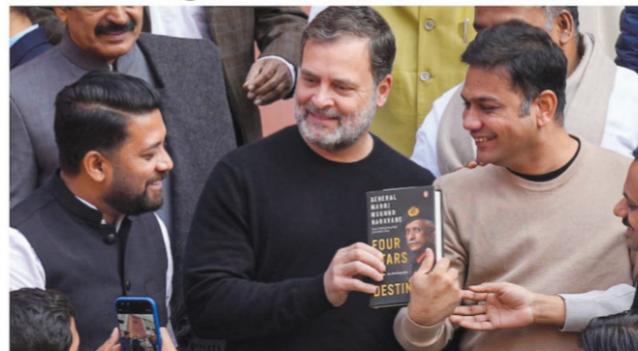


I believe Naravane over Penguin: Rahul Gandhi as mystery around book deepens

New Delhi.(Agency)

Commenting on the ongoing controversy surrounding General (Retd.) MM Naravane's unpublished book, Congress MP Rahul Gandhi on Tuesday said that both the former and publisher, Penguin, could not be lying. "Either Mr Naravane is lying or it is Penguin, which is lying. I don't think the former Army chief will lie," he told reporters outside Parliament. Referring to a 2023 tweet by Naravane wherein the ex-Army chief promoted his new book 'Four Stars of Destiny', Rahul Gandhi said that some of the statements the former made in his book are "inconvenient for the Government of India and the Prime Minister of India.

India". Here is a tweet from Mr Naravane which says, "just follow the link to my book". The point I am making is either Mr Naravane is lying or it is Penguin, which is lying. I don't think the former Army chief will lie. Penguin says the book has not been published. But the book is available on Amazon... I believe Naravane ji over Penguin. Do you believe Penguin over Naravane ji? I believe Naravane ji has made certain statements in his book which are inconvenient for the Government of India and the Prime Minister of India.



Obviously, you have to decide if Penguin or the former Army chief is telling the truth," the Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha told reporters.

Questioning how Rahul Gandhi got hold of

the memoir, which is yet to receive clearance from authorities. In a statement, Penguin denied publishing the former Army chief's memoir in any form and warned that any version of the book currently in circulation, print or digital, amounts to copyright infringement. "We wish to make it clear that the book has not gone into publication. No copies of the book – in print or digital form – have been published, distributed, sold, or otherwise made available to the public by Penguin Random House India." The publisher further said that it would sue those involved in the illegal and unauthorised dissemination of the material

and said the statement was issued to place its position on record. The Delhi Police has registered a case over the alleged circulation of an unauthorised copy of the book on social media and online platforms. According to investigators, a PDF of a typeset book, apparently prepared by the publisher, was spotted on certain websites.

Some online platforms were also seen displaying the book cover as if the memoir was available for purchase.

The row began last week during the ongoing post-Budget session of Parliament when Rahul Gandhi quoted a magazine article based on the ex-Army chief's unpublished memoir.

Mukh Mantri Sehat Yojna offers Rs 10 lakh cashless treatment: CM Mann

The Sikh Times

CHANDIGARH, 10th February: Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann on Tuesday appealed to the people of Punjab not to be misled by misleading and malicious propaganda being spread by anti-Punjab forces regarding the Mukh Mantri Sehat Yojna, the flagship healthcare programme of the state government. In a video message addressed to the people, CM Bhagwant Singh Mann said, "The Punjab government launched this ambitious scheme to ensure that every resident of Punjab, especially those from the weaker sections of society, has direct access to quality medical treatment." Explaining the scope of the initiative, Bhagwant Singh Mann said, "To provide comprehensive healthcare to the people, the state government has introduced the Mukh Mantri Sehat Yojna, a first-of-its-kind scheme in the country, under which every resident family in Punjab is entitled to cashless medical treatment of up to Rs 10 lakh." Calling it a landmark achievement, the Chief Minister said, "It is a matter of immense pride and satisfaction that Punjab has become the first Indian state to offer such extensive healthcare coverage. This scheme will significantly reduce the financial burden on the public while ensuring access to quality health services." Highlighting universal eligibility,

Bhagwant Singh Mann said, "This historic step aims to provide universal healthcare to all families in the state. All government employees, pensioners, and every other citizen are eligible for the health card, which can be obtained from facilitation centres and Common Service Centres, or through



online registration using Aadhaar card or voter card." Referring to the public response, he said, "The scheme has received an overwhelming response from the people of Punjab, who are coming forward in large numbers to avail its benefits. This initiative has provided major relief to families who otherwise would have had to spend huge amounts from their own pockets for treatment in case of illness." However, the Chief Minister cautioned against misinformation, saying, "Some anti-Punjab forces, who do not want the people of the state to benefit from such facilities, are deliberately spreading falsehoods about

this ambitious scheme." He added, "These misnomers are intended to discourage people from availing the benefits of the scheme, which is completely unwarranted and undesirable." Clarifying the hospital empanelment process, CM Bhagwant Singh Mann said, "The state government has empanelled a majority of private hospitals under the scheme. Rates have been fixed by the government for around 2,600 ailments and treatments." Explaining the payment mechanism, he said, "The government will pay hospitals as per the mutually agreed rates, regardless of the fact that these hospitals may charge higher amounts from private individuals." Emphasising accountability, the Chief Minister said, "Hospitals are duty-bound to provide treatment at the rates fixed by the government, and they must ensure that treatment is given free of cost to the beneficiaries." Rejecting misinformation outright, CM Bhagwant Singh Mann said, "Hospitals will be paid directly by the government, and not even a single penny will be charged from the beneficiaries, despite attempts by forces inimical to the state to paint a different picture." Reiterating the core assurance of the scheme, the Chief Minister said unequivocally, "Treatment under the Mukh Mantri Sehat Yojna will be completely free of cost, and no fees will be charged from patients by the hospitals." Appealing for vigilance, he said, "People of Punjab must remain alert to such forces that are hell-bent on harming public interest by spreading baseless rumours. Contd.....page 7

Opposition moves 'no-confidence' motion against Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla, backed by over 100 MPs

New Delhi.(Agency)

Opposition parties, led by the Congress, have decided to move a 'no-confidence' motion to remove Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla, following a meeting of INDIA bloc leaders chaired by Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Tuesday morning. The decision comes amid continuing disruptions in Parliament, including a row over the Lok Sabha Speaker not allowing Congress MP and Leader of the Opposition Rahul Gandhi to speak in the House. A notice for the motion is has been submitted to Lok Sabha Secretary General Utpal Kumar Singh by Congress chief whip Suresh Kodikunnil and Mohammad Jawed.

The notice was submitted after talks between the Congress MPs and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju failed to yield any results.

Congress leaders said they had secured 106 signatures from MPs, crossing the requirement of 100 needed to move the resolution in Parliament.

The motion has the backing of the Samajwadi Party and the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK), while the Trinamool Congress (TMC) has not formally declared its position. TMC leaders did not attend the meeting.

Meanwhile, Opposition parties also agreed to

take part in the discussion on the Union Budget later in the day. The move follows sharp exchanges in the House on Monday, after the Speaker accused opposition parties of "planning" disruptions. Proceedings in the Lok Sabha were adjourned for the day amid a stand-off between the government and the opposition over Gandhi's demand that he be allowed to speak before the Budget debate began.



Parliament has witnessed repeated disruptions since February 2, with opposition members protesting several issues, including the Chair's decision to disallow Gandhi from quoting an article that referred to an unpublished memoir by former Army chief MM Naravane on the 2020 India-China border clash.

Last week, seven Congress MPs and one CPI(M) member were suspended for the remainder of the session following disorderly scenes in the House.

"Sanatan Will Face Existential Crisis If...": Yogi Adityanath Warns

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Monday said if the nation becomes weak, Sanatan will face an "existential crisis", cautioning people to stay alert against those who try to divide society. His remarks came during the Murti Sthapana Diwas and Bhandara at Tapodham Satguru Gurdwara Nath Ji Maharaj Tapodham Ashram here. According to an official statement, the chief minister cautioned, saying, "If Sanatan becomes weak, the nation will become weak, and if the nation becomes weak, Sanatan will face an existential crisis. Therefore, people must stay alert against those who try to divide society.

"In Bangladesh, Hindus are being killed and burnt, yet everyone remains silent. Those who are being killed are Dalit Hindus. Except for some religious leaders and Hindu organisations, no human rights group or global organisation is standing up to defend them," he said. Adityanath emphasised that under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, India is preparing itself for a long and transformative journey. "India will become a global power, and no one can stop it. It is the duty of every Indian to participate in this journey and work together. If this is done, the results will be better for both the present and future generations," he



said. The chief minister further mentioned that many civilisations and cultures across the world have vanished over time, but the Sanatan culture continues to stand tall with dignity and pride, having weathered

countless storms. It continues to give the message of friendship and compassion through "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam" to the world, he added. Asserting that many attempts have been made to break this unity, Adityanath said that Sanatan followers have always offered shelter to everyone in times of crisis, allowing them to prosper.

However, some people did not fulfil their duty as refugees. Instead, after coming here, they tried to strangle the very hand that helped them and left no stone unturned in looting the nation," he added.

"Followers of Sanatan Dharma possess strength, wealth, and wisdom, but never misuse them.

Delhi gets six new weather stations, 100 Vayu Rakshak vehicles for better air

Delhi CM Rekha Gupta said that providing clean and breathable air to the people of Delhi is a core responsibility of the government.

New Delhi.(Agency) Chief Minister Rekha Gupta on Monday said pollution control requires sustained, year-round action while inaugurating six Continuous Ambient Air Quality Monitoring System (CAAQMS) stations to expand real-time tracking of air quality across the capital. She also flagged off 100 'Vayu Rakshak' vehicles for stricter monitoring and enforcement of pollution control norms.

Now, the total number of CAAQMS in Delhi has increased to 46, making it the largest air quality monitoring network in any city in the country. Of these, 30 stations are operated by the Delhi



Pollution Control Committee (DPCC), 10 by the India Meteorological Department/IITM, and 6 by the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB). Also, 14 monitoring stations are planned to be installed soon.

Gupta said that providing clean and breathable air to the people of Delhi is a core responsibility of the government. She highlighted that air quality data is fully transparent, available in the public domain.

Stating that the government believes in evidence-based policymaking backed by transparent data, she said that PM10 and PM2.5 data are updated every hour, while data for other parameters are updated every five minutes.

As part of the initiative, 100 'Vayu Rakshaks' have been deployed to work in coordination with the DPCC for on-ground pollution control. In addition, 600 Vayu Rakshaks, in coordination with the Delhi Police, are monitoring violations related to traffic and emissions.

News box

Private company staffer dies by suicide at her home in Sohna

Faridabad.(Agency)

A 26-year-old woman was found hanging inside her rented flat in a residential society in Sohna on Monday morning. Police said the incident occurred in a seventh-floor flat in tower 4 of GLS Society. The deceased, identified as Kiran, worked with a private company in the Rojka Meo industrial area and lived in the flat with her brother, Akash, who is also employed at a private firm in the city.

According to police, Kiran and her brother attended a wedding on Sunday and returned home later in the evening. She then went to her room to sleep. On Monday around 8am, Akash opened her room and found her hanging. He informed their uncle, who alerted the police.

A police team reached the spot. "No suicide note was found from the spot," an officer said, adding that the body was shifted to the civil hospital mortuary for autopsy. Police said an investigation is underway to ascertain the circumstances leading to her death.

In another incident, a 22-year-old man was found hanging inside a rented room in Sector 66 on Sunday evening. Police suspect mental distress as a possible reason. The deceased, Yogesh, was from Bijnor in UP. He was employed with a private company and lived in the rented room with his partner, Gayatri, who works as a domestic helper. Police said Yogesh was at home on Sunday, while Gayatri went to work. Around 7.30pm, when she returned, she found the room locked from the inside. After repeated calls went unanswered, she sought help from neighbours, who broke open the door and found him hanging. They informed the police. A police team reached the spot and got the scene examined by forensic and fingerprint experts. No suicide note was recovered.

During the inquiry, Yogesh's maternal uncle told police that he had limited contact with his family in recent months. Police also said Yogesh had travelled to his village two days earlier but returned midway and appeared disturbed thereafter. An officer said the autopsy was conducted on Monday, and the body was handed over to the family. "Statements have been recorded and

Construction, tree-felling rampant in protected Aravalis, NGT seeks action

Noida.(Agency)

National Green Tribunal (NGT) has set a deadline for various agencies and authorities amid mounting concerns over alleged damage to the city's fragile Aravali landscape. In an order delivered on Jan 30 — that was uploaded on Saturday — NGT gave four weeks to the Centre, Haryana principal chief conservator of forests, the state govt, Haryana State Pollution Control Board (HSPCB), the divisional forest officer and the district wildlife officer to respond to allegations of construction, tree loss, illegal borewells and disruption of wildlife corridors in the ecologically sensitive Aravali range in the city's Sector 54. The tribunal was hearing a plea, filed by environmentalist Vaishali Rana, alleging that the unauthorised constructions stood within the ecologically sensitive Aravali Range, which functions as a wildlife corridor supporting diverse fauna and bird species. The matter is now listed for April 24. The bench — headed by chairperson Prakash Srivastava and expert member A Senthil Vel — allowed additional time after the state govt counsel sought four weeks to place responses on record.

The tribunal first took up the matter on July 28, 2025, observing that the plea raised "substantial issues relating to compliance of environmental norms", and issued notice to all concerned authorities. According to the July 2025 order, the plea flagged rampant construction, dumping of debris and mud to flatten land, cutting and burial of fully grown trees, illegal digging of borewells, filling of natural gorges and gulches, installation of electricity poles inside forest areas, construction of a 1.5km motorable road through the Aravalis, noise pollution from loudspeakers, plastic pollution and commercial activity inside the forest zone.

Delivery executive dies as auto, hit by reversing car, topples on e-scooter in Noida

Noida.(Agency)

A delivery executive died after his e-scooter collided with an auto-rickshaw near Sector 62 on Monday morning.

Police said a car reversing on the road collided with the oncoming auto-rickshaw, which overturned and crushed the scooter that was next to it. The scooter rider, Ghulam (22), was critically injured as shards from the auto's broken windscreens slit his throat, causing severe bleeding. He later died during treatment at Kailesh Hospital in Sector 71. The auto driver sustained some

bruises in the incident. He was taken into custody along with the car driver, but not arrested, as Ghulam's family was yet to reach Noida and submit a complaint. Police also seized both the car and the auto.

The body has been sent for autopsy. According to cops, Ghulam, originally from Farrukhabad, worked as a delivery executive for Blinkit. On

Monday, he had picked up an order around 9 am from the company's office, around 200 metres from the spot, when he was hit. After the accident, several delivery executives staged a protest and tried to block the road near the hospital for nearly an hour, seeking accountability and compensation for Ghulam's family. Agitators claimed police used force as they removed protesters from the road. A senior police officer, however, dismissed the charges. Later in the day, Blinkit delivery executives in the area went on strike for the day, disrupting services.



Fix Umang Bhardwaj Chowk-Dwarka Expressway stretch in 24 hours, says CM Saini

Gurgaon.(Agency)

Haryana chief minister Nayab Singh Saini on Monday directed officials to ensure that a severely damaged stretch linking Dwarka Expressway and Umang Bhardwaj Chowk should be "pothole-free within 24 hours".

Taking cognisance of a complaint on the poor condition of the road from Umang Bhardwaj Chowk in Sector 10A via Gadoli up to Dwarka Expressway, Saini told officials to "remove encroachments immediately". "Irrespective of the department concerned — whether HSIIDC, GMC or GMDA — necessary action must be taken as per rules to repair all roads and make them motorable within one month," Saini said, while chairing a district public relations and grievance redressal committee meeting. He emphasised strict accountability and "swift action". The CM took serious note of complaints.

Out of 17 grievances presented, the CM resolved 12 on the spot and issued instructions for status reports on the remaining cases. Saini also announced relief for over 7,000 residents of Sector 85, where a long-pending road blockage issue was cleared, paving the way for a 24-metre connecting road in two weeks. He ordered urgent measures to fix chronic waterlogging in Surat Nagar Phase I within one month.

As regards a complaint submitted by Carnation Residency RWA, Sector 85 pertaining to road obstruction, the CM constituted a committee of concerned departments. Based on the committee's report, the private land in question was purchased by the builder and the process of removing old structures built there began. Thereafter, within two weeks, a 24-metre-wide connecting road will be constructed, establishing direct connectivity with Sector 86 main road



and Dwarka Expressway. This decision will provide major commuting relief to around 7,000 residents and 800 school students. As to the long-standing waterlogging problem in Surat Nagar Phase I, he directed officers to ensure resolution within one month. "All affected lanes should be freed from waterlogging and renovated to provide

relief to local residents. Proper drainage arrangements should be restored immediately and pumps should be installed wherever required to remove stagnant water," Saini said, adding, "The govt is fully committed to the overall development of Gurgaon and the resolution of citizens' problems." He also directed regular monitoring of the works and strict action against responsible officers if deadlines are not met. Later in the evening, Saini inaugurated Nagesh Trophy Men's National T20 Cricket Tournament for the Blind at Tau Devi Lal Stadium. "Our govt is committed to ensuring that every talent gets a platform and every dream gets wings. To provide better training and opportunities to para-athletes, special sports infrastructure and a separate stadium will be developed for them in the state," he said.

'Agreement-resale-leaseback' — dubious web at 32nd Milestone: Main accused Dhruv Dutt, linked to KoD promoters, arrested last week

Gurgaon.(Agency)

The economic offences wing of Gurgaon police is investigating what it describes as an "agreement-resale-leaseback" transaction pattern in a commercial unit at 32nd Milestone, one of Gurgaon's biggest office hubs. Investigators are examining documents, financial trails and the role of multiple entities connected to a deal involving a 3,000 sqft first-floor unit. Officials said this leaseback arrangement is a key aspect of the alleged modus operandi under scrutiny, as it enabled control of the property to remain with linked entities despite changes in ownership on paper. According to police, the unit worth Rs 2.5 crore — in Sector 15 Part-II — was sold through an agreement in 2021 and though payment was received, conveyance deed was not executed in favour of the initial buyer. The same unit, according to police, was subsequently sold to multiple other purchasers between 2022 and 2023 through separate conveyance deeds. The space was, however, later taken back on a long-term lease by a related hospitality firm — 32nd Vista Pvt Ltd — allowing continued use of the property. Company director Dhruv Dutt Sharma, who is related to promoters of Kingdom of Dreams (KoD), is the main accused in the case. He was arrested last week.

