

From bitterness to business: Carney's India visit signals thaw in strained ties

The visit is described as occurring at a pivotal moment in normalising bilateral relations. PM Modi and Mark Carney have previously committed to a constructive, balanced partnership rooted in mutual respect for each other's concerns and sensitivities, robust people-to-people links, and expanding economic synergies.

New Delhi.(Agency) Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney will undertake his first official visit to India from February 27 to March 2, at the invitation of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, marking a significant step in resetting bilateral ties strained during the tenure of former Canadian leader Justin Trudeau.

accusations of foreign interference. In a notable shift under Carney's leadership, Canadian officials have recently stated that India is no longer believed to be linked to ongoing violent crimes or related activities on Canadian soil, signaling progress in security dialogues and a deliberate thaw in relations.



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Digital Classrooms Are Cornerstone of Punjab Sikhya Kranti's Systemic Reform: Harjot Singh Bains

CHANDIGARH, February 26: In one of the largest technological overhauls in Punjab's educational history, Punjab Education Minister Harjot Singh Bains on Thursday announced a massive ₹400 crore digitalisation project under the Punjab Sikhya Kranti, stating that the Bhagwant Mann Government has initiated an unprecedented transformation that will equip government schools with state-of-the-art technology and fundamentally redefine classroom teaching across Punjab.

historic intervention, Minister Harjot Singh Bains said, "As many as 38,649 brand-new desktop computers equipped with the latest software are being deployed across 5,012 government schools. These will be distributed to all Senior Secondary and High



Schools, as well as 50 percent of Middle Schools, ensuring that students have access to the latest hardware and technology." He further informed that dedicated computer labs will be established in 5,000 government schools, ensuring that all Secondary and Senior Secondary government schools have fully functional computer labs.

will receive these panels, with larger schools receiving four, five or even eight units based on student strength. This massive infusion of technology ensures that digital literacy and smart learning are no longer the privileges of private institutions but the fundamental right of every student in Punjab's public school system," he said.

Contd.....page-3

Digital platforms must share fair revenues with content creators: Ashwini Vaishnaw

New Delhi .(Agency) The Union Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Ashwini Vaishnaw, on Thursday, urged several content-generating platforms to ensure a fair share of revenues for content creators. Delivering a speech at the Digital News Publishers Association (DNPA) Conclave 2026, Vaishnaw urged the platforms to maintain transparency in terms of revenue sharing with the creators.

The concerns came a few days after the India AI Impact Summit, where, despite lauding India's AI growth, several key leaders, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Emmanuel Macron, warned the citizens of deepfakes and misinformation.

"Social Media platforms must also legally share revenue with the people who are creating the content, whether it is news, the conventional media, the creators sitting in far-flung areas, influencers, the professors and researchers who are disseminating their work using the platforms," Vaishnaw said.

by them. The online safety of children, the online safety of all citizens, is the responsibility of the platforms," Vaishnaw noted.



the growing threat caused by deepfakes and misinformation circulating on several social media platforms. Advocating for the safety of children who often get trapped in these drives, Vaishnaw further mentioned that misinformation and deepfakes destroy the fundamentals of societal values, which need to be protected at any cost.

Digital platforms must take responsibility for online content, safety of children: Ashwini Vaishnaw

New Delhi .(Agency) Union Minister for Electronics and Information Technology Ashwini Vaishnaw on Thursday called on digital platforms to act responsibly while hosting content, stressing the need to ensure online safety and protect citizens from the misuse of emerging technologies.

"Platforms must wake up, must understand the importance of reinforcing trust in the institutions, which human society has created over thousands of years. Platforms must take the responsibility for the content that is hosted by them. The online safety of children, the online safety of all citizens is the responsibility of the platforms. Non-adherence to these principles will definitely make them responsible because the nature of the Internet has changed now," said Vaishnaw.

President Droupadi Murmu to visit Jharkhand, lay foundation stone for spiritual centre

Ranchi .(Agency) President Droupadi Murmu is scheduled to visit Jharkhand on Thursday to lay the foundation stone of the Shri Jagannath Spiritual and Cultural Charitable Centre Trust at Kadma Marine Drive. After the ceremony, she will proceed to Tata Manipal Medical College in Baridih.



introductory conference. During her visit, she is also expected to tour the campus and take part in a tree-plantation drive. The

college management has a long-term plan to develop the "Draupadi Murmu Sports and Food Complex" on the campus. Only 200 people have been permitted to attend the event. According to the schedule, the President's MI-17 helicopter will land at Sonari Airport at 12 noon. She will first participate in the groundbreaking ceremony at Kadma and then attend the function at Tata Manipal Medical College.

Baran Mahto, MLA Saryu Rai, MLA Purnima Sahu, and TV Narendran will be present at the event. To maintain law and order during the President's visit, around 4,000 police personnel and 125 magistrates have been deployed across the city and along the convoy route. Security has been tightened to an unprecedented level. Three hit teams will form the most critical part of the security arrangement. They will remain on standby for quick deployment in case of any potential threat.

Remove every infiltrator: Amit Shah's Seemanchal crackdown before Bengal polls

New Delhi.(Agency) Declaring that "the Narendra Modi government is determined to "remove every infiltrator from Indian soil", Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Thursday launched a high-stakes security and political outreach in Bihar's sensitive Seemanchal region ahead of the high-stakes Assembly polls in West Bengal.

begin in the entire Seemanchal region," Shah added. Shah began a three-day tour of the Seemanchal region comprising Kishanganj, Araria, Purnia and Katihar districts in Bihar along the Bangladesh-Nepal frontier known for illegal migration routes, document fraud networks and cross-border smuggling. He is scheduled to hold closed-door meetings with District Magistrates and police chiefs from seven border districts, seeking intelligence on infiltration corridors and demographic shifts. According to security officials, infiltrators entering Bihar frequently move onward into West Bengal districts such as North Dinajpur, Malda and Murshidabad.



SIR VS NRC IN DISGUISE: A NEW FLASHPOINT The Centre is preparing a Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in the border belts to identify suspected illegal migrants. While Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee has branded the move

"NRC in disguise", the Centre argues it is essential for electoral integrity and border security. Shah is expected to review SIR implementation mechanisms in sensitive districts during the visit, potentially escalating Centre-state confrontation between Delhi and Kolkata. Officials acknowledge that rapid population growth pockets and settlement pattern changes in parts of Seemanchal and north Bengal have become a quiet trigger behind the renewed infiltration focus. The BJP interprets these shifts as evidence of sustained cross-border migration and Bengal's ruling Trinamool Congress counters that demographic rhetoric is being deployed to polarise voters before elections.

News box

Money-laundering probe: Enforcement Directorate attaches Ansals' Rs 598 crore land in Agra

Gurgaon.(Agency)

Enforcement Directorate (ED) has provisionally attached immovable properties worth more than Rs 598 crore in Agra in connection with a money-laundering probe involving Ansal Properties & Infrastructure Ltd (APIL).

The case pertains to alleged large-scale irregularities in the acquisition and subsequent release of land in Gurgaon sectors 58 to 63 and 65 to 67. ED said the Gurgaon land has already been developed and sold to third-party buyers and no longer retains its original physical identity. To protect innocent homebuyers and avoid disturbance to occupied projects, the agency has attached alternative immovable properties in various villages of Agra held in the names of associate entities and individuals allegedly acting on behalf of APIL.

The attachment has been carried out under provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002, the agency said on Tuesday, adding, its "investigation under the PMLA is ongoing".

ED initiated its investigation on the basis of a CBI FIR registered on Jan 23, 2019, following directions of Supreme Court in a civil appeal. The FIR named various public servants and private builders — including APIL — and invoked sections related to criminal conspiracy, cheating and provisions of the Prevention of Corruption Act. According to ED, the land had originally been notified for acquisition for "stated public purposes such as development" by Haryana Urban Development Authority (HUDA) and creation of a land bank. However, most of the land was later released in favour of private colonisers through what the agency described "a fraudulent and collusive process".

ED said its probe revealed that APIL entered into "collaboration agreements" and obtained general power of attorneys from individual landowners in respect of land already notified for acquisition. Investigators found irregularities in these arrangements

Ghaziabad residents oppose move to shift deputy registrar office to Noida

Noida.(Agency)

Residents' groups in the district have opposed the state gov't decision to shift the office of the deputy registrar (firms, societies and chits) to GB Nagar, saying the move will inconvenience office-bearers and registered residents' bodies. A resident group, Social Awareness Society, urged authorities to reconsider the decision and appoint separate deputy registrars for the two districts. Vineet Sharma of the group said the relocation would affect routine administrative work. "Office-bearers of the residents' bodies will have to travel to another district for registrations, renewals and other formalities," he said. The letter was addressed to the Prime Minister, the chief minister, the chief secretary, the registrar (firms, societies and chits), and the district magistrate. Around 15,500 societies are registered across the two districts, including RWAs, AOA's, NGOs and welfare bodies. Of these, about 10,000 are in Ghaziabad and around 5,500 in GB Nagar.

The Ghaziabad office currently operates with a staff strength of around 13 and handles work for both districts. Sharma said records remain largely undigitised and infrastructure is still being streamlined. "Instead of strengthening the existing office through additional staff and digitisation, shifting it to another district reflects poor assessment of ground realities," he said. Residents also expressed concern that no provision has yet been made for weekly sittings in Ghaziabad after the shift. Dipanshu Mittal, executive member of the Raj Nagar Extension federation, said the city has nearly twice the number of registered housing societies as Noida. "Shifting the office despite this imbalance is impractical and will inconvenience thousands of residents," he said. An official from the registrar department said, "While Ghaziabad currently has more societies due to its larger population, GB Nagar is expected to see rapid growth in high-rise housing," the official said.

Sanitation workers say too much confusion after Noida reshuffle

Noida.(Agency)

A week after Noida Authority integrated its health department with work circles, sanitation workers have claimed the move has created confusion and operational problems. Workers said they previously reported to designated officials within the health department but are now required to coordinate with multiple officials.

The Authority has merged the health department and traffic cell with the work circles. Under the new system, sanitation, sewer maintenance, drainage work and traffic-related responsibilities will be handled directly by zonal work circle officials. Officials said the move would address accountability gaps and prevent departments from shifting responsibility.

"We would clean designated areas and report to officials in the health department. After the merger last week, a worker cleaning three to four sectors now falls under the jurisdiction of different work circles. Who do we report to?" asked Satveer, a sanitation worker. The health department earlier functioned independently with a senior manager, managers and sanitation inspectors.

Nearly 1,500 contractual sanitation workers went on strike, opposing the new norms and demanding regularisation of their services. The workers have sought medical insurance for employees hired through agencies.

The strike took a toll on neighbourhoods across Noida. General secretary of Federation of Noida Residents Welfare Associations KK Jain said garbage was not picked up regularly from sectors 34, 35, 50 and 51. In Sector 27, garbage piled up in front of a primary school. A resident of the sector, Ankita Nigam, said, "Garbage has remained scattered in E Block for a week now. It is blocking the road and creating a problem for residents and commuters." General manager of the Authority SP Singh, who is in charge of work circles 1-5, said discussions were held with the protesting workers, following which they resumed duty on Wednesday.

Stunt for reels turns fatal: Teen killed, 2 injured after Thar plunges into 50ft gorge in Faridabad

Gurgaon.(Agency)

A 15-year-old boy was killed and two of his three friends were critically injured after their SUV plunged almost 50ft into a gorge in Faridabad's Sirohi village on Tuesday. While sources claimed the accident happened because they were filming a stunt video on a rocky terrain in the Aravalli hills, police spokesperson Yashpal Yadav said the victims were speeding and lost control of the vehicle.

Vedang Babu alias Sohan (15), a Class 9 student, was declared dead at Al-Falah Medical College and Hospital. Originally from Siwan district in Bihar, his current residence was Karnera village of Ballabgarh. The critically injured included the driver, Vikas Kumar (21), and Himmat. The duo underwent treatment at the same hospital on Tuesday and were said to be stable. "Both Vikas and Himmat took voluntary discharge from the hospital on Wednesday and now they will undergo treatment in Delhi. They are out of danger," an investigator said. A fourth companion, Vikram,



sustained minor injuries. Police have booked Vikas under sections 281 (rash driving) and 106 (death due to negligence) of the BNS. The accident occurred around 2.30pm when the four friends drove their Thar off the main road

and onto a rough trail. Sources claimed the group were making reels on the edge of the gorge when the car rolled into it, shattering on impact. Locals passing through the trail witnessed the vehicle fall and alerted police and villagers. Several

villagers rushed to the spot, climbed down into the gorge, and pulled out the injured youths before police arrived. The three seriously injured were taken to Al-Falah Medical College, where doctors declared Sohan dead. Police shifted his body to the mortuary of BK Hospital for a post-mortem examination and informed the family. Police and local authorities remained at the site until late evening, using a crane to retrieve the mangled vehicle from the gorge. An officer said the SUV, which is registered in Deoria district of Uttar Pradesh, was brought to Faridabad about a month ago by Vikas's family. Vikas is self-employed while Sohan's father works in a private company, he said. Sirohi village, nestled in the Aravalli hills along Ballabgarh-Sohna Road, is known for its rocky terrain. There are some small lakes in the area. One such waterbody, Panikot Lake, also called Sirohi Lake, draws visitors from Delhi-NCR for photography and short trips, earning the area the nickname "Mini Ladakh."

Haryana gets 1 lakh HPV vaccine doses ahead of Feb 28 rollout

Gurgaon.(Agency)

Haryana has begun district-level preparations for the human papilloma virus (HPV) vaccination campaign, scheduled for national launch on Feb 28, with health facilities across the state put on alert to meet strict preparedness and reporting requirements laid down by the Union health ministry.

The campaign will target adolescent girls who are 14 years old but have not yet turned 15. The drive will be conducted over a three-month period and will be rolled out in phases, starting from district hospitals and then community health centres, primary health centres, and major urban polyclinics.

"Haryana has received 1,14,000 vaccines. Every district was given 2,000 vaccines on Wednesday. Total 3 lakh people will likely be vaccinated this year," said Dr Virender Yadav, director of Haryana NHM. Each district hospital has been designated as the preferred launch site for the campaign. During the district-level

inauguration, at least 50 eligible girls are to be vaccinated at the session site. The national launch will be held via webcast, with district launches to follow only after the conclusion of the national event. No vaccination activity is permitted before or during the national launch window. District administrations have been instructed to ensure the presence of a vaccinator, verifier, mobiliser or volunteer, and a medical officer at the launch session. All beneficiaries must be observed for at least 30 minutes after vaccination.

Only health facilities with a posted medical officer are eligible to be designated as HPV vaccination session sites. Facilities are required to meet a detailed pre-campaign preparedness checklist, including functional cold chain infrastructure like ILR, deep freezer, cold box and vaccine carrier. The vaccine being administered is Gardasil, a quadrivalent HPV vaccine manufactured by MSD. It is given as a single intramuscular dose of 0.5

ml in the left upper arm. Officials have been instructed that permissible vaccine wastage during the campaign must not exceed 1%, with emphasis on minimising wastage since the vaccine comes in single-dose vials. After vaccination, the left index finger of each beneficiary will be marked to avoid duplication. All vaccinations will be recorded online through the U-WIN portal and an OTP-based digital consent will be obtained prior to vaccination, though written parental consent will also be accepted. Vaccination certificates will be generated digitally and shared with beneficiaries.

