

INDIRA VIKAS COLONY LAND SCAM EXPOSED

₹1000 Crore Government Land Allegedly Grabbed – Political Leaders, Officials, Builder Mafia Nexus Under Scanner

The Sikh Times
Gurcharan Singh
Babbar

Indira Vikas Colony, located near Dr. Mukherjee Nagar, and named after former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, has become the centre of a massive and shocking land controversy that allegedly began during Indira Gandhi's tenure. According to serious allegations and ground-level reports, land grabbing in Indira Vikas Colony reportedly started during that period when a powerful BHU Mafia began encroaching on valuable government land.

Gradually, the encroachments expanded and large residential "kothis" were constructed. It is alleged that several influential individuals were involved, including MLAs, MCD councillors, Members of Parliament, local Congress leaders, and even local police officers. On the other side, officials from DDA, Fire Department, MCD, Jal Board, Electricity Department, Registrar Office, along with land mafia, builder mafia, and property dealers allegedly worked in collusion. Heavy bribes were reportedly exchanged to facilitate illegal possession and



construction on government land. After the initial encroachments, the alleged sale of government land began openly. Today, Indira

Vikas Colony has transformed into a large and luxurious residential locality. However, the most shocking aspect is that the residents reportedly do not possess:



No legal registry, no building plan, no official mutation, no approved government sale records.

The Government has neither officially sold this land nor have the residents legally purchased it from the Government. Four and five-storey kothis have been constructed, covering nearly 100% of the plots. Many buildings have illegal lifts installed. Allegations suggest that government officials accepted heavy bribes and played a major role in facilitating the settlement and expansion of Indira Vikas Colony. According to estimates, government land worth approximately ₹1000 crore has allegedly been sold by builder mafia, land mafia, and property dealers. Shockingly, the residents

reportedly possess only Power of Attorney documents.

The individuals who allegedly sold the government land have issued such documents, and copies of these papers are available with the families currently residing in the colony. The Government must arrest those individuals who sold government land illegally. Every document of sale is reportedly available with the families living in Indira Vikas Colony. A thorough investigation can easily identify who sold the land and how these transactions were executed.

[Continued news page 2](#)

Tamil Nadu's election-year budget bets on welfare, growth – and a trillion-dollar promise

Tamil Nadu .(Agency)

Presenting what is likely to be the last budget of the DMK government's current tenure, Tamil Nadu Finance Minister Thangam Thennarasu on Tuesday framed the state's interim budget for 2026-27 as both a welfare ledger and a political statement – one that argues high growth and high redistribution can coexist.

Invoking Thiruvalluvar and recalling former Chief Minister M Karunanidhi's 1971 advice that a budget must mobilise resources rather than slow development for want of funds, Thennarasu's speech, stretched over 100 pages, blended cultural nationalism, social justice, and an economic ambition now central to Tamil Nadu's political narrative: a one-trillion-dollar economy.

"The focus should be on identifying the means to mobilise the necessary financial resources for a well-conceived plan, rather than reducing plan expenditure or slowing the pace of development on the grounds that adequate funds are not presently

available. Our budget must serve as an instrument for planned development, without in any way diminishing the momentum of constructive work," Thennarasu said.

The government reiterated that Tamil Nadu



recorded double-digit economic growth of 11.19% in 2024-25, ranking first among major states. It highlighted leadership in electronics exports, contributing 41.23% of India's total in the sector, and pointed to 1,179 investment MoUs worth Rs 12.37 lakh crore, promising 36 lakh jobs.

The budget's industrial pitch is clear: more SIPCOT parks (54 operational now across 49,468 acres), semiconductor and deep-tech missions, a Rs 5,200-crore shipbuilding cluster in Thoothukudi, and new TIDEL parks in tier-two cities. For investors, the message is continuity. For voters, it is employment. Yet the trillion-dollar target – originally framed for 2030, now reiterated in spirit – depends not merely on MoUs but on sustained capital formation, global demand, and macro stability. The budget does not spell out fiscal ratios in the opening chapters, but it leans heavily on growth momentum to justify expansive spending. If growth is the headline, welfare remains the grammar. The government's flagship Kalaignar Magalir Urimai Thittam provides Rs 1,000 per month to 1.31 crore women. In a politically dramatic move, Rs 5,000 was recently credited at one go – Rs 3,000 towards monthly entitlements plus a Rs 2,000 summer package.

Govt land for Cong bhavans
Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar confirmed that government land will be used to construct Congress bhavans across the state. Responding to BJP leaders' allegation that government land is being identified to build Congress bhavans, he said 100 such bhavans will be built to mark

the centenary of Mahatma Gandhi's Congress presidency. "We will allot 5,000 to 10,000 sq ft of land for Congress bhavans in district and taluk headquarters," he said.

Slamming Opposition parties, Shivakumar said,



"During the BJP rule, land was allotted in more than 100 places in Bengaluru for various trusts. Land given to Chanakya University is worth Rs 10 crore per acre.

But the BJP government allotted 100 acres of land at Rs 50 lakh per acre and collected crores in the name of CSR fund. The BJP government misused power.

Mayawati rejects alliance buzz, says Bahujan Samaj Party will go solo in 2027 Uttar Pradesh polls

Lucknow .(Agency)

BSP president Mayawati on Wednesday trashed as "fake news" reports that her party would contest the 2027 Uttar Pradesh Assembly elections in alliance with other parties, asserting that it will fight the polls on its own strength. The former Uttar Pradesh chief minister in a press briefing alleged that such reports were being spread with the help of artificial intelligence (AI) to mislead people.

"It is absolutely wrong, false, baseless and fabricated news. These discussions are being deliberately circulated to misguide the public," she said, adding that political leaders as well as sections of the media should avoid indulging in such speculation.

Mayawati said she has repeatedly announced that the BSP will contest elections independently and recalled that she had made a public declaration in this regard at a mega rally held in Lucknow on October 9, 2025, on the death anniversary of party founder Kanshi Ram.

"After nationwide discussions on that announcement, there remains no scope for any confusion. Yet some people and certain media sections are engaged in a malicious campaign to spread false news. This is an anti-BSP tactic and people need not pay attention to it," she said.

The BSP chief alleged that the Congress, Samajwadi Party and Bharatiya Janata Party have a "narrow mindset" and are opposed to the ideology of BR Ambedkar, and any talk of alliance with the BSP is driven by electoral self-interest.

"Alliance politics has only harmed the BSP in the past. Therefore, party workers are fully committed to contesting the 2027 Assembly elections alone with full dedication," she said.

Urging party workers not to be distracted by what she described as conspiracies by rival parties, Mayawati said the BSP should move ahead confidently and aim to form a full majority government in the state as it did in 2007.

India and France upgrade ties to Special Global Strategic Partnership

New Delhi .(Agency)

India and France elevated their bilateral ties to a Special Global Strategic Partnership following talks in Mumbai Tuesday between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and French President Emmanuel Macron. With the meeting resulting in 21 important outcomes in areas ranging from defence to critical minerals, tech and innovation to startups, advanced materials to health and skilling, Modi underlined that "this partnership will provide stability and progress" in "this era of unpredictable global dynamics".

Macron, who will travel to New Delhi for the AI Impact summit Wednesday, said India is

one of the most trusted partners of France. "From Rafale jets to submarines, we are expanding defence cooperation," he said. The two leaders virtually inaugurated the H125 light utility helicopter final assembly line of Tata-Airbus in Karnataka. "We take pride in the fact that, together, India and France will manufacture in India the world's only helicopter capable of flying to the heights of Mount Everest and export it to the entire world," Modi said.

The facility, according to the Ministry of External Affairs, will strengthen India's aeronautical manufacturing capabilities,



lead to skilling of the workforce, create jobs and give impetus to Atmanirbhar Bharat.

Describing the India-France relationship as

"very crucial", Modi said, "The strategic partnership between the two countries is one of the oldest and, with the help of President Macron, we have deepened the ties and given it more energy in recent times. Based on this trust and vision, we are elevating our relation to a Special Global Strategic Partnership. This partnership is not just strategic. In this era of unpredictable global dynamics, this partnership will provide global stability and progress." He said the friendship between the two countries has "no boundaries" and the partnership can "reach from deep oceans to the tallest mountains".

Disorganised PR spectacle: Rahul Gandhi slams AI Summit over Galgotias robodog row

Following the robodog controversy, Rahul Gandhi slammed the Narendra Modi government and the AI summit on X, calling it a disorganised PR spectacle that showcased Chinese products instead of leveraging India's talent and data.

New Delhi .(Agency)
The Congress has doubled down on its attack on the Narendra Modi government over Galgotias University allegedly trying to pass off a Chinese robodog as its own innovation, with Rahul Gandhi calling the AI summit "a disorganized PR spectacle" and the party terming the act "brazenly shameless." "Instead of leveraging India's talent and data, the AI summit is a disorganized PR spectacle - Indian data up for sale, Chinese products showcased," Rahul Gandhi wrote on X.

Earlier in the day, the Congress latched on to the robodog controversy at the AI summit, which eventually led the Indian government to vacate the event, saying that the "Modi government has made a laughing stock of India globally with regard to AI."



The Congress also claimed that India has become a subject of ridicule in the Chinese media after their robots were showcased as Indian innovations at Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi. "This is truly embarrassing for India. What is even more shameful is the fact that Modi's minister Ashwini Vaishnaw is

indulging in the same falsehood, promoting China's robots at the Indian summit. The Modi Government has caused irreparable damage to the image of the country - they have reduced AI to a joke - a field in which we could be world leaders given our data power. Brazenly shameless," it said.

The controversy first emerged when the Noida-based university showcased a surveillance robot called "Orion," with professor Neha Singh claiming it was part of the university's Rs 350-crore AI initiative. However, the innovation turned out to be a Chinese-made Unitree Go2, available for Rs 2.3 lakh. What left the university further red-faced was when netizens took to social media to fact-check a clarification issued by the university, which claimed it had never presented the robodog as its own innovation.

Front continued news

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1000 Crore Government Land Allegedly Grabbed — Political Leaders, Officials, Builder Mafia Nexus Under Scanner

I have written hundreds of letters to both the Delhi Government and the Central Government regarding this matter. On record, I have repeatedly published detailed reports in newspapers highlighting:

The illegal sale of government land
The role of officials and political figures
The absence of registry, mutation, and building approvals
The estimated ₹1000 crore land value

The danger posed by unauthorized multi-storey constructions

Despite repeatedly informing the authorities and bringing the matter into public domain, till date no arrests have been made against those who allegedly sold government land. Another alarming aspect is that most property dealers have converted houses into PG accommodations for students, as the colony is close to coaching hubs of Mukherjee Nagar. The lanes of Indira Vikas Colony are extremely narrow. In case of a fire emergency, rescue operations would be nearly impossible.

The Fire Department officials are reportedly silent. Students living inside these PG accommodations are at serious risk. In the event of a fire or structural collapse, there could be a catastrophic tragedy.

This issue is not merely about illegal construction; it concerns: Government land worth ₹1000 crore, alleged political and bureaucratic nexus, massive unauthorized real estate operations.

It is time for a high-level inquiry by an independent investigative agency. The Government must take immediate action, identify the individuals who sold government land, and initiate legal proceedings. The people living in Indira Vikas Colony deserve clarity. The students deserve safety. And the nation deserves accountability. The question remains: How long will the authorities remain silent?

Three attack bike taxi driver, stab and rob him of motorcycle; FIR registered

Gurgaon.(Agency)

A bike taxi driver was allegedly attacked and robbed by three men in Bisrak on Sunday. The driver was travelling from Galaxy Chowk towards Lal Kuan when the men on a motorcycle stopped him near JM International School. One of them stabbed him in his abdomen and fled with bike and mobile phone.

Based on the complaint filed by the driver Kushal, an FIR was registered at the Bisrak police station. He mentioned in his complaint that the incident took place around midnight on Feb 14. Kushal is originally from Meerut and has been living in Chhaprula village for the past three years. He said he had dropped off a passenger at Nirala Society and was travelling from Galaxy Chowk towards Lal Kuan when three men on a motorcycle began to follow him near JM International School. Kushal sensed danger and tried to speed away. However, the men sped past him and parked their motorcycle in front of his vehicle. The men allegedly brandished a knife and demanded him to give up all his valuables. When he resisted, one of the attackers stabbed him in his abdomen. Kaushal attempted to cry for help but the men threatened to kill him if he continued shouting. They subsequently snatched his motorcycle, cash and mobile phone before fleeing.

Locals rushed to his aid and took him to a nearby hospital. He was discharged on Monday and returned home. On Tuesday, Kushal approached the police station and submitted a formal complaint regarding the incident.

Man regains his eyesight after rare facial malformation op

Noida.(Agency)

A 24-year-old man from Agra regained his eyesight and eyelid movement after undergoing complex surgery for a rare facial venous malformation at a hospital in Greater Noida.

The congenital vascular disorder affected the right side of his face, including the forehead, eyebrow and upper eyelid. Over the years, the abnormally formed veins gradually enlarged, causing progressive swelling that led to drooping of the eyelid, impaired vision and episodes of double vision. At times, the man was forced to keep one eye closed to see clearly.

Venous malformations are rare, affecting an estimated one to two people per 10,000. While present at birth, they often worsen with age. Doctors said lesions near the eye pose particular challenges due to the dense network of fragile blood vessels and their proximity to critical structures involved in vision.

The patient had approached several hospitals in the past but was repeatedly advised against surgery because of the risk of severe bleeding and potential loss of eyesight. Two years ago, an attempted procedure elsewhere failed and left behind scar tissue, further complicating his condition. Detailed clinical imaging at ShardaCare hospital later revealed an extensive venous malformation measuring around 6 by 5 cms externally, with deeper spread across the forehead and eyelid. After careful assessment, doctors decided on a redo surgery aimed at removing the lesion while preserving eye function. The procedure involved dissection through multiple abnormal venous channels.

"Redo surgeries for vascular malformations are challenging because scarring distorts normal anatomy," said Dr Jagdish Chander, senior director of general surgery at ShardaCare-Healthcity, Greater Noida. "Our priority was to clear the lesion while safeguarding vision and eyelid movement."

75% work done, key drain on SPR likely by June

Gurgaon.(Agency)

The perennial issue of monsoon flooding along Southern Peripheral Road (SPR) could see relief this year, with the master stormwater drain between Vatika Chowk and NH8 now nearing completion. Officials from the GMDA said nearly 75% of the work was completed, and the remaining 1.2-km section is under execution. The authority is now targeting June for completion so that the infrastructure is in place before the onset of the monsoon.

The 4.6-km reinforced cement concrete (RCC) box drain being constructed along the arterial stretch aims to address persistent flooding in the new sectors along the SPR. "The construction picked up pace, and we are working to ensure that the remaining stretch is completed before the monsoon season. The master drain will reduce the burden on the Badshapur drain by diverting and streamlining stormwater flow from newly developed sectors," the senior official of GMDA said. While a 600-metre portion of the drain was constructed by the National Highways



Authority of India (NHAI) during the development of the Dwarka Expressway, the remaining 4.6 km is being executed by GMDA along the SPR. Once operational, the drain will channelise rainwater discharge from sectors 68 to 80 and ease pressure on the existing Badshapur drain, which frequently overflows during heavy

rainfall. Sohna Road, SPR, and Golf Course Extension Road are expected to benefit from improved stormwater outflow, the official said. The Badshapur drain is one of the city's 3 primary stormwater channels, carrying runoff from nearly 24,100 hectares, from Ghata village to the Najafgarh drain. To address the issue, GMDA planned to construct Leg-IV, which breaks off from the Badshapur drain beyond Vatika Chowk on Sohna Road and moves along the SPR up to NH8. The project was approved during GMDA's 4th authority meeting in May 2019. However, the tender was floated nearly 3 years later owing to the pandemic and a revision in cost. The work was finally allotted in April 2023, with an initial completion deadline of Oct 2024. The timeline was extended multiple times, drawing criticism from residents who continue to face flooding even during moderate rainfall. Residents say the project is long overdue. "Every monsoon, we experience flooding along the SPR and adjoining sector roads. We hope the authority completes the drain this time before the rains set in. Because of poor drainage, the road surface deteriorates quickly, leading to traffic disruptions. The drain along the SPR must also be properly connected with internal sector drains so that rainwater is effectively channelised into the master drain," said Rajat Srivastava, a resident of Sector 70A.

Two firemen battle 50% burns after Faridabad factory explosion, in ICU

Gurgaon.(Agency)

Two firemen who rushed into a burning industrial unit in Faridabad's Mujesar on Monday to rescue trapped workers are now battling for their lives in hospital with over 50% burn injuries.

Ranveer (28) and Bhavi Chand (48) are undergoing treatment at the ICU of AIIMS and Safdarjung Hospital in Delhi. Around 4pm on Monday, a fire and series of explosions at two factories in Mujesar industrial area left 35 people injured in total, including three policemen and the owners of the two workshops. Preliminary findings revealed that the incident began at Shiv Steel Company, where a machine used for cutting steel caught fire while it was still operating. As workers and first responders tried to contain the flames and pull people out, the fire spread to an adjacent unit — Kalkaji Lubricants — where highly inflammable chemical drums were stored without any cover, setting off a series of explosions.

A senior fire officer said the department received the first distress call around 4.30pm. A team from NIT fire station reached within minutes, while two policemen on an emergency response vehicle also arrived at the spot.

Ranveer and Bhavi Chand, along with driver Gopal, led the initial response. "After we received the message from our Panchkula headquarters, it appeared to be a routine workshop fire. We did not know chemical drums were stored there. As the team laid hose pipes and prepared to douse the flames, a massive explosion occurred in the drums. The blast was so powerful that Ranveer was flung in the air and slammed against the fire tender parked outside the factory," the official said. Bhavi Chand was trapped inside.

"He managed to crawl out despite severe injuries, and then collapsed," the officer added. Gopal — though injured by glass shards from the fire tender's damaged windscreen — helped pull the victims to safety and get them to hospital. The fire was brought under control in about 40 minutes, the official said, adding that the team prevented "50 to 60" chemical drums stored outside from exploding. Three cops engaged in the rescue operation were also injured.

