deal in May this year.

NHM employees get their October salary, but pen-down strike continues in Punjab

During the protest, the employees also met Ghanshyam Thori, Mission Director, NHM Punjab, and Special Secretary, Health and Family Welfare, and submitted a memorandum of demands.

Chandigarh . (Agency)

Even as the Punjab Government Thursday evening released the October salary of more than 9,000 employees of the National Health Mission (NHM), their pen-down strike, which began on December 1, entered its fifth day Friday, saying they have not yet been paid for November.

On Thursday, NHM employees across Punjab took mass casual leave, and a few hundred of them marched to Prayas Bhawan in Sector 38, Chandigarh, where they staged a protest outside the mission director's office.

"Our salaries were disbursed on

Thursday evening after we lodged our protest in Chandigarh. However, our strike will continue, as we have yet to receive the November salary. They had issued a Rs 44.85 crore budget sanction letter for the salaries of November on December 1 itself," Sukhjeet Kamboj, State Committee Member, NHM Employees Union Punjab, told The Indian Express.

"For more than a year now, we have been getting salaries only after the 20th of every month. Do the officers also get their salaries this way?" asked Kamboj. He



added that the state body has unanimously decided to continue the pen-down strike until a firm assurance is given on the timely payment of dues.

During the protest, the employees also met Ghanshyam Thori, Mission Director, NHM Punjab, and Special Secretary, Health and Family Welfare, and submitted a memorandum of demands.

"Apart from timely salaries, we are also demanding regularisation of our jobs and better pay scales.

At present, employees get salaries ranging from 20,000 to 70,000 depending on designation and length of service. These include nursing staff and medical officers. But in the present

inflationary scenario, these are not the salaries the government should be paying. They deserve better grades," Kamboj said.

Comparison with Haryana, outsourcing concerns

Union leaders pointed out that Haryana offers much better pay scales to its NHM employees, on par with regular staff, and accordingly receives a 60 per cent funding share from the Centre.

They also recalled that in 2011, the then SAD-BJP government in Punjab had proposed the regularisation of around 1,100 nursing staff, but the proposal was later shelved.

Delhi bus routes to be rejigged to strengthen last-mile connectivity

New Delhi.(Agency)
In a bid to address high commuter density in specific zones and ensure equitable access to public transport, the Delhi government has decided to implement targeted route rationalisation measures.

As part of this initiative, the government will soon restart the Dwarka Circular Service with DTC electric buses to strengthen last-mile connectivity across the wider Dwarka region. The service will be redesigned to enhance public convenience and expand overall transport coverage.

Delhi Minister for Transport Pankaj Kumar Singh said, “Route rationalisation is one of the strongest pillars of our public transport reform. Delhi’s mobility needs are evolving rapidly, and our transport planning must evolve with the same speed and precision. By scientifically assessing passenger density, daily footfall patterns, and area-specific travel behaviour, we are redesigning routes to ensure that buses

reach exactly where they are needed the most. Our focus is to eliminate gaps in accessibility, reduce waiting time, and make public transport the most convenient choice for every commuter.”

“In this direction, restarting the Dwarka Circular Service with DTC electric buses marks an important milestone. Dwarka is one of Delhi’s fastest-growing residential and commercial pockets, and the demand for reliable last-mile connectivity has been consistently rising. With the reintroduced circular service, commuters will now have smoother access to key points across Dwarka, especially major metro stations such as Dwarka Metro Station and Dwarka Sector-8 Metro Station,” the Minister added.



To boost ridership and improve integration with the Delhi Metro, the route will be revised to include additional metro stations such as Dwarka Metro Station and Dwarka Sector-8 Metro Station. This improved

alignment will connect residential, commercial, and educational hubs, enhancing last-mile connectivity and contributing positively to local economic activity.

The reinstated Dwarka Circular Service will significantly benefit the people of Dwarka by restoring essential last-mile connectivity across the sub-city. It will provide smoother access to key metro stations, residential pockets, colleges, and major commercial complexes, ensuring that daily travel becomes easier and more reliable.

With continuous bus availability, commuters will experience reduced waiting time and more dependable services. The initiative taken by the Delhi government will greatly enhance public transport convenience and coverage in Dwarka, making daily mobility

smoother, more efficient, and commuter-friendly. For better commuter convenience, the Delhi government has also revised the route between PM Sangrahalaya and Central Secretariat. The new route will follow the alignment: PMML, Teen Murti, South Avenue, Sena Bhawan, Udyog Bhawan, Central Secretariat. Earlier, the route operated via PMML, Teen Murti, Khushak Road (Army Canteen), Sena Bhawan, Udyog Bhawan, and Central Secretariat.

Smarter routes for Delhi
Delhi govt to rationalise bus routes based on commuter load
Dwarka Circular Service restarting with DTC electric buses
New route to link key metro stations for better last-mile access
Dwarka residents to get easy connectivity to colleges & markets
PM Sangrahalaya–Central Secretariat route revised for faster travel

Delhi Police makes IFSO an independent unit, sets up cyber stations in all 15 districts

New Delhi.(Agency)
The Intelligence Fusion and Strategic Operations (IFSO) unit of Delhi Police, previously part of the Special Cell, will now operate as an independent unit. According to an order issued on Wednesday, all personnel assigned to IFSO will report directly to the Deputy Commissioner of Police (IFSO), the head of the unit.

“The Intelligence Fusion and Strategic Operations (IFSO) Unit presently functioning under Special Cell, henceforth will function as a separate Unit for administrative purposes, and all personnel (posted in IFSO) shall report to DCP/IFSO being Head of the Unit,” the order stated.

In addition, Delhi Police have established dedicated cyber police stations across all 15 districts of the national capital. In February 2019, then Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh inaugurated the National Cyber Forensic Lab (NCFL) and the Delhi Police’s cyber crime unit, CyPAD (Cyber Prevention Awareness and Detection). Singh termed cyber crime as the “biggest challenge” and hoped the facility would help tackle it effectively.

The CyPAD was later renamed IFSO. Amid rising cyber crimes, Delhi Police in October lowered the threshold for filing e-FIRs in cyber financial fraud cases from Rs 10 lakh to Rs 1 lakh, allowing quicker redressal and stronger digital policing. Victims of online frauds involving Rs 1 lakh and above can now file e-FIRs at any police station. Earlier, cyber complaints were directed to the national helpline 1930 or online. The Delhi Police receive over 3,000 calls regarding cyber frauds on helpline number 1930 every day.



AAP questions plan for liquor shops in malls

New Delhi.(Agency)
The Aam Aadmi Party alleged that the Delhi government is planning to open premium liquor showrooms inside metro stations and shopping malls. Delhi State President Saurabh Bharadwaj said that the same BJP, which earlier objected to “too many” liquor vends, is now pushing for showrooms at high-footfall locations.

During a media interaction, Bharadwaj said that when the AAP government was in power, it had reduced the number of liquor vends across the city. Despite this, BJP leaders kept alleging that the AAP administration had increased liquor shops. “The BJP created a major uproar over it. Today, the same BJP leaders are talking about opening liquor showrooms in Delhi,” he said.

He added that the BJP government wants liquor showrooms placed at such locations so that even those who do not drink are encouraged to consume alcohol. “On one hand, they will shut down Mohalla Clinics that provide free healthcare, and on the other, they will open large premium liquor showrooms in malls and metro stations,” Bharadwaj said. He questioned why the government needs showrooms inside shopping malls.