Health officials said the emphasis of the campaign is on safe administration, strict monitoring, and uniform implementation across districts as Haryana prepares for the nationwide rollout later this week

"The vaccine works best when administered before exposure to the virus and or before the onset of sexual activity. By targeting girls aged nine to 14, the programme builds a wall of immunity at

On way to break Ramzan fast, man killed after Innova slams bike in Gurgaon; shocking dashcam video surfaces

Gurgaon.(Agency)

A 50-year-old man died on Tuesday, a day after a multi-purpose vehicle (MPV) rammied into a motorcycle from behind while it was stuck in a traffic jam on Gurgaon-Faridabad Road. Shakir, who was riding pillion on a Honda S being driven by his brother Mohammad Rashid (37), sustained serious injuries after being hit by a Toyota Innova. He was admitted to BK Civil Hospital in Faridabad, where he died on Tuesday. Based on a complaint, lodged by Rashid, and medical documents, an FIR was registered under sections 281 (rash driving) and 106 (causing death by negligence) of the BNS against the Innova driver at DLF Phase 1 police station. A police officer said, "We seized the car and will issue a notice to its owner." According to the FIR, the accident took place around 4.45pm. Rashid, a painter by profession

and native of Karmas Khedi village in UP's Bijnor district, said the brothers were returning from work in DLF Phase III and were heading towards Shakir's rented



accommodation in Dabua Colony, Faridabad. When they reached near a CNG pump in Gwal Pahari, traffic slowed down due to congestion. Rashid stopped his motorcycle behind a Grand Vitara car amid the jam when the white Toyota Innova allegedly came at high speed and

hit their bike from behind. The impact left the motorcycle wedged between the Grand Vitara in front and the Innova that struck it from behind, causing both brothers to fall and suffer injuries. A crowd gathered at the spot following the collision. Rashid said he noted down the registration number of the Innova at the spot. With the help of a passing vehicle, he took his brother to the hospital. Talking to TOI, Rashid said that after work, they were on their way to Faridabad to break the fast in Ramzan. "We returned to our native village where I am undergoing treatment for a fractured leg. My elder brother Shakir suffered serious injuries after he cracked his multiple bones sitting behind me on the bike. He is survived by three children and wife," Rashid said. Police found the damaged motorcycle and the Innova car. "Photographs.



been obtained". Rera upheld allottees' rights under Section 18(1) of the Real Estate (Regulation and Development) Act, saying "promoters cannot force endless waits" post-payment. Payments plus 10.85% interest from order date are "due forthwith", the officer said. On Sept 3, 2012, the couple had booked a 3,390 sq ft flat for Rs 3.4 crore. They paid Rs 1.5 crore, including adjustments from a prior MoU for cancelled shops, with possession due by Jan 3, 2015. Pronouncing the order following a complaint filed under Section 31 of the Act, Rera noted a prior order in the separate complaint and directed refund of Rs 1.5 crore plus 10% interest under Rule 15 of Haryana RERA Rules, 2017, citing Supreme Court precedent in IREO Grace Realtech vs Abhishek Khanna (2021).

Gurgaon-Noida RRTS corridor to also run metro service in city with 6 stations

Gurgaon.(Agency)

Haryana has cleared the alignment of Gurgaon-Faridabad-Noida Metro corridor, with NCRTC proposing six metro stations and two integrated RRTS-cum-metro hubs in the city.

Speaking in the Assembly on Wednesday, chief minister Nayab Singh Saini said gov't took "an important step in the direction of urban transport" by approving the alignment of RRTS corridor in the region. On Tuesday, the proposal was discussed at a meeting chaired by Saini, where NCRTC presented a plan to run both Noida Metro and metro services on the same alignment within the city. Under the plan, IFFCO Chowk and Sector 61 will serve as integrated RRTS-cum-metro hubs. Six other stations will be built at Sector 29, Millennium City Centre, Sector 52, Wazirabad, Sector 57 and Sector 58/61 as metro-only stops to support daily intra-city travel. An NCRTC official said the model would allow high-

speed RRTS trains to handle intercity movement, while metro services would cater to shorter trips within the city using the same corridor. They said the plan mirrors the Delhi-Meerut corridor, where metro services operate within Meerut on the RRTS route. In Dec last year, Haryana Mass Rapid Transport Corporation (HMRTC) asked NCRTC to assess the feasibility of planning a metro system along the RRTS alignment to improve local connectivity and avoid duplicating infrastructure.

The proposed corridor is 64km long, with 52km in Haryana, covering Gurgaon and Faridabad. The route will begin at IFFCO Chowk and proceed towards Gwalpahari via Sector 29, Millennium City Centre, and sectors 52, 57, and 61 along Golf Course Road Extension. NCRTC officials said the alignment was planned because it serves existing and upcoming sectors while avoiding ecologically sensitive areas, including Tau Devi Lal Biodiversity Park. For

integration, Rapid Metro line may need an extension of around 1km at Sector 61. The alignment is designed to connect with DMRC's Yellow Line at Millennium City Centre, Rapid Metro at Sector 61, and the proposed metro corridor between Sector 56 and Pachgaon. The corridor is expected to provide long-term connectivity between IGI Airport and upcoming Noida International Airport in Jewar. The project is estimated to cost around Rs 15,000 crore.

Saini said the detailed project report (DPR) will be prepared soon. "The corridor will link Delhi Metro, Rapid Metro, and the upcoming Gurgaon Metro network, and will support investment and employment in line with PM Narendra Modi's vision of a Viksit Bharat," he said.

Union minister Rao Inderjit Singh had earlier raised concerns about congestion at IFFCO Chowk, noting that the location already will get an RRTS station under Delhi-Gurgaon-Bawal corridor and an operational

Yellow Line metro station.

Earlier, Gurgaon Metro Rail Limited (GMRL) proposed that Gurgaon-Faridabad-Noida Metro corridor be built underground in the city rather than elevated. It also recommended starting the underground stretch from Rajiv Chowk instead of IFFCO Chowk, arguing that Rajiv Chowk serves denser residential and commercial areas in Old Gurgaon and could generate higher all-day ridership. GMRL said this option would integrate better with the planned Delhi-Gurgaon-Manesar-Bawal RRTS corridor, create a stronger multimodal hub, and deliver a more balanced network connecting Old and New Gurgaon while enabling future expansion towards Manesar and the railway station. In Faridabad, an integrated section of around 16km from Sainik Colony to Badshapur has been approved. The stretch will cover key areas, including NIT, Bata Chowk, Sectors 12 to 15, and parts of New Faridabad. It will connect with Delhi Metro's

Violet Line. In Faridabad area, two integrated RRTS-cum-metro stations.

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Ambedkar University, Jamia sign MoU for joint research

The Sikh Times New Delhi: Dr B R Ambedkar University Delhi and Jamia Millia Islamia on Monday signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to strengthen academic, research and infrastructural collaboration between the two institutions, marking a significant step towards interdisciplinary cooperation in higher education.

part of the MoU, both institutions will undertake collaborative research projects and joint supervision of PhD programmes to advance knowledge creation and research activities. The collaboration will focus on joint research ventures in areas such as education, social sciences, humanities, management and vocational studies, along with initiatives under PMMMNTTC. As

aimed at enriching student life and encouraging holistic development. The universities will share academic resources, including library holdings and laboratory facilities. The MoU further includes provisions for joint outreach, extension and capacity-building programmes, as well as consultancy projects aimed at addressing societal and industry needs. The collaboration underscores Ambedkar University Delhi's commitment to quality education and research while positioning both institutions as contributors to interdisciplinary innovation in the national capital.



Image of Ambedkar University building

Traffic chaos: rain, restrictions cause gridlock in Delhi

New Delhi: The movement of vehicles came to a crawl in several parts of the Capital on Tuesday as rain lashed the city and multiple restrictions remained in force in view of the India-EU summit, movement of VIPs and full-dress rehearsal of the Beating Retreat Ceremony at Vijay Chowk. Visuals from different areas showed steady rain reducing visibility and slowing vehicular movement, with waterlogging reported in several stretches. Commuters, especially office-goers,

said the combination of VIP-related curbs and rain significantly increased travel time during the peak traffic hours. "Here we go again, Delhi. VIPs are allowed to move smoothly, while there are traffic curbs for the rest of us. It's a tradition at this point. What do ordinary people do?" a commuter stuck in central Delhi traffic said. Traffic congestion was reported from different parts of the city, including Outer Ring Road, Delhi-Meerut Expressway towards Sarai Kale Khan, Ghazipur, Mehrauli-Badarpur Road, Bhikaji Cama Place, ITO, Rajpath, Janpath and surrounding areas. Several key roads in Lutyens' Delhi and central parts of the city were either restricted for parking and halting or subject to diversions. A commuter, who travels daily from Ghaziabad to Connaught Place for work, said his

usual travel time almost doubled. "I was rushing to work but met severe traffic jams on my way to Connaught Place. While it usually takes me around 35 minutes to get to my workplace, today it took me over an hour," he said. The police had advised people to avoid roads such as Janpath, Tolstoy Marg, Mathura Road, Bhairon Marg, Teen Murti Marg and Raisina Road, and to use alternative routes. They also urged commuters to keep buffer time, especially those heading to the ISBT, railway stations and airports, and to prefer public transport in view of the wet road conditions.

Air defence team felicitated for protecting skies during R-Day events

New Delhi: Chief of the Indian Air Force's Western Command Air Marshal Jeetendra Mishra today felicitated the Delhi Integrated Air Defence Centre (DIADC) for protecting the skies over Delhi-NCR and surrounding areas during the Republic Day Parade, the flypast, At Home at Rashtrapati Bhavan and the Beating Retreat Ceremony. Air Marshal Mishra felicitated DIADC personnel for their professionalism, dedication and steadfast service in ensuring secure airspace during the celebrations. The collective effort and seamless coordination amongst all services and national security stakeholders resulted in a comprehensive air defence coverage of the Delhi-NCR area, the IAF said. Advanced air defence assets and command-and-control elements were integrated through the IAF's Integrated Air Command and Control System.

Public Notice: NOTICE is hereby given to public at large that my client Mr. Rajesh Kumar is the owner of Plot no. 30, admeasuring 100 Sq. yards, Plot no. 31, admeasuring 152 Sq. yards, admeasuring 100 Sq. yards, and land admeasuring 152 Sq. yards, total admeasuring 504 Sq. yards, Village Bhopur, Pargana Jalalabad, Tehsil Modinagar, Distt. Ghaziabad vide Sale Deed dated 29.04.2025 which is registered as doc. no. 8749, book no.1, vol. no. 16227, page no. 155 to 170, on 29.04.2025, SRO-Modi Nagar. and intend to mortgage the said property with Cholamandalam Investment and Finance Company Limited. If any person(s) has/have any objection(s) or claim(s) with respect to the right, title or interest in the said property may please contact us within 7 days from the date of this notice on the number & address mentioned herein below, failing which my client(s) shall not be held responsible in any manner whatsoever.

Public Notice: It is for general information that I Meeta Chauhan W/O: Dardender Chauhan, R/O X 271-B, Gali No-55, near Shiv mandir, Brahmputra, Garhi, Mentu, North East Delhi, Delhi-110023, declare that the name of my husband has been wrongly written as Geeta Chauhan and Dharmender Chauhan in my minor daughter namely Muskan Chauhan aged 16 years in her 10th class educational document. The actual name of mine and my husband are MEETA CHAUHAN and Dardender Chauhan. Respectively which may be amended accordingly.

Public Notice: It is for general information that I Rohit S/o JAGBIR SINGH CHAUHAN R/O KHASRA NO 5524, MANDIR WALI GANJ, DELHI-110021, declare that the name of my father has been wrongly written as JAGBIR SINGH in my All Education Documents and in my PAN card No. DREPPR359R. Aadhar No. 261473614718 and in my Driving License No. DL1 20260107163. The actual name of my father is JAGBIR SINGH CHAUHAN, which may be amended accordingly.

Public Notice: I, Hargovind S/O Satbir Jain R/O E-5/23 Krishna Nagar delhi 110051, changed my name to Har Govind Jain.

Public Notice: I, Ramesh Nandini Pandey W/O Suresh Narayan Pandey R/O H.No.500, Street Mantola, Pahar Ganj, Delhi-110055 have changed my name to Ramesh Nandani Pandey.

Public Notice: I, Noreen Haroon W/O Haroon Zaki R/O 1053, mohalla kishan Ganj teliwara, Azad Market delhi 110006, changed my name to Noorin Haroon

Public Notice: I, Sahil WADHWANI S/O SUNIL WADHWANI R/O H.No-8, 2nd Floor, Block A, Rohini Sector 19, Rohini Sec-11, North West Delhi-110085, have changed the name of my minor son KRIDAY WADHWANI aged 11 Years and he shall hereafter be known as VIHAAN WADHWANI.

Public Notice: I, Anu Lehra W/O RAKESH KUMAR R/O MAHACHIANA (16), HAILLY MANDI, GURGAON, HARYANA-122504, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO ANNU FOR ALL FUTURE PURPOSES

Public Notice: I, Anu Lehra W/O RAKESH KUMAR R/O MAHACHIANA (16), HAILLY MANDI, GURGAON, HARYANA-122504, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO ANNU FOR ALL FUTURE PURPOSES

Public Notice: I, Gurmeet Kaur Taneja W/O Harjinder Singh S/O GURBAX SINGH R/O 24/24 GROUND FLOOR WEST PATEL NAGAR DELHI-110008 HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO HARJINDER PAL SINGH

Public Notice: I, Anu Lehra W/O RAKESH KUMAR R/O MAHACHIANA (16), HAILLY MANDI, GURGAON, HARYANA-122504, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO ANNU FOR ALL FUTURE PURPOSES

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Digital Classrooms Are Cornerstone of Punjab Sikhya Kranti's Systemic Reform: Harjot Singh Bains

Contd...Front page The Education Minister further informed that School Heads have been directed to organise School Level Unboxing Celebration Programmes between 21st February and 20th March by inviting parents, School Management Committees, village panchayats, retired teachers and ex-service-men to witness the inauguration of this new digital era. "We want the community to see the change in the government education system. Often, people look at government schools from the outside and do not realise the transformation inside. Let the parents see that their children are learning with the latest technology, perhaps even better than private schools in the area. This will build confidence in our public education system," he said. Responding to a

media query regarding TET qualifications, Harjot Singh Bains said, "I want to assure every teacher. Your jobs are secure. No one will lose their job." He said he understands the anxiety among experienced teachers who have been serving for 20 to 25 years and assured that legal solutions are being explored. He added that he remains in constant touch with teacher unions and is exploring every legal avenue, reiterating that the Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann-led Punjab Government stands firmly with its teachers. The initiative is being implemented with strict monitoring, safe installation protocols and transparent utilisation of public resources, ensuring that the digital transformation is delivered effectively

on the ground. With Punjab Sikhya Kranti steadily transitioning government schools from traditional classrooms to smart, technology-enabled learning spaces, the Bhagwant Mann Government has positioned Punjab's students at the forefront of digital preparedness, ensuring that they are equipped with the competencies essential for higher education, employment and leadership in a rapidly evolving world.

Public Notice: NOTICE is hereby given to public at large that my client Mr. Manu is the owner of Plot no. 71, admeasuring 150 Sq. yards, Plot no. 71, admeasuring 100 Sq. yards and Plot no. 71, admeasuring 150 Sq. yards and Plot no. 71, admeasuring 100 Sq. yards, total admeasuring 500 Sq. yards, out of Kharsa No. 1135, Village Bhopur, Pargana Jalalabad, Tehsil Modinagar, Distt. Ghaziabad vide Sale Deed dated 01.05.2025 which is registered as doc. no. 8953, book no.1, vol. no. 16234, page no. 259 to 274, on 01.05.2025, SRO-Modi Nagar, Ghaziabad, and intend to mortgage the said property with Cholamandalam Investment and Finance Company Limited. If any person(s) has/have any objection(s) or claim(s) with respect to the right, title or interest in the said property may please contact us within 7 days from the date of this notice on the number & address mentioned herein below, failing which my client(s) shall not be held responsible in any manner whatsoever.

Public Notice: NOTICE is hereby given to the General Public that Mr. Ram Kumar Shokeen, Mr. Raj Pal Shokeen & Mr. Pradeep Kumar, are the owner of Plot of land area measuring 375 Sq. Yds., approx. out of 927 Sq. Yds., out of Kharsa No. 251-252, Situated at Mohalla Pachaya, Near MCD School, Village Chhawia, District South West, New Delhi-110071 vide Final Decree in a Suit for Partition dated 02.12.2021 passed by Sri D.N. Patel, Chief Justice of the High Court Delhi in CS(OS) No. 213/2019 and said property to be sold to Mr. Rahul Shokeen & Mr. Manish Shokeen and same to be finance by SMFG India Home Finance Co. Ltd., General public hereby informed that if anybody has any charge/ interest in the said property or any kind of dispute kindly inform the undersigned in writing on the below mentioned address within 07 days of the present.