School fails to get admit cards, Class 10 students miss first CBSE paper, DC seeks report from principal

Gurgaon.(Agency)

Eleven Class 10 students missed their CBSE board maths paper on Tuesday after their school in Sector 9 failed to get them admit cards following a dispute over affiliation, sparking nightlong protests by parents and a police complaint. Parents alleged that Edcrest International School kept delaying the admit cards despite taking full fees in advance, leaving families panicked and students uncertain about whether they would be allowed to write the remaining papers. Out of a batch of 25, only 14 students received hall tickets. The rest reached the test centre without an admit card, only to be turned back despite months of preparation.

The school, parents said, had a CBSE affiliation only till Class 8, but had got students registered for board exams through other institutions. They claimed they were repeatedly assured that "all formalities were complete", but the admit cards were held back until the last



moment.

The situation escalated over the weekend. According to parents, the school first promised the admit cards on Saturday, then shifted the deadline to Monday afternoon, and later to Monday evening. Late in the evening, they were told several students had missed registration timelines and their admit cards had not been released. "Our children prepared for the exams through the year, but were informed only at the last moment that their admit cards had not been released. We

gathered outside the deputy commissioner's residence late on Monday night and continued our protest till around 3am. We sought his urgent intervention," said Virender Kumar, a parent. Parents again protested near the DC office on Tuesday morning, demanding immediate action and clarity. A tense confrontation also played out at the school, where parents questioned the principal. According to them, the principal claimed she visited the CBSE regional office, but no solution was reached before the exam on Tuesday.

The school owner, Vinay Kataria, said earlier batches had managed to take the exams through "a similar arrangement", but the problem arose this year after a Delhi-based partner school was defunct. "We attempted to transfer the students to other schools in Gurgaon to ensure their registration. However, these attempts largely failed. We tried across the city, but some schools did not take them due to fear of being de-registered," he

Broken Salarpur bridge doubles as daily shortcut



Noida.(Agency)

Declared dilapidated by the Noida Authority, a narrow bridge linking Sector 81 Metro Station to Salarpur village continues to function as a key pedestrian

shortcut, exposing daily commuters to serious risk.

Despite visible cracks and an uneven surface, residents of Salarpur and neighbouring Bhangal, most of them

industrial and domestic workers, use the bridge to cross the Kondli drain and reach the metro station and workplaces in the NSEZ, Sector 81 and nearby 7x sectors, especially during morning rush hours.

With no barricades or access restrictions, pedestrians are forced to squeeze past each other, often stepping onto the low parapet wall to avoid crowds or stray cattle that also move across the connector. Below, the Kondli drain is clogged with filth and plastic waste, amplifying the danger of a slip or structural failure.

The continued use of the unsafe crossing has renewed concerns over civic enforcement and public safety, weeks after software engineer Yuvraj Mehta drowned in an unbarriered, water-filled trench in Sector 150.

While the Authority's health department is responsible for sanitation in the area, maintenance of the bridge falls under the civil wing. Noida Authority general manager (civil) AK Arora did not respond

25 who suffered burns in factory blaze onlookers in Faridabad

Gurgaon.(Agency)

At least 25 people who sustained burns after a blast inside a steel factory in Faridabad's Mujesar industrial area were onlookers. Dr Jayant Ahuja, Faridabad chief medical officer (CMO), confirmed that one person was critical with over 55% burns and was on a ventilator at Delhi's Safdarjung Hospital. According to senior fire officials, after a short circuit triggered the fire, most people inside Shiv Steel Company were firemen and police and the situation was under control.

First responders were laying hose pipes to douse the flames when the fire caught on, spreading to uncovered oil and chemical drums, triggering a series of explosions and a massive inferno. The boundary wall collapsed and iron drums (200 litres each) containing highly inflammable substances at the adjacent Kalkaji Lubricants workshop also exploded.

After hearing multiple blasts, workers from nearby units and passersby gathered at the site,



contributing to the high number of casualties. Officials said that the factory owners had already evacuated the staff when the fire first started. However, the subsequent blasts caused injuries to the owner and the crowd of bystanders outside. "The injury was not due to the fire. It was the onlookers who did not listen to the authorities and went near the spot despite several warnings," an officer said, describing how people gathered out of curiosity to see what was happening.

"Those who went to look... the blast wave hit them," the officer added.

According to doctors, while 14 patients reached BK Hospital on Monday, 23 were admitted to Fortis Hospital. Eight out of 37 patients were shifted to AIIMS and Safdarjung hospitals by creating green corridors. On Tuesday, six patients were left in BK Hospital. Doctors confirmed that the patients currently admitted to the civil hospital were stable. Dr Ahuja also emphasised the need for

public awareness during such disasters. "Wherever emergency or fire vehicles are operating, the public should give them a working area and avoid looking on. Create a safe zone and maintain a proper distance from the incident site. There could have been zero injuries in case the onlookers followed the safety protocol," he said. Abhishek, who damaged his right eardrum due to the blast, said, "My brother Krishna works at Kalkaji Lubricants. He called me to inform me about the fire. When my brother-in-law Ravinder and I reached the site and stood near the workshop to observe the fire operations, suddenly there were multiple blasts in the chemical drums. The area went dark after the smoke rings engulfed the area. The three of us were injured. I feel acute pain in my ears. Ravinder and Krishna are unconscious." Another person injured in the incident was Vipin, who is admitted to BK Hospital.

THE SIKH TIMES

Edited, Printed, Published
Owned by Simmi Babbar
N-31, Dr. Mukherjee Nagar
Delhi-110009

Printed at Qaumi Patrika Printing
Press, A4/A144, Tronica City
(Loni), Ghaziabad (Uttar Pradesh)
Corporate Office:

5, Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg,
Press Area, ITO, New Delhi
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RNI No. DELENG/2008/25465

72 senior officers shifted in major bureaucratic reshuffle

The Sikh Times

New Delhi: In a major bureaucratic reshuffle, the Delhi Government transferred 72 senior officers, including IAS and DANICS officials, with several being given additional charges across departments. According to an order from the Services Department, 36 Arunachal Pradesh-Goa-Mizoram and Union Territory (AGMUT) cadre IAS officers from different batches were either assigned new responsibilities or moved to other departments. The reshuffle also involved 36 officers from the Delhi, Andaman and Nicobar Islands Civil Services (DANICS). Key appointments include Santosh D Vaidya (IAS),

1998), who has been appointed principal secretary (home) and will also hold additional charges of finance, planning and industries. Bipin Pathak (IAS, 1992), additional chief secretary (social welfare), has been given additional charge of the SC/ST/OBC Welfare Department. In the health sector, Rupesh Kumar Thakur (IAS, 2006), CEO of the Delhi Urban Shelter Improvement Board, has been appointed secretary (health and family welfare), replacing Nikhil Kumar (IAS, 2002), who will now serve as commissioner (trade and taxes). The Education Department sees Sanjeev Ahuja (IAS, 2011) taking charge as the secretary (education) with addition-

al responsibility for higher and technical education, while Pandurang Pole (IAS, 2014), outgoing education secretary, moves to the General Administration Department with the additional charge of Labour Commissioner. Other significant postings include Neeraj Semwal (IAS, 2003), revenue secretary-cum-divisional commissioner, who will additionally head the Power

NAME CHANGE

I. Pradeep Kumar S/o Kuldeep Singh R/o 93, Ground Floor, 10, C, Vasundhara, Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh -201012 have changed the name of my Minor Daughter Gudiyaa aged 2 years and she shall hereafter be known as Madhviya Singh

PUBLIC NOTICE

Information is given to general public at large that our client Mr. Sanjay S/o Late Mr. Babu Ram is the owner of Freehold Residential area measuring 2 Bigha 12 Biswa 5 Biswansi, out of Khatia No. 120, Khasra No. 99. Situated in the area Village Ilaichariup, Pargana Loni, Tehsil & Distt. Ghaziabad, U.P. by virtue of Sale Deed dated 19.03.2002. As Done No. 4374, Vol. No. 1689 Book No. 1 on Pages 255-259 on dated 19.03.2002 in SR. IV, Ghaziabad. Same has been lost and online FIR Reference No. 430/2014/LR no. 3439215/2015 dated 18.12.2025 Crime Branch Delhi is also available now our client is declaring that that any other person does not have any right over the said property, and Plot area measuring 50 Sq. Yds., will be Sale to Mrs. Deepika Sharma W/o Mr. Shivam Mishra and same will be finance by Roha Housing Finance Pvt. Ltd. Branch: 2nd Floor, A-45, Block A, Sector 4, Noida, Uttar Pradesh -201301. If any person(s) have any objection(s) or claim(s) with respect to the right, title or interest in the Said Property then contact us within 07 days from the date of Publication of this notice and or the same to the undersigned if found by anyone. Thereafter no claim shall be entertained.

PUBLIC NOTICE

I NAZIM S/O LAIK AHMED R/O NEW F-159 RAGHUBIR NAGAR DELHI-110027. I have changed my name to NAZIM KHAN Permanently for all Future purpose

NAME CHANGE

I. AAFTAB AHMED S/O ABRAR AHMED R/O 9289, Dakshin Puri EXTN. DR Ambedkar Nagar, New Delhi, South Delhi, Delhi-110062 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as CHANDRA.

PUBLIC NOTICE

I RITIKA RAMDAY W/O SUMIT RAMDAY R/O FLAT NO 601 EAST WEST SOCIETY PLOT NO-99 SECTOR 54 GURGAON 1220011, have changed my name to RITIKA SHARMA Permanently for all Future purpose

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I. RAJINDER KUMAR S/O Kishan Lal R/O X-23 Gali No 9 Bhabmpur Delhi 110053 Changed my name to Satish Chand Gupta

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NEWS BOX

Police arrest man who ran toward the US Capitol building holding a shotgun

WASHINGTON. (Agency)

US Capitol Police in Washington, DC, arrested an 18-year-old man Tuesday after he ran from his vehicle toward the west side of the Capitol Building armed with a shotgun. Capital Police Chief Michael Sullivan said the man, identified as Carter Camacho of Smyrna, Georgia, was arrested after he parked a Mercedes SUV near the Capitol, got out and ran "several hundred yards" toward the building with a shotgun before officers intercepted him and ordered him to put down the firearm and get on the ground. Speaking at a press conference following the arrest, Sullivan said Camacho was wearing a tactical vest and gloves and had a Kevlar helmet and gas mask in the vehicle. The shotgun was loaded and he had additional rounds on him, the chief said.

Sullivan said the motive was under investigation, including whether members of Congress were the target. Congress is not in session. Sullivan said the department has video footage, but he asked the public for any footage they might have of the incident.

"Who knows what would have happened if we wouldn't have officers standing here?" the chief said, adding that the department had run active shooter drills in almost the identical spot in recent months.

Sullivan said Camacho was not known to authorities and described him as not being from the area. The chief said the vehicle was not registered to the suspect, who has multiple addresses. He is being held for unlawful activities and carrying a rifle without a license, an unregistered firearm and unregistered ammunition, the Capitol Police said in a press release. There have been incidents at the Capitol in recent years, including a Capitol Police arrest in 2023 where an Atlanta man armed with a rifle was spotted in a park near the Senate.

Peru's Congress removes interim President Jerí as he faces a corruption probe

LIMA, Peru. (Agency)

Peru: Peru's Congress voted Tuesday to remove interim President José Jerí from office as he faces corruption allegations, triggering a fresh wave of political instability just weeks before the nation's April presidential and congressional elections.

Jerí is under a preliminary investigation into corruption and influence peddling, stemming from a series of undisclosed meetings with two Chinese executives. With 75 votes in favor, 24 against and three abstentions, Peru's legislature voted to remove Jerí from the position he had assumed on Oct. 10 when predecessor Dina Boluarte was dismissed as a crime wave gripped the country.

Jerí's removal from office is the latest chapter in a prolonged political crisis in a country that has seen seven presidents since 2016, and is about to hold a general election amid widespread public outcry over the surge in violent crime. Lawmakers will choose a new president from among their members to govern until July 28, when the interim leader will hand over the office to the winner of the April 12 presidential election. Jerí will return to his position as a legislator until July 28, when the new Congress also takes office. A vote on the interim leader will take place Wednesday, after lawmakers register their candidates. The accusations against Jerí stemmed from a leaked report regarding a clandestine December meeting with two Chinese executives. One attendee holds active government contracts, while the other is currently under investigation for alleged involvement in an illegal logging operation.

Jerí has denied wrongdoing. He said he met the executives to organize a Peruvian-Chinese festivity, but his opponents have accused him of corruption. Despite a revolving door of presidents, Peru's economy has remained stable. The Andean nation had a public debt to gross domestic product ratio of 32% in 2024, one of the lowest in Latin America, and the government has welcomed foreign investment in areas like mining and infrastructure.

Afghanistan says it has released three Pakistani soldiers captured during October cross-border fighting

KABUL. (Agency)

Afghanistan has released three Pakistani soldiers who it had captured during cross-border fighting last October, its government spokesman said Tuesday.

Zabihullah Mujahid said in a statement the three, who had been captured during fighting on Oct. 12, were turned over to a Saudi delegation that mediated between the two sides and had traveled to Kabul on Monday. He said the release was decided upon in light of the start of Ramadan, the Islamic holy month of fasting and reflection. Tension between Afghanistan and neighboring Pakistan has been high



since deadly border clashes in October killed dozens of soldiers, civilians and suspected militants, and wounded hundreds more on both sides. The violence erupted after explosions in Kabul, the Afghan capital, on Oct. 9 that the Taliban government blamed on Pakistan and vowed to avenge. The fighting was the worst between the neighbors in recent years. A ceasefire mediated by Qatar has since eased tension, although subsequent peace talks in Istanbul failed to produce a definitive agreement and relations remain strained. There was no immediate comment from Pakistan on the release of the three soldiers.

Indonesia tightens control on nickel as US and China scramble for critical minerals

HANOI. (Agency)

Indonesia is tightening state control over the world's largest nickel supply after years of betting the metal would anchor a homegrown electric-vehicle industry, and just as global demand begins shifting away from heavy reliance on nickel.

The move could still ripple through global EV supply chains as the United States and China compete for critical minerals. Indonesia sits at the center of the nickel market: its share of global supply jumped to about 60% in 2024 from 31.5% in 2020, according to S&P Global Market Intelligence, after former President Joko Widodo banned raw ore exports, drawing a surge of Chinese-backed investment into refining. Jakarta hoped that control over nickel would underpin a fully domestic EV industry, from mining and batteries to finished cars. Experts say that promise was used to justify forest clearing and mining expansion in the name of the energy transition, even as climate risks deepened. In 2025, Indonesia cracked down on what it called illegal exploitation of natural

resources, saying many mining and plantation licenses were tainted by bribery or never properly approved.

Authorities say they have seized more than 4 million hectares (9.8 million acres) of mines, palm oil plantations and processing sites, levied \$1.7 billion in fines, and could seize another 4.5 million hectares this year. But analysts warn the crackdown is coming just as nickel's payoff is starting to fade, with many Chinese EVs shifting to battery chemistries that use far less of the metal, relying instead on iron-based designs.

"The forests have been exploited to the brim," said Putra Adhiguna of the Jakarta-based Energy Shift Institute. "But you never got the electric-vehicle value chain." Indonesia's pays an environmental cost. China plays the leading role in Indonesia's nickel sector, using the metal to underpin its stainless steel and clean-energy industries. The world's largest nickel reserves are concentrated on the Indonesian island of Sulawesi, which accounts for more than half of global nickel mine production, according to the US-

based Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis or IEEFA. China has sourced nickel from Indonesia for decades, but the relationship deepened after Jakarta



banned raw ore exports in 2020, drawing a surge of Chinese investment into smelters. Nickel shipments to China jumped, with imports of nickel matte — a semiprocessed material used in battery chemicals and alloys — rising nearly 28-fold between 2020 and 2023, more than 90% of it from Indonesia, according to trade data. Over the same period, North and South America's combined share of global

nickel output fell from 16% to 7%, while Europe's share dropped from 35% to 10%, according to the International Nickel Study Group, a Lisbon-based intergovernmental organization. Meanwhile, mining drove the loss of about 370,000 hectares (roughly 914,000 acres) of Indonesian forests between 2001 and 2020 — more than in any other country — according to an analysis by the World Resources Institute. More than a third of that loss was old-growth rainforests which hold vast carbon stocks and are crucial for limiting climate change. The heavy use of coal to run Indonesia's nickel smelters has also slowed the country's energy transition, adding new fossil-fuel demand even as it tries to cut emissions. A 2024 analysis by the IEEFA found that major nickel producers emitted about 15 million metric tons of greenhouse gases in 2023, largely because of coal reliance. In one of the most public nickel-related seizures last year, Indonesian soldiers accompanied by a local television crew, took control of part of the world's largest nickel mine.

California walloped by winter storm with high winds and heavy rain and snow

world. (Agency)

California was walloped Monday by a powerful winter storm carrying treacherous thunderstorms, high winds and heavy snow in mountain areas. Millions of Los Angeles County residents faced flash flood warnings as rain pounded the region and people in some areas scarred by last year's devastating wildfires were under an evacuation warning through Tuesday because of the potential for mud and debris flows. Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass ordered emergency crews and city departments to be ready to respond to any problems.

The storm wreaked havoc on roadways spanning from Sonoma County to the Sierra Nevada. Traffic was halted temporarily in both directions on I-80 near the Nevada state line due to spinouts and crashes, the California Department of Transportation reported. In Santa Barbara County, a large tree toppled onto US-101, shutting down southbound lanes.

Forecasters said the western slope of the Sierra Nevada, northern Shasta County — including portions of

Interstate 5 — and parts of the state's Coast Range could see up to 8 feet (2.4 meters) of snow before the storm moves through late Wednesday. The heavy snow, wind and low visibility could also make travel conditions dangerous to near impossible,



forecasters added. "It has seemed 'springlike' for a large part of 2026, but winter is set to show it's not quite done yet," the Shasta County Sheriff's Office said in a social media post urging residents to stay aware of the storm. California's Office of Emergency Services said it was placing fire and rescue personnel and resources in areas most at risk for flooding, mud and debris flows. In Southern California, Six Flags Magic

Mountain was closed Monday due to the storm, and Knotts Berry Farm amusement park shut its doors early. But the winter weather was celebrated by local ski resorts that have waited weeks for snow.