1,500 kg spurious ghee seized during raid in Delhi's Alipur

During investigation, it was found that the factory was being run by Gyanendra Singh, who has allegedly been manufacturing fake desi ghee since 1995 and operating from the present address since 2014.

New Delhi.(Agency)
A large-scale spurious ‘desi ghee’ manufacturing unit was busted in the Alipur area, with police seizing 1,500 kg of clarified butter along with 55 litres of synthetic essence used to prepare it, police said. A senior police officer said that information was received on Tuesday regarding an illegal ghee manufacturing factory operating in the area. The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) was informed, and a joint team conducted a raid following due legal procedures under the new law. “During the search, the team found large quantities of ready-for-distribution spurious ghee stored in tins, cartons and packets. Samples were seized by FSSAI for laboratory examination,” he said.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (Outer North) Hareshwar Swami said, “A total of 1,500 litres of spurious desi

ghee and 55 litres of essence used for making ghee have been recovered.” During investigation, it was found that



the factory was being run by Gyanendra Singh, who has allegedly been manufacturing fake desi ghee

since 1995 and operating from the present address since 2014. He supplied the product across Delhi and

adjoining states, Swami added. Police have registered an FIR and further investigation is underway.

Delhi HC asks MEA to facilitate communication between Celina Jaitly, her brother

New Delhi.(Agency)
The Delhi High Court directed the Centre to facilitate communication between actor Celina Jaitly and her brother, Major Vikrant Kumar Jaitly (retd), a former Indian Army officer who has been detained in the UAE for over a year.

The court was hearing a plea filed by the actor seeking effective legal representation and basic information regarding her brother’s welfare and legal status. According to the petition, Major Vikrant has been residing in the UAE since 2016 and was working with the MATITI Group, which deals in trading, consultancy, and risk-management services.

The plea claimed that he was “illegally abducted and detained” in the UAE on September 6 last year. It further alleged that despite the passage of

more than a year, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) has been unable to secure clear information about his condition or legal proceedings.



On November 3, the court had sought a response from the Centre. During Thursday’s hearing, Justice Sachin Datta directed the MEA to inform Major Vikrant during the next consular access visit that his sister wishes to speak with him.

Justice Datta also instructed the MEA to facilitate communication between Celina and her brother either through the UAE’s TAMM app (Abu Dhabi’s government services platform) or any other suitable mode.

The court observed that although the MEA’s status report mentioned the appointment of a nodal officer, more clarity was required. It asked the ministry to file a fresh status report and listed the matter for further hearing on December 23. During the proceedings, Celina broke down in tears. Her counsel told the court that she had been unable to communicate with Major Vikrant despite earlier directions. The advocate added that the TAMM app could not be used because it requires UAE citizenship.

Trapped in mangled car for 8 hours, couple bleeds to death on Delhi-Mumbai expressway

New Delhi.(Agency)
A Delhi couple bled to death after remaining trapped for nearly eight hours inside their mangled WagonR when an unidentified heavy vehicle rammed it from behind on the Delhi-Mumbai expressway near Nuh, police said.

The victims have been identified as Laxmi Ram (42), who was a contractual labourer and his wife Kusumlata (38). They were returning home from Hindaun, in Karauli district of Rajasthan, when the accident took place between 11.30 pm and midnight on Tuesday near Nowshera village. Their grey Maruti WagonR, registered in Delhi, was crushed against the metal crash barrier on the expressway.

Police reached the spot only around 7.30 am on Wednesday after a patrol team was informed of the wreck by a passerby. By then, husband and wife had died from injuries and blood loss while still trapped inside. The position of the bodies indicated the husband had managed to hold on to his wife, said police.



The couple lived in Mangiram Park in Delhi’s Budh Vihar with their four young children (two sons and two daughters).

In his handwritten complaint that formed the basis of the FIR, Laxmi Ram’s father, Devi Singh (65), stated: “On 02.12.2025 around 7 pm, my son Laxmi Ram and daughter-in-law Kusumlata left for Delhi in WagonR... They were going via Delhi Mumbai Highway. When my son and daughter-in-law reached Channel Point 30.900, some unknown vehicle hit them from behind at very high speed and... caused a terrible accident... both my son... and daughter-in-law... died on the spot... I called my son at 8.56 am, then the Jaisinghpur post people picked up the phone and told me that your son and daughter-in-law have met with an accident and died.”

The Nuh Sadar police station has registered an FIR for rash driving and death by negligence against the unknown driver of the heavy vehicle. Police are examining CCTV footage to trace the offending vehicle.

Delhi government's TB drive goes big, announces target of screening 50 lakh people

Singh credited the progress to coordinated efforts among departments, community involvement and the commitment of healthcare workers.

New Delhi.(Agency)
Delhi Health Minister Pankaj Kumar Singh on Thursday reviewed the implementation of the TB Elimination Programme during a meeting at the Delhi Secretariat. Senior Health Department officials and doctors from the TB cell assessed the progress made under the national TB Mukh Bharat Abhiyan, earlier known as the 100-day TB campaign.

The government said around 8.78 lakh individuals have been screened and nearly 3.8 lakh chest X-rays conducted, aiding early detection and timely treatment initiation.

Delhi has set a target of screening 50 lakh people. The capital currently has 190



diagnostic centres and 365 treatment centres offering free TB care. Officials said Delhi has achieved 99% of the

National TB Elimination Programme target for January–November 2025. The government highlighted strong

community participation through the Nikshay Mitra Initiative, which provides nutritional, vocational, diagnostic and psychological support to TB patients.

Delhi has registered 4,313 Nikshay Mitras, who have distributed 2,23,457 food baskets to support 1,03,593 patients. Singh credited the progress to coordinated efforts among departments, community involvement and the commitment of healthcare workers.

“We will continue to strengthen our screening, support systems, and community participation to ensure that every TB patient receives timely care and nutrition. Our mission is clear—Delhi will play a leading role in making TB Mukh Bharat a reality,” Singh said.

NEWS BOX

India hope for another 'Ro-Ko' show in series decider; focus on Jaiswal, bowlers

VISAKHAPATNAM . (Agency)
The spotlight, like most times, will be on Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma but the pressure would also be on India's younger crop when the home side looks to avoid another embarrassing series loss to South Africa in the must-win third and final ODI here on Saturday.A Raipur-like fumbling by India will see South Africa bag the ODI series too, closely after their 2-0 triumph in Tests.Consecutive series defeats is unthinkable for India in the current scenario, particularly when the dressing room is perceived to be pulling in different directions. A victory in this rubber can quell the chatter around the team for a while, and for that, Kohli and Rohit have to do the heavy lifting once again.Both have been the undisputed masters of the 50-over format, and no strangers to such tight situations. After all, their legacy is built around taking down difficulties -- an exhilarating ride in itself in



the last decade and half.Now, standing at the door that opens only to the sunset, Kohli and Rohit will want another glorious chapter to be added to the long book of achievements. It's not a mere ambition either.Kohli has two hundreds and a fifty in his last three innings, while Rohit has a hundred and two fifties in his last four outings.Those numbers tell about their touch, class and hunger even in late 30s, indicating that they can still save the day for the team.But they would not complain about some meaningful support from the younger batters like it came forth in the last match through Ruturaj Gaikwad, who struck his maiden ODI hundred.But Yashasvi Jaiswal is still to find his range in this series as an opener, and the gifted young man will be keen to convert his starts into a bigger score, for his and the team's sake.There is an obvious flaw in his batting against left-arm quicks, be it Jayden Seales of the West Indies or Marco Jansen and Nandre Burger in this series. He has been dismissed by left-armers 30 times (9 in Tests, 19 in T20Is and 2 in ODIs) in his career, predominantly while attempting a cut and its many versions, his staple diet outside the off-stump.