Public Notice: I, MANORAMA BEHERA Mother of JC-432591N Rank-SUB CLK (SD) Name-ASHOK KUMAR BEHERA Presently residing at VILL-HATASAHIL, PO-RAJENDRAPUR, VIA-KABIRPUR TEH-KUAKHIA, DIST-JAIPUR, ODISHA-755009, have changed my name from MANORAMA BEHERA to MANORAMA BEHERA for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 26/02/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

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Public Notice: I, SUDESH KUMARI wife of JC751016A, RANK-EX-SUB, Name-BALJIT SINGH MOR residing at PZ-26P51, STREET NO-6, INDRAPARK EXTN, PALAM COLONY, SOUTH WEST DELHI, NEW DELHI-110045, have changed my name from SUDESH KUMARI to SUDESH MOR for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 26/02/2026 before Executive Magistrate, Delhi.

Public Notice: I, RACHANA KATHURIA W/O RISHI KATHURIA R/O H NO-35, OLD GEETA COLONY, DELHI-110031, have changed my name to RACHANA KATHURIA for all future purposes.

Public Notice: It is for general information that I, Anchal Kumari D/o Deepak Kumar R/O A-79, Sector-25 Rohini, Ritahli, Rohini Sector-7, North West Delhi, Delhi-110085 declare that name of my mother has been wrongly written as Nandini Devi in my 10th Class Educational Documents and Nandani Devi in my 12th Class Educational Documents. The actual name of my mother is Raj Nandani.

Public Notice: It is for general information that I, Bhupendra Pratap S/O Indrapraday R/O House No A 280 Gali No 6, Part 5, Sonia Vihar, Badar Pur Khadar, Sabhapur, Seelam Pur, North East Delhi, Delhi-110094 declare that name of mine has been wrongly written as Bhupendra Pratap Yadav in my minor daughter Palak Yadav aged 17 years in her 10th Class Educational Documents. The actual name of mine is Bhupendra Pratap.

Public Notice: I, Karishma Manchanda D/o Sukhwant Singh Manchanda Ex W/o Nitin Sharma R/O H-167, Sarita Vihar, Sarita Vihar, New Delhi, South Delhi, Delhi-110076 declare that I got divorce from my husband Vite Court Decree HMA No. 1804/2025 dated 12/12/2025. Further I have changed the name of my minor daughter Raabhya Sharma aged 4 years and she shall hereafter be known as Raabhya Manchanda.

Public Notice: I, Ramesh sherawat D/o Ramesh kumar sehwawat R/O hno.238, pana bitrola dulan bawana delhi 110039, have changed my name Shruti sehwawat for all future purposes.

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Public Notice: I, Shabrua Khanam W/o Nazakat Ali Khan R/O 920, Block D, Jahangir Puri, North West, Delhi - 110033 have changed my name Sabura Khanam for all future purposes.

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NEWS BOX

Justice Department says it's reviewing whether any Epstein-related records were mistakenly withheld

WASHINGTON. (Agency)

The Justice Department said Wednesday that it was looking into whether it improperly withheld documents from the Jeffrey Epstein files after several news organizations reported that some records involving uncorroborated accusations made by a woman against President Donald Trump were not among those released to the public.

The announcement followed news reports saying that a massive tranche of records released by the Justice Department did not include several summaries of interviews that the FBI conducted with an unidentified woman who came forward after Epstein's 2019 arrest and claimed to have been sexually assaulted by both Trump and Epstein when she was a minor in the 1980s.

"Several individuals and news outlets have recently flagged files related to documents produced to Ghislaine Maxwell in discovery of her criminal case that they claim appear to be missing," the Justice Department said in a post on X. "As with all documents that have been flagged by the public, the Department is currently reviewing files within that category of the production." Maxwell, Epstein's longtime confidant, is serving a 20-year prison sentence on a sex trafficking conviction.

It said that if any document is found to have been improperly withheld and is responsive to the federally enacted law mandating the files' release, "the Department will of course publish it, consistent with the law." At issue is a series of interviews said to have been conducted in 2019 with a woman who made an allegation against Trump, who has consistently denied any wrongdoing in connection with Epstein. News reports from recent days say the accuser was interviewed four times but a summary of only one of those interviews was included in the publicly released files. The missing records were earlier reported by the journalist Roger Sollenberger on Substack and NPR, and have since been documented by other news organizations, including The New York Times, MS Now and CNN.

How Beijing Rescued 3 Chinese Scientists Jailed For Smuggling "Worms" In US

Washington. (Agency)

A case against three Chinese scientists, which the Donald Trump administration once framed as a national security win, has been dropped by Washington. The three researchers, who were accused of helping a colleague smuggle biological materials into the US, are back in China after the Justice Department abruptly dropped charges against them on Beijing's intervention, according to a report by the Associated Press.

The "biological materials" that the three Chinese scientists tried to smuggle were nothing dangerous but were mostly "tiny transparent worms". However, when the case came to light last year, US officials hailed the arrests as a victory for national security. Attorney General Pam Bondi said the government must be vigilant when foreign nationals try to "advance a malicious agenda".

What Was The Case

Xu Bai and Fengfan Zhang were charged with conspiring to help another scientist who shipped packages to them from China before she arrived in 2025 for temporary lab research at the University of Michigan. A third man, Zhiyong Zhang, was charged with making false statements.

Bai, Fengfan Zhang and Zhiyong Zhang were in jail for more than three months while the case was pending in federal court in Detroit. A judge suddenly dismissed the charges on February 5 at the Justice Department's request, and the three traveled home to China.

"India Has Major Role To Play": Israeli Minister On Peace In Middle East

Amsterdam. (Agency)

A strategic partnership with Israel, India and the US is critical in pushing prosperity and peace in the Middle East, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the State of Israel Sharron Haskel said.

Speaking to NDTV, Haskel said that "India is part of the good guys. It is a part of the forces that can stabilise. India is a major component of the military effort. I think it has a major role to play in stability, in pushing prosperity and peace in the region."

She said that Israel had pursued a diplomatic path from the beginning, however, Iran "deceived the world" and broke the agreements signed with them. Haskel said that US President Donald Trump's diplomatic channel is heading the right way and might lead to a good result. However, she expressed scepticism and said Iranians are just buying time.

"They call for the elimination of America. They call for the elimination of Israel. And so I'm not sure that tomorrow in the talks in Geneva, the Iranian will actually agree to a deal like that. I wish there would have been a diplomatic path," she said. Speaking about the protests in Iran and the subsequent killings of protesters, she said, "Iran is choosing a path of war. Look at what they've done internally in their own country, where peaceful demonstrators went out and marched in the streets just to ask for their liberty and their freedom. Little children who were shot dead by the IRGC forces, teenagers, young people. 35,000 people were butchered on the streets."

"If they can do that to their own people, try and think what they're capable of doing to their enemies," she added.

On Prime Minister Narendra Modi's first day of his two-day visit to Israel, he received a rousing welcome from his Israeli counterpart, Benjamin Netanyahu, and from the Indian community in Israel. He received a standing ovation at the Knesset, which he, as the only Indian prime minister, addressed.

Cuba says it foiled attack on soldiers, killed four aboard US-registered speedboat trying to 'infiltrate'

HAVANA. (Agency)

Cuba said it thwarted gunmen trying to infiltrate from the United States as its coastguard opened fire Wednesday at a Florida-registered speedboat near its shores, killing four people and wounding six. As a new source of tension between beleaguered Cuba and Donald Trump's Washington suddenly emerged, Havana's Interior Ministry said people arrested after an exchange of gunfire with the boat claimed they "intended to carry out an infiltration for the purposes of terrorism."

The ministry said assault rifles, handguns, Molotov cocktails, and other military-style gear were found on the vessel and the 10 occupants were all Cubans living in the United States. US Secretary of State Marco Rubio said Washington was seeking its own facts about the shooting and would "respond accordingly." "We're not going to base our conclusions on what they've (Cuba) told us, and I'm very, very confident that we will know the full story of what happened here," Rubio told reporters while on a trip to the Caribbean nation of St Kitts

and Nevis. "As we gather more information, then we'll be prepared to respond accordingly," he said. The attorney general of Florida, which lies just 100 miles (160 kilometers) from Cuba across the Florida Straits, ordered an investigation into the killings. The Cuban interior ministry earlier said the coast guard encountered the "illegal" US vessel, whose registration number it gave as FL7726SH, one nautical mile from Cayo Falcones island off Cuba's northern coast.

As the coast guard vessel approached, "shots were fired from the illegal speedboat," injuring the commander of the Cuban vessel, the ministry said. "As a result of the clash, at the time of this report, on the foreign side, four aggressors were killed and six others were wounded," the ministry said, adding that the injured were evacuated and received medical assistance. In its second statement the ministry released the names of seven of the people on the speedboat. It said most of the 10 had records in Cuba for "criminal and violent activity." A man sent

from the United States to take part in this operation was arrested on Cuban soil and confessed, it added. The Cuban government frequently reports incursions



by speedboats from the United States into its territorial waters.

People smuggling

Incursion incidents are often related to people-smuggling to the United States or drug trafficking, and have included chases, shootouts and armed attacks on border

guards. Shortages of food and medicine and daily blackouts drove an exodus from the island in recent years, with many heading to southern Florida, which has received waves of Cuban migration since the 1960s. Wednesday's shootings came as Washington softened a virtual oil siege of the island imposed by President Donald Trump in January after the US ouster of a top Cuba ally, Nicolas Maduro of Venezuela. Before Maduro's ouster by US forces on January 3, Cuba had relied on Venezuela, once a major oil producer, for about half its fuel needs. Faced with an outcry from Caribbean leaders, worried that starving 9.6 million Cubans of oil would cause the economy to collapse, Washington said it would allow

shipments of Venezuelan oil for "commercial and humanitarian use." The announcement came during the summit of Caribbean nations attended by Rubio, a Cuban-American who has spent his career hoping to topple Havana's government.

Hong Kong court quashes fraud conviction of ex-media mogul Jimmy Lai

HONG KONG. (Agency)

A Hong Kong appellate court on Thursday quashed fraud convictions against onetime media magnate Jimmy Lai, a rare victory in the prominent activist's legal battles. Lai, 78, an outspoken critic of China's ruling Communist Party who founded the now-defunct Apple Daily, will stay in prison because he was sentenced to 20 years weeks ago after being convicted in another case brought under a China-imposed national security law. That came more than five years after he was arrested under the law, which was used in a yearslong crackdown on many of Hong Kong's leading activists. His plight has evoked grief over the city's loss of press freedom and sparked an international outcry, though the city's authorities insist his case had nothing to do with media independence.

The conviction that was overturned Thursday was from an earlier fraud case in which prosecutors alleged that a consultancy firm controlled by Lai had

used office space that his media business rented for publication and printing purposes. Lai was sentenced to five years and nine months in prison in 2022 after being found guilty of two



fraud charges.

A lower court judge found that Lai and his co-defendant Wong Wai-keung had concealed that the firm was occupying space and violated lease agreement, saying he had used his media organization as a protective shield. He also fined Lai 2 million Hong Kong dollars (\$257,000). But judges at the higher court ruled that the prosecution had failed to prove beyond reasonable doubt that the defendants had made false representations, throwing out

both convictions. Neither defendant appeared in court.

The ruling could slightly reduce Lai's total prison time. The judges handling Lai's national security allowed the two sentences to be served concurrently for only two years, with the other 18 years to be added after the fraud sentence. The lengthy sentence has raised concerns that he could spend the rest of his life in prison.

Lai's children have expressed hopes that a visit by U.S. President Donald Trump to Beijing could help secure the release of their father, a British citizen. The White House has confirmed that Trump will travel to China on March 31 through April 2 to meet Chinese leader Xi Jinping.

U.K. Foreign Secretary Yvette Cooper has said Lai was sentenced for exercising his right to freedom of expression and called on the Hong Kong authorities to release him on humanitarian grounds. Chinese and Hong Kong authorities have defended Lai's sentencing in the national security case, saying it reflected the spirit of the rule of law. They also insisted the security law is necessary for the city's stability.

North Korea warns it could destroy South if threatened, but leaves door open for US dialogue

SEOUL. (Agency)

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un claimed his nuclear-armed country could "completely destroy" South Korea if its security were threatened, reiterating his refusal to engage with Seoul, state media said Thursday. However, he left the door open to dialogue with Washington as he concluded a ruling party congress outlining his policy goals for the next five years. The official Korean Central News Agency said that Kim also called for developing new weapons systems to bolster his nuclear-armed military, including intercontinental ballistic missiles that could be launched from underwater and an expanded arsenal

of tactical nuclear weapons, such as artillery and short-range missiles, targeting South Korea. He said the accelerated development of his nuclear and missile program in recent years "permanently cemented" the country's status as a nuclear weapons state, and called for the United States to discard what he perceives as "hostile" policies toward the North if it wants to resume long-stalled dialogue. South Korea's Unification Ministry said it was regrettable that the North continues to define inter-Korean relations as hostile and that Seoul will "patiently" pursue efforts to stabilize peace. The Workers' Party congress, which began last Thursday in

Pyongyang, came as Kim carves out a more forceful regional presence, leveraging his expanding military nuclear program and a growing alignment with Moscow that have deepened his standoffs with Washington and Seoul. KCNA said the North staged a military parade in the capital Wednesday as it wrapped up the congress, previously held in 2016 and 2021. Watching the parade with his increasingly prominent daughter — believed to be around 13 years old and named Kim Ju Ae — Kim Jong Un in a speech said his forces were capable of "immediately and thoroughly retaliating" against any hostile threat. But the state outlet did.

Rubio defends US ouster of Venezuela's Maduro to Caribbean leaders unsettled by Trump policies

BASSETERRE. (Agency)

U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio on Wednesday defended the Trump administration's military operation to capture Venezuela's Nicolas Maduro, telling Caribbean leaders, many of whom objected to that move, that the country and the region were better off as a result.

Speaking to leaders from the 15-member Caribbean Community bloc at a summit in the country of St. Kitts and Nevis, Rubio brushed aside concerns about the legality of Maduro's capture last month that have been raised among Venezuela's island-state neighbors and others. "Irrespective of how some of you may have individually felt about our operations and our policy toward Venezuela, I will tell you this, and I will tell you this without any apology or without any apprehension: Venezuela is better off today than it was eight weeks ago," Rubio told the leaders in a closed-door meeting, according to a transcript of his remarks later distributed by the U.S. State Department. Rubio said that since Maduro's ouster and the

effective takeover of Venezuela's oil sector by the United States, the interim authorities in the South American country have made "substantial" progress in improving conditions by doing "things that eight or nine weeks ago would have been unimaginable." The Caribbean leaders have gathered to debate pressing issues in a region that President Donald Trump has targeted for a 21st-century incarnation of the Monroe Doctrine meant to ensure Washington's dominance in the Western Hemisphere. The Republican administration has declared a focus closer to home even as Washington increasingly has been preoccupied by the possibility of a U.S. military attack on Iran. His trip to the region came as Cuba's government announced that its soldiers killed four people aboard a speedboat registered in Florida whose occupants it said opened fire on officers in Cuban waters.

"Suffice it to say, it is highly unusual to see

shootouts in open sea like that. It's not something that happens every day. It's



something, frankly, that hasn't happened with Cuba in a very long time," Rubio told reporters. He said that the U.S. is gathering its own information and that "we'll be prepared to respond accordingly."

Rubio downplays antagonism in US regional push

In his remarks to the group, America's top diplomat tried to play down any antagonistic intent in what Trump has

referred to as the "Donroe Doctrine." Rubio said the administration wants to strengthen ties with the region following the Venezuela operation and ensure that issues such as crime and economic opportunities are jointly addressed. "I am very happy to be in an administration that's giving priority to the Western Hemisphere after largely being ignored for a very long time," Rubio said. "We share common opportunities, and we share some common challenges. And that's what we hope to confront." He said transnational criminal organizations pose the biggest threat to the Caribbean while recognizing that many are buying weapons from the United States, a problem he said authorities are tackling. Rubio also said the U.S. and the Caribbean can work together on economic advancement and energy issues, especially because many leaders at the four-day summit have energy resources they seek to explore. "We want to be your partner in that regard," he said.