Other states on Monday braced for different threatening weather events. Residents in parts of eastern Colorado received warnings that they could be in fire danger due to a combination of abnormally high temperatures, gusty winds and dry conditions. The risks were expected to continue further into the week as gusts up to 60 mph (96 kph) are likely to hit the Colorado eastern plains on Tuesday. Parts of Texas, New Mexico and Kansas were also under red flag warnings.

The latest storm comes amid a snow drought across much of the American West, with snow cover and depth measuring at the lowest levels scientists have seen in decades. Most states saw half their average precipitation or less in January, though California fared better others due to heavy rains in December.

Fallout from Epstein and Mandelson puts Britain's House of Lords under scrutiny

LONDON. (Agency)

Fallout from the Jeffrey Epstein files has landed on the gilded wood and plush red benches of Britain's House of Lords. Parliament's upper chamber is in the spotlight after former UK ambassador to Washington Peter Mandelson was forced to resign as a member of the Lords because of his friendship with the late sex offender.

The episode has emboldened critics who say the unelected house is antiquated, undemocratic and far too slow at punishing bad behavior by its members. Supporters say the chamber of more than 850 members-for-life who sport the titles of "Lord" or "Lady" is an unwieldy but essential part of parliamentary democracy.

Almost everyone agrees it needs reform, but that task has eluded successive

governments. "It's a mess," said Jenny Jones, one of two Green Party members of the Lords. "In spite of our being supposedly a modern democracy, we have a semi-feudal system." For most of its 700-year history, the House of Lords was composed of noblemen — not women — who inherited their seats, alongside a smattering of bishops. In the 1950s, these were joined by "life peers" — retired politicians, civic leaders and other notables appointed by the government, among them the first female members of the Lords. In 1999, the Labour government of then-Prime Minister Tony Blair evicted most of the more than 750 hereditary peers, though to avoid an aristocrats' rebellion, 92 were allowed to remain temporarily. A quarter century on, Prime Minister Keir Starmer's current

Labour government finally introduced legislation to oust the remaining "hereditaries," calling them an indefensible relic of the past. The lords have put up a fight, forcing a compromise that will see some hereditary members allowed to stay by being "recycled" into life peers. "Hereditary peers actually work harder than average peers," said Charles Hay, the 16th Earl of Kinnoull, who leads the group of cross-bench, or non-party affiliated, peers in the Lords. "It means that you chuck out a lot of people who are actually being effective." Most agree that the House of Lords plays an important role in reviewing legislation passed by the elected House of Commons. The lords can amend bills and send them back to lawmakers for another look.

What to know about the Strait of Hormuz, which Iran says it temporarily closed for a military drill

DUBAI. (Agency)

Iran says it temporarily closed parts of the Strait of Hormuz, the narrow mouth of the Persian Gulf. The move came as semi-official Iranian news agencies reported live fire exercises in the vital waterway, through which 20% of the world's oil passes. The move is a rare, perhaps unprecedented shutdown of the strait, a signal from Iran of the potential fallout to the world economy if the United States goes through with threats to attack it as tensions mount between the two countries. In past times of tension and conflict, Iran has at times harassed shipping through the narrows, and during the 1980s' Iran-Iraq war, both sides attacked tankers and other vessels, using naval mines to completely shut down traffic at points.

But Iran has not carried out repeated threats to close the waterway altogether since the 1980s, even during last year's 12-day war when Israel and the US bombed Iran's key nuclear and military sites. The extent and impact of Tuesday's closure were not

immediately known. Iranian media said it would be for several hours for "safety and maritime concerns." The US military's Central Command did not immediately comment on the closure or Iran's live fire drills. But during Iranian military exercises in the strait and nearby waters several weeks ago, it warned Tehran that any "unsafe and unprofessional behavior near US forces, regional partners or commercial vessels increases risks of collision, escalation and destabilization." Here's what to know about the strait, the drill, what caused the tensions and what might happen next.

A key waterway for global shipping. The Strait of Hormuz is a bending waterway, about 33 kilometers (21 miles) wide at its narrowest point. It connects the Persian Gulf to the Gulf of Oman. From there, ships can then travel to the rest of the world. While Iran and Oman have their territorial waters in the strait, it's viewed as an international waterway all ships can ply. The United Arab Emirates, home to the

skyscraper-studded city of Dubai, also sits near the waterway. The strait long has been important for trade



in Saudi Arabia and the UAE that can avoid the passage, the US Energy Information Administration says "most volumes that transit the strait have no alternative means of exiting the region." Threats to the route have spiked global energy prices in the past, including during the Israel-Iran war in June. Iran's drill includes live fire. With the US threatening to strike amid the massive nationwide anti-government protests that erupted in late December and January, Iran held a live-fire military drill in the Strait of Hormuz in early February. It warned ships of the drill at the time but did close the passage. On Feb. 4, tensions between the Iranian and US navies rose further after a US Navy fighter jet shot down an Iranian drone that was approaching the aircraft carrier USS Abraham Lincoln in the Arabian Sea. Iran also harassed a US-flagged and US-crewed merchant vessel that was sailing in the Strait of Hormuz, the US military reported.

What to know about the removal of Peru's president — yet again — and what's to come

World. (Agency)

Peru's Congress on Tuesday voted to remove interim President José Jerí from office, triggering fresh political instability just weeks before the nation's April presidential election. Jerí was Peru's seventh president in less than a decade, and will now be replaced by a member of Congress, who will be expected to lead the country during the election and until the newly elected president is sworn in on July 28. How José Jerí became Peru's president

Jerí, a 39-year-old lawyer, was elected to Peru's Congress in 2021 for Somos Peru, a small conservative party. He was the head of Peru's Congress in October, when lawmakers voted to remove then President Dina Boluarte from office as the nation faced increasing rates of violent crime. Following Boluarte's removal, Jerí was elected by his peers as the nation's interim president, with the expectation that he would stay in office until July, when a new presidential term begins. But his mandate was cut short as corruption allegations surfaced against him and Congress grew impatient with his leadership. The charges against Jerí

Jerí is facing a preliminary investigation for corruption and influence peddling launched by Peru's Attorney General's office earlier this year. The charges stem from a series of undisclosed meetings with two Chinese businessmen in December. One of those businessmen holds active government contracts, while the other is under investigation for alleged involvement in an illegal logging operation.

Jerí has denied wrongdoing. He said he met the executives to organize a Peruvian-Chinese festivity, but his opponents have accused him of corruption. While Jerí still hasn't been found guilty of corruption, his former colleagues in Congress cited the allegations as one of the reasons to remove him, arguing that Jerí had become unfit to execute his presidential duties.

Frequent removals

A clause in Peru's constitution enables legislators to remove presidents who are found to be "morally incapable" of conducting their duties.

This clause has given legislators great leverage over Peru's executive branch, which has also struggled in recent years to build congressional majorities.

The moral incapacity clause has been interpreted widely by legislators who have used it, along with corruption allegations, to remove presidents that no longer suit the interests of the nation's political parties. Peru has had seven presidents over the past decade — with only two of those elected by a popular vote.

NEWS BOX

UP barber arrested for 'sexually assaulting' eight-year-old girl, shop demolished



Lucknow. (Agency)

Police on Tuesday arrested a 23-year-old barber for allegedly sexually assaulting an eight-year-old girl in his shop in Lakhimpur Kheri. The incident sparked tension in the area, prompting authorities to step in. Subsequently, the shop was demolished by the municipal corporation.

"The accused has been arrested and medical reports of the girl are pending," Circle Officer, Lakhimpur Kheri, Jitendra Singh Parihar said.

According to police, the girl's father, in his complaint on Monday, alleged that his daughter informed him that the accused had sexually harassed her on several occasions in the past. As per the complaint, the accused allegedly called the girl to his shop on various pretexts when he was alone and assaulted her. The complaint further stated that on Monday, when the accused allegedly harassed her again, she returned home and informed her family members.

The Station Officer of the police station concerned said that on the basis of the complaint, an FIR was registered against the accused under charges of rape and other relevant sections. Meanwhile, as news of the incident spread, several people gathered outside the shop and raised slogans on Tuesday.

Police said that later in the day, the shop was demolished by the Nagar Palika. The Indian Express tried to reach out to Nagar Palika Executive Officer Vijay Bahadur but the calls went unanswered.

Bengalureans may soon be allowed to carry sealed liquor bottles on Metro



BENGALURU. (Agency)

Bengalureans travelling on Namma Metro may soon be allowed to carry liquor bottles, provided they are sealed. Sources in the Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL) said the issue has been discussed on multiple occasions and was taken up again at a recent meeting. While there is in-principle approval, implementation is likely to take some time, the sources said.

"We will follow the Delhi model. Currently, carrying liquor is allowed on the airport line of the Delhi Metro. Once Namma Metro is connected to the airport, which is expected in about two years, liquor will be allowed," a source said.

BMRCL officials said there is no requirement for special permission or a separate licence to allow liquor bottles. Once approved, the provision will be incorporated into the Metro's rules and orders.

"At present, it is not allowed, and there is no specific reason for it. People are permitted to travel on Metro trains even after consuming alcohol, as it is a public transport system. However, consumption must be within permissible limits," an official said.

Four-year-old left asleep in cab reunited with parents within an hour in Bangalore

BENGALURU. (Agency)

A mother accidentally left her four-year-old son asleep inside a cab in Hennur on Friday night and was safely reunited with him within an hour by the Hoysala patrolling police.

Around 8.30 pm on Friday, four-year-old Jian Chungi was returning home with his mother, Ginny, and five other relatives after visiting the ISKCON temple. On the return journey, Jian fell asleep in the back seat of the cab. Busy getting down from the vehicle, his mother and relatives forgot to wake him up or to take him from the cab, even as he continued to sleep in the rear seat.

The cab driver too failed to notice the child and proceeded to pick up other passengers. When Ginny realised that her son was missing, she recalled that Jian was asleep on the back of the taxi. She tried calling the cab driver, but could not reach him. She immediately dialled Namma 112 for assistance. ASI Manjappa Koppal and Head Constable Satis Kumar, who were on patrol duty, reached the spot within two minutes.

From bulldozers to bail to ballot box: How Nagpur riot accused Fahim Khan's story flipped in a year

Nagpur. (Agency)

It's been a roller-coaster year for Fahim Shamim Khan. Named prime accused in the Nagpur communal violence of March 2025, he was jailed and his family house demolished by the authorities, claiming illegal construction. Four months later, Khan got bail; last month, his wife Alisha became a corporator in the very same municipal body that demolished their house; and last week, the Nagpur Bench of the High Court directed the corporation to either reconstruct Khan's house or compensate the family.

As he waits for the Nagpur Municipal Corporation (NMC) to get back to the court by March 4, Khan says he is expecting the riot charges against him to also collapse. On the evening of March 17, 2025, violence had broken out in Mahal, in the heart of Nagpur, following protests by VHP and Bajrang Dal members against the tomb of Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb located in Aurangabad, leaving one dead and 38 injured, including 33 policemen. Khan was arrested on the allegation of inciting the crowd. Soon after, bulldozers rolled in to pull down his house located in the congested Sanjay Bagh Colony, and registered in the name of his 65-year-old mother Mehrunnisa Khan. Nearly a year later, the rubble remains on the spot, while Khan, his wife and three triplets live in a rented tin-roof shelter next to it. The NMC justified the demolition as valid, claiming that portions of the house were unauthorised and that the land

lease held by the Khan family had expired. However, Khan says, the demolition team that arrived in the early hours of the morning removed not just "the unauthorised sections" but the entire house. "We had submitted a complaint about safety hazards over a year ago, and it is still pending. But when it came to my house, the notice was forced into my mother's hands on a holiday, when government offices



are closed, and the demolition began even before official working hours." Hours after the bulldozers arrived, the High Court stayed the demolition, saying that *prima facie*, due process — including the mandatory 15-day notice period laid down by the Supreme Court — had not been followed. Municipal Commissioner Abhijit Chaudhari even tendered an unconditional apology before the court, claiming that civic officials were

unaware of the Supreme Court directive. Apart from Khan, the NMC sent notices to structures owned by two other families whose relatives were named in the riots, partially pulling down a balcony in one case. The NMC action against them was also stayed by the High Court.

Denying the riot charges against him, Khan says he had visited the police station earlier that day to submit a complaint regarding the alleged burning of a cloth bearing Quranic verses.

He was not present in Mahal when clashes broke out, he says, adding that his mobile location data supports this. Over 68 accused were identified by the police as having taken part in the riots; like Khan, all are out on bail. Khan's advocate Ashwin Ingole says: "We have substantial proof and have requested the court to quash the FIR. We have also sought the constitution of a Special Investigation Team for a fair inquiry."

Prosecutor Nitin Telgote admitted to The Indian Express that there was a delay in the case. "The chargesheet is yet to be filed. We are making efforts to expedite the process, but it will take a while," he said. Khan believes his innocence has already been endorsed by his wife Alisha's victory in the NMC polls held in January. She entered electoral politics only after Khan was charged in the riots, and won from Prabhag 3 ward, on an AIMIM ticket.

12 sentenced to life imprisonment in 27-year-old murder case during Shia-Sunni violence in UP's Azamgarh

Lucknow. (Agency)

A local court on Tuesday sentenced 12 persons to life imprisonment in connection with a 27-year-old murder case stemming from a Shia-Sunni violence in Azamgarh.

The accused, who had earlier been out on bail, were taken into custody on Friday after being held guilty on charges including rioting, murder, and destruction of evidence.

"The court on Tuesday sentenced all 12 persons, above 55 years of age and belonging to the Sunni community, to imprisonment for life. The court has also imposed a fine of Rs 66,500 on each of them. They were subsequently sent back to jail," Additional District Government Counsel, Azamgarh, Deepak Mishra said.

According to the prosecution, the case dates back to April 28, 1999, when a missing person complaint was filed for 57-year-old Ali Akbar, belonging to the Shia community, at the Mubarakpur police station. It was alleged that

he had gone for a juloos (religious procession) and had not returned home. Two days later, the police recovered his headless body in a pond. The body was subsequently identified by the



deceased's family.

During the initial investigation, the police learnt that on April 27, a clash had broken out between members of the Shia and Sunni communities,

following which Ali Akbar went missing. The altercation reportedly occurred when members of the Shia community were returning home after taking part in the procession.

The probe revealed that the accused allegedly caught the victim while he was returning from the procession, killed him, and dumped his headless body in a pond. Tension gripped the area following the murder as more incidents of violence were reported.

Police subsequently arrested 16 persons in connection with the murder, among which four died during the trial. Meanwhile, defence counsel Swami Nath Yadav said that they would file an appeal against the judgment in the high court. Except for three accused, the remaining persons belong to different families and had been out on bail for a considerable period, he said, adding that the head of the deceased has not been recovered till date.

Construction debris to be collected from doorstep at nominal charges: Ahmedabad civic body

Ahmedabad. (Agency)

SOIL, RUBBLE and building debris generated during repair, renovation, maintenance or new construction activities in residential or commercial units in Ahmedabad will now be disposed of in a proper manner.

The Solid Waste Management Department of the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation (AMC) on Tuesday introduced a system under which construction debris will be collected from the doorsteps with a single call. Citizens can avail of waste collection services by making a phone call to the zonal control room of their respective area.

The Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation (AMC) appealed to citizens undertaking repair, renovation, maintenance or new construction activities not to dispose of soil, rubble or building debris on public roads, public places or any other unauthorised locations.

The AMC's Solid Waste Management team has made arrangements to collect building material and construction waste directly from citizens' premises at nominal charges and transport it to appropriate disposal sites. To avail

of this service, citizens can contact their respective zonal numbers between 8 am and 6 pm. They can also dispose of such waste at any of the 25 designated plots/locations identified across the city's seven zones — East, West, North, South, Central, North-West and South-West — at their own expense. No charges will be levied by the civic



body for disposal at these designated sites. If debris is not cleared from residential or locations of complaints within the stipulated time frame, prescribed charges and penalties will be recovered from the concerned individual.

Dumping construction and demolition waste on public roads, open plots or at locations other than those designated by AMC will attract strict action, including seizure of vehicles.

Allahabad HC issues contempt notices to Bareilly DM, SSP for action over 'namaz' at private property

In January, 12 men were picked up for questioning for allegedly offering namaz at the private premises.

Lucknow. (Agency)

The Allahabad High Court has directed that contempt notices be issued to the Bareilly District Magistrate and the Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) for allegedly not complying with its January order, in which it held that no permission is required for holding religious prayer meetings in private premises.

The court passed the order while hearing a petition by a man, Tarik Khan, seeking permission to offer namaz at his private premises since Ramzan is approaching.

Asked why the petition was filed, the petitioner apprised the court of an incident that took place last month. In January, the police had picked up a group of men, including Khan, for questioning for allegedly offering namaz at the same premises. The court was told that the petitioner has instituted the present petition on the ground that the month of Ramzan is imminent and he has sought permission to offer namaz and religious activities at his private premises.

Khan's counsel, Rajesh Kumar Gautam, submitted that on hearing the matter, the court directed issuance of notices to the District Magistrate and SSP under the Contempt of Courts Act, 1971. In its February 12 order, the division bench of Justices Atul Sreedharan

HC was hearing a plea that sought permission to hold a religious congregation within its private property.

The petitioner had said despite making several representations to the authorities, permission was not granted.

The court observed that the petitioner has the right to conduct the prayer, as per convenience, in his own private premises without any permission from the state government. If the congregation spills over onto a public road or public property, it said the petitioner shall intimate police and seek

requisite permission under the law. The court added, "The manner in which protection, if required, is to be provided... is within the discretion of the State. However, it is a concomitant duty on the State to ensure that property, rights and life of the petitioner are protected at all cost. How this is done is entirely the discretion of the police."

