

## INDIRA VIKAS COLONY LAND SCAM

# Can Government Land Be Sold on Forged Power of Attorney in the Heart of Delhi ?

The Sikh Times  
Gurcharan Singh  
Babbar

New Delhi 20th February: Can anyone in Delhi sell the land opposite Lal Qila on Power of Attorney to hundreds of people? Can any mafia builder, property dealer, or land mafia sell the land opposite India Gate on Power of Attorney to hundreds of people? Absolutely not. No matter how big a criminal, goon, or don may be, no one can sell government land on forged

Power of Attorney in Delhi. If any mafia builder, property dealer, or land mafia attempts to sell government land, the Delhi Police PCR would immediately reach the spot. The local police station would reach the site. The concerned ACP and DCP would also arrive and arrest the accused without delay. If the police failed to act, then officers of DDA, MCD, and the Revenue Department would reach the site and, with police assistance, take legal action to stop the criminals. But in the case of Indira Vikas Colony, government land was first encroached upon by

mafia, property dealers, and land mafia. Then the property mafia started selling the government land. The land was given a new name — Indira Vikas Colony. The most shocking fact is that this colony is situated very close to Raj Niwas (the residence of the Lieutenant Governor) and also near the Delhi Vidhan Sabha. Yet no one stopped Indira Vikas Colony from being formed. No one stopped the sale of government land. When the government land was being sold, senior officers of MCD did not stop the property mafia. Senior

officers of DDA did not stop the sale of government land. Revenue Department officials also remained silent while the government land was being sold. Along with this, the local police allegedly remained in collusion with the mafia. It is astonishing that openly, without fear, criminals prepared forged Power of Attorney documents and sold government land to innocent people. Today, the residents of Indira Vikas Colony possess Power of Attorney documents given by those who sold the government land.

One fact is very clear: whichever property dealer, builder, or land mafia sold the government land provided the buyer with their Power of Attorney, documents, photographs, and even registered these documents openly without fear. Can any mafia in Delhi, near the Governor's residence, near the Chief Minister's residence, near the Delhi Vidhan Sabha, sell government land through forged Power of Attorney? No. Absolutely not. There is rule of law in the country. There is rule of law in Delhi. No matter how powerful a

criminal may be, government land cannot be sold through forged documents. And here, the trade in land allegedly continues regularly. Every day property dealers sell properties built on government land. Every day property dealers buy properties constructed on government land. Another shocking question arises: On what basis does the registrar office register property of Indira Vikas Colony if it is government land? On what basis do property dealers get such properties notarized? This is a very serious criminal matter.

I appeal to the Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi Ji to take this matter into his own hands in national interest. All government authorities are well aware that those who sold the Government of India's land have their names, addresses, and affidavits recorded in the registrar office. The innocent people who purchased the land possess Power of Attorney (Will), Agreement to Sell, Special Power of Attorney, and other such forged documents issued by the property mafia, builder mafia, and land mafia.

[Continued news page 2](#)

"King Experienced But..."

## BJP's Maithili Thakur's 'Dhritarashtra' Jibe At Lalu Yadav

Patna .(Agency)

Singer-politician Maithili Thakur on Thursday attacked former Bihar chief minister Lalu Prasad Yadav and compared his rule to that of 'Dhritarashtra', a blind king in the epic Mahabharata.

In a fiery speech inside the Bihar assembly, the 25-year-old newly elected BJP MLA, who is one of the youngest in the country, also compared Yadav's son and former Bihar deputy chief minister Tejashwi Yadav to 'Duryodhana', a Kaurava who was one of Dhritarashtra's 100 sons.

"Whenever I think about that time (before 2005), I remember Dhritarashtra's Hastinapur in the Mahabharata. The king was experienced, but he was blind and didn't want to see. He wasn't worried about



Hastinapur, but about his Duryodhana," she said, in an apparent reference to Lalu and Tejashwi. She said the state was

deprived of education about two decades ago. "Many generations are still suffering from it," she said. Without naming Tejashwi, she said that those at the top of power couldn't hear the cries of the people because they had blindfolded their eyes and ears. Maithili said that before 2005, it

was impossible to leave the house after 5-6 pm in Bihar. "People used to say, 'Don't get out of the car after 5 pm; it's dangerous,'" she said. She also heaped praise on JDU's Nitish Kumar, who was sworn in as Chief Minister of Bihar for a record-extending tenth time last year.

"Today, as an artist and MLA, I leave Darbhanga at 3 am and reach my home in Patna safely. This change is a result of Nitish Kumar's good governance," she said.

She also praised Nitish Kumar's cycle scheme, which was introduced in 2006 to provide financial aid to Class 9 girls to purchase bicycles. "In my own village, where there was no discussion in the name of school, all the girls started going to school when the cycle program started," Thakur, a resident of Madhubani, said.

**Congress, BJP clash with AI posters of Sonia, Nirmala Sitharaman in Tamil Nadu**



As the Tamil Nadu Assembly elections loom, the Congress and BJP escalate poster warfare using AI images.

New Delhi .(Agency) As political temperatures rise in Tamil Nadu ahead of the Assembly elections, the Congress and the BJP on Friday engaged in a fresh round of poster warfare, using AI-generated images of Nirmala Sitharaman and Sonia Gandhi to target each other. The Tamil Nadu Congress shared a poster depicting Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman as a giant figure walking through a small village road, with people -- and even animals such as cows and dogs -- seen running for safety. The poster is titled 'Thai Kelavi' (grandmother). Sitharaman is shown carrying what appears to be a goat on her shoulder, while a man in the poster says, "Run it's coming towards us". Designed to resemble a movie poster, it also carries the line: "Direction - RSS" and "Lootus Productions." The BJP hit back with a similar poster featuring Sonia Gandhi portrayed as a massive figure holding a broom on a dusty road, alongside references to several alleged scams -- from the 2G spectrum case to Bofors and the National Herald case. BJP leader SG Suryan shared the image, criticising the Tamil Nadu Congress and claiming that Sonia Gandhi was the "OG Thai Kelavi". Tamil Nadu is set to vote in high-stakes Assembly elections before May this year.

## Youth Congress members detained at AI Summit after shirtless protest against PM

► Youth Congress members detained at AI Summit after shirtless protest, slogans against PM

New Delhi .(Agency)

Delhi witnessed a dramatic protest on Friday as workers of the Indian Youth Congress staged a topless demonstration at Bharat Mandapam, raising slogans against Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The protest drew attention during the ongoing AI Summit, where some Congress workers were reportedly taken into custody.

Delhi Police confirmed that legal action is being initiated in connection with the demonstration.

A senior police source said, "We will take strict legal action against those involved in the protest." The demonstration marks yet another flashback in the tense political atmosphere in the national capital, coming amid heightened security around

high-profile events. The Indian Youth Congress has not released an official statement explaining the topless protest, but participants were reportedly chanting slogans criticising the central government's policies.

As the Delhi Police proceeds with investigations, the authorities are expected to scrutinise the protest organisers and participants under relevant laws.



## Punjab Governor Gulab Chand Kataria Advocates Inclusion of State's Border Villages in NITI Aayog Programmes

The Sikh Times

Chandigarh, February 20: The Governor of Punjab, Shri Gulab Chand Kataria, on Friday formally suggested the inclusion of the state's border blocks under NITI Aayog's Aspirational Districts and Aspirational Blocks Programmes. This proposal comes as a strategic response to the discontinuation of the Border Area Development programme, with the Governor emphasizing that these blocks require a robust framework to ensure they are not left behind in the nation's developmental journey. Presiding over the 'Sampoornata Abhiyan Samman Samaroh' organised to recognize the outstanding achievements of districts and blocks under NITI Aayog's Aspirational Districts and Aspirational Blocks Programmes, Punjab Governor said that the government can leverage targeted transformation and convergence-based action to fill the void left by previous funding structures by integrating these border area blocks into the Aspirational framework. The Governor lauded the collaborative governance that has turned development into a mass move-

ment in Punjab. He emphasized that these programmes represent a bold shift from incremental progress to targeted transformation and from isolated schemes to convergence-based action. He said that true development is not measured by the progress of the fastest, but by the upliftment of the weakest. In his keynote address, Rohit Kumar, Additional Secretary, Government of India and Mission Director of Aspirational Districts and Aspirational Blocks Programmes at NITI Aayog, highlighted that the programme's success hinges on the three Cs: convergence, collaboration, and competition. He explained that the core objective is to transform Aspirational Districts and Blocks into inspirational models. He expressed satisfaction that within a short span, numerous districts and blocks across the country have not only surpassed national and state averages but have also set new benchmarks. He attributed this success to collective teamwork and collaboration, and assured that he would present the state's proposal to include border villages in the programme during the NITI Aayog meeting. In her welcome

address, Additional Chief Secretary Planning Jaspreet Talwar highlighted Punjab's participa-

tion in the NITI Aayog's Aspirational Districts and Aspirational Blocks Programmes. She mentioned that this programme covers two Aspirational Districts, Ferozepur and Moga, and ten blocks across seven districts. She highlighted that Ferozepur and Moga's good performance under the programme has made them eligible for performance-based incentive grants. She also appealed the NITI Aayog to include border blocks of the state under this programme. The ceremony honoured both current and for-

mer District Collectors for their leadership in driving these initiatives. Among the current officers, Deputy Commissioner Ferozepur Deepshikha Sharma and Deputy Commissioner Jalandhar Himanshu Aggarwal received Cooper Medals; while Deputy Commissioner Moga Sagar Setia and Deputy Commissioner Kapurthala Amit Kumar Panchal were awarded Bronze Medals. Former DCs including Kulwant Singh (Moga), Vishesh Sarangal (Moga), and Rajesh Dhiman (Ferozepur) were also recognized for their contributions with certificates and awards. Prominent amongst others ACS Dhirendra Kumar Tiwari, ACS Tejveer Singh, Principal Secretary, Rahul Bandari, Principal Secretary to Governor Punjab V.P. Singh, Administrative Secretary Gurkirat Kirpal Singh, Administrative Secretary Varun Rojani, Administrative Secretary Ghanshyam Thor, Administrative Secretary Arshdeep Singh Thind, Director Panchayati Raj, GOI Vipul Ujwal, Deputy Commissioner Sangrur Rahul Chaba and DC Amritsar Dalwinderjit Singh were also present on the occasion.

Front continued news

## INDIRA VIKAS COLONY LAND SCAM

### Can Government Land Be Sold on Forged Power of Attorney in the Heart of Delhi?

We request the Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi Ji to order strict action in national interest against the property dealers, land mafia, and builder lobby who sold government land. There is strong documentary evidence available with the registrar office, with notary officers, and with the flat owners constructed on government land.

I hope that the Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi Ji will issue firm directions for concrete action to the Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor of Delhi, to the Delhi Police Commissioner, to the Hon'ble Chief Minister Smt. Rekha Gupta Ji, and to all ministers of the Delhi Government. This matter concerns the rule of law, protection of government property, and the faith of innocent citizens who may have been misled through forged documents. Strict and immediate action is the need of the hour.

#### News box

### Revamp for master drain before work begins on Phase 2 metro route in Gurgaon

#### Gurgaon.(Agency)

Ahead of work beginning on new metro corridor, GMDA has approved reconstruction of Leg 1, a 2.8 km master storm water drain between Old Delhi Road and Rezang La Chowk. According to an official, an estimate of Rs 34 crore was prepared and a tender for the project will be floated soon. Built over three decades ago with brick masonry, years of sewage flow and corrosive gases have weakened the structure in several areas, especially Sector 22. The drain was transferred from the Haryana Shehri Vikas Pradhikaran to the GMDA in 2018.

Leg 1 falls along the alignment of the metro corridor being developed by GMRL. Under the metro's Phase II, the corridor will run between Sector 9 and Cyber City and pass through Sector 22 and Sector 23A.

Earlier, the metro agency asked the GMDA to complete the rebuilding work by June this year so that construction of the elevated corridor is not hindered.

The drain begins from Sikenderpur village and outfalls into the Najafgarh drain, passing through Sectors 18/19, Old Delhi Road, Sectors 22 and 23A, Palam Vihar, railway culvert No 47, village Bajghera and Sector 115.

While the portion from Rezang La Chowk to railway culvert No 47 was rebuilt by GMDA in 2024, the remaining stretch from the Old Delhi Road culvert to Rezang La Chowk is now being undertaken for reconstruction, the official said. The drain is 4.25 metres wide upstream of Old Delhi Road but the width reduces to 2.10 metres downstream.

### Noida techie death: Realtor gets pre-arrest bail



#### Noida.(Agency)

An additional sessions court on Thursday granted anticipatory bail to Lotus Greens founder Nirmal Singh, who is named in an FIR in connection with the death of software engineer Yuvraj Mehta in a waterlogged pit in Sector 150 on Jan 17. Singh had been untraceable since Jan 23, when a non-bailable warrant was issued against him. His lawyers told the court the FIR and investigation material did not disclose any cognisable offence against him, and that arrests should not be used routinely.

Singh faces allegations under the Environment Protection Act, 1986, the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974, and BNS sections 290 (negligence in building construction or demolition), 270 (public nuisance) and 125 (negligence endangering human life). Granting relief, judge Atul Srivastava said that considering "the facts and circumstances, the nature of accusations, the punishment prescribed, the absence of prima facie involvement, and that no recovery is to be made from the applicant", it was a fit case to extend the "protective umbrella of anticipatory bail". The judge ordered that Singh must not "directly or indirectly" induce or threaten anyone connected with the case to stop them from disclosing facts to the court. It also restricted foreign travel without permission. In the event of arrest, Singh is to be released on a personal bond of Rs 30,000 with two sureties of the same amount. Singh's counsel argued that employees of M/s Lotus Green Constructions Private Limited were "illegally implicated and arrested" but later granted bail. "The investigating officer was extensively examined by the CJM court, with no satisfactory material emerging to show involvement," the lawyer said.

## DEHLI/NCR

# Ghost admissions, fake records: Gurgaon hospital busted for insurance scam, 3 arrested

#### Gurgaon.(Agency)

Everything was a sham at this private hospital—ghost admissions, forged lab reports and fabricated treatment bills. On Wednesday, Galaxy One Hospital in New Palam Vihar, which generated fake insurance claims through them, ran out of luck, when three staffers were arrested in a crackdown. The hospital, located in Nihal Colony, would siphon off money from nearly 25 insurance companies. The chief minister's flying squad and local police unearthed the racket, which involved hospital staffers and fake patients splitting insurance payouts. The operation revealed a systematic paper admission scheme.

"The fraud was committed with both govt and private insurance companies—60% of their insurance claims were cleared," ACP (West) Abhilaksh Joshi said. According to the investigations, the hospital admitted individuals to its in-patient department on paper only,

without any actual medical treatment taking place. "Authorities are currently scanning digital records and bank statements to identify other conspirators, including the fake patients and senior hospital management involved in the payout chin," a police officer said. Those arrested include Sapna and Varsha, both local residents, and Gaurav of Rajasthan for their alleged roles as accomplices. A case has been registered under sections 318(4) (cheating), 336(3) (forgery), 338 (forgery of valuable securities) and 340 (using a forged document or electronic record as genuine) of BNS at the Bajghera police station. The investigation into the facility began with a preliminary raid in May 2025, where authorities first noticed irregularities, including a doctor who falsely claimed to have an MD degree. Following a formal complaint by the CM flying squad at Bajghera

police station on Feb 14, a specialised team was formed under DCP (West) Karan Goyal and led by ACP Joshi. The search operation, which included cyber



experts and drug control officers, yielded 56 fake insurance files containing detailed records for patients who were never actually admitted. Police officials said "medical records and lab reports were manufactured" to obtain insurance money, which was then

shared between the hospital officials and the beneficiaries, who lent their names to the files. ACP Joshi said that the fraud was estimated to be around Rs 1 crore.

"In each case, we found a fraud of Rs 60-70,000. When we raided the hospital, we observed that the hospital didn't have many patients admitted there and the handwriting of the patient documents in all the files was almost the same. When we confronted the staffers, they disclosed the crime," Joshi said. Authorities also seized a cache of forged lab reports, pharmacy bills and treatment charts used to substantiate the claims. A secondary search at Labswell diagnostic centre in Dayanand Colony revealed that the facility provided the fake diagnostic reports used in the hospital's files. The ACP added that police were conducting a detailed investigation pertaining to the financial trail and checking the role of others involved in the organised crime.

### Faridabad factory fire: Workshop owner's son among two dead

#### Gurgaon.(Agency)

Three days after a fire and a series of explosions in Faridabad left 37 people injured, two people, including the son of one of the owners of the workshops, died on Thursday. Abhishek Monga (32) and his father Vijay, owner of Kalkaji Lubricants, had suffered serious injuries in the fire that took place at two workshops in the Mujesar industrial area on Monday. Abhishek died of injuries at 3.20am at Safdarjung Hospital. Vijay is also undergoing treatment in the same hospital. Police said another person, Pradeep (30), died at 1.30pm at the said hospital. Both the deceased were initially admitted to Fortis Hospital in Faridabad but were referred to Delhi due to critical injuries. Police could not clarify if Pradeep was among the onlookers or a factory worker. An administrative officer said both of them were among the eight patients who were referred to Safdarjung and AIIMS hospitals by creating a green corridor on Monday night. Faridabad police spokesperson Yashpal Yadav said police and the administration are keeping a close watch on all the victims. At least 25 people who sustained burns after a blast inside the steel factory were onlookers. 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. The owner of Shiv Steel Company, Nikhil Monga, was also among those injured, besides two firemen and three cops. 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. The fire team, including Ranveer and Bhavi Chand, along with driver Gopal, led the initial response.

## Rera orders s 41L compensation to buyers for delay in flat handover in Gurgaon

#### Gurgaon.(Agency)

Haryana Real Estate Regulatory Authority (HRERA) has ordered developers to pay a compensation amounting to Rs 41 lakh to buyers for delay in handing over an apartment in Sector 86. While the apartment had been booked in 2015, the possession was offered to the buyers by 2018. On Feb 11, the adjudicating officer of HRERA (Gurgaon) directed developers Microtek Infrastructures Pvt Ltd and Deepanshu Projects Pvt Ltd to pay the amount to allottees Mridula Parti, who is an NRI, and her brother Partha Sarathi De over an eight-year delay in handing over the apartment in the Greenburg project.

The order awarded approximately Rs 40 lakh towards loss of appreciation, Rs 1 lakh towards mental inconvenience and Rs 50,000 as litigation costs. Interest at 10.85% per annum has also been directed from the date of the order until payment. Certain other claims were not allowed due to lack of supporting documents or overlap with relief already granted.



According to the order, the allottees had booked a 1,480 sq ft apartment (Unit J-602, 6th floor) in May 2015 for around Rs 1 crore. They paid over Rs 40 lakh towards the unit. Project advertisements had indicated possession by Jan 1, 2017. However, a conditional occupation certificate (OC) was issued in July 2017 and possession was offered in July 2018. The order noted that electricity meters were installed only in Aug 2018, affecting

the apartment's readiness for occupation.