Can Virat Kohli reach 100 hundreds The dream vs the reality in numbers

New Delhi. (Agency)
Ranchi smelled faintly of winter when Virat Kohli walked off with a hundred in his arms. Raipur felt warmer, almost festive, as he raised the bat again three days later. Back-to-back hundreds in ODIs – his 83rd and 84th international centuries – were not merely a statistical revival; they were reminders of the old currents that run through him still. The assurance in his footwork, the clarity of his thoughts, the hunger in his eyes; all of it felt familiar, like a melody he had not forgotten how to play.And just like that, the question resurfaced. One that has hovered over Indian cricket for nearly a decade: Can Virat Kohli get to a hundred international hundreds?For two years it felt rhetorical,



something to chuckle at nostalgically. But after Ranchi and Raipur, the idea doesn't feel absurd any more. It feels like a possibility-distant, shimmering, improbable, but possible.Kohli's world is narrower now. Test cricket is no longer his arena. He retired from T20Is nearly two years ago. He lives in the space of ODI cricket – a format whose relevance is constantly debated, whose calendar is shrinking, whose windows feel squeezed between T20 leagues and bilateral obligations.And yet, this narrowing of scope might paradoxically be his only path to 100. A single-format existence means every ODI innings is a chance to dig, to build, to sculpt something big. But it also means the road is more fragile; there are fewer games, and therefore fewer chances.India's Future Tours Programme through 2027 offers him a mixed blessing. As of now, the schedule gives him 29 ODIs – three each against New Zealand, Afghanistan, England (away), West Indies, New Zealand again (away), and Sri Lanka in 2026. Add the 2027 World Cup, now returning to its older, sprawling 14-team format with group stages and a Super Six, and India could play 11 matches minimum if they reach the final.

Pant, Rinku or Dube: Who is best suited to fix India's ODI finisher problem

←Aside from the dew, one issue has followed India throughout this ODI series against South Africa: the lack of runs from the lower order. KL Rahul has produced back-to-back half-centuries in the role. Still, the continued struggles of Washington Sundar and Ravindra Jadeja have left India without a dependable finisher in the format.

New Delhi. (Agency)
India walked into Raipur with the kind of platform teams dream of in one-day cricket. Virat Kohli and Ruturaj Gaikwad, locked in rhythm and feeding off each other, stitched together a classy 195-run stand that lifted India to 284 for 3 by the 39th over. The pitch looked true, the bowlers looked tired, and the innings seemed to be cruising towards a total that would touch or even cross the 370 mark.And then, almost without warning, the gears jammed.Kohli and Gaikwad fell in quick succession, and with their exit the clarity and fluency of India's innings left too. What followed was another reminder of a

problem that has trailed India through this ODI series against South Africa: the lack of a reliable, game-shaping finisher at the back end of the innings. India scraped together only 74 runs in the final 11 overs, a phase that has so often separated imposing totals from merely competitive ones.KL Rahul did what he could. His 66 from 43 balls carried the kind of intent the situation demanded, but he was left fighting a lone battle. The absence of Hardik Pandya and the decision to rest Axar Patel meant India were banking on Ravindra Jadeja and Washington Sundar to provide late-overs muscle. Instead, Washington lasted eight balls for a single run and Jadeja could never break free, finishing with 24 off 27. India managed just 41 in the final five overs. Social media did not wait for the innings to end before the questions began.India's top order has shown across formats that it can carry the scoring load. But Raipur once again spotlighted the gap between those who lay the platform and those expected to finish the story. Rahul's recent form offers reassurance, but he alone cannot fill the void when the innings demands a surge.As India look ahead to a busy year and a World Cup cycle that will soon begin taking shape, they will need to

revisit the finisher's role with urgency. That role is no longer a luxury or a tactical



flourish. It defines modern ODI cricket. It dictates momentum. It often decides games. Here are five players who could fit that role if given a proper run.
AXAR PATEL: THE EVOLVING ALL-ROUNDER
Axar Patel's ODI numbers don't quite tell his whole story. An average of 23 and a strike rate under 92 don't scream finisher, but Axar today is not the Axar of five years ago. In the 2025 IPL, he struck at 157.49, batting in pressure situations and showing a willingness to take risks early in his innings. His game has broadened and he now carries a quiet authority. If India want someone with

experience and an improving power game, Axar will remain in the conversation.

SHIVAM DUBE: POWER AND PRESENCE
Few batters in India's domestic circuit hit a cricket ball as cleanly as Shivam Dube. His transformation at Chennai Super Kings turned him into one of the most feared middle-order hitters in the IPL. He maintained a strike rate above 150 for three straight seasons, a remarkable stretch for someone in a specialised role. Dube may be more prominent in T20Is right now, but his ability to bully spinners and muscle pace bowlers gives him a strong claim to the No. 6 slot in ODIs.
RISHABH PANT: THE NATURAL DISRUPTOR
Rishabh Pant's return to elite cricket has been one of the feel-good stories of the last year, but his absence from ODIs remains puzzling. Across 31 matches, he averages more than 33 and strikes at over 106. Pant thrives in chaos, and the lower-middle order is often filled with it. Even with KL Rahul continuing as wicketkeeper, Pant's instincts, fearlessness and ability to change momentum in a heartbeat make him tailor-made for finishing duties.

Shai Hope, Justin Greaves defy a depleted New Zealand team on the 4th day of the 1st test

New Zealand led by 530 runs when its second innings came to an end Thursday at 466-8.

CHRISTCHURCH. (Agency)
A New Zealand team with a crowded medical ward met stiff resistance and was unable to finish off the West Indies on the fourth day of the first test Thursday after setting the tourists 531 to win.Shai Hope led the resistance with his fourth test century in an unbroken partnership of 140 with Justin Greaves which began when New Zealand captured four wickets relatively quickly in the second session.At stumps, Hope was 116 not out, Greaves was 55 not out and the West Indies were 212-4, trailing New Zealand by 319 runs. New Zealand led by 530 runs when its second innings came to an end Thursday at 466-8. It was a moot point whether New Zealand declared or simply ran out of fit batters. Wicketkeeper Tom Blundell was unable to bat because of a hamstring injury and



allrounder Nathan Smith was inactive with a side strain.Matt Henry bowled 11 overs in the 'West Indies' second innings before leaving to visit the hospital, handily adjacent to Hagley Oval for scans on painful calf muscle.With Henry and Smith out of action, Jacob Duffy and Zak Foulkes, with only two previous tests between them and in their first tests at home, were left as New Zealand's only fit pacers.To add injury to injury, Hope is still affected by a serious eye infection which has forced him to bat in

sunglasses in both innings; to make a half century in the first innings and a century on Thursday. He was unable to field for most of New Zealand's second innings and has needed antibiotic eye drops.That made his effort throughout the fourth day all the more meritorious as the medical staff of both teams were kept busily employed.I don't want to give away too much but it's just about understanding what you have to do to overcome a situation," Hope said. "They've got quality bowlers in test cricket, nobody's a walkover in this format."New Zealand had no choice from the second session but to tie up one end with the spinners Michael Bracewell and Rachin Ravindra, then rotate Duffy and Foulkes at the other end with the nagging wind at their backs.Bracewell bowled 22 overs, taking 1-54, Ravindra bowled nine overs, Duffy bowled 19 overs and took 2-65 and Foulkes bowled 13 overs.New Zealand resumed Thursday on 417-4, already 481 ahead after leading by 64 on the first innings. The West Indies were bowled out for 167 in reply to New Zealand's 231.Ravindra made 171 and Tom Latham 145 as New Zealand took control of the match on the third day.