NEWS BOX

Three-day exhibition of development initiatives starts in Agartala

Agartala. (Agency)

A three-day mega exhibition has commenced today, focusing on developmental initiatives in Tripura that align with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of a developed and self-reliant India.

Rajya Sabha MP Rajib Bhattacharjee stated that the exhibition's objective is to showcase significant development projects and welfare initiatives implemented by both the Central and State governments.

These initiatives encompass infrastructure expansion projects, accomplishments of self-help groups, start-up initiatives, digital services, and social security schemes. A total of 80 stalls have been set up at Agartala Children's Park, providing digital presentations and awareness programs tailored to engage youth, students, and the younger generation.

Notable institutions such as DRDO and the Territorial Army have presented their activities and plans at the exhibition. The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is also participating to highlight India's advancements in space science and technology.

The students have demonstrated robotics and innovative technological models, adding to the exhibition's appeal for the younger generation. The exhibition also features displays of Agartala's Smart City Mission projects through modern technological showcases.

Further, developments in Tripura's tourism sector are being emphasized to promote the state as an emerging tourist destination. The Tourism Corporation has showcased initiatives aimed at attracting both domestic and international tourists, along with strategies to promote Tripura's tourism potential beyond the state.

Over 77 lakh youths apply for 'Yuva Sathi' scheme in nine days

Kolkata. (Agency)

Amid the West Bengal government's claims of large-scale employment generation, the newly launched 'Yuva Sathi' scheme has received an overwhelming response, with more than 77 lakh unemployed youths registering within just nine days forcing the state to think of extending the deadline of the registration process.

The scheme, announced by Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, promises monthly financial assistance of Rs 1,500 to unemployed youths aged between 21 and 40 years.

Registration for the scheme began on February 16, following its announcement in the state budget, and Thursday marked the last scheduled day for submitting applications.

However, officials indicated that the deadline could be extended in view of the massive response. From the very first day, the scheme saw a surge in applications, reflecting the scale of unemployment concerns among the state's youth. According to government data, candidates who have passed Madhyamik (Class 10) and fall within the specified age group are eligible. Beneficiaries will receive Rs 1,500 per month until they secure employment, or for a maximum period of five years. Applications can be submitted both online and through 'Swanirbhar Bangla' camps organised across the state. Sources at Nabanna said that till Wednesday, a total of 76.77 lakh applications had been received under the Yuva Sathi scheme. District-wise data shows the highest number of applications from South 24 Parganas, followed by Murshidabad, North 24 Parganas, Bankura and Purulia.

Safety inspection over as Chennai Metro's Vadapalani-Poonamallee corridor set for commercial launch

CHENNAI. (Agency)

The final safety inspection of Chennai Metro Rail's Corridor 4 Phase II stretch between Vadapalani and Poonamallee Bypass has concluded successfully, bringing the project a step closer to commercial operations.

Chennai Metro Rail Limited expects the Commissioner of Metro Rail Safety's report within days, T Archunan, director (projects), said, following late-evening speed trials and



subsequent Operation Control Centre-linked tests conducted on Wednesday by Anant Madhukar Chowdhary of the Commissioner of Metro Rail Safety.

Once the report is received, the Railway Board is expected to grant authorisation to begin passenger services, likely in March. The conclusion of the safety inspection brought palpable relief to metro rail officials, capping months of gruelling work to ready a complex piece of urban infrastructure — a double-decker metro viaduct slicing through one of Chennai's most congested corridors.

Minister Rushikesh Patel slams Congress: 'Indecent protest at global AI summit shameful'

ON THE first day of the general discussion on the Budget for 2026-27, Energy and Panchayat Minister Rushikesh Patel hit out at the Congress, saying that the "indecent protest by Congress workers at an international level AI summit is shameful for the country." "Now is the era of AI and Deep Tech. Recently, India [...]

Ahmedabad. (Agency)

ON THE first day of the general discussion on the Budget for 2026-27, Energy and Panchayat Minister Rushikesh Patel hit out at the Congress, saying that the "indecent protest by Congress workers at an international level AI summit is shameful for the country."

"Now is the era of AI and Deep Tech. Recently, India hosted the AI Impact Global Summit in Delhi. Leaders from all over the world participated," the minister said, adding that in its opposition to BJP, Congress now seems to be "directly opposing the interests of India".

"When new opportunities for development have opened up for the country's youths, the Congress also opposed the AI summit with the aim of creating doubts in their minds and only getting cheap fame for itself," said Patel.

"Gujarat is making rapid progress in the start-up sector. Similarly, to ensure that the youth get opportunities in the AI sector too, More than Rs

850 crore has been allocated and a Data Fusion Centre and Centre of Excellence have been announced," the minister said. Sharing details of multiple schemes proposed in the Budget,



Rushikesh Patel said that to build an educated, excellent and future-ready youth, the budget has provided Rs 226 crore for the 'Namoo Gujarat Skill and Employment Mission'. In which the youth will be given skill training as per the demand of the industrial sector.

Under the PM Poshan Yojana, the work of constructing modern centralised mid-day meal kitchens is in progress in 74 talukas and Rs 552 crore has been provided in this regard.

To ensure that students get engineering education at a low fee, an increase of around 2,500 new seats is planned in the coming year, he said.

"A provision of Rs 60 crore has been made for the purchase of medical equipment to provide closed system ICU services at six government civil hospitals. With this dedicated doctors, nursing staff will be available for patients admitted to ICU, all types of multispecialist doctors will be available in these closed system ICUs, the quality of treatment will improve and the mortality rate will also be reduced," he added. Hosting the Commonwealth Games will give a new impetus to the process of developing Gujarat as the sports capital of India, he said.

Bengaluru Suburban Rail Project to serve 19 lakh commuters, take 40,000 buses off roads

BENGALURU. (Agency)

The Bengaluru Suburban Railway Project (BSRP), once completed, will cater to nearly 19 lakh passengers and help remove around 40,000 buses from city roads, easing congestion, Lakshman Singh, Managing Director of Rail Infrastructure Development Company (Karnataka) Limited (K-RIDE), has said.

The project will eliminate around 24 level crossings and integrate with 17 Metro stations, 22 railway stations, and the bus network wherever feasible, he added. The MD was speaking while delivering a presentation on 'Building Tomorrow's Cities with Integrated Rail Network' at Concrete Panorama & Deminar 2026, organised by the Indian Concrete Institute, Bengaluru Centre, on Wednesday.

He highlighted that the Rs 23,342 crore project spans 148-km with 57 stations across four corridors — Sampige, Mallige, Parijata and

Kanaka — collectively branded as 'Samparka', meaning connectivity.

"According to IISc data, the network is projected to carry 19 lakh passengers daily by 2027 if all



corridors are ready," he said, adding that this would effectively remove nearly 40,000 buses from city roads, significantly easing the congestion," Singh said. The presentation also

added that the suburban network will integrate with 17 Metro stations, 22 railways stations and major bus depots, ensuring seamless multimodal connectivity. Stations are being designed with universal accessibility, additionally installing solar panels, water harvesting systems and sustainable building practices that aims to reduce nearly 10 million tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions annually and harvest 22 million litres of water per year, he said.

A key highlight of the presentation was the design of the Yeshwantpur interchange, which will integrate suburban rail, Metro and Railways. The five-storey station will feature two basement parking levels and stacked corridors, with two suburban corridors running one above the other which will be a first-of-its-kind configuration in the city.

Bengali voters in India and abroad want to get rid of TMC: BJP's Samik Bhattacharya in Surat

Bhattacharya was speaking to mediapersons after a meeting with people from West Bengal, including migrant workers, who are staying in Surat.

Surat. (Agency)

Ahead of the Bengal polls scheduled this year, West Bengal BJP chief and BJP MP Samik Bhattacharya on Wednesday claimed that Bengalis living across India and foreign countries were "working hard to bring a BJP government in West Bengal."

Bhattacharya was speaking to mediapersons after a meeting with people from West Bengal, including migrant workers, who are staying in Surat.

"Bengalis fear that if the BJP does not come to power this time, they will lose their state.

The internal security of our country is compromised due to West Bengal," said Bhattacharya.

After a meeting with people of West Bengal who were staying in Surat, the MP claimed, "We have a porous border with Bangladesh of around 2,200 km. Bangladeshi 'jihadis' are sent to India through

the West Bengal passage. The 26/11 terror attack incident had links to West Bengal. A terrorist had taken two SIM cards from a teashop in Kolkata. In 2004, four terrorists from



Pakistan came to India through the West Bengal passage. They got identity cards from West Bengal."

"A large chunk of fake Indian currency originates from a particular district — Malda district's Kaliachak region — which is in West Bengal, as per a statement issued by Central

authorities," claimed Bhattacharya.

Bhattacharya said, "The voters of West Bengal and those Bengali voters who are in Gujarat, Chennai, Coimbatore, Uttar Pradesh, etc, and those staying abroad in the USA, Canada, and London, want to get rid of the Trinamool Congress because they fear Bengal will slip out of all of our hands. This time, people have made up their mind to bring BJP in West Bengal."

Bhattacharya appealed to the public to give the BJP a chance, claiming that it was only the saffron party that could save Bengal. "The politics of West Bengal has become polarised, earlier it was dominated by Congress, then CPM, and now Trinamool. Today the public is divided between BJP and Trinamool Congress," added Bhattacharya.

Less than 1% of annual budget earmarked for Environment and climate change dept

A provision of Rs 76.16 crore was allocated in the revised estimates for FY 2025-26 for the climate department.

Mumbai. (Agency)

The Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation's (BMC) environment and climate change department drew less than one percent in the civic budget for the financial year 2026-27 announced on Wednesday. The environment and climate change department has been allocated Rs 159.82 crore for the upcoming fiscal year, which accounts for only 0.33 percent of the BMC's capex fund of Rs. 48,164 crore.

A provision of Rs 76.16 crore was allocated in the revised estimates for FY 2025-26 for the climate department. A key project which will draw the department's focus in the coming year is implementing Project MANAS (Mumbai Air Network for Advanced Sciences) where the civic body is set to install a network of 75 new low cost sensors across Mumbai in collaboration with IIT Kanpur.

While the city is currently home to 28 continuous ambient air quality monitoring stations (CAAQMS)

HC stays proceedings on FIRs filed after Gujarat banned Rolling paper and 'gogo' cones

Vadodara. (Agency)

Over two months after a prohibitory notification of the Gujarat Home Department led to a crackdown and registration of FIRs against traders for storage, distribution and sale of rolling paper and pre-rolled cones, the Gujarat High Court has stayed the proceedings in the cases, by way of interim relief.

The court also issued a notice to the state to respond in the matter challenging the validity of the notification of the state government dated December 16, 2025. Justice M R Mengdey of the Gujarat High Court was hearing a special criminal application filed by Pune-based Ality Paper Industries Private Limited, which markets the rolling paper products under the brand name 'Stash Pro' as well as two other petitioners engaged in trading of the rolling paper in Gujarat, whose premises were raided by the police in Ahmedabad and Vadodara, respectively, and goods worth Rs 72 lakhs seized.

The oral order of the High Court, delivered on Monday, notes the submission of the petitioners that the notification dated December 16, 2025, issued by the Secretary of the Home Department, was "without any authority" and that as per the provisions of the Section 163 of the Bharatiya Nagrik Suraksha Sanhita, the power to issue such notifications lies with the Executive Magistrate.

The court, in its oral order, noted that the Public Prosecutor appearing for the state, "without entering into the merits", made a statement that "as an interim arrangement, the further proceedings of the FIRs registered on the basis of the impugned notification, be stayed".

The oral order of the court also directed the police to return the seized products to the petitioners. The order states, "...by way of interim relief, the further proceedings of the FIRs registered on the basis of the impugned notification, are stayed."

20 ABVP activists held for vandalism at Azim Premji University in Bengaluru

The accused, aged between 18 and 25, allegedly entered premises, assaulted security guards and a BA student.

BENGALURU. (Agency)

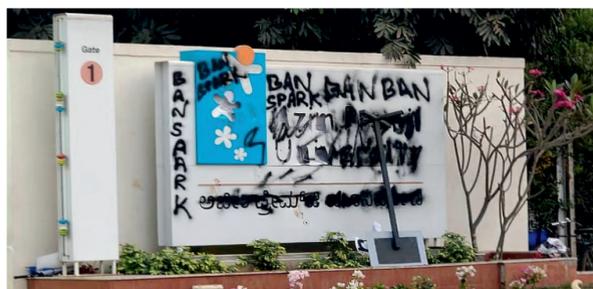
Sarjapura police on Wednesday arrested 20 activists of the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) for trespassing and assaulting security guards and a student, as well as vandalising property, on the Azim Premji University premises on Tuesday.

The ABVP activists allegedly went on a rampage during their protest against a programme held on the university premises, which they termed as "anti-national". Police told TNIE that several activists were taken into custody on Tuesday evening, of whom 20 were later formally arrested following a complaint. The accused, aged between 18 and 25,

are students of different colleges in the city.

According to the FIR filed on Tuesday by S Wilson (56), the university's security manager, around 25 ABVP activists gathered outside the university's main entrance, raised slogans, and waved the Tricolour after a post about a programme was uploaded on the university website.

During the protest, the activists allegedly entered the premises and assaulted security guards and a first-year BA student. They also allegedly issued death threats to the security staff and smeared black paint on the signboard, besides writing slogans such as "ban SPARK" and "ban AISA".



The security personnel injured are Jagadeesh, Chandan Mahalik, Chitr Bahadur, Naresh, Sripathi and Harish. The injured student, Mohammed Ali Ahmed, is undergoing medical treatment.

The college authorities said no programme, as alleged by the ABVP activists as to be related to an alleged rape by an Indian soldier in Kashmir, was held on the premises.

The Sarjapura police have registered a case under Sections 191 (rioting), 189 (unlawful assembly), 351 (criminal intimidation), 115 (voluntarily causing hurt), 352 (intentional insult with intent to provoke breach of peace) and 329 (criminal trespass) of the BNS.

Home Minister Dr G Parameshwara said a seminar was being held at the university.

"Whatever be the topic discussed at the seminar, no one has the right to interpret it in their own way and assault students.

They have taken the law into their hands. There is no option for that, and action will be taken against them," he said.

India's AI moment: For substance after the summit

The recent AI Impact Summit in Delhi was more than a diplomatic gathering—it was a declaration of intent. For years, the global conversation on artificial intelligence has been monopolised by the Global North—nations that, for all their computational prowess, lack firsthand experience of the challenges faced by the developing world. India's singular achievement at this summit was to force a reckoning with that asymmetry.

The landmark New Delhi Frontier AI Impact Commitments—signed by nearly all major AI companies, Indian and international alike—commits to context-aware evaluation and multilingual deployment tailored to local environments. This is no symbolic gesture. For a country as linguistically and culturally diverse as India, it is a structural necessity. Unless the entities controlling AI power are willing to include the rest of the world in the conversation, our demands for inclusion will remain unheard. That they signed is significant.

But the most striking revelation was not in a policy document—it was in the expo's hallways. People were literally pushing doors to join sessions. Global tech leaders, accustomed to cautious or hostile public reactions in Western capitals, were blindsided by the sheer enthusiasm. Young Indians do not view AI through the lens of fear—of displacement, control or existential risk. They see it as a partner: a tool for uplift of self and progress of the nation. That is a civilisational mindset shift, and the world should pay attention.

Enthusiasm, however, is not policy. Converting this energy into genuine AI sovereignty begins with a hard question: do we have enough people who can build AI from the ground up? Not just fine-tune it or wrap it in an app, but construct it from first principles? The answer today is: barely. Building foundational AI for India requires a fundamentally different way of thinking. Indian languages demand novel approaches to tokenisation that cannot simply be borrowed from English-centric architectures. The constraint of limited compute is not merely a handicap; it is a design challenge that forces us to innovate.