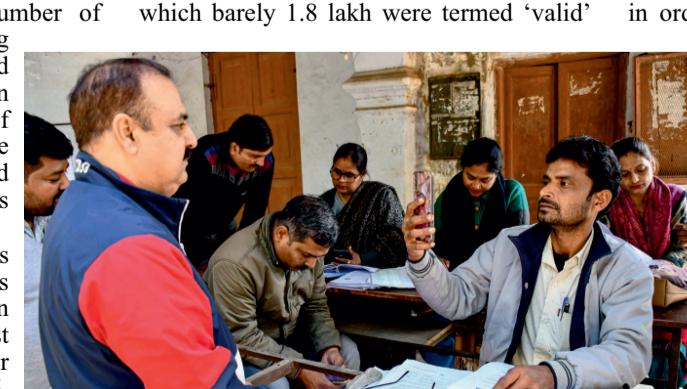
and S A Siddharth Nandan stated, "Learned counsel for the State is requested to seek instructions in this case..." Till the next date of listing, coercive proceedings against the petitioner shall remain stayed." It listed the case for further hearing on March 11. The January 27 order in its order passed on January 27 (Maranatha Full Gospel Ministries vs. State of UP), the

Jamnagar (2.01 per cent). Surendranagar is the only district with more number of deletions than additions. According to the draft list, Surendranagar had 13,44,959 voters. With the addition of 21,316 voters and deletion of 21,415 names, the number in the final electoral roll has reached 13,44,860 — a decline of 99 voters from the draft list.

The rights, objections and claims regarding the inclusion of one's name in the voter list or exclusion of one's name from the voter list were submitted between December 19, 2025 and January 30, 2026. Thereafter, the election officials verified the veracity of the objections and disposed of them by February 10, 2026.

The Indian Express had reported on February 16 that a marginal increase is expected in the final electoral roll. As reported by The Indian Express, the CEO's office has received nearly 14 lakh Form 7 applications (for

deletion of names) from across the state, of which barely 1.8 lakh were termed 'valid'



after scrutiny. Of 90 lakh notices issued to 'unmapped' voters and those with 'logical discrepancies', nearly 30 pc appeared for hearing.

CEO lauds staff, citizens

Lauding the support of citizens and the staff,

Chief Electoral Officer Harit Shukla said that in order to complete the work of Special Intensive Revision of the voter list within the stipulated time, there has been active participation of 34 District Election Officers, 182 Voter Registration Officers, 855 Assistant Voter Registration Officers, 50,963 Booth Level officers (BLOs) and many volunteers.

"Active cooperation has been received from the voters of the state. As a result, out of a total of 5,08,43,436 voters, enumeration forms were received from 4,34,70,109 within the stipulated time. All these counting forms have been completely digitised," Shukla said. Following the door-to-door survey conducted by the BLOs, voters in the categories of 'deceased', 'permanently migrated' and 'registered at two places' were identified.

Gujarat's final electoral roll out, 4.40 crore registered voters

CHENNAI. (Agency)

The total number of voters in Gujarat now stands at 4.40 crore, according to the final electoral rolls published by the Election Commission (EC) on Tuesday following the nearly three-and-a-half months of the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) exercise. The final electoral roll has 4,40,30,725 registered voters, a marginal increase of 5.60 lakh from 4,34,70,109 names in the draft list published by the EC.

According to the data maintained by the Gujarat Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) office, after the draft list was published on December 19, there has been an addition of 9,56,121 and deletion of 3,95,555 voters, registering a net change of 1.29 per cent. Notably, Gujarat had 5,08,43,436 registered voters in 2002, according to the electoral roll published that year. Among districts that recorded the highest percentage of net change in the draft and final electoral roll are Ahmedabad (2.2 per cent), Dang (2.15 per cent), Porbandar (2.12 per cent) and

Jamnagar (2.01 per cent). Surendranagar is the only district with more number of deletions than additions. According to the draft list, Surendranagar had 13,44,959 voters. With the addition of 21,316 voters and deletion of 21,415 names, the number in the final electoral roll has reached 13,44,860 — a decline of 99 voters from the draft list.

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Social media and the battle for young minds

The case of the suspected suicide of the Ghaziabad sisters and many recent incidents abroad compel one to sit up and think about some restrictive measures on the use of social media. True that banning anything, from books to websites, films to theatre performances, may not be a very good idea in a democratic system per se.

But democracy is not just about popularity, public opinion and market trends, as pointed out by thinkers-politicians like Edmund Burke. It is also about protecting the interests of the people despite their grave ignorance. Also, the emerging powers of new technologies are proving to be not just disruptive but also invasive of privacy and personal spaces of individuals, many of them gullible and ignorant.

If one examines the strengths and limitations of social media bans or restrictions imposed on schoolchildren in countries like Australia, it yields valuable insights. One thing is very clear. In the absence of any other practicable and effective measure, restricting kids' easy access to all social media is increasingly popular. Over 77 percent of Australians have supported the restrictions promulgated since late last year. A survey found that globally, 65 percent of people support banning children under 14 from using social media.

While the narrative around restricting kids' access to social media is evolving worldwide, the measures taken or considered by certain countries are worth understanding. The new Australian law compelled all major social media platforms to block minors under 16 from December 10, 2025. The law provides penalties of up to AUS 4.95 crore (approximately 317 crore) for companies that do not comply. In the UK, the age of consent for digital activities is 13, but the government is reconsidering raising it to 16. France, Denmark and Greece have almost finalised rules banning children under 16 from accessing social media. The Netherlands and South Korea have regulated cell phone use in classrooms fairly strictly. In the US, while there is no federal ban yet, states like Utah passed regulations while others focus on limiting 'addictive algorithms' and mandatory parental consent. In India, a parliamentary standing committee on Education in its 2022 report has already recommended that the government explore making smartphones a licensed device for persons under the age of 16.

Very recently, the chief economic adviser too has called for age-based restrictions on social media. While there is a strong case for at least seriously considering restrictions on access to social media in general and smartphones in particular, many oppose any such bans. Some of them believe that if parents are given the responsibility to decide, where is the guarantee that they will make an informed decision? Others argue that, technologically, it is just impossible to enforce such a ban. They cite examples of using a virtual private network to escape Big Brother surveillance. While a few of these arguments may hold some water, most 'doubting Thomases' have plausibly developed a 'given-up' mindset. True, a simplistic approach—this way or that—may not lead us anywhere; countries like India would do well to undertake a structured study of post-restriction societal impact in countries experimenting with restrictions. As it happens, no single family or educational institution can entirely enforce a ban unless there is deep societal understanding and support from law-enforcement authorities. At the same time, if families are unconcerned and callous, no ban could be effectively implemented ensuring the avoidance of addiction. Social media addiction is comparable only to drugs. Experts in behavioural addiction issues largely attribute the phenomenon of social media addiction to the dopamine-inducing social environments that social networking sites provide. Social media platforms produce the same neural circuitry that is seen in those with a gambling addiction and recreational drug users. Undoubtedly, preventing any addiction is the shared responsibility of both families, communities and the government. And while the share of government is much higher, families cannot outsource this responsibility.

AI Impact Summit & Indian-origin IT CEOs

At this week's New Delhi summit, India will push for expanding the Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence (GPAI) and attempt to make it India's AI lobby.

At the global summit on artificial intelligence (AI) held in Paris last year, in which India participated at the Head of Government level, Prime Minister Narendra Modi posed a riddle which suggested the innocent curiosity with which billions of people worldwide approach the subject of AI. Modi's riddle at the AI Action Summit was this: If an AI application — app for short in common parlance — is commanded to draw an image of someone writing with their left hand, will the app follow that command? The PM then gave his answer. "The app will most likely draw someone writing with their right hand. Because that is what the training data is dominated by."

Slightly more than a year has passed and India is hosting the mammoth AI Impact Summit in New Delhi this week. Yet, as far as can be ascertained, no one has contradicted Modi. He proceeded to complain in his address to the Paris summit about the many biases which are widely prevalent in this medium, although AI is not human and therefore cannot be prejudiced. "While the positive potential of AI is absolutely amazing, there are many (inherent) biases that we need to think carefully about. That is why I am grateful...to co-chair it", ie, the Paris Summit. It is interesting — intriguing for the uninitiated — that none of the wizards in high technology from Silicon Valley to Seoul, where the AI summit had been held nine months before the one in Paris, has solved or explained Modi's riddle. Modi is not one of those wizards. He is not a genius from the digital world. He

is like me and most of you, readers of this column, who are looking askance at the pace at which AI is taking over our lives.

In one recent briefing, Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri took a somewhat sceptical media by surprise when he spoke of the impact that AI is already having on everyday lives. "You are probably all holding an AI app in your hands, on your phones, or on your laptops. Artificial intelligence is bound to have and is already having a profound impact across all sectors of the economy, polity, society, and governance. And therefore, AI summits are both significant and timely." In strategic terms, the most significant long-term gain so far from participation in AI summits is that it has enabled India to

advance its one foot in the door of one of the most exclusive macro-economic and business clubs in the world — the Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). The Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence (GPAI), of which India has been a founding member since its launch in 2020, is located at the OECD headquarters in Paris. India became a "key partner" of the OECD in 2007. But it has not been able to advance its standing within the OECD since then, despite growing from the ninth largest economy in the world by GDP in 2010 to the fourth largest now. Indonesia and Brazil, which also became key partners in 2007, are both "candidates" for OECD membership now. The OECD is a very prescriptive organisation, steeped in

domestic AI rather than with the rich man's club, the OECD. One reason for this is that the World Bank Group is willing to work with India on 'Small AI' more than the global private sector technology giants. This is especially so on the issue of job crisis, which India and the Global South dread as a result of the unrestrained AI expansion. Small AI does not need the huge infrastructure, which technology giants are advocating and building. Small AI can be run on smartphones and laptops while the conventional AI model — Big AI — needs supercomputers, more electricity, highly trained manpower and huge resources to operate.

World Bank President Ajay Banga said last month that 1.2 billion young people will be looking for jobs in emerging market countries in the next 12 to 15 years.

His predictions are that only 400 million jobs are available there. Banga said only Small AI can help alleviate this big job crisis. In fact, he predicted an adverse fallout in developed countries from the bigger versions of AI. In addition to unemployment alleviation, Small AI can help in healthcare, agriculture and education in India and similarly placed countries. Caution, therefore, needs to be exercised at the AI Impact Summit and not to be infatuated with Indian-origin information technology CEOs like Sundar Pichai, Satya Nadella, Arvind Krishna or Shantanu Narayan. Their public relations machines will be in overdrive during the summit. But these ethnic Indian CEOs are fundamentally responsible to their shareholders and not to jobless youth in India, South Africa or Brazil, who need help from AI. Which is why Modi emphasised at the AI Action Summit last year that "loss of jobs is AI's most feared disruption. But

history has shown that work does not disappear due to technology. Its nature changes and new types of jobs are created. We need to invest in skilling and re-skilling our people for an AI-driven future." This should be the focus of India's private and public sectors after this week as a follow-up to the New Delhi conclave.

Chasing the mirage of investment in India by global technology giants is futile, even if they make big promises to grab today's headlines and sign MoUs that will be mostly forgotten. Previous AI summits in the UK and South Korea were driven by fears about AI. The Paris Summit balanced fears with opportunities. This week in New Delhi, opportunities will be the leitmotif.



Urban challenge: Onus on cities to pull up their socks

Cities have to substantially generate financial resources for their own growth; their authorities cannot afford to take things easy

THE Union Cabinet has finally approved the Rs 1 lakh crore Urban Challenge Fund (UCF), a year after it was announced in the 2025-26 Budget. Under this ambitious scheme, Central assistance will cover 25 per cent of a project's cost, provided that the city concerned raises at least 50 per cent of the funding from the market, including through municipal bonds, bank loans and public-private partnerships. The remaining 25 per cent can be covered by state governments or local bodies themselves. According to the Modi government, the move marks a paradigm shift in India's urban development approach from grant-based financing to a market-linked, reform-driven and outcome-oriented infrastructure creation. The message is clear: cities have to substantially generate financial resources for their own growth; their authorities cannot afford to take things easy. It's noteworthy that the 2026-27 Budget has reduced the allocation for AMRUT (Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban



Transformation) by 20 per cent, while no funds have been earmarked for the Smart Cities Mission for the second financial year in a row. These measures, coupled with the

UCF, indicate that private investment is expected to play a bigger role in building cities that are resilient and future-ready. The UCF leaves no room for profligacy: cities that implement sustainable financial models are better placed to flourish as engines of economic growth. A key aspect of the scheme is that it extends monetary support to cities with a population as small as one lakh through a Rs 5,000-crore Credit Repayment Guarantee Scheme. This initiative will help smaller cities access the market, fostering financial independence. The UCF would serve its purpose if it's able to improve ease of living in urban areas. City residents face myriad problems: air pollution, water contamination, poor drainage, broken roads, rampant concretisation. Greater accountability and transparency can give urban governance a new lease of life.

A TRIPP across the South Caucasus

Since 2022, India's defence supplies to Armenia have grown significantly and are at present valued at \$2.2 bn.

THE Caucasus doesn't usually get the attention it deserves from strategic analysts. Not surprisingly, two recent visits to Armenia this past fortnight have largely stayed below the radar. The first was by Chief of Defence Staff (CDS), General Anil Chauhan, and the second by US Vice President JD Vance. General Chauhan's visit marks a distinct uptick in bilateral relations, it being the first by India's seniormost serving military official. Vice President Vance's is the highest-level visit from the US since Armenia's independence in 1991. The scheduling of the two visits would appear to be coincidental. What is not, however, is their timing — both are taking place at a time of quiet competition and a consequent transformation in the South Caucasus. This region comprises Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia. Abutting them are three major powers, ie, Russia, Iran and Turkiye. This complex geography makes for a contentious strategic scenario, a Caucasian version of the "Great Game". This is evidenced by the renewal of their historic jostling by the three aforementioned powers to safeguard their regional influence. Adding to the mix is the role of extra-regional players like India, Israel and the US. The visit to Yerevan of a high-level defence delegation led by India's CDS, General Anil Chauhan (Feb 1-4) cements growing bilateral ties. It widens the ambit of engagement and fits in with India's multi-alignment strategy. General Chauhan's official engagements included meetings with Armenian Defence Minister Suren Papikyan and Chief of the General Staff Edvard Asryan. One significant outcome is the decision to expand defence cooperation to include military training, a sign of high mutual confidence. After its 2020 war with Azerbaijan, Armenia has increasingly turned to India to qualitatively upgrade its defence capabilities. Since 2022, India's defence supplies have grown significantly and are at present valued at \$2.2 billion.

These include Akash medium-range air-defence, Pinaka rocket launchers, 155-mm towed howitzers and other equipment. General Chauhan also paid respects at the Armenian Genocide Memorial, a reminder of the genocide of around 1.5 million Armenians in 1914-15 under the Ottoman Empire. Turkiye's denial of that genocide continues to cloud Armenia-Turkiye ties. Less well known is the triangular ethnic relationship between Iran, Azerbaijan and Armenia.

Iran is home to a substantial Azeri minority as also a small Armenian diaspora. In fact, Iran's Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei is of ethnic Azeri stock. Turkiye and Azerbaijan are linked by their shared Turkish ancestry but while Turkiye is majority Sunni, the Azeris profess the Shia faith. Implicated by Iran's traditionally close ties with Armenia, a Christian majority country. If that were not confusing enough, Israel has steadily deepened its ties with Azerbaijan, securing a valuable strategic foothold on Iran's northern border. During the 2020 Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict, Turkish military equipment was instrumental in Azerbaijan's success. At the time, Russia stayed neutral, despite its historical and religious ties with Armenia and their membership in the Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO).

Armenia has since distanced itself from the CSTO and, to an extent, even from Russia. Instead, it has broadened its range of partnerships — with India, Iran and the US, which hosts a large Armenian diaspora. The latter fact contextualises the visit to Yerevan by Vance (February 9-10). He held talks with Armenian PM Nikol Pashinyan and both sides announced cooperation in nuclear energy generation and of US military supplies to Armenia, essentially surveillance drones. From Armenia, Vance went to the neighbouring Azerbaijan.

But the actual intent of Vance's visit appears to be to follow up on the peace deal announced by President Trump between Armenia and Azerbaijan in Washington DC in August. The deal seeks to bring to a close the four-decade simmering conflict between the two Caucasian rivals. At the end of their trilateral meeting in Washington, both leaders predictably endorsed Trump for the Nobel while Trump took characteristic credit for closing another



peace deal. Subsequent developments, however, indicate that mutual distrust between Armenia and Azerbaijan remains undiminished while Trump has moved on to other issues. However, the larger significance of last August's trilateral meeting was the announcement of the so-called "Trump Route for International Peace and Prosperity" corridor or TRIPP. There is no formal mention of the TRIPP in the peace deal, but it forms part

of a provision on "transit links". Notably, the agreement itself was merely "initialled" and requires completion of ratification processes by both Armenia and Azerbaijan. The TRIPP is ambitious in scope and has the potential to transform the region. It envisages redevelopment of Soviet-era transit rights linking Azerbaijan with its enclave of Nakhchivan. This corridor, presently referred to as the Zangezur corridor, is a 43-m route running across Armenian territory. The TRIPP envisages a rail and road link cutting across the southern Caucasus. From Nakhchivan, the TRIPP will extend into Turkiye and then on towards Europe, as the so-called Middle Corridor being promoted by Turkiye.

Given the strained Armenia-Azerbaijan relations, Azerbaijan's only access is currently via Iranian territory. Once TRIPP becomes operational, its access to Nakhchivan will be from within Armenian territory, thereby bypassing Iran. Iran views the TRIPP with deep suspicion, as a strategic threat with the potential of stationing the US and Israel on its northern borders.

Iran has countered by reaching out to India, for a trilateral arrangement with Armenia. This is, however, lying in abeyance, given Iran's own distractions. Thus, embedded in the two visits are signals of strategic intent being sent by

India and America. The US has offered to manage the TRIPP, floating the idea of a 100-year US lease for it. India has shown that it is not averse to entering the South Caucasus game of thrones. It has signalled to Turkiye and Azerbaijan that their meddling in India's neighbourhood, support for Pakistan and, lately, Bangladesh, would come at a cost they would need to prepare for.

IED-like suspicious object detected in J-K's Baramulla

Srinagar.(Agency)

A suspicious object, likely an Improvised Explosive Device (IED), was detected and destroyed by security forces on Wednesday in Baramulla district of Jammu and Kashmir, officials said. The object, concealed in a trolley bag, was found near the Baramulla-Srinagar National Highway close to Patti. Officials said the object was spotted by security forces during routine patrolling with the assistance of sniffer dogs. Soon after the detection, senior police, Army and the Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) personnel rushed to the spot and secured the area. The traffic along the highway was also stopped. The suspicious object was safely destroyed by the Bomb Disposal Squad (BDS). Fortunately, no loss of life or damage to property was reported. Traffic on the National Highway was later restored, officials confirmed.