Greatest catch in Ashes history Marnus Labuschagne's flying attempt stuns fans

New Delhi. (Agency)
Marnus Labuschagne pulled off one of the finest outfield catches on Day 2 of the second Ashes Test between Australia and England at the Gabba in Brisbane. Labuschagne dived full length to take a superb outfield catch that dismissed Jofra Archer, the last England wicket to fall in the first innings on Friday, 5 December.Brendan Doggett went into the wickets column, but if cricket's rules were fairer, Marnus Labuschagne might well have earned it himself. The right-arm fast bowler delivered a short-pitched ball in an attempt to trouble the tail-ender, who had wagged impressively towards the end of Day 1 and pushed England's total beyond 300.It was only the third over of the day's play, but Archer did not relent and went for a big pull shot. He was unable to generate the power needed to clear the boundary rope. The ball flew towards a vacant area at deep



fine leg, but Labuschagne sprinted across from mid-wicket and launched into a full-length dive to his right to complete the catch. The Australian No. 3 even had to stretch out his right hand after landing to pluck the pink ball from the air and secure the dismissal.The breakthrough was a relief for the Australian bowlers, as the 10th-wicket partnership between centurion Joe Root and Archer had stretched to 60 runs,

swinging the momentum in favour of the visiting team.Many wondered whether a better outfield catch had ever been taken in Ashes history. Cricket Australia fuelled the discussion by sharing a video of Glenn McGrath's diving catch to dismiss Michael Vaughan during the 2002 Test at Adelaide Oval, inviting comparison. Some fans remarked that Labuschagne had saved Australia from further embarrassment, as Archer had been striking the ball to all parts of the ground. The England tail-ender was batting on 38 off 36 deliveries, having already hit two boundaries and two sixes.
END OF FRUSTRATION FOR AUSTRALIA
Australia needed that early breakthrough, and they managed to wrap up England's innings for 334, which was already England's highest first-innings total in a pink-ball Ashes Test.



milestone, captioning the video with the words: "Root thank you. You've saved all our eyes." Her post quickly went viral across social media, helped by her significant following and the humorous nature of her father's earlier promise.Matthew Hayden had his own hilarious reaction to Root's achievement. As soon as Root reached the hundred, Hayden broke into an enthusiastic dance outside the commentary box, a moment that the Channel 7 crew captured and shared widely. The celebration added an extra layer of lighthearted fun to an already memorable day in the Ashes series.Joe Root and England had a memorable day on Day 1 of the second Test. Root's hundred took England to a 300+ total for the first time in this series. The batter anchored the innings throughout the day, seeing off tough spells from Mitchell Starc, who breathed fire with the pink ball.

Incredibly rare. FC Goa captain shown red card before kick-off in Super Cup semi-final

←Super Cup: An incredibly rare incident happened in FC Goa's Super Cup semi-final against Mumbai City FC. Goa's captain Iker Guarrotxena was shown a straight red card before the match even started.

New Delhi. (Agency)
The Super Cup semi-final between FC Goa and Mumbai City FC delivered incredible drama on Thursday, December 4. In what turned out to be one of the rarest incidents in football, FC Goa captain Iker Guarrotxena was shown a red card even before the match had officially begun.The incident occurred as both teams lined up in the players' tunnel.

A commotion broke out between players and officials just moments before the sides were set to walk onto the pitch. The broadcast showed that the referee took issue with the Goa captain, reportedly because he was wearing inner shorts in a colour that did not comply with the match regulations.What should have been a simple matter resolved calmly escalated into complete chaos when the referee reacted to Guarrotxena's words and showed him a straight red card for dissent."Everybody saw what he did," referee Pratik Mondal reportedly argued, while the Goa players made a futile plea to overturn the decision handed to their captain.
Why Was Iker Shown a Red Card?
According to a report by the Times of India, the Spaniard was instructed to change his inner shorts because their colour apparently clashed with the kits of both teams. Guarrotxena's response was interpreted as dissent, leading to a straight red card before the teams had even stepped onto the pitch. "I saw the referee ask him to change and



thought it would be sorted out right there. I then walked to the pitch and two minutes later someone came and told me that Iker had been sent off," FC Goa head coach Manolo Marquez was quoted as saying by TOI."It was not a normal situation, but we were still

allowed to play with eleven players. The real problem now is that we will not have Iker available for the final. To show a red card for something like this feels excessive, although there is nothing we can do about it," he added.
So, Did FC Goa Play With Ten Men?
Not exactly. According to the laws of football, if a red card is issued before kick-off, the team is permitted to replace the suspended player with another member of the squad. Goa named Spanish footballer Javier Siverio as Guarrotxena's replacement, which allowed them to begin the match with a complete starting eleven that featured a slightly altered lineup.Borja Herrera was handed the captain's armband for the match, which Goa eventually won 2-1. The stand-in captain reflected on the unusual incident afterward and said that he had never witnessed anything quite like it."I have never seen anything like this in my life. But I prefer not to speak more about it. The team management will review the situation and find a suitable solution," he said.

RBI Slashes India’s Inflation Forecast To 2% For 2025-26

New Delhi.(Agency)
New Delhi: The RBI’s monetary policy committee (MPC) on Friday slashed its forecast for India’s inflation rate for the financial year 2025-26 to 2 per cent -- from 2.6 per cent predicted in October due to the sharp decline in food prices and the GST rate cuts playing out. RBI Governor Sanjay Malhotra said that “the MPC noted that headline inflation has eased significantly and is likely to be softer than the earlier projections, primarily on account of the exceptionally benign food prices. Reflecting these favourable conditions, the projections for average headline inflation in 2025-26 and Q1 2026-27 have been further revised downwards.”Malhotra also pointed out that core inflation (which excludes food and fuel) remained largely contained in September-October, despite continued price pressures exerted by precious metals. Excluding gold, core inflation moderated to 2.6 per cent in October. Overall, the decline in inflation has become more generalised, he added. The RBI Governor observed that food supply prospects have improved on the back of higher kharif production, healthy rabi sowing, adequate reservoir levels and conducive soil moisture. Barring some metals, international commodity prices are likely to moderate going forward.“Overall, inflation is likely to be softer than what was projected in October, mainly on account of the fall in food prices. Considering all these factors, CPI inflation for 2025-26 is now projected at 2.0 per cent with Q3 at 0.6 per cent; and Q4 at 2.9 per cent. CPI inflation for Q1 2026-27 and Q2 are projected at 3.9 per cent and 4.0 per cent, respectively. The underlying inflation pressures are even lower as the impact of increase in price of precious metals is about 50 bps. The risks are evenly balanced,” Malhotra highlighted.He explained that core inflation, which had been rising steadily since Q1 2024-25, eased at the margin in Q2 2025-26 and is expected to remain anchored in the period ahead. Both headline and core inflation are expected to be at or below the 4 per cent target during the first half of 2026-27. The underlying inflation pressures are even lower as the impact of increase in price of precious metals is about 50 basis points (bps). Growth, while remaining resilient, is expected to soften somewhat.