There was no immediate response available from Sharma or the company linked to the project at the time of publication. Police emphasised that the investigation is ongoing and "all allegations are yet to be tested in court". According to a police statement, the complainant company — Tram Ventures Private Limited — paid the full amount and signed the agreement with 32nd Vista Pvt Ltd — which, according to the police complaint, was earlier known as Apra Motels — but the conveyance deed was not executed in its favour despite repeated follow-ups. The Apra Group was a key partner in the ownership of the now closed iconic entertainment venue — Kingdom of Dreams (KoD) — in Sector 29.

Drone mapping kicked off in Nuh to track mining violations in Aravalis

Gurgaon.(Agency)

The Nuh district administration has begun carrying out drone mapping to track fresh violations and changes on the ground in the Aravalis, even as the region continued to tackle illegal mining in eco-sensitive pockets of the Aravali belt.

Nuh deputy commissioner Akhil Pilani told TOI that the exercise is meant to create a visual baseline and help detect even small-scale excavation or new access routes early. "We have tied up with Driishya Haryana for drone mapping. We carried out the mapping of the Aravalis. We plan to carry it again in three months to compare the images," Pilani said.

Officials said the periodic aerial surveys will focus on vulnerable stretches of the Aravali Range in and around Nuh, especially Basai Meo and adjoining

villages, which have seen repeated allegations of illegal stone and soil extraction. The move follows last year's controversy in Basai Meo, where a hillock was razed and informal roads were carved



out to ferry mined material across the Haryana-Rajasthan border. Residents then

complained of trolleys entering villages, loading material, and leaving before enforcement teams could reach the spot. Joint inspections by forest, mining, and enforcement agencies failed to catch operators on site, underlining the difficulty of policing rugged terrain through conventional means.

In a parallel effort to physically block mining corridors, authorities last year converted two illegal roads in Basai Meo into green zones by planting around 7,500 saplings over a 15 km ridge stretch. Forest officials said the rapid afforestation drive was designed not just as ecological restoration but as a permanent barricade against vehicle movement into sensitive hill areas repeatedly exploited by mining operators.

Burglars strike at home, hold family captive, steal gold

Gurgaon.(Agency)

A private school teacher and his family were held captive in their own house in Sector 23 on Saturday night by three armed men who broke in and looted gold jewellery and cash from them, the police said. The suspects, who are currently absconding, have been booked under sections 309(4) (robbery), 311 (robbery, or dacoity, with attempt to cause death or grievous hurt), 331(4) (lurking house-trespass or house-breaking), and 351(3) (criminal intimidation) of the BNS at the Palam Vihar police station. An officer said CCTV cameras had captured the suspects entering the house through a window. However, their faces were covered so they are yet to be identified, he added. The suspects, according to sources, carried weapons. "While the complainant, Nitish Grover, and his elderly mother were sleeping on the ground floor, his wife and



children were on the upper floor of the house. The accused persons roamed inside the house for a few minutes before

entering their rooms with sticks. The accused allegedly kept the family captive before fleeing the spot with the jewellery and cash," the officer said. However, a senior officer denied that the family was held captive. "We have registered a case and will trace the suspects soon," he said.

Another officer, on condition of anonymity, said that the complainant, a school teacher in a prominent private school, reached out to the police a day after the crime. "The family was distressed. The complainant did not inform the police immediately after the crime and instead came to us on Sunday, and thus we lost crucial time. We are checking the CCTV cameras near the spot and probing all possible angles. We will nab the suspects soon," he said.

Gurgaon has only 541 anti-smog guns to fight bad air, needs 246 more

Faridabad.(Agency)

The city has emerged as the "biggest laggard" where anti-smog guns are concerned. The city requires 787 anti-smog guns but has only 541 available — a gap of 246 units. In fact, several Haryana cities continue to face major shortfalls in anti-smog guns despite repeated winter action plans, according to data submitted to the Commission for Air Quality Management.

An anti-smog gun is a cannon-shaped device that sprays fine particles of water into the air, creating an artificial mist that helps settle dust, PM2.5 particles and other pollutants. The system is connected to a water tank for continuous supply and can be mounted on a truck, allowing it to cover larger construction areas.

Coming back to the city, of the 246 units required, 235 are static guns and 11 are mobile units. While 528 static guns are currently deployed at construction sites larger than 5,000 sqm, as per Haryana State Pollution Control Board

(HSPCB) norms, the city still falls significantly short of the required number. The shortfall in mobile units alone is estimated to cost around Rs 6 crore, which officials say may be sought from CAQM for truck-mounted smog guns. According to norms issued by the HSPCB, at least one anti-smog gun must be installed at a construction site spanning 5,000–10,000 sqm. Sites measuring 10,001–15,000 sqm are required to deploy two such machines, while projects covering 15,001–20,000 sqm must have three. Large construction sites exceeding 20,000 sqm are mandated to install four anti-smog guns. These norms are aimed at lowering dust and particulate emissions in the region, especially as air pollution in Delhi-NCR turns severe every winter. "We will ask those not complying with the norms to follow them. If they fail to do so, penalties will be imposed," said an HSPCB officer (Gurgaon).

Faridabad, too, shows gaps in mobile anti-smog

infrastructure. While all seven required static guns are in place, only eight of the 15 required mobile units are available, leaving a shortfall of seven. The estimated cost to bridge this gap is Rs 3.85 crore, with funding proposed through the environment protection charge (EPC) fund. In Manesar, no static anti-smog guns are required or available. However, of the four mobile units required, only two are currently in place, while the remaining two are under technical evaluation. The estimated cost for procurement is Rs 0.90 crore, with funds indicated as available.

Sonipat faces shortages in both categories. Of three required static guns, only one is available, while five mobile units are missing against a requirement of six. The estimated cost to fill the gap is Rs 2.5 crore, proposed to be funded through CPCB funds, while only Rs 50 lakh is currently available. Rohtak has one static anti-smog gun short, with none available against a

requirement of one. Its mobile requirement has been met, with two units already deployed. The cost to bridge the static gap is pegged at Rs 0.45 crore. In Karnal, both static and mobile anti-smog guns remain unavailable despite a requirement of one each. Tenders have been invited and officials have indicated that funding support will come from CPCB. Panipat shows one of the widest gaps relative to its size. All five required static anti-smog guns are missing, with an estimated cost of Rs 0.20 crore.

In the mobile category, while two units are available with the municipal corporation, seven required units under HSIIDC are yet to be procured. The total estimated cost for mobile units stands at Rs 3.36 crore, with funding arrangements underway between CPCB, the Panipat municipal corporation, and HSIIDC. The use of anti-smog guns in Delhi-NCR gained momentum after Supreme Court of India in Nov 2019 directed the central govt to install smog towers and anti-

smog guns to combat air pollution in the region and

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Punjab State Scheduled Caste Commission orders to transfer Moti Nagar School Headmaster and complete investigation

The Sikh Times

Malagar khamano
Fatehgarh Sahib,
February 11: The Punjab
State Scheduled Caste



Commission has sent a letter to the Director School Education on February 9, ordering the transfer of the Head Teacher of Government Model Primary School Moti Nagar (Ludhiana District) with immediate effect, so that the investigation into the case of serious allegations of discrimination, harassment and defamation leveled by a female teacher of the school itself can be prevented from being affected. It is worth mentioning here that regarding this issue, the Democratic Teachers Front Punjab (Ludhiana District), 6635 ET Teachers Union Ludhiana and 4161 Master Cadre Union are demanding

NAME CHANGE
I, PARAS son of Shri DINESH KUMAR residing at House No. 558, Pocket 1, Sector A6, DDA Flats, Narela North West Delhi, Delhi-110040, have changed my name from PARAS to PARAS NARESH for all future purposes.

NAME CHANGE
I, hitherto known as MANOJ KUMAR son of Shri MUKTI PAL residing at A-56, Khiribabad, Near New Friends Colony, New Friends Colony, South Delhi, Delhi-110025, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as MANOJ KUMAR PAL.

NAME CHANGE
I, B. TULASI is legally daughter of No. GS-187152K Rank-SFWALA Name- BN RAMANA NAIK HQ DGRB R/o 4-126 & B PALLI TANDA MUDIGUBBA A P BULLI TANDA DORIGULLA, DISTT-SRI SATHYASAI, ANDHRA PRADESH(515111), have changed my name from B. TULASI to BHUKYA THULASI and date of birth from 06/04/2007 to 07/04/2007 for all future purposes. Vide affidavit dated 10.02.2026 before Sub Division Magistrate Delhi.

NAME CHANGE
I, SUSMITA RAI is a legally wedded spouse of No. GS-186068X Rank-PNK Name DHARAMBEER RAY presently residing at DHARMER, SALEMUR DIST DEORA, (UTTAR PRADESH)-274509, have changed my name from SUSMITA RAI to SUSHMITA RAI and my date of birth from 08/03/1984 to 01/01/1985 for all future purposes. Vide affidavit dated 10.02.2026 before Sub Division Magistrate Delhi.

NAME CHANGE
I, No. GO-005533M Rank-PVT SECY Name-K RAMESH R/o HNO, 4/571 VILL MANGAMMAPURAM, PO-KANAKAMUTLU, DIST-KRISHNAGIRI, (TAMIL NADU)-635002, have changed my name from R PRIYADARSHANI to PIRYADHARSHAN R for all future purposes. Vide affidavit dated 10.02.2026 before Sub Division Magistrate Delhi.

NAME CHANGE
I, seema rani W/O Dharmaender Singh R/o 555 GT road manesarwan park shahdara Delhi 110032, changed my name to Seema

NAME CHANGE
I, CHAUDHARI ARUN DODHU is legally father of No. 2813764L Rank-HAV Name-CHAUDHARI JAGDISH ARUN Presently resident of VILL-BORKHEDA, POST -BORKHEDA, TEH- DHARANGAON,DIST- JALGAON (MAHARASHTRA)-425104, have changed my name from CHAUDHARI ARUN DODHU to ARUN CHAUDHARI for all future purposes. Vide affidavit dated 29.01.2026 before Public Notary Delhi.

NAME CHANGE
I, No. 192946Y Rank- JE(CIV) Name-AEET SINGH, Ro HQ DGRB, NARAYANA RING ROAD DELHI CANTT-110100, have changed my name from ARNAV SAKERWAL to ADHIRAJ SAKARWAL for all future purposes. Vide affidavit dated 10.02.2026 before Sub Division Magistrate Delhi.

NAME CHANGE
I, KAUSHAL BANSAL S/O SURENDRA BANSAL R/o A-403, Geotech Pristine Avenue, Gaur City - 2, Greater Noida West, Chipyana Khurd Urf Tigr, Gaur Budha Nagar, Uttar Pradesh - 201009, have changed the name of my minor daughter VIDHI aged 13 years and she shall hereafter be known as VIDHI BANSAL.

NAME CHANGE
I, SURENDRA-PRASAD SAHU S/o KAPLESHWAR SAHU R/o 268 - F, Hauziani Court, Malviya Nagar, South Delhi , Delhi - 110011, have changed the name of my minor daughter SHAUMYA aged 5 years and she shall hereafter be known as SOUMYA KUMARI.

Public Notice
It is for general information that I Rajesh Kumar Tarwani S/o Lal Singh Tarwani, R/o WZ-572 B2, Naraina Village, South West Delhi, Delhi, 110028, declare that name of mine and my father has been wrongly written as Prem Lal and Shyam Lal in my Aadhar card No. 3799 7650 4127. The actual name of mine and my father are LALIT SARADAR AND BADRI SARADAR, respectively which may be amended accordingly.

Public Notice
It is for general information that I Lalit Kumar Tarwani S/o Lal Singh Tarwani, R/o WZ-572 B2, Naraina Village, South West Delhi, Delhi, 110028, declare that name of mine and my father has been wrongly written as Prem Lal and Shyam Lal in my Aadhar card No. 3799 7650 4127. The actual name of mine and my father are LALIT SARADAR AND BADRI SARADAR, respectively which may be amended accordingly.

NAME CHANGE
I, JAVED S/O NADIM R/O C-35Y DDA FLATS JAHANGIRPUR DELHI-110033.HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO SK JAVED ALI.

justice for the victim teacher by transferring the school head and conducting an impartial investigation by Grade-A women officers and taking appropriate action.

plaints against those who stood in her support, using their influence to destroy evidence and by misusing the school's letterhead and position without the approval of

the staff register without authorization and was humiliated, of which there is documentary evidence. Earlier, the Head Teacher had been taking Rs. 2200 every year on various pretexts and Rs. 300 every month under pressure in the name of cleaning the school, of which the slips are also available. After the Head

NAME CHANGE

I, SHAMA PRAVEEN W/O MOHD FURKAN R/O D-490 WEST VINOD NAGAR, SHAKARPUR, DELHI 110022 CHANGED MY NAME TO SHAMA PARVEEN

NAME CHANGE

I, Santosh Kumar Rajak S/O Bhagru Ram R/O 120 A gali no-9 Kripal Singh ki kothi agarwali dharamshala road meethapur EXTN 3 part 3 south Delhi 110044, changed my name to Santosh Kumar.

NAME CHANGE

I, SACHIDANAND S/O NAND KISHORE PRASAD residing at H NO-853, 5th FLOOR, TOWER-B, SAYA ZINTAH, AHINSA KHAND, INDIRAPURAM, GHAZIABAD, UTTAR PRADESH-201014, have changed my name to SACHIDANAND for all future purposes.

NAME CHANGE

I, A/N Savitha W/o A. V. Surya Prasad R/o Ganapathi Layout 1st Cross, PO-Vidyanagar Shimoga, Dist-Shimoga, Karnataka - 577203, have changed my name to Savitha N Puranik.

NAME CHANGE

I, Parveen Begum W/o MD Rustam R/o A-196, Veer Vihar, Madan Pur Dabas, Delhi-110081, have changed my name to PERVEEN permanently.

NAME CHANGE

I, Abdul Mujahid S/O Umarddeen R/O 47 1st Floor Joga bai EXTN jama nagar Delhi 110025, changed my name to Abdul Mujahid.

NAME CHANGE

I, Santosh Kumar Rajak S/O Bhagru Ram R/O 120 A gali no-9 Kripal Singh ki kothi agarwali dharamshala road meethapur EXTN 3 part 3 south Delhi 110044, changed my name to Santosh Kumar.

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NEWS BOX

Epstein accomplice Ghislaine Maxwell seeks Trump clemency before testimony

WASHINGTON. (Agency)

Jeffrey Epstein's accomplice Ghislaine Maxwell refused on Monday to answer questions from a congressional panel but said she was prepared to speak if granted clemency by President Donald Trump. Maxwell, 64, who is serving a 20-year prison sentence for sex trafficking, was subpoenaed by the House Oversight Committee to discuss her relations with Epstein. Rather than answer the committee's questions, however, the former British socialite invoked her Fifth Amendment right to not incriminate herself. "As expected, Ghislaine Maxwell took the Fifth and refused to answer any questions," committee chairman James Comer told reporters. "This is obviously very disappointing."

"We had many questions to ask about the crimes she and Epstein committed as well as questions about potential co-conspirators," he said.

Maxwell's attorney, David Markus, said she would be prepared to speak publicly if granted clemency by Trump. "If this Committee and the American public truly want to hear the unfiltered truth about what happened, there is a straightforward path," Markus said in a statement. "Ms Maxwell is prepared to speak fully and honestly if granted clemency by President Trump." Markus also said that Trump and former president Bill Clinton -- both of whom were once friendly with Epstein -- are "innocent of any wrongdoing." Ms Maxwell alone can explain why, and the public is entitled to that explanation," he said. Maxwell is the only person convicted of a crime in connection with Epstein, who died in a New York jail cell in 2019 while awaiting trial for sex trafficking.

Maxwell was convicted in 2021 of supplying underage girls to Epstein, who had ties to powerful business executives, politicians, celebrities and academics, and had been subpoenaed to testify virtually from the Texas prison where she is serving her sentence.

Her deposition comes amid the recent release by the Justice Department of millions of documents, photographs and videos related to the investigation into Epstein.

'Act Now': Global Body Flags Rise In Violence Against Hindus In Bangladesh Ahead Of Polls

world. (Agency)

A broad international alliance of human rights organisations, faith groups, and civil society leaders has issued an urgent global appeal warning that Hindus in Bangladesh are facing escalating violence and systematic persecution under the interim government led by Muhammad Yunus, just days before national elections scheduled for February 12. Coordinated by the Hindus Advancing Human Rights Initiative (HAHRI), the letter—endorsed by more than 125 organisations and individuals across 15 countries—called on the United Nations, the United States, the European Union, India, and other international stakeholders to take immediate, enforcement-oriented action, warning that continued inaction risks the erasure of an indigenous religious minority through what signatories describe as sustained ethnic and religious cleansing.

With Bangladesh heading into national elections on Thursday, mounting international concern is focusing on the deteriorating condition of the country's Hindu minority under the interim administration led by Muhammad Yunus. Human rights advocates warned that persistent violence, intimidation, and forced displacement of Hindus have intensified since the political transition of August 2024, raising serious questions about minority safety and democratic credibility ahead of the polls. The global coalition calls for international intervention to protect Hindus in Bangladesh, saying that the systematic pattern of persecution has worsened under the Yunus-led interim government.

Girl In Singapore Suffers Tongue Burns After McDonald's Staff Mistake

world. (Agency)

A three-year-old girl in Singapore suffered severe tongue burns after drinking hot water that was mistakenly poured into her insulated water bottle at a McDonald's outlet, AsiaOne reported. The incident occurred on February 1, 2026, at the McDonald's Ridout Tea Garden in Queensway, and the details were shared on Facebook on February 4 by Ridhuan Muhamad, who is the girl's father and a former national footballer. "What was meant to be a normal outing turned into a hospital trip after my daughter was accidentally given boiling hot water instead of cold water as we asked for," the 41-year-old wrote. Muhamad said they had requested cold water for his daughter's bottle, but the staff member misunderstood and filled it with hot water instead. The girl took a sip and immediately cried in pain, prompting her parents to rush her to the hospital.

"The filling area was not visible, and when the bottle was returned to me, there was no verbal warning. I assumed it contained cold water, as requested," he wrote. He also said that the staff didn't seek confirmation before filling the bottle.

"If not because of the staff member's complacency and negligence, this incident could have been avoided," he told AsiaOne. The girl struggled to eat and drink for several days and was traumatised by the incident. She is stable now. Ridhuan emphasised the importance of double-checking requests, especially when children are involved. He hopes the incident serves as a reminder for parents and food outlets to prioritise caution. Notably, he also mentioned that as parents, they were also partly responsible. "We never said the outlet was entirely to blame."

In recent weeks, images of emaciated livestock in the arid area near the Somali border have shocked many in a region that reels from the effects of climate change.