Couple suffers severe burn injuries in fire accident in Hamirpur's Barsar

Hamirpur (HP).(Agency)

A couple sustained serious burn injuries in an explosion while lighting a fire at their home in the Barsar area of Hamirpur district on Tuesday evening. The injured have been identified as Kulwant and his wife. According to reports, the couple was using a chemical to ignite the fire when it suddenly flared up. An official spokesperson said the woman's clothes caught fire within moments. In an attempt to save her, Kulwant tried to extinguish the flames but suffered severe burns to his hands. With the help of family members and residents, both were rushed to the Civil Hospital in Barsar. After administering first aid, doctors referred them to AIIMS Bilaspur for further treatment, citing their critical condition. The BMO, Barsar, confirmed that the victims were referred to AIIMS Bilaspur after initial treatment. Police have registered a case, and further investigation into the cause of the incident is underway.

Himachal's first trout hub taking shape in Boh Valley, boost to tourism and self-employment

Dharamshala.(Agency)

The picturesque Boh Valley in the Dharamshala area of Shahpur in Kangra district is set to emerge as Himachal Pradesh's first dedicated trout hub, marking a new chapter in tourism-linked livelihood generation and rural economic empowerment. Located around 25 km from Shahpur, Boh Valley is renowned for its pristine natural beauty, cascading streams, snow-clad mountains and lush green forests. Famous for the scenic Khabru Waterfall, the valley has long been a paradise for nature lovers and tourists. Now, it is poised to carve out a new identity in trout production alongside eco-tourism.

Shahpur MLA and Deputy Chief Whip Kewal Singh Pathania said the proposal to establish a trout hub in Dharamshala was raised during his first MLA priority meeting with Chief Minister Sukhdev Singh Sukhu. The Chief Minister announced the project in his very first Budget, allocating Rs 3.03 crore for its implementation.

Most of the work has been completed and a trout hatchery has already been set up in Boh. The project is expected to significantly strengthen the local economy while enhancing tourism activities in the region. Pathania urged residents to construct raceways and adopt trout farming as an eco-friendly enterprise. To facilitate marketing, five motorcycles equipped with ice boxes have been provided, and another will be made available soon. He also suggested the establishment of two fish kiosks in Shahpur and Dharamshala to ensure better market access.

In an inspiring example of self-employment, Boh resident Pappu Ram, a former deputy pradhan, along with his wife Neelam Devi, has set up the 'Boh Valley Fish Farm and Hatchery' at a cost of Rs 38 lakh. The family received a government subsidy of Rs 15 lakh for the venture. Trout seed has already been introduced in the hatchery, and the family expressed confidence that the enterprise will strengthen their livelihood. They have appealed to youth to opt for self-employment rather than depend solely on government jobs.

Assistant Director, Fisheries Department, Palampur, Dr Rakesh Kumar said Dharamshala Valley holds immense potential for trout farming. Currently, 15-20 individuals have constructed ponds and started trout production. With the new hatchery, quality trout seed will now be available locally. High-breed trout seed has been procured from Denmark for the project.

Chandigarh MC clears Rs 1,712-crore Budget for 2026-27, stares at Rs 400-crore resource gap

The Budget proposes Rs 1,102 crore under revenue expenditure and Rs 610 crore under capital expenditure, with total estimated receipts of Rs 1,726 crore.

Chandigarh. (Agency)

The Chandigarh Municipal Corporation (MC) on Tuesday approved a Rs 1,712-crore Budget for 2026-27 (FY27), projecting a resource gap of about Rs 400 crore as expected income of Rs 1,311 crore — including Rs 850 crore in grant-in-aid and Rs 461 crore from its own revenue — falls short of the planned expenditure.

Mayor Saurabh Joshi meanwhile said the Budget prioritises infrastructure works, digital governance and revenue reforms aimed at making the civic body more financially self-reliant.

The Budget proposes Rs 1,102 crore under revenue expenditure and Rs 610 crore under capital expenditure, with total estimated receipts of Rs 1,726 crore. Of this, Rs 461 crore is expected to come from the civic body's own revenue sources, which Joshi described as a step toward financial self-reliance.

The Mayor described the Budget as a roadmap toward an AI-enabled, self-reliant and



civic infrastructure such as roads, sewerage and water supply. Allocation for gaushalas has been increased from Rs 7 crore to Rs 27 crore. No funds have been set aside this year for the 24x7 water supply project; instead, Rs 61.75 crore has been proposed for replacing old pipelines. Major increases compared with last year include roads and parking (Rs 44.10 crore to Rs 140 crore), water supply strengthening (Rs 3.50 crore to Rs 61.75 crore), machinery upgrades (Rs 1.25 crore to Rs 54.20 crore), storm-water drainage (Rs 11 crore to Rs 50 crore) and sewerage (Rs 5 crore to Rs 44.50 crore).

Financial position

The civic body expects Rs 850 crore in grants and Rs 461 crore from its own revenue. The projected Budget has now been sent to the administration for final approval, which will decide whether to clear it in full or impose cuts. With estimated annual essential expenditure of Rs 1,020 crore, around Rs 291 crore is projected to remain for development works.

Shri Ashish Bansal joins as the new General Manager of Construction Organisation of Northeast Frontier Railway

The Sikh Times

Maligaon, 18th February 2026:

Shri Ashish Bansal, an officer of Indian Railway Service of Engineers from UPSC's 1989 batch, has taken over as the General Manager of N.F. Railway (Construction). Before joining as the General Manager of N.F. Railway (Construction), he worked as the Principal Executive Director (Track Modernisation and Machines) in the Ministry of Railways, Government of India from March, 2023 onwards. As General Manager he will be the overall in-charge of all railway construction activities within the jurisdiction of N. F. Railway i.e. all north-eastern states including Sikkim and parts of West Bengal and Bihar. Shri Bansal has a long and varied experience across multiple domains of railway operations, including track maintenance, policy formulation, bridge engineering, metro construction spreading over different railway zones and Railway Board including RDSO

and DMRC after joining the Indian Railway Service on January, 1991.

Director, IRCON International Limited. During his tenure in the Track Machines Directorate of RDSO, he was responsible for track recording systems and the development of guidelines for track maintenance using track recording data. He was instrumental in operationalising a high-speed track recording car imported from the USA and commissioning of two additional track recording cars. He also authored two reports on the use of track recording data for maintenance planning and monitoring. During his tenure as Chief Track Engineer of Northern

Railway he was involved in maintenance of track of about 10000 km network along with track renewal works. In his previous role as Principal Executive Director (Track Modernisation and Machines) in the Ministry of Railways, Government of India, he was responsible for leading efforts in track modernisation, focusing on expanding the track machine fleet to handle increased axle loads and traffic. His emphasis on a structured rail grinding programme has resulted in notable improvements in track performance and longevity, delivering measurable operational benefits to Indian Railways. One of the most significant strategic achievements during his tenure was finalization of the policy for adoption of the Indigenous Modern Fastening System for future 25T axle load and higher speed operations to meet the international standards ensuring higher reliability, tighter tolerances and extended service life. A major modernization initiative laid the foundation for precision manufacturing is taken in PSC sleeper manufacturing with fully automated carousel-based closed-loop systems. During his last 2 years tenure, order for 695 nos. of track machines was also placed. Further, another 680 nos. track machines are under various stages of procurement to enhance track reliability.

He has also served as Divisional Railway Manager of Dhanbad Division under East Central Railway and was responsible for the highest freight loading as well as freight earning among all the divisions of Indian Railways. Additionally, he has held the charge of Chairman and Managing

Investigators further discovered that proceeds from at least eight other cybercrime cases were also credited into these accounts.

Complex laundering network unearthed

Officials said the funds were systematically transferred through a network of mule accounts to conceal their origin. A part of the money was layered through shell entities and routed outside India using

trade-based money laundering mechanisms, while a portion of the funds was used to acquire virtual digital assets, they added.

The attached Rs 1.76 crore was found in the bank account of Mrityunjaya Multitrade, which investigators claim was used to receive and route proceeds from various cybercrime and digital arrest cases.

accused used accounts linked to entities, including Frozenman Warehousing and Logistics and Riglo Ventures Pvt Ltd, to launder the proceeds of crime. Investigators further discovered that proceeds from at least eight other cybercrime cases were also credited into these accounts.

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No plan to shift Mann

Authorities clarified that there are no plans to

ED attaches Rs 1.76 crore in SP Oswal digital arrest case

Officials said the funds were systematically transferred through a network of mule accounts to conceal their origin.

Jalandhar .(Agency)

The Directorate of Enforcement (ED), Jalandhar Zonal Office, has provisionally attached a bank balance of Rs 1.76 crore in connection with their ongoing money laundering investigation into the digital arrest of businessman SP Oswal, officials said on Tuesday.

The action was taken under the provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002, following an FIR registered by the Cyber Crime police station in Ludhiana under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNSS), 2023.

Rs 7 crore extorted

According to ED officials, the investigation found that fraudsters posing as Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) officers extorted around Rs 7 crore from Oswal after digitally arresting him.

According to officials, the ED probe found the illicit funds were routed through multiple mule bank accounts operated by the accused, identified as Rumi Kalita and Arpit Rathore. The agency stated that the

accused used accounts linked to entities, including Frozenman Warehousing and Logistics and Riglo Ventures Pvt Ltd, to launder the proceeds of crime.

Investigators further discovered that proceeds from at least eight other cybercrime cases were also credited into these accounts.

Complex laundering network unearthed

Officials said the funds were systematically transferred through a network of mule accounts to conceal their origin. A part of the money was layered through shell entities and routed outside India using

trade-based money laundering mechanisms, while a portion of the funds was used to acquire virtual digital assets, they added.

The attached Rs 1.76 crore was found in the bank account of Mrityunjaya Multitrade, which investigators claim was used to receive and route proceeds from various cybercrime and digital arrest cases.

16 Mohali schools targeted in latest bomb threat email

Chandigarh. (Agency)

Panic gripped parts of the city after 16 schools in Mohali received bomb threat emails for the second time this month, coinciding with Board examinations that began on Tuesday. The threatened 16 schools include Shivalik Public School (Phase 6), Gyan Jyoti Public School (Phase 2), and The Millennium School (Phase 5).

Mohali City SP Dilpreet Singh said there was also a mention of Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann in the email. Mann was admitted to Fortis Hospital in Mohali for the second time, after returning from a rally in Moga on Monday.

"The bomb threat to schools also mentioned Fortis Hospital in Mohali, where we conducted anti-sabotage checks. Non-essential services were kept on hold while essential services continued," Dilpreet Singh told reporters in Mohali.

The threats on the day the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) and Punjab School Education Board (PSEB) began Board examinations. Soon after the call was received, police and security agencies rushed to the schools and Fortis Hospital and carried out extensive searches of the premises. Security was tightened and authorities began closely monitoring the situation.

Special Superintendent of Police Sukhnaaz Singh said, "A call was received in the morning, after which checking is being carried out at all locations where the call was reported, as this is a serious matter due to the ongoing board examinations."

SP Dilpreet Singh said the email was received around 8 am on the official email ID of a school. Following this, anti-sabotage teams from Police Headquarters, the Range Office, and Mohali Police, along with bomb disposal squads, were immediately deployed to the hospital and nearby locations.

"As a precautionary measure, since the threat originated from school email IDs, all nearby schools were thoroughly checked to ensure the safety of students and staff," he said. After comprehensive searches, officials confirmed that no suspicious object or substance was found. Police stated the threat appears to be a hoax and assured that the situation is fully under control. Investigations are ongoing to trace the source of the email.

No plan to shift Mann

Authorities clarified that there are no plans to



shift Mann, and both Mohali police and the CM's security team remain fully alert. Officials also noted that similar emails received on February 11 were later declared hoaxes. However, taking no chances, security agencies are strictly enforcing all safety protocols. Mohali SP Dilpreet Singh told the media that the pattern of the threat email is similar to the messages received earlier this month. He confirmed that five anti-sabotage teams were deployed immediately. Police officials stated that earlier threat emails were sent from "spoofed" sources, with IP addresses traced

Anurag Chander Sharma is Kullu's new Deputy Commissioner as Himachal Pradesh reshuffles its top brass

Shimla.(Agency)

The Himachal Pradesh Government on Tuesday posted Anurag Chander Sharma as the new Deputy Commissioner of Kullu, acting on the recommendations of the Civil Services Board.

Sharma will replace Torul S Raveesh, who has been transferred as the Managing Director of the Himachal Pradesh State Industrial Development Corporation. Raveesh will also hold the additional charge of Managing Director, General Industries Corporation, Shimla, the government order stated.

Sharma was holding the post of Director (Personnel and Finance) of the Himachal Pradesh State Electricity Board Limited.

According to the order, Ashish Singhmar has been assigned the additional charge of the post of Secretary to the Chief Minister. He will also hold the additional portfolios of Secretary, Secretariat Administration Department (SAD), Social Welfare Department (SWD), and Parliamentary Affairs. With this, Rakesh Kanwar has been relieved of these additional responsibilities.

Meanwhile, Arindam Chaudhary, who held the post of Managing Director of the Himachal Pradesh Horticultural Produce Marketing and Processing Corporation, has been appointed as Director (Personnel and Finance) in the Himachal Pradesh State Electricity Board Limited (HPSEBL).

Agriculture Director Vinay Singh has been appointed as the Managing Director of the Himachal Pradesh Horticultural Produce Marketing and Processing Corporation (HPMC). He will also hold the additional charge of Managing Director, Himachal Pradesh Agro Industries Corporation Limited, and Agro Industrial Packaging India Limited, the order read.

Uttar Pradesh Board of Secondary Education exams begin

Lucknow.(Agency)

High school and intermediate board examinations conducted by the Uttar Pradesh Board of Secondary Education, Asia's largest education board, began on Wednesday.

On the first day of the exams, the state's Minister of State for Secondary Education (Independent Charge), Gulab Devi, inspected the Government Girls Inter College, Vikramaditya Marg (Jiyamau) examination center in Lucknow to review the arrangements. She reviewed security, surveillance, and exam conduct arrangements at the center and interacted with the students, encouraging them.

During the inspection, Minister Gulab Devi applied tilak and gave them sweets. She blessed them to take the exam with a calm mind, confidence, and full energy. She urged the candidates to achieve excellent results through their hard work and bring pride to their parents, teachers, and the state. At the Government Girls Inter College, Jiyamau (Center Code 341874), 304 candidates for High School Hindi were registered in the first shift, and 352 candidates for Intermediate Hindi were registered in

the second shift. The High School and Intermediate Board examinations conducted by the Board of Secondary Education are being held across the state from February 18 to March 12, 2026. On the first day, the High School Hindi and Elementary Hindi examinations were held at 8,033 centers, with 2,754,376 candidates registered. In the second shift, the Intermediate Hindi and General Hindi examinations were held at 7,998 centers, with 2,499,370 candidates participating. A total of 5,337,778 candidates are registered for the 2026 board examinations, including 2,761,696 high school students and 2,576,082 intermediate students. A total of 8,033 examination centers have been set up in the state, including 596 government schools, 3,453 aided schools, and 3,984 self-financed schools.

Of these, 222 centers have been declared highly sensitive and 683 centers have been declared sensitive. To monitor the examinations, arrangements have been made for live monitoring and webcasting of examination centers in all 75 districts from a state-level, high-tech control room in Lucknow.

Police further said that such emails often include names of organisations to appear credible, but previous investigations have found them to be false. A detailed probe is underway to identify the sender and ensure the safety of the chief minister, students, hospital staff, and the general public, said. Authorities have urged the public to remain calm and cooperate with law enforcement. Citizens have also been asked to immediately report any suspicious activity to the nearest police station. Students appearing for the examinations admitted feeling anxious and stressed due to the incident, while parents voiced concern over their children's safety. Officials reassured that student security remains the top priority and that all necessary arrangements are in place to ensure the safe and smooth conduct of the board examinations.

Untying pyjama strings counts as rape attempt, says SC, junks high court remark

The Supreme Court disagreed with the High Court's view that the accused grabbing the breasts of an 11-year-old girl, breaking the string of her pyjamas, and trying to drag her beneath a culvert amounted only to preparation and not attempted rape.

New Delhi.(Agency)
The Supreme Court has decided to overturn a controversial Allahabad High Court ruling that held that grabbing a child survivor's breasts, breaking the string of her pyjamas, and attempting to drag her beneath a culvert did not amount to rape or attempted rape. Coming down heavily on the Allahabad High Court judgement, a bench led by Chief Justice of India Surya Kant, along with Justices Joymalya Bagchi and NV Anjaria, pointed out that adjudication in cases of sexual offences requires both legal reasoning and empathy.

"We cannot agree with the finding of the High Court that the allegations only amount to preparation, but not an attempt, towards the commission of the offence of rape," the Supreme Court said.

In its judgment delivered on February 10, 2026, the bench also warned that "complete justice" cannot be served if courts remain insensitive to the specific vulnerabilities faced by litigants.

The controversial observations from the

Allahabad High Court came on March 17, 2025, while it was modifying a summoning order against two accused. The prosecution alleged that the accused, Pawan and Akash, grabbed the breasts of an 11-year-old girl, broke the string of her pyjamas, and tried to drag her beneath a culvert before being interrupted by passers-by.

The trial court had found grounds for attempted rape or penetrative sexual assault under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act and issued a summoning order for charges under Section 376 (rape) and Section 18 of the POCSO Act.

However, the High Court changed the charges to Section 354-B of the IPC (assault or use of criminal force with intent to disrobe) and Sections 9/10 of the POCSO Act (aggravated sexual assault).

In his order, Justice Ram Manohar Narayan

Mishra said that both accused ran away from the site as soon as they were caught breaking the string of the girl's lower garment. Justice

determined to commit rape on victim as apart from these facts no other act is attributed to them to further their alleged desire to commit rape on the victim," Justice Mishra said, as reported by Bar and Bench.