End Of An Era: Simone Tata, Mother of Noel Tata, Passes Away At 95

New Delhi.(Agency)
Friday morning brought sad news for the Tata family, as Simone Tata passed away at Mumbai’s Breach Candy Hospital after a brief illness. She was 95 and was the mother of Tata Trusts chairman Noel Tata and stepmother of the late Ratan Tata. The Tata Group said that people can pay their last respects to the founder of Lakmé on Saturday, December 6, 2025, from 9:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. at the Cathedral of the Holy Name Church in Colaba, followed by a mass at 11:00 a.m.In its statement, Tata Sons paid tribute to her legacy, saying, “Ms. Simone will always be remembered for her contribution to the growth of Lakmé as India’s leading cosmetic brand and laying the foundation for fashion retail with the Westside chain. She also guided the work of many philanthropic organisations including Sir Ratan Tata Institute.”The statement further expressed condolences, saying, “With her positivity and deep resolve she overcame many challenges in her life while touching many of us deeply.” It added, “May her soul rest in peace and God give us the strength to overcome this loss.”She is survived by her son Noel Tata, daughter-in-law Aloo Mistry, and grandchildren Neville, Maya, and Leah.
A Look Back at Simone Tata’s Journey
Born as Simone Naval Dunoyer in Geneva, Switzerland, she first visited India as a tourist in 1953. Two years later, she married Naval H. Tata and soon began her professional journey with the Tata Group in the early 1960s.Simone Tata joined the board of Lakmé in 1961, when it was a small subsidiary of Tata Oil Mills Company (TOMCO), known for popular personal care brands like Hamam, Okay, and Modi Soaps. Her strong vision and leadership played a key role in transforming Lakmé into a leading cosmetics brand in India.

Rate cut ignites Dalal Street as investors turn optimistic but cautious

CHENNAI . (Agency)
Indian markets opened on a steady and mildly positive note on Friday (December 5) as investors positioned themselves ahead of the Reserve Bank of India’s policy outcome. The early tone was cautious, with both the Sensex and Nifty starting the session close to the flat line, reflecting a market that preferred to wait for clarity before taking stronger positions. Sentiment remained balanced in the first few minutes of trade, shaped by mixed global cues and the anticipation that the monetary policy decision could influence interest-rate-sensitive sectors.
As trading progressed, optimism gradually strengthened after the RBI announced a 25-basis-point cut in the repo rate while maintaining a neutral stance. At 10:50 AM, the BSE Sensex climbed 310 points to 85,579, while the NSE Nifty 50 advanced 99 points to 26,133.The policy move acted as a catalyst, pulling benchmark indices higher and lifting market confidence. Banking, auto and realty stocks were among the first to respond, with investors expecting lower borrowing costs to support loan demand, consumption and housing activity. The easing in policy rates also improved liquidity expectations, helping financial stocks gain early traction.
The broader market showed a similar but measured improvement. Midcap and small-cap indices edged up as traders interpreted the fresh rate cut as a supportive signal for corporate borrowing and investment cycles. Despite the positive undertone, the early session still reflected a degree of restraint, as participants assessed how quickly banks might transmit the rate cut and how external factors, including currency movements, could shape the near-term outlook.

IndiGo shares tumble 2% as mass flight cancellations continue to disrupt travel

IndiGo's stock fell over 2%, trading at Rs 5,326.35 by 10 am, amid mounting concerns over ongoing mass cancellations and delays across India's busiest airports.

New Delhi.(Agency)
Shares of IndiGo's parent company, InterGlobe Aviation, slipped over 2% on Friday as it struggled to manage extensive operational disruptions. The stock was trading 2.14% lower on the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) at 10:20 am, amid mounting concerns over ongoing mass cancellations and delays across India's busiest airports.What began earlier this week has now snowballed into one of the airline's worst operational breakdowns in recent years. Even today, the disruptions continued unabated, with around 400

flights cancelled so far, adding to the mounting network strain and frustrating thousands of passengers nationwide. These disruptions have persisted for three consecutive days. On Thursday, IndiGo cancelled more than 550 domestic and international flights. Delhi airport alone accounted for at least 172 cancellations, with other major airports like Mumbai, Bengaluru, Hyderabad and Goa also experiencing significant delays. Recognising the widespread impact, IndiGo issued an apology via a post on X, stating, “The last two days have seen widespread disruption across IndiGo’s network and operations. We extend a heartfelt apology to all our customers and industry stakeholders who have been impacted by these events.” To mitigate the situation, IndiGo is collaborating with the Ministry of Civil Aviation, DGCA, BCAS, AAI and airport operators to minimise the cascading effects and restore normal schedules. Travellers are being informed about revised timings and advised to

check updates before heading to the airport. IndiGo typically operates close to 2,300 flights daily, optimising aircraft and crew utilisation to maintain punctuality. However, its on-time performance



plummeted to 19.7% on Wednesday, down from 35% the previous day, marking a record low for the carrier. In response to the crisis, an emergency meeting was held on Thursday involving

officials from the Civil Aviation Ministry and the DGCA along with IndiGo’s leadership. After the meeting, IndiGo CEO Pieter Elbers acknowledged the severity of the situation in an internal email. He said the airline, which serves nearly 380,000 customers a day, had been hit by “an accumulation of several operational challenges”, including minor tech glitches, schedule changes, adverse weather, heightened congestion and the enforcement of new flight duty time limitation norms. To stabilise operations, IndiGo has begun implementing schedule revisions and planned cancellations to rebalance aircraft and crew availability. Signs of strain were visible even earlier: in November, the airline cancelled 1,232 flights, prompting the DGCA to seek explanations. IndiGo attributed these cancellations to staff shortages, air traffic control failures, airport restrictions and other operational pressures.

Your FD investments to take a hit as RBI cuts repo rate

New Delhi.(Agency)
The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) cut the repo rate by 25 basis points on Friday, December 5, 2025, bringing it down to 5.25%. The decision came after a three-day meeting of the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC), which voted unanimously for the cut while keeping the policy stance neutral. Along with the repo rate, the standing deposit facility (SDF) rate has been revised to 5%, while the marginal standing facility (MSF) rate and the Bank Rate now stand at 5.50%.
FD INVESTORS MAY SEE LOWER RATES SOON
Many banks had already reduced their fixed deposit (FD) rates by October, and the transmission of earlier cuts is still not complete. With this fresh reduction, banks and small finance banks (SFBs) are expected to trim FD rates again. However, the change will not be immediate, and it may vary from bank to bank. Some may adjust rates within days, while others may take months. “From depositors’ standpoint, a 25bps cut in repo rate will create concerns about declining returns on fixed deposits and other interest-bearing savings,” said Ankur Jalan,

CEO of Golden Growth Fund (GGF). Existing FDs will not be affected. But new investors may receive lower maturity amounts if banks revise their



rates soon. This makes it important for savers to lock in higher rates while they are still available. **WHY BANKS ARE LIKELY TO CUT RATES FURTHER**
Banks generally reduce FD rates after repo rate cuts because their overall cost of funds eventually falls. But the reduction is not always equal to the RBI cut. A 25 bps cut doesn’t mean banks will reduce FD rates by the same margin. Jalan added, “Banks will likely trim deposit rates in the coming months, making it harder for savers to earn meaningful returns.”