KAMPALA. (Agency)

Drought conditions have left over 2 million people facing hunger in parts of Kenya, with cattle-keeping communities in the northeast hardest hit, according to the United Nations and others. In recent weeks, images of emaciated livestock in the arid area near the Somali border have shocked many in a region that reels from the effects of climate change. In recent years, rainy seasons have become shorter for some communities, exposing them to drought. Normally, animals are the first to die. The

livestock losses echo what happened between 2020 and 2023, when millions of animals died in the region that extends from Kenya into parts of Ethiopia and Somalia. At the time, a famine predicted for Somalia was averted by a surge in international aid. Four consecutive wet seasons have failed in parts of the Horn of Africa, which juts into the Indian Ocean. The wet season from October to December was one of the driest ever recorded, according to the U.N. health agency. Because the rains were brief, parts of eastern Kenya were the driest they have been during that season since 1981.

Some 10 counties in Kenya are experiencing drought conditions, according to the National Drought Management Authority. The northeastern county of Mandera, bordering Somalia, has reached the "alarm" classification, which means critical water shortages have led to the death of livestock and the wasting of children. The suffering extends into Somalia, Tanzania and even Uganda, where many are threatened by similar

weather patterns and water shortages, the World Health Organization said in late January. In southern Somalia, an assessment by the Islamic Relief aid group found "shocking food shortages as families



flee the region's worsening drought. In Somalia, long vulnerable to drought conditions, over 3 million people have left their homes, seeking shelter in camps for the internally displaced. But support is not enough, with 70% of the internally displaced in the city of Baidoa surviving on

one meal a day or less, Islamic Relief said in a statement, adding that children in the camps are "showing visible signs of malnutrition and wasting." Experts say much of what's happening is due to climate change. The Indian Ocean has become warmer, feeding some of the more destructive tropical storms in recent years. At the same time, drought conditions have become longer, more intense and more severe. All of that is devastating for Africans whose economic mainstay is rain-fed agriculture, making them vulnerable to extreme weather. Many farmers say increasing temperatures deny livestock pasture and kill their crops. Africa is particularly vulnerable to extreme weather events because it is less equipped to prepare for natural disasters. Despite contributing only 3% to 4% of global emissions, according to the U.N., the continent is one of the most exposed to the effects of climate change.

MGR's iconic song 'Naalai Namathe' played at lunch during PM Modi's Malaysia visit

KUALA LUMPUR. (Agency)

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, on his two-day visit to Malaysia, received a warm welcome from the Indian community and friends of India in Kuala Lumpur. The visit began with meetings, cultural programs, and time spent with members of the Indian diaspora, highlighting the strong people-to-people ties between the two countries.

During the visit, PM Modi attended a lunch hosted by Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim on Saturday evening. PM Modi later posted on his X account about the moment and mentioned the "special song" played during lunch. One of the songs at the lunch hosted by the Malaysian PM was from the 1975 classic Tamil masala film, which starred M.G. Ramachandran (MGR). In his post, he wrote, "At the lunch hosted by my friend, PM Anwar Ibrahim, one of the songs sung was Naalai Namathe, from a movie starring the great MGR! PM Anwar Ibrahim, like several of us in India, is a big fan of MGR!" Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim also shared details of the visit on social



media. Part of his tweet read, "On the first day of PM @narendramodi's visit last night, it began with a welcome at the Bunga Raya Complex, before we headed straight to Seri Kembangan to meet the Indian community. May the friendship between Malaysia and India, rooted in cultural, historical, and economic ties that have been intertwined for centuries, continue to blossom and strengthen for mutual benefit."

The reception offered a vivid showcase of India's civilizational legacy thriving far from its shores. Prime Minister Modi witnessed a series of traditional performances, including Nadhaswaram and Thavil recitals, the chanting of Thirumurai devotional hymns, Wayang Kulit shadow puppetry, and a Ramayana-themed Bharatanatyam presentation, reflecting centuries-old cultural links between India and Malaysia.

Israel says killed four militants exiting Gaza tunnel

GAZA CITY. (Agency)

Israel's military said Monday it had killed four armed militants who emerged from a tunnel in southern Gaza and attacked its troops, accusing the suspects of a "blatant violation" of the ceasefire. Despite a US-brokered truce that entered its second phase last month, violence has continued in the Palestinian territory, with Israel and Hamas trading accusations.

Gaza's health officials said that six people were killed on Monday by Israeli fire in several incidents separate to the one in Rafah, including four killed in an air strike on an apartment in Gaza City. In a statement about the tunnel incident, the Israeli military said, "A short while ago, four armed terrorists exited an underground tunnel shaft and fired towards soldiers in the Rafah area in the southern Gaza Strip.... Following identification, the troops eliminated



the terrorists." It said none of its troops had been injured in the attack, which it called a "blatant violation of the ceasefire agreement". Israeli troops

are continuing to operate in the area to locate and eliminate all the terrorists within the underground tunnel route", the military added. Hamas's armed wing described what it said was a "heroic resistance". The fighters "refused humiliation or submission in the besieged Rafah valley and chose martyrdom over surrender," the Ezzedine al-Qassam Brigades said in a statement. Hamas said in late November that dozens of its fighters were holed up in southern Gaza's tunnels, beneath areas controlled by the Israeli military. This was a sticking point in the early days of the ceasefire, with Israel insisting the militants posed a security threat, while Hamas sought safe passage for them. Since then, many of the fighters have been killed in clashes with Israeli troops during operations targeting tunnels near Rafah, according to the military. Rafah lies in an area held by Israeli forces following their withdrawal behind a so-called "Yellow Line" under the terms of the US-brokered ceasefire, in effect since October 10. Israeli troops still control more than half of Gaza, while the rest remains under Hamas authority. The Israeli military has in recent weeks launched.

Landmark trial accusing social media companies of addicting children to their platforms begins

LOS ANGELES. (Agency)

The world's biggest social media companies face several landmark trials this year that seek to hold them responsible for harms to children who use their platforms. Opening statements in one such trial in Los Angeles County Superior Court began on Monday.

Instagram's parent company Meta and Google's YouTube face claims that their platforms deliberately addict and harm children. TikTok and Snap, which were originally named in the lawsuit, settled for undisclosed sums. Jurors got their first glimpse into what will be a lengthy trial characterized by dueling narratives from the plaintiffs and the two remaining social media companies named as defendants. Meta lawyer Paul Schmidt spoke of the disagreement within the scientific community over social media addiction, with some believing it doesn't exist or that addiction is not the most appropriate way to describe heavy social media use.

"Addicting the brains of children"

Mark Lanier delivered the opening statement for the plaintiffs first, in a lively display where he said the case is as "easy as ABC," which he said stands for "addicting the brains of children." He called Meta and Google "two of the richest corporations in history" that have "engineered addiction in children's brains." He presented jurors with a slew of internal emails, documents and studies conducted by Meta and YouTube, as well as YouTube's parent company, Google. He emphasized the findings of a study Meta conducted called "Project Myst" in which they surveyed 1,000 teens and their parents about their social media use. The two major findings, Lanier said, were that the company knew children who experienced "adverse events" like trauma and stress were particularly vulnerable for addiction; and that parental supervision and controls made little impact. He also showed internal Google documents that likened some company products to a casino, and internal communication between Meta employees in which one



person said Instagram is "like a drug" and that employees are "basically pushers." At the core of the Los Angeles case is a 20-year-old identified only by the initials "KGM," whose case could determine how thousands of other similar lawsuits against social media companies will play out. She and two other plaintiffs have been selected for bellwether trials — essentially test cases for both sides to see how their arguments play out before a jury. Plaintiff grew up on YouTube, Instagram KGM made a brief appearance after a break during Lanier's statement and she will

return to testify later in the trial. Lanier spent time speaking about her childhood, and particularly focused on what her personality was like before she began using social media, saying her mother called her a "creative spark" as a child. She started using YouTube at age 6 and Instagram at age 9, Lanier said. Before she graduated elementary school, she had posted 284 videos on YouTube.

The outcome of the trial could have profound effects on the companies' businesses and how they will handle children using their platforms. Lanier said the companies' lawyers will "try to blame the little girl and her parents for the trap they built," referencing the plaintiff. She was a minor when she said she became addicted to social media platforms, which she claims had a detrimental impact on her mental health. Lanier said that despite the public position of Meta and YouTube being that they work to protect children and implement safeguards for their use of the platforms.

NEWS BOX

No ID, no name — until AI stepped in: How Agra Police cracked a chilling murder case

Nashik. (Agency)

When the Agra Police found the body of a young woman wrapped in a blanket near the Yamuna Expressway, they didn't have much to go on. Her face was caked in mud, making it hard to ascertain her features. The only clue they had was two words written on her hand: 'RS' and 'Sunny'.

That's when police hit upon the idea to use Artificial Intelligence to reconstruct the woman's face — managing to crack the case and identify her. On February 7, police were alerted that the body of a woman, with an injury mark on the neck, was lying on the roadside along the Expressway in Khandauli. A team was dispatched but couldn't find any ID on her.

To help establish her identity, a photograph of the victim's body was circulated widely by the police, even across social media platforms, to no avail. Police officers said the identification attempt failed mainly because the victim's eyes were closed and her face was covered with dirt. Deputy Commissioner of Police, Agra, Aditya said police then turned to AI to enhance and clarify the victim's facial features, which proved crucial in establishing her identity.

Using the tech, police said they first reconstructed her face and edited out the mud. Her eyes were also opened digitally to give her face a more natural appearance. The edited image was then put into a special application that enhanced her features.

Bombay HC grants bail to 2011 Mumbai triple blasts case accused, 14 years after his arrest

Mumbai. (Agency)

The Bombay High Court on Tuesday granted bail to Nadiim Akhtar Shaikh, 14 years after he was arrested in the 2011 Mumbai triple blasts case. A bench of Justices Ajey S Gadkari and Shyam C Chandak allowed an appeal by the nearly 35-year-old accused, who claimed that he had been incarcerated pending trial for over a decade following his arrest in January 2012, and there was no likelihood of the same getting completed in the near future.

The court directed Shaikh's release on furnishing a personal bond of Rs 1 lakh along with one or more sureties of the same amount, among other conditions. Shaikh had approached the high court in May 2022 after a special court rejected his bail plea and sought relief on the grounds of long incarceration pending trial in the case.

On July 13, 2011, three explosions rocked Dadar, Zaveri Bazaar, and Opera House in Mumbai, claiming 27 lives and injuring more than 100 others. The investigating agency charged 11 individuals in connection with the blasts, including suspected operatives of the outlawed terror group Indian Mujahideen (IM), for plotting the attacks in central and south Mumbai.

The accused were booked by Maharashtra Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS) under charges related to criminal conspiracy, murder, attempt to murder, causing hurt, and under relevant sections of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act and Maharashtra Control of Organised Crime Act (MCOCA).

Earlier, in November 2025, the high court had granted bail to another accused in the case, Kafeel Ahmed, 65, nearly 13 years after his arrest. One of the accused, Kawal Pthreja, an alleged hawala operator, died during the pendency of the trial. Yasin Bhatkal, a key IM operative facing the death penalty for the Hyderabad blasts, is among those charged in the triple blasts case.

ED busts cyber fraud cartel targeting US nationals in Telangana

HYDERABAD. (Agency)

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has unearthed a large-scale cyber fraud cartel operating illegal call centres that cheated US nationals, laundered money through cryptocurrency and accumulated assets over several years. Searches in Ahmedabad led to the seizure of cryptocurrency worth about \$12,000, cash of 13.5 lakh and the freezing of 31 bank accounts.

The Hyderabad zonal office of ED conducted searches on February 4 at six premises in Ahmedabad under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act. The probe was initiated based on FIRs registered by Cyberabad police and the CBI's IOD wing in New Delhi in cases related to organised cyber fraud and impersonation.

Investigations revealed that illegal call centres were operated by Mohammed Ansari alias Mohd Irfan Ansari, Akib Gulamrasul Ghanchi, Vikas K Nimir, Divyang Raval and Pradip V Rathod, along with their associates. Although operating from multiple locations, the call centres were controlled by the same group, using shared technical infrastructure, trained staff, call scripts and a centralised money-handling system.

The operators allegedly impersonated officials of US government agencies or private companies and intimidated victims by making false claims of unpaid loans, tax dues or impending legal action. Victims were coerced into buying gift cards or making digital payments.

Rs 35,000, a forged Aadhaar: How 15-year-old was lured into becoming illegal IVF donor in Prayagraj

Five people, including four women, were arrested after the teen's mother lodged a complaint. Police said the IVF centre where the teen allegedly underwent the procedure is also under scanner. They are also ascertaining if more victims were involved.

Lucknow. (Agency)

The Prayagraj Police have launched an investigation into a case of illegal IVF donation where a teenager was allegedly lured with money to become a donor and her age was falsified to show her as eligible for the procedure.

The alleged incident came to light after the 15-year-old girl's mother approached police on February 6 and lodged a complaint, alleging that her daughter had been kidnapped and made to undergo a procedure at an IVF centre in the city.

Police registered a case and arrested five persons, including four women: Rinki Hela and her daughter Palak, Kalpana Bhartiya, Seema Bhartiya and her son Himanshu, all residents of Prayagraj. Deputy Commissioner

of Police, Ganga Nagar (Prayagraj), Kuldeep Singh said the accused allegedly made a forged Aadhaar card to show the victim was 25 and married.

Police have questioned staff of the IVF centre where the teen allegedly underwent the procedure. DCP Singh said police have also written to the health department to examine whether there were any irregularities in the centre's functioning and sought a thorough inquiry into the functioning and compliance of other IVF centres in the district.

As per the eligibility criteria under the Assisted Reproductive Technology (Regulation) Act, 2021, only women between 23 and 35 years of age can donate. The woman may donate eggs only once in her

life and not more than seven eggs may be retrieved from her, it states. Further, a centre must not supply gametes of a single donor to more than one commissioning

police found that the minor victim and Palak worked as waitresses at a wedding. Police found that Palak, in collusion with her mother, allegedly lured the teenager with money — Rs 35,500 — to become an IVF donor by misleading her about the nature and legality of the procedure.

Police said the two took her to Seema whose son, Himanshu, allegedly made a fake Aadhaar card of the victim using a mobile app. Police claimed Seema subsequently took the minor, along with the forged document, to Kalpana — a registered agent at an IVF centre and Seema's niece.

Police said a fabricated consent affidavit was allegedly made in the victim's name to make the procedure appear lawful.



party (i.e. couples or single women seeking services). The accused, their role During questioning of the accused,

CIAL's Aero Park launches Kochi airport into aviation hub era

Presiding over the function, Industries Minister P Rajeeve said the airport's development model, which prioritises social justice and public welfare is exemplary.

KOCHI. (Agency)

Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan on Monday inaugurated the 36-acre Aero Park on the CIAL premises, enhancing the Kochi airport beyond conventional airport operations to become an aviation hub.

The chief minister highlighted how CIAL stands as a clear example of how development initiatives implemented over the past decade are reshaping the country. "Through CIAL, Kerala is demonstrating to the world that airports can serve as strong centres of industrial and economic growth," he said.

"Success of any development depends on adapting to changing times," Pinarayi said, emphasising that CIAL's strength



lies in its ability to implement timely changes, while consistently providing world-class airport facilities.

Developed as an integrated aviation ecosystem, the Aero Park brings together aircraft hangars, parking bays, training facilities, technical

service units and business infrastructure within a single campus. It will function with all the features of a special economic zone and have direct connectivity to both the airport's operational area and the city side.

"A flagship project of the Kochi

airport, the Aero Park will help in creating large-scale employment opportunities, generating significant tax revenue and building future-proof capabilities for the rapidly growing aviation sector," said CIAL managing director S Suhas.

Presiding over the function, Industries Minister P Rajeeve said the airport's development model, which prioritises social justice and public welfare is exemplary. He noted that CIAL was the first airport in India to swiftly overcome the crisis faced by the aviation sector during the Covid period, and return to profitability with strong turnover.

"The emphasis on business diversification played a key role in this achievement," Rajeeve pointed out.

A first in Gujarat: Ahmedabad gets CNG-based dog crematorium

Ahmedabad. (Agency)

THE CATTLE NUISANCE CONTROL DEPARTMENT (CNCD) of the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation (AMC) has operationalised, for the first time in the state, a corporation-managed and CNG-based crematorium for performing the last rites of pet dogs.

The reason for adopting a gas-fired dog cremator is that the burial of dogs after accidental or natural death can lead to soil pollution, pose risks of disease transmission and often face constraints of space availability, CNCD officials said on Monday.

Pet and stray dogs are susceptible to diseases such as canine distemper virus and rabies. AMC states that through this cremation process, viruses like canine distemper are effectively destroyed, thereby reducing the risk of infection spreading to other dogs. "Moreover, for pet dog owners who share a deep emotional bond with their pets and consider them as family members, the need for dignified last rites at the time of their demise has become essential. Keeping this emotional and social need in mind, the AMC has established this facility. This is also the first such pet dog crematorium operated by a municipal corporation in an urban area nationwide," CNCD's Head of Department Naresh



Rajput said. At the CNCD Animal Birth Control (ABC) Centre located on the Jamnajpur Cross Roads to Khodiyarnagar Cross Roads, within the Sewage Pumping Station campus at Behrampura, a CNG gas-operated dog crematorium (animal cremator) has been installed at a cost of Rs 30 lakh. In addition, a smaller organ cremator machine for the disposal of organs generated during dog sterilisation surgeries has been functioning within the campus for the past two years.

Looking ahead, and considering future demand and utility, plans are also in place to install two more dog crematoriums. At present, 16,843 pet dog owners have registered 19,162 pet dogs in the city, for

whose benefit this project has been developed. The move is also in accordance with the Animal Birth Control (ABC) Rules-2023 and National Action Plan for Dog Mediated Rabies Elimination from India by 2030, (NAPRE-2030) issued by the Government of India. Various initiatives under these rules, including vaccination and sterilisation of stray dogs, registration of pet dogs, medical treatment for sick dogs, dedicated feeding spots, welfare activities, and comprehensive care and treatment have been implemented by AMC.

Two injured due to suspected LPG cylinder blast in Bengaluru

BENGALURU. (Agency)

Two people were seriously injured after a major fire broke out allegedly due to a suspected LPG cylinder blast at a house here, police said on Tuesday.

The incident occurred at around 7 pm on Monday in Manjunath Layout in the city's K R Puram area, they said.

Poornima (46), the house owner, and Venkatesh (40), a tenant from a neighbouring house, sustained severe burn injuries in the explosion.

According to police, preliminary information suggested that a strong smell of gas emanated from one of the houses, following which Venkatesh alerted Poornima about the suspected leak. When she reached the spot and opened the house, the explosion occurred after the light was switched on, triggering a massive fire, a senior police officer said.