In an earlier proceeding before HRERA, the authority had directed a refund of the deposited amount after certain deductions along with interest. Subsequently, the allottees approached the adjudicating officer seeking compensation in relation to the delay and its impact. After examining the submissions and records, the adjudicating officer observed that the apartment was not delivered in a fully completed and ready-to-occupy condition within the committed timeline. Referring to provisions of the Real Estate (Regulation and Development) Act, 2016, the officer held that allottees are entitled to compensation where delivery of possession is delayed beyond the agreed period. The developers had submitted that delays were linked to regulatory approvals and that the project had been completed. The adjudicating officer considered the overall timeline and availability of essential services while

## UP to NGT: Applicants seeking Yamuna flood aid are encroachers

#### Noida.(Agency)

UP govt has told the National Green Tribunal (NGT) that farmhouse owners seeking compensation for damage caused during the July 2023 Yamuna floods had encroached upon the floodplain and had been served eviction notices more than a year before the deluge. Submitting details of the river's floodplain demarcation, the state said the applicants, who own farmhouses and fields along the Yamuna in Gautam Budh Nagar, had raised unauthorised constructions on the river's floodplain despite a clear prohibition by the Noida Authority. Notices warning against construction in the notified area were issued on June 8, 2022, the state govt counsel told the principal bench of the tribunal, which was examining a compensation claim submitted by Suman Chauhan, Manoj Singh and Dinesh Kumar Tyagi claiming that over 50 land owners were affected by the flood. The three had moved the tribunal in 2023, seeking compensation for damage to their

houses and agricultural land. The applicants argued that the flooding was not a natural disaster but the result of human actions, including silt accumulation that narrowed the river channel, faulty flood regulation and the failure to strengthen embankments between the river and nearby villages. They sought compensation under the principle of "no-fault liability", citing earlier tribunal orders in similar cases. The state govt, UP irrigation department, Dedicated Freight Corridor Corporation of India Limited, Noida district magistrate and Noida Authority, all respondents in the case, had contested the claim, maintaining that the floods were a natural event that was worsened by widespread encroachment on the floodplain. Officials told the tribunal that those seeking compensation were themselves in violation of environmental and land-use norms. In an affidavit, the executive engineer of the irrigation and water resources department informed the

tribunal that the Yamuna's floodplain had been formally demarcated and notified on Dec 21, 2024. The demarcation covered critical stretches of the river, including areas from Asgarpur to Etawah and from Shahpur to Prayagraj, based on a 100-year flood return period and one-metre contour data. According to the affidavit, the Central Water Commission provided geographical coordinates for the floodplain passing through Noida. These coordinates were verified on the ground, after which demarcation pillars were installed to physically mark the floodplain limits. Photographs of the pillars were also placed on record before the tribunal. Counsel representing the authorities said action had been initiated against the applicants for raising unauthorised farmhouses, prompting them to approach the high court. While the applicants claimed they were only cultivating farmland with temporary structures, the authorities disputed this, describing the constructions as illegal and permanent.

## Surajkund effect: Panel wants multi-tier checks for big events

#### Gurgaon.(Agency)

The Haryana Human Rights Commission said technical certification by a multidisciplinary committee, comprising structural engineers, electrical safety experts, and officials from disaster management, fire services and police, should be made mandatory for all major events expected to draw large public gatherings. The commission took suo motu cognisance of the Feb 7 swing crash at the Surajkund International Crafts Mela that left 13 people injured and police inspector Jagdish Prasad dead, flagging glaring "systematic lapses" in the structural safety of amusement rides, entry gates and stalls at the venue.

Around 19 people were on the electrical swing, locally called 'tsunami ride', when it became unhooked suddenly, tilted mid-air and crashed to the ground. Prasad (58), who was deployed on duty at the fair, lost his life while attempting to rescue those trapped in the ride. Twelve

others, including police personnel and civilians, were injured in the incident.

Haryana Police constituted a Special Investigation Team (SIT) to conduct a detailed investigation into the circumstances that led to the collapse. The district administration also set up a separate ADC-level inquiry committee to examine the technical and mechanical aspects of the accident. On Thursday, a full bench of chairperson Justice Lalit Batra and members Kuldeep Jain and Deep Bhatia initiated proceedings and sought detailed reports from Faridabad deputy commissioner, DGP, heritage and tourism department, chief electrical inspector and Surajkund Mela Authority. HHRC assistant registrar Punit Arora said the officials have been directed to submit a comprehensive report within four weeks, including the findings of the inquiry committee probing the swing collapse, the status of the FIR,

and action taken against those responsible. The matter would be next heard on April 7.

Observing that the Surajkund fair was a globally renowned festival that celebrated India's heritage, crafts, and folk traditions, the bench said it was important that it upheld core human rights values, including dignity, safety, and inclusivity. It flagged the absence of evidence that a competent technical committee had conducted thorough structural and electrical inspections before the fair was inaugurated and termed it a "serious administrative lapse". It also noted there was inadequate deployment of emergency response teams, medical units and disaster-management mechanisms, and pointed to uneven pathways that posed risks to senior citizens, children and persons with disabilities. The panel stressed the need for level, safe and disability-friendly pathways across venues, and for clearly marked, obstruction-free evacuation

routes to ensure quick and safe movement during emergencies. It directed the deployment of adequate emergency infrastructure, including ambulances, fire tenders, first-aid centres and trained rescue personnel, while underlining the need for institutionalisation of weather-related risk assessments, with operations to be suspended during high winds or other adverse conditions.

Calling safety non-negotiable, the commission said a "fair (mela) must be fair in all respects", and directed zero tolerance for safety violations. It ordered mandatory third-party safety audits of all rides, gates, stalls and temporary structures, along with strict penal action for negligence. Members of the commission, who were present at the venue on Feb 7 for an awareness camp, flagged additional safety lapses after a temporary gate near the venue's food court collapsed in the wind earlier that day and left two to three persons injured. They also

said that a second gate, near gate 2, had tilted precariously.

## THE SIKH TIMES

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

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

Corporate Office:  
5, Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg,  
Press Area, ITO, New Delhi

Editor-in-Chief  
Gurcharan Singh Babbar

Mob: 9654077232, 9971359517

Website: www.thesikhtimes.in

Email: sikhtimesindia@gmail.com

RNI No. DELENG/2008/25465

# From Altman to Pichai: Key tech leaders gather as world's largest AI summit opens in Delhi

## The Sikh Times

New Delhi: The world's largest artificial intelligence (AI) summit opened to packed halls and long queues on Monday, as tech moguls, industry leaders, policy-makers, founders, and technologists thronged the venue for the conference, where India is set to push for widening access to AI and seek international agreement on global AI commons. With huge billboards around the city welcoming delegates,

### Public meetings, protests banned on Delhi University campus for 1 month

New Delhi: The Delhi University administration has imposed a complete ban on public meetings, processions, demonstrations, and protests on the campus for a period of one month, effective February 17. In an official order issued on Tuesday, the university said the decision was taken in view of inputs suggesting that unrestricted gatherings could lead to traffic obstruction, threats to human life and disturbance of public peace. The order noted that in the past, several protests on campus had escalated beyond control, spreading across areas and resulting in the deterioration of law and order.

### NAME CHANGE

I, SUBHAS KUMAR DAS is a real father of No 15679611X Rank HAV Name GOUTAM KUMAR DAS unit-3IDRS, presently residing VPO-KHODAMBARI, TEH-HALDIA, DIST-PURBA MEDINIPUR, (WEST BENGAL)-721650 have changed my name from SUBHAS KUMAR DAS TO SUBHAS CHANDRA DAS for all future purposes. Vide Affidavit Dated 20/02/2026 before Notary Public New Delhi.

### NAME CHANGE

I, VIMLASH DEVI Mother of No-16026501A, Rank-RNF, Name-BHUPENDRA presently residing at MOHALLA AZAMTARA, B B NAGAR, BULDANDSHAR, UTTAR PRADESH-245402, have changed my name from VIMLASH DEVI to VIMLESH for all future purposes and in my son's service records my date of birth wrongly mentioned as 01/01/1970 instead of my correct date of birth as 01/01/1975 vide Affidavit dated 20/02/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

### NAME CHANGE

I, JAGRIB SINGH Father of No-16026501A, Rank-RNF, Name-BHUPENDRA presently residing at MOHALLA AZAMTARA, B B NAGAR, BULDANDSHAR, UTTAR PRADESH-245402, have changed my name from JAGRIB SINGH to JAGVEER for all future purposes and in my son's service records my date of birth wrongly mentioned as 15/10/1968 instead of my correct date of birth as 01/01/1965 vide Affidavit dated 20/02/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

### NAME CHANGE

I, SATYA PAL S/O SHRI RAM R/O HOUSE NO-110 SERVICE ROAD TIRKHA EXTENSION COLONY SECTOR-2 BALLABGARH FARIDABAD HARYANA 121004 HAVE CHANGED NAME TO SATYA PAL SINGH

### NAME CHANGE

I, HIMANK S/O RAJESH BATRA R/O PLOT 139 THIRD FLOOR AMOLIK RESIDENCY, NEAR AMOLIK CHOWK SECTOR -86 KHERI KALAN (113) FARIDABAD HARYANA 121002 HAVE CHANGED NAME TO HIMANK BATRA

### PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform you that Mrs. Vidya Garg is the owner of a freehold residential plot measuring 200 sq. yards (i.e., 167.224 sq. meters), forming part of Khasra No. 230, situated in Village Bhangal Begumpur, Jupiter Enclave, near Maharsi Ashram, Paragon and Tehsil Dadri, District Gauhati Budh Nagar, Uttar Pradesh. Mrs. Vidya Garg purchased the said property from Mrs. Anjula Chaturvedi through a Sale Deed dated 23.08.2012, registered as Document No. 4166. Please note that the original chain documents pertaining to the property, namely the Sale Deed dated 27.10.2006 (registered as Document No. 6128), have been lost. Accordingly, the said original document is not available in respect of the above-mentioned property. An online FIR (Lost Report No. 116963/2026) was registered on 20.02.2026 regarding the loss of the aforesaid document. Please also note that the said property is proposed to be financed by DCB Bank Limited, Karol Bagh Branch, New Delhi. If any person(s) objection & regarding subject property, then kindly may submit his/her objection within 07 days from the date of the Notice in writing. The said objection may be kindly sent to the undersigned by way of the Registered Post on the address given below and by E-mail failing which, the claim as per aforesaid shall be treated as null and void in respect of the subject property.

[ASHWANI KUMAR]

Advocate

Chamber No. 122,

Tehsil Compound,

Ghazibabad, U.P.

kumar2021ashwani@gmail.com

speakers, and guests at the AI Impact Summit, Bharat Mandapam saw long queues much before the conference opened at 09.30 hours, signalling the interest in the subject and the conference. The enthusiasm was high even though the high-profile speakers - from Sundar Pichai of Alphabet to Sam Altman of OpenAI and Dario Amodei of Anthropic - haven't even arrived in the country. Their sessions start not before Wednesday. Final two days of the Summit - February 19 and 20 - will see more than 20 heads of state and government, including France's Emmanuel Macron and Brazil's Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, along with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, talking about the future of AI alongside business leaders and investors. A team of PTI reporters on the ground observed long queues outside the halls hosting different sessions. There were some logistical issues, but the conference was orderly and well-organised. Multiple parallel sessions are happening at the same time, and all of them are packed to capacity. From February 16 to 20, the summit will feature

over 3,250 speakers and more than 500 sessions. "Sessions are packed. There are long queues, and once the halls fill up, doors are closed, which creates some hassle for those still waiting outside," an enthusiastic participant said. "You have to be there for a session well in advance. One cannot float around from session to session like in other conferences." Another person said an interesting lineup of speakers is drawing huge crowds. "There is a lot of buzz around AI." Organisers said registrations exceeded expectations, reflecting accelerating interest in AI infrastructure, enterprise adoption, and sovereign compute capabilities. Panel discussions on the future of employability in the age of AI, skilling, safe and trusted AI at scale, AI governance and infrastructure, generative AI deployment, and public sector use cases drew standing-room-only audiences, with participants crowding corridors between sessions to network and exchange ideas. An expo where the who's who of the tech industry - from Google to Nvidia, Amazon, Meta,

OpenAI, and Microsoft, besides homegrown innovators in AI is held alongside. Focused on AI's transformative impact, it includes 300+ exhibitions, 13 country pavilions, and addresses themes of People, Planet, and Progress. The summit offers India not just a chance to showcase its vast tech-savvy population and engineering talent but also to push for democratising AI access to the global south. Besides wider access to AI, New Delhi may also seek international agreement on 'global AI commons' or a repository of use cases for AI in key sectors that can be shared. The UK hosted the first AI Summit in 2023 that focused on AI safety and extreme risks. The next edition in France in 2025 saw trumpeting big investments in the tech sector. For Prime Minister Modi, it offers an opportunity

to showcase the impressive digital infrastructure and tech prowess that has attracted the likes of OpenAI and Anthropic to set up operations in the country, as well as an array of data centre commitments by giants such as Amazon, Google, and Microsoft. Ahead of the Summit, Modi, in an interview with PTI, pitched India as a global hub for digital infrastructure and artificial intelligence, saying the country is ready to host the world's data and lead the next wave of the technology revolution. The summit is expected to focus on expanding access

to AI technologies, strengthening digital public infrastructure, and building consensus around shared global frameworks for responsible AI development. India is positioning itself at the centre of discussions on democratising AI and shaping international cooperation on emerging technologies.

### NAME CHANGE

I, Mohd Iqbal S/o Islamuddin R/o H.No-D/433, Street No.4, D-Block, Brijpur, Delhi-110094 have changed my name to Mohammad Iqbal.

### NAME CHANGE

I, Simran Sanjay Dhir W/o Avneet Singh Kapoor R/o 8/62, Geeta Colony, Delhi-110031 have changed my name to Simran Kaur Kapoor.

### PUBLIC NOTICE

Information is given to general public at large that our client Mrs. Anisa Begum is the owner of Freehold Residential House No. 1006, area measuring 50 Sq. Yds., out of Khasra No. 66, situated at Gali No. 33, in the area of Village Jafraabat, Ilqa Shaheera, Delhi-52. Initially Mr. Islam S/o Late Mr. Mattoo & Mrs. Anisa Begum W/o Mr. Islam were the joint owners of said property, and after the death of Mr. Islam S/o Late Mr. Mattoo leaving behind his legal heirs i.e., Mrs. Anisa Begum (Wife) & Mohd. Aqib (Son), and now Mohd. Aqib will execute Regd. Relinquish Deed in favour of his mother Mrs. Anisa Begum. And then Mrs. Anisa Begum will be solely owner of the said property, our client is declaring that any other Person does not have any right over the said property, which is to be financed by Piramal Finance Ltd. Branch: Dwarka, New Delhi. 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

Information is given to general public at large that our client Mrs. Vinita Kumari purchasing Freehold Residential Plot, area measuring 33 Sq. Yds., Out of Total Area Measuring 200 Sq. Yds., Out of Khasra No. 1041, Situated at Waka Sivana Mauja Hall Colony Raj Nagar, Tehsil & Distt. Gurgaon Haryana, from Mr. Shalender Kumar & Mr. Jitendra & Mrs. Lalita & Mr. Usha & Mr. Shivang & Mrs. Garima, initially Mr. Ram Narayan S/o Mr. Bhoop Singh was the absolute owner in respect of Plot, area measuring 200 Sq. Yds. Out Khasra No. 1041. Thereafter Mr. Ram Narayen died on 08.11.2013 & his wife Mrs. Prem Lata Died on 21.11.2017 & her son Mr. Shankar Lal Died on 05.04.2021, our client is declaring that any other Person does not have any right over the said property, which is to be financed by Piramal Finance Ltd. Branch: Dwarka, New Delhi. 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

### NAME CHANGE

I, RAJEEV kumar sharma s/o Ram Sudershan Sharma r/o house no 7-27, gali no 55, vijay colony 3-1/2 pusta, Kartar Nagar, Delhi 110053 changed my name to RAJEEV SHARMA for all purpose.

### NAME CHANGE

I, RISHI KUMAR s/o HANUMAN DASS GOLYAN r/o E2/20 Right portion , upper ground floor , near Jain market , galli no O, Shastri nagar, Delhi 110052 changed my name to RISHI KUMAR GOLYAN for all purpose.

### NAME CHANGE

I RAJEEV kumar sharma s/o Ram Sudershan Sharma r/o house no 7-27, gali no 55, vijay colony 3-1/2 pusta, Kartar Nagar, Delhi 110053 changed my name to RAJEEV SHARMA for all purpose.

### NAME CHANGE

I, RISHI KUMAR s/o HANUMAN DASS GOLYAN r/o E2/20 Right portion , upper ground floor , near Jain market , galli no O, Shastri nagar, Delhi 110052 changed my name to RISHI KUMAR GOLYAN for all purpose.

### NAME CHANGE

I, Kanu Priya Sinha D/o Krishna Gopal Sinha and W/o Vineet Shrivastava R/o Flat No.-402, Tower No.-38, Louis Boulevard, Espacia, Sector-100, Noida, Maharsi Nagar, Gautam Buddha Nagar, Uttar Pradesh-201304, have changed my name to Kanu Priya Shrivastava.

### NAME CHANGE

I, Shivani D/o Mohan Singh R/o Bihari Gaur, Sitapur, Uttar Pradesh - 261141, have changed my name to Arati Singh.

### NAME CHANGE

I, Kanu Priya Sinha D/o Krishna Gopal Sinha and W/o Vineet Shrivastava R/o Flat No.-402, Tower No.-38, Louis Boulevard, Espacia, Sector-100, Noida, Maharsi Nagar, Gautam Buddha Nagar, Uttar Pradesh-201304, have changed my name to Kanu Priya Shrivastava.

### NAME CHANGE

I, Janki Devi W/o Ayoobha R/o Sidhiyavan, Jagdishpur, Amethi, Uttar Pradesh - 227809, have changed my name to Ramjanaki.

### NAME CHANGE

I, Shanti Kant Shukla S/o Surya Prakash Shukla R/o 13476 Arya Nagar, Near Shri Durga Mandir, Firozabad, Uttar Pradesh - 283203, have changed my minor daughter's name from Anshika Shukla aged 12 years to Anika Shukla forever.

### NAME CHANGE

I, SHASHWAT SODHANI S/o VIJAY SODHANI R/o 46A, Gali No-15, East Azad Nagar, East Delhi, Delhi-110051 declare that the name of mine, my father and my mother has been wrongly written as SHASHWAT SODHANI. VIJAY SODHANI and USHA SODHANI in my all educational documents and name of my father has been wrongly written as SABNAM. The actual name of mine, my father and my mother are SHASHWAT SODHANI, VIJAY SODHANI and USHA SODHANI respectively which may be amended accordingly.

### NAME CHANGE

I, MANSI Daughter of J-28419W, Rank-SUB, Name-MAHESH KUMAR residing at H.NO-7A, GALI NO-3, NEAR GOLDEN ERA PUBLIC SCHOOL, KALAWATI VIHAR, SONIPAT, HARYANA-131001, have changed my name from POONAM to POONAM DEVI for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 20/02/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

### NAME CHANGE

I, MANSI Daughter of J-28419W, Rank-SUB, Name-MAHESH KUMAR residing at H.NO-7A, GALI NO-3, NEAR GOLDEN ERA PUBLIC SCHOOL, KALAWATI VIHAR, SONIPAT, HARYANA-131001, have changed my name from POONAM to POONAM DEVI for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 20/02/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

### NAME CHANGE

I, MANSI Daughter of J-28419W, Rank-SUB, Name-MAHESH KUMAR residing at H.NO-7A, GALI NO-3, NEAR GOLDEN ERA PUBLIC SCHOOL, KALAWATI VIHAR, SONIPAT, HARYANA-131001, have changed my name from POONAM to POONAM DEVI for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 20/02/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

### NAME CHANGE

I, DARA CHARAN S/o MOJUKEEL R/o Donkeli, P.O. Dokeli, Dist. Firozabad, Uttar Pradesh-283203 has embraced Sikhism and renounced Hinduism on 31.08.2025. In future my name will be considered as DARA CHARAN SINGH and not DARA CHARAN.

### NAME CHANGE

I, DARA CHARAN S/o MOJUKEEL R/o Donkeli, P.O. Dokeli, Dist. Firozabad, Uttar Pradesh-283203 has embraced Sikhism and renounced Hinduism on 31.08.2025. In future my name will be considered as DARA CHARAN SINGH and not DARA CHARAN.

### NAME CHANGE

I, DARA CHARAN S/o MOJUKEEL R/o Donkeli, P.O. Dokeli, Dist. Firozabad, Uttar Pradesh-283203 has embraced Sikhism and renounced Hinduism on 31.08.2025. In future my name will be considered as DARA CHARAN SINGH and not DARA CHARAN.

### NAME CHANGE

I, DARA CHARAN S/o MOJUKEEL R/o Donkeli, P.O. Dokeli, Dist. Firozabad, Uttar Pradesh-283203 has embraced Sikhism and renounced Hinduism on 31.08.2025. In future my name will be considered as DARA CHARAN SINGH and not DARA CHARAN.