Gold price prediction: What's the gold outlook for December 5, 2025 Here's what investors should do

New Delhi.(Agency)
Gold price prediction today: Gold prices are exhibiting weakness, says Jateen Trivedi, VP Research Analyst - Commodity and Currency, LKP Securities. Here recommends a sell on rise strategy for investors:
Gold futures on MCX traded near ₹1,30,000, showing signs of weakness after failing to sustain above the immediate resistance zone. Price action suggests that momentum is tilting in favor of sellers as the short-term averages flatten and oscillators indicate a lack of bullish conviction. The technical setup supports a sell-on-rise strategy near ₹1,30,400, with a stop-loss at ₹1,31,500 and potential downside targets around ₹1,29,000.
Gold Technical Setup: Moving Averages (EMA 8 & EMA 21): The 8 EMA has flattened and is trending close to the 21 EMA, signaling loss of momentum and indecision in the short term. A failure to



reclaim the ₹1,30,750–₹1,31,000 region will likely keep the bias negative for the session. Gold prices have slipped below the mid-Bollinger band, confirming a shift to mild bearishness. The lower Bollinger band near ₹1,29,200 could act as the next support if selling pressure intensifies. *? Resistance Levels: ₹1,30,750 – ₹1,31,130 – ₹1,31,500 *? ? Support Levels: ₹1,29,800 – ₹1,29,300 – ₹1,29,000 Repeated rejection near the upper pivots suggests a short-term top formation, strengthening the case for a

downside move. The RSI is currently at 50.3, showing neutral momentum but with no signs of strength, implying limited upside potential and scope for corrective pressure. The MACD remains below the signal line, reflecting continued bearish sentiment. The histogram shows weak buying pressure, indicating that any bounce may remain short-lived. ? Bias: Bearish below ₹1,30,750; sustained trade below ₹1,29,800 could accelerate downside momentum. Gold’s intraday structure remains weak with flattening EMAs, a neutral RSI, and a bearish MACD crossover. The repeated rejection near upper resistance reinforces a short-term bearish bias. Traders are advised to adopt a sell-on-rise strategy near ₹1,30,400, keeping a strict stop-loss at ₹1,31,500 and targeting ₹1,29,000. Sustained weakness below ₹1,29,800 could open further downside potential toward ₹1,28,800.

RBI reduces repo rate by 25 bps. Will your home loans get cheaper

RBI Governor Sanjay Malhotra said the committee unanimously agreed on the rate cut after assessing inflation trends, growth forecasts and liquidity needs.

New Delhi.(Agency)
The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) reduced the repo rate by 25 basis points on Thursday, bringing it down from 5.5% to 5.25%. The latest rate cut takes the total reduction in 2025 to 125 basis points. With this move, homebuyers are now hoping for relief in the form of lower EMIs as banks begin adjusting lending rates. The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) met on December 3, 4 and 5 to review economic conditions and vote on the policy action. RBI Governor Sanjay Malhotra said the committee unanimously

agreed on the rate cut after assessing inflation trends, growth forecasts and liquidity needs. “The MPC met on the 3rd, 4th and 5th of December to deliberate and decide on the policy repo rate. After a detailed assessment of the evolving macroeconomic conditions and the outlook, the MPC voted unanimously to reduce the policy repo rate by 25 basis points to 5.25% with immediate effect,” Malhotra said. He added that the Standing Deposit Facility (SDF) rate has now been lowered to 5%, while the Marginal Standing Facility (MSF) and bank rate stand at 5.5%. The RBI has also kept its neutral stance unchanged. In addition to the rate cut, the RBI announced liquidity measures to support financial markets. “The Reserve Bank has decided to conduct OMO purchases of government securities of Rs 1 lakh crore and a three-year dollar rupee buy-sell swap of 5 billion US dollars this month in December to inject further durable liquidity into the system,” Malhotra said. With borrowing costs now expected to come down, the question for many is simple: will home loans become cheaper? ANAROCK

Group Chairman Anuj Puri said the cut is positive for the real estate sector, especially at a time when housing prices have risen sharply. “The RBI’s decision to cut the repo rate by



25 bps is a distinct positive for the Indian real estate sector as we close 2025. Coming on the back of earlier easing cycles this year, this move further sweetens the value proposition for homebuyers, particularly in the affordable and mid-income segments which are highly sensitive to interest rate fluctuations,” he said. According to Puri, home loan rates could

soon fall to more attractive levels if banks pass on the cut. “With average housing prices across the top 7 cities having risen by around 10% in 2025, this rate cut provides a critical cushion to affordability. If banks swiftly pass on this rate cut to borrowers, we anticipate a renewed surge in sales velocity carrying firmly into Q1 2026,” he said. He added that while luxury homes will continue to drive demand, the cut may help bring back some buyers who were waiting due to rising prices. Developers echoed similar optimism. Rajat Khandelwal, Group CEO of Tribeca Developers, said the cut would help ease pressure on homebuyers in high-priced markets. “The RBI’s decision to reduce the repo rate to 5.25% is a welcome move that will provide much-needed relief to homebuyers, especially in premium markets like MMR, NCR, and Pune, where rising EMIs have impacted affordability. Lower borrowing costs not only improve financial predictability but also strengthen buyer confidence,” he said.

Ankita Lokhande

Paints Instagram Pink With Her Sporty, Barbie-Coded Pictures, Fans Call Her 'Cute'

Ankita Lokhande has once again proven that she can effortlessly pull off any fashion trend with confidence and charm. The actress shared a new set of pictures on Instagram today, showcasing her playful and quirky style, and her fans cannot stop gushing over her look. In the photos, Ankita is seen dressed head-to-toe in pink, creating a bold and cheerful fashion statement. She opted for a sporty pink T-shirt paired with faded pink jeans and matching pink sneakers, giving her outfit a coordinated, energetic appearance. Her naturally curly hair added even more character to the look, making the ensemble vibrant and refreshing.

Alongside her, little Advait, her nephew, can also be spotted posing adorably. Dressed in a blue-



and-white outfit, he complemented Ankita's bright look with his innocent charm. The actress captioned the post with the empowering words, "Pretty in pink, powerful in purpose." Her fans quickly filled the comments section with admiration, with one user writing, "You look stunning ankyy. The curls uff so beautiful!!" while another simply added, "Stunning". Ankita Attends Bharti Singh's Baby Shower With Family and TV Industry Friends.

Ankita wore this eye-catching pink outfit to comedian Bharti Singh's baby shower. She arrived at the event accompanied by her husband Vicky Jain, her nephew Advait and

her mother. Before entering the venue, the family paused to greet the paparazzi and pose for photos.

She was also seen bonding with her Laughter Chefs co-contestant Reem Shaikh, sharing cheerful moments from the celebration. Ankita later posted a story featuring a group photo that showed many of the attendees together. Bharti Singh and Harsh Limbachiyaa Host a Warm, Star-Studded Celebration Comedy queen Bharti Singh and her husband Harsh Limbachiyaa are gearing up to welcome their second child and their intimate baby shower saw several popular celebrities from the television industry join in to celebrate the joyous occasion.

Filmmaker Farah Khan was one of the early guests and was seen warmly interacting with others. Actress Rubina Dilaik, who recently worked with Bharti on Laughter Chefs 2, attended the function with her husband Abhinav Shukla. Popular TV couple Aly Goni and Jasmin Bhasin were also spotted at the event, keeping their looks relaxed and fun for the celebration.

Ankita's Recent Work: From Reality Shows to Films

On the professional front, Ankita Lokhande recently appeared in the second season of the cookery-comedy reality show Laughter Chefs – Unlimited Entertainment, alongside her husband Vicky Jain.

Before this, she featured in several noteworthy projects, including the 2024 film Swatantra Veer Savarkar. The film, directed, co-written, and co-produced by Randeep Hooda, portrays the life of freedom fighter Vinayak Damodar Savarkar, with Ankita playing the role of Yamunabai Savarkar.