Following these developments, the Supreme Court took suo motu cognisance of the High Court order and stayed its implementation on March 26, 2025. In its final verdict, the Supreme Court declined to immediately frame guidelines for judges. "We are hesitant to undertake, at this stage, a fresh and unguided attempt to lay down any guidelines, without the benefit of a comprehensive understanding of the past endeavours of such nature undertaken by the different Constitutional and statutory bodies, the on-ground results of such efforts, and the varying scope of problems faced by victims and complainants in similarly sensitive cases," the court stated, according to Bar and Bench.



Rajya Sabha polls for 37 seats on March 16, Sharad Pawar among MPs set to retire

New Delhi.(Agency)

Elections to fill 37 Rajya Sabha seats across 10 states will be held on March 16, the Election Commission of India announced on Wednesday. The notification will be issued on February 26, with nominations open until March 5. Voting will take place from 9 am to 4 pm, followed by counting from 5 pm, and results are expected the same night.

The seats are falling vacant as the terms of members end between April 2 and April 9. The highest number of vacancies is from Maharashtra (7), followed by Tamil Nadu, Bihar and West Bengal with five each. Odisha has four vacancies, Assam three, while Haryana, Chhattisgarh and Telangana have two each, and Himachal Pradesh one.



Pawar, Priyanka Chaturvedi and Ramdas Athawale. From Tamil Nadu, outgoing members include M. Thambidurai, Tiruchi Siva, Kanimozhhi and G.K. Vasan.

From West Bengal, those retiring include Saket Gokhale and Ritabratna Banerjee. Assam's outgoing member includes Rameswar Teli. Bihar members completing their tenure include Prem Chand Gupta, Ram Nath Thakur, Upendra Kushwaha and Harivansh Narayan Singh.

From Chhattisgarh, K. T. S. Tulsi is retiring. Haryana members completing their term include Ramchandra Jangra and Kiran Choudhry, while Telangana's outgoing member includes Abhishek Manu Singhvi. Newly elected members will take oath after the retirement of the current MPs and the completion of their terms.

Election For 37 Rajya Sabha Seats In April, Sharad Pawar, M Kharge Terms Ending

New Delhi.(Agency)

Elections for 37 Rajya Sabha seats - which will fall vacant in April - will take place across 10 states on March 16, the Election Commission said Wednesday morning.

The majority of these seats are in Maharashtra (7) and Tamil Nadu (6), with Bihar and Bengal offering five each. Apart from these, four seats will fall vacant in Odisha, three in Assam, two each in Telangana, Chhattisgarh, and Haryana, and one in Himachal Pradesh.

In addition, the terms of several senior political leaders, from the ruling BJP and the opposition, are set to expire, potentially re-drawing boundaries and battle lines in the Upper House.

Among these are Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge (Karnataka), as well as NCP leader Sharad Pawar, the Shiv Sena's Priyanka Chaturvedi, and Republican Party boss Ramdas Athawale from Maharashtra. In Telangana, the Congress' Abhishek Manu Singhvi's term comes to an end.

Eighty-five-year-old Sharad Pawar, the biggest name in Maharashtra politics, has expressed his desire to contest another election, the Shiv Sena's Sanjay Raut has said.

Pawar, citing his age, had previously said he would not contest another poll; in a political career spanning 50+ years, the former union minister has contested 14 polls and won every time.

The term of Rajya Sabha Deputy Chairman Harivansh (Bihar) will also end.

The process of electing Rajya Sabha MPs is different since seats are allocated based on the population of each state, and the voting itself is by elected members of the Lok Sabha and each state's Legislative Assembly. As a result, the strength of each party is an important factor.

There is a formula to calculate how many votes are needed to win a seat in a state.

In August last year the BJP's Rajya Sabha tally crossed 100 for the first time since 2022, handing the ruling party a boost in its attempt to control both Houses and enforce passage of its bills. The last contest for these seats was in 2020, when the BJP and its allies enjoyed dominant positions in Assam, Bihar, Haryana, and Himachal Pradesh. In Maharashtra the BJP and Congress, and the then-undivided Shiv Sena and Nationalist Congress Party, shared the seats.

Teacher killed in failed honeytrap plot, cousin among six arrested in UP

New Delhi.(Agency)

A murder case in Uttar Pradesh's Jalalpur district has unravelled into a failed honeytrap conspiracy that ended in the killing of a man, police said. Six people, including a woman, were arrested on Tuesday in connection with the case. The main accused has been identified as Krishpal alias Kuldeep, a cousin of the victim's. Police said the victim, Raghavendra, was a schoolteacher by profession. Krishpal, described as a gambling and alcohol addict by the police, had accumulated significant debt and had borrowed money from Raghavendra as well.

When Raghavendra began pressuring him to repay the loan, Krishpal allegedly conspired with his girlfriend, Sonia, to silence him through



blackmail. As part of the plan, Krishpal and his associates allegedly lured Raghavendra to a village in neighbouring Madhya Pradesh on the pretext of returning the money. After reaching a farm, the accused allegedly tried to take objectionable photographs of Raghavendra with Sonia, intending to use the pictures to blackmail him, Jalalpur's Superintendent of Police Durgesh Kumar said. When Raghavendra resisted, the group

allegedly assaulted him and strangled him to death with a data cable, the officer said.

The accused then dumped the body in nearby bushes. A missing person's report was filed on February 11, a day after Raghavendra disappeared from his village.

Police formed three teams to trace him. His body was recovered days later, and a murder case was registered on February 14. Relying on informant inputs and technical surveillance, investigators arrested Krishpal and five others, including Sonia. Police said the case was cracked within 72 hours of registering the murder case, prompting the SP to announce a cash reward of Rs 25,000 for the team. A pistol, two live cartridges and two data cables were among the items recovered from the accused, police said.

Delhi Police rescue kidnapped newborn within hours of complaint, two arrested

New Delhi.(Agency)

Delhi Police on Tuesday recovered a three-day-old baby boy who was kidnapped from a government hospital in Rohini and arrested two persons, including a woman, in connection with the case, officials said.

The infant was abducted from the labour room Dr Baba Saheb Ambedkar Hospital, Sector-6, Rohini, on February 17. Police said the child was traced and rescued within hours of the registration of the case. According to the police, North Rohini Police Station received a PCR call around 9 am reporting the kidnapping. The complaint was filed by the 30-year-old mother of the newborn, a housewife, who stated that she had been admitted to the hospital on February 12 and delivered a baby boy on February 14.



In her statement, the woman alleged that an unknown woman, around 30 years old, had been frequently visiting her during her stay in the hospital and had gained her trust. On February 17 at around 5 am, the woman allegedly took the newborn in her lap and told the mother to rest. The mother reportedly fell asleep.

When she woke up at around 8 am, she found both the woman and the child

missing. Her husband, a labourer, immediately alerted the police through a PCR call.

Based on the complaint, an FIR under Section 137(2) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sahita (BNS) was registered at North Rohini police station and an investigation was launched. Police said multiple teams were formed to trace the child. Hospital staff and security personnel were questioned as part of the probe, and CCTV footage was also examined.

"On the basis of technical surveillance and human intelligence, the kidnapped child was recovered from the Delhi-Meerut Expressway," an official said.

The baby was found with two persons — a 40-year-old woman identified as Rani (name changed) and a 20-year-old man, Ahilbaran Saxena. Both have been arrested.

Army used AI to predict, foil Chinese move along LAC in Arunachal: Top officer

New Delhi.(Agency)

India successfully used artificial intelligence (AI)-powered prediction tools to anticipate and foil an unprecedented Chinese attempt along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Arunachal Pradesh, Lt Gen Dinesh Singh Rana, Commander-in-Chief, Strategic Forces Command, said.

While addressing the India AI Impact Summit 2026, the senior military official emphasised that AI is transforming modern warfare, strategic doctrines, and national security planning.

Reflecting on his tenure commanding a Corps responsible for LAC security in Arunachal Pradesh, Lt Gen Rana said a locally developed, low-cost AI system had helped detect early warning indicators of a Chinese military build-up in a disputed sector. "We could see through some AI systems that something was building up. Finally, we were able to predict the timing of their move," he said.

He described the Chinese move as "unprecedented" and noted that timely AI-enabled intelligence ensured effective force positioning and evacuation planning, resulting in "no casualties" on the Indian side.

GLOBAL AI RACE RESHAPING WARFARE

Lt Gen Rana highlighted that AI is no longer a futuristic concept but central to global power dynamics. He pointed to rising investments worldwide, particularly by the United States and China, describing it as an ongoing "AI race."

He added that AI goes beyond software, influencing workforce development, infrastructure, military doctrine, and command structures. Major powers are integrating AI into command-and-control systems, autonomous weapons, precision strikes, target identification, logistics, predictive maintenance, maritime domain awareness, electronic warfare, cyber defence, and countering misinformation. "In the cyber domain, AI-powered systems can both conduct sophisticated offensive operations and strengthen defensive capabilities by identifying vulnerabilities and plugging gaps," he said.

RISKS OF ARTIFICIAL SUPERINTELLIGENCE

Lt Gen Rana cautioned that the shift from narrow AI to artificial superintelligence (ASI), if achieved, would bring both opportunities and challenges.

As a dual-use technology, advanced AI could be misused by rogue actors or leveraged for strategic coercion, similar to nuclear deterrence during the Cold War. He said controlling proliferation would be far harder than with nuclear technology due to the digital nature of AI.

Galgotias University asked to vacate AI Summit after Chinese robodog fiasco: Sources

New Delhi.(Agency)

Noida-based Galgotias University was asked on Wednesday to vacate the India AI Impact Summit immediately following a controversy over the institution presenting a Chinese robodog as its own, sources said. However, the university, which maintained it never claimed to have built the device, said it did not receive any such order from the government. "We have not been informed yet that we have to vacate," a Galgotias professor at the AI Summit told India Today. The development comes as the university faced massive backlash on social media for attempting to pass off a Chinese product as an indigenous device.

Separately, the government has also come under opposition fire for giving space to "showcase Chinese products" at the India AI Summit.

WHY GALGOTIAS UNIVERSITY LANDED IN CONTROVERSY?

The controversy erupted after Galgotias University showcased a surveillance robotic dog named "Orion" at the AI Summit being held in Delhi. A viral video shows a university professor, Neha Singh, presenting the robodog and claiming that it was developed under the university's Rs 350 crore AI initiative. She proudly said the robodog was capable of surveillance while moving autonomously around the campus.

The device gained wider attention after it

featured in a video titled India's 'Sovereign Models' posted by Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw.

WHAT IS THE UNITREE ROBODOG?

However, the robodog turned out to be

actually a Chinese-made Unitree Go2 and

not an in-house innovation. In fact, the



Unitree Go2
92,800.00 USD
Order now and ship within 1 month

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ISSUES CLARIFICATION, GETS FACT-CHECKED

As the fiasco blew out of proportion, the university came out with a hastily drafted statement. The university asserted it never claimed it developed the robodog, and it was being used as a teaching tool.

"Let us be clear - Galgotias has not built this robodog, nor have we claimed... Our students are experimenting with it, testing its limits, and in the process, expanding their own knowledge," the statement said. However, more embarrassment was in store for Galgotias. The university's clarification itself was challenged by an X community note. It claimed the university's assertion that it never presented the robot as its own was incorrect. The community note said the robot was explicitly described as developed by the university.

NEWS BOX

How MS Dhoni's biopic sparked Pakistan star Usman Tariq's stunning cricket comeback

New Delhi. (Agency)

Pakistan spinner Usman Tariq revealed how MS Dhoni's biopic inspired him to return to cricket ahead of the crucial game against Namibia. Tariq has been a revelation for Pakistan since making his debut in the T20I format in 2025, picking up 12 wickets in five matches at an average of 9.25 and an economy rate of 5.94. Tariq had made his presence in T20 leagues around the globe, and has four wickets in two matches so far in the T20 World Cup 2026. Speaking ahead of the crucial Namibia game, the spinner revealed that he felt a connection to the 2016 film based on Dhoni's life, as he was working as a purchase coordinator in a real estate firm in Dubai. The former Indian captain worked as a ticket checker in Indian railways before putting his efforts into making a mark in cricket, which was depicted beautifully in his biopic. "As for my inspiration, I came back to cricket after watching MS Dhoni. His story felt similar to mine because I was also working a job, and he was too. He created history, and I felt that if he could do it, maybe I could as well. But



for that, I would have to work very hard. That's what inspired me to return to cricket," said Tariq.

TARIQ READY FOR ANOTHER IND VS PAK TIE

Ahead of the India vs Pakistan clash, most of the talk was around Tariq and his unique bowling style. The spinner ended with figures of one for 24 as the Indian team carefully saw him off without taking any unwanted risks. Tariq was critical about his own performance and felt he wasn't up to the mark against India and vowed that he tries to do much better if he gets to play in another game against Pakistan's arch-rivals. Yes, of course. I think the whole nation watched the Pakistan-India match, and people around the world watch it. "Honestly, I saw it as a big opportunity to make a name for myself. I tried my best, but personally, I feel I wasn't up to the mark the way I should have been. Hopefully, if I get another chance, I'll do much better than I did in the last game," said Tariq.

In Kolkata, it felt like playing cricket in nightclub, says Scotland's Brad Currie

New Delhi. (Agency)

Playing a T20 World Cup fixture in front of 42,000 fans in Kolkata felt like showing up for "cricket in a nightclub" but going back to the sport in Scotland would be akin to being "in a library", said Scottish seamer Brad Currie as he asked for more opportunities at the top level. Scotland made a late dramatic entry to the T20 World Cup when Bangladesh were ousted from the competition for refusing to travel to India. Placed in Group C, Scotland put out strong performances against tougher opponents in England and the West Indies. "(In) the England game, we had 40 odd thousand (fans), maybe even 50 (at) Eden Gardens. For me, that as a kid growing up, was a dream come true. Here at the Wankhede (Stadium), again, a dream come true," Currie told media after Scotland's seven-wicket loss to Nepal here on Tuesday night. "That's (in Kolkata) the loudest game



I've ever played. It was crazy. It was genuinely like playing a cricket game in a nightclub." In the England game, a lot of Indian fans - and that's exactly what we want as players - we want that experience, (it) almost normalises playing in front of 40,000 in what feels like a nightclub." Reiterating the common demand made by all Associate players who played in Mumbai's Wankhede Stadium, Currie said they need more opportunities at the top level. "We grow as players for that experience and what we ask for is more, just give us more, we love playing these games and we'd love to sort of entertain, really," he said. "...it's going to feel like we're playing in a library when we go back to Scotland," he quipped. Currie said Scotland weren't under-prepared when they got a late call-up to join the T20 World Cup. "We had two warm-up games (and) we had plenty of net sessions. As far as I'm concerned, we were all preparing for our Namibia series next month and (the) Cricket World (Cup) League 2. I don't think any of us were too undercooked," he said.

PAK vs NAM Colombo weather forecast: Will Pakistan suffer Australia's fate if rain arrives

Pakistan takes on Namibia in a crucial Group A fixture at the Sinhalese Sports Club in Colombo, needing a win to stay alive in the T20 World Cup 2026. But will the weather play spoilsport during the contest

Kandy. (Agency)

Pakistan's campaign at the T20 World Cup 2026 comes down to a decisive group stage clash against Namibia on Wednesday, February 18, at the Sinhalese Sports Club in Colombo. A loss would result in Pakistan's elimination from the tournament, marking another early exit for the team under captain Salman Ali Agha. This match takes on added significance after Pakistan's 61-run loss to India, which severely impacted their net run rate and pushed them below the USA on the Group A points table. Pakistan will have destiny in their own hands at the moment, making victory over Namibia essential for progression to the Super 8 stage. Namibia, led by Gerhard Erasmus, has suffered heavy defeats in their three matches against the



Netherlands, India and the USA. While there were brief moments of brilliance, the African nation has failed to make a mark in the competition and has already been eliminated. However, Erasmus and Co. will look to leave the Indian shores on a high and pick up an

upset win over the former T20 World Cup champions.

PAK vs NAM: COLOMBO WEATHER REPORT

It is expected to be a cloudy day on Wednesday in Colombo, with thunderstorms expected.

Thankfully for cricket fans, rain is expected to stay away during the duration of the game but cloud cover is expected to be 100 percent. Thunderstorms are expected to happen between 1 and 3 pm, so we may have a delayed start to the contest in Colombo.

IND vs NED: India look to enter Super Eight with a perfect group stage record

NEW DELHI. (Agency)

A rampant India will look to round off their group-stage campaign with a perfect record when they face the Netherlands in their final league fixture at the Narendra Modi Stadium on Wednesday, before shifting focus to the Super Eight stage of the ICC Men's T20 World Cup.

The India vs Netherlands group clash will get underway at 7 pm IST. JioHotstar will offer live streaming, while Star Sports will provide TV coverage of the match in India. An emphatic 61-run victory over Pakistan secured India's passage to the next round, allowing Suryakumar Yadav's side to approach their final Group A fixture with a degree of comfort. The contest, however, is far from a dead rubber. A heavyweight clash against South Africa awaits on Sunday in a repeat of the previous edition's final, making the game an ideal opportunity to fine-tune combinations and address lingering concerns. For India, much of the focus will remain on Abhishek Sharma. The 25-year-old has endured a stop-start campaign, but inspiration is close at hand in the form of opening partner Ishan Kishan, who has been in impious touch. Should some of Kishan's fluency rub off on the middle order, India would be

considerably strengthened. One of the most feared batters in the format over the past 18 months, Abhishek is yet to ignite in his maiden ICC event at home. A duck in the



tournament opener was followed by a bout of illness that ruled him out against Namibia. He returned for the high-stakes clash against Pakistan but endured another failure, leaving India waiting for their young opener to stamp his authority on the competition. Suryakumar Yadav and Tilak Varma handled Pakistan's spinners sensibly on a tricky Colombo pitch, but India's larger struggle against spin remains a worry. Namibia captain Gerhard Erasmus explored that weakness with figures of 4 for 20, and India currently have the lowest

average and run rate against spin among the top-ranked teams in the tournament.

Battling coach Sitantha Kotak has indicated that Jasprit Bumrah is unlikely to be rested, even with qualification secured. Bumrah's spell against Pakistan, which included the key wickets of Saim Ayub and Salman Ali Agha, effectively ended the contest. His workload has been managed carefully, but India seems keen to keep their spearhead in rhythm ahead of the Super Eight.