### NAME CHANGE

I, DARA CHARAN S/o MOJUKEEL R/o Donkeli, P.O. Dokeli, Dist. Firozabad, Uttar Pradesh-283203 has embraced Sikhism and renounced Hinduism on 31.08.2025. In future my name will be considered as DARA CHARAN SINGH and not DARA CHARAN.

### NAME CHANGE

I, DARA CHARAN S/o MOJUKEEL R/o Donkeli, P.O. Dokeli, Dist. Firozabad, Uttar Pradesh-283203 has embraced Sikhism and renounced Hinduism on 31.08.2025. In future my name will be considered as DARA CHARAN SINGH and not DARA CHARAN.

### NAME CHANGE

I, DARA CHARAN S/o MOJUKEEL R/o Donkeli, P.O. Dokeli, Dist. Firozabad, Uttar Pradesh-283203 has embraced Sikhism and renounced Hinduism on 31.08.2025. In future my name will be considered as DARA CHARAN SINGH and not DARA CHARAN.

### NAME CHANGE

I, DARA CHARAN S/o MOJUKEEL R/o Donkeli, P.O. Dokeli, Dist. Firozabad, Uttar Pradesh-283203 has embraced Sikhism and renounced Hinduism on 31.08.2025. In future my name will be considered as DARA CHARAN SINGH and not DARA CHARAN.

### NAME CHANGE

I, DARA CHARAN S/o MOJUKEEL R/o Donkeli, P.O. Dokeli, Dist. Firozabad, Uttar Pradesh-283203 has embraced Sikhism and renounced Hinduism on 31.08.2025. In future my name will be considered as DARA CHARAN SINGH and not DARA CHARAN.

### NAME CHANGE

I, DARA CHARAN S/o MOJUKEEL R/o Donkeli, P.O. Dokeli, Dist. Firozabad, Uttar Pradesh-283203 has embraced Sikhism and renounced Hinduism on 31.08.2025. In future my name will be considered as DARA CHARAN SINGH and not DARA CHARAN.</p

## NEWS BOX

## Rishi Sunak By His Side, UK Deputy PM Reveals His India Connection

BEIJING (Agency)

Former UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak and UK Deputy Prime Minister David Lammy shared the stage at the British High Commission in New Delhi, blending humour, shared heritage and discussion on AI during a fireside chat. Introducing Sunak, Lammy said, "I know that former Prime Minister Rishi Sunak is not just a great son of the United Kingdom, he is also a great son of India." Sunak promptly interjected, saying, "Son-in-law", drawing laughter from the audience, as Lammy responded with "Son-in-Law!"

David Lammy, Deputy Prime Minister of the UK, highlighted his Indian heritage, mentioning his great-grandmother was from Calcutta, as he praised his friendship with former UK PM Rishi Sunak.

Lammy went on to underline his own India connection. "I just want to establish my heritage too, because my great-grandmother on my mother's side was from Calcutta," he said. Lammy emphasised their ability to work together despite political differences, focusing on shared goals for the UK and globally.

Highlighting their cross-party cooperation despite being on different sides of the political aisle in the UK, Lammy said, "Whilst we are on different sides of the political aisle, we can work together and have been friends for many years." He added it had been "One of the great pleasures in recent years to join former Prime Minister Rishi Sunak on our shared goal to do much better both in the United Kingdom and globally on prostate cancer, and it's a pleasure to work with him on that cross-party issue."

Turning to artificial intelligence, Lammy referenced Sunak's decision to convene the first global AI Summit at Bletchley Park. "You kicked off the first global summit, um, in Bletchley Park. Um, it's an issue that you cared about then. Why did you decide that it was something that you were going to use your platform to signal to the world that this is important? And how do you think that story's going?" he asked.

Lammy's comments came amid discussions on strengthening UK-India relations, with potential areas of cooperation including trade, technology, and security. The UK and India have been exploring ways to deepen their strategic partnership, building on historical ties and shared values.

## Former Nepal king says March 5 parliamentary polls should be postponed

Kathmandu (Agency)

Nepal's former king Gyanendra Shah has called for the postponement of the March 5 parliamentary election in the Himalayan nation, warning that holding the polls amid the nationwide dissatisfaction could deepen political instability and spark further conflict. Shah, who was dethroned by the parliament in July 2008, bringing the curtains down on the centuries-old monarchy in Nepal, said in a video message that the election has been pushed forward despite widespread disagreement and protests.

He said holding the polls against public sentiment would not produce a lasting solution to the country's current political crisis, Kathmandu Post reported.

He claimed that the electoral process alone cannot resolve the prevailing instability and warned that the situation may worsen after the vote.

Reacting to the statement, a minister told the Post that Shah's statement is objectionable and insisted that the government is committed to holding the elections.

"No Nepal will buy his logic at this moment to postpone the March 5 elections. The entire country is in election mode. Political parties, party leaders, security agencies, and the bureaucracy are fully devoted to the elections. There is enormous external support and solidarity for the elections. So his statement is meaningless," said the minister.

It may be mentioned that the government has detained controversial medical entrepreneur and monarchist Durga Prasain on the charge of attempting to disrupt the elections. Once aligned with other parties, Prasain has lately embraced monarchist views and calls for the restoration of a Hindu kingdom.

## Man extracts 191 grams of gold from old SIM cards, wows internet

Toronto (Agency)

This is amazing and intriguing at once. A man in China has taken social media by storm after he shared videos showing how he extracts gold from discarded SIM cards. The man claims that he has recovered around 191 grams till now by doing so. His clips have gone viral and triggered spike in demand for used SIM cards. However, the man, in his videos, has sounded a caution to viewers that the process involves health and safety hazards. The man is known as "Qiao" on social media. He hails from Huizhou in China's Guangdong province. The man is employed in precious scrap metal refining, and one of his gold-extraction videos has amassed over five million views.

What the videos show

The video shows him immersing a SIM card in chemical barrels and carrying out a series of reactions — like corrosion, displacement and heating — for gold extraction. After filtering and heating the material, the man claims to have recovered 191 grams of gold, valued at almost 200,000 yuan (around US\$29,000), according to a report in the South China Morning Post. Qiao told the Xiaoxiang Morning Post that the gold was not extracted only from SIM cards. He said he processed nearly two tonnes of scrap, including telecom chip waste, to refine the gold. The report said a single SIM card holds less than 0.001 grams of gold. Qiao pointed out that precious metals are used as thin plating in certain components or parts to boost stability and corrosion resistance. According to data, gold can also be recovered from bank card chips and contact components in communication devices, which also contain small amounts of gold and can be recycled.

# US bases and assets could be "legitimate targets" if attacked: Iran Tells UN

New York (Agency)

Iran has written a letter to UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres and the president of the Security Council on Friday, warning that US bases, facilities, and assets would be Iran's "legitimate targets" if the United States follows through on its military threats. Amir Saeid Iravani, the Iranian ambassador to the United Nations, said in a letter that Tehran would respond "decisively" to any attack, warning of serious consequences for military aggression in the region. The development comes after US President Donald Trump issued an ultimatum to Iran of "10-15 days, pretty much maximum" to make a deal with Washington on the nuclear issue. He added that "bad things" will happen if the sides fail to reach an agreement. Iran's permanent mission to the UN also criticised Trump's rhetoric, saying it "signals a real risk of military aggression" but stressing that Tehran does not seek war. The letter warned that "the United States would bear full and direct responsibility for

any unpredictable and uncontrolled consequences." The United Nations has expressed concern over US military deployments in the Middle East amid rising tensions. UN spokesman Stephane Dujarric told reporters, "The Secretary General Antonio Guterres, like others, is very concerned about the military buildup we are seeing, the war games that we are seeing, the training that we are seeing. That is why we were encouraging both the Islamic Republic of Iran and the United States to continue their discussions as facilitated by Oman." The second round of Iran-US talks on the Iranian nuclear program took place on February 17 in Geneva with Omani mediation. Following

the talks, Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said there had been progress and



that Tehran and Washington would work on texts that could form the basis of a potential agreement. Trump, who has deployed two US aircraft carriers and thousands of troops

to the Gulf region — escalated his rhetoric on social media. "Should Iran decide not to make a Deal," the US may need to use an Indian Ocean airbase in the Chagos Islands, "in order to eradicate a potential attack by a highly unstable and dangerous Regime", he wrote on his Truth Social platform.

A previous negotiating effort collapsed last year when Israel launched attacks on Iran, triggering a 12-day war that Washington joined in by bombing three Iranian nuclear sites at Fordow, Natanz and Isfahan.

Trump initially issued threats of military action in January following a deadly Iranian crackdown on anti-government protesters. Tehran responded by threatening to close the Strait of Hormuz, a vital oil export route for Gulf oil, and warning it could strike US military bases in the region.

## British Museum Removes 'Palestine' From Some Displays Citing Historical Inaccuracy

World (Agency)

The British Museum in London has removed the word 'Palestine' from some of the displays, stating that the term was used inaccurately and is no longer historically neutral. The move comes after UK Lawyers for Israel (UKLFI) wrote to the Director of the British Museum, Nicholas Cullinan, raising concerns "regarding the anachronistic use of the term 'Palestine'", which risked obscuring the "history of Israel and Jewish people".

"Applying a single name, Palestine, retrospectively to the entire region, across thousands of years, erases historical changes and creates a false impression of continuity," the letter stated, as per a report in The Guardian. "It also has the compounding effect of erasing the kingdoms of Israel and of Judea, which emerged from around 1,000BC, and of reframing the origins of the Israelites and Jewish people as erroneously stemming from Palestine." The museum explained that 'Palestine' no longer holds a neutral

designation and may be understood in reference to political territory. For the Middle East galleries for maps showing ancient cultural regions, the

emphasis the history of Canaan, the Canaanites, and the rise of the kingdoms of Judah and Israel.

### Reverse The Decision

Since the changes were made, an online petition urging the museum to reverse the decision has been launched. As of the last update, the petition had received over 19,000 signatures, with critics arguing that the selective removal highlighted inconsistency in curatorial standards and raised concerns about political pressure influencing historical presentation.

"If the British Museum is genuinely concerned about modern etymology, then consistency would require similar scrutiny of terms such as 'Britain', which is itself a relatively modern political construct. Yet 'Britain' remains unchallenged in the museum's own galleries," the petition highlighted. Despite the backlash, the museum is expected to make further changes as part of the museum's long-term reconstruction and redisplay programme.

term 'Canaan' is relevant for the southern Levant in the later second millennium (BCE)," a museum spokesperson said. "We use the UN terminology on maps that show modern boundaries, for example, Gaza, West Bank, Israel, Jordan, and refer to 'Palestinian' as a cultural or ethnographic identifier where appropriate." UKLFI reports that the British Museum has updated its 2,000-300 BC Levant gallery displays to

and built in India... what we want to do is expand. India confirmed a few days ago its willingness to command a new bunch of Rafales... 114... and to co-produce in India," he said. Macron

noted that France hopes to see the success of the Rafale deal replicated with submarines as well. "Rafale is absolutely key," he said. "I hope we will do it on submarines. We offered additional capacities." In its largest-ever defence acquisition push, India last week cleared the long-pending proposal to procure 114 Rafale fighter jets under a government-to-government framework with France.



Under the Multi-Role Fighter Aircraft (MRAF) project, 18 aircraft will be supplied by Dassault Aviation, the maker of Rafale, in a fly-away condition, and the rest will be manufactured in India with around 50 per cent indigenous content that will be met in phases, according to a report by news agency. Details of the Rafale deal, including plans for co-production, expected to be sealed after technical and commercial negotiations, are yet to be made public. Media reports have said that the 114 jets manufactured by Dassault Aviation are expected to cost 3.25 trillion rupees (\$35.65 billion). The move to procure the jets has come at a time when the number of the Indian Air Force's fighter squadrons has gone down to 31 from the officially sanctioned strength of 42. So far, India has purchased 36 Rafales for its air force and ordered another 26 marine versions of the jet for the navy.

## Illegal Indian 'Alien' Truck Driver In ICE Custody After Fatal US Crash

Washington (Agency)

A 25-year-old Indian man has been arrested in the United States after his truck caused a three-vehicle collision, killing a 64-year-old man in Indiana. The accused, identified as Sukhdeep Singh, allegedly ran a red light, causing a fatal crash. He's in the United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) custody, as he was not only driving wrong and cost a life, but he was also in Indiana illegally, US authorities said. Per a Fox News report, Singh was caught crossing the US border in 2018 -- a minor at the time -- but was later released. He reportedly received a commercial driver's license in May 2025.

### About The Crash

The fatal crash reportedly occurred in Hendricks County, Indiana, located just west of Indianapolis. Eyewitnesses told Fox59 News that around noon on Wednesday, Singh made a fatal mistake and slammed his semi-truck into the side of a white pickup. "He went through the intersection and hit the electric truck that was driving through," said a witness, Kate Breedlove, who claimed she herself narrowly missed being hit and quickly ran to check on the victim in the pickup. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) noted that the tragedy comes less than two weeks after another illegal alien driving a semi-truck killed four innocent people in Indiana. "It is incredibly dangerous for illegal aliens, who often don't know our traffic



laws or even English, to be operating semi-trucks on America's roads. These tragedies are 100 per cent preventable, and we pray for the family and victim," DHS said in a statement to Fox News. As per authorities, Singh, who was first detained in 2018, was released into the US under the 1997 Flores consent decree, which mandated that children who crossed the border illegally were to be released to a parent or adult relative rather than being detained. The first Donald Trump administration moved to abolish the Clinton-era policy in 2019, the year after Sukhdeep crossed the border.

### Similar Cases In The US

The crash comes about two weeks after Bekzhan Beishekeev, an illegal immigrant truck driver from Kazakhstan, allegedly killed four people in another Indiana accident.

# UK's former prince Andrew released hours after being held in Epstein-related misconduct probe

SANDRINGHAM (Agency) Britain's royal family was thrown into crisis Thursday after former prince Andrew was arrested by police and held for hours, in a blow to the monarchy unprecedented in modern British history. The disgraced royal was detained early Thursday on suspicion of misconduct for his links to late US sex offender Jeffrey Epstein. As Andrew marked his 66th birthday on Thursday, police swooped on the remote Sandringham royal estate in eastern England around 8:00 am (0800 GMT). King Charles III, who has promised police the full support of Buckingham Palace, swiftly issued a rare personally signed statement insisting: "The law must take its course." It was a humiliating new blow for Andrew, who was last year stripped of his titles and ousted from his Windsor residence of more than two decades. Thames Valley Police said in a statement late Thursday: "The arrested man has now been released under

investigation." A photograph published by media showed Andrew slumped in the back of a car, staring wild-eyed ahead. While the earlier police searches in Norfolk "have now concluded," they were still searching a property in Berkshire, police added. It is believed that is Andrew's former residence, Royal Lodge. "It's a hugely significant moment for the British monarchy, and indeed the nation," royal expert Ed Owens told AFP. "We are witnessing a monarchy, I think, shaken by recent events." In the sleepy village of Sandringham near the royal estate, an off-duty police officer said he was "very satisfied some formal action was taken". "It's very reassuring to the members of the public," the officer, who did not want to be named, told AFP. Thames Valley police said it had arrested "a man in his sixties from Norfolk on suspicion of misconduct in public office", without naming the suspect, as is common UK practice. US President Donald Trump

called the arrest "very sad", adding: "It's so bad for the royal family," in comments to reporters.

### Moment of crisis'

Andrew's arrest follows new revelations last



week that the ex-prince appeared to have sent Epstein potentially confidential documents while serving as a UK trade envoy, a post he held from 2001.

In a November 2010 email seen by AFP, Andrew appeared to share with the US financier reports on his visit to several Asian countries. Epstein had been convicted in the United States in 2008 of procuring a child for prostitution.

Charles last year stripped his brother of his titles and ordered him to leave his Windsor mansion -- though he does remain eighth in the line of succession. "Let me state clearly: the law must take its course," the king said in his statement. In an apparent bid to project an air of business-as-usual, Charles carried out several public duties Thursday, including opening London Fashion Week.

In the Norfolk village of Dersingham, local pub owner John Higginson said he hoped the issue would be "resolved". "I just feel sorry, to be quite honest, for people like William and Kate," he added, referring to the heir-to-the-throne and his wife.

## NEWS BOX

We just want her to grow up normally: Parent of 16-month old suffering from blood disorder shares journey

## Ahmedabad. (Agency)

When doctors told the parents of a 16-month-old from Gandhinagar that their daughter would need a bone marrow transplant, there was little debate at home. "We were told there was no other option. Genetic tests in December had confirmed an inherited bone marrow failure syndrome caused by a mutation in the DNAJC21 gene. They said a transplant is the only cure. We were scared... But we agreed immediately. What else could we do?", her father said at a media interaction on Thursday.

By then, she had already developed pancytopenia, a condition which meant her body was unable to produce enough blood cells to fight infections. "She would fall sick again and again," he said. "We were just praying that the transplant would work."

The procedure was performed in January 2026. More than 40 days later, her blood count has stabilised. "She is recovering," he said. "That is enough for us right now."

Her story was one among several shared by patients and families at a media interaction with patients organised at Apollo Hospitals, Ahmedabad. For an 11-year-old from Botad with the blood disorder transfusion-dependent thalassemia major, hospital visits once dictated his childhood. Every two to four weeks meant another transfusion. "In thalassemia, unless a transplant is done at the correct time, children need lifelong transfusions. If undertaken early, cure rates can be 90 to 95 per cent," said Lt Gen (Retd) Dr Velu Nair, haemato-oncologist at Apollo Hospitals, Ahmedabad.

## Odisha Govt to set up dedicated land cell for protection of Lord Jagannath's properties

## Bhubaneswar. (Agency)

The Odisha government has decided to establish a dedicated Shri Jagannath Mahaprabhu Land Cell within the Revenue Department to strengthen the protection and management of landed properties belonging to Lord Jagannath.

The decision was taken at a high-level meeting chaired by Revenue Secretary Arbinda Padhee to review measures for safeguarding land owned by the deity.

Addressing officials during the meeting, Padhee said that Lord Jagannath is regarded as the supreme spiritual landlord of the Odia community and emphasised that protecting the deity's landed properties is a collective moral responsibility.

He directed all concerned officials to ensure effective implementation of orders and judgments issued by the Supreme Court and the Orissa High Court relating to the protection and restoration of these lands.

Padhee also stressed the urgent need to correct land records (Record-of-Rights) for all properties registered in the name of Shree Jagannath Mahaprabhu Bije, Puri, through the Shree Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA). He called for the expeditious disposal of pending cases concerning temple lands.

The meeting further discussed steps to remove illegal encroachments from lands under the administration of the Shree Jagannath Temple, particularly in various tahsils of Khordha district and along National and State Highways.

## Security forces arrest four, recover arms in Manipur crackdown

## Imphal. (Agency)

Security forces and Manipur Police carried out a series of operations across multiple districts of Manipur on Thursday, resulting in the recovery of a significant cache of arms and ammunition and the arrest of several individuals allegedly involved in unlawful activities, including extortion, police said on Friday. In one operation conducted at Keirak Awang Loukon Chingol under Kakching Police Station in Kakching district, security personnel recovered a large quantity of weapons and war-like stores.

The seized items included one Amogh carbine with a magazine, two locally made lathode guns, two locally made single-barrel firearms, seven tear smoke shells, and three tube launching devices.

Additionally, two .36 high-explosive grenades with detonators, ten rounds of ammunition, one hundred empty cases, and two improvised explosive devices with detonators were recovered from the site. Protective gear comprising two helmets, one bulletproof jacket, and two magazine pouches was also seized during the search operation. The recovered items have been taken into custody for further investigation.

In a separate operation carried out at Malom Tulihal Makha Leikai under Nambol Police Station in Bishnupur district, security forces apprehended one individual alleged to be an active cadre of a proscribed outfit. The individual was taken into custody for further legal proceedings.

Another arrest was made from Khewa Bazar under Porompat Police Station in Imphal East district, where security personnel detained one person allegedly involved in extortion activities.

## Ahmedabad: Gang targeting senior citizens busted; crime proceeds worth Rs. 15.38 lakh recovered

The arrests were made near Jamalpur Bridge following strategic patrolling and a confidential tip-off to the police. Legal proceedings are currently underway under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS).