A clear proof of this potential was on display at the summit. Sarvam AI, the Bengaluru-based startup, unveiled sovereign foundational models like Sarvam-30B and Sarvam-105B, built specifically to reason and code within India's unique constraints. But Sarvam's impact goes beyond the models it releases; the company itself operates like a foundry for talent. By tackling the hardest problems in AI engineering—training large-scale models on constrained infrastructure—it is forging a new generation of research engineers who possess rare, high-value skills. We will soon see new companies launched by folks trained at this 'Sarovam foundry', carrying that expertise into the wider ecosystem. But a few companies acting as a training ground is not enough. We need a concerted, nationally coordinated effort to expand this talent pool—through universities and industry partnerships that rethink what engineering education in an AI-native India should look like.

Gaps no one is talking about

Even the best engineers hit a ceiling without deep fundamental research. Pushing the boundaries of what AI can do—particularly under severe compute and data constraints—requires sustained investment in academic enquiry that does not strictly aim for a product launch in six months. This is precisely where India's AI ambitions are most vulnerable. Building models that genuinely serve the population—reason about land records in regional scripts, or interpret a health worker's voice note—requires original research.

India's Iran dilemma deepens amid war talk

For New Delhi, Iran is the closest and cheapest source of hydrocarbons.

THE theocratic regime in Iran is a cruel and oppressive one, which has maintained itself in power via the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps and the Basij militia. Its recent crackdown, when thousands of people are believed to have been killed, indicates how little it cares about its citizens. But does the US have any right to overthrow the Iranian regime and dictate policy to it? The Trump regime has also shown signs of authoritarianism, but does anyone have the right to oust it by force? As for the nuclear issue, Trump himself claimed that the US had destroyed the Iranian nuclear programme in its attack in 2024. So, what is so urgent and threatening that the US is readying for war against Iran? The US has now amassed a huge force in West Asia: Hundreds of warplanes, two aircraft carrier battle groups comprising 35 warships, 50,000 ground troops, in addition to 200 Israeli warplanes. One difference between now and 2003, when Iraq was the target, is that NATO and the EU are not a part of it. Even the closest US ally, the UK, has refused to participate and asked the US not to use its base in Diego Garcia. Saudi Arabia and the UAE have also refused to allow the US to use their territory for attacks on Iran. Such a force, let us be clear, cannot by itself bring about a regime change. Sure, it can bomb Iran at will and bring huge damage. But to effect a regime change, the US would need to commit troops on the ground and it is clearly not prepared for that. It may be hoping to trigger an uprising, but that card has already been played last year and is spent. Iran is not entirely defenceless. The Iranian air defence system has been systematically upgraded with new hardware, new missiles have been added to the arsenal and the whole system de-centralised. It already has a vast arsenal of hypersonic and other ballistic missiles and their targeting could have been enhanced with Chinese space assets. Iran has also threatened to close the Strait of Hormuz through which 20-25% of global oil trade passes. So, a war will result in destruction in Iran, but also exact a toll on the US, Israel and places like Qatar, the UAE and Oman, where the US bases are located. A disruption of the oil trade could impact the wider world. Possibly, the Houthi allies of Iran could make shipping difficult in the Red Sea, affecting the traffic to and from the Suez Canal.

Just what the American goals are is difficult to fathom. In the case of Iraq in 2003, the US falsely claimed that Iraq had nuclear weapons that threatened the US. The US had no explicit UN sanction to attack Iraq and neither does it have one now for Iran. Under the UN Charter, either self-defence or an explicit resolution can justify an attack.

What did happen in September 2025 was that under the "snapback" provision, previous UN sanctions were



reimposed, but these only included a ban on uranium enrichment and restrictions on ballistic missile activities. But the mechanism did not include legal permission for the US to attack. The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) that placed verifiable restrictions on the Iranian nuclear programme was formally backed by the UN Security Council Resolution 2231 (2015) that endorsed the nuclear deal and incorporated snapback mechanism if Iran violated its commitments, which Iran has done. But the US had trashed the JCPOA and is now acting on its own to bring Iran's nuclear programme to heel. The only authority it seems to have is its military power. And it is being egged on by Israel to exercise it. Note that Israel itself has an arsenal of around 60 nuclear weapons. The developments highlight the continuing Indian dilemma in relation to Iran. For India, Iran is the closest and cheapest source of hydrocarbons. It is also the landmass through which India had hoped to develop multi-modal trade corridors to Afghanistan, Central Asia and Europe and invested in developing a port in Chabahar. The country is a technological powerhouse that can make and launch satellites. It offers opportunities for Indian business to invest in a range of areas — from oil and gas

to steel — as well as for trade in agricultural commodities, machinery and pharmaceuticals. All this has come to naught on account of the US neo-imperial policy of wanting to decide what is good for other countries and using force to get its way. It began with blocking the India-Pakistan-Iran gas pipeline project in 2008. This was followed by coercing New Delhi to stop importing Iranian oil in 2019. It has now extended to abandoning its long effort to develop the Chabahar port. Just how far India is willing to go to oblige the US is not clear. Recently, it seized three oil tankers in its EEZ for violating US laws relating to the oil trade of Iran and Russia. The three ships had been sanctioned by the US Treasury last year for allegedly transporting Iranian oil. India's relations with the US are extremely important. Those with Iran may not be in that category, but they do have their own place in our foreign policy, which is shaped by our national interests. At some point, New Delhi has to figure out the extent to which we can allow a third country to dictate our national interests. A war leading to large-scale destruction in Iran and/or a disruption of the oil trade is certainly not in our interests, especially when we can see that the country that is responsible for it claims to be our strategic ally.

Sans principals: Fill posts in HP schools to safeguard standards

Filling sanctioned leadership posts is not an optional reform; it is a basic responsibility

NEARLY 800 senior secondary schools in Himachal Pradesh are functioning without regular principals. This is a sign of administrative drift in a state already struggling with fiscal stress. In the absence of stable leadership in schools, academic standards, regulatory compliance and institutional credibility face risk. The crisis cannot be viewed in isolation. Himachal's fiscal health is fragile. With mounting debt and limited revenue sources, the state's dependence on Central transfers has long been evident. This year, it is unlikely to receive the Rs 6,000 crore in revenue deficit grants (RDG) it had counted on, tightening the budgetary squeeze. But financial distress cannot become an excuse for governance paralysis. Filling sanctioned leadership posts is not an optional reform; it is a basic responsibility. The timing makes the vacancies more damaging. Many government schools are seeking or maintaining CBSE affiliation. It is a compliance-heavy process, requiring constant oversight — from infrastructure certification to inspection responses. A



regular principal anchors this ecosystem. Without one, documentation falters, accountability weakens and the risk of conditional affiliations or showcause notices rises.

The government has attempted to rationalise schools with low enrolment through cluster models over the past two years. Without full-time principals, such restructuring risks becoming an exercise in consolidation without quality control. Structural reform cannot succeed if the leadership spine is missing.

Beyond compliance lies the deeper cost to students. Principals monitor syllabus completion, board exam readiness and teacher performance. Acting heads, burdened with dual roles, cannot provide sustained academic direction. The result is fragmented planning and declining morale. Himachal Pradesh has long been praised for its educational achievements. That reputation is now threatened by inertia. Administrative caution about mid-session disruption rings hollow when vacancies stretch endlessly. Students cannot be made collateral damage in that stalemate. Swift appointments are essential to protect their future.

India's AI road dotted with challenges

Ambitions must be tempered by inescapable realities such as energy poverty and water stress

INDIA has every reason to be proud of the success of the AI Impact Summit. This was the fourth in a series of summits which began at Bletchley Park (UK) in November 2023, followed by Seoul in May 2024 and Paris in February 2025. While the focus of the first two summits was on AI safety and risk management, the Paris and Delhi summits shifted the emphasis decidedly towards a more positive and forward-looking narrative. If the Paris conference billed itself as the AI Action Summit, the Delhi meeting went further to brand itself as the AI Impact Summit. The Paris event was co-hosted by French President Emmanuel Macron and Prime Minister Narendra Modi, while the Delhi summit had Macron as a principal guest who delivered the keynote address. This was solely India's show, marking the first instance of a country from the Global South hosting such a summit. While there were several heads of state/governments in attendance, the AI superpowers — the US and China — were decidedly under-represented. The US delegation was led by Michael Kratsios, Assistant to the President and Director of White House Office of Science and Technology. He is said to be the AI czar in the Trump administration. China was represented by its Vice Minister of Science and Technology, Chen Jiacheng. In Paris, the US was represented by Vice President JD Vance and China by Vice Premier Zhang Guoqing. However, the US was over-represented by its high-tech industry giants, including Sam Altman of OpenAI, Dario Amodei of Anthropic, Demis Hassabis of Google DeepMind and Sundar Pichai of Google/Alphabet. The summit was part policy forum, part technology and trade exposition, with countries as well as companies showcasing their capabilities and products. For the large number of Indians visiting the

sprawling venue of Bharat Mandapam, this was a rare and welcome exposure to frontier technologies and their promise for economic and social development. It was also an opportunity for Indian companies to display their mastery of high technology, though the unfortunate instance of Galgotias University passing off a Chinese-built robot as its own was a disastrous public relations snafu. While the Paris Declaration (2025) was rejected by the US and the UK, reportedly because it emphasised global and inclusive governance and neglected national security concerns, the New Delhi Declaration was a consensus document endorsed by the UK and the US. This required some creative drafting. The declaration emphasised "democratic diffusion" rather than inclusivity. The reference to Global AI Impact Commons suggested the need for norms but avoided any reference to multilateral norm-setting or global governance.

The United Nations was ignored. This may have kept the US on board, but may pose a challenge for India going forward. For a developing country like India, multilateralism and global governance are indispensable principles in dealing with challenges which are cross-border, cross-domain and truly global in dimension. AI is precisely such a challenge. It is a general-purpose technology of immense power and promise. Its domination by just one or two nations will limit the agency of developing countries.

A visit to various stalls at the summit was inspiring in many ways. One witnessed many creative applications of AI geared to India's specific developmental needs. They offered solutions at the grassroots level and in a form and language that could be tailored to the communities being served. There was an AI-assisted optical scan which

could provide almost instant data on several vital health indicators. Or AI-enabled tablets which can store all textbooks that a child takes to school and enable learning through text and visuals. A demonstration of the use of AI in healthcare and education was the most impressive. It was also inspiring to see young Indians explaining complex technologies and applications with confidence



and enthusiasm. If our older generation is fearful of the significant risks that AI clearly entails, this generation is excited by its promise and embraces it boldly.

There is no doubt that the summit established India as a significant and aspiring AI power. While PM Modi did sound a cautionary note about the importance of safety, the emphasis was clearly on making India one of the leading AI powers. The summit presented this goal as an exciting and rewarding forward trajectory. But the challenges and constraints are sobering.

AI depends upon immense data-crunching capacity which comes from high-end Graphics Processing Units (GPUs). The US is estimated to have 1.5 million GPUs in operation, with a target of three million over the next few years. China has half a million GPUs, with a target of 800,000. India has only 38,000, with a target of 100,000 by the end of this year. The whole of Africa has only 1,000 GPUs. PM Modi announced at the summit that India aspired to become the data centre for the world. But data centres require a huge scale of power and large quantities of water for cooling. A 100-megawatt (MW) AI data centre can use up to 1.9 million litres of water per day — roughly what a small city consumes.

Currently, India has 1.5-1.7 gigawatts (GW) capacity of data centres, with a target of 8 GW by 2030. The corresponding capacity of China and the US is 7.5-9 GW and 14-16 GW, respectively. Their target is 12 GW (China) and 25 GW (US) by 2030. Given the scale and variability of power consumption, grid power is not always the best source of electricity. Most data centres are settling for captive power and exploring small modular nuclear reactors as the solution. For India, an energy-poor country, with electricity consumption per capita lower than the global average, AI plans must not be at the cost of efforts to reduce and eliminate energy poverty. Diversion of power for catering to ambitious AI plans would be counter-productive. The same argument applies to water availability. Water security is already a growing challenge and the volume of water required for even a modest AI plan may expand economic inequalities and spawn undesirable social and political consequences. India's AI ambitions must be tempered by these inescapable realities and should be harnessed to remove these constraints.

Woman constable, 2-yr-old son killed in car fire after collision with dumper in Rampur

Rampur.(Agency)

A 23-year-old woman constable and her two-year-old son were killed after their car caught fire following a collision with a dumper truck in Rampur district, police said on Thursday. The deceased constable, Lata, was returning from a trip to Nainital with her husband Dan Singh and his cousin Ravi when the accident occurred near Aanga village, close to Kashipur, late Wednesday night. The family was travelling in a recently purchased Swift Dzire car. According to reports, the dumper hit the car from the side, causing the petrol tank to rupture and the vehicle to burst into flames. Dan Singh and Ravi managed to escape despite suffering burn injuries. However, Lata and her son were trapped inside the burning car. Local residents and petrol pump employees nearby attempted to extinguish the fire using fire extinguishers before police and fire brigade teams arrived. It took around 10-15 minutes to control the blaze. The child died on the spot, while Lata succumbed to her injuries while being taken to Bareilly for advanced treatment. The dumper driver fled the scene. Additional Superintendent of Police Anurag Singh reached the spot. Traffic was disrupted for some time before the damaged vehicle was removed. Police have launched a search for the absconding driver.

Special funds for Padma awardees and slums in Varanasi Municipal Corporation budget

Varanasi.(Agency)

The Municipal Corporation is continuously working towards the development of Varanasi. In a significant meeting of the executive committee on Wednesday evening, a budget of Rs 2533.33 crore for the financial year 2026-27 was approved to accelerate the city's development. This includes Rs 2262.42 crore for the Municipal Corporation and Rs 270.91 crore for the Jalak Department. For the first time, the budget has allocated special funds for Padma awardees and slums. Mayor Ashok Kumar Tiwari stated here on Thursday that the Municipal Corporation has taken a major initiative to honour Padma awardees who have enhanced the art and culture of Kashi. A special provision of Rs 20 crore has been made in the budget to develop the streets around their residences as "model streets." These streets will be artistically designed and equipped with modern amenities. Rs30 crore has been allocated in the budget to improve the living standards of citizens living in the city's slum colonies. This amount will be used to provide sewer lines, clean drinking water, modern streetlights, and other basic amenities in these areas. Chief Finance and Accounts Officer (CFO) Manish Shukla presented the Municipal Corporation's proposed budget for the financial year 2026-27 and the revised budget for 2025-26 to the Executive Committee, along with Jalak General Manager Anoop Singh. The Municipal Corporation's budget has increased 2.69 times over the past three years. Compared to the previous year, it is 1.7 times higher (approximately Rs938 crore more), reflecting the city's changing landscape and increased revenue collection. While the budget for 2023-24 was Rs840.90 crore, it has risen to Rs2262.42 crore in 2026-27. This indicates a significant increase in spending on the city's infrastructure and amenities.

J&K Crime Branch files case against 2 over medical supply fraud during Covid

Srinagar.(Agency)

The Economic Offences Wing Kashmir of Crime Branch J&K has registered a formal case against two individuals for their alleged involvement in a large-scale fraud related to procurement of medical supplies during the COVID-19 pandemic in Jammu and Kashmir, officials said on Thursday. The case was initiated following a written complaint alleging that the accused, residents of Peerbagh and Sanat Nagar, Srinagar, impersonated themselves as delegates of the J&K Ministry and OSD Supplies. "By deceitful means, they induced departments and institutions to transfer payments for medical goods into bank accounts fraudulently opened in the names of genuine suppliers. The accused also allegedly created fake email IDs to misrepresent the original supplier's identity," the EoW statement said. Preliminary verification revealed that the accused dishonestly obtained an amount of Rs 27 lakh from a government office and planned to fraudulently withdraw Rs 2.24 crore from a government medical institution. On prima facie evidence, offences under various sections of IPC read with a section of the IT Act have been established, it said. Cognizance has been taken and further investigation is underway, the statement added.