In the incident, Poornima sustained burn injuries and is stated to be in a critical condition. Venkatesh also suffered serious injuries. Both of them are under treatment at a hospital here, police said. The fire broke out in a two-storey building where Poornima resided on the first floor, while two other houses were located on the upper floor.



When the incident occurred, tenants of the affected house were away at work, police said. Fire and Emergency Services personnel rushed to the spot and brought the flames under control. A case has been registered at the K R Puram Police Station, and further investigation is underway.

Mamallan reservoir project on wetland begins, communities fear livelihood loss

Reservoir will submerge large swathes of Great Salt Lake ecosystem; it's our workplace not empty land, say fishers.

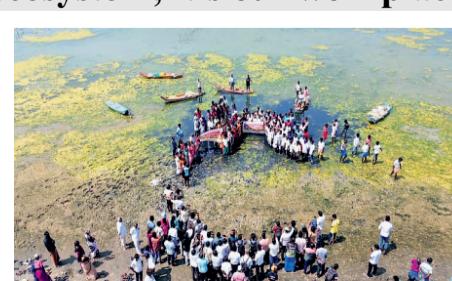
CHENNAI. (Agency)

Standing knee-deep in the shallow waters of the Great Salt Lake, Selvi Ramesh spends hours each day feeling through the mud with her bare hands, searching for prawns and crabs. "This wetland feeds my children," she said, during a fisherman's protest held on Monday on the banks of the lagoon. "If this water goes, we go hungry."

Selvi from Thiruvanthankai village, who belongs to the socio-economically backward Irular community, has three children, and, like several Irular families, depends entirely on the brackish backwaters for daily income. The proposed Kovalam-Mahabalipuram drinking water reservoir, she fears, will turn this wetland into a deep freshwater storage. The protest, organised by fishing communities from 16 coastal villages, comes amid

mounting opposition to the Water Resources Department's plan to build the large Mamallan Reservoir across coastal wetlands between East Coast Road and Old Mahabalipuram Road. The project will submerge more than 4,300 acres of marshes, mudflats, salt pans and backwaters, including large parts of the Great Salt Lake ecosystem.

"This is not empty land. This is our workplace," Selvi said. "We don't have boats or big nets. We survive by collecting prawns and crabs by hand." From Pudu Kalpakkam, Sadayan D and Elumalai P stood near their small boats tied along the wetland edge. Both said their families were resettled earlier in 1964, when the original Kalpakkam village was cleared for setting up the nuclear power plant. "We



lost our homes then. Now the government wants to take away our fishing grounds too," Sadayan said. "These wetlands still give us daily income," Elumalai said. "We catch live shrimp here. Big sea fisherman buy them as bait. That money feeds our families every day." Naturalist M Yuvan said the Great Salt

Lake is not just a livelihood zone but a critical ecological system. It has been listed by the Salim Ali Centre for Ornithology and Natural History (SACON) as one of Tamil Nadu's 141 prioritised wetlands, while the Wildlife Institute of India has identified it as an Important Coastal and Marine Biodiversity Area. Over 200 bird species, including more than 70 migratory species, have been recorded here, with winter counts running into tens of thousands.

"This backwater is a biological powerhouse," said TD Babu, Asia-Pacific environmental auditor and marine biologist. "You cannot recreate a backwater ecosystem elsewhere. It has tidal influence every six hours, which allows shrimp, crabs and molluscs to breed. If you convert this into a freshwater reservoir, you will kill everything."

'No proof of tip-off': Mumbai special court discharges studio owner in 2023 MCOCA case involving gangster's death

Lucknow. (Agency)

Noting that his name was mentioned in a panchama part of the chargesheet as a witness, a special court in Mumbai on Monday discharged a photo studio owner from a 2023 murder case of a gangster. Vishal Utekar was discharged by the special court designated under the Maharashtra Control of Organised Crime Act (MCOCA) on all charges, including murder and criminal conspiracy.

The Mumbai police arrested Utekar on allegations that he was the one who tipped off the co-accused that gangster Sumit Yerunkar was coming to his photo studio on December 24, 2023. Yerunkar was at the photo studio to get his photographs clicked to display them on flex banners in the Chunabhatti area for his birthday; five people arrived at the spot and fired at him, the police said. Utekar, who was first named as a witness, was then made an accused, with the police claiming that an accused's interrogation had revealed that he had informed them about the gangster's location.

Utekar, through his lawyer Prashant Pawar, had said that there was no proof of his involvement — the statement of the co-accused against him was not recorded, no call data records were collected, nor was any other proof of his being part of the organised crime syndicate given. The police had opposed the plea, saying that there was evidence to frame charges against him. The court said that the investigating officers admitted that the call records and confession statement of the co-accused were not brought before the court as evidence, and no proof was shown to claim that Utekar had tipped off the others about the gangster's visit to the studio.

Should You Break Friendships Over Politics

In the years since 2016, a peculiar genre of personal essay has emerged: the friendship autopsy. A relationship of ten, twenty, thirty years ends because of a vote, a yard sign, a social media post. The writers of these essays often describe the break as a reluctant necessity. They could not, in good conscience, remain close to someone who supported a particular candidate or policy. To do so would be to condone what they found unconscionable. I understand the impulse. I also think it is usually a mistake. The clearest illustration of what such breaks cost comes from Paris in 1952, when Jean-Paul Sartre and Albert Camus, two of the most celebrated intellectuals of the twentieth century, ended their friendship over politics. They had met in 1943, during the German occupation. Sartre was a philosophy teacher turned playwright; Camus, a decade younger, had edited the principal Resistance newspaper. For seven years they moved in the same circles, contributed to each other's publications, and appeared together often enough that the public saw them as leaders of a shared intellectual project.

Their friendship ended after Camus published *The Rebel*, a book arguing that revolutions, from the Jacobins to Marxism-Leninism, often begin by seeking justice but end by prioritising power. Political violence, even when justified by history or ideology, remained violence and could not be excused. The argument was aimed at the French Communist Party, with which Sartre had been closely aligned. He had defended Soviet policy and dismissed reports of labor camps as bourgeois propaganda. Camus treated this alignment as moral evasion. Sartre's journal published a hostile review. Camus responded with a letter addressed pointedly to "Monsieur le Directeur" rather than to Sartre by name. Sartre replied in the same issue. He accused Camus of philosophical incompetence, described his humanism as sentimental, and concluded that he had become "a victim of a dismal self-importance."

The friendship was over. No reconciliation followed. Sartre and Camus had disagreed before. What changed in 1952 was not the fact of disagreement but its character. Each stopped engaging with the other's arguments and began instead to treat those arguments as symptoms of a deeper moral failing. Camus became, in Sartre's account, a man whose moral seriousness masked complacency. Sartre, in Camus's view, became a man whose political commitment licensed cruelty. Today this pattern repeats constantly, accelerated by social media and sharpened by polarisation. Someone posts something; we decide what it says about them; we act on that judgment. The sequence can take minutes. We speak of "cutting people off" as though relationships were tumors.

The cost is easy to underestimate. Disagreement permits reply, clarification, and revision. Silence permits nothing. Whatever Sartre might have wished to say to Camus after 1952 remained unsaid. Whatever reconciliation might have occurred did not. I am not arguing that all relationships must be preserved regardless of political difference. Some positions genuinely are intolerable. But the threshold should be high, and we should be honest about what we sacrifice when we cross it. We lose not only the relationship but also the possibility of influence and the chance of persuasion. When Camus died suddenly in a car accident in 1960, Sartre published an obituary praising his "stubborn humanism" and calling his death an "unbearable absurdity." The tribute revealed how much the loss still mattered to him, despite eight years of estrangement. Whatever he might have wanted to say, he had waited too long to say it. The answer to what has been lost in such ruptures tends to arrive only when it is too late to be of any use to the people involved.

This was to be a good commercial assignment. Something that would keep the wallet warm for a while. A coffee table book was being planned for an organisation that had crossed a major milestone. The brief was spelt out in the first salvo: "You are a professional and know what to do. All I'm concerned with is that my boss should like it and be happy." Nice and simple. Except that it wasn't. A few months of work went down the drain and the wallet remained miserably unfed as both the boss and the commissioning person moved on to other (and better?) things. In a manner of speaking this was just as well, as the moment all this work wound its way to the rubbish bin, something else came along.

Within of course and outside the state too, there are two things that are instantly recognisable as Himachali. The first being the distinctive round 'pillbox' caps of the state. A political inflection has been given to them by the colour of the velvet band that decorates them. This, one surmises, is only because the leader of a political party favoured a particular colour, so needless to say, the other party had to drape itself with another. Meanwhile, for persons non-political, fashionable and for those who couldn't care less, this has led to a host of other designs and myriad colours adorning these caps.

The second instantly recognisable 'Himachali thing' are the Himachal Roadways buses that ply on numerous routes across North India. You'll find them on both highways and on narrow roads. At about this time of the year in 2024, I was commissioned by the Himachal Road Transport Corporation (HRTC) to put together a coffee table book to mark its golden jubilee.

As happens in assignments of this nature, one sometimes ends up learning more than what one may impart. Or expect. However, unlike many other similar assignments, where one is handed a task and often enough is expected to bumble one's way through, here the head of the organisation and many others who were a part of this remained completely involved in the process. The word I should use is 'proactive'. The result was that one had far greater access to the material one wanted or may even have missed, and the working remained smooth. Along the way, putting together the pages, one grew to admire the men, and now women, who work in adverse conditions and often enough hazard both life and limb on treacherous routes and in dangerous situations.

On the times that one walked across to the roadways' office, for reasons unknown, a dog who lived en route would accompany me and wait on the slope and then, walk back with me for some distance. One doesn't quite know if he was an unofficial-guardian or appointed-greeter of the transport office — but he was there every time one went. Expectedly, he'd stop some distance

Himachal's buses and the driving force

Navigating the inhospitable terrain, the drivers and conductors are heroes of sorts



away from the racing traffic on the highway, wag his tail and then park himself in a sunny spot.

If one was more superstitious than one is, one could almost consider that canine as a harbinger of good things. That dog, like most, seemed to have an individual character. As I was told: "Vehicles too have individual character. Ask any HRTC driver and he will tell you which six-wheeled princess takes well to the roads, which queen throws tantrums and has emotional breakdowns, and which king should be retired." Today, for many of us, aspirations have gone far beyond a bus ride and the time when the fare between Chandigarh, where I studied, and Shimla was a princely Rs 7.50. Despite the endless times one has been up and down that highway, one was prone to travel sickness. "Just swallow a tablespoon of diesel and you'll never be travel-sick again" was a piece of advice that was ignored.

Reminiscent of an earlier time when buses were a rare

commodity in rural India, there remain pockets where the arrival of a bus is still a cause for celebration. This was recently testified by a news report of the moment that the first bus arrived in the village of Tammun, in the Karsog area of Mandi district. It was welcomed the way a groom would be welcomed on his wedding day — complete with a ceremonial gateway, garlands and a host of Instagram and Facebook reels.

There was a time when an entire village could turn out to welcome the arrival of a bus. People would gather to see who was getting off and later, check who was getting in. The driver and conductor were heroes of sorts. They would be feted and welcomed. If there was an overnight stop and the bus had to turn around the following morning and leave, both the driver and the conductor would be hosted by someone. They were liberators of sorts. They held the means to move to the outside world — or to return home.

Work on Gandhi's vision, stop tussle over brand

In Bengaluru and Delhi, the Congress and the BJP are squabbling to appropriate Brand Gandhi. Both parties realise the endurance of the legacy at home and away. They should abjure from symbolism and work towards ensuring the inclusive State that the Mahatma envisioned



President Droupadi Murmu to withdraw VB-G GRAM G and bring back the old scheme.

But the larger contention is over Brand Gandhi. The Congress, seeking to establish itself as the Mahatma's original legatee, has resorted to symbolism and advised Karnataka government employees to wear khadi on one Saturday every month. It also proposes to prefix all gram

panchayats with 'Gandhi'. Not to be outdone, the BJP and JD(S) have portrayed Gandhi as a nationalist who wanted to establish a Ram Rajya. This Gandhi-versus-Gandhi narrative recently played out in parliament too, where the Congress leadership's use of the surname and the party's overuse of it in naming projects over 70 years were called into question by BJP leaders along with other aspects of the Nehru-Gandhi family's history.

Sensing the enduring strength of Brand Gandhi, the BJP, even while associating with his killer Nathuram Godse, does not want the Congress to appropriate his entire legacy. Gandhi as an icon provides credibility at home and on global platforms too. The BJP realises it cannot diminish Bapuji as an apostle of ahimsa. Whether Gandhi was committed to Ram Rajya or Gram Rajya, political parties should stop squabbling over his name and bring the nation back to the framework of his vision — a non-violent and inclusive State that focuses on the welfare of the most marginalised sections.

Fairness is the Prerequisite for a United India

Only with parental trust can the system shift from reflexive reaction to assessment-led response in cases of bomb scares in schools.



they contribute and what they receive remains a canyon. When Maharashtra contributes nearly 15 per cent of the national GDP but receives a pittance back in devolution, it is an affront to the dignity of the taxpayer.

Federalism is a contract of mutual respect and shared growth. When you rewrite that contract to punish those who followed the national mandate — those who controlled their population and educated their workforce — you aren't just practising poor economics; you are committing a federal sin. The Union's increasing reliance on cesses and surcharges is perhaps the most cynical aspect of this betrayal. By siphoning an estimated Rs 5.91 lakh crore in FY26 alone into pools not shared with the states, the Centre is running a parallel economy. Since these levies bypass the divisible

pool, the "41 per cent share" for states is a 41 per cent share of a pie that the Centre is busy eating from the edges. This is a subversion of the Constitution's intent, a fiscal manoeuvre that weakens the states to empower a monolithic centre. The exclusion is not limited to the ledger; it is etched into the very geography of our future. The 2026 infrastructure announcements, particularly regarding the seven high-speed rail corridors, reveal a geography of favouritism. While corridors like Chennai-Bengaluru and Hyderabad-Bengaluru are welcome, the "growth connectors" mysteriously stop where the real logistical potential begins. Where is the high-speed corridor connecting the industrial power sector cities of Coimbatore and Salem to the logistical hubs of Kochi and Mangalore? Why is the recently

operationalised Vizhinjam International Seaport — a project of national strategic importance — not being integrated into a high-speed freight or passenger spine? The healthcare sector tells an even more poignant story of disdain. Kerala, despite possessing a primary health sector, has once again been denied an AIIMS. The state has identified land, cleared hurdles, and pleaded for a tertiary-care institution for years. The denial is a direct message: your excellence in basic health means you don't deserve advanced central support. In our current system, a state that fails to manage its population is rewarded with more seats and more money, while a state that succeeds in every developmental metric is threatened with political and financial marginalisation. However, the fiscal strangulation is merely the preamble.

The looming threat of the 2026 Delimitation exercise is the final act. This is where the "Performance Penalty" turns into a total political eclipse. For decades, the South and the West have been the torchbearers of the national family planning mission. We were told it was our patriotic duty to manage our numbers. Now, we are being told that because we succeeded, our voice in the Parliament will be silenced. If seats are redistributed purely based on current population figures, the states that resisted social reform will gain absolute hegemony, while the performers will be reduced to spectators.

Nationalism must be a partnership of equals. The current trajectory is not just unfair; it is unsustainable. You cannot build a world-class economy by alienating the very people who produce the wealth. Fairness is the prerequisite for a united India. If we continue to punish performance and reward stagnation, we are not building a "Vikas Bharat" — we are dismantling the very foundations of our national unity. Let us hope the Centre realises that a nation is only as strong as the trust among its parts and rises above petty electoral politics.

Jai Ram Thakur blames Sukhu govt for delay in Central University Campus

Dharamshala.(Agency)

Former Chief Minister and Leader of Opposition Jai Ram Thakur alleged that the delay in the construction of the permanent campus of Central University of Himachal Pradesh was due to the Sukhu government's failure to deposit Rs 32 crore as Floor Area Ratio (FAR) charges.

Speaking after inaugurating the Inter-Zonal Kabaddi Tournament organised by the Central University, Thakur said the university administration had shown commendable commitment despite limited resources. "Had the university received adequate support, the progress would have been far better. The biggest hurdle today is the state government," he said.

Thakur honoured Himachal's daughters, who are Kabaddi World Cup champions, on the occasion and congratulated the university administration and participants for organising the event.

He asserted that the BJP would continue to fight "from the road to the House" against the government's decision and neglect, which he said was hampering the university's development.

He later addressed the party workers at Shahpur and celebrated the birthday of Rajeev Bhadrawaj, MP, representing the Lok Sabha seat of Kangra.

Mukh Mantri Sehat Yojna offers Rs 10 lakh cashless treatment: CM Mann

Contd.....Front page

I urge everyone not to get swayed by such canards." Detailing the safeguards in place, Bhagwant Singh Mann said, "The state government has put in place a foolproof mechanism under which the entire treatment process, from hospital admission to diagnosis, treatment, and discharge, is entirely free of cost." Issuing a clear warning to erring hospitals, the Chief Minister said, "If any hospital demands money from a patient under this scheme, a complaint should be lodged with the state government immediately." Assuring strict action, he added, "The government will take strict, punitive, and exemplary action against any hospital found indulging in such malpractices." Concluding his appeal, CM Bhagwant Singh Mann said, "I urge the people of Punjab to take maximum benefit of this scheme, which has already earned accolades from across the globe."

Bal Jogi Pargat Nath appointed Chairman of Advisory Board of Shrine Board of Bhagwan Valmiki Ji Tirath Sthal

Contd.....Front page

Located around 12 kilometres west of Amritsar on Chogawan Road, Bhagwan Valmiki Ji Tirath Sthal dates back to the period of the Ramayana and is revered as the hermitage of Maharishi Valmiki Ji. The sacred site houses an ancient holy tank and several temples, along with a hut that marks the place where Mata Sita gave birth to her twin sons, Luv and Kush. Also preserved at the Tirath are Maharishi Valmiki Ji's hut and the historic well with steps where Mata Sita is believed to have taken her bath. The Bedis of Punjab trace their lineage to Kush, while the Sodhis trace their descent from Luv, linking the site deeply with Punjab's spiritual and cultural history. A four-day fair has been held here since time immemorial, beginning on the full moon night in November. Situated nearly 16 kilometres west on Chogawan Road, Bhagwan Valmiki Ji Tirath Sthal continues to commemorate the enduring legacy and heritage of Maharishi Valmiki Ji.

Bhagwan Valmiki Ji Panorama stands as a lasting tribute to faith, heritage and dignity.