## Ahmedabad. (Agency)

The Detection of Crime Branch (DCB) of Ahmedabad City Police on Thursday said it successfully apprehended a three-member gang involved in several cases of theft targeting senior citizens in auto-rickshaws. The arrest led to the recovery of proceeds of crime worth Rs. 15.38 lakh.

The Crime Branch arrested Mohammad Yunus alias "Chacha" (46), resident of Danilimda (4 prior cases), Imtiyaz alias "Kuli" (36), resident of Saraspur (2 prior cases), and Sakil Salim Ansari (38), resident of Danilimda (1 prior case).

The arrests were made near Jamalpur Bridge following strategic patrolling and a confidential tip-off to the police. Legal proceedings are currently underway under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS).

A statement from the police said, "The gang specialized in picking up senior citizens as passengers in an auto-rickshaw (often with the number plate removed). While the victim was distracted, they would steal cash and gold jewellery from their bags before dropping them off at a different location."

The proceeds of crime recovered by the police, including a gold necklace with a pendant, one gold waist-band, one gold chain, and two gold



rings (Total weight approximately 8 tolas). The police also seized an auto-rickshaw and two mobile phones.

The accused confessed to robbing a retired inspector of the State Reserve Police Force (SRPF) of his pension money and jewellery while he was heading to his village to attend a marriage function last year in Sardarnagar.

Apart from the Sardarnagar case, the gang also

admitted their role in four other recent thefts including the theft of a gold Mangalsutra from a couple 15 days ago in Vasna, the theft of gold earrings and a ring from a woman a month ago in Naroda Patiya, the theft of Rs. 1 lakh in cash from a woman's bag 17 days ago again in Naroda Patiya, and the theft of Rs. 50,000 in cash from a passenger about five weeks ago in Jashodanagar.

## Telangana to host quantum workshop, national roundtable at Hyderabad University

According to a statement, the workshop is a first-of-its-kind academic and ecosystem engagement initiative in Telangana aimed at bridging classroom learning with real-world innovation.

## HYDERABAD. (Agency)

Aiming to position the state as a national leader in quantum technologies, the Information Technology, Electronics and Communications (ITEC) Department, through the Photonics Valley Corporation, will host a quantum technologies workshop titled "From Bits to Qubits: Student Awareness & Exploration Day", along with a national roundtable on "Quantum Technologies: From Classroom Curiosity to National Capability" on Saturday.

The event will be held at CR Rao Advanced Institute of Mathematics, Statistics and Computer Science in the University of Hyderabad campus. According to a statement,



the workshop is a first-of-its-kind academic and ecosystem engagement initiative in Telangana aimed at bridging classroom learning with real-world innovation. It seeks to

provide students and faculty exposure to cutting-edge research, industry use cases, start-up opportunities and national strategic priorities in quantum computing and related technologies.

The national round table will bring together representatives from academia, premier research laboratories, start-ups, global industry players, Global Capability Centres (GCCs) and government stakeholders.

Among the confirmed participants are IIIT Hyderabad, Tata Institute of Fundamental Research, Quantum Ecosystem Technology Council of India, Quandela, Novartis, GHX, Cloudangles and CR Rao AIMSCS, among others.

**Garbage stir ends as Karnataka govt offers special package for landfill areas**

## BENGALURU. (Agency)

Namma Bengaluru's garbage issue appears to have been resolved for now with people of Bellahalli and nearby areas in Byatarayanapura assembly constituency ending their agitation against Bengaluru Solid Waste Management Limited (BSWML) following an assurance to develop their areas and provide all amenities.

According to a senior official from BSWML, administrative approval for release of Rs 350 crore has been given to implement development projects in Yeshwanthpur, Byatarayanapura, Mahadevapura, Bengaluru South and Anekal assembly constituencies.

Areas, including Mithagannahalli, Kannur, Bidarahalli and Bellahalli in Byatarayanapura and Mahadevapura assembly constituencies, Kannnahalli and Seegehalli in Yeshwanthpur, Chiguranaahalli in Doddaballapur, Chikkanagamangala in Anekal and Hulihalli and Lakshimpura in Mantapa and Hulimangala panchayats in Bengaluru South will be developed.

He said Rs 90 crore each has been allocated to Yeshwanthpur, Byatarayanapura and Mahadevapura. Similarly, Rs 50 crore for Anekal, Rs 20 crore for Bengaluru South and Rs 10 crore for Doddaballapur will be given for basic infrastructure works in areas where garbage processing plants or dump sites are located. "Tenders have to be invited for works such as roads, drains, footpaths, installation of electric poles, improvement of lakes, and drilling of borewells to be taken up immediately in these areas," the official said.

Hemanth Kumar of Kogilu Cross near Bellahalli said people there are frustrated over the delay in implementation of basic infrastructure projects.

Over 200 trucks carrying garbage were not allowed to enter the dump sites at Kannur and Bellahalli by locals, who have been protesting against the neglect of their areas. With the protesters deciding to continue their agitation, the civic officials invited them to a meeting on Wednesday evening.

## Woman delivers baby in rickshaw amid traffic jam in Nashik

## Nashik. (Agency)

A pregnant sugarcane worker gave birth in a rickshaw after being stranded in a massive traffic jam in Manmad town of Nashik district.

The woman, identified as Majila Avesh Wadive from Kelipani in Nandurbar district, was travelling with other sugarcane workers when their vehicle was caught in severe congestion on the highway passing through Manmad.

As vehicles stood in long queues, she went into labour. Although a hospital was located nearby, reaching it proved impossible due to the gridlock.

In the critical situation, rickshaw driver Amjad Attar stepped in and shifted the woman and her family into his vehicle in an attempt to reach the hospital. However, the road ahead remained completely blocked.



newborn were immediately taken to a nearby hospital. Both are reported to be stable and in good health.

The incident has sparked anger among locals, who criticised the administration over poor traffic management and highway congestion.

## Reuse of treated water can cut water demand in Chennai basin in future, says TNGCC study

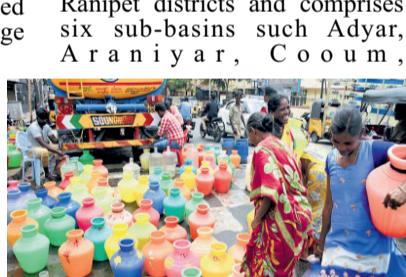
The study says investment in Adyar sub-basin should focus on decentralised modular plants to treat used water that can enable it to be reused locally for non-potable purposes in houses and industries

## CHENNAI. (Agency)

Even as Chennai Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board (Metro Water) is letting a major quantity of treated used water (TUW) from its sewage treatment plants into rivers, a study conducted by Tamil Nadu Green Climate Company (TNGCC) has suggested alternative uses of TUW will reduce the water stress of Chennai Basin in the future.

As per 'Towards Climate-Resilient River Systems in Chennai - Assessing Risks at the Sub-basin level and Advancing a Circular Economy Approach' report, prepared by TNGCC and Council on Energy, Environment and Water (CEEW), the total water demand for drinking and agriculture in the Chennai basin will rise 2,728 Million Cubic Metres (MCM) by 2050, driven by a 34% increase in population over the same period, under a

business-as-usual (BAU) scenario. The Chennai Basin covers Chennai, Chengalpattu, Ranipet districts and comprises six sub-basins such Adyar, Araniyar, Cooum,



Gummidipoondi, Kovalam, and Kosasthalaiyur. However, under a high population growth scenario, the total water demand will reach 2,939 MCM in 2050 and unmet water demand will rise to 754 MCM by 2050, further stressing water resources and jeopardising access for

domestic and agricultural users, the report said. The report suggests the combined implementation of adoption of micro-irrigation and TUW reuse can reduce unmet water demand in the Chennai basin.

According to the estimates, scaling up micro-irrigation to 13% of the cultivated area and achieving 25% TUW reuse will reduce unmet water demand by about 52% by 2050. Increasing TUW reuse to 40% will further reduce unmet demand by about 63% by 2050. On the other hand, incorporating the climate change effect of increased water availability with micro-irrigation and TUW reuse will reduce unmet water demand by 93%.

Recommending interventions, the report added the Kosasthalaiyur sub-basin faces the highest water risk but also shows strong potential to mitigate it.

## Ahead of Budget meet: Congress workers clash with police outside Gandhinagar civic body office

Gandhinagar Municipal Corporation under the chairmanship of Mayor Miraben Patel unanimously approves Rs 1,918.35 crore budget for the financial year 2026-27.

## Ahmedabad. (Agency)

A CLASH broke out outside the Gandhinagar Municipal Corporation building between Congress workers and police, ahead of the civic body's general meeting on Thursday to approve the financial budget for the year 2026-27.

Heavy security was deployed at the Municipal Corporation building due to protests by the opposition Congress workers. Congress workers reached the GMC general meeting venue and protested against the budget, which led to a clash with police, security staff as well as the fire team after they prevented the workers from entering the building with the fire brigade using water cannons on the protesters.

The issues raised by Congress city president Shakti Patel included lack of basic facilities in the newly merged villages in the GMC limits. "The ruling BJP has conspired to keep

us out of the general meeting. In the previous budget, there was a provision to plant 2.3 lakh trees under the 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam' campaign but no trees have been planted yet. The smart villages, which include the new villages merged into the corporation, are not being given any facilities like roads and during the monsoon sewers overflow," Shakti Patel said.

The general body meeting of Gandhinagar Municipal Corporation under the chairmanship of Mayor Miraben Patel unanimously approved Rs 1,918.35-crore budget for the financial year 2026-27. The last budget before GMC elections this year was presented by the Chairman of the Standing Committee Gaurang Vyas. The aim of the budget was to provide modern facilities without imposing any new taxes on the citizens. The budget had a surplus of Rs 172.74 crore.

According to the Gandhinagar Mayor, the emphasis of the budget was on modern technology. "This budget has been made



keeping in mind the development of all and public welfare. Work will also be done in the field of sports keeping in mind the upcoming Commonwealth Games. This budget has been made by Gandhinagar Municipal

Corporation keeping in mind all the citizens including women and the youth. This budget has also received general approval," said Patel.

Presenting the budget proposals, Standing Committee Chairman Gaurang Vyas said that this budget had been prepared keeping security, health, convenience, income and technology in focus.

"AI (Artificial Intelligence) technology will be widely used to make the city smart, under which integrated command and control centre will be converted into an AI Experience Center and modern facilities like AI-based surveillance and self-assessment drive will be started," he said.

Further, he added that under PMAY 2.0, the municipality had resolved to construct more than 3,500 houses at a cost of approximately Rs 440 crore for the poor.

## Tenzin Choegyal: A life of exile and service

WHEN the Dalai Lama fled Tibet in March 1959, crossing the Himalayas in secret and arriving on Indian soil to begin the longest exile in modern history, he was not entirely alone in the family sense. Beside him, barely into his teens, was his youngest brother Tenzin Choegyal, Ngari Rinpoche, who would spend the remaining 67 years of his life in India, making this country not merely a refuge but also a home, and the Tibetan cause not merely an inheritance but also a personal vocation. TC, as he was known to those close to him, passed away on February 17, 2026, at the age of 80, at Kashmir Cottage in Dharamsala, the modest house that the Dalai Lama's mother made her home in exile and which still stands today as a quiet repository of the family's grief, grace and endurance. To die there was, in its own way, to die within the embrace of everything that had sustained the family across 67 years of displacement. His story begins with one of those details that, in the Tibetan Buddhist tradition, feel less like coincidence than confirmation. Born in Lhasa in 1946, he was recognised at the age of three as the reincarnation of the Ngari Rinpoche lineage, associated with western Tibet. Before the formal rites of recognition, the family had marked an older brother, who had died in childhood - a small patch of yak butter had been placed upon his body as part of the mourning tradition. When the new baby arrived, he bore an identical mark, in precisely the same place, as if the soul returning had not forgotten where it had been. His elder brother, already living apart in the Potala Palace, named him Tenzin Choegyal, Holder of the Buddha's Teachings. In 1959, that elder brother became the world's most famous exile. TC went with him. What followed in India was a life of extraordinary range, shaped by the conviction that exile was not a condition to be merely endured but a charge to be answered. He studied at St Joseph's School in Darjeeling, one of those storied Indian institutions that shaped a generation of Tibetan exiles, then pursued higher education in the US, carrying traditional learning into the modern world. Back in India, he served the Central Tibetan Administration in multiple capacities: teaching at the Tibetan Children's Village school, working in the Department of Religion and Culture and serving with particular dedication in the Private Office of His Holiness the Dalai Lama itself. From 1974 to 1976, he was President of the Tibetan Youth Congress and he later sat as a Member of the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile, representing Domey. In the complex years following India's 1962 border war with China, TC also briefly served in the Indian Army and with the Special Frontier Force, the paramilitary unit drawn largely from Tibetan exiles and stationed in Uttarakhand. That a recognised lama chose also to serve in uniform was not, for him, a contradiction; it was a measure of how fully he had made Tibet's struggle, and India's border security, his own.

Those who encountered TC in later life met a man of strong intelligence and unmistakable individuality, sometimes wry, sometimes restless, always deeply human. He was the kind of person who made a room feel warmer simply by being in it: frank where others were diplomatic, accessible where protocol might have demanded distance, possessed of a self-deprecating humour that belongs only to those who have truly known suffering. Though trained within the traditional monastic system, he had little patience for rigid ritualism or the formality that creates distance between teacher and student. He chose, in time, the life of a householder, yet remained throughout a devoted steward of the monasteries in Ladakh associated with his lineage, working to reduce protocol and expand educational opportunity within them. He was also part of the fabric of his brother's life during many of its most significant encounters, including the warm and luminous friendship with Archbishop Desmond Tutu, whose own Nobel Peace Prize had been forged, like the Dalai Lama's, in the long fires of dispossession. TC knew Tutu appreciated his irreverent wit and understood.

THE Sixteenth Finance Commission's decision not to recommend revenue deficit grant (RDG) to any state marks a significant break from constitutional convention — and for the hill states, it may prove deeply destabilising. Clause (ii) of the Terms of Reference, dated November 29, 2023, mandates the 16th Commission that it shall determine the principles governing the allocation of grants-in-aid to states from the Consolidated Fund of India under Article 275 of the Constitution.

Earlier finance commissions have consistently discharged this responsibility by recommending post-devolution RDG to states whose revenues, even after tax devolution, were insufficient to meet the assessed expenditure needs. All hill states, including Himachal Pradesh, have regularly received RDG based on such recommendations. However, the 16th Finance Commission, in its report published on February 1, did not recommend RDG to any state. The commission observed that "State finances in general, and tax revenues, committed expenditure and discretionary expenditure in particular, show that there is significant scope for increasing revenues and rationalising expenditure." On this basis, it chose not to recommend RDG. Yet, the commission did not specify which states possess such untapped revenue potential or where precisely expenditure rationalisation is feasible. By discontinuing RDG without articulating a clear and state-specific rationale, the commission appears to have abdicated its constitutional duty to determine principles governing such grants under Article 275. The background to the creation of the finance commission lies in the inherent vertical fiscal imbalance in India. The Union Government commands substantially greater taxation powers relative to its expenditure responsibilities, whereas states bear larger expenditure obligations with comparatively limited revenue-raising authority. This necessitates vertical devolution — the transfer of a share of union tax proceeds to states.

The commission has recommended that 41% of the net proceeds of Union taxes be devolved to the states — the same share as recommended by the Fifteenth Finance Commission. This aspect of the recommendation is not in dispute. The more complex issue lies in horizontal devolution — the distribution of this 41% among states. The commission has adopted such criteria as population, area, forest cover, per capita income distance and

contribution to GDP for inter se distribution. However, macro indicators used for horizontal devolution do not fully capture the revenue-raising capacity and expenditure disabilities of all states. For example, the revenue potential of Maharashtra cannot be equated with that of Himachal Pradesh or Nagaland. The tax-to-GSDP ratio of most hill states is lower than that of large plain states like Haryana or Uttar Pradesh due to limited industrialisation and geographical constraints.

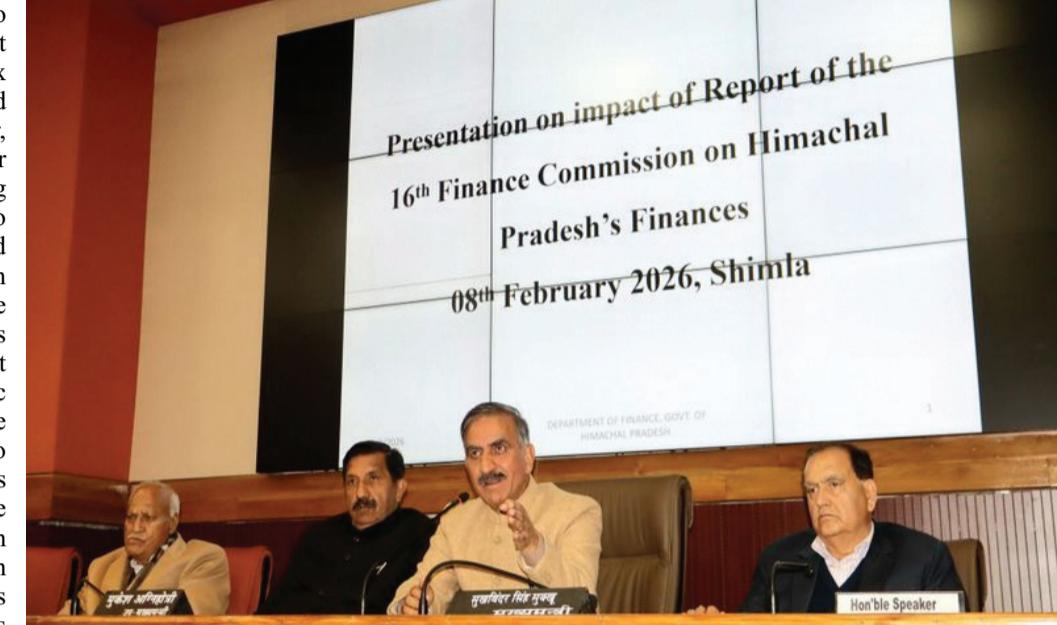
On the expenditure side, hill states face structural cost disabilities. The cost of constructing a road in Himachal is significantly higher than in Punjab or Haryana. Similarly, due to dispersed and remote populations, hill states must maintain a larger number of schools, hospitals and administrative units per capita. These cost disabilities are not adequately captured in the horizontal

salary and pension expenditure (net of interest) at 35% of the total expenditure while assessing revenue deficits.

During my tenure as Principal Secretary (Finance), Himachal Pradesh, I represented before the Fourteenth Finance Commission that this condition was unrealistic, given the state's structural constraints.

The commission considered the plea and removed the condition, resulting in RDG of Rs 40,624 crore for Himachal Pradesh, compared to Rs 7,889 crore recommended by the Thirteenth Commission. Thus, while principles may evolve, the responsibility to determine and recommend grants has always been upheld. In contrast, the Sixteenth Finance Commission has withdrawn from recommending RDG altogether. Its recommendations are applicable from 2026-27 to 2030-31. The financial repercussions for hill states during this period would be severe. Nagaland, which received Rs 2,750 crore as RDG in 2025-26, and Tripura, which received Rs 2,428 crore, will find it extremely difficult to sustain normal governmental functions without similar support. The situation demands urgent corrective action. First, all hill States should collectively approach the PM and the Union Finance Minister, seeking the constitution of a high-level committee with representation from these states to reassess the issue of grants under Article 275. Such a committee should be mandated to recommend appropriate compensatory

grants in light of structural fiscal disabilities. Second, pending such recommendations, the Government of India should consider providing ad hoc grants for 2026-27 and relaxing borrowing limits to mitigate immediate fiscal stress. At the state level, efforts to augment revenue must continue, though the scope is limited in the post-GST regime. For example, Himachal's per capita tax revenue already exceeds the national average. Nevertheless, the state could explore enhanced revenues through long-term mineral auctions and reforms in hydropower allotment policies to attract investment and secure higher upfront premiums.



devolution formula. As a result, even after tax devolution, many hill states face post-devolution revenue deficits. This reality has been recognised by every finance commission since the formation of these states. Not a single commission in the past has denied RDG to hill states, acknowledging that while these states were created to fulfil political and democratic aspirations, they were not necessarily economically self-sustaining at inception.