Police claim breakthrough in Adian double murder, one accused killed in encounter

Amritsar . (Agency)

Punjab Police on Wednesday claimed to have cracked the double murder of two police personnel at the second line of defence post in Adian village in Gurdaspur, announcing that one of the main accused was killed in an encounter while another remains at large. Ranjit Singh, 19, was shot dead during a pre-dawn exchange of fire near Purana Shala. A third accused, Dilawar Singh, is in custody, while Inderjit Singh, described by police as physically disabled and unable to walk properly, is absconding. Addressing the media after the encounter, DIG Sandeep Goyal alleged that Pakistan's intelligence agency, Inter-Services Intelligence, had orchestrated the killings by offering the trio ₹2-4 lakh. He said only a small portion of the promised amount had been paid so far. According to police, Dilawar was to receive Rs 20,000, of which Rs 3,000 had allegedly been paid. However, several aspects remain unclear, including how the money was to be transferred, the source of the funds and whether any amount beyond the initial payment had changed hands. Police have also



not clarified whether the accused were personally known to the victims. Home Guard jawan Ashok Kumar and ASI Gurnam Singh were shot dead a few days ago at the Adian police post. Gurnam Singh's body was found on a chair, while Ashok Kumar's body was discovered under a quilt. The DIG said the three accused, all residents of villages near Adian, were in contact with ISI handlers and had carried out reconnaissance before attacking the post when only two personnel were present.

Take strict legal action against police, admn: Cong brass meet Gov, term demolition of Khaira's property 'illegal'

Chandigarh .(Agency)

PPCC president Amrinder Singh Raja Warring and Leader of the Opposition Partap Singh Bajwa on Wednesday led a Congress delegation to Governor Gulab Chand Kataria and submitted a representation, demanding "strict legal action" against police and civil administration officers involved in the "illegal" demolition of a boundary wall at the ancestral house of Bholath MLA Sukhpal Singh Khaira in Kapurthala's Ramgarh village. The representation, also signed by Khaira, Deputy LoP Aruna Chaudhary and former Speaker Rana KP Singh, describes the demolition action on February 23 as a "blatantly illegal and contemptuous act" to silence Khaira's vocal opposition to the

Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government.

According to the letter, 400-500 policemen, including Kapurthala SSP Gaurav Toora, DSP Bholath Karnail Singh, SHO Bholath Ranjit Singh and BDPO Nadala Kulwinder Singh Randhawa, arrived at 8 am without any prior notice and used a JCB machine to "demolish a portion of the boundary wall on Khaira's private property". The Congress leaders claim that ownership documents were "shown to the officials on the spot, but they refused to examine them or produce any demolition notice or order. The action violated principles of natural justice and the Supreme Court's recent guidelines on bulldozer justice, which require

a 15-day notice period followed by 15 days for the affected party to seek legal remedies".

"No notice of any sort was served by the local administration or the

government came in power in March 2022 and described all the cases "false and frivolous".

Particularly criticising BDPO Randhawa, who allegedly led the demolition drive, the representation notes, "He faces an FIR (No. 37/2024, Vigilance Bureau, Patiala) under sections 409 & 120B of the IPC and the Prevention of Corruption Act, and was previously suspended in a separate case involving alleged misappropriation of Rs 41 lakh in government funds."

The signatories suggest the demolition was part of a quid pro quo arrangement linked to higher political directions.



police and no opportunity of personal hearing was afforded," the representation states, accusing the state machinery of "a pattern of political vendetta", listing five FIRs registered against Khaira and his supporters since the AAP

GM of NFR Inspects the Mariani-Simaluguri-New Tinsukia Section of Tinsukia Division

The Sikh Times

Maligaon, 26th February: The General Manager of Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR), Shri Chetan Kumar Shrivastava, conducted an extensive Annual Safety Inspection of the Tinsukia (TSK) Division on 25th February 2026, covering the Mariani-Simaluguri-New Tinsukia section spanning 152 kilometres. The inspection was carried out as part of NFR's continuous commitment towards strengthening operational safety, infrastructure reliability and up-gradation of passenger amenities across its network. The General Manager commenced the inspection from Mariani where he inspected the Crew Lobby and Running Room to review crew booking procedures, resting facilities and compliance with safety protocols. He also reviewed works under the Automatic Block Signalling System and inspected the newly installed Large Format Display system aimed at improving real-time monitoring and operational control. A newly installed Solar Power Plant at the station was inaugurated, reinforcing NFR's commitment to sustainable and green energy initiatives. At Nakachari, the GM undertook a detailed inspection of the signalling system, including the Relay Room and

reviewed the functioning of the Electronic Intrusion Detection System and other associated safety systems. He also inspected

connection with the proposed enhancement of sectional speed from 100 kmph to 110 kmph, marking a significant step towards



Level Crossing Gate No. 102 (Engineering), a non-interlocked gate and emphasized strict adherence to safety protocols at level crossings. During the halt at Simaluguri, the General Manager conducted a speed trial in the Mariani-Simaluguri section in

improving line capacity and reducing transit time. He also inspected Level Crossing Gate No. ST-115 (Traffic), Point Nos. 31 and 31A at the Mariani end, the Power House, ABSS works and the Railway Health Unit. He also reviewed the condition of the Railway

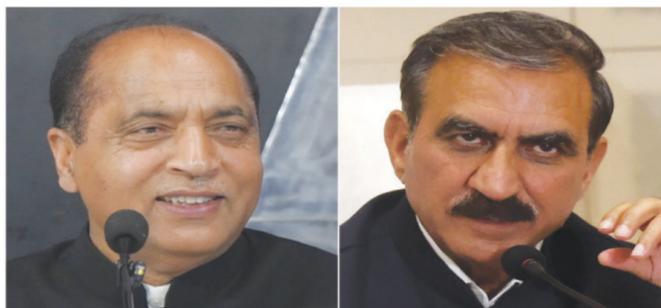
Colony and interacted with staff regarding civic amenities. On the occasion, he inaugurated a newly developed Railway Playground and newly constructed staff quarters for employee welfare and community infrastructure. Further inspections included Minor Bridge No. 524 and interaction with the track maintainer of Gang No. 18-DR to assess field level safety practices and track maintenance standards. At Naharkatiya (NHK), the Traction Sub-Station (TSS) was inspected to review the reliability of traction power supply. Important Bridge No. 561 and Switch Expansion Joint were also examined to ensure structural integrity and track safety. Such inspections are undertaken with the objective of reinforcing the highest standards of operational safety, asset reliability and service efficiency across the railway network. They provide an opportunity for assessment of track, signalling, traction and rail infrastructure, review of safety systems and field level practices. NFR remains firmly committed towards continuous safety up-gradation, modernization of infrastructure, adoption of green energy initiatives and enhancement of staff welfare and passenger amenities.

'Shirtless' protest I Jai Ram: Sukhu engaging in 'anarchic politics'; Rathore says voices of youth being suppressed

Thakur claimed that the recent congregation of the entire state Cabinet in Delhi now stood exposed in light of these developments.

Shimla. (Agency)

Leader of the Opposition Jai Ram Thakur on Wednesday launched a sharp attack on Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu, accusing him of indulging in "anarchic politics" to get into the good books of Congress leader Rahul Gandhi. AICC spokesman and Thogel MLA Kuldeep Singh Rathore said that attempts were being made to "suppress the voice" of youth by turning the recent shirtless protest by the Indian Youth Congress (IYC) during a summit in Delhi into a controversy. Rathore demanded action against the Delhi Police for "conducting a raid at Himachal Sadan in Delhi without a warrant". Rathore demanded action against the Delhi Police for "conducting a raid at Himachal Sadan in Delhi without a warrant". Speaking to the media, the LoP said, "It's deeply unfortunate that the Himachal Pradesh Police allegedly interfered in the functioning of the Delhi Police during an interstate operation.



The AI Impact Summit was not a political party event. Still, an international platform aimed at enhancing the country's global image, with political and technological leaders from across the world in attendance, but members of the Congress's youth wing disrupted the summit and attempted to

damage the country's reputation at an international level." "What is even more shameful," Thakur said, "is that the Himachal Pradesh government acted as a collaborator in this entire episode." The former CM claimed that the strategy to execute "the conspiracy was chalked out at

Himachal Sadan in Delhi in the presence of the chief minister". "The three accused apprehended by the Delhi Police were sent from Delhi to Shimla in a vehicle belonging to an elected Congress representative from Himachal under official protection. They were subsequently sent to Rohru and provided logistical and other facilities under the state government patronage," The LoP alleged. "It is disgraceful that individuals from outside Himachal Pradesh, who tried to tarnish India's image internationally, were given shelter in the state," Thakur said, accusing the state government of being willing to "trample upon the law and the Constitution to support those responsible for defaming the country". Thakur claimed that the recent congregation of the entire state Cabinet in Delhi now stood exposed in light of these developments. "The chief minister is engaging in such disorderly conduct merely to curry favour with Rahul Gandhi," he alleged.

Standard operating procedures to ensure cybersecurity of adolescents: By Commissioner

Bilaspur(HP).(Agency)

Taking seriously the growing cyber threats in the digital age, the Bilaspur District Administration has taken a significant initiative towards ensuring the cybersecurity of adolescents. At a meeting of the District-Level Committee on Cybersecurity was held today under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner Rahul Kumarit was decided to develop guidelines and standard operating procedures focusing on the cybersecurity of adolescents. This initiative will make Bilaspur the first district in the country to develop a structured and institutionalized cybersecurity framework for adolescents. At the meeting, Deputy Commissioner cum Chairman of the Indian Red Cross Society, District Branch Bilaspur, Rahul Kumar, said that the use of digital media has increased rapidly, and adolescents are being most affected. While opportunities have expanded through social media platforms, online gaming, digital transactions, and various virtual platforms, they have also posed serious challenges such as online grooming, cyberbullying, fake profiles, identity theft, gaming addiction, and cyber fraud. Consequently, the need for a clear, effective, and actionable standard operating procedure at the district level has long been felt. He stated that the draft of the proposed cybersecurity guidelines and standard operating procedures will be released at the state-level Nalwari Fair. This will establish cybersecurity protocols for schools, colleges, industrial training institutes, and other educational institutions.

The drama and the procedure: What happened when Delhi and Himachal cops faced off over arrest of 3 alleged Youth Congress workers?

Why were Delhi Police booked for kidnapping in Shimla? What is the proper legal procedure for arresting a person in another state? What will now happen to the FIR against the Delhi Police personnel? Read on.

New Delhi.(Agency)

An extraordinary stand-off between the police forces of Delhi and Himachal Pradesh took place in and around Shimla on Wednesday (February 25). A team from the Special Cell of the Delhi Police had picked up three men suspected of involvement in the so-called 'shirtless' protest at the AI Summit in Delhi last month, but they were prevented from taking the men out of the state by the Himachal Pradesh Police, who accused them of not having followed the proper procedure, and of kidnapping the suspects. An FIR was registered against the Delhi Police, and a faceoff between the two forces continued late into the night at the Shoghi police post on the Shimla-Chandigarh highway.

The suspects were ultimately produced before a court in Shimla on Thursday morning, and a transit remand was obtained. The Delhi Police team has come back to the capital, and the suspects will be likely produced before a Delhi court now. While the day- and night-



long standoff in Himachal Pradesh was dramatic and at times ugly, such situations between the police forces of two states over the legal procedure for arresting and taking action against accused persons is not entirely

unheard of in the country.

Here's what happened, and why.

What was the issue? What happened in Himachal on Wednesday?

A 15-member team of the Delhi Police, led by

an Assistant Commissioner of Police (ACP), travelled to Himachal Pradesh to carry out an operation in connection with the 'shirtless' protest organised by the Indian Youth Congress (IYC) during the AI Impact Summit at Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi on February 20. The Delhi Police have been cracking down on the protesters, and eight suspects, including the national president of the Youth Congress, had already been arrested.

The Delhi Police team reached a resort in Shimla on Wednesday morning and took into their custody three suspects allegedly involved in the protest. They also collected the digital video recorders (DVRs) from CCTV cameras at the resort, and seizing a Mahindra Thar vehicle in which the three men were allegedly travelling.

After completing their operation within two hours, the Delhi Police team left the resort in their convoy of three vehicles and headed back to the capital.

However, the Shimla Police stopped the team near Solan, and asked them to follow the legal procedure for arresting individuals from another state. They asked the Delhi Police to produce the arrest warrant, and to explain why they had not informed the local police before conducting the operation. The Himachal Police also wanted to know why the suspects had not been produced before a local court to obtain a transit remand.

In their defence, the Delhi Police argued that they had sufficient legal ground to produce the accused directly before a court in Delhi. The Delhi Police team also informed the Himachal Pradesh Police that they had indeed tried to produce the accused in the local court for a transit remand, but had been told that the judge was not available.

With no meeting ground between the conflicting claims, a stalemate ensued, which continued late into the night. The Delhi Police officers were detained at the Shoghi police post.

Woman found dead with daughters aged 3, 5 and 7 in Outer North Delhi; husband absconding

New Delhi.(Agency)

Three girls – aged 3, 5 and 7 – and their mother were found with their throats slit inside their house in Outer North Delhi's Samay Pur Badli on Tuesday morning. The prime suspect in the murders, the woman's husband and the father of the children, is absconding, said police.

Police said neighbours of the family alerted Samay Pur Badli police station about the murders. "The bodies of three girls and a woman were found with their throats slit by a sharp-edged weapon inside a ground-floor room of the house," DCP (Outer North) Hareshwar Swami said.

Police identified the mother as Anita, wife of Munchun Kewat. A vegetable seller at Azadpur Mandi, police said Munchun had fled to Bihar and raids were being conducted to trace him.

"Preliminary inquiry revealed that Munchun Kewat has been missing since early morning and is suspected to be involved in the crime. The bodies were discovered by neighbours, who alerted the police," the DCP said.

The family, hailing from Patna district, lived in a double-storey building at Chandan Park near Sarvodaya Vidyalaya in a narrow dug-up lane of Samay Pur Badli – mostly occupied by families employed at Azadpur Mandi.

The family of five lived in room 2, sandwiched between two other rooms of a ground floor flat. Munchun, police said, has two elder brothers, Sandeep and Pradeep – both of whom live with their families in Gali 1, two lanes down Munchun's house. "The three brothers would leave for the Azadpur Mandi at 4.30 am everyday. Today, Sandeep and Pradeep reached the market but didn't find Munchun. Around 7 am, Anita's sister-in-law Sugni Devi and her son came to the flat to check on Munchun," said Rubina, Munchun's distant relative who lives on the floor above him.

Delhi Police head constable held for ED staff member's murder: Duo fought last week too, families have history of disputes, say police

New Delhi.(Agency)

Two days after a Delhi Police head constable was arrested for the alleged murder of a staff member of the Enforcement Directorate (ED) at a wedding in North Delhi's Wazirabad, police said on Wednesday that the two men had a fight last week as well, after which a complaint had been lodged at a police station in Baghpat, Uttar Pradesh.

The accused, identified as Praveesh, is posted with the traffic unit of the Delhi Police. He shot the victim – identified as Ashish, who was a member of the Multi-Tasking Staff (MTS) of the ED – with his licensed pistol, police said.

MTS are Group C staff, along with others such as clerks, stenographers, and sepoy. Ashish was 30 years old, and belonged to Katkha village in Baghpat district, police said.

Police officers said that the families of the victim and the accused live in the same neighbourhood in the Baghpat village. Two of the head constable's relatives have also been arrested, while a hunt is on to nab another, police said.

According to police, information was received at Wazirabad police station late on Monday night that a man, who had sustained a gunshot wound, had been taken to a hospital in Timarpur a few kilometres away by his younger brother Anuj. Doctors at the hospital had declared him dead.

In his complaint to police, Anuj said that he had gone to attend a neighbour's wedding in Gulshan Vatika in Wazirabad, along with Ashish. He added that Praveesh was attending the wedding along with his brother Sandeep and brothers-in-law Vipin and Vikash. According to police, the accused was dancing in the baraat procession when Ashish arrived. The accused asked him to leave, and fired a shot in the air to scare him away.