The Bhagwant Mann government has translated respect for Dalit faith into visible and lasting action at Bhagwan Valmiki Ji Tirath Sthal. In October 2024, Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann dedicated the state-of-the-art Bhagwan Valmiki Ji Panorama to the public at Bhagwan Shri Valmiki Ji Tirath Sthal, Amritsar, calling it a humble tribute to Adi Kavi Bhagwan Valmiki Ji, the author of the world's first epic, the Ramayana. Built over nine acres at a cost of ₹32.78 crore, the panorama blends advanced technology with deep narrative to present the life, philosophy and contributions of Bhagwan Valmiki Ji through 14 galleries, including depictions of his early life, the creation and features of the Ramayana, Mata Sita and Luv-Kush, Yog, Sanjeevani Vidya, the Ashwamedha Yagna, Yog Vashisht and his teachings. With modern visitor facilities such as a library, cafeteria and souvenir shop, the panorama reflects the Punjab government's commitment to preserving faith, honouring Dalit spiritual heritage and ensuring that centres of belief are developed with dignity, sensitivity and purpose.

Punjab State Scheduled Caste Commission orders to transfer Moti Nagar School.....

Contd.....Front page

Thus, creating an insulting environment for me in the school, my health and safety as a woman were affected. The teacher demanded from the Punjab government and higher education authorities that the head teacher of Moti Nagar School be transferred outside Ludhiana district on administrative basis and that an impartial investigation be conducted as per the norms and punishments prescribed under the Prevention of Sexual Harassment at Workplace (POSH) Act 2013 and the Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act and due justice be given to her.

The teacher leaders said that a joint meeting is being called at Isru Bhawan Ludhiana on February 16 to raise voice in favor of justice for the victim teacher, in which further programs will be decided after exchanging views.

'Har Ghar, Har Dwar Swachhta Ki Dastak' drive Chandigarh Mayor, MC Commissioner visit households: 'strictly follow waste segregation guidelines'

Urge residents to segregate waste into four categories and encourage them to adopt zero-waste practices

Chandigarh .(Agency)

The Chandigarh Municipal Corporation on Sunday launched an awareness campaign "Har Ghar, Har Dwar Swachhta Ki Dastak" under the Swachh Survekshan 2025-26 to generate mass awareness about cleanliness, scientific waste management and sustainable living practices. Mayor Saurabh Joshi formally launched the campaign at the Community Centre in Sector 15 in the presence of Municipal Commissioner Amit Kumar, Councillor Gurbaix Rawat, Joint Commissioner Dr Himanshu Gupta, and office bearers of various market welfare associations and resident welfare associations (RWAs).

Addressing the gathering, Joshi said, "Cleanliness begins at home. Active participation of citizens is the cornerstone of success in Swachh Survekshan." He urged residents to strictly adhere to waste segregation norms, reduce waste generation, and adopt in-house composting to minimise the amount of garbage sent to dumping grounds. The mayor appealed to residents to

make cleanliness a daily habit and work collectively to preserve Chandigarh's identity as



a clean and green city. The Commissioner said, "Cleanliness drives can achieve lasting results only with strong public cooperation. Citizens play a crucial role in helping municipal authorities effectively implement the Municipal Solid Waste Management Rules."

The Commissioner also stressed the importance of home composting, stating, "It strengthens the city's cleanliness drive while offering long-term

environmental and economic advantages."

As part of the initiative, Municipal Corporation teams will conduct door-to-door outreach programmes across the city to interact with residents and sensitise them about waste segregation at source. They will also distribute pamphlets detailing proper waste management practices. After the launch, the mayor and the Commissioner visited several households in Sector 15 and appealed to residents to strictly follow waste segregation guidelines and motivate others in their neighbourhoods to adopt the same practices. They urged residents to segregate waste into four different categories and encouraged them to adopt zero-waste practices at the household level.

MC officials sensitise residents on the importance of organising zero-waste events, reducing food wastage, and adopting home composting using kitchen and vegetable waste, explaining that home composting not only reduces the load on dumping sites but also provides environmental and economic benefits to households.

Punjab electricity board engineers flag PSPCL's 'unrealistic' power loss target

The engineers' body argues that the revision appears aimed at projecting a reduction in power purchase costs of more than Rs 5,200 crore over three years.

Ludhiana.(Agency)

The Punjab State Electricity Board Engineers Association (PSEBEA) has raised serious concerns over the revised multi-year tariff (MYT) petition submitted by Punjab State Power Corporation Limited (PSPCL) to the Punjab State Electricity Regulatory Commission (PSERC), calling the projected reduction in power distribution losses unrealistic and potentially harmful for the state's power sector.

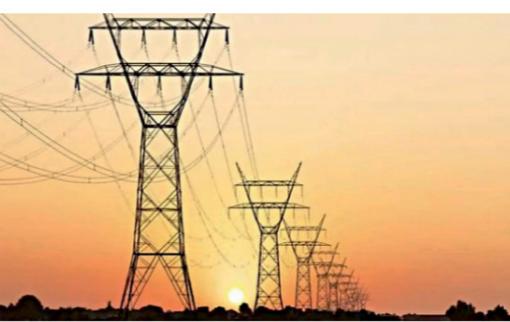
In a letter written by PSEBEA General Secretary Ajaypal Singh Atwal to the PSPCL chairman-managing director, the engineers' body has questioned the sharp revision made to the aggregate revenue requirement (ARR) projections for the control period from FY 2026-27 to FY 2028-29. Copies of the letter have also been sent to the chairman of

the PSERC, the power secretary, the chief secretary, and other senior officials.

PSPCL originally filed its MYT petition on November 28, 2025, proposing a gradual reduction in distribution losses from 12.75 per cent in FY 2026-27 to 12.20 per cent by FY 2028-29, based on what it described as realistic field conditions and operational assessments. However, in a revised ARR submitted on February 4, 2026, PSPCL drastically lowered the target loss for FY 2026-27 to 10 per cent.

According to PSEBEA, this amounts to an abrupt and unprecedented reduction of 2.75 per cent within a single year. The engineers' association has stated that such a sharp fall in losses is neither technically feasible nor

supported by past trends or existing ground conditions. The letter argues that the revision appears aimed at projecting a



reduction in power purchase costs of more than Rs 5,200 crore over three years, thereby showing a lower tariff requirement during the current MYT period.

The association has further objected to the treatment of loss funding

amounting to Rs 3,581.95 crore as non-tariff income in the revised ARR. As per the engineers, this defeats the purpose of loss funding under PSERC regulations and presents a distorted financial picture of the utility.

The PSEBEA has pointed out that achieving such a steep reduction in distribution losses would require substantial investment in strengthening the power distribution infrastructure. However, no adequate provisions for such capital

expenditure have been made in the approved business plan. In the absence of these investments, the assumptions used in the revised ARR lack credibility, the letter states. 'A risk to long-term financial stability'

Himachal police to impose heavy fines for illegal number plate and tyre modifications

Shimla .(Agency)

Himachal Pradesh Police have initiated strict action against vehicles with illegally altered number plates and non-standard tyres, announcing fines ranging between Rs 5,000 and Rs 10,000 under the provisions of the Motor Vehicles Act.

The move comes after receiving multiple complaints regarding unsafe and unlawful vehicle modifications across the state.

Recently, heavily modified Alto car was penalised in Hamirpur, following which the state police headquarters issued clear instructions to all district superintendents of police to intensify enforcement.

Police officials stated that the use of fancy number plates, non-standard fonts, stylised lettering, altered stickers, or tampered registration details is strictly prohibited. Such violations attract action under Section 177 of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988, and relevant provisions of the Central Motor Vehicles Rules, 1989. In addition to number plate violations, the police will also act against vehicles fitted with oversized or excessively wide tyres, tyres protruding beyond wheel arches, non-approved rims, or tyres that do not conform to manufacturer-approved specifications. These modifications are considered a serious safety hazard.

Director General of Police Ashok Tiwari stated that tampering with number plates is a legal offence and compromises vehicle identification. He added that unauthorised tyre modifications adversely affect vehicle stability, braking systems, and overall road safety, thereby increasing the likelihood of accidents.

Police have also observed attempts by motorists to evade online challans generated through camera surveillance.

In many areas, two-wheelers are being driven without displaying full registration numbers, while some vehicle owners apply grease or obscure number plates deliberately.

Amid high drama, Ludhiana MC House passes integrated solid waste mgt proposal; private firm to oversee garbage collection

Ludhiana.(Agency)

The Ludhiana Municipal Corporation House on Monday passed all the eight proposals including the controversial Integrated Solid Waste Management Project without any discussion at Guru Nanak Dev Bhawan, amid ruckus by the opposition parties. Mayor Inderjit Kaur confirmed that all eight

proposals stood "passed".



Meanwhile, Congress councillor Gaurav Bhatti also reached the House Meeting wearing handcuffs in protest. Bhatti was recently booked by police in Ludhiana for an alleged social media post accusing an AAP leader for seeking money to make health cards under the Punjab government scheme.

He dared AAP councillors to get him arrested and said he will keep speaking the truth for public welfare.

The MC House meeting witnessed repeated disruptions as opposition councillors from the Congress, the SAD and the BJP opposed the integrated solid waste management proposal.

The proposed waste management project would work

under the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model under the supervision of a private firm. This includes door-to-door collection, transportation, segregation and scientific processing of waste. Opposition councillors alleged irregularities and warned that the project would eliminate livelihoods of unorganised sanitation workers from the Valmiki community who have been collecting the solid waste in the city for decades. Meanwhile, sanitation workers also reached outside the meeting venue with their carts protesting against the integrated project. They argued that they already manage door-to-door collection and fear losing

their jobs if private firms take over. They have vowed to intensify their agitation. Mayor Kaur, however, said the sanitation workers were advised that there was "no threat" to their livelihoods. The estimated cost of the integrated project is Rs 140 to 150 crore annually or Rs 1100 to 1200 crore for over eight years. This would cover all the 95 wards of Ludhiana city with over 20 lakh residents.

SP said that the accused was

identified as Kushal Kumar alias Anujan (19), a resident of Ward No. 1, Kotalu, Tehsil Jwalamukhi, Kangra district of Himachal Pradesh.

He was arrested on the spot, and a case

was registered under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act at Jwalamukhi police station. Further investigation was in progress, he said. Police said that earlier, on February 7, the Jwalamukhi police team recovered 4 grams of chitta from two smugglers and 30 grams of charas

from two others. On February 8, a team from the Sansarpur Terrace police station recovered 58 grams of charas from two smugglers.

With these operations, Dehra district police have arrested a total of seven drug traffickers in the last three days, seizing 4 grams of chitta and 390 grams of charas in total.

SP said the sustained action of the police reflects a firm resolve to eradicate the illegal drug trade and make Himachal Pradesh drug-free.

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SIT probing missing saroops' case must have 'Amritdhari' Sikh police officers: Akal Takht Jathedar

Talking to reporters, Gargaj said that the Akal Takht Secretariat has received letters from the 'sangat' residing in India and abroad, flagging the recent "violation" of Sikh 'maryada' (conduct) by the SIT at a religious place in the Doaba region.

Amritsar.(Agency)

Akal Takht Jathedar Giani Kuldip Singh Gargaj Monday said that a special investigation team (SIT) of the Punjab Police, probing the case of the 328 missing 'saroops' of the Guru Granth Sahib, must comprise exclusively of 'Amritdhari' (baptised) Sikh police officers.

Talking to reporters, Gargaj said that the Akal Takht Secretariat has received letters from the 'sangat' residing in India and abroad, flagging the recent "violation" of Sikh 'maryada' (conduct) by the SIT at a religious place in the Doaba region. He said recently, when the investigation team reached the religious place, they inspected the sacred 'saroops' at the place of 'Sukhsan' (resting place), which was against established 'maryada'. This deeply hurt Sikh sentiments. To ensure that such an incident does not recur, these directions have been issued, the Jathedar said. "In view of the suggestions and

demands received from the sangat, it is essential that the probe be carried forward only by Amritdhari Sikh officers, who possess complete understanding of Sikh Rehat Maryada and the reverence due to Guru Sahib," said Gargaj.

Regarding Gurdwara Sahib Winnipeg South Sikh Centre in Canada, which is under consideration at Akal Takht following complaints from the 'sangat', he said the 'sangat' has lodged complaints against the gurdwara management alleging tampering with the sacred 'saroop' of Sri Guru Granth Sahib, that the management is not 'Amritdhari'.

The Jathedar issued a stern warning to the office-bearers of Gurdwara Sahib Winnipeg South Sikh Centre directing them to personally appear before Akal Takht and submit their stand within 10 days, allow the



'sangat' to visit the gurdwara respecting their sentiments, and immediately stop all activities being carried out contrary to Gurmat. The Jathedar also announced a ban on throwing colours on sangat during Holi. "Throwing colours on the

sangat during Holi Mohalla at Sri Anandpur Sahib is against Sikh principles, and is therefore strictly banned," he said. Nihang jathas may apply gugal within defined areas during processions. Responding to the arrest of two men by Punjab Police from Darbar Sahib parikrama without SGPC knowledge, the Jathedar held the Punjab government and Home Department are responsible. "A complete report will be sought from the SGPC executive," he said, demanding clarification on the personnel involved. Regarding the case of remarks made against the reverence of the founder of Sikhism, Guru Nanak Dev, in the presence of Guru Granth Sahib, Barnala-based 'kathavachak' (Sikh preacher) Gurjant Singh was summoned and appeared before the Jathedar at the secretariat of Akal Takht Sahib.

Why PM skipped House: Minister shares video citing chaos by women Opposition MPs

The video showed women Congress MPs surrounding the seat and refusing to move despite requests by Kiren Rijiju and Giriraj Singh, only minutes before Prime Minister Narendra Modi was scheduled to deliver his speech.

New Delhi.(Agency)
Union Minister Kiren Rijiju on Tuesday shared a video from inside the Lok Sabha on February 4, which showed women Congress MPs gathered near the seat of Prime Minister Narendra Modi only minutes before his speech. The session was abruptly adjourned on that day. Earlier, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla said that he advised PM Modi to skip the session as Opposition MPs were planning an attack on the latter. "Congress Party is proud of the most degrading behaviour by their MPs !! If we had not stopped all BJP MPs and allowed the women MPs to confront Cong. MPs, it would have led to very ugly scene. We have very high consideration, to protect the dignity & sanctity of the Parliament," Rijiju tweeted.



The video showed the women MPs assembled near the seat, with a massive banner with the text "Jo uchit samjho, wahin caro (Do what you think is best). They remained static in their positions and refused to move despite Rijiju and Giriraj Singh requesting them with folded hands. The text on their banner was in reference to a sentence from a

magazine article based on General (Rtd.) MM Naravane's unpublished book 'Four Stars of Destiny'. The memoir, which was mentioned by Congress MP Rahul Gandhi during his brief speech in Parliament last week, stirred a storm and led to a massive controversy.

On February 4, when Om Birla's advice to PM Modi had come to light, it was not known what had unfolded inside the House. Even after Rijiju's video today, it is not known what the Congress MPs were planning to do. Earlier, BJP MP Manoj Tiwari said that several Opposition women MPs entered the well of the House, moved towards the PM's chair, causing the situation to flare up to the point that Modi couldn't enter.

BJP women MPs have written a letter to Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla

urging him to take the strongest possible action against the Opposition MPs. They said that the Opposition MPs committed "heinous acts" within the precincts of the House and "brought disrepute to our democratic institutions".

CONGRESS COUNTERS

Congress MP Manickam Tagore slammed the BJP and said the video only shows the women parliamentarians gathered near Piyush Goyal, Ashwini Vaishnaw and Kiren Rijiju, among others. "Where is Prime Minister? Kiren Rijiju proved Om Birla wrong," he mocked, referencing the Lok Sabha Speaker's allegation that women Opposition MPs were planning an attack on the Prime Minister. "Why is Kiren Rijiju so mad at the Speaker? What does he want," Tagore told India.

Probe assault of lawyer in courtroom without pressure: Delhi HC

New Delhi.(Agency)

The Delhi High Court on Monday directed the DCP concerned to probe the alleged physical assault of a lawyer inside a courtroom on Saturday "without being pressurised", noting that such incidents not only threaten the individual counsel practising in the court but also erode the dignity and propriety of the court proceedings. A special bench constituted of the three most senior judges of the high court to hear the matter also directed the Principal District and Sessions Judge, Tis Hazari Courts, to submit a report into the incident after making enquiries from everybody concerned, including the presiding officer of the court where the incident allegedly took place.

"Please investigate the matter without being pressurised from any corner whatsoever so that we can unearth the truth and act upon it accordingly," the bench said, adding that an ACP, under the direct supervision of the DCP concerned, shall conduct the investigation of the FIRs.

The bench also directed police to provide security to the victim round the clock, at least till a report is filed by the DCP and the district judge, the bench said. The security will be subject to review of the threat perception conducted after 10 days, the bench said.

Noting the seriousness of the issue, the Chief Justice of India, Surya Kant, earlier today remarked that "Gunda Raj" was unacceptable. The CJI then asked the lawyer to approach the HC Chief Justice.

Later in the evening, a bench consisting of Chief Justice Devendra Kumar Upadhyaya and Justices V Kameswar Rao and Nitin Sambre noted the submission from the Delhi government, Delhi Police and others concerned after noting that the lawyer was beaten and heckled after bolting the courtroom.

Police remand of sub-contractor extended in Delhi biker's death case

New Delhi.(Agency)

A court, on Monday, extended by a day the police remand of a sub-contractor arrested for allegedly withholding information that a biker had fallen into a pit dug by the Delhi Jal Board in the Janakpuri area, delaying police and emergency response.

Another accused in the case, 23-year-old labourer Yogesh, was also produced in the court, which sent him to 14 days of judicial custody. He was present at the spot at the time of the accident. The labourer was arrested on Sunday for allegedly not informing the police or emergency authorities about the incident and also for misleading the victim's family when they came inquiring about him.

Judicial Magistrate First Class Shiv Kumar extended sub-contractor Rajesh Prajapati's police custody by a day on Monday. His one-day police remand, granted on Sunday, ended today.

Kamal Dhyani, an employee with a private bank in Rohini, was returning home on the intervening night of Thursday-Friday when he fell into the pit dug for a sewer project with his bike, suffering fatal injuries. Prajapati was arrested on Saturday. So far, two arrests have been made in connection with the incident. Three Delhi Jal Board officials have been suspended in the case.

The victim, Kamal Dhyani, was riding home when he fell into the pit, which had allegedly been left open without any safety measures. Two persons—a sub-contractor and his employee—have already been arrested in the case, police officials said.

The sub-contractor, Rajesh Kumar Prajapati, was arrested on Saturday, while his employee Yogesh was nabbed on Sunday. DCP(West) Darade Sharad Bhaskar said Prajapati's police custody remand was extended by one day, while Yogesh was sent to judicial custody.