Each commission has had the authority to evolve its own principles for determining RDG under Article 275. For instance, the Thirteenth Finance Commission capped

## Strategic trust: Modi and Macron must embrace more tightly

### After Russia, France has become India's second largest defence partner



Sindoor. Nor that, recently in Davos, Macron indirectly criticised China by saying that the Chinese are hardly

doing enough, and need to invest much more in Europe. Macron's visit is certainly a reaffirmation of India's strategic independence. In an age where Donald Trump has upended every foreign policy mantra, with a wilful unilateralism that forces most of the rest of the world to comply — even as China grows more assertive — the Modi-Macron tie is a force for stability. It allows both countries much-needed elbow room to rethink their relationships in an uncertain world.

Unlike France, India is not a permanent member of the UN Security Council. The French are also more than a little arrogant about their commitment to democracy, even though 16,000 people were guillotined in the reign of terror that followed the French Revolution back in 1789. In the current scenario, both sides should downplay their differences. In a few weeks from now, Trump will meet Xi Jinping. If only to hedge against the tremors of that impending alliance, Modi and Macron must embrace more tightly. They need each other too much.

## The Supreme Court shifts the onus

### The apex court's refusal to hear petitions against Assam CM raises troubling questions

LAST year, Delhi was flooded. The Yamuna swelled. Roads disappeared. Water crept up to the very gates of the Supreme Court. Soon, the memes followed. One of them showed the Court peering down at the floodwaters and saying, politely, "Please approach the high court first." It was funny. It was sharp. The joke worked because it captured something people had begun to notice. A pattern. A reflex. A new judicial courtesy note: wrong forum. Earlier this week, the Supreme Court asked petitioners seeking an FIR against Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma for alleged hate speech targeting Miya Muslims to approach the high court instead, while requesting the latter to expedite the matter. On paper, this sounds reasonable. High courts are constitutional courts. Article 226 gives them wide powers. They can enforce fundamental rights. They can issue writs. They can even strike down laws. So why complain?

Because Article 32 is not a matter of convenience. It is a guarantee. The Constitution says the right to move the Supreme Court for enforcement of fundamental rights is guaranteed. Not suggested. Not subject to prior exhaustion of remedies. Not conditional on docket pressure. BR Ambedkar called Article 32 the heart and soul of the Constitution. He did not describe it as a matter to be routed elsewhere. When citizens approach the Supreme Court alleging that a sitting CM has engaged in speech targeting a vulnerable minority community, they invoke that guarantee. They ask the Court to stand between power and prejudice. The Court can reject the plea. It can hold that no offence is made out. It can find the speech protected. That is its role. But to decline to hear the matter at all, because another court exists, shifts the ground. The defence is familiar. The Supreme Court cannot become a court of first instance in every case. Litigants must not bypass high courts. The docket is exploding. All of this may be true. None of it appears in

Article 32. The text contains no requirement to first approach the high court. It contains no clause that says the right shrinks when the cause list grows longer. We have seen this reasoning before. It has been analysed in critiques of what is now called the Supreme Court's "Go to the high court" jurisprudence. The central point remains simple: the Constitution does not grant the Court the discretion to refuse to entertain a petition alleging violation of fundamental rights merely because another forum has concurrent power. Concurrent jurisdiction does not erase guaranteed jurisdiction. There is more discomfort here. The Supreme Court's approach has not been consistent. In politically sensitive matters, the Court has not always insisted on prior recourse to high courts. It has entertained petitions directly under Article 32. It has constituted committees. It has monitored investigations. It has taken control of cases with national consequences. Yet, in other politically charged cases, it invokes alternative remedy and steps back. This selective restraint raises questions. If high courts are fully competent constitutional courts, then let them decide. But then why transfer matters from multiple high courts to the Supreme Court when the issue is deemed important enough? Why centralise some controversies and decentralise others? Uniformity cannot explain everything. Convenience cannot explain everything.

The Sarma case concerns alleged hate speech against Miya Muslims, a Bengali-origin community in Assam that has faced sustained political hostility. Words matter in such contexts. When the head of a state government speaks, the speech carries the weight of office. It shapes public discourse. It signals to law enforcement. It influences social attitudes. When citizens allege that such speech

crosses the line into criminal incitement, and that authorities have failed to act, the issue is not technical. It goes to equality before the law. Would an ordinary citizen be subjected to swift police action for comparable speech? That question lurks beneath the petition. The Supreme Court's response was to ask the petitioners to move the high court and to request the latter to hear the matter expeditiously. Expedition is welcome. But



expedition is not engagement. Article 32 was designed precisely for moments when the violation of fundamental rights demands direct recourse to the highest court. It was meant to be a shield against state excess. If the Court treats Article 32 as a remedy to be "discouraged," it alters its character. The right remains in the text, but its force diminishes in practice.

The Court understood this in its early years. When objections arose that petitioners should first move the

high courts, the Supreme Court made it clear that it could not refuse to entertain applications seeking protection against fundamental rights. It recognised that Article 32 was itself a fundamental right. Over time, the tone has changed. The Court now speaks of discouragement. It asks why the high court was not approached. It treats direct invocation of Article 32 as an exception rather than a norm. Perhaps the pressure of arrears explains this shift. The docket is heavy. The institution is strained. But constitutional guarantees do not recede when the workload increases. If anything, they matter more when the political temperature rises. Cases involving allegations against powerful political actors are not routine service disputes. They implicate democratic accountability. They test the resilience of institutions.

In such moments, symbolism matters. When the Supreme Court hears a petition against a sitting CM, it affirms that no office is above constitutional scrutiny. When it declines to hear it, even politely, the signal is more muted. This is not a plea for judicial activism. It is a plea for judicial responsibility. The Court need not grant relief. It need not order an FIR. It need not pronounce on guilt. But it should hear the matter. It should examine the allegations. It should give reasons. Avoidance erodes confidence faster than an adverse ruling.

The meme about the floodwaters was funny because it imagined the Court speaking to water like King Canute. But floodwaters do not have fundamental rights. Citizens do. When citizens allege that those in power have targeted a vulnerable community, and that the law has failed to respond, they knock on the Court's door invoking a constitutional promise.

**HP: Police release CCTV footage, seek public help to trace murder accused**



Shimla.(Agency)

Shimla Police have launched a manhunt for two suspects wanted in connection with the murder of a Nepali national in Badiyara village (Jangla) under Chirgaon police station limits.

The deceased, identified as Seti Ram Kami alias Rakesh Pratap (36), was found dead on February 18 near the banks of the Pabbar River. An FIR was registered at Chirgaon Police Station the same day.

Police said CCTV footage collected during investigation shows three men together, including the deceased, on the night of February 17. Two of them are now suspected to be involved in the murder and have been absconding since the incident. According to the description released by police, both suspects are Nepali laborers, short in stature and dark in complexion. One of them has long hair and was seen wearing a brown hoodie at the time.

Senior Superintendent of Police Shimla, Garav Singh, said that CCTV footage of the suspects has been released and the police are seeking public assistance to trace them. "We appeal to the public to share any information regarding the whereabouts of the accused. All inputs will be kept confidential," he said.

Police have urged anyone with credible information to contact SHO Chirgaon at 8894728027. Intensive search operations and technical investigations are underway to apprehend the accused at the earliest.

**CBI busts alleged bribery racket in TRD contract recruitment; three officials arrested in Orai and Chitrakoot**

Lucknow.(Agency)

In a late-night crackdown, the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) busted an alleged bribery racket linked to the recruitment of contractual employees in the TRD department in Orai, sources confirmed on Friday. A team from the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), Lucknow unit, conducted raids and arrested three individuals, including DEE TRD Shantanu Yadav and technician Prakash Kushwaha from Chitrakoot. Senior Section Engineer (SSE) TRD B.S. Pal was allegedly caught red-handed while accepting money from candidates.

The operation was led by CBI Inspector Devesh, who, along with his team, carried out coordinated raids late at night on Thursday. According to sources, one accused was arrested from Orai, while the other two were apprehended in Chitrakoot. All three were taken into custody for questioning.

The sudden action has sent shockwaves through the department, triggering panic among officials. Further investigation is underway to determine the extent of the alleged bribery network and identify any additional individuals involved.

**Police book seven boatmen for overloading, not using life jackets in Kashi**

Varanasi.(Agency)

Despite repeated advisories issued to boat operators, a police checking drive conducted on Thursday exposed gross negligence at various ghats in Kashi. The drive was led by Assistant Police Commissioner Gaurav Kumar of Bhelpur and Station House Officer Sudhir Kumar Tripathi.

During inspections at Assi Ghat, Rewa Ghat, Tulsi Ghat, and other locations, cases were registered against boatmen Atul Sahni, Santosh Nishad, and Pawan Sahni, along with several unidentified individuals, for violating safety norms. Seven boats were seized during the operation. According to police sources on Friday, a separate special checking drive was also carried out by the Dashashwamedh police station at Dashashwamedh Ghat, Sheetla Ghat, Pandey Ghat, and adjoining areas.

During the inspection, several boatmen were found overloading boats and failing to ensure that passengers wore life jackets, thereby putting the lives of pilgrims and tourists in the Ganga at risk. Taking immediate action, police registered a case against Mahesh Kumar, Suraj Sahni, and Tinku Sahni under Section 282 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC). Three boats were seized in this operation. Officials confirmed that similar drives are being conducted at other ghats to ensure compliance with safety regulations.

Assistant Commissioner of Police Gaurav Kumar, dressed in plain clothes, monitored the situation on the ghats and in the Ganga for several hours.

## EC asks CEOs to make preparations: SIR to start in Punjab, Haryana, HP from April

Chandigarh. (Agency)

The Election Commission of India has written a letter to the Chief Electoral Officer, Punjab, informing that the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) in the above state is expected to start from April, 2026, hence preparatory work related to SIR should be completed at the earliest.

The letter, dated February 19, has also been addressed to the Chief Electoral Officers of Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Chandigarh, Dadra and Nagar Haveli & Daman and Diu, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Ladakh, Maharashtra, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, NCT, of Delhi, Odisha, Sikkim, Tripura, Telangana and Uttarakhand.

The letter states that the Commission, vide Order No. 23/ERS/2025 dated 24.06.2025 has ordered Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral roll to be undertaken in all the States and UTs. In continuation to this, the

Commission, vide letter no. 23/2025-ERS (Vol.II) dated 05.07.2025, directed all the CEOs (except Bihar) to initiate pre revision activities for the SIR exercise. Further, the Commission

requested to complete preparatory work related to SIR, at the earliest," says the letter signed by Pawan Dewan, Secretary of the Commission.

The letter by EC assumes significance in Punjab as the assembly elections are due in early 2027. As part of the nationwide exercise, Punjab has been included in the next (remaining) phase of SIR.

Preparatory activities include finalising BLO training, polling-station mapping/rationalisation, logistics for door-to-door verification, and coordination with district electoral officers. A voter-mapping exercise conducted in Punjab in October 2025 had already shown that 55% of the state's approximately 2.14 crore voters matched names from the 2003 rolls, potentially exempting a large section from fresh document submission after verification.

The CEO Punjab office has been conducting internal groundwork (no public SIR-specific schedule or forms have yet been uploaded on ceopunjab.gov.in or elections.punjab.gov.in).



vide letter dated 27.10.2025 announced SIR exercise in 12 State/UTs, which is underway, the letter says. "Since, the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) in the above States/UTs is expected to start from April, 2026, you are

## 'Sikh institutions have steadily weakened since coming under Sukhbir's control'

**Addressing party workers and members of various Sikh organisations, he accused SAD leader Sukhbir Badal of weakening Sikh institutions and misusing religious bodies for political gains.**

Jalandhar. (Agency)

Former Akal Takht Jathedar Giani Harpreet Singh Thursday slammed the SAD and its leadership during a public meeting of Akali Dal Puneri Sajjeet held at Dana Mandi in Pratappur, Jalandhar.

Addressing party workers and members of various Sikh organisations, he accused SAD leader Sukhbir Badal of weakening Sikh institutions and misusing religious bodies for political gains. He alleged that Sikh institutions have steadily weakened since coming under Badal's control. He said that decisions taken under the current leadership have distanced common people from these institutions.

He said that business-minded individuals entering politics cannot truly serve their state or community, alleging that Badal is

among the wealthiest individuals not only in Punjab but across North India. He also raised serious concerns about the functioning of Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC). He alleged that the SGPC is working to raise funds for the SAD ahead of the

2027 Assembly elections by selling religious properties. He claimed that Sikh elders had originally donated land for religious service and upkeep, but the SGPC has instead assumed the role of an owner rather than a caretaker.

He cited the case of land belonging to Gurdwara Amb Sahib, which he claimed was sold to the Greater Mohali Area Development Authority (GMADA).

According to him, approximately Rs 49.47 crore was received from GMADA nearly a year ago. However, he alleged that no land was purchased in exchange, despite provisions under the SGPC Act that require land to be acquired when gurdwara land is sold. The meeting was attended by Gurpratap Singh Wadala and several leaders and workers from Sikh groups.



## Haryana to present budget on March 2

Chandigarh. (Agency)

The nearly month-long Haryana Assembly session will begin with the governor's address on Friday and conclude on March 18, with the state budget for 2026-27 scheduled to be presented on March 2.

Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini says that the

government has already consulted stakeholders to prepare a people-centric budget reflecting collective aspirations and translating the vision of 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas' into action. He dismissed the opposition's stance, saying it has "no real issues to discuss" and is instead "trying to spread rumours to mislead the people."

He added that traders, industrialists, and citizens are satisfied with the recent India-US trade deal, and claimed that Prime Minister Narendra Modi's strategic moves have left the Congress party "faded." Meanwhile, Congress MLAs are preparing for a

combative session. Former CM and Leader of the Opposition Bhupinder Singh Hooda chaired a meeting of the Congress Legislative Party on Thursday, after which he told reporters that Congress will demand accountability from the BJP government on issues of public interest. Hooda said,

"Congress MLAs will

raise a wide range of

issues, including

unemployment, law and

order, extortion, drug

abuse, migration, toll

collection, sports and

sportspersons, the paddy

scam, family identity

cards and rising fertilizer

prices."

Hooda announced that

Congress MLAs will

stage a protest on

February 24 and march to the Assembly, while State President Rao Narendra Singh declared that on February 25, Congress leaders and workers will surround the Assembly to oppose changes in



MNREGA. Meanwhile, Congress MLAs are preparing for a

February 24 and march to the Assembly, while State President Rao Narendra Singh declared that on February 25, Congress leaders and workers will surround the Assembly to oppose changes in

## Stone pelting reported on Vande Bharat Express carrying RSS Chief Mohan Bhagwat near Hardoi

Hardoi/Meerut.(Agency)

A stone-pelting incident was reported on the Vande Bharat Express carrying Mohan Bhagwat, the Sarsanghchalak of Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), near Hardoi, officials said on Friday. Bhagwat is safe, they confirmed.

The incident occurred around 3:20 pm when the train was heading towards Delhi after departing from Lucknow at 1:50 pm for Meerut on Thursday. The Varanasi-Meerut Vande Bharat Express had reached near Balokhara crossing close to Kaudha village under Kotwali Dehat police station limits in Hardoi when a stone struck the window of a coach, shattering the glass with a loud impact.

Panic briefly spread among passengers following the incident. Bhagwat was travelling in coach E1 at the time. According to passengers, the stone hit coach C4, which was one coach ahead of Bhagwat's compartment. As a precautionary measure, security personnel later shifted him to another coach. Train staff immediately

informed the control room. Teams from the Government Railway Police (GRP) and the Railway Protection Force (RPF) inspected the site and questioned local residents. However, the train had already left the spot by the time local police reached the area.

GRP officials are probing two possible causes. One possibility is that children playing cricket near the railway track accidentally hit the train with a ball.

Another suspicion is that some mischievous children may have deliberately thrown stones at the train.

A case has been registered against unidentified persons, and CCTV footage is being examined as part of the investigation.

Hardoi City Circle Officer Ankit Mishra said that children were reportedly seen playing cricket near the tracks, and authorities are verifying whether the impact was accidental or intentional. Bhagwat arrived at Meerut railway station at around 9 pm amid tight security arrangements. He is staying at Madhav Kunj in Shatabdi Nagar.

## Sports 'most lethal weapon' against drugs: Mann announces budget hike

**Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann said sports are the "most lethal weapon" against the drug menace as he announced an increase in the state's sports budget at the Kila Raipur Rural Olympics. He also highlighted the revival of bullock cart races after 13 years.**

Chandigarh. (Agency)

Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann on Thursday described sports as the "most lethal weapon" against the drug menace and announced that the state government will increase the sports budget in the forthcoming fiscal year.

Addressing a gathering at the Kila Raipur Rural Olympics, Mann said the state is prompting sports to channelise the energy of the youth in a positive direction. He noted that stadiums are being constructed in every village across Punjab, adding that it is a matter of pride that local sportspersons are winning medals at national and international events. The CM highlighted the resumption of bullock cart races, a major attraction of the fair, after 13 years. He attributed the revival to legislative changes made by his government. Earlier in the day, Mann was discharged from Fortis Hospital in Mohali, where he was

admitted on Monday for a check-up after he experienced exhaustion.

"The 'Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Punjab Amendment) Act, 2025, was unanimously passed in the Punjab Vidhan Sabha on July 11, 2025, paving the way for the resumption of these races," Mann said. He added that following the amendment, a heritage sport event was held at village Mehma Singh Wala in Ludhiana on July 29, 2025.

Mann said the games, popularly known as the "Mini Olympics" or "Rural Olympics", reflect the state's rural culture and heritage. "We are witnessing historic moments. People have deep affection for their bulls and raise them like their own sons. Bulls are an integral part of the cultural heritage; the first Sikh Guru, Guru Nanak Dev, spent a long

time farming with bulls at Kartarpur Sahib," he said. The chief minister recalled the legacy of the Grewal Stadium, noting that legendary hockey players including Dhyani Chand, Balbir Singh, Udhampur Singh, Prithipal Singh,

time farming with bulls at Kartarpur Sahib," he said. The chief minister recalled the legacy of the Grewal Stadium, noting that legendary hockey players including Dhyani Chand, Balbir Singh, Udhampur Singh, Prithipal Singh,

Security forces arrest four, recover arms in Manipur crackdown

Imphal.(Agency)

Security forces and Manipur Police carried out a series of operations across multiple districts of Manipur on Thursday, resulting in the recovery of a significant cache of arms and ammunition and the arrest of several individuals allegedly involved in unlawful activities, including extortion, police said on Friday.

In one operation conducted at Keirak Awang Loukon Chingol under Kakching Police Station in Kakching district, security personnel recovered a large quantity of weapons and war-like stores. The seized items included one Amogh carbine with a magazine, two locally made lathode guns, two locally made single-barrel firearms, seven tear smoke shells, and three tube launching devices.

Additionally, two .36 high-explosive grenades with detonators, ten rounds of ammunition, one hundred empty cases, and two improvised explosive devices with detonators were recovered from the site. Protective gear comprising two helmets, one bulletproof jacket, and two magazine pouches was also seized during the search operation. The recovered items have been taken into custody for further investigation.

In a separate operation carried out at Malom Tulihal Makha Leikai under Nambol Police Station in Bishnupur district, security forces apprehended one individual alleged to be an active cadre of a proscribed outfit. The individual was taken into custody for further legal proceedings.

Another arrest was made from Khewa Bazar under Poropat Police Station in Imphal East district, where security personnel detained one person allegedly involved in extortion activities.

In a follow-up operation conducted at different locations in Imphal West and Imphal East districts, two more individuals suspected of being engaged in extortion-related activities were apprehended.



Jitpal Singh and Surjit Singh had showcased their talent there. He also mentioned that athletes such as Milkha Singh, Makhhan Singh, Praduman Singh, Gurbachan Singh Randhawa, and Parveen Kumar had competed on the same track.

Tracing the history of the event, Mann said the vision for the stadium was conceived in 1933 under the patronage of Inder Singh. Wrestling matches began that year, following by chariot races in 1942. These evolved into bullock cart races in 1950. "In 1964, this became the first rural stadium to introduce girls' athletics," he added, noting that the event has historically drawn high-profile visitors, including the President of India.