Delhi HC notice to Centre, DU, police on plea against month-long ban on protest after UGC stir

The petition will now be taken up by a division bench headed by Chief Justice D K Upadhyaya on March 10.

New Delhi.(Agency)

The Delhi High Court Wednesday issued notices to the Union Ministry of Education as well as the Delhi Police and Delhi University (DU) in a plea challenging the legality of a notification issued by the university on February 17 that prohibits public assembly of five or more persons, thereby effectively curtailing demonstrations, protests or any gatherings on DU's college campus for a month.

DU had issued the order after a stir over UGC rules on caste discrimination turned violent on the university campus. Following the notification-cum-order issued by the office of the proctor of DU, several colleges affiliated to it, including Kirori Mal College and Dyal Singh College, have issued consequential orders "reinforcing the prohibition in aggravated manner", petitioner Uday Bhadoria, who is a student at Campus Law Centre, Faculty of Law, has submitted. Taken up before the court of

Justice Jasmeet Singh on Wednesday, DU's counsel Mohinder Rupal, however, opposed the plea, submitting that the petition is in the nature of a public interest litigation. The court, while adding Delhi Police too as a necessary party to the petition, issued notices to the authorities, and directed



that the petition be treated as a PIL.

The petition will now be taken up by a division bench headed by Chief Justice D K Upadhyaya on March 10.

Bhadoria, in his plea, also submitted that the DU's move restricts free movement, speech and expression, and

that imposition of such a ban on gatherings has led to either cancellation or postponement of events, seminars or annual fests planned by the college or any department.

Bhadoria, represented by advocates Abhishek Rai and Aman Rawat, has also contended that such a notification has been issued "without any consultation, or discussion with the students elected body union of the university, or colleges, or teachers elected representatives in the teacher's union, or elected executive council members or elected academic council members of the university".

Notably, following the DU notification, Kirori Mal College, in a consequential order, had also "advised" students "not to post, share, or circulate any controversial, sensitive, or provocative content on social media platforms or WhatsApp groups that may disturb harmony, create discord, or affect the peaceful environment of the college".

Rohit Godara 'calls' husband of Lawrence's lawyer, accuses him of involvement in associate's murder

New Delhi.(Agency)

A day after members of scooter-borne assailants fired upon members of jailed gangster Lawrence Bishnoi's legal team, including advocate Rajini Khatri's husband Deepak, in North Delhi, gangster Rohit Godara allegedly called up Deepak Wednesday afternoon, threatening him and accusing him of being involved in the murder of Inderpreet Singh alias Parry in Chandigarh last year.

Parry, an associate of the Lawrence Bishnoi gang, was shot dead by unidentified assailants near Timber Market in Sector 26, Chandigarh.

Speaking to The Indian Express, Deepak Khatri said the call lasted for around 7-8 minutes. A recording of the same has been handed over to the police, he added. "He threatened me... I told him if he wants to get me killed, he can do it. He also accused me of being involved

in Parry's murder, with which I have no connection... he was also our child who was killed soon after his wedding. I knew him and he used to call me 'mama' just like how Rohit and



Lawrence... I asked Rohit what was the issue... he is accusing me of something I have no relation with," Deepak said.

Hours after Tuesday night's firing, the Goldy Brar-Rohit Godara gang claimed responsibility for the firing

incident through a Facebook post.

In the purported post, the gang alleged that the targeted individuals were acting as informers to facilitate extortion activities. Police said they are verifying the authenticity of

the post. The post, from an account named 'Rahul Fatehpur Naveen Boxer', said, "We take the responsibility of opening fire at Deepak Khatri (Lawyer). He helps Lawrence as an informer and middleman in his extortion business... Stop doing this... This time, we missed the target but next time your family will be targeted. And all our enemies who consider Lawrence a criminal should correct themselves in time, or the consequences will be severe." It also has names of Goldy Brar, Rohit Godara and several other gangsters from Delhi and Haryana. Meanwhile, police said a case has been registered.

Chandni Chowk traders slam Delhi Police for allowing street vendors' rally, call protesters 'Muslim encroachers' mafia'

Chandni Chowk traders criticised police over a protest march by street vendors demanding implementation of the Street Vendors Act, 2014.

New Delhi.(Agency)

A traders' body in Delhi on Tuesday slammed the police for allowing a protest march in Old Delhi's Walled City. The traders' organisation, Chandni Chowk Nagrik Manch, described the participants as "Muslim encroachers' mafia", alleging that they were "occupying public spaces".

In a statement to the press, Chandni Chowk Nagrik Manch general secretary Praveen Shankar Kapoor, who is also a spokesperson for the Delhi unit of the Bharatiya Janata Party, said around 300 people participated in a procession from Town Hall to the Red Fort, passing through parts of Chandni Chowk and Jama Masjid.

The protest rally was called on February 25 by various associations of the street vendors at Chandni Chowk. The protesters demanded the implementation of the Street Vendors Act, 2014. The protesters said due to the non-implementation of the law, they



were being exploited and repeatedly evicted. Video claims protesters demanding right over govt land

Kapoor, however, criticised the local police for allowing the protest march. In his

statement, he alleged that the protesters were "encroachers" and referred to them as a "Muslim encroachers' mafia". He said the protesters raised slogans claiming rights over government land. He also shared a

Delhi Red Fort blast: NIA arrests 2 more from J&K, 11 in custody so far

Delhi Red Fort blast case sees two more arrests as NIA tightens probe into alleged arms supply network linked to the 2025 terror attack.

New Delhi.(Agency)

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) has arrested two more alleged terror operatives from Jammu and Kashmir in connection with the Delhi Red Fort bomb blast case, taking the total number of arrests to 11.

According to the NIA, the arrested men have been identified as Zameer Ahmad Ahangar, a resident of Ganderbal, and Tufail Ahmad Bhat from Srinagar. "Both were allegedly involved in supplying weapons to the prime accused, Umer Un Nabi, who



was killed in the explosion that rocked the national capital on November 10, 2025. The blast had claimed 11 lives and injured several others," a NIA spokesperson said. "The NIA's probe revealed that both accused were part of a wider network engaged in arms collection and supply for anti-India operations. They also played a role in multiple terror plots beyond the Delhi blast conspiracy," the spokesperson said.

The Red Fort Blast on November 10, 2025, claimed 13 lives and injured around 30 people. The prime suspect was identified as Umar Nabi, a resident of Pulwama district and an assistant professor in the General Medicine Department at Al Falah University in Faridabad. Forensic analysis of the explosives used in the blast has confirmed the presence of a mixture of ammonium nitrate and triacetone triperoxide (TATP), highly potent chemicals whose sale and handling are heavily regulate. Initial findings from the forensic science laboratory indicate that at least 30-40 kg of ammonium nitrate was present in the car, which could have caused an explosion of such magnitude.

video of the said protest, where vendors were seen raising the slogan, "Jo zameen sarkari hai, woh zameen hamari hai [Government land is our land]."

Apart from raising objection over the slogan, Kapoor said that traders and residents of the area have repeatedly sought removal of alleged illegal encroachments in the Walled City. He added that the Chandni Chowk MP Praveen Khandelwal, the area's BJP councillor, and several traders' and residents' associations have raised the issue with authorities, including the Delhi government, the Municipal Corporation of Delhi and the police.

The traders' body also referred to recent observations by the Delhi High Court expressing concern over encroachments around Jama Masjid and Chandni Chowk, and said the matter would now be taken up with the Lt Governor and the Chief Minister.

NEW

Shivam Dube's bowling questioned, called a batter and not an all-rounder by ex-IND star

New Delhi. (Agency)

Shivam Dube has shown promising signs of improvement in his bowling over the last year or so, but Mohammed Kaif remains unconvinced. The former Indian cricketer said he considers Dube a pure batter, not an all-rounder, following his poor performance with the ball in the loss to South Africa. Dube conceded 32 runs in the two overs he bowled and picked up just one wicket as South Africa staged a comeback with the bat and took the game away from the hosts. This year, Dube has seven wickets in 10 matches at an average of 19.57. But his economy-rate is above 10 and in the ongoing T20 World Cup, he has leaked runs with the ball. Speaking on his YouTube channel, Kaif said that Dube started to go defensive in the 10th over, when he should have tried to attack. The former cricketer said that India doesn't need an all-rounder who bowls at 120 kph as Dube will always be susceptible to giving away runs. "With the field and his plan to bowl wide to Brevis, Dube showed



that he wanted to be very defensive. Nobody bowls defensively in the 10th over. You looked to attack and try to take a wicket at that time. According to me, Dube is a batter; he is not an all-rounder," said Kaif.

"We don't need an all-rounder who bowls at 120 kph. He might take an odd wicket but will always go for runs. He can even concede four sixes in an over against West Indies."

'MAINTAIN BALANCE'

Kaif also slammed India's use of too many left-handers in the playing XI and called for Sanju Samson's inclusion into the side for the clash against Zimbabwe.

"There should be a balance in everything. We have gone overboard with lefties, where there are six left-handed batters in the top eight. Hardik is coming at No. 5 for the left-right combination. If you think it could be your winning formula, make a squad keeping that in mind. Bring in Sanju to get that left-right combination," said Kaif.

Shanaka blames negativity, seeks government help after Sri Lanka's World Cup exit

New Delhi. (Agency)

Sri Lanka captain Dasun Shanaka has blamed growing negativity around the team for their T20 World Cup exit, even calling for government support to help safeguard the future of the sport. His comments came after Sri Lanka became the first side to be knocked out of semi-final contention.

Sri Lanka's campaign came crashing down after a 61-run defeat in front of a packed Khetarama crowd, a loss that followed earlier setbacks against Zimbabwe, England and New Zealand. Speaking at the post-match press conference, Shanaka said the pressure from outside the dressing room had become impossible to ignore. "A lot of times what we see and hear are negative things," Shanaka said. "No matter how we as cricketers try to stay positive, there is negativity outside. That's a big loss for Sri Lanka cricket. "This is the only sport we have, and I don't know if we'll be able to protect it. If you look outside the stadium, you'll see how many people are standing with mics, and people will say stuff without



even having watched the match." "Why spread this negativity? Yes, we lost a World Cup, and we know the reasons. Everyone has concerns. More than talking about that and correcting it, the negativity has come to the fore. "We will play and leave, but for the players who will come in the future, if the government can even stop it, that's better for their mental health." **SRI LANKA'S HORROR RUN CONTINUES**

Sri Lanka's early exit continues a worrying pattern in T20 World Cups. Since winning the title in 2014, they have now failed to reach the semi-finals in five straight editions. This time, the slide was marked by a string of defeats and a batting unit that struggled to adapt to spin-friendly conditions. Shanaka admitted the team misread the Khetarama surface, which offered significant turn from early in the match, with six wickets falling to New Zealand's spinners as Sri Lanka limped to 107 for 8.

Chennai metro steps up for IND vs ZIM: Free tickets for fans to Chepauk

Chennai Metro Rail Limited will provide complimentary metro rides on Thursday, February 26, for those attending the India vs Zimbabwe Super 8 match, with match tickets doubling as metro passes. The initiative includes extended services to midnight and special operational measures near the Chepauk stadium.

LONDON. (Agency)

Ahead of the much-anticipated India vs Zimbabwe clash, the Chennai Metro Rail Limited (CMRL) has stepped up in a big way to make it a memorable day for the fans attending the match on Thursday, February 26. The CMRL announced complimentary metro rides for match ticket holders, aiming to ease travel for spectators attending the game at M. A. Chidambaram Stadium in Chepauk. Fans can use their physical match tickets, which contain a unique QR code, to access metro services by scanning the code at



Automatic Fare Collection (AFC) gates. IND vs ZIM, T20 World Cup Super 8: Preview Each ticket holder is allowed a single round trip from any metro station to the Government Estate Metro station and back on match day. The initiative is designed to manage the expected full attendance at the stadium. CMRL has planned special late-night operations, extending train services until midnight to accommodate post-match travel demand. The last trains on Thursday will

depart from Government Estate station at 12:00 am, with one headed towards Wimco Nagar Depot and another toward the Airport line. To ensure smooth transitions for late-night travelers, CMRL has introduced a Green Line interchange restriction after 11:00 pm. Passengers needing to transfer to the Green Line during this period will only be able to do so at Chennai Central station. Entry into the Government Estate station will close ten minutes before the last train's

departure, so commuters are advised to plan their arrivals accordingly. "Metro Rail Service to Provide Extended Train Service to Cater to Audience for T20 World Cup Cricket Match in Chennai Chennai Metro Rail Limited (CMRL) is delighted to announce a special collaboration with Tamil Nadu Cricket Association (TNCA) to ensure seamless and convenient travel for fans attending the Super 8 match of the ICC T20 Men's World Cup 2026 - India vs Zimbabwe, scheduled on 26th February 2026 at M. A. Chidambaram Stadium, Chepauk, Chennai." "As part of this initiative, event organizer is sponsoring Metro rides for match attendees on the event day. Importantly, match tickets (unique QR codes) will also serve as CMRL Metro tickets, distributed by the event organizer to the match attendees. Each match tickets valid for one round trip on the day of the event (i.e. 26th February 2026)," read the statement from CMRL. **INDIA IN MUST-WIN SITUATION**

The Super 8 clash will be a high-stakes game for India as the hosts cannot afford a loss at this stage. After their heavy loss to South Africa in Ahmedabad.

WI vs SA: India keep close watch as South Africa, West Indies aim for semis spots

New Delhi. (Agency)

South Africa and the West Indies will face off in a crucial Super 8 clash, with the winner taking a significant step toward a spot in the T20 World Cup 2026 semi-finals. But Zimbabwe and India will also be keeping a close eye on the contest when the Proteas and the Caribbean side take the field on Thursday, February 26 at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad. India's net run rate of -3.800 took a hit following their huge defeat to South Africa in their first Super 8 match. Net run rate could prove decisive for India if three teams end up tied on six points each, as the side with the superior net run rate would progress. A similar scenario occurred in the T20 World Cup 2012, when India won two of three Super 8 matches but were edged out due to an inferior net run rate.

Meanwhile, South Africa remain unbeaten in the tournament, and with a net run rate of +3.800, they look like strong contenders to advance from Group 1. The West Indies are also undefeated, and after their win over Zimbabwe, they appear well-positioned for a top-four finish.

ADVANTAGE SOUTH AFRICA IN AHMEDABAD?

For the Proteas, Ahmedabad has felt like a home away from home. Of the five games they've played in the tournament, four have

been at the Narendra Modi Stadium, with the only exception being the match against the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Aside from their thrilling Super Over win against Afghanistan, South Africa have delivered dominant performances at this venue. However, left-arm spinner Keshav Maharaj feels the team doesn't have a built-



in advantage, as they've played on different pitches each time. Maharaj emphasised that, more than relying on familiarity, the Proteas need to adapt quickly to the conditions and adjust their game accordingly.

"It's nice not having to travel. From a pitch perspective, though, I think every game has been very different. In the four matches we've played here, conditions have varied throughout each game. I wouldn't see it as a major advantage - what matters is adapting

quickly and focusing on executing those adjustments during the game," Maharaj said in the pre-match press conference.

'NO POINT TO PROVE'

The West Indies, on the other hand, have come out firing on all cylinders in the ongoing tournament. Since their famous title triumph in India in 2016, the two-time champions endured disappointing campaigns in the 2021, 2022 and 2024 editions. However, they have looked like a completely transformed side this time around. With five consecutive wins under their belt, the West Indies are brimming with confidence. Batting coach Floyd Reifer said the team has nothing to prove to anyone and will continue to play with a positive and fearless mindset. "There's no point to prove for us and we came here like any other team to win the competition, a lot of people have us flying under the radar but we plan every game to go in there with a positive mentality to win cricket games," Reifer told the reporters. It was only on Monday that the West Indies hammered Zimbabwe, registering the second-highest total in T20 World Cup history. However, beating South Africa will be far from straightforward, as the Proteas have also enjoyed an impressive campaign and have done little wrong in the tournament so far.