"Non-bailable warrants have been issued against the alleged contractors Himanshu Gupta and Kavish Gupta," the DCP said. According to the FIR, the pit had been dug by the Delhi Jal Board near the Andhra School and was left uncovered without any safety arrangements to alert road users. "There was no barricading, no warning sign or security guard deployed at the site despite the pit being dug in the middle of the road," the FIR stated. Police said a spot inspection conducted after the accident indicated that the authorities concerned were aware of the excavation work but failed to ensure basic safety measures at the site.

India Set To Sign Biggest Arms Deal: 114 Rafale Fighter Jets For Rs 3.25 Lakh Crore

New Delhi.(Agency)

A Rs 3.25 lakh crore deal to buy 114 French-made Rafale fighter jets for the Indian Air Force's Multi-Role Fighter Aircraft programme is likely to be cleared by the Defence Ministry this week – days before France President Emmanuel Macron's visit to Delhi – sources told Tuesday morning.

Once approved, the deal will not only be India's biggest ever weapons agreement but will also include provisions to manufacture a certain number, around 100, of them in India, which will involve the transfer of high-grade fighter jet tech and a strategic partnership to enhance the 'make in India' programme.

And, once confirmed, this deal will also underline India's status as one of the largest non-French operators of the Rafale, a twin-engined, multi-role



fighter jet widely regarded as one of the deadliest in the world and known for executing air superiority and precision strike missions. India already has 36 Rafales – the Air Force took delivery of the last 'C' variant in December 2024 – and has ordered 26 naval variants, the 'M' version, in a deal worth Rs 63,000 crore. That deal included the purchase of four twin-seat trainers and facilitation of fleet maintenance,

logistics support, and personnel training under a MRO, or 'maintenance, repair, overhaul' agreement, reported in April last year that delivery is likely by 2030.

The delivered 'C' version jets have been divided between No 17 Squadron in Ambala, i.e., the Golden Arrows, and the No 101 in Bengal's Hasimara, i.e., the Falcons.

Rafale's India combat experience

The IAF fighters have already seen combat; they participated in Operation Sindoora, India's military response to the Pahalgam terror attack, in May last year, and in Ladakh. Rafales deployed during Op Sindoora, are believed to have launched the SCALP, an air-launched cruise missile developed that can strike hardened targets over 250km away with extreme precision, and have been used in various conflicts worldwide, including the Iraq war and in Libya.

"If I Died Like Nirbhaya, Everyone Would Have Believed": Unnao Rape Survivor

New Delhi.(Agency)

The Unnao rape survivor on Monday expressed relief after the Supreme Court of India rejected the bail plea of expelled BJP leader Kuldeep Singh Sengar in connection with the custodial death of her father.

Speaking to ANI, she said, "I went to the Supreme Court today. I was in the court when the judge gave his verdict. I am very happy with this verdict. I am satisfied that the judge has ordered the hearing to be completed within 3 months, as soon as possible. My father is not going to come back. His brothers, Atul Singh Sengar and Jaideep Singh Sengar, killed my father. They are out of jail for medical treatment. All the police officers who were involved are out. As far as Kuldeep Singh Sengar is concerned, he has committed a heinous



act against me. He has raped me. How can I prove it? Am I alive? Do I have to do this?" The Unnao rape survivor said she has been struggling for eight years to prove the assault, adding that if she had died like Nirbhaya, her ordeal would have been believed. She urged the Supreme Court to deliver justice for her father, calling for the death penalty for Kuldeep Singh Sengar so that her father's soul can rest in peace.

"If I had died like Nirbhaya, everyone would have believed that I was raped. I am alive. It took years to prove what happened to me. I have been struggling for 8 years. Even now, I have to prove that I have been raped. His daughter said that it was a normal accident. I did not know whether the accident was normal. I was on the ventilator. I have requested that the Supreme Court deliver justice for my father. He should be hanged so that my father's soul can be at peace and justice can be given to him," she said.

Earlier, the Supreme Court refused to grant immediate relief to rape-convict and former BJP MLA Kuldeep Singh Sengar on his plea seeking suspension of sentence and bail in the custodial-death case of the rape victim's father, but requested the Delhi High Court to hear and decide the matter within.

"The 'baba' was seen sitting in the front passenger seat of the car earlier in the day and had interacted with all three, making him a crucial link in the probe. He was in frequent touch with them in the past as well," a police source said. The source said that the 'baba' and another person have been brought in for questioning, and investigators are trying to establish the nature of his relationship with the deceased.

What has further complicated the case is the relationship of Laxmi Devi with the two men. Police said Randhir and Naresh had been known to each other for the past six years and were partners in property-related work. Both families are also familiar with each other.

However, Laxmi was not known to any of the families of the two men. Preliminary inquiry has revealed that Naresh and Laxmi were acquainted and that all three victims were in close contact with the 'baba', meeting him multiple times in the past, police said. Randhir's family said that he was not financially or mentally weak. One of Randhir's brothers said, "He had gone to the farm around 9.30am and later went somewhere, along with Shiv Naresh. Police informed us later in the evening about the incident. We were not aware of the woman. This can't be a case of suicide, and police should investigate the case."

Can Higher Budget Help Delhi Achieve Clean Air Target By End Of 2026?

New Delhi.(Agency)

Delhi's struggle for basic essentials - clean water and clean air - is decades old. Today, the national capital is once again attempting to reclaim some breathable space. As part of this renewed effort, the Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) has announced its 2026 air-quality targets, laying out a detailed plan to curb pollution and push the city toward healthier living conditions.

These goals translate into bringing PM2.5 down to 96 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$, PM10 to 177 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$, and AQI to 177 for 2026. Unlike older, broad pollution-control roadmaps, the new strategy assigns specific responsibilities to individual sectors, acknowledging that transport emissions, construction dust, biomass and waste burning, industrial operations, and small-scale manufacturing collectively feed Delhi's toxic air.

A key part of the plan is expanding air-

quality monitoring infrastructure. The government intends to increase the number of Continuous Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Stations, aiming to reduce data gaps, strengthen enforcement, and ensure greater accountability among agencies responsible for controlling emissions.

How Bad Was It Earlier?

Delhi's air-quality journey shows slow but noticeable fluctuations over recent years. In 2018, the city recorded very high levels, PM2.5 at 114 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$, PM10 at 242 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$, and AQI at 225. These numbers showed that pollution was firmly in the "poor" to "very poor" range. By 2019, the levels had come down slightly, but the air was still unhealthy.

A major drop appeared in 2020, when PM2.5 fell to 94 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$, and AQI improved to 185. This was largely due to reduced

activity during the COVID-19 lockdowns. However, once normal activity resumed, pollution climbed again, with PM2.5 rising to 104 in 2021 and AQI returning to around



209 through 2021-2024. These years show that Delhi struggled to retain the cleaner air of 2020.

A real sign of improvement occurred in 2025, when AQI dipped to 191, and PM2.5

dropped to 99 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$, indicating that pollution-control measures may have begun to work more consistently.

Money Matters

The budgetary support for the CAQM has seen a steady climb from FY22 to FY27, signalling the government's growing commitment to tackling pollution. In FY22, the allocation was Rs 20 crore, which dipped slightly in FY23 to Rs 13 crore, but increased every year since then. It went up to Rs 16 crore in FY24, Rs 21 crore in FY25, and saw a sharper rise to Rs 31 crore in FY26. For FY27 (Budget estimate), the allocation is Rs 35 crore, the highest so far. This upward trend indicates that the government is expanding financial support for monitoring, enforcement, and long-term pollution-reduction work by CAQM.

NEWS BOX

Sachin Tendulkar honours India's U19 captain Ayush Mhatre with special gift

NEW DELHI. (Agency)

Ayush Mhatre received a special gift from Sachin Tendulkar as the cricket legend gave the youngster his Test jersey following India's U19 World Cup win. Mhatre, who is the captain of India's U19 side, returned to Mumbai following a landmark victory in Zimbabwe where his team clinched the U19 World Cup title by defeating England in the final. This triumph marked a record-extending sixth title for India at the tournament. Upon his return, Mhatre visited cricket legend Sachin Tendulkar, who honoured him with the gift. Tendulkar presented his Test jersey to Mhatre, accompanied by a handwritten note. The Indian legend revealed to the youngster that it was the jersey that he wore during his final series as he wanted to motivate the youngster to progress to the senior team. "Keep working hard. Focus. Don't get carried away by people. Keep practising. Focus has to be there. There will be plenty of distractions,



whatever they may be," Tendulkar told Mhatre in the video. Dear Ayush, wishing you all the success in your career. "Mhatre shared the moment on social media, expressing his delight at getting the gift from the cricket legend. "I grew up watching you through a screen. Today, I stand at your home, holding a piece of your journey in my hands," Mhatre wrote. "Thank you, Sir, for this honour. I will carry this with the same respect you carried Indian cricket for years." MHATRE LEADS FROM THE FRONT

The Indian Under-19 squad received a warm welcome on returning home. In Virar, Mhatre was greeted by family, friends, and neighbours, while teammate Udhav Mohan also received a hero's reception in New Delhi. Celebrations reflected the pride in their achievement and the impact of their World Cup win. During the tournament, Mhatre led from the front, particularly in the knockout stages. He scored 53 off 51 balls in the final against England and 62 off 59 in the semi-final against Afghanistan. Over the course of the tournament, he amassed 214 runs in seven innings, finishing with an average of 30.57 and becoming India's fourth-highest run-scorer in the competition.

Shaken by Nepal scare, England seek stronger showing against West Indies in key T20 World Cup clash

MUMBAI. (Agency)

Shaken by a scare from lower-ranked Nepal in their tournament opener, England will look to step up their performance when they face the West Indies in an evenly matched and crucial Group C clash of the T20 World Cup here on Wednesday. Both teams are two-time champions and are chasing a third title, like tournament co-hosts and defending champions India. With little separating sides in the shortest format, consistency on the day will be vital, as margins can be dangerously thin in T20 cricket. England were reminded of that reality in their opening match, when Nepal, team several rungs below them, pushed the former champions to the brink. Nepal lost by just four runs, with England escaping narrowly in a contest that threatened to slip away. That result is likely to keep the Harry Brook-



led side on its toes going forward.

Sam Curran emerged as the hero for England after they posted a competitive but not commanding 184/7. He held his nerve in the final over, defending 10 runs with disciplined line and length to ensure England came through unscathed.

Overall, England may feel their batting unit performed better than their bowlers. Adil Rashid went wicketless after a long time, while Jofra Archer, despite possessing all the requisite skills for the format, was taken apart as Nepal exposed vulnerabilities in the England bowling attack. Brook and young Jacob Bethell struck half-centuries, and the other batters also appeared in rhythm, even if they were unable to convert starts into bigger contributions. England's narrow win has kept them in second place in Group C, with the West Indies sitting on top after a convincing 35-run victory over Scotland in their opening match. The West Indies, meanwhile, will be aware that there is little room for error, especially at a venue where the pitch has offered assistance to bowlers in the first two matches.

Day jobs and World Cup dreams: Inside the relentless grind of associate

T20 World Cup: The Netherlands' World Cup journey is built as much on day jobs and distant dreams as it is on runs and wickets. At the Arun Jaitley Stadium, Zach leon-cash-ay's spell in the nets captures that quiet hope perfectly.

NEW DELHI. (Agency)

Zach Lion-Cachet. Zak Lion Cash-et? No, no — it is Zach leon-cash-ay. I was quickly corrected during the Netherlands' practice session at the Arun Jaitley Stadium.

Born to a British mother and a Dutch father on December 15, 2003, the 22-year-old is among the younger players in the side, one who harbours ambitions beyond merely participating in world tournaments. The off-spinner is fed straight into the Netherlands top-order batters in the nets as the big hitters prepare for their range-hitting drills ahead of their second T20 World Cup game against Namibia. The Dutch, fresh off their heartbreak against Pakistan, are in the mood to respond, and Zach Lion-Cachet bears the brunt of it, tasked with giving them the kind

of practice they hoped they had a few days earlier. Either it is his good fortune, or the batters are still carrying the residue of disappointment, but the hits are not clean. Not many balls disappear into the stands. In fact, only a handful even reach the boundary rope.

SPORTING ROOTS, CRICKETING DREAMS

A member of the travelling Dutch staff casually mentions that Zach's mother was a former tennis player, while his father played rugby for the Netherlands. A quick Google search confirms the story. Zach's mother, Sarah Loosemore, born in Wales, was not just another professional. She was Britain's youngest national champion and the country's No. 1 tennis player for a period during her career. Someone at the ground suggests that Zach's father may even have captained the Netherlands rugby team.

Zach himself, however, gravitated towards football and cricket while growing up in England. Until the age of 16, he was part of Southampton's football academy before eventually choosing cricket. Having made his international debut in 2023, the right-hander is still shaping his game, learning on

the job across formats, conditions and levels. The Royal Dutch Cricket Association has been making a concerted effort to provide young cricketers with better preparation, despite the limited size and resources of the country's cricketing



ecosystem. Ahead of the World Cup, a section of the squad trained in South Africa, while the batting group was sent to Mumbai to acclimatise to subcontinental conditions. The full squad eventually assembled in Chennai, ten days before flying to Colombo for their opening match of the tournament. "At least they don't have to spend their own

money anymore," the team manager says ahead of the Namibia clash. "I'm not saying they're earning big money. But they don't have to dip into their own pockets either. I think we've reached a break-even point in Dutch cricket," he adds.

LESS EXPOSURE, MORE EFFORT

Netherlands all-rounder Colin Ackermann, meanwhile, calls for greater exposure for associate nations. Despite being regular World Cup participants, the Dutch had not played an international match since September 2025 before this tournament. "There's a very easy solution," one staff member says. "Teams touring England in the summer can just come to the Netherlands for their preparations. We're ready to play." While cricket may be more financially viable than it once was, several Dutch players have had to place other parts of their lives on pause to be here. All-rounder Basde Leede, who is enrolled at university, has taken special permission to travel for the World Cup. Spinner Saqib Zulfiqar, who works as a Business Intelligence manager at ABN AMRO, has taken a break from his banking job to represent the Netherlands, much like USA's Saurabh Netrvalkar.

What more must Axar Patel do Ex-India batter blasts new BCCI contract list

CORTINA D'AMPEZZO. (Agency)

Former India batter Aakash Chopra questioned the latest BCCI contracts list, asking why India's T20I vice-captain Axar Patel was placed in Category C. The BCCI has overhauled its central contracts framework, doing away with the A+ bracket altogether and elevating Grade A as the topmost category under the new system. For the 2025-26 season, only three players have made the cut at that elite level — Jasprit Bumrah, ODI and Test skipper Shubman Gill, and experienced all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja. Axar, who has been a regular in the white-ball setup and part of the Test squads, saw himself get demoted from Grade B to C, a move that didn't sit well with Chopra. The former India batter took to X and asked what else does the all-rounder need to do to get what he actually deserves. Chopra was also unhappy



decision on potential boycott will be taken by the Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif. Jan 25, 2026: With speculations rife in the air about the ripple effect and implications of a potential boycott, Pakistan announced their 15-Member squad for the global event. Salman Ali Agha led the team which also included Babar Azam.

Jan 26, 2026: The PCB chief clarifies that the final call will be taken by the Prime Minister in the days to follow after a meeting with PM Shehbaz Sharif. "Had a

productive meeting with the Prime Minister Mian Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif. Briefed him on the ICC matter, and he directed that we resolve it while keeping all options on the table. It was agreed that the final decision will be taken either on Friday or next Monday," Naqvi posted on X.

Feb 1, 2026: On Sunday evening, the Pakistan government took to social media to announce that the cricket team would travel to Sri Lanka but would not take part in the clash against India on February 15. The PCB, meanwhile, does not have a public comment while ICC warns them of the ramifications and asks to reconsider the decision. Debates continue as to whether PCB could go ahead with it and what are the effects it may have not just for them but the rest of the countries, especially with the marquee clash being a major reason behind the massive sum the broadcasters had paid for the rights. Amidst the earlier misgivings between JioHotstar and ICC over media rights for these events, the former felt that the existing rights deal was inflated. Without this game, they would definitely feel that way and may even demand the ICC to return some of the money they received from the broadcaster.

Chepauk's new stands brim with energy for T20 World Cup

NEW DELHI. (Agency)

The argument of Chepauk getting full only when Former India and Chennai Super Kings captain MS Dhoni is in the ground may well be debunked. On a hot Sunday noon at the MA Chidambaram Stadium, over 20,000 people flocked the stands, all for the tie between Afghanistan and New Zealand in the Men's T20 World Cup. Not that both teams don't deserve such numbers coming in, it is in the manner that these fans go about supporting the teams. As per the latest count, 21,266 were in attendance for the match which began at 11 am. The breeze off the coast crossed paths with a breeze of enthusiasm, energy, and excitement as jersey-clad fans flocked the stands.

The stadium underwent upgrades for this blue ribbon event, with the pitch relaid and stands

getting cosmetic changes. That wave could be seen as fans took the long march to the



stadium from Wallajah Road. As their march brought them closer to the action, they too, grew closer to the intricacies the tie offered.

Sri Lanka President thanks Pakistan PM Shehbaz Sharif for India boycott U-turn

Dhakshinewar Suresh announced himself as India's newest Davis Cup hero, sweeping all three rubbers against the Netherlands. The 25-year-old's stunning weekend powered India into Qualifiers Round 2 for the first time since 2019.

New Delhi. (Agency)

Sri Lanka President Anura Kumara Dissanayake penned a thank-you note to Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif after Pakistan confirmed it would play India in their much-awaited ICC Men's T20 World Cup clash in Colombo on February 15. The message came soon after Pakistan made a dramatic U-turn on its proposed boycott,

clearing the way for the tournament's biggest fixture to go ahead as scheduled. The India vs Pakistan match had briefly been thrown into uncertainty after Pakistan floated the possibility of refusing to take the field. However, following an extended meeting on Monday involving the PCB, the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) and the International Cricket Council (ICC), Pakistan reversed its stance and confirmed it would play the fixture as scheduled. Taking to X after the decision, Dissanayake expressed relief and gratitude, while acknowledging the efforts made behind the scenes to keep the contest intact. "Thank you, Prime Minister @CMShehbaz for ensuring the game we all love goes on. Delighted that the eagerly awaited India and Pakistan match at the ongoing T20 Cricket World Cup in Colombo will proceed as planned," he wrote. "As co-host of the tournament, Sri Lanka thanks the @ICC and all concerned for their efforts. Sri Lanka hasn't forgotten the solidarity shown by both India and Pakistan during the 1996 World Cup, when they played in Colombo at

a time when others refrained due to security concerns," he added. How did Pakistan make the India boycott U-turn?