# Delhi–Meerut RRTS station to open on February 22

**A 280-metre-long foot overbridge (FOB) equipped with six travelators links the RRTS station directly with the railway station, improving last-mile access for passengers.**

**New Delhi.(Agency)**  
The long-awaited Sarai Kale Khan RRTS Station is set to open on Sunday, after missing multiple deadlines, marking a significant milestone for the Delhi–Meerut Regional Rapid Transit System corridor. Touted as the largest station on the Delhi–Meerut stretch, the facility has been designed to ease intercity travel across the National Capital Region (NCR).

The station is expected to substantially cut down travel time between Delhi and Meerut while serving as a major gateway for thousands of regular commuters. Located near the Hazrat Nizamuddin Railway Station and the Veer Hakikat Rai ISBT Sarai Kale Khan offers seamless connectivity to the Delhi Metro's Pink Line. A 280-metre-long foot overbridge (FOB) equipped with six travelators links the RRTS station directly with the railway station, improving last-mile access for passengers.

Fares on the Namo Bharat service, however, remain a point of debate. A standard class ticket from New Ashok Nagar in Delhi to Meerut South costs Rs 150, while the premium class fare is Rs 225. From Anand Vihar to Meerut South, passengers pay Rs 130 for standard class and Rs 195 for premium class. In comparison, a UP Roadways bus from Anand Vihar to Meerut



costs around Rs 70, while a passenger train from the New Delhi Railway Station can cost Rs 25. "The train is fast and comfortable. But for daily travel, it feels too expensive compared to the bus or a passenger train. But the rates don't pinch as it's an air conditioned journey that lasts only about 45-50 minutes," said Iqra Siddiqui, a commuter from Ghaziabad who frequently travels to Meerut for work.

On the Delhi–Meerut corridor between Sarai Kale Khan and Begumpur, 11 stations are planned, including New Ashok Nagar, Anand Vihar, Sahibabad, Ghaziabad, Guldhara, Duhai, Murad Nagar, Modi Nagar North, Meerut South and Shatabdi Nagar. Meanwhile, two stations—Jangpura, located before Sarai Kale Khan, and Modipuram, the final stop in Meerut—are yet to open.

The Begumpur station is a key underground station in the heart of Meerut's market area, will serve both Namo Bharat trains and the local metro service. Modipuram station, situated along the national highway, will include an FOB to ensure safe pedestrian movement.

**Long overdue**  
Missed deadlines: The Sarai Kale Khan RRTS Station already missed three deadlines last year, despite being declared ready by National Capital Region Transport Corporation officials. Initially slated for June, the launch was later expected on September 17, coinciding with PM Narendra Modi's birthday, and then September 30. However, the inauguration date remains unannounced, leaving the project in prolonged uncertainty.

**Fares:** The train fare ranges from '20 to '150 for the Standard Class and Rs 30 to Rs 225 for the Premium Class, depending on the distance.

**Ridership:** As of early 2026, the Delhi–Meerut RRTS corridor has achieved a cumulative ridership of over 22.7 million, with average daily ridership around 52,954 and peak daily, figures exceeding 81,000. The system has significantly reduced travel time between Delhi and Meerut to roughly 40-50 minutes, catering to thousands of commuters.

**Large private hospitals, premium care still out of reach: Ayushman Bharat scheme gains ground, but gaps in coverage remain**

**New Delhi.(Agency)**

In the very first year of assuming office, the BJP government has signalled its governance priorities with a push towards expanding healthcare access for the poor. Among its most consequential decisions was the rollout of the flagship Ayushman Bharat–Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB–PMJAY), the world's largest publicly funded health insurance programme. The scheme provides an annual health cover of Rs 5 lakh per eligible household.

Launched nationwide in September 2018, the scheme has been positioned by the BJP as a welfare reform aimed at reducing out-of-pocket healthcare spending. However, in Delhi, beneficiaries were unable to access its benefits for years due to the refusal of the previous Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government to implement it. The political friction over PMJAY became a visible flashpoint between the Centre and the then Delhi government under



injuries to motorists & pedestrians alike and fatal road accidents. Driving in the opposite direction puts not only the violator but also others at a high risk. Head-on crashes at a high speed leave little scope for survival," the police officer emphasised.

officer added.

Driving on the wrong side of the road is no longer being treated as a minor traffic violation in the national capital. It has been treated as a serious and life-threatening offence.

Police officials further noted that surveillance through CCTV cameras, AI-based high technology cameras, deployment of traffic personnel and intensified patrolling at major intersections, flyovers and other vulnerable stretches are part of the ongoing drive. "Everyone must drive in the proper lane and strictly follow the speed limit. A high speed can prove fatal. While driving, people must keep their phone aside and must not indulge in making reels or use social media. A few seconds of distraction can cost a life," the police

officer emphasised.



AAP, with the BJP accusing the state administration of putting "political interests" above public welfare. delhibjp 1 year status report

While launching the PMJAY extension for senior citizens, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had publicly apologised to elderly residents of Delhi, stating that he was unable to extend the scheme's benefits to them because their state government had chosen not to adopt it. The remarks underscored how healthcare delivery under PMJAY has also been interwoven with the BJP's political messaging and campaign narrative in the Capital.

Since the scheme was finally rolled out in Delhi last April, at least 188 hospitals – 137 private and 51 government – have been empanelled. A total of 19,287 patients received treatment under the scheme till December 2025.

However, concerns persist regarding the scope and depth of the rollout. Major private hospital chains in Delhi have yet to join the scheme, limiting access to highly specialised treatment for economically weaker sections. Their absence has effectively meant that certain advanced procedures available at premium tertiary care centres remain out of reach for PMJAY beneficiaries.

## Delhi records 182 wrong-side driving FIRs from January 3 to February 9

**New Delhi.(Agency)**

Delhi traffic police registered a total of 182 cases from January 3 to February 9 against motorists driving against the traffic flow or on the wrong side.

This shows that around five cases were lodged every day against motorists found driving against the designated flow of traffic. According to police data, the New Delhi Range reported the highest number of such cases, 53. Further, the Southern Range recorded 37 FIRs, and the Central, Northern & Western Ranges each reported 27 cases. The Eastern Range registered 11 FIRs.

A police officer said that cases were lodged under Section 281 (rash driving) (punishable by up to six months of imprisonment and a fine of Rs 1,000 or both) of the Bharatiya

Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), with provisions of the Motor Vehicles Act.

"Wrong-side driving, breaking traffic rules and jumping lights increases the risk of head-on collisions, grievous

injuries to motorists & pedestrians alike and fatal road accidents. Driving in the opposite direction puts not only the violator but also others at a high risk. Head-on crashes at a high speed leave little scope for survival," the police

## Cleaner air brings cinema shoots back to Delhi, permission requests rise

Kartik Aaryan and Shreelila-starrer Naagzilla has received approval to shoot at key locations, including Connaught Place, parts of the Delhi Metro Blue Line, Paharganj and stretches near Laxmi Nagar.

**New Delhi.(Agency)**

Film shoots are set to return to the national capital as air quality improves. Authorities have received five applications for shoots in January and February after none were filed in December, when pollution levels were categorised as "severe". The applications were submitted to the city's tourism department under the Delhi Film Policy.

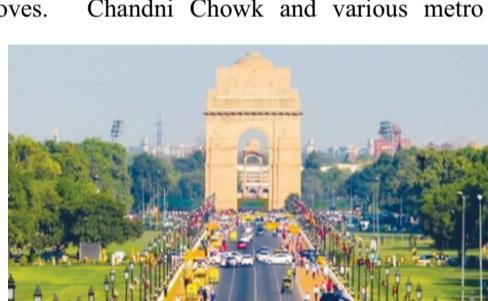
An official said that, so far, Kartik Aaryan and Shreelila-starrer Naagzilla has received approval to shoot at key locations, including Connaught Place, parts of the Delhi Metro Blue Line, Paharganj and stretches near Laxmi Nagar. Other

applications also propose similar locations such as Connaught Place, Chandni Chowk and various metro

and November. Prior to that, around 15 applications had been submitted.

To attract more productions and promote the policy, the Delhi Tourism and Transport Development Corporation (DTTDC) has been participating in international and domestic industry events, including the Berlin Film Festival and WAVES. Launched in 2022, the Delhi Film Policy offers a single-window clearance system with approvals promised within 15 days, with DTTDC as the nodal agency.

The Delhi government had allocated Rs 3.01 crore last year for implementing the policy. Officials expect over 20 applications through the e-film clearance portal this year.



stations. The official added that Delhi is set to host its own film festival on March 25. In December, no applications were received, while three proposals were filed between October

## Govt moves to remove 3 slums on Race Course Road in Delhi, asks residents to leave by March 6

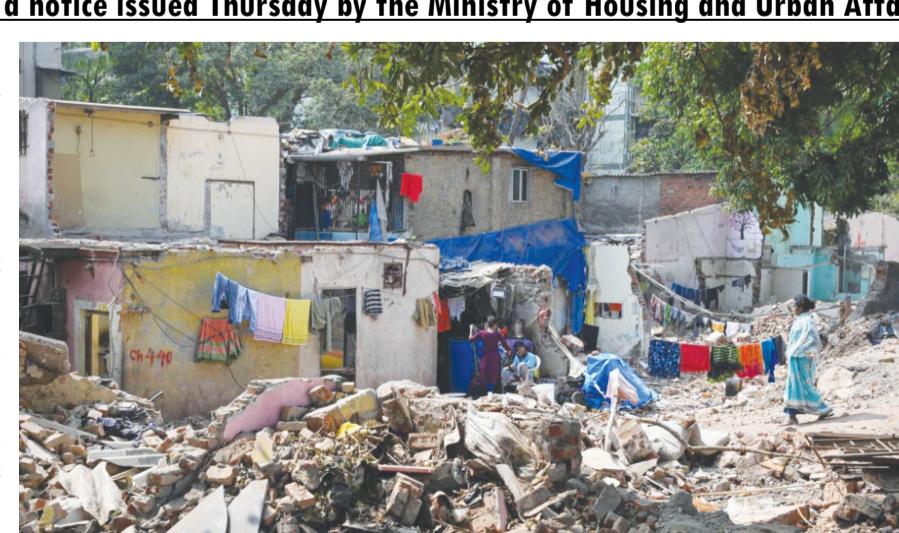
**The residents of Bhai Ram Camp, Masjid Camp, and DID Camp on Race Course Road have been asked to vacate or face legal action, according to a notice issued Thursday by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs to a resident.**

**New Delhi.(Agency)**

In a step towards removing three slum clusters on Race Course Road near the Prime Minister's residence in New Delhi, the Centre Thursday began issuing rehabilitation notices to residents, asking them to vacate by March 6 and take possession of the flats allotted to them at the DUSIB Colony at Savda Ghevra, The Indian Express has learnt.

The residents of Bhai Ram Camp, Masjid Camp, and DID Camp on Race Course Road have been asked to vacate or face legal action, according to a notice issued Thursday by the Land and Development Office (L&DO) of the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) to a resident.

The notice, seen by, says the three jhuggi jhopri (JJ) clusters are located on government land under the L&DO. Sources say that the 717 households have



been allotted flats at Savda Ghevra. Delhi Municipal Council (DMC) records still list the slums' address as Race

Course Road.

The notice adds that, as per the rehabilitation policy of the Delhi Urban Shelter Improvement Board (DUSIB), a joint survey was conducted by the L&DO and the Delhi Development Authority in January 2024 to assess whether the residents were eligible for alternate housing. After that, it was decided that the residents of the three clusters would be rehabilitated at the DUSIB Colony in Savda Ghevra, about 45 km away. A notice for rehabilitation was issued to all residents on October 29, 2025, which was then challenged in the Delhi High Court in November.

In its order on November 13, 2025, the court asked the government for a reply, and said: "In the meantime, the petitioners shall not be evicted without adhering to the procedural safeguards..."

## ISRO's improved fire-detection algo ready for test in rabi harvest season

**New Delhi.(Agency)**

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) will test a modified algorithm intended to better monitor farm fire events during the upcoming wheat harvesting season, The Indian Express has learned.

Concerns have been expressed that existing satellite-based fire counts may not be accurately reflecting the number and extent of farm fires that are lit to get rid of crop residue after harvesting. Ground patrol teams led by deputy commissioners and district collectors in the NCR, working under the supervision of the Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM), reported significant discrepancies between burnt areas detected in satellite images and actual ground conditions last year.



It was found that large burnt patches in satellite data often corresponded to relatively small active fire events, while smaller fires were sometimes underdetected or not recorded at all. Following a series of consultations among CAQM, ISRO, and other stakeholders that began in November 2025, it was decided that the space agency's existing detection algorithm would be fine-tuned to address the gaps in monitoring. The pilot testing planned for the wheat (rabi) harvest will evaluate whether the tweaked algorithm produces a more accurate picture of the scale and timing of the stubble-burning, senior government officials said.

The burning of kharif paddy stubble significantly worsens the seasonal air pollution over Punjab, Haryana, and Delhi-NCR as winter sets in, roughly from mid-October every year. reported last December that the statutory air pollution watchdog would now extend its farm-fire vigil to the rabi wheat harvesting season as well.

## NEWS BOX

From next Yuvraj to main man: Shivam Dube owning the T20 World Cup stage

New Delhi. (Agency)

When Shivam Dube burst into the limelight, comparisons with Yuvraj Singh were inevitable. Many even viewed him as a potential successor to the Indian legend. The similarities were evident, especially in their batting — both possessed the ability to dismiss bowlers with elegant, authoritative strokeplay. However, the Mumbai all-rounder initially struggled under the weight of those expectations. His resurgence in Chennai Super Kings colours changed everything. Dube established himself as one



of the best players of spin in the IPL, much like Yuvraj had done in international cricket. Since returning to the Indian fold, each passing year has seen him grow from strength to strength. Now, after his heroics against the Netherlands that helped India secure their fourth win of the ICC Men's T20 World Cup campaign, the all-rounder is displaying the kind of form Yuvraj once showcased during India's victorious World Cup runs in 2007 and 2011.a

## FIRST NAME ON THE TEAM SHEET?

Dube's graph has been steadily rising, and Irfan Pathan believes the all-rounder has cemented his place in India's T20I side. "Whenever India's T20 team sheet is written, his name will be there — he has earned that status. In the World Cup final, we saw that came. In the Asia Cup final too, he batted brilliantly. Against Pakistan, he played a superb knock. Then against the Netherlands, when he got the chance to face more balls and move up the order, he showed he can play responsibly as well as attack," said Pathan. In 2026 alone, Dube has demonstrated his value with both bat and ball. Often labelled a spin-basher, the Mumbai all-rounder has reinvented himself — much like Yuvraj did during his prime years.

After Abhishek Sharma slogger remark, Amir warns India opener amid poor form

New Delhi. (Agency)

After calling Abhishek Sharma a slogger, Mohammad Amir has now issued a warning to the Indian opener amid his poor run of form during the ongoing T20 World Cup 2026. Amir, ahead of the India vs Pakistan clash, had said that Abhishek looks to slog the ball and doubled down on the comment, saying he doesn't know how to defend. So far, Abhishek hasn't enjoyed the best of times in the T20 World Cup 2026, as he has been dismissed without scoring a single run. The Indian opener has five ducks to his name from seven innings and has scored 182 runs in eight matches this year at an average of 26 with a strike-rate of 224.69.

Speaking on Geo News, Amir compared Abhishek's situation to that of Saim Ayub when he burst onto the scene and how his off-side game was causing his downfall. Similarly, the former pacer said that Abhishek is trying to slog every delivery and unless he works on it, the Indian opener



will get exposed in international cricket. "Saim [Ayub] had the same issue when he started in the PSL a few years back. He was new and was hitting no-look shots. Nobody knew his weakness because most of his shots were on the leg side. Now, if you bowl on the third or fourth stump line, he struggles to decide. Even in his last two matches, he was dismissed playing on the off side. Unless he improves his off-side game, he cannot progress. Strong bowlers will always test your weakness and push you out of your comfort zone," said Amir. It is the same for Abhishek. He wants every ball in the slot so he can hit it. But at the highest level, or in ODIs, har ball lapete mein nahi le sakte (you cannot slog every ball in pressure cricket). Salman Agha and Aryan Dutt got him out in a similar fashion. International cricket will expose you."

# Man United eases past Atletico to reach Women's Champions League quarterfinals for first time

**Title holder Arsenal and Real Madrid advanced to the quarterfinals on Wednesday after eliminating OH Leuven and Paris FC, respectively.**

TURIN. (Agency)

Manchester United reached the quarterfinals of Women's Champions League for the first time on Thursday while two-time champion Wolfsburg beat Juventus away to advance. Manchester produced another dominant display to beat Atletico Madrid 2-0 and advance 5-0 on aggregate. Wolfsburg also won 2-0 and advanced to its 13th quarterfinal in 14 seasons with a 4-2 aggregate score.

Title holder Arsenal and Real Madrid advanced to the quarterfinals on Wednesday after eliminating OH Leuven and Paris FC, respectively. After taking a healthy lead in Madrid, United continued in similar fashion



at Leigh Sports Village. Julia Ziggiotti Olme, who also scored one last week, broke the deadlock with a precise left-foot shot inside half an hour. Jess Park doubled the lead with a stunning long

distance drive before the interval as United set up a meeting with Bayern Munich in the quarterfinals. Atletico defender Xénia Pérez was dismissed for her second yellow card five minutes from time.

## Wolfsburg hits on counters

In Turin, Wolfsburg soaked up the pressure before Vivien Endemann opened the scoring on a fast counterattack in the 18th minute when she collected a pass from Svenja Huth inside the box and slotted a low right-foot shot past goalkeeper Danielle de Jong.

Ana Capeta came close to equalizing when she hit the crossbar with the best of numerous chances for the hosts before substitute Cora Zicai scored the second in the sixth minute of stoppage time. The German club rallied from two goals down at home in the first leg last week to draw 2-2 and set up a quarterfinal against record eight-time European champion Lyon. The new Women's Champions League format has followed the men's that launched last year, with an opening league phase.

The top four in the standings — Barcelona, Lyon, Chelsea and Bayern — advanced straight to the quarterfinals. Teams placed fifth to 12th went to the playoffs and those from 13th to 18th were eliminated.

## Mesut Ozil's convoy involved in road accident during Bangladesh tour

New Delhi. (Agency)

What began as a day of humanitarian outreach ended with an unexpected road scare for former Germany star Mesut Ozil in Bangladesh. A vehicle in his convoy was involved in a traffic accident in Cox's Bazar on Thursday evening while returning from the Rohingya refugee camps.

The motorcade, which included Necmettin Bilal Erdogan, son of Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, was travelling along the Cox's Bazar-Teknaf highway when one of the escort vehicles collided with a battery-powered autorickshaw near Kutupalong. Police officials said the accident happened shortly before 7 pm. Ozil and members of the delegation were safe, but the autorickshaw was badly damaged and its driver sustained injuries. The injured driver was treated locally, and the vehicle has since been seized. Authorities have launched an investigation to determine how the autorickshaw entered the VIP convoy, reportedly breaching security protocol

before the collision took place. While no one from the delegation was hurt, the brief scare momentarily shifted attention away from what had otherwise been a day of



outreach and interaction.

### WHAT WAS OZIL DOING IN BANGLADESH?

Ozil was in Bangladesh as part of an 11-member Turkish delegation led by Bilal Erdogan on a humanitarian and goodwill tour. The group visited Rohingya camps in Ukhia, where they inspected medical

facilities and education centres supported by Turkish organisations. In the afternoon, the former World Cup winner gave fans a sight they could have only dreamt of, as he even joined group Rohingya youngsters for a friendly match at Camp 4. The sight of Ozil on the field sparked excitement among children and locals, many eager for a glimpse of the former Arsenal and Real Madrid playmaker. Earlier in the trip, Ozil also attended the inauguration of renovated facilities at the Shaheed Buddhiji Dr Mohammad Mortoza Medical Centre at the University of Dhaka. The upgraded centre now features improved emergency services and new medical equipment as part of a Turkish-backed initiative.