The bowling unit as a whole has been sharp. Conditions in Ahmedabad could encourage a slight change in combination, with the management considering an extra seamer such as Arshdeep Singh in place of Kuldeep Yadav. The Netherlands, meanwhile, are no pushover. They stunned South Africa and Bangladesh during the 2023 ODI World Cup in India and have repeatedly shown the ability to punch above their weight on the global stage. Progression is no longer in their hands, as they require favourable results elsewhere, including a Namibian upset over Pakistan, but they have already demonstrated that they are far more than mere participants.

Muqaddar ka Sikandar: How Raza turned heartbreak into happiness for Zimbabwe

Colombo. (Agency)

The most remarkable thing about time and fortune is that they are never constant - they change. Just when you believe it's all over, magic steps in and surprises you in ways you never expected. Sikandar Raza will agree to this fact. Back in 2023, Raza was the captain when Zimbabwe lost to Uganda by five wickets in Windhoek, a crushing defeat that meant his team failed to qualify for the T20 World Cup 2024. It seemed that this was Raza's only real chance to deliver glory for Zimbabwe on the world stage. Raza also endured a personal loss just months before the start of the T20 World Cup as his young brother passed away at the age of 13 in December. But, as life often does, it presented him with a beautiful gift in ways no one could have predicted. 27 months after that painful loss to Uganda, Raza experienced his moment of triumph, leading to jubilant



J&K make history, enter Ranji Trophy final for first time in 67 years



New Delhi. (Agency)

Jammu and Kashmir scripted history by reaching the Ranji Trophy finals for the first time in their 67-year history, defeating two-time former champions Bengal by six

wickets on day four of the semifinal here on Wednesday. Set a below-par target of 126 by the home side, they chased it down in 34.4 overs, with Vanshaj Sharma (43 not out) and Abdul Samad (30 not out) steering them

J&K first participated in the Ranji Trophy in the 1959-60 season and was not seen as a contender up until now.

past the finish line. This was after pace spearhead Auqib Nabi had wreaked havoc by taking nine wickets in the match to destroy the host side's chances. J&K first participated in the Ranji Trophy in the 1959-60 season and was not seen as a contender up until now. During the 2013-14 season, they qualified for the knockouts for the first time in over a decade. At stumps on day three on Tuesday, J&K were 43/2, and they lost overnight batter Shubham Pundir (27) and skipper Paras Dogra (9) early on day four.

celebrations with his fans after the match against Ireland on Tuesday. And why not? After the bitter disappointment of missing out last time, Zimbabwe had fought their way into the Super 8 this time, turning sorrow into elation.

Raza will turn 40 in just three months. Yet his heart remains young, and his passion undiminished, as he continues to inspire Zimbabwe at every turn. For many players after the age of 35, thoughts of retirement begin to creep in, but for Raza, it feels like a new lease on life. His career has flourished in ways many thought improbable, and he continues to set an example for his teammates at the highest level through aggressive batting, shrewd leadership, and the relentless determination that lifts an entire nation.

LUCK FAVOURS THE BRAVE

Zimbabwe went through to the Super 8s after their match against Ireland in Pallekele was abandoned due to rain.

Mohsin Naqvi names real hero behind Pakistan's India match boycott U-turn

T20 World Cup: Mohsin Naqvi said that the actual hero behind Pakistan's India match boycott U-turn was Sri Lanka president Anura Kumara Dissanayake and thanked him for his timely intervention.

LONDON. (Agency)

Pakistan cricket board chairman Mohsin Naqvi named Sri Lanka president Anura Kumara Dissanayake as the actual hero in Pakistan's decision to perform a boycott U-turn and play against India during the ongoing T20 World Cup 2026. Pakistan had previously declared that they would boycott

their T20 World Cup match against India, expressing solidarity with Bangladesh after the latter opted not to travel to India for their fixtures. The U-turn happened on February 9 after an extended round of discussions featuring representatives from the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB), the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB), and the ICC was held to convince Pakistan to reconsider its proposed boycott. Sri Lankan president Dissanayake also personally stepped in to call Pakistan PM Sharif and asked him to allow the team to take part in the match.

After the match, Naqvi met Dissanayake and said he was the reason for the match going ahead. "First of all, warm greetings from the President of Pakistan (Asif Ali Zardari) and the Prime Minister of Pakistan (Shehbaz Sharif). They specially

asked me to convey their greetings to you. Actually, in yesterday's match, you were the actual hero because 2 billion people were entertained because of you. So, it is only



because of you that we played the match," Mohsin Naqvi told Sri Lankan President Anura Kumara Dissanayake in a

meeting. "We were having several issues regarding playing with India, but as soon as the Prime Minister received your call, he called me up and said, 'There is no more issue... we have to play the match. That's it.' I am very thankful to you that you played a very critical role in this," said Naqvi.

WHAT HAPPENED IN IND VS PAK?

The match against India didn't end up being a sweet memory for Pakistan as they were beaten handsomely in Colombo. Powered by Ishan Kishan's magnificent 77, India posted 175 on a tricky pitch at the R. Premadasa stadium.

The Indian bowlers were on the money as Pakistan fell apart in front of Naqvi, who was present for the game. The loss meant that Pakistan's match against Namibia in Colombo on Wednesday, February 18 becomes a must-win game for Salman Ali Agha and his men.

Sensex, Nifty open flat as IT stocks tumble in early trade; Infosys down 2%

New Delhi.(Agency)

Benchmark stock market indices opened flat on Wednesday as gains in metal and banking shares were offset by losses in IT sector stocks in early trade. The S&P BSE Sensex was up 19.33 points to 83,470.29, while the NSE Nifty50 added 12.50 points to 25,737.90 as of 9:41 am. Dr. VK Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist, Geojit Investments Limited, said that the better-than-expected Q3 results and indications of continuing momentum in earnings growth, going forward, are positive factors that will keep the market resilient. "The volatility in IT stocks may continue, in response to incoming news relating to the sector. Overall, IT stocks may remain weak since uncertainty surrounding the sector is huge and large institutional investors are unlikely to invest big time in IT stocks, unless valuations become compelling," he added. An hour after the opening bell, Kalyan Jewellers India Ltd led the Sensex gainers, rising 3.39%. It was followed by Tata Steel Ltd, which gained 2.39%. ITC Ltd moved up 1.11%, while Bajaj Finserv Ltd added 0.67%. Bajaj Finance Ltd also traded higher, rising 0.65%. Infosys Ltd saw the sharpest fall, dropping 2.64%. Tech Mahindra Ltd declined 2.51%, HCL Technologies Ltd was down 2.12%, Tata Consultancy Services Ltd slipped 1.72%, and Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone Ltd fell 1.32%. "There can be chucks away from IT towards other sectors like banking and financials, automobiles, telecom, pharmaceuticals etc where there is good earnings visibility," said Vijayumar. This is the time to gradually increase exposure to equity. But many retail investors are increasing investments in gold and silver ETFs, which is a risky game in the present context. Early signs of a shift in the investment strategy of FIIs are visible now. In the cash market, FIIs have been buyers in eight out of the last thirteen trading days," he added.

Uncut gems: Indian startups embrace AI despite job fears

New Delhi.(Agency)

Glinting under the exhibition centre lights, the gold brooch studded with gemstones on the startup founder's lapel was handmade by Indian artisans -- but artificial intelligence dreamt up its elaborate design. The brooch, in the shape of Hindu deity Lord Krishna, is an emblem of both the fast-developing power of AI technology and hopes it will drive innovation in India's youthful economy. Siddharth Soni, 23, showed AFP a box of AI-designed jewellery, mostly in classical Indian style, made by the company Idea Jewellery which he co-founded in 2023. "Jewellery like this used to take around six months, seven months" to manufacture using traditional methods, said Soni, at a global AI summit in New Delhi. Now, using a 3D-printed mould based on an AI blueprint, and streamlining the process in other ways, "I can make this piece in one week" with a few more needed for hallmarking, he said.

Tech bosses and world leaders are gathered in the Indian capital this week to discuss the opportunities and challenges presented by AI, including the threat of mass redundancies and loss of human expertise.

Soni's startup is a new direction for his decades-old family jewellery manufacturing business in the city of Hyderabad. He said his father was "excited" about the new venture and "wants to take it all over the world" so retailers in places like the United States can offer custom AI-designed Indian jewellery.

At the same time, his father and grandfather, both in the industry for around 30 years, are conflicted because they believe "artisans should not lose their imagination", Soni said.

Elon Musk poised to be a trillionaire soon! What are major contributor to Musk's wealth

BENGALURU. (Agency)

Even as Tesla and SpaceX CEO Elon Musk is another step towards becoming the world's first trillionaire, the US entrepreneur said that the actual amount of cash he is sitting on is much lesser. Responding to a post on X about wealth creation and '75 percent chances of him becoming a trillionaire this year', Musk said his net worth is almost entirely due to my ownership stakes in Tesla and SpaceX. "Already have thousands of times over. My 'net worth' is almost entirely due to my ownership stakes in Tesla and SpaceX. I have <0.1% that is cash. Tesla and SpaceX employees all receive stock/options and Tesla is >80% owned by retail investors and index/pension funds, so value increases apply >80% to them," Musk added. In September 2021, Musk became the third person ever worth \$200 billion. He went on to reach \$300 billion net worth in November 2021, \$400 billion in December 2024 and \$500 billion in October.

What are major contributor to Elon Musk's wealth? Musk's net worth increased to approximately \$852 billion in February this year after SpaceX acquired his artificial-intelligence firm xAI. The merger increased the combined value of the company to \$1.25 trillion and increased Musk's fortune by about \$84 billion, as per reports. Following the merger, Musk's stake in the combined entity touched 43 percent, worth about \$542 billion. SpaceX grew to be Musk's largest holding by a significant margin, the reports said. Musk held about 42 percent of SpaceX, valued at \$800 billion prior to the deal. Musk has roughly 49 percent of xAI which was valued at \$250 billion following a recent round of private fundraising.

Will your PF interest rate increase this year or remain at 8.25% Check here

For lakhs of salaried employees, the annual PF interest rate is more than just a number; it shapes long-term savings. With expectations building around this year's decision, many are wondering whether returns will rise or stay unchanged.

New Delhi.(Agency)

The Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) is likely to keep the interest rate on provident fund deposits unchanged at 8.25% for the financial year 2025-26. If approved, this would mark the third straight year of stable returns for lakhs of salaried workers. While a final decision is expected at the upcoming meeting of the apex decision-making body in early March, the discussion is not only about interest rates. Sources say the bigger story this year could be reforms aimed at making PF transactions faster and easier for subscribers.



STABLE RETURNS, BUT PRESSURE BUILDING AHEAD

According to sources, the EPFO has enough surplus from its investments to maintain the current 8.25% interest rate this year. However, officials are also aware that sustaining such returns in the future may become more challenging. EPFO currently manages a corpus of roughly Rs 25-26 lakh crore. A large part of this money is invested in relatively safe instruments. Around 41%

is parked in State Development Loans, 16% in central government securities, 15.9% in corporate bonds, and about 9.5% in exchange traded funds. Experts say that while these investments provide stability, the organisation may need to explore new investment avenues in coming years if market returns soften.

UPCOMING CBT MEETING IN FOCUS

Attention is now on the next meeting of the Central Board of Trustees (CBT), the EPFO's top decision-making body. The

CBT is chaired by Labour and Employment Minister Mansukh Mandaviya and is expected to meet on March 2. In fact, on February 16, the 116th meeting of the executive committee of the CBT was held in New Delhi under the chairpersonship of Vandana Gurnani, Secretary, Ministry of Labour and Employment. The committee reviewed the progress of EPFO-administered schemes and discussed steps to strengthen social security delivery. TECH UPGRADES AND FASTER WITHDRAWALS LIKELY

Sources suggest that the EPFO may push ahead with reforms focused on smoother digital services. These could include an upgrade of its website, quicker claim settlements and faster withdrawals, long-standing concerns for many subscribers. While the official agenda for the CBT meeting is yet to be circulated, expectations are high that the organisation will balance two priorities: protecting stable returns for members and modernising its systems to match the needs of a growing workforce.

EPFO may keep PF interest rate at 8.25% for FY26. What it means for your savings

New Delhi.(Agency)

The Employees' Provident Fund Organisation is likely to retain the EPF interest rate at 8.25% for FY26. A final decision is expected at the upcoming meeting of its decision-making body on March 2, reported Business Today.

If approved, this would be the third consecutive year that subscribers receive 8.25% on their provident fund deposits. As per the report EPFO would have adequate surplus from its investments to maintain the 8.25% interest rate this fiscal. However, they also said that in the coming years the body may need to explore newer investment avenues or may have to consider lower returns from the next fiscal if earnings come under pressure. The EPFO manages a corpus of a little over Rs 28 lakh crore. It invests 45 to 65% of fresh inflows in government securities. Around 20 to 45% goes into other debt instruments. Between 5 and 15% is invested in equities through exchange-traded funds. Up to 5% is parked in short-term debt instruments. This mix of investments helps EPFO balance safety and returns, as most of the funds are placed in relatively stable debt instruments. The EPFO is also working on creating an interest stabilisation reserve fund. The aim is to provide a stable and consistent interest rate to subscribers, even if markets are volatile. Such a reserve can help smooth returns in years when investment income is lower.

The interest rate proposal will be discussed and approved by the Central Board of Trustees (CBT), which is the apex decision-making body of EPFO. It is headed by Labour and Employment Minister Mansukh Mandaviya. The CBT had last met on October 15, 2025. At that meeting, it had announced several reforms aimed at making withdrawal of provident fund money easier for subscribers. According to sources, this time as well, the board is likely to consider more reforms to make transactions smoother for members. These could include a technology upgrade of the EPFO website, faster withdrawals and quicker settlement of claims. However, the agenda for the upcoming meeting has not yet been circulated. For over six crore EPF subscribers, a steady rate of 8.25% would mean predictability in retirement savings. If a subscriber has Rs 5 lakh in the account, an 8.25% interest rate would translate into around Rs 41,250 in annual interest, subject to monthly balances and fresh contributions.

New Delhi.(Agency)

If your income tax refund has not been credited yet, the latest data suggests you are not alone. For Assessment Year 2025-26, around 8.80 crore

Income Tax Returns (ITRs) were filed, according to figures shared in Parliament. Out of these, about 24 lakh returns are still pending for more than 90 days. That means more than 97% of returns have been processed, but lakhs of taxpayers are still waiting for their refunds. RETURN STILL UNDER PROCESSING

Refunds are issued only after a return is processed under Section 143(1) of the Income Tax Act. If your status on the income tax e-filing portal shows "Under Processing," the department has not completed the assessment yet. Until that step is done, no refund can be credited. Some returns take longer due

to data checks, mismatches in income details, or verification of deductions and tax credits.

ISSUE WITH BANK DETAILS

If the account is not validated, inactive, or has incorrect details, the transfer may fail. In such cases, you need to update the bank information and submit a refund reissue request.

RETURN NOT E-VERIFIED

Filing the ITR is not enough. It must also be e-verified within the prescribed time. If it was not verified, the return is treated as invalid and no refund is issued. Refunds can also be adjusted against any pending tax demand from previous years, which will be reflected in your online account.

With over 24 lakh returns still pending beyond 90 days, delays this year are largely procedural. The first step is to log into the portal and carefully check your return status, bank validation, and verification details.



Even if your status shows "Processed with refund due," the money may not reach your account if there is a problem with bank details. Refunds are credited only to a pre-validated bank account linked with permanent account number (PAN).

New Delhi.(Agency)

In a move that is likely to make homes more affordable for many buyers in Delhi, the Delhi Development Authority has decided to remove parking charges from the total price of flats under its ongoing housing schemes. The decision means that buyers will no longer have to pay separately for covered or open parking spaces while purchasing a flat from DDA. The authority has discontinued the levy of parking charges, including covered parking, in the overall cost of flats. This change is expected to reduce flat prices by Rs 5 lakh to Rs 12 lakh, depending on the category of the flat and the size of the parking space.

The immediate benefit will be seen in MIG and HIG flats under four schemes: DDA Karmayogi Awas Yojana 2025 (FCFS), DDA Towering Heights

Karkardooma Housing Scheme 2025 (E-Auction), DDA Nagrik Awas Yojana 2026 (FCFS) and DDA Towering Heights Karkardooma Housing Scheme 2026 (FCFS).

WHAT HAS CHANGED IN THE PRICING METHOD

According to DDA's order, the cost of constructing parking facilities will now be included within the overall expenditure for developing housing pockets while calculating the plinth area rate, or PAR, of flats. This means that parking costs will be part of the general project cost and will not be charged separately to buyers. The order clearly states: "No separate or additional charges on account of car or scooter garages or covered or uncovered parking will be added to the total cost." Earlier, the pricing formula included the cost of building car or

scooter garages and parking spaces. The cost was calculated by adding the plinth area of the garage multiplied by 60% of the PAR, adjusted for depreciation. Similarly, parking spaces were calculated as plinth area of parking multiplied by the PAR of parking, again adjusted for depreciation. This amount was then added to the total flat cost. With the new decision, the revised method adopted in Dec 2025 for calculating disposal prices will no longer apply to these schemes. HOW MUCH CHEAPER WILL FLATS BE The price cut will vary depending on the scheme and the size of the parking space. For example, HIG flats under the Karmayogi Awas Yojana with an 11-square-metre parking space will see a reduction of around Rs 10 lakh. MIG flats under the same scheme are expected to become cheaper by about Rs 4 lakh to Rs 5 lakh.

Big relief for homebuyers as DDA removes parking charges from flat prices

New Delhi.(Agency)

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Businesses won't be competitive if they don't lean into AI: General Catalyst CEO Hemant Taneja

Speaking at the India Today AI

Summit 2026, General Catalyst CEO

Hemant Taneja described AI as a

"transformative force" and argued

that even if the current moment

carries elements of hype, it is laying

the groundwork for long-term

change.

New Delhi.(Agency)

Artificial Intelligence (AI) may look like a bubble, but that is not necessarily a bad thing, says Hemant Taneja, CEO of General Catalyst. Speaking at the India Today AI Summit 2026, Taneja described AI as a "transformative force" and argued that even if the current moment carries elements of hype, it is laying the groundwork for long-term change.