Pakistan's change of stance followed a series of high-level talks involving the PCB, the



ICC, and the Bangladesh Cricket Board. The meeting in Pakistan's Gaddafi stadium, which stretched for at least five hours, was aimed at ensuring that the World Cup's most high-profile and profitable match was not derailed. PCB chairman Mohsin Naqvi later briefed Prime Minister Sharif on what was

discussed and the outcomes achieved. Soon after, the Government of Pakistan confirmed through its official social media account that the national team would take the field against India on February 15.

Sharif said the decision was shaped by requests from "friendly countries," naming Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and the UAE, along with the progress made through multilateral discussions with ICC officials. In the build-up to the announcement, BCB president Aminul Islam Bulbul also urged Pakistan to play the match, stressing the importance of keeping the tournament's marquee fixture on track. Sri Lanka Cricket, too, had reportedly written to the PCB earlier, asking them to reconsider their refusal.

Why did Pakistan threaten an India boycott? Pakistan's initial boycott threat was due to its support for Bangladesh, who were removed from the tournament after citing security concerns.

US trade: India offers phased removal of tariffs over ten years for select agri imports

New Delhi.(Agency)

Amid growing concern over the opening up of the agricultural sector to the US, the government on Monday clarified that market access for agricultural products has been calibrated based on the sensitivity of items, with phased duty elimination of up to 10 years built into the offer to safeguard domestic interests. The government said agricultural items have been classified into four broad categories, with duties imposed, reduced, or eliminated depending on the sensitivity of each segment.

"In line with India's approach in previous trade agreements, agricultural market access has been structured based on product sensitivity. The offer is categorised into immediate duty elimination, phased elimination (up to 10 years), tariff reduction, margin of preference, and tariff rate quota mechanisms," a government release stated on Monday.

Phased tariff elimination over periods of up to 10 years will be available for select intermediate inputs used by India's food processing industry and sourced from multiple countries. These include albumins; coconut, castor, and cottonseed oils; hoofmeal, lard, stearin, modified starches, peptones and their derivatives, and certain plant-based materials. The extended phase-out period aims to provide adjustment time for domestic producers while ensuring input availability for processors. "This extended timeline provides adequate adjustment space for domestic stakeholders," the release said.

For highly sensitive segments such as meat, poultry, and dairy products, genetically modified food items, soyameal, maize, cereals, millets such as jowar, bajra, and ragi, and fruits including bananas, India has retained full tariff protection, with no commitments made. For certain sensitive items, India has opted for tariff reductions rather than full elimination to ensure a degree of protection. Products in this category include parts of plants, olives, pyrethrum, and oil cakes. Alcoholic beverages have also been placed under tariff reduction, combined with minimum import price-based mechanisms and quotas, to prevent dumping.

Standard Chartered CFO De Giorgi unexpectedly resigns to join Apollo

New Delhi.(Agency)

Standard Chartered Plc Chief Financial Officer Diego De Giorgi, one of the front-runners to eventually replace long-time Chief Executive Officer Bill Winters, unexpectedly resigned after about two years in the role. He will be replaced by deputy CFO Peter Burrill on an interim basis as the London-based firm seeks a permanent replacement in "due course," according to a statement.

De Giorgi, who joined the bank in September 2023, will take on a role at Apollo Global Management Inc. as a partner and head of Europe, the Middle East and Africa, according to a separate statement from the alternative assets giant. He will succeed longtime partner Rob Seminara. He was seen as one of the candidates to replace Winters, who is the longest-serving CEO of a major UK bank. He previously held senior roles at Bank of America Corp. and Goldman Sachs Group Inc. as well on the board of UniCredit SpA. Simon Cooper, another front-runner to replace Winters abruptly left the emerging markets lender in 2024, as it pushed through a broader management reshuffle to boost returns. De Giorgi's departure comes as the bank is in midst of a restructuring program known as 'Fit for Growth' that aims to streamline operations and save \$1.5 billion. Winters has overseen the lender in the past few years to focus on Asia growth. Standard Chartered shares in Hong Kong have risen more than 80% in the past year and its share price is around the highest since 2010. The UK lender last year named Maria Ramos as chair to succeed Jose Vinals. Despite being based in London, Standard Chartered makes most of its income from its operations in Asia, Africa and the Middle East. Its single biggest market is Hong Kong, which is still navigating its rebound after a prolonged period of economic contraction.

ACME Solar secures 220 MW solar project with battery storage in MP

New Delhi.(Agency)

ACME Solar Holdings on Tuesday said it has secured a 220 MW solar project with Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) from Rewa Ultra Mega Solar Ltd (RUMSL). The project is part of a 440 MW tender floated by RUMSL for the Morena Solar Park in Madhya Pradesh, a company statement said. The tender was floated under tariff-based competitive guidelines (TBCB) for which an e-reverse auction was conducted in September 2025. The project requires supplying power with a maximum annual CUF (capacity utilisation factor)

of 35 per cent, along with 4 hours of peak supply (2 hours each in the morning and evening) at 95 per cent availability. Charging energy for the evening peak will be sourced from the solar plant, while energy for the

morning peak will be supplied free of cost by the procurer during night hours. RUMSL would provide the land and evacuation infrastructure above the 33 kV level as part of the facilities offered by the solar park developer. The project would combine Solar and BESS technologies to meet the supply obligations under the Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) for a 25-year tenor. Going forward, PPA would be signed with Madhya Pradesh Power Management Company Ltd (MPPMCL) and RUMSL.

Want smoother approvals for future loans? Start tracking those small borrowings

Smaller loans deserve particular attention. Consumer durable EMIs, short-term personal credit and buy-now-pay-later products are now common entry points into formal credit. They are designed to make life easier. But they also test discipline.

Mumbai.(Agency)

Credit today is part of everyday life. It helps families manage important transitions, plan ahead, and deal with uneven cash flows. For many households, access to formal credit represents progress and confidence. What often goes unnoticed is how routine borrowing choices add up over time. Most people do not think of credit as a long-term record. Decisions are usually practical. An appliance bought on EMI. A personal loan taken during a demanding phase. Credit is used

because it is available and convenient. These are sensible choices in the moment. But taken together, they shape how a borrower is viewed when future needs arise. Lenders do not look for perfection. They look for comfort. Comfort comes from consistency. How often repayments are made on time. How many commitments run at once. Whether borrowing rises steadily or suddenly. Whether obligations remain manageable during busy or uncertain periods.

These patterns matter more than any single account.

Smaller loans deserve particular attention. Consumer durable EMIs, short-term personal credit and buy-now-pay-later products are now common entry points into formal credit. They are designed to make life easier. But they also test discipline. Repayment delays, even when regularised, are recorded and form part of a borrower's credit history. When such delays repeat, they influence how



stability is assessed later. The pace of borrowing matters as well. Taking on multiple obligations within a short period often feels manageable at first. Over time, stacked EMIs reduce flexibility. Applying for several loans or credit lines close together also leaves a trail. Each enquiry is visible. HOW TO USE YOUR CREDIT CARD TO BUILD CREDIT SCORE

Credit cards fit into this broader picture, but they are not unique. Used thoughtfully,

You thought Rs 22 lakh salary catapults you to top 1% of population CA explains real math and a delusion

New Delhi.(Agency)

A person earning Rs 22 lakh a year is often portrayed as belonging to the top one percent of the population. But chartered accountant Nitin Kaushik says that real wealth is not about reaching a national percentile but rather about earning money in a thriving and modest region where the salary would serve as a wealth-building engine.

In a recent post in X, Kaushik called the top 1 percent label in India a statistical delusion. He said on paper it appears that someone has won the financial struggle by earning roughly Rs 22 lakh a year and getting placed in the top 1 percent of the country. However, in a Tier-1 city like Mumbai or Bangalore the math is completely different. He said that after a 30 percent tax bracket and a high cost of living that elite income will buy an aggressively middle-class lifestyle. Kaushik claims that states like Delhi, Goa or Sikkim have such a concentrated density of wealth that Rs 22 lakh hardly seems sufficient. People

in these hubs compete with business legacies and high-velocity capital rather than the national average. The same Rs 22 lakh income provides comfort and a massive relative advantage in states like Bihar, Uttar Pradesh or West Bengal. In these



places, you are wealthier than 99 percent of the local population. You have more leverage and are better able to invest and beat local inflation. Kaushik said that the real shift is the death of the national average. The arbitrage opportunity is evident as remote work and digital careers

decouple income from geography.

According to Kaushik, a salary of Rs 25 lakh is a survival strategy in an upscale area but that same salary is a wealth-building engine in a thriving and economical region. Kaushik said that people have been optimizing for the highest possible CTC for decades but have neglected the reality that wealth is not the number on Form 16. Real wealth is the gap between your income and the cost of your environment, he says. A person is measuring success on a broken scale if he is not accounting for regional purchasing power parity, he said. Kaushik said that true financial freedom is not about reaching a national percentile.

It is about realizing that where you earn is just as important as how much you earn. The best course of action going forward is to take a good salary somewhere where it really matters rather than trying to get a larger one in a busy metropolis.

Delhi's 5-star hotel rates cross Rs 10 lakh per day and AI has something to do with it

New Delhi.(Agency)

If you thought luxury hotel rooms in Delhi usually top out at some thousand a night, think again. On Tuesday morning, a quick look at bookings on MakeMyTrip showed something unusual. One night in a five-star hotel in the capital was crossing Rs 10 lakh. And no, this was not New Year's Eve or a big wedding weekend.

The reason sits firmly in the world of artificial intelligence. AI was already under fire for threatening jobs and changing the way people work. Now, it seems to be hitting wallets in an unexpected way. Artificial intelligence is one of the reasons why five-star hotel rooms in Delhi are suddenly costing astronomically for a single night.

WHY HOTEL PRICES ARE RISING IN FEBRUARY Delhi is getting ready to host the India-AI Impact Summit 2026 at Bharat Mandapam between February 16 and 20. Preparations are already in full swing, and the event is expected to bring a large number of foreign delegates, policymakers, tech leaders and speakers to the national capital. That sudden surge in demand is showing up clearly in hotel pricing.

As of 9 am on Tuesday morning, bookings on MakeMyTrip for February 15 to 16 showed some eye-watering numbers. A luxury suite with a bathtub at The Imperial, New Delhi was listed at a total payable amount of around Rs 11.64 lakh for a single night, including taxes. Even a heritage suite at the same hotel was priced at about Rs 1.76 lakh for one night.

Other premium hotels were not far behind.

A room at The Oberoi, New Delhi was costing about Rs 5.84 lakh for the night. A Maharaja Suite at The Leela Palace was priced at roughly Rs 7.34 lakh, while a garden presidential suite at Taj Palace was close to Rs 4 lakh.

Even relatively lower-priced luxury options, such as Le Meridien, were nearing Rs 90,000 for one night.

WHAT THE TRAVEL INDUSTRY IS SAYING The spike has not gone unnoticed by the travel industry. Alok Bajpai, chief executive of travel portal ixigo, pointed directly to the AI summit as the reason behind the surge. The India AI Impact Summit has surely impacted hotel rates in Delhi NCR. Several 5 star hotels in Delhi are going at 1 Lakh+ per night between 16-20 Feb," Bajpai said in a post on X.

The comment reflects what many travellers are seeing in real time. With limited inventory at the very top end and a sudden influx of international guests, prices are being pushed up sharply.

Can India hold its ground on e-commerce trade against mounting US pressure

New Delhi.(Agency)

The recent trade deal with the US might force India to change its long-held stance against a permanent duty exemption on cross-border electronic commerce. A White House fact sheet on Tuesday said India has "committed to negotiate a robust set of bilateral digital trade rules that address discriminatory or burdensome practices and other barriers to digital trade, including rules that prohibit the imposition of customs duties on electronic transmissions".

For Washington, such rules are central to ensuring free cross-border data and digital services flows, predictability for global tech firms, and protection against what it sees as trade-distorting digital levies and regulatory barriers.

New Delhi, however, has historically taken a very different view of the issue in multilateral forums.

India's WTO stance: Revenue loss and policy space For over two decades, India has opposed making permanent the WTO moratorium that prevents countries from levying customs duties on electronic transmissions such as software downloads, video games, films, music, and e-books.

The moratorium, in place since 1998, was introduced at a time when digital trade was nascent. Indian officials argue that the nature and scale of digital commerce have since changed dramatically, making the continued ban on customs duties outdated and costly for developing economies.

Citing estimates by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), commerce ministry officials have argued that India alone could be losing around \$500 million annually due to its inability to impose

customs duties on digital goods delivered online. India and South Africa have jointly argued at WTO ministerial meetings that of the estimated \$10 billion global annual revenue loss from the moratorium, nearly 95% is borne by developing countries. According to their submission, the percentage of customs revenue lost for developing countries is 4.35%, compared with just 0.24% for developed nations.

Ahead of previous WTO ministerial conferences, including the 12th and 13th meetings, India had indicated its intent to push for reconsideration of the moratorium and had demanded greater clarity on what constitutes "electronic transmission".

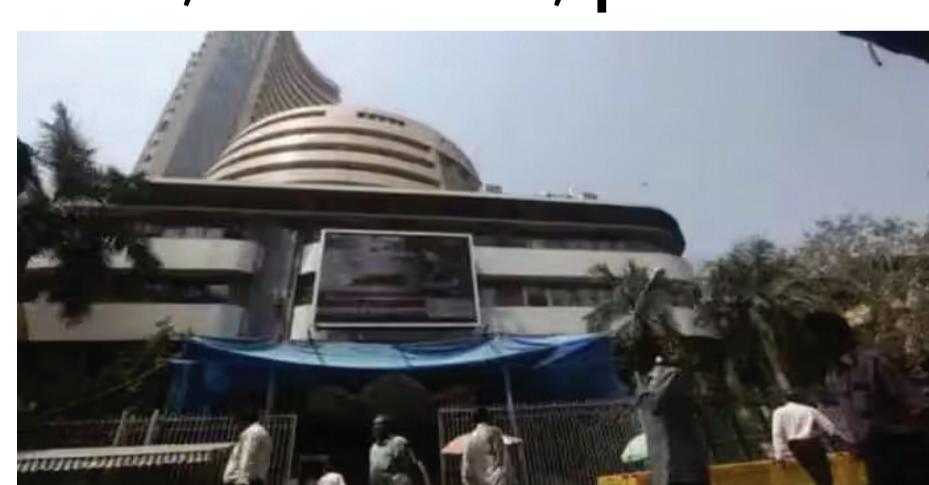
Trade experts such as Ajay Srivastava of the Global Trade Research Initiative have argued that ending or revisiting the moratorium should be a priority for India.

Nifty, Sensex open positive amid supportive global cues and FPI inflows, PSU banks, pharma stocks lead

The benchmark indices opened in the green. The Nifty 50 index opened at 25,922.65, registering a gain of 55.35 points or 0.21 per cent, while the BSE Sensex opened at 84,210, up by 144.25 points or 0.17 per cent.

Mumbai.(Agency)

The share market in the country witnessed a turnaround with a positive opening continuing on Tuesday, as foreign inflows returned to domestic markets and investor sentiment remained upbeat. The benchmark indices opened in the green. The Nifty 50 index opened at 25,922.65, registering a gain of 55.35 points or 0.21 per cent, while the BSE Sensex opened at 84,210, up by 144.25 points or 0.17 per cent. Market experts said the positive opening was supported by renewed buying from foreign portfolio investors and strength across broader market indices. Ajay Bagga, Banking and Market Expert, told ANI, "The Indian stock futures are pointing to a positive start, which could see further consolidation as



FPIs have turned net buyers in February. Broader Indian indices outperformed the mainboard indices. He added that expectations of stronger business activity after the US-India framework deal on trade helped several sectors rally. "Hopes of a strong boost in orders post the US-India framework deal on trade saw sectors like textiles, gems and jewellery, auto parts and the bankers to all Indians, the PSU banks rallying strongly," Bagga said. According to the data, fund flows in

the cash market on Tuesday at NSE showed FII inflows of Rs 2,254.6 crore, while DII inflows stood at Rs 4.2 crore. In the broader market, gains were visible across indices. On the NSE, the Nifty 100 surged by 0.20 per cent, Nifty Midcap 100 gained 0.20 per cent, and Nifty Smallcap 100 jumped by 0.46 per cent, indicating strong participation beyond the frontline stocks. Sectorally, mixed trends were seen. Nifty Auto gained 0.24 per cent, Nifty Pharma rose by 0.5 per cent, and Nifty

PSU Bank surged 0.23 per cent. However, some sectors witnessed mild pressure, with FMCG down by 0.02 per cent, IT slipping 0.21 per cent, and Metal easing by 0.02 per cent. In the commodities market, gold prices continued to remain elevated at Rs 1,57,255 per 10 grams for 24 karat, while silver prices declined on Tuesday by 1.5 per cent to Rs 2,59,167 per kg.

Bagga noted that "Gold and silver saw dip buying returning. Crypto also saw fresh buying and tentative recoveries."

Global cues remained supportive. In the US markets, the S&P 500 surged by 0.47 per cent, while the Nasdaq gained 0.97 per cent on Monday. Another record was reported for the Dow Jones. Japanese stocks also remained strong, while US Big Tech stocks saw a dip in buying.

Meanwhile, oil prices saw a brief spike following a US warning to ships to steer clear of Iranian waters in the Straits of Hormuz. The global markets are currently navigating a mix of geopolitical developments, political transitions, and a rotation in investor sentiment, setting the tone for Tuesday's trade.

Ayesha Khan

Calls AI Misuse 'Very Scary,' Recalls How Her Picture Was Morphed

Actress Ayesha Khan, who has been in the headlines ever since the release of *Dhurandhar*, featuring her in the popular track *Shararat*, has shared her concerns over the growing misuse of artificial intelligence and morphed images being circulated on social media with ease. Speaking to *Pinkvilla*, Ayesha Khan, while expressing her concern, shared, "The AI thing that has started is very scary. You have made a whole app to sexualise women on the internet... I can't humanly process this information that this is happening... There was a picture of me and Vijay sir... it was turned into an AI video where we are hugging each other. I had to tell her that this has never happened before." Speaking about how the technology has blurred the difference between fake and real, she added that it is "sad how most people would not know that it's AI." Khan also opened up about how paparazzi often click videos from weird angles and post them on social media with a tag of 'oops moment' and said, "People don't understand consent. You can't do these things without asking... They know it's wrong... you're capturing someone's oops moment and even posting that publicly."