Bigg Boss 19: Kamya Punjabi Defends Captain Gaurav Khanna In Food Fight Row



Bigg Boss 19 is inching towards its grand finale, but the drama inside the house refuses to slow down. With only a handful of contestants left, the clashes are still as fiery as they were when the house was packed. In the past few days, the house has been consumed by a heated fight over food duties, with captain Gaurav Khanna bearing the brunt of the blame. This sparked a major showdown, as Farhana Bhatt locked horns with Gaurav a few days ago on the same topic. The latest episode even showed Tanya Mittal badmouthing the captain in the kitchen area while he was away, further escalating tensions.

And, like every big moment in the Bigg Boss house, former contestant Kamya Punjabi had something to say. Here's what she wrote.

Kamya Punjabi Backs Gaurav Khanna

Kamya supported Gaurav and called out the contestants for unnecessarily targeting the television actor. She wrote, "Khana khilaana Captain ki responsibility kabse ho gayi? Captain hai tumhari maa thodi hai... khudko duty karni nahi hai lekin khane ka order zaroor dena hai. She concluded her fiery tweet with, "BB19 ki mahilao ka ek hi obsession hai iss waqt, Gaurav Khanna."

Khana khilaana Captain ki responsibility kabse ho gayi? Kamya's tweet was bound to spark reactions, and it did. People quickly took sides and shared their opinions.

Here's How The Internet Reacted To Kamya's Take

A user commented, "Khana khilana nahi captain ki duty, par jab 5 log bache ho to karna aur karwana dono captain ki duty hai and people were asking for his duty naki ehsaan." Another user backed Gaurav and wrote, "Sahi baat boli madam aap, Only obsession is Gaurav Khanna." Another user voiced their opinion and said, "Amaal Farhana se kaam nikalwa leta tha apne captaincy mein. Aur GK ghamand mein purani roti dal aloo aur chawal khilata hai. Tell me who is the better captain." An individual remarked, "BTW being a captain uski toh koi duty hi nahi hai... still woh kar raha hai ki sabne mana kar dia aur na kisi ko aata hai khana banana."

Palak Muchhal Breaks Silence On Palaash Muchhal, Smriti Mandhana Wedding Controversy: 'Very Tough Time'



Palaash Muchhal was supposed to marry Smriti Mandhana on November 23, but their wedding was postponed indefinitely after the bride's father fell sick. Following this, several reports with different claims and speculations as to why the wedding must have been postponed made headlines. While some accused Palaash of being unfaithful, others claimed that the music composer was caught cheating red-handed by the cricketer just the night before their wedding. While neither family has issued any statement as of now, Palaash's sister, Palak, has now broken her silence. In a recent interview, Palak opened up about the scrutiny that Palaash has been facing and admitted that it is a 'very tough time' for both families.

"I think the families have been through a very, very tough time and like you just said... I would just want to repeat that we would like to believe in positivity in this time and spread positivity as much as we can. And stay strong... yeah," she told Filmfare.

Why Was Palash's Wedding With Smriti Postponed?

Palash and Smriti were set to tie the knot on November 23 in Smriti's hometown of Sangli, Maharashtra. However, their wedding has been postponed indefinitely due to the cricketer's father's health. According to reports, Shrinivas Mandhana began experiencing chest discomfort on the morning of the wedding and was immediately taken to Sarvhit Hospital and Medical Research Centre. The family decided to call off the celebrations as doctors conducted tests and stabilised his condition.

The emotional strain extended to Palaash as well. His mother told Hindustan Times that the singer shared a very close bond with Smriti's father, and the situation deeply affected him. "He cried so much that his health suddenly deteriorated. They kept him in the hospital for four hours. He was given an IV drip, an ECG was done, and other tests were carried out. Everything came back normal, but he is under a lot of stress," she said.

Recently, both Smriti and Palaash made subtle changes to their Instagram bios and added the nazar emoji. While they haven't issued any statement as of now, the emoji is a symbolic gesture to ward off negativity.

Madhuri Dixit

Calls Husband Dr Sriram Nene A 'Bigger Blessing' Than Her Career

Madhuri Dixit was at the top of her game in the 1990s when she broke many hearts after deciding to leave fame behind and move to the US with her husband, Dr Sriram Nene. Her decision to move to the US hit her career hard, but she shifted back to India with their sons. Now, in a recent chat, Madhuri Dixit opened up about how she was first hesitant to get married and now feels Dr. Nene is a bigger blessing to her than anything. In a chat with Ranveer Allahbadia on his YouTube channel, Madhuri revealed why she was hesitant about the idea of getting married and said, "Because I loved what I did. My career was like... every day was fun, and I would think that if I am with someone who is not right for me, then the fun is gone. And I just loved what I was doing, so I didn't even think about it."

While Madhuri loves what she does, her husband comes above her career now. When asked if Dr. Nene was a bigger blessing than her career, Madhuri said, "Career was there, it still is, and it will continue to exist, but I think the bigger blessing is my husband. Why? Because if you are not happy in your actual life, no matter what you achieve, you will not get happiness from it. Because you have no one to share it with." She added, "One day, people are going to forget you, and who is going to be with you? Your companion. That's why he takes a bigger place." Calling her marriage a "great combination of art and science," she shared that the two always encourage each other to do stuff.

Madhuri Dixit tied the knot with Dr. Shriram Nene, a cardiothoracic surgeon based in Los Angeles, on October 17, 1999, in a private ceremony, followed by a reception in Mumbai. At the time, she was one of Bollywood's biggest stars but chose to step away from films and move to Colorado to begin a new chapter in her personal life. Interestingly, Dr. Nene wasn't familiar with her film work before they met and later said he saw her simply as his wife and life partner.



Top 20 ways to

Improve Your Concentration

With distractions present everywhere, concentrating on work becomes difficult. The human mind isn't designed to cope with surrounding chaos as each sense picks up on something that could distract us in a second. However, even though it is difficult to improve concentration, it is not entirely impossible. Perseverance is important in improving your concentration power. Here are the top 20 ways with which you can improve your concentration. Get cracking today!

Select your environment

The environment in which you work plays an important role in improving your concentration.

Comfortable and appealing environments are more conducive to attaining full concentration while working.

Usually, while selecting the environment, keep in mind, the lesser the distractions, the better the chances of working with full concentration.

Control your thoughts

The key to concentration is to not allow your mind to distract you with casual thoughts.

When unrelated thoughts emerge in the mind, pay no attention to them and actively focus on the task you are trying to accomplish.

Make a time plan

Make a schedule for the jobs to be done. In order to balance, allocate time appropriately to serious tasks, and to leisure as well.

This will help you feel more fulfilled and less weak toward playful distractions.

Never be negative

Do not tell yourself that you cannot concentrate; this will make it more difficult to focus, because you will force your mind to be short of concentration and attention.

Avoid Multi-tasking

Multi-tasking ensures that we cannot concentrate on one single task at hand when we have a horde of tasks lying in front of us.

Focus on completing each task before moving on to the next.

Cut off the Noise

Cutting off noise is very important, as it is obvious that distractions won't help you focus. Though it can be tempting to put the e-mail



alerts on, reply to the BBM or whatsapp messenger and answer every request sent your way, eventually it will only prevent you from concentrating.

Diet and Exercise

Focus depends, to a great deal, on a balanced diet and exercise plan.

Lack of essential nutrients can cause fatigue and lethargy. Ensure concentration by eating a diet rich in nuts and fruits containing Vitamin E, and follow through with a healthy workout routine.

Understand the task

Concentration is particularly difficult if you have doubts about what you are doing or if you find the task confusing.