"Bubbles are very good," he said. "What bubbles do is they mobilise talent and capital behind more problem areas."

While acknowledging that some investments will inevitably result in losses, he added that "on the other side of

what we're going through now in a few years, you'll see we'll build some incredible companies and we will change the world with it."

RESEARCH TO REVENUE

Taneja drew a distinction between investments in foundational AI research and what he called the "applied AI layer." On foundational models, he noted that continued capital is flowing into research because of the promise of breakthroughs beyond current token prediction and language models. "That's hard to assess when is that going to become a business," he admitted. But applied AI, he argued, is already showing proof points. "I would actually argue 2025 was the year that diffusion started," he said, pointing to enterprises beginning to meaningfully shift labour spend into AI-driven productivity. He cited rapid advances in programming tools as an example. AI systems have moved "from, can these models help you write faster, to they're actually generating pieces of software for you."

That shift, he said, has profound implications for value creation and margins, as work that once took teams transformation."

months can now be completed in weeks or even days. Similar transformations, he suggested, are underway in customer support, sales and marketing. "Every department is going through that kind of

MAKE ENTERPRISES AI-NATIVE

For Taneja, the real shift is not just about building AI products but transforming companies themselves. "AI is a transformative force, and the biggest value is about applying it to enterprises," he said. The first step, he argued, is to make enterprises AI-native.

Every successful applied AI company in the US, he noted, has strong "forward deployed engineering capabilities," the ability to work closely with customers to solve real-world problems. India's IT industry, he said, has matured into precisely that skill set.

Once that happens, companies can move beyond operational efficiency to what he described as an "offering of abundance."

He illustrated this with a healthcare example: an AI-native hospital that combines in-person nurses with digital agents whose costs become essentially zero over time. The transformation, he said, comes when enterprises rethink their offerings fundamentally after adopting AI at the core.

DECODING INDIA'S AI OPPORTUNITY

Taneja was candid about India's current position in the AI race. "India is behind when it comes to development of infrastructure and models," he said, calling that a difficult arena in which to compete with global leaders. But he expressed strong optimism about India's prospects in applied AI.

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Shanaya Kapoor

Opens Up About Her Shelved Films: 'Maybe I Wasn't Meant To Do'

Shanaya Kapoor is currently seen in the survival thriller film, Tu Yaa Main, with Adarsh Gourav. Well, she recently opened up about her journey to big-screen debut films, which were shelved. Shanaya had multiple offers coming her way, including Bedhadak and Vrussabha with Mohanlal. In a conversation with the Indian Express SCREEN, Shanaya Kapoor opened up about her debut films. "When I look back at it now, I feel everything happens for a reason. Maybe I wasn't meant to do those films. Maybe I was meant to do something completely different. Looking at it in hindsight now, I feel glad my career shaped this way," Shanaya said.

Tu Yaa Main Box Office Day 4:

Bejoy Nambiar's survival thriller Tu Yaa Main, led by Adarsh Gourav and Shanaya Kapoor, is struggling to find firm footing at the box office.

Despite a steady weekend pattern, the film's overall numbers remain underwhelming, raising concerns about its theatrical longevity. On its first Monday, the film recorded a 35 percent drop from Friday, adding just Rs 40 lakh to its tally. The four-day cumulative collection now stands at Rs 3.25 crore nett in India. While a Monday decline after the weekend is standard, the issue lies in the scale of collections. For a film that does not ride on conventional star power, strong word-of-mouth becomes crucial for survival. That push, however, seems missing. The thriller appears

to be heading toward a disappointing theatrical run, with limited audience traction and subdued buzz.

Adarsh Gourav Urges Audiences To Show Up For Tu Yaa Main: 'We Are Off To A Slow Start But...'

In his note, Adarsh appealed to audiences to show up for smaller commercial films like theirs as well. "It's important that people show up in bigger numbers and watch smaller commercial films like ours too because it gives a real chance to other writers and directors to develop films that are clutter-breaking. It encourages producers to back films that are trying to do anything unique. Plus, this one is tailor-made for a big screen experience. We are off to a slow start but we've been feeling all the love coming our way. If you liked the film, please tell your friends about it and watch us all get destroyed by an 18-foot Crocodile," he wrote.

About The Film

Tu Yaa Main centres on a modern couple fighting for survival against a deadly creature. The film is directed by Bejoy Nambiar, known for Wazir (2016), Taish (2020), and Dange (2024). From a business standpoint, his previous projects have seen modest returns, and it remains to be seen whether this latest outing can stage a turnaround in the coming days.



Sonali Raut

Hints At Possible Reunion With Gautam Gulati: 'Love Show Kare?'

Sonali Raut dropped hints about a possible collaboration with Gautam Gulati. The fan-favourite duo was last seen together in Bigg Boss 8, and since then, fans have been eagerly waiting for a reunion. During an interview with Filmygyan, the reality TV star answered the most asked fan question and talked about her bond with Gautam Gulati.

Sonali Raut Hints at Collab With Gautam Gulati

When the host read a fan comment that stated, "We miss Sonali Raut and Gautam Gulati's bond. We need a reunion." Sonali's instant reaction was "Oh my god!" She added, "Main Gautam ko call kar rahi hu aur usko bol rahi hu we need a reunion."

Talking about their bond, Sonali shared, "Hum milte rehte hai. I think Gautam mujhe beech main T-Series ke party mai bhi mila tha...mai woh share kar rahi hu. I think hum dono ek dusre ko social media pe bhi follow karte hu." She further asked for suggestions from fans, "Toh kya kare? Reality show kare? Love show kare?" Following Sonali's revelation about her strong bond with Gautam Gulati, fans are hoping for the dynamic duo's on-screen reunion.

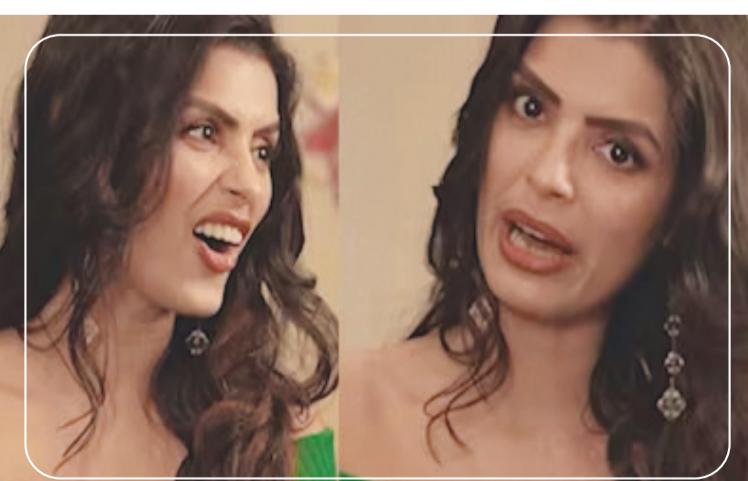
Sonali Raut and Gautam Gulati's Close Bond

Sonali Raut and Gautam Gulati developed a close and highly speculated romantic bond during their appearance on Bigg Boss 8 in 2014. Often referred to as "Gaunali" by fans and media, the duo initially shared intimate moments on the show, including

sleeping in the same bed and flirting. However, their relationship was inconsistent on the show, with both expressing mixed feelings of affection and frustration at different points.

Sonali Raut and Gautam Gulati on the Work Front

Sonali Raut was recently seen appearing in Bigg Boss Marathi Season 6. However, she did not stay long on



the show and became the second contestant who was eliminated. Following her exit, she revealed that she suffered from a health infection due to compromised hygiene inside the house, which affected her performance in tasks. On the other hand, Gautam Gulati was last seen on MTV Roadies XX. In the show he was one of the gang leaders alongside Prince Narula, Neha Dhupia, Rhea Chakraborty, and Elvish Yadav.

Kareena Kapoor Khan Shares Hilarious 'Boy Mom' Meme, Gives Fans A Peek Into Mommy Life



Kareena Kapoor Khan once again proved that she is as relatable as she is glamorous. The actress shared a hilarious meme that perfectly summed up her life as a mother of two boys, leaving fans amused.

Taking to her Instagram stories, Kareena shared a hilarious post talking about boy mom problems and reacting to the same, the actress wrote, "me all day with laughing emoji". Earlier, one such viral video of scolding Jeh through eyes went viral. Kareena Kapoor notices Jeh is doing mischief, and she tries to stop him. She screams his name and also gives him a stern look, which was enough for Jeh to stop. The actress look immediately went viral and fans called her typical Indian mom. One of the fans wrote, "Aww she looks amazing at everything she does I love how she is keeping her kid out from any mischief."

Speaking in a special Valentine's Day conversation with Times Entertainment, Saif and Kareena shared how they celebrate the day. "We don't plan grand gestures. We watch a movie, stay at home, lounge on the couch, and have a night in with pizza and some great wine or Chinese food," Saif said. Kareena added, "If we're together and un hurried, that's enough celebration." On gifts, Saif revealed, "I like to gift her when it feels right. Not just because the calendar says so," while Kareena appreciated thoughtful gestures.

Love Built on Friendship and Honesty

The couple first met on the sets of Tashan, and though the film wasn't a hit, their personal bond blossomed. "We didn't fall in love trying to impress anyone. We were working, talking, arguing, laughing, and one day it just became obvious," Saif recalled. Kareena emphasized, "We chose each other as people first. Everything else came later."

Parenthood and Perspective: Raising Taimur and Jeh

Life as parents to Taimur and Jeh has brought new perspectives. Kareena explained, "What's changed is perspective. What hasn't changed is comfort. He is home!" Saif said, "There's no pretending. That's a luxury in itself. The ease of being around someone is the best leisure. Life is full of chores, love can't be one of them. We just get each other without words."

Sunita Ahuja Ready To Forgive

Govinda Amid Cheating Allegations? She Says 'I Tolerated A Lot'



Sunita Ahuja has finally addressed rumours regarding her personal life. In one of her recent YouTube vlogs, Sunita openly spoke about emotional struggles, family dynamics and how she has evolved over the years. She also broke her silence on Govinda's cheating allegations and stated that she is ready to forgive the actor only on one condition – if he starts to listen to her. "Many people took advantage of my innocence. I tolerated a lot – but not anymore. I have built my own identity now. I will always remain emotional because a 40-year relationship doesn't break overnight. But I have become strong-hearted," Sunita said as quoted by the Indian Express.

However, when asked whether she would forgive Govinda, Sunita stated, "You never know. He is my childhood love. If he changes and lives according to what I believe is right, I will forgive him."

Sunita Ahuja further explained that at her age, she does not want to take stress and added, "I don't want to hear everything in the news. This is not the age where I can handle such stress – I am going through menopause. At this time, you need your husband and children to support you, not put pressure on you."

When asked if she thinks Govinda also made her feel let down, Sunita said, "He must have his own thoughts too. I believe this can't go on forever. Eventually, when age catches up, one's wife and children are the ones who stand by you."

She further claimed that attempts to confront Govinda about their issues have not always brought clarity. According to Sunita, he often laughs off serious conversations, leaving her feeling unheard. "I have said everything indirectly and directly – for someone sensible, even a hint is enough," she said. Govinda and Sunita got married in 1987. They have two children – daughter Tina and son Yashvardhan.

Must-have Foods this Summer

Summer is here. The weather could be hot but the food that the season offers is definitely 'happening'. Namya Kapadia has a special summer menu. One dip in the swimming pool, shopping cool cottons, applying sunscreen, styling a new hairdo and not stepping out of home without those dark glares is what defines the arrival of summers in the city. While you pamper yourself with these summer must haves, it is equally essential to keep your body cool from within too. The summer special mantra is all about having lots of fruits and juices, low calorie food, looking out for lunch variations and bidding a mini farewell to spicy and oily food.

FRUIT FROLIC

It is a known fact that juices and drinks are best of the substitutes in summery days. Eating raw fruits with fibre, works wonders in keeping your

body hydrated. So splurge on fresh fruit juices or a wholesome dish of freshly cut fruits like watermelon, sweet lime, strawberries, chickoo, and grapes topped with the fruit masala which will serve as a perfect 'fruit chaat'. Drink lots of watermelon juice after your workouts or dancing sessions and your skin is sure to look very fresh. Mangoes truly rule the summers. You can prepare anything with mangoes, from mango milkshakes, ice-creams and desserts to your meals. Nothing can match a summer noon lunch where you can relish the chilled aam ras and roti. If the heat catches and kills your appetite during the peak lunch hours, Kachhi Keri vegetable dish is the best. A popular dish called 'fajeto' is a curry made of unripe mangoes which is a scrumptious summer special. Pickles and 'chundo' made of mangoes are a hot pick of this season. Pickles, both sweet and spicy of lemon and mangoes, are a great complementary food with rotis and a big glass of butter milk.

THE GOOD OL' SALAD AND CURD

Raitas made of freshly churned curd, cucumber and boiled potatoes is an unmatched

option. Having curd with fresh fruits is definitely going to keep you cool. Dahi boondi and mixed vegetable parathas with raita are also yummy options to relish the goodness of curd. The pasta mint salad which is freshly filled with black olives, pineapple and lettuce leaves is a sure hit. Salads are a great way to fill your stomach while keeping it light during working hours.

NO MOCKING MOCKTAILS

Mocktails of orange, lemon and mint will be the hot cake selling in the season. Having a hygienic glass of sugarcane juice under the shade of a huge banyan tree is an experience you cannot afford to miss out this summer. Iced tea with a pinch of lemon and mint is also a refreshing drink. The packaged fruit juices and cold drinks can be consumed to quench thirst. While corporate players will try to woo you for packaged juices, it must not replace fresh fruits in any case. Cold coffee with lots of ice cream, pina coladas, guava smoothie or fruit milkshakes in summers are sure to keep you going fresh and feel alive. At home you can simply have chilled milk with khus or rose syrups.

LUNCH VARIATIONS

A heavy lunch can spoil your day making you feel lousy at work. You can try variations of the regular lunch which could work best as summer meals. Try a chana chaat in which paneer, boiled potatoes, puri or khakhra are mixed with boiled chhole which you can saute with onion. Garnish it with chutneys of coriander leaves or ambli-khajur. Pune Misal is yet another favourite dish found on dining tables of most households. The sweet-salty taste of different pulses which are perfectly boiled and mixe

d with curd is a true summer treat. Altering your diet plans and food habits is quintessential to keep the heat at bay. The best of hoteliers vary their menus to complement the summer taste buds of the customers. After all the foodie does not want to be stuffed in this heat, instead he prefers to have a gala time by sticking to lean food. In a nutshell, 'You are what you eat', this scorching summer. So be careful while gorging on but don't shy away from relishing the season's gifted foods. For now you may safely bid a goodbye to the spicy oily food and say cheers to a juicy, light and low calorie intake.



7 scrumptious Veggie sandwiches for Summer

There are few food preparations that have the versatility or potential of a sandwich. Pack them with the right ingredients and a sandwich can work as a wholesome meal in itself, whether it's breakfast, a light lunch or even a quick weeknight dinner along with a salad on the side.

The great part about making a sandwich is that you can experiment with the fillings, the sauces and chutneys. You can use a variety of whole grain breads available in the market, which adds a flavour and taste.

Here are seven scrumptious vegetarian sandwiches (all eggless) that will definitely make

your life easier in the summer months. I'd recommend serving them with a bowl of salad and a glass of fresh watermelon juice to make the perfect cooling meal for this weather.

Tea-time sandwiches with beets and arugula

These bite-sized sandwiches with a healthy filling of beetroot, radish, avocado and arugula are perfect for teatime. They can satisfy those 5pm hunger pangs without ruining your appetite for dinner and are packed with nutrients unlike most other teatime snacks.

Grilled sandwich with herbs

This sandwich is an excellent go-to for a filling and nutritious meal. The



Grilled vegetable sandwich with goat cheese

This sandwich is an excellent go-to for a filling and nutritious meal. The

Cucumber sandwiches with mayo and cream cheese

These yummy sandwiches are super-easy to make--all you need are sliced cucumbers, mayonnaise, cheese spread and fluffy bread. Have them with your evening tea or pack them for a summer picnic.

Grilled spicy potato sandwich

This is a wonderful lunch-time sandwich made with the potato filling that usually goes into a masala dosa. Grill it and have it hot. Cool your palate with a chilled fruit juice on the side. It also makes a great breakfast... lip-smacking with a cup of tea.

Avocado and cottage cheese

This sandwich is an excellent go-to for a filling and nutritious meal. The

unctuous texture of the avocado and the wholesome goodness of cottage cheese will give your dose of 'healthy fats', while a dash of mint chutney will offset the smooth flavours with an assertive tang.

Grilled tofu and lettuce sandwich

This grilled tofu and lettuce (or spinach if you prefer) sandwich is a fantastic option for vegans. I marinate the tofu in mustard before grilling it and then stick it between regular whole-wheat sandwich bread. Easy peasy. I like to add some extra mustard and Tabasco sauce for that spicy punch.

Grilled mushroom sandwich with

Sweet recipe: Rava laddoo in minutes



It's nutritious, tasty and easy to make. Rava laddoo is a yum treat if you want your children to indulge in some home-made sweet delicacies.

Grated coconut, roasted rava, select dry fruits and nuts, and sugar is all you need to make a delectable platter of homemade rava laddoos. And lots of ghee and lots of love of course.

Ingredients:

Rava or sooji (semolina): 200 gms

Coconut: 1

Sugar: 200 gms

Ghee: 200 gms

Nutmeg: half a pinch

Cardamom ground: a pinch

Dry fruits: kismis, sliced badam and kaju-as per your liking

Method:

Grate one whole coconut and add sugar to it. Keep this mixture aside in a bowl. Roast the rava in a non-stick pan till it attains a light brown colour. Take the pan off the stove. Add ghee to it. Pour the grated coconut with sugar on the layer of rava and ghee. Mix the ingredients well. Add nutmeg and cardamom to it and mix well.

Start making laddoos by taking the laddoo mixture in your palm. You can decide on the size of the laddoo on how big or how small you want them to be. Embed the dry fruits as you make each laddoo in your palm.

Once the entire lot is done, let your little ones feast on it.