The visit blended diplomacy, charity and football. Thursday's road accident may have caused a brief disruption, but it did little to overshadow the broader purpose of the trip — engagement, support and a reminder of football's reach beyond the pitch.



against Ireland secured the point that eliminated Australia. For a team that did not qualify for the 2024 edition, this campaign marks a strong comeback — and Burl has been right at the centre of it.

### BURL REACHES THE SKY

Burl's six off Sri Lanka spinner Dunieth Wellalage was clean and decisive. With Zimbabwe in control of the chase, the blow removed any lingering tension and confirmed the result.

Brian Bennett's composure and captain Sikandar Raza's attacking strokeplay shaped the victory, but Burl's strike became the headline moment. Batting at number three, he has scored 58 runs in the group stage at a strike rate of 138.09, averaging 29. He has also chipped in with the ball, taking two wickets in three matches at an economy of 8.33, giving Zimbabwe flexibility in both departments.

### BURL'S DEFINING OVER VS AUSTRALIA

While the Sri Lanka six flooded social media, Burl's bigger impact arguably came against Australia.

Defending 170 against a strong Australian batting unit, Zimbabwe were under pressure when Glenn Maxwell and Matt Renshaw built a 77-run partnership for the fifth wicket. To add to the tension, captain Sikandar Raza had to leave the field due to injury.

## T20 World Cup: India must solve familiar off-spin question as Super 8 test looms

New Delhi. (Agency)

In a format where six runs an over is considered a holding phase, India are scoring at 6.23 per over against off-spin in this tournament. They have faced 102 deliveries of off-spin in the group stage, the highest by any team. Among the 13 sides that have played at least six overs of off spin, India's run rate of 6.23 is better only than Nepal at 5.25 and Oman at 5.42. Almost every other team has scored eight or more per over against the same bowling type. India's average against off-spin stands at 13.25. The issue is not limited to tempo. Wickets have fallen regularly. The pattern has been easy to spot. Six left-handers feature in India's top eight. The top three of Abhishek Sharma, Ishan Kishan and Tilak Varma are all left-handed. For opposition captains, the match-up is obvious. Bowl off spin into them, bowl it early, and persist.

### INDIA ADMIT THE SPIN STRUGGLE

Namibia captain Gerhard Erasmus was the first to expose the method in Delhi. His round arm off-spin did not rely on extravagant turn. He varied his release

points, altered angles and forced Indian batters to play against the spin coming into them. In Colombo, Pakistan's Usman Tariq,



Salman Agha and Saim Ayub sustained that pressure. They did not bowl mystery deliveries. They changed pace subtly, held a tight length and denied room. The plan was simple and repeatable. The Netherlands applied it with precision in Ahmedabad. Aryan Dutt bowled three overs in the powerplay and finished with figures of 4 for 19. He dismissed Abhishek Sharma and Ishan Kishan. Bowling at a steady 98 to 99 kilometres per hour, Dutt relied on skid and accuracy. At similar speeds, Colin

Ackermann missed his lengths and conceded three sixes. The difference lay in control. Abhishek's tournament has reflected the broader struggle. He has begun with scores of 0, 0, 0. Twice he fell attempting attacking strokes against off-spin. One of those dismissals came when Salman Agha opened the bowling with the new ball.

When dismissals begin to cluster against one type of bowling, the technical problem can quickly turn mental. Assistant coach Ryan ten Doeschate addressed the issue after India's 17-run win over the Netherlands. He admitted that India have not yet played a complete game in the tournament. He acknowledged that the left-heavy top order has made planning easier for opponents. "It has made it easier for teams to plan against India. We don't have many options in the top three. We've got Sanju sitting on the side. On balance, we still feel these are our best batters and we're going to make do with the abundance of left-handers," he said.

## Jonathan Trott left in tears talking about Afghanistan turnaround: Watch

**T20 World Cup: Jonathan Trott was unable to hold back his tears in his final press conference as Afghanistan coach. Trott performed a remarkable turnaround to change Afghanistan's fortunes.**

New Delhi. (Agency)

An emotional Jonathan Trott struggled to hold back his tears in his final press conference as Afghanistan coach after their match against Canada at the T20 World Cup 2026. Trott will leave his role following the completion of the tournament after taking charge of the Afghanistan side in 2022.

Since his appointment, Trott has changed the fortunes of Afghanistan, making them one of the most exciting teams in the world. The former England batter guided Afghanistan to

a memorable 2023 ODI World Cup campaign, where they defeated Pakistan, England and Sri Lanka and pushed Australia all the way. The following year in the last edition of the T20 World Cup, he oversaw Afghanistan's fairytale run to the semi-finals of the tournament, with wins over New Zealand and Australia along the way. Following the win over Canada, Trott came to the post-match presser where the questions were mainly about his experience with Afghan cricket and their future prospects. This made the Afghan coach choke up a bit as he remembered his first tour to Ireland and realised the talent within the camp. "Well I just think and I could sit here and tell you so many stories of things that I've seen with my own eyes but in the talent, yeah - I said I didn't want to get upset. I just remember my first trip when we were in Ireland and I just saw things that just realised that these boys are so talented and focused." "And if you just us to add a little bit of structure to the mindset, professionalism,

and the high standards that we hold ourselves to, not individuals but we hold each other to those high standards and professionalism. I remember seeing Ibra for the first time, I remember seeing Azmat for the first time, I remember seeing Gurbaz for the first time and thinking, what amazing players. Let's try and build on what we've got, this natural raw talent. Cool, thanks. And let's see where we can get to. We had the names Mujeeb, Nabi, Rashid, all these guys. But it's just one of those things. And I remember how chaotic

that first tour is to where we are now is chalk and cheese," said Trott. The Englishman said he was amazed at how the Afghan players operate at a high level despite the challenges that they face back home with the lack of infrastructure and cricket academies to nurture them at the youth level. He players need so much credit because the level they operate at and the advantages and the things that they're afforded as youngsters to develop their skills and their passion for the game. They operate at such a high level compared to what they're afforded compared to other countries, but yet they can come on this stage and compete and almost people expect us to be in the semifinals and finals, which I find amazing that they can do that, handle the pressure, but also the background, they don't have the sort of day-to-day coaching that young players have, academies and facilities and all these things and schooling," said Trott.



## Sensex, Nifty open flat amid volatility, IT stocks continue to decline

New Delhi.(Agency)

Dalal Street's main indices opened on a cautious note on Friday as global volatility and escalating US-Iran tensions continued to weigh on investor sentiment. The benchmark indices were largely flat in early trade, reflecting the jittery mood across markets.

At around 9:16 am, the S&P BSE Sensex was trading 10.44 points lower at 82,487.70, while the Nifty 50 inched marginally higher to stay above the 25,450 mark. The broader market displayed a mixed trend, suggesting that sector-specific moves will be crucial through the session. Notably, weakness persisted in the IT pack, extending the downtrend that has dominated the week. The sharp rise in geopolitical tensions remains the biggest overhang on sentiment. Elevated uncertainty after fresh statements from Washington and Tehran has pushed global markets into a risk-off zone, spilling over into domestic equities as well. Dr. VK Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist at Geojit Financial Services, said the escalation has left markets "on tender hooks." "The sharp spike in Brent crude to Rs72 reflects growing fear and uncertainty in markets. President Trump's warning that 'Iran has 10 to 15 days to strike a deal or bad things happen' has put the markets on tender hooks. Whether there will be a deal after the standoff, or whether missiles will fly will determine the market behaviour in the near term. The continuing weakness in IT stocks is another dampener for the market," he said. Vijayakumar added that despite the noise, India's economic fundamentals remain supportive.

"Amidst the many crises, the strength of the Indian economy and the recovery in corporate earnings, as reflected in Q3 numbers, are positives. If the US-Iran standoff is resolved in the coming days, the market will bounce back. Investors who are optimistic about a possible deal can use the current weakness to buy fairly valued, high-quality stocks across banking and financials, autos, pharmaceuticals, hotels, capital goods and telecom."

## Gaudium IVF IPO Day 1: Price band, GMP, Listing timeline — All you need to know

CHENNAI.(Agency)

Fertility care provider Gaudium IVF and Women Health has opened its initial public offering (IPO) for subscription today, February 20. This marks a significant moment for India's reproductive healthcare space. Ahead of the launch, the company raised Rs 49.5 crore from anchor investors, signalling early investor interest. The Rs 165 crore issue will remain open till February 24 and is set to make history, as Gaudium IVF becomes the first fertility care company in India to tap the public markets. The total size of the Gaudium IVF IPO is Rs 165 crore and is divided into two parts. It includes a fresh issue of 1.14 crore shares worth Rs 90 crore and an offer-for-sale (OFS) of 95 lakh shares amounting to Rs 75 crore. In a fresh issue, the funds go directly to the company to support its growth plans, while in an OFS, existing shareholders sell part of their stake and receive the proceeds. Gaudium IVF has fixed the IPO price band at Rs 75 to Rs 79 per share. Each lot consists of 189 shares. At the upper price band of Rs 79, retail investors will need a minimum investment of Rs 14,931 for one lot. Small non-institutional investors (NIIs) will have to apply for at least 14 lots, amounting to Rs 2,09,034, while big NIIs will need to bid for a minimum of 67 lots, which comes to around Rs 10,00,377. The Gaudium IVF IPO will close for subscription on February 24. The basis of allotment is likely to be finalised on February 25, and refunds, if any, will also be initiated the same day. Shares are expected to be credited to investors' demat accounts on February 26, with the stock scheduled to list on the exchanges on February 27. The shares will be listed on both the NSE and BSE.

## How Israel went from 370% hyperinflation in the 1980s to becoming a global high-tech powerhouse

BENGALURU.(Agency)

Israel is a small Middle Eastern nation on the Mediterranean Sea, home to just 9.4 million people. It lacks vast oil reserves, expansive farmland, and a massive domestic market. It has faced decades of geopolitical tension and hostile borders. Yet today, Israel ranks among the wealthiest and most advanced economies in the world. Its economic output is more than ten times that of some neighboring countries. Its GDP per capita exceeds USD 52,000 — higher than nations such as Canada, Germany, Japan, and the UK. It is ranked among the most innovative countries globally and spends more on research and development as a share of GDP than even the United States. But this prosperity was not inevitable. In fact, less than four decades ago, Israel's economy was on the brink of collapse.

The Crisis of the 1980s

By the mid-1980s, Israel was battling hyperinflation that peaked at over 370 percent annually. The Israeli shekel had become nearly worthless. Citizens avoided using their own currency, preferring US dollars instead. Business contracts became nearly impossible to structure because prices changed so rapidly. A salary agreed upon one year could lose much of its purchasing power the next.

## What began as a simple I-T review of biryani restaurant bills turned into a sweeping hunt for Rs 70,000 crore in suppressed sales buried across the country.

New Delhi.(Agency)

It began quietly late last year, but the scale it exposed was staggering. A routine visit by officers from the Income Tax (I-T) Department to a few popular biryani restaurants in Hyderabad would eventually point to around Rs 70,000 crore in concealed turnover across the country. At the time, nothing looked unusual. Officers walked in for basic checks. Kitchens were busy, customers were eating, and the billing counters were operating as usual. Then something did not add up. The number of diners inside the restaurant was far higher than the figures showing on the billing system.

### THE BILLINGSCAM

At first, the officers thought it was a local trick. Then they discovered that all these restaurants were using the same billing software. That was the moment the investigation stopped being routine. When officials traced the deletion pattern back to the software provider's backend in Ahmedabad, they unlocked nearly sixty terabytes of stored billing information from more than one lakh restaurants across India. A small mismatch at a biryani joint had suddenly turned into a nationwide data trail. Inside the tax department's digital lab in Hyderabad, specialists began reconstructing the deleted bills.

Every transaction clicked into the system had left tiny digital marks, even if it had been "deleted" on the surface.

### HOW AI HELPED

Artificial Intelligence tools helped read these marks and rebuild the missing pieces. What officers found was striking. Restaurants across the country had generated around Rs 2.43 lakh crore

worth of bills during the six years examined. More than Rs 13,000 crore worth of those bills had been quietly erased after being recorded. This was not accidental. Some restaurants removed a



few cash bills every day. Others erased entire blocks of dates, sometimes up to thirty days at a stretch. A few businesses kept all their records intact inside the software but still declared a much smaller turnover in their tax filings. The intention was the same in each case. Lower reported income meant lower tax.

## Why has this Dutch company's stock gained over 90% on Nasdaq in six months

New Delhi.(Agency)

A company from a quiet Dutch town has become one of the biggest drivers of the global tech rally. ASML Holding NV, a name that barely features in everyday conversations, has delivered a stunning surge of over 90% on Nasdaq in just six months. The company's stock has gained 94.66% in the past six months on the US stock exchange Nasdaq, where many of the world's biggest technology companies list their shares. It does not make phones, laptops or chips. Instead, it builds the machines that make the world's most advanced chips possible. And that single fact has turned it into one of the most influential companies in global technology. Most people never hear about ASML because it operates behind the scenes. But its machines sit at the heart of every modern device. If you use a smartphone, a laptop, an electric car, a cloud service or an AI tool, you are indirectly relying on ASML technology. The company builds

extreme ultraviolet lithography machines, often called EUV systems. EUV is the process that allows chipmakers to place unimaginably tiny circuits onto silicon. These circuits

### IN THE PAST SIX MONTHS?

There are three clear reasons behind the extraordinary six-month rally. The first is the global push for more advanced chips. Chipmakers such as TSMC, Samsung Electronics and Intel rely on ASML's machines for their highest-performance products.

Since there is no second supplier, orders keep rising. The second driver is the explosion in artificial intelligence. AI tools require huge computing power, and every generation of AI models needs more advanced chips than the one before. This has pushed chipmakers to expand their fabs and upgrade their equipment, which in turn increases demand for ASML systems. The third reason is the company's strong visibility. ASML's order book stretches far into the future. Many machines are booked years in advance because production capacity is limited and demand is intense.



make chips faster and more efficient. Without EUV, the highest-end chips simply cannot be produced. Here is the part that changes everything. ASML is the only company on the planet capable of making EUV machines. No other firm has matched its technology. This gives ASML an advantage that is almost impossible to challenge.

### WHY HAS THE STOCK SOARED 90%

THE BIRYANI CONNECTION

According to officials familiar with the analytics review, a surprisingly large share of suspicious billing patterns emerged from restaurants where biryani is the main revenue driver. And that made sense. Biryani is one of the highest-selling single-dish items in the

organised and semi-organised food sector. In cities like Hyderabad, Bengaluru, Chennai and Mumbai, it is not just dinner, it is an economy. With such scale, even a small suppression per plate can snowball into massive unaccounted turnover.

As investigators went deeper, a pattern emerged. Raw material purchases, especially rice and meat, told one story. Delivery platform data told another. GST filings suggested something else entirely. The billing software's internal

logs often reflected far fewer transactions than the rhythms of a typical biryani outlet would suggest. During weekends and festive periods, the mismatch grew wider. The number of plates that seemed to be leaving the kitchen simply did not match what was being declared officially.

### HOW BIRYANI OUTLETS OPERATE

Part of the reason, officials say, is how biryani outlets operate. High cash turnover, fast table rotation, bulk takeaway orders and cloud kitchens running multiple brand names from a single backend setup are all standard practice. But these same factors also make deviations easier to spot. Biryani has standardised pricing and predictable ingredient ratios, so analysts can estimate how much should have been sold based on how much raw material was purchased.



## How Hyderabad's love for biryani exposed a nationwide multi-crore tax scam

New Delhi.(Agency)

In the end, it was not a whistleblower, a hacking attempt, or a dramatic raid that first exposed the cracks in a nationwide multi-crore tax evasion racket. It was biryani. More specifically, the numbers behind one of India's most loved dishes. When the Income Tax (I-T) Department began analysing a massive pile of digital billing data linked to an alleged Rs 70,000-crore turnover suppression case late last year, one segment that kept flashing red was the high-volume biryani business.

THE BIRYANI CONNECTION

According to officials familiar with the analytics review, a surprisingly large share of suspicious billing patterns emerged from restaurants where biryani is the main revenue driver. And that made sense. Biryani is one of the highest-selling single-dish items in the

organised and semi-organised food sector. In cities like Hyderabad, Bengaluru, Chennai and Mumbai, it is not just dinner, it is an economy. With such scale, even a small suppression per plate can snowball into massive unaccounted turnover.

As investigators went deeper, a pattern emerged. Raw material purchases, especially rice and meat, told one story. Delivery platform data told another. GST filings suggested something else entirely. The billing software's internal

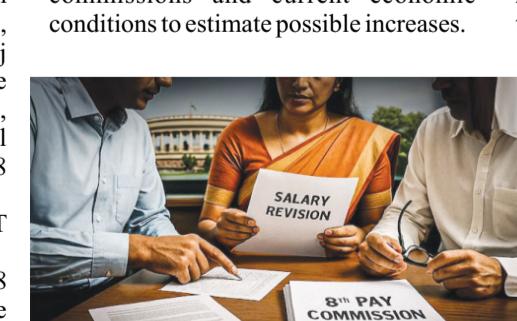
implementation date yet. However, if past practice is followed, the revised pay structure is likely to take effect from January 1, 2026. This is because the 7th Pay Commission's term ends on December 31, 2025. In Parliament, Minister of State for Finance Pankaj Chaudhary clarified that, as per the Resolution notified on November 3, 2025, the 8th Pay Commission will submit its recommendations within 18 months from the date of its constitution.

### WHEN WILL EMPLOYEES GET ARREARS?

Even if the report is submitted within 18 months, implementation may take additional time. However, whenever the government approves the recommendations, arrears are likely to be calculated from January 1, 2026. CA Manish Mishra, Founder, GenZCFO, explained the likely scenario, "Arrears will likely be computed from January 1, 2026, the date that has been set as the end date for the 7th Pay Commission, even if payment is actually made later after the commission's recommendations are cleared."

HOW MUCH SALARY HIKE CAN EMPLOYEES EXPECT?

This is the next big question. While nothing is final yet, experts are looking at past commissions and current economic conditions to estimate possible increases.



Pratik Vaidya, Managing Director and Chief Vision Officer at Karma Management Global Consulting Solutions Pvt. Ltd., said expectations are being shaped by history and today's economy. "The 6th Pay Commission delivered roughly a 40% average hike, while the 7th Pay Commission's overall impact on pay and allowances is often placed around 23-25%, with a uniform

fitment factor of 2.57." He added that early projections for the 8th Pay Commission suggest a 20-35% increase, with a possible fitment factor in the 2.4-3.0 range. However, he cautioned that these are only estimates.

The scale grew clearer as officers checked individual states. Karnataka showed the highest value of deleted transactions at about Rs 2,000 crore. Telangana followed with about Rs 1,500 crore. Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra and Gujarat were not far behind. A closer look at 3,734 PANs in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana revealed suppressed sales worth over Rs 5,000 crore. When investigators studied a sample of forty restaurants in the two states, they found nearly Rs 400 crore in unreported turnover. Some outlets seemed to hide almost a quarter of their sales.

### THE BIRYANI ANGLE

One of the key consumption patterns flagged during the data analytics exercise was tied to India's high-volume biryani business. Officials familiar with the probe said a significant portion of suspicious billing activity came from restaurants where biryani is the primary revenue driver. Because biryani is one of the highest-selling single-dish items in the organised and semi-organised.

## Exclusive: IMF chief says India well-positioned in AI race thanks to digital infra

New Delhi.(Agency)

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is rewriting global job markets and India has suddenly become one of the countries best positioned to gain from it, said Kristalina Georgieva, Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund.

In an exclusive interview with India Today TV, the IMF chief said early evidence from countries studied so far shows a "positive" impact on employment, although the gains are uneven and India will have to prepare carefully to avoid widening gaps.

She pointed to India's digital groundwork as a key advantage, saying, "India invested over the last years in digital public infrastructure. It is the foundation for AI to be more accessible."

### AI JOBS PAY MORE, BUT MIDDLE ROLES ARE SHRINKING

Georgieva also pointed to the United States to explain how AI is affecting salaries and job profiles. "Already in the United States, one in ten jobs require AI enhanced skills, and it pays more," she said. Workers with AI-related skills are earning higher salaries and spending more money. That spending is pushing up demand for low-skilled service jobs in restaurants, hotels and entertainment.