When work is difficult, the mind looks for easier things to do. Hence, try to get a general overview and develop a basic concept and framework before you start each task.

Conquer Procrastination

Don't feel like concentrating? Are you putting off a task? This is procrastination.

Do not postpone, in fact simply decide to not leave your seat till the burdensome task is over.

Spot your peak times

All of us have our times of peak alertness in the 24-hours cycle. However, it is not the same for all.

Find out yours and use it for more tricky or less interesting tasks.

Be positive

Whenever you need to focus, tell yourself over and over again that you can concentrate, and this will easily help you to develop this ability.

Divide tasks

Tasks that have no clear start or end point will destroy your focus. If you have a large project that needs work, clearly identify a path that you will use to get started working on it.

Concentration Exercises

Exercise restores the loss in focus by improving mind and body coordination.

Focus is closely related to memory preservation exercises like coin trick, chair trick. This will improve your concentration.

Meditation

Meditation is not a cure; but, if you can practice sincerely and learn to control the mind you will notice a difference, and slowly improve your concentration power.

Go slow

It is important to discipline yourself as well as put in more time to effective use.

So start small, but stick to it if you are not able to concentrate easily.

Train your brain

In order to improve your concentration you need to train your brain.

If you are unable to focus on a subject for

more than a few seconds, but if you persevere, you will be able to fix the mind on anything for a longer duration.

Set a Deadline

Deadlines work well when trying to strengthen concentration.

A deadline can make it easier to forget the non-essential and speed up your working time.

Get enough sleep

Impose a regular bedtime.

Tiredness, fatigue and lack of a good night's sleep is one of the leading causes of poor concentration.

Steady progress

If you feel you are horrible at concentration, try to make small improvements each week.

If you get distracted for say half of the time, make an effort to get distracted for less time each week.

Manage requirements

Make sure that you have arranged all your requirements before you start with each task.

This may avoid unnecessary distractions, and you will work serenely.

Unite your heart with mind

Applying your mind to the work is a requirement in any case; adding positive attitude makes the real difference.

When you start enjoying the work, your understanding of it and desire to concentrate on it is much faster and better.



Benefits of

chamomile

Tea

Of late, green tea has earned kudos for its miraculous effects on skin and body. But the wonders of chamomile tea are still unknown to many. Yes, chamomile tea has sundry beneficial effects on the skin as well as hair. Some of them are as follows:

1. It has an abundance of a amazing healing, antioxidant, cleansing and moisturizing properties and is considered a full-fledged skincare treatment.
2. Infused with great healing properties, chamomile tea accelerates the healing process of minor wounds and also disinfects the wounds.
3. Chamomile tea is an excellent all-natural skin bleach. It lightens the complexion and renders it a healthy glow.
4. It is found to be very effective in soothing skin irritation and sunburns.
5. This magic potion is a powerhouse of antioxidants that help you fight acne and breakouts. It

also works wonders to eliminate acne scars.

6. It protects your skin from free radical damage, a chief contributor to premature aging, hence help retaining your youthful charm for long.
7. Placing cooled down chamomile tea bags under the eyes can help reducing under-eye dark circles and eye puffiness. It also soothes your tired eyes.

8. When blended with powdered milk, chamomile

tea provides you a great body and facial scrub. It sloughs off the dead, dry skin cells revealing the underlying cells which are new.

9. If consumed on a regular basis, chamomile tea nourishes and moisturizes your skin from deep inside. You may also want to use chamomile in your homemade beauty recipes to draw its beauty benefits.
10. A chamomile tea rinse brightens up the blonde hair instantly. If combined with henna, it makes natural highlights for dark hair as well.

11. It is a wonderful hair lightener. Using chamomile tea as final hair rinse adds a stunning bright-golden light to the brown hair. Use the treatment regularly to lighten your hair gradually.
12. Chamomile is also found to be highly effectual in preventing and eliminating dandruff. In addition, it also soothes irritated scalp.



Here are 7 great reasons to snack on olives regularly

Cardiovascular benefits

When free radicals oxidize cholesterol, blood vessels are damaged and fat builds up in arteries, possibly leading to a heart attack. The antioxidant nutrients in black olives impede this oxidation of cholesterol, thereby helping to prevent heart disease. Olives do contain fat, but it's the healthy monounsaturated kind, which has been found to shrink the risk of atherosclerosis and increase good cholesterol.

Cancer prevention

Black olives are a great source of vitamin E, which has the brilliant ability to neutralize free radicals in body fat. Especially when working with the stable monounsaturated fats found in olives, vitamin E can make cellular processes safer. When such processes such as mitochondrial energy production are not well protected, the free radicals produced can cause oxidation, damaging a cell's mitochondria, and preventing the cell from producing enough energy to supply its needs. If the DNA of a cell is damaged, it may well mutate and become cancerous. Studies have shown that a diet supplemented with olive oil leads to a lower risk of colon cancer, almost as low a risk as a diet rich in fish oil.

Skin and hair health

Black olives are rich in fatty acids and antioxidants that nourish, hydrate and protect. Chief among those is vitamin E. Whether applied topically or ingested, vitamin E has been shown to protect skin from ultraviolet radiation, thus guarding against skin cancer and premature aging. You can gain a healthy, glowing complexion by washing your face in warm water, applying a few drops of olive oil to vulnerable spots, and letting it work its magic for 15 minutes before rinsing it off. In fact, you can moisturize with olive oil before any bath, and even condition your hair with it by mixing it with an egg yolk and leaving it before rinsing and washing.

Bone and connective tissue

The anti-inflammatory abilities of the monounsaturated fats, vitamin E and polyphenols in black olives may also help dull the asperity of asthma,

7 reasons you MUST eat

Olives



osteoarthritis, and rheumatoid arthritis. Most of the suffering in having one of these three bone maladies is brought about by high levels of free radicals. Olive oil also contains a chemical called oleocanthal, which acts as a painkiller. Research has found that oleocanthal inhibits inflammation by the same means that drugs like Ibuprofen do.

Digestive tract health

Frequent consumption of both vitamin E and the monounsaturated fats in black olives is associated with lower rates of colon cancer. These nutrients help prevent colon cancer by neutralizing free radicals. Olive oil's protective function also has a beneficial effect on ulcers and gastritis. Olive oil activates the secretion of bile and pancreatic hormones much more naturally than prescribed drugs, thereby

lowering the incidence of gallstone formation. A cup of black olives also contains 17% of the daily allowance of fiber, which promotes digestive tract health by helping to move food through the system at a healthier pace. This keeps any one part of the digestive tract from having to work too hard and supports the ideal balance of chemicals and populations of microorganisms required for a healthy digestive system.

Good source of iron

Black olives are very high in iron. The ability of red blood cells to carry oxygen throughout the body is due to the presence of iron in the blood. If we suffer from a lack of iron, our tissues don't get enough oxygen, and we may feel cold or weak. Iron also plays a vital role in the production of energy. It is a necessary part of a number of

enzymes, including iron catalase, iron peroxidase, and the cytochrome enzymes. It also helps produce carnitine, a nonessential amino acid important for the utilization of fat. To top it all off, the proper function of the immune system is dependent on sufficient iron.

Eye health

One cup of black olives contains ten percent of the daily recommended allowance of vitamin A which, when converted into the retinal form, is crucial for healthy eyes. It enables the eye to better distinguish between light and dark, thereby improving night vision. Furthermore, Vitamin A is believed effective against cataracts, macular degeneration, glaucoma and other age-related ocular diseases.