Ayesha on Shooting for *Dhurandhar's* Song

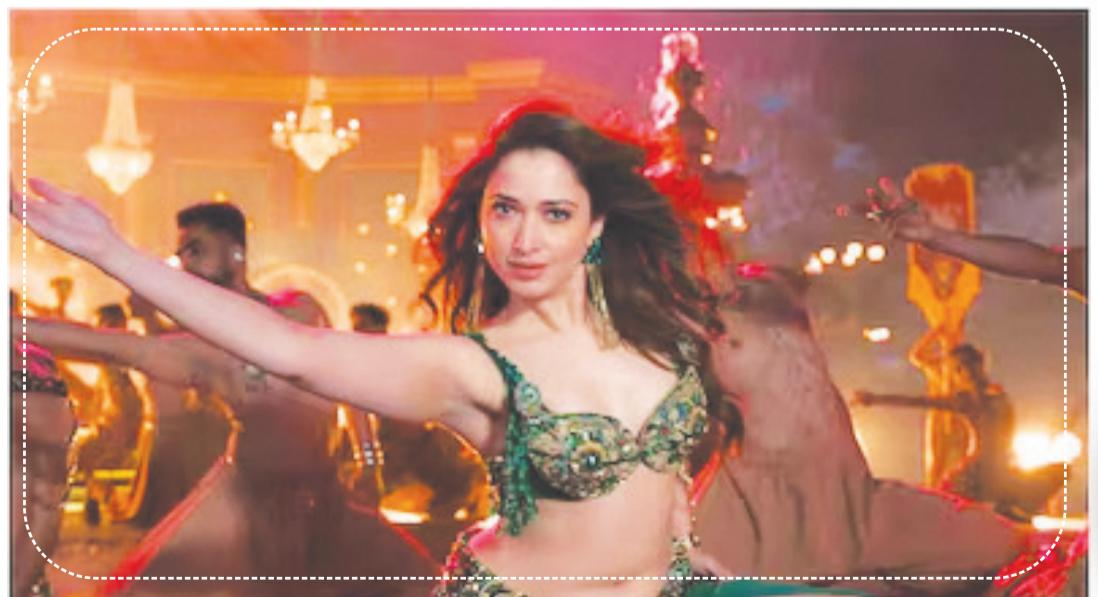
Ayesha opened up about the physically and emotionally taxing shoot and said, "It was two days of shooting. It was so hectic. I was on my period during the shoot, and you know you're not looking your best because you're bloated and you're not at your best. Kaash, I was at my best. It was so much work for two days... We were running short on time. We were so tired; our bones were aching after dancing so much. I was feeling so overwhelmed, and it was also because I was on my period, so maybe my emotions were hitting me too much. So, I just couldn't control it, and I just cried. It was khushi ke aansu (tears of joy)."

About the Song *Shararat*

Set against the backdrop of a lavish Karachi wedding in *Dhurandhar*, *Shararat* features Ayesha Khan and Krystle D'Souza as wedding dancers, lighting up the screen with their energy. The track is composed by Shashwat Sachdev, sung by Madhubanti Bagchi and Jasmine Sandlas, and choreographed by Vijay Ganguly. The song has already crossed 200 million views on YouTube, cementing its status as one of the film's most popular numbers.



Tamannaah Bhatia Signs Rs 6.2 Crore Contract With Mysuru Sandal Soap As Brand Ambassador

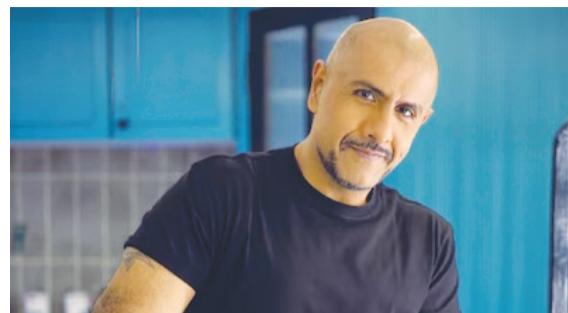


Tamannaah Bhatia has officially kicked off her role as the brand ambassador of Karnataka Soaps and Detergents Limited (KSDL), marking the start of a two-year association with Karnataka's iconic Mysuru Sandal Soap. The actor has been signed for a deal worth ₹6.2 crore. Announcing the partnership in Bengaluru, officials said Tamannaah's brand value will be leveraged to boost Mysuru Sandal Soap's visibility and sales, particularly among younger consumers and in markets outside Karnataka. As part of the agreement, she will feature in advertisements and promotional campaigns for Mysuru Sandal

Soap and other KSDL products. Industries Minister M B Patil said Tamannaah will not endorse competing products during the tenure of the contract. He added that the association is aimed at strengthening the brand's national presence, especially in North India. KSDL, which has a legacy of over 100 years, currently manufactures 57 products across soaps, detergents and cosmetics. The state-run company has set an ambitious target of achieving an annual turnover of ₹5,000 crore by 2030, and hopes the actor's pan-India appeal will play a key role in expanding its footprint beyond Karnataka.



'Don't Do Sifaarish': Vishal Dadlani BLOCKS Politician After Influence Call For Aspiring Singer



Singer-composer Vishal Dadlani has slammed the culture of "sifaarish" and influence-peddling in the music industry. Taking to Instagram on Monday (February 9), Vishal shared a blunt note aimed at newbie singers, making it clear he has little patience for anyone trying to secure work through political or personal connections instead of talent.

"Don't fuckin' get some mantri-ji..." In his post, Vishal directly addressed aspiring singers and revealed that he recently blocked a politician after being approached through such a route. He wrote: "Some advice for newbie singers. Don't fuckin' get some mantri-ji or his secretary to call me. That is a guaranteed way to NEVER meet me. I have zero respect for people who try to make their way forward through 'contacts'. To the chap who just tried it, mantri-ji is now blocked, and so are you. Now, even if you're a great singer, I have no interest in working with you. Sorry." The post quickly grabbed attention online for its sharp tone and unfiltered message against favouritism.

Please have faith in your talent...

Vishal further expanded on his stance in the caption, urging newcomers to trust their craft and stay patient instead of leaning on recommendations and pressure tactics.

He wrote: "Please have faith in your talent, be prepared to work hard and be patient. If you are good, your time will come. Don't do the 'sifaarish' thing. It's a boring cliche and more than anything, it only shows you to be someone who doesn't believe their talent is enough."

Vishal Doesn't Name Anyone

Vishal did not name the politician or the singer he was referring to in his post. Known for his no-nonsense social media presence, the musician has often voiced his opinions publicly and called out things he believes are wrong—without holding back.

Who Is Talha Anjum, The Pakistani Rapper Who Got Engaged To Influencer Zoiea Karim



Pakistani rapper and songwriter Talha Anjum is officially engaged to popular social media influencer Zoiea Karim. The musician is a member and co-founder of hip-hop music brand Young Stunners. Although the couple has not officially announced their engagement yet, several photos and videos of the couple have been making rounds on social media.

Who Is Talha Anjum?

The 30-year-old rapper is popular for being the co-founder of Young Stunners along with Talha Yunus. Besides his band, he has released two solo albums and starred in the 2024 film *Kattar Karachi*, where he also served as an executive producer.

Based in Karachi, Talha Anjum and Talha Yunus introduced Urdu rap to the Pakistani music scene. After the release of their 2013 song 'Burger-e-Karachi', the duo gained massive fame. Over the years, they released multiple popular tracks, including *Maila Majnun* and *Laam Sai Chaura*.

Following a brief separation, Talha reunited with Yunus in 2017 and released their debut album, *Rebirth*. Later in 2021, their major releases included *Gumaan*, *Afsanay*, and the *#HBLPSL6* anthem, *Groove Mera*, among others. Talha Anjum began his solo career and collaborated with other artists. In 2022, he collaborated with Karakoram and Faris Shafi to perform *Ye Dunya* from *Coke Studio 14*. He also released a song titled 'Nevermind' with Indian rapper Calm. In 2023, he released his debut solo album, *Open Letter*, which became a massive hit.

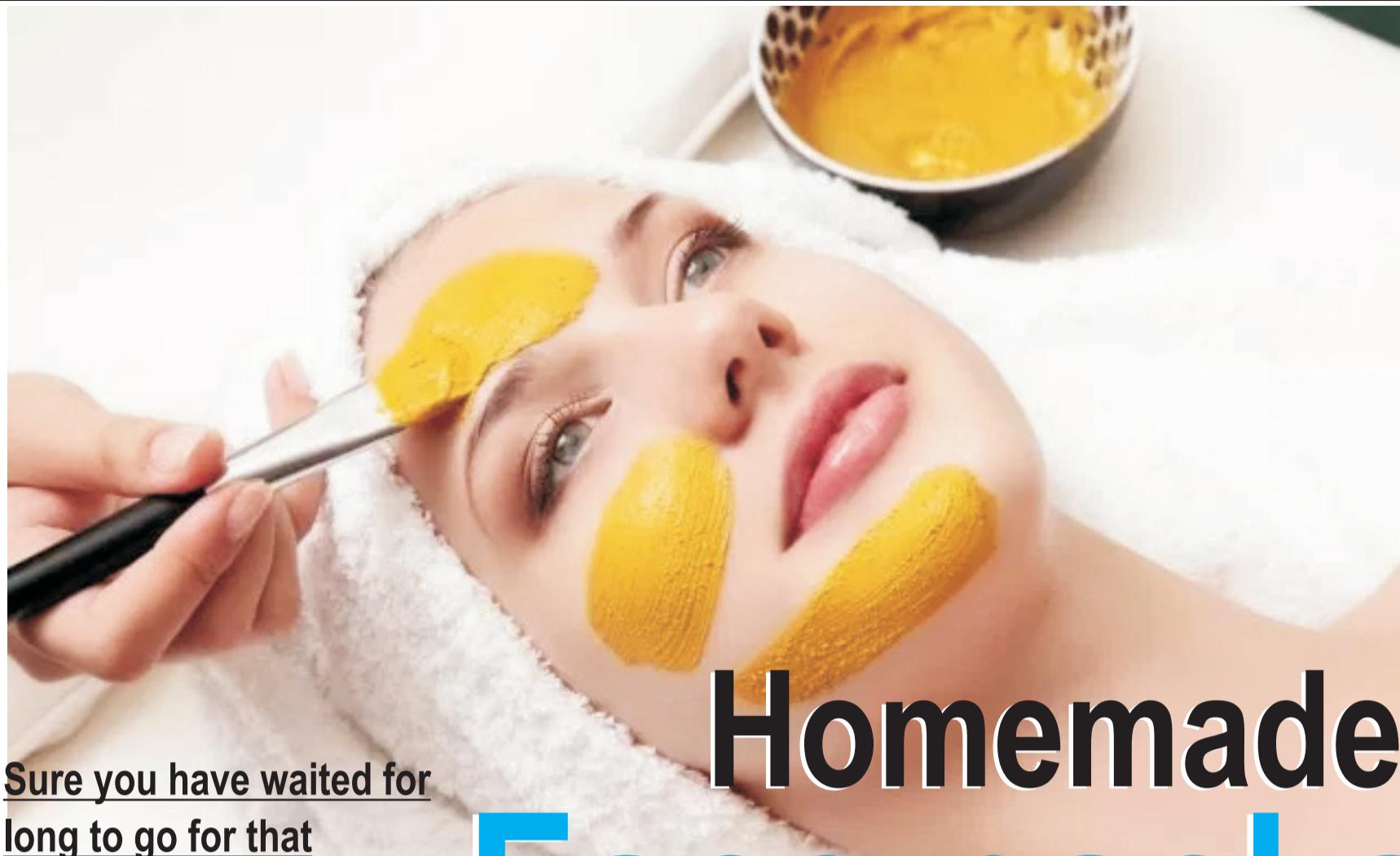
Talha Anjum Gets Engaged to Zoiea Karim

Although the couple has not yet shared photos from their engagement ceremony, musician Ahmed Khan dropped a few glimpses from the night. Sharing a performance video, he wrote, "Talha getting hitched before GTA6." In the video, Talha, along with the groomsmen, was seen dancing to his popular 2025 track, *Hawa Aney De*.

Other pictures of Talha and Zoiea have been circulating around the internet, where the couple was seen exchanging rings and sharing adorable moments.

Talha Anjum's Past Relationship

Previously, the rapper was reportedly in a relationship with actress Rimsha Ahmed. However, the two parted ways without stating any proper reason or statement. The sudden breakup left the fans confused, prompting massive online speculation about the reason for the split.



Sure you have waited for long to go for that vacation and enjoy a little tanning session. But then when you come back home you realise that the little tan sessions went too ahead leaving you with tanned hands, face and practically the whole you. So here are certain home remedies which will help you to get rid of

Homemade Face packs for tan removal

1. Cucumber, Rose Water and Lemon Juice:

While lemon acts as natural bleach, cucumber and rose water acts as cooling agents. In a small bowl take a table spoon each of cucumber juice, lemon juice and rose water and mix in well. Apply the mix with cotton on tanned areas and keep it for about 10 minutes. Then wash it off with cold water. Apply this pack every day after you get back home from the sun.

2. Gram flour and turmeric mix:

Mix two tablespoons of gram flour with a pinch of turmeric, a tablespoon of milk and a table spoon of crushed orange peel in a bowl with cold rose water. Apply the mix on clean face and let it dry for about 15-20 minutes. Once the pack dries, slowly remove the pack by scrubbing gently in clockwise and anti-clockwise direction; the

exfoliation effect will help in removing the tan.

3. Oat Meal and Butter Milk:

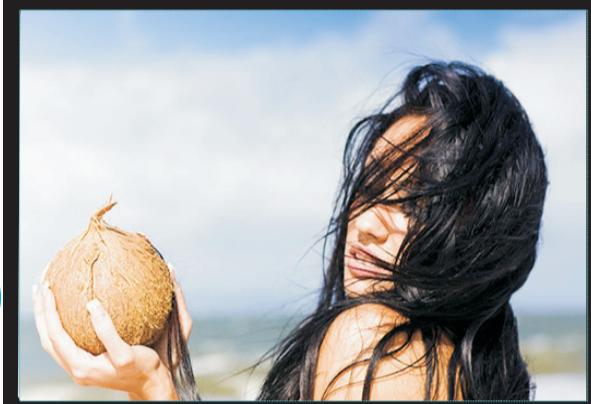
While butter milk is an excellent source for soothing skin and healing blisters and oatmeal is a great natural scrub. In a bowl mix two tablespoon of oatmeal with three-four tablespoons of butter milk and apply on tanned areas. Gently massage in circular motion; let it stay for 15-20 minutes and cleanse with water.

4. Milk and strawberry:

Not only is this combination a healthy one, it also helps in improving skin complexion and reduction of dark spots, freckles and even pigmentation. Take four-five crushed strawberries and mix it with two tablespoons of milk cream and apply it on face. Let it stay for about 20-30 minutes. Rinse it with fresh water.

The many benefits of raw coconut oil

If you are struggling with dry skin and hair, a jar of coconut oil could be your best friend. Its light texture, moisturizing properties and easy availability make it one of the best remedies to dry skin.



Coconut oil is also an effective makeup remover. Regularly using coconut oil on your body not only helps lighten the skin, but also helps rid scars and dark patches. Massage it onto your skin after a bath every day and you can do without a body cream. Its also an excellent hair tonic. A massage with warm coconut oil brings back lost shine and makes hair soft and manageable. It also helps reduce protein loss, which makes your hair healthy and attractive. Trying to grow your hair? Then use coconut oil regularly. This oil is also good for losing weight, maintaining cholesterol level, boosting the immune system, aiding in proper digestion and regulating metabolism. There is a misconception that coconut oil is not good for the heart because it contains large quantities of saturated fats. But this is far from the truth. Coconut oil contains about 50% lauric acid, which actively prevents various problems that affect the heart, such as high cholesterol levels and high blood pressure.



How to ensure good hair growth

To make your hair stronger and thicker, here's what you need to do.

Oil your hair twice a week

Oiling your hair twice a week will strengthen your hair roots and also make it shinier. Use coconut or almond oil or you can mix both and apply it to your hair. Keep it on for a good 30 minutes before washing it off with a shampoo that suits your hair type.

Apply henna once a month

Though a home remedy, but applying henna on your hair will not only condition it but will also make your hair stronger from within. Do not keep the henna for too long, if you do not want the colour.

Go in for hair strengthening treatments once every fortnight

There are several treatments that are done to treat hair loss. It also strengthens your hair in turn. Since these treatments are chemical-based ones, you should ideally get it done only once every fortnight.

Our feet possess over 25,000 sweat glands which produce up to a half-cup of sweat daily! Sweaty feet or hyperhydrosis is one of the most common, annoying conditions of the feet. Besides causing socially embarrassing problems like smelly feet, they also lead to fungal infections. Sweaty feet can also result in Athletes Foot, which is a common condition. Here are some tips to combat sweaty feet...

All in the family

Sweating beyond certain limits may also be due to hereditary reasons. If you are facing the problem of sweaty feet, find out whether your parents have this problem too. There are certain medications



available in the market that can control natural perspiration. Always consult your doctor before taking these medicines.

Wash feet daily

Make it part of your daily routine to wash your feet thoroughly.

It may sound silly to have to point it out but many people step into the shower and happily clean the upper part of their body but tend to neglect their feet. Wash your feet at least once a day, but preferably twice a day. Use a good antibacterial soap. Really dry your feet carefully and completely, especially, in between your toes. Don't let microorganisms get started growing in the nice, damp places between those toes!

Powder well

Powdering your feet frequently is helpful as the powder absorbs the excessive sweat. So, after bathing and drying your feet, choose to use an antiperspirant foot spray, or a



here's another good reason to give up those booze-fuelled outings.

'Shoe'-time

Give closed shoes a boot this summer. You need to give your feet space to breathe, so try to wear open-toed shoes as much as possible.

Wear cotton socks

Don't buy cheap synthetic socks, stick with good quality cotton socks. Natural fibres have a good built in ventilation system. Change your socks at least once in the middle of the day. Make sure you always have clean, dry socks to change into.

Medication

There are good quality lotions, medications and powders available in the market that are good to get rid of sweaty feet. Certain medical foot bath treatments are good antiperspirants, excellent for sweaty feet.

Unusual lip shades for the summer

Experimentation is the name of the game this summer and the trend has trickled to lip colours as well.

This summer has seen pink as the most wearable colour, but if it isn't your colour, then there are a few more unusual colours for you to choose from. Here, we list a few.

Peach: The juicy shade is summer-perfect as it gives a beachy, laid-back vibe that will get you on the vacation mood, pronto. Add kajal to your eyes and you are beach-ready instantly.

Tangerine: It is one of those colours that was just made for summers. If you like peach, but want to heighten the drama a bit, then tangerine is the shade you want to pick.

Orange: It's a fun colour to sport, especially in the heat. The fun and peppy shade has a coolness that helps you grab eye-ball instantly. Fire engine red: Red hot lips are a perfect choice for summer parties. Instead of wearing a darker brick colour this time of the year go for a bright red shade.

Lilac: This shade of purple may seem a little out-of-the-box at first, but don't be scared. The pale lilac colour transitions easily from a fun day at the beach to a happening night out in the city. That's not all, this gorgeous lip colour will brighten up your complexion, making you glow.