However, the middle of the workforce is feeling the pressure. Georgieva said much of the employment growth linked to AI is coming from lower-paying roles, which is shrinking the space for mid-income jobs. She added that automation is erasing many entry-level positions. "We also see automation eliminating entry-level jobs. So recent graduates worry, where is the job for me?"

### WHY POLICYMAKERS MUST ACT NOW

Georgieva said governments cannot sit back and watch these changes unfold. "We are not helpless," she said. Her first recommendation is to overhaul education. "Redefine education for the era of AI. Learn to learn and be adaptable," she said, stressing that workers will need continuous skill upgrades as job profiles evolve. Her second recommendation is to build stronger social safety nets so people have support if they are temporarily displaced.

### THE BIRYANI CONNECTION

She praised Denmark's "flex security" model, which combines flexible labour markets with strong worker protection. She also welcomed India's labour reforms but said flexibility must be matched with security.

### DOES INDIA HAVE AN EDGE?

According to Georgieva, India's biggest strength in the AI era comes from long-term investment in digital public infrastructure. "India invested over the last years in digital public infrastructure. It is the foundation for AI to be more accessible," she said.

## 8th Pay Commission: When will you get your arrears and salary hike

Central government employees and pensioners are closely watching every update on the 8th Pay Commission. The big questions remain, i.e., when will the new pay structure be implemented, and when will arrears actually reach your bank account

New Delhi.(Agency)

Central government employees and pensioners are waiting for clarity on one big question, i.e., when will the 8th Pay Commission be implemented, and when will arrears be paid? The government has already approved the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the 8th Pay Commission in November 2025. It has also given the panel 18 months to submit its report. The chairperson and some members have been appointed. But the final implementation date is still not officially announced. WHEN WILL THE 8th PAY COMMISSION BE IMPLEMENTED? The government has not fixed an

fitment factor of 2.57." He added that early projections for the 8th Pay Commission suggest a 20-35% increase, with a possible fitment factor in the 2.4-3.0 range. However, he cautioned that these are only estimates.

The final number will depend on inflation over the next 12-18 months, fiscal space after the 16th Finance Commission, tax buoyancy and political appetite. My own sense is that the government will try to balance a visible, feel-good hike with a more calibrated structure of allowances and DA resets."

8th PAY COMMISSION LAUNCHED The government has launched the official website of the 8th Pay Commission. The Commission has invited suggestions and inputs from ministries, departments, central government employees and other stakeholders.

The last date to submit responses is March 16, 2026. This shows that the process has formally started, but it will still take time before the final report is ready.

# Hina Khan

## Shares Her Sehri Prep Ritual, Show How She Balances Work With Faith

Hina Khan attended an event on February 18, looking effortlessly glamorous, but she also made sure to stay true to her faith. Balancing work and personal beliefs with ease, she proved once again that she knows how to manage it all without compromise. The actress shared a glimpse into her routine, revealing that she ensured her acrylic nails were removed before Sehri, even after having a very busy day. Posting about it on her Instagram story, Hina gave fans a peek into how she carefully aligns her professional commitments with her Ramadan practices.

### Hina Khan Proves She Can Do It All

Hina Khan took to her Instagram Stories and shared a collage of her clean, bare nails alongside the acrylic nails she removed before Sehri, along with a timestamp sticker of 2:42 am. The text on the picture read, "Sehri in 2 hours and the hard work



finally paid off.

Who said work and faith can't go hand in hand?" She further revealed that despite having a long day at work, she still made sure to remove her acrylic nails at home. Hina concluded it by saying, "Woh kehte hain na, jahan chaah hai, wahan raah hai... Alhamdulillah. #Ramadan Mubarak." She also shared a glimpse of her Sehri meal on Instagram with the text, "Sehri=Vaar Daar Thool."

As Hina mentioned how her day was packed with work, and she wasn't kidding. She attended an event which was part of her professional commitments, but she made sure to shine through with her impeccable style. Dressed in a striking red ensemble, Hina turned heads effortlessly. The outfit featured a unique silhouette that she carried with complete ease, proving once again why her fashion choices rarely miss. Her makeup stayed true to her signature style with a soft, dewy base paired with a bold, dark red lipstick that complemented the look perfectly. So when Hina says she knows how to balance faith and work, she truly means it. Her graceful event appearance, followed by her dedication to observing Ramadan rituals with sincerity, speaks volumes.



# Nikkki Tamboli

## Sacrifices Her Makeup Products, Arbaz Patel Reveals The Cost



The latest episode of The 50 turned out to be quite a rollercoaster, especially for Nikki Tamboli. She was given a task that pushed her out of her comfort zone and tested just how far she was willing to go in the game. Known for always giving her best, Nikki was clearly taken aback as the task unfolded. Things got intense when she had to sacrifice some of her very expensive makeup products, a moment that left both her and viewers stunned.

### Nikki Tamboli Sacrifices Her Belongings

The episode began on a light note, with all the contestants relaxing and having fun, unaware of the chaos that was about to unfold. Things took a sudden turn when the 'Fox' arrived, and Shiv Thakare and Faisal Shaikh were quick to start flirting with her. The 'Fox' then headed straight to the bedroom and picked Nikki Tamboli, who was busy doing her makeup, to take on the Dare or No Dare challenge. Nikki soon found herself stepping into the Lion's den. Once there, the 'Lion' asked her about the current situation in the palace. Nikki revealed that the house was divided into two teams and openly spoke about certain contestants lacking loyalty,

even admitting she was considering voting them out. She was then given a secret dare by the 'Lion', who asked her to collect the contestants' personal belongings within a fixed time limit.

### Three Challenging Rounds

In the first round, the 'Lion' asked Nikki to collect one kg of another contestant's personal belongings within 15 minutes. She rushed in and managed to grab Archana Gautam's things, sparking a heated reaction from Archana. Despite the chaos, Nikki completed the task and added Rs 20,000 to the prize pot.

The second round raised the bar, with Nikki asked to collect two kg of items. This time, the contestants hid their belongings, clearly aware of her mission. Though visibly upset, Nikki still pulled it off and added another Rs

30,000. She later got emotional in front of the Lion, sharing how hurt she felt by the lack of support from her own friends. For the final round, Nikki was offered Rs 50,000 and challenged to collect three kgs of belongings. To meet the weight, she even sacrificed her own belongings, including her makeup. In the end, Nikki added a total of Rs 1 lakh to the prize pot, taking it to Rs 13,41,000.



## The 50 Episode 17 Turns Explosive With Wildcard Re-Entries And Fierce Fights



The latest episode of The 50 opened with a major shock as four previously eliminated contestants made dramatic wildcard re-entries into the Mahal. Day 17 quickly became one of the most intense episodes yet, packed with surprise returns, emotional confrontations, strategic betrayals, and a high-stakes Arena challenge that completely changed the game. Just before the Arena task began, the Lion stunned the house by bringing back Urvashi Dholakia, Arushi Chawla, Khanzaadi and Tejaswi. While Urvashi and Tejaswi were welcomed warmly, the returns of Arushi and Khanzaadi visibly upset several players. Before the "Dare No Dare" round, the Lion announced that each team must choose one returning contestant for the Arena task, forcing teams into uncomfortable decisions.

### Prince Narula's Team Faces Internal Conflict

Tensions flared within Prince Narula's team, especially after Arushi questioned her earlier elimination. As Prince attempted to clarify his stance, Ridhi and Yuvika accused Arushi of pressuring him. Krishna lost her temper and demanded respect, while Prince tried to mediate. Eventually, Prince decided to include Arushi in his team despite the resistance.

### Urvashi Dholakia Slams Lack of Unity Among TV Stars

Never one to hold back, Urvashi openly called out the lack of solidarity among television actors, delivering one of the episode's most explosive moments. She said, "Yahan par logon ko lagta hai TV, TV and let me be very clear, zaruri nahi ek actor dusre actor ko support karega. Maine apne pure career mein ye nahi dekha hai. So I'm upset." She further added, "I am 47 years old and still here. Look at yourselves and think at 47 tum log kahan hoge, kya karoge ye... toh theek hai. Main hats off karungi. Solo game hoti na toh 50 kya 500 ko pachaaed ka main aage nikalti."

### Arena Task Rules and Team Selections

The teams were assigned their wildcards: Urvashi joined Arbaaz's team, Tejaswi went to Shiv's team, Khanzaadi joined Sidharth, and Arushi stayed with Prince. The Lion clarified that winning the task would grant the wildcard contestant re-entry into the Mahal, while losing would mean permanent elimination.

## The 50: Ridhi Dogra Says 'Komolika Is Back' As Urvashi Dholakia Re-Enters



Television actor Urvashi Dholakia has re-entered The 50 as a wild card contestant, days after her shocking eviction. Urvashi's comeback has already created tension inside the house. As she returned, Urvashi was asked about her eviction and alliance experience. She did not hesitate to express her disappointment, especially towards fellow TV actors she had considered friends. She said, "When I had been voting for my people to save them, I kept saving Ridhi, the day I was in danger, why didn't any of you save me?"

### Urvashi Questions Loyalty And Calls Out TV Actor Alliances

Urvashi strongly criticised the idea that TV actors always support each other. She said her experience in the show proved otherwise. She said, "Here people think, TV actors have made their own group and have each other's back, let me be very clear, it's not necessary, I have not seen this in my entire career."

Calling herself the senior-most contestant at 47, Urvashi also challenged others to match her determination and courage. She added, "I am 47 years old and I am here doing this show. At my age, where will you be? Will you do this? If yes, hats off to you." Her bold remarks made it clear that she is ready to play independently and fight her own battles.

### Urvashi Dholakia Supports Women, Slams 'Weak' Label

Urvashi also took a stand for female contestants, who have repeatedly raised concerns about being sidelined in the game. She criticised the mindset that labels women as weak. She said, "Not everyone has physical strength, but that doesn't mean they are weak. Women have brains, strategy and strength too."

Several contestants, including Krishna Shroff and Yuvika Chaudhary, supported her views. Many female contestants have previously pointed out that they were excluded from key alliance decisions. Ridhi Dogra Welcomes Urvashi's Comeback, Says 'Komolika Returns Stronger'.

# Healthy Habits to inculcate in Your kids



Many parents complain that their children don't listen to them, whether it's brushing their teeth before bed or eating veggies!

But what they don't understand is that unless they instill little habits like these from a young age, children won't get into a set routine. We list down the top three healthy habits every parent must make their child follow.

- Teach your child about dental hygiene. This not only includes brushing after every meal, but also flossing their teeth daily. What's more, parents must encourage kids to go for regular check-ups to the dentist and educate them about the ill-



effects of bingeing on sweets.

- In today's world, most kids are holed up in their house, playing video games on their computers, instead of playing outdoors. Hence it's necessary to teach them the benefits of exercise and being active. Set an example, by being active yourself. Take your kids to the park and play with them.

- Reading is a habit that will prove valuable to your kids when they grow up and want to study higher, as it will drastically elevate their language skills. Every night, set aside sometime and read to your kids. Eventually, make them develop the habit of reading on their own.

## 21 questions to ask your kids instead of 'How Was Your Day?'



Most of us are guilty of asking our kids, 'How was your day?' after they return from a long day at school. And when we get common answers like, 'Good' or 'Fine', we obviously feel disappointed and sometimes dejected. So how can we make our kids more forthcoming about sharing details of their day. Or atleast get a full sentence out...

- 1) What is the best place at the school?
- 2) What was the funniest thing you heard today?
- 3) Did you help someone today?
- 4) Did someone help you?
- 5) Who sat with you in the class? Would you have preferred someone else?
- 6) What made you laugh?
- 7) What bored you in school?
- 8) During lunch break, whom did you play with?
- 9) Who is the funniest person in the class?
- 10) Who is the most grumpy kid in the class?
- 11) If you were your teacher, what would you do?
- 12) What was the word your teacher used most today?
- 13) Did anyone cry in the class?
- 14) Did your ma'am teach something that you couldn't understand?
- 15) Anything you look forward to tomorrow?
- 16) What is the hardest rule you have to follow in school?
- 17) What made your teacher happy?
- 18) What made your teacher mad?
- 19) Did you learn any new words today?
- 20) Which is the part of your school you like the least?
- 21) Did you use the school washroom? Do you feel safe going there?

With the sweltering summer approaching fast, fun-loving Surtis have already started making plans for a much deserved family vacation for the year. And if a pet is one of your family members too, you'd never want to leave him behind.

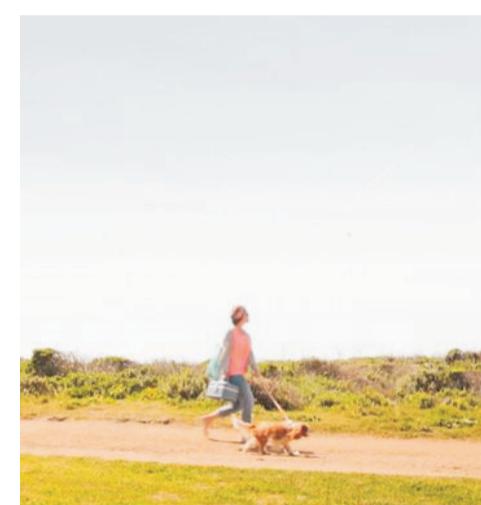
Here's how to make sure you and your four-legged companion make the most out of a holiday.

### Travel safely

The safest and the most comfortable way for pets to travel is inside a carrier or crate. Never leave your pet unattended in a parked car. Temperatures shoot up inside a closed vehicle during summer and that can give your pet a fatal heatstroke. Always keep them on the back seat and don't allow them to stick their head out of the window. Give them plenty of rest stops and carry sufficient amount of food and water. On a beach trip, make sure you get them a shady spot and never let them drink sea water as salt tends to make them sick.

### Check with the airline in advance

If travelling by airplane with your pets is the only option, call the airline in advance and check if they allow pets in the cabin. Check if they have any special pet health and immunisation requirements and if they require a specific type of carrier. If your pet is flying in



# How to have a fun pet-cation

the cargo hold, make sure you use direct flights, travel in the same flight as your pet, and choose a flight that will accommodate temperature extremes.

### Make hotel reservations carefully

The words 'pet-friendly' have a very broad definition in the hotel world. Call them directly and ask: What is the charge for bringing a pet? Will there be a cleaning fee that may or may not be refundable? Are there weight restrictions, breed restrictions? May I leave them unattended in the room while I'm

gone for the day?

### If you can't carry your pet along

The best way to ensure pet safety when you can't take them along is to have someone watch your pet in your home. If it's difficult to find a potential dog baby-sitter, make sure you find a comfortable, responsible and reliable 24 hour home care. Look for a foster home or a dog care centre to leave your dog while on vacation. Visit the centre at least twice to check if its clean and safe, the caretakers are reliable and whether they will be able to meet the needs of your dog.

### Tip

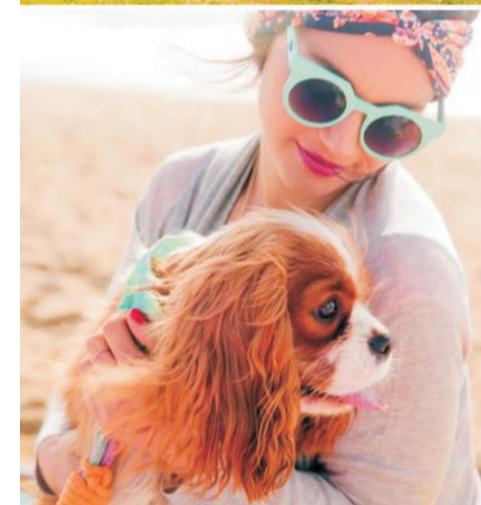
Always, have two ID tags on your pet's collar: the normal ID tag plus a tag with the information of where you are staying (hotel, friend's address, etc.). Also, keep an updated photo of your pet in case you do get separated, so you can locate him more easily.

### Must do's

Get an early summer check-up done for your pet and make sure your dog's vaccinations are up to date before your trip. Fleas, ticks and the mosquitoes which carry heart worm disease are more prevalent in warmer months.

Ask your veterinarian for an effective preventive to keep these parasites off your dog.

While making a travel plan, don't visit places where animals are kept in cages and enclosures or used for entertainment. Animals can suffer tremendously when they are kept in captivity and live in an almost constant state of discomfort and anxiety. Avoid festivals and temple ceremonies that continue to feature elephants. Choose a beach, hill station, park, garden or a historical place instead.



"Parents must educate their children about how to behave with animals. Animals are just like human beings and feel as much pain as we do. They are innocent like babies and exhibit all the emotions that we do — be it joy, sadness or jealousy. Pets have an incredible ability to brighten your day and fill your house with positive energy. Not once have I come home and not had my dog Zorro jumping in joy to see me," she says, adding, "Bringing dogs home just to use them as security guards is inhuman. If you want security, just pay for guards; don't abuse helpless animals."

What the law says

The following area punishable under the Prevention of Cruelty To Animals Act, 1960:

- Beating, kicking, overriding, torturing or causing any pain or suffering by the pet owner or any other person.
- Caging or confining in an enclosure that is too small to allow reasonable movement.
- Using a short leash or a very heavy chain.
- Keeping the animal constantly confined or tied for extended periods, thereby denying it the opportunity to exercise.
- Failing to provide sufficient food, water and proper shelter.
- Placing an animal in circumstances that are likely to endanger its life, or cause its death from starvation or thirst. This means abandoning an animal in unfamiliar territory or in sickness or old age.
- Maiming or injuring an animal in any way, or performing any surgical or invasive procedure without anaesthesia. This can include ear or tail docking.
- Inadequate health care. This includes lack of timely and appropriate veterinary treatment.
- Using an animal for the purpose of animal fights/contests (cockfights, oxen races, dog races) or baiting.
- Over-breeding dogs or keeping pups for sale in poor conditions.

Celebs that are animal right advocates

Amitabh Bachchan: Senior Bachchan brought worldwide attention to the plight of Bijlee, an elephant who collapsed after being physically and psychologically traumatized, in June. If it was not for the actor's appeal via social media outlets, which generated worldwide support, this former working elephant would not have been rescued and cared for.

Madhuri Dixit-Nene: Recently, the Dhak Dhak girl rescued seven puppies that were drenched in rain and struggling for their lives. Madhuri interrupted the shoot of her show, and stayed with the puppies until help arrived.

Trisha Krishnan: She recently sent a letter to the mayor of Chennai, urging him to scrap a proposed round-up of approximately 30,000 dogs from the streets, who would then be imprisoned in pounds.

Raveena Tandon-Thadani: The actress shares her home with two Indian community dogs rescued from the streets and one dog adopted from an animal shelter. She has also helped find homes for several other street dogs.

John Abraham: He pushed for enforcement of the ban on Jallikattu and spoke out against Mumbai's 'dancing' monkeys. Now, John is urging the Ministry of Environment and Forests to help animals who are abused in India's circuses.

# Pets have rights too

not given enough exercise. This can also lead to skin problems and ailments like kidney or liver failure.

While many of us feel that a whack or two is OK to discipline our pets, Santosh says that such methods of training are outdated. "Beating is just not required. Positive reinforcement, wherein you spend time with your pets and reward good behaviour, works best," he says, adding, "You don't need professional trainers. There are several videos online that you can refer to train your pet. You will cherish this experience and it is a great way to bond."

What to do if you witness abuse

So what do you do if you witness abuse? If reasoning it out with the owner is not an option, the best thing to do is to call in the experts. Santosh, whose team rescues and rehabilitates abused animals, says that on an average, he receives 4-5 cases a day. "We do not reveal the name of the complainant, so that there are no issues between neighbours. We counsel the owners and tell them that what they are doing is wrong and



against the law. If they are facing problems with caring for their pets, we give them options and even offer to take the pet away if they are unable to keep them. The last step is to approach the local police, if the owners do not mend their ways and are unwilling to give us their pet," says Santosh.

There's a reason dogs are called man's best friend. They get lonely when you are away and are happiest in the presence of their human family. Treating them with respect is something that must come naturally, and it all begins with education, feels Aindrita.