Vinicius gets his revenge as Real Madrid knock Benfica out of Champions League

New Delhi. (Agency)

Vinicius Jr did what he does best. He made the moment about football again. Just days after being dragged into a racism row in Lisbon, the Real Madrid forward stepped up with the decisive strike that ended Benfica's resistance and carried Madrid into the Round of 16. The 2-1 win at the Santiago Bernabeu sealed a 3-1 aggregate victory, but it was Vinicius' late intervention that shaped the narrative of the night. The build-up to the return leg had been dominated by the fallout from the first meeting in Portugal, where Vinicius had accused Benfica's Gianluca Prestianni of using discriminatory language. With Prestianni suspended and Jose Mourinho missing from the touchline after his red card, the focus finally swung back to the tactical battle on the pitch. Benfica came out with intent and struck early through Rafa Silva in the 14th



minute after Madrid failed to clear their lines inside the box. Madrid responded with purpose. Federico Valverde surged down the right and squared the ball into the half-space for Aurelien Tchouameni, who timed his arrival perfectly before guiding the finish from the edge of the area.

The contest remained stretched through the second half. Benfica continued to find space

between the lines and even rattled the crossbar, while Madrid struggled to impose sustained control in possession. The breakthrough arrived in the 80th minute. Valverde pounced on a loose pass in midfield and released Vinicius into the channel. The Brazilian curved his run to beat the line, drove into the area and slotted a composed finish into the bottom corner to close the tie on Madrid's terms.

VINICIUS GETS HIS REVENGE

Vinicius' goal carried weight beyond the scoreline. After all the noise that followed the first leg, this was his way of dragging the conversation back to where it belongs — on the pitch. The Brazilian once again broke into his corner flag dance, the same celebration that had stirred tensions in Lisbon, but this time it felt less like provocation and more like a statement.



tournament. In India's final preparatory series before the World Cup, Abhishek was showered with praise for his exceptional run-scoring spree. In a conversation with Sunil Gavaskar and Abhinav Mukund, Abhishek had explained his process of picking net bowlers similar to the opposition he would face - a method that helped him prepare for match-day challenges.

A very self-aware Abhishek had said that he knew what bowlers would try against him in the World Cup and that he was prepared for those plans. He had correctly predicted that teams would either take pace off against him or apply early pressure with spin.

However, despite hours of preparation, Abhishek faltered. An unfortunate bout of illness meant he could not focus against USA. Batting with a 103-degree Fahrenheit fever, Abhishek probably struggled to even track the ball properly and ended up handing a catch to the boundary rider off the very first delivery he faced. If the fever was not bad enough, his health deteriorated further ahead of India's next match in Delhi, and the left-hander was admitted to hospital due to food poisoning.

Sri Lanka job done, but New Zealand cannot underestimate England: Rachin Ravindra

New Delhi. (Agency)

"New Zealand ticked one big box with a convincing win over Sri Lanka, but Rachin Ravindra has made it clear that the job is far from done. With a semi-final spot now within reach, the Black Caps all-rounder has warned against taking England lightly in their final Super 8 clash.

Speaking after New Zealand's 61-run win in Colombo, Ravindra stressed that momentum alone would not be enough heading into their next challenge. With England already through to the semi-finals after winning both their matches, New Zealand must now avoid defeat to stay firmly on course for the knockout. You're always confident going into these fixtures, especially when we know what the surface is going to be like, but it would be silly to underestimate England at any point. They're such a quality unit and have shown how well they've been bowling. They've got world-class batters throughout their order. We'll take confidence from today

but realise in two days' time it's a different challenge," Rachin said. He also acknowledged the significance of beating Sri Lanka in home conditions. "It's a big achievement to beat Sri Lanka in Colombo. We know how strong they are here and I'm immensely proud of the fight the group showed," he added. The victory pushed New Zealand to second place in Group 2 with three points from two matches, following their washed-out opener against Pakistan. While the result strengthened their position, Ravindra insisted that England's depth in both batting and bowling makes them a dangerous opponent regardless of standings. **HOW CAN NEW ZEALAND SEAL A SEMI-FINAL SPOT**

New Zealand's win has left Pakistan needing multiple results to go their way in order to stay alive in the competition. Pakistan must defeat Sri Lanka and hope England beat New Zealand in the final Super 8 fixture. Even that may not be enough, as net run rate could

come into play depending on how the final matches unfold. With England already assured of qualification, New Zealand's fate

permutations is not the preferred route. **HOW RACHIN RAVINDRA RATTLED SRI LANKA**

Sri Lanka's chase of 169 never truly got going after an early setback saw Pathum Nissanka dismissed for a golden duck by Matt Henry. The innings unraveled quickly, and Ravindra played a decisive role in the collapse.

He struck with his very first delivery, removing Kusal Mendis, and followed it up in the same over by having Pavan Rathnayake stumped. The left-arm spinner continued to dismantle the middle order by dismissing Dasun Shanaka and Dushan Hemantha.

Ravindra finished with impressive figures of 4 for 27, leaving Sri Lanka reeling at 59 for 6. Although Kamindu Mendis offered some resistance with a steady 31, Mitchell Santner tightened the pressure from the other end.



largely remains in their own hands — a win against England would guarantee their progress. Avoiding defeat could also be enough, depending on Pakistan's result and the margin involved. But Ravindra's message was clear — relying on

Sensex, Nifty open higher buoyed by IT stocks

New Delhi.(Agency)

Benchmark stock market indices opened higher for second straight session on Thursday, driven by early gains in IT and PSU banking stocks. Dalal Street also opened on a positive note, tracking global markets. The S&P BSE Sensex was up 53.27 points to 82,329.34, while the NSE Nifty50 gained 33.90 points to 25,516.40 as of 9:35 am.

Dr. VK Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist, Geojit Investments Limited, said that a significant takeaway from the current market trend is that despite large institutional buying - FII and DII combined - the market is not surging. "Yesterday the combined institutional buying in the cash market was a massive Rs 8,100 crores. Yet the market couldn't sustain the early gains since the 'sell on rally' trend emerged, wiping out the early gains. As the market rallies and valuations get stretched, bears are getting stronger and shorts are increasing, pulling the market down. This trend may continue in the near-term, capping the upside to the market," he added. At the opening bell, IT stocks traded firmly in the green. Tech Mahindra Ltd led the Sensex gainers, rising 1.78%. It was followed by Infosys Ltd, which gained 1.39%. HCL Technologies Ltd moved up 1.32%, while Tata Consultancy Services Ltd added 1.12%. Sun Pharmaceutical Industries Ltd also opened higher, rising 0.58%.

Hindustan Unilever Ltd saw the sharpest fall, slipping 0.35%. InterGlobe Aviation Ltd declined 0.32%, Axis Bank Ltd was down 0.28%, UltraTech Cement Ltd fell 0.21%, and ICICI Bank Ltd eased 0.19% in early trade. Vijayakumar said that for investors, the best option now is to slowly accumulate fundamentally strong, quality stocks like financials which are available at fair valuations.

"High quality growth stocks in sectors like automobiles and capital goods will also remain resilient. Buy and wait with patience. It appears that the IT stocks are stabilising after the 20% crash in the last one month, despite the uncertainty surrounding the sector," he added.

Why aren't we Monetizing real estate on street dogs': Techie's post goes viral, netizen fuming on the SaaS idea

New Delhi.(Agency)

A former Microsoft techie has triggered a massive online debate over his proposal on "monetizing" street dogs as a medium of "offline billboard".

Referring to his proposed hyperlocal distribution hack, he said India's 'stray dog inventory' can be used for billboards. He proposed Stray as a Service (SaaS) as an idea of monetising the real estate on street dogs. "I just cracked Hyperlocal distribution. Why aren't we monetising the real estate on street dogs?"

SaaS - Stray as a Service. India has approx 30M units of untapped inventory; every stray dog is also an offline billboard," the techie that goes by username Aditya wrote on X. Netizens react

"and when the dog's tshirt is wet in winter, it stays wet and dog dies, who's responsible?," asked a user. Another commented, "beginner mistake. you're trying to market to humans, when the focus should be on the



dog population itself. the jackets should say "bhau bhau, bhau bhau", untapped service, untapped market also. "A third user asked, "And what happens if for some unforeseen reason, the clothing catches fire? How does the dog open it? By asking for support on X?" "Why dont you use your forehead for ad space, will earn nice sum," wrote a user.

Anil Ambani appears before ED in money laundering case

New Delhi.(Agency)

Reliance Group chairman Anil Ambani on Thursday appeared before the Enforcement Directorate here for a second round of questioning in connection with an alleged bank fraud-linked money laundering case. The 66-year-old businessman entered the federal probe agency's office in central Delhi around 10.30 am. Officials in the agency said they will



record his statement under the provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA). He was first questioned by the ED in August 2025.

The probe pertains to an alleged over Rs 40,000 crore worth bank fraud by his group company, Reliance Communications (RCOM).

Ambani and his multiple group companies are facing allegations of loan fraud, and the ED recently constituted a special investigation team (SIT) to probe all these instances. The SIT was formed on the recent directions of the Supreme Court.

Love swiping your credit card Here's how to use it without falling into a debt trap

More Indians are now swiping their credit cards, though most have not learned the habits needed to stay out of debt. This article shows the mistakes people make and the simple habits that help.

New Delhi.(Agency)

Indians are using credit cards more than ever. The country now has 11.6 crore active cards, almost double the number from four years ago. In December 2025 alone, people spent Rs 2.05 lakh crore using them. Most of this spending happened online, which shows how easily credit cards have blended into India's digital routine. But behind this booming adoption is a quieter truth. People love their credit cards, but most struggle to use them wisely, and that struggle often leads them toward debt. Dev Patel, quantitative research

analyst at I Finance, believes the credit card story in India is being misunderstood. "India is not falling out of love with credit cards. It is falling in love with the idea of owning them," he says. After years of using UPI to pay for everything from tea to rent, the shift felt natural. "UPI made digital spending effortless. Credit cards slipped right into that behaviour. The habit was already built," he adds. A credit card lets you pay with the same ease as UPI but with a short interest-free window of 40 to 45 days. Add the possibility of earning rewards, and urban consumers see it as a smart financial tool. The problem starts when excitement takes over judgment. People often overspend without realising it. They forget where the money went. They get influenced by social media posts promising free luxury travel if they "max out their cards." Patel says this misunderstanding is common. "Social media has convinced many that maxing out a card will get them a free

holiday. That's not how it works," he says.

DON'T FORGET TO CHECK THE REWARDS



He calls it a "half knowledge and execution" problem. People know that rewards exist but do not know how to earn them efficiently or redeem them correctly. Every bank has its own app or portal where better offers and accelerated rewards live. These tools exist, but they are barely marketed. "Most users have no idea these portals exist. They hold the right cards but use

them the wrong way," Patel explains.

This gap becomes even clearer when you compare how different people use the same card. Two people may have identical credit cards but get entirely different value from them. One may travel often and benefit more. Another may hardly fly and get nothing.

"The card doesn't fail. The mismatch between the product and your behaviour does," Patel says. **DON'T ACCUMULATE TOO MANY CREDIT CARDS**

And then there is the growing trend of collecting multiple cards. People believe they are being strategic by using one card for travel, another for online shopping and another for groceries. But Patel warns that this usually backfires. Collecting too many cards creates mental clutter. One due date is manageable. Four is anxiety," he says. The stress outweighs the rewards. "Reward greed is never worth your peace of mind," he adds.

Deepinder Goyal wins EY Entrepreneur Of The Year 2025 award

Deepinder Goyal was recognised for his focus on innovation, strong operations and long-term thinking. The jury also noted that his businesses have created thousands of jobs for youth and gig workers and supported a wider ecosystem of entrepreneurs across the country.



New gency) Deepinder Goyal, Founder of Eternal Ltd., has been awarded the EY Entrepreneur Of The Year 2025 Award at the 27th edition of the awards held in Mumbai. An 11-member jury selected him for his impact on India's consumption patterns through his consumer-tech businesses and for building long-term value. The

organisers said Goyal was recognised for his focus on innovation, strong operations and long-term thinking. The jury also noted that his businesses have created thousands of jobs for youth and gig workers and supported a wider ecosystem of entrepreneurs across the country. Goyal will now represent India at the EY World Entrepreneur Of The Year Award to be held in Monte Carlo in June 2025.

Union Commerce and Industry Minister

Piyush Goyal attended the event as Chief Guest and felicitated Deepinder Goyal, Uday Kotak and the category winners. Uday Kotak, Chairman of GIFT City and veteran banker, received the Special Jury Award for his contribution to the Indian banking and financial services sector and for his long-term impact on entrepreneurs. He awards were given across eight categories. Abhishek Lodha of Lodha Group won in Energy, Real Estate and Infrastructure. Ajay Bhardwaj of Anthem Biosciences was recognised in Life Sciences and Healthcare.

Gopal Vittal of Bharti Airtel won in the Entrepreneurial CEO category. Jasbir Singh of Amber Enterprises was honoured in Manufacturing. Karan Bhagat of 360 One WAM won in Services. Pranav Goel and Uttam Digga of Porter won in the Start-up category. Sunil Vachani of Dixon Technologies was recognised for Business Transformation. Vir S Advani of Blue Star won in Consumer Products and Retail.

Property deals under Rs 20 lakh? PAN may not be needed from April 1

New Delhi.(Agency)

Buying or selling a low-value property may soon involve less paperwork. The Income Tax Department has proposed new draft rules that would remove the need to provide a Permanent Account Number (PAN) for property transactions below Rs 20 lakh. If the proposal is finalised, the change will come into effect from April 1, 2026.

The move is part of the Draft Income Tax Rules, 2026 released under the proposed new income tax framework. **PAN REQUIREMENT THRESHOLD MAY DOUBLE**

At present, PAN must be quoted when buying or selling immovable property, such as a house, flat, or plot, if the transaction value exceeds Rs 10 lakh. Under the draft rules, this threshold would be raised to Rs 20 lakh. This means property transactions below Rs 20 lakh would no longer require mandatory PAN disclosure. However, deals worth Rs 20 lakh or more would still need PAN details, just as they do now. The draft also makes it clear that certain arrangements, such as property transfers through gifts or joint development agreements, would fall under PAN reporting rules if their value crosses the specified limit.

WHY THE GOVERNMENT IS PROPOSING THIS CHANGE



The Rs 1 crore question: Should you invest in stocks or buy a home

New Delhi.(Agency)

Apna ghar' (A home of our own) is more than just a phrase in India. It is deeply rooted in the middle-class mindset. For generations, families have believed that real financial security begins with owning a home. Rent is often seen as wasted money. A house is seen as safety, pride and stability. In many cities today, that dream comes with a Rs 1 crore price tag. When a young working professional reaches a point where they can afford a Rs 1 crore home, usually with savings and a loan, a serious question arises. Should they buy the house now? Or should they invest that money in equities and build wealth first? Abhishek Kumar, Sebi RIA and founder of Sahaj Money, says the

decision must begin with understanding trade-offs. One should first evaluate the opportunity cost by comparing the potential returns equities against the combined benefits of saved rent and growth in property value," he says. He points out that both asset classes carry uncertainty. "As both potential returns from equity as well from property is difficult to ascertain in advance hence one should also factor their primary reason for buying property. "If the house is meant for self-use and long-term family stability, buying may still make sense. "If its for self use and for providing long term stable environment for their family members then buying property would be the natural choice despite potentially better returns from

equity." One should assess their current debt to income ratio and other important financial goals so that they don't end up overspending on house purchase. **EQUITY VS PROPERTY: WHAT HISTORY SAYS** Over long periods, equity has delivered stronger returns than residential property in most cases. "Historically, diversified Indian equity portfolios have delivered annualised returns ranging from 12% to 15% over a 15 year time horizon but future returns could be different than the past returns," Kumar says. In contrast, residential real estate in major metros has typically averaged between 5% and 8% annually, often trailing equity performance once maintenance and property taxes are deducted."

Property prices have increased significantly over the years, and the existing Rs 10 lakh threshold often covered even modest transactions. By raising the limit to Rs 20 lakh, the government appears to be adjusting the rules to reflect current market realities. For smaller buyers, especially those purchasing in smaller towns or dealing with family property transfers, the change could reduce paperwork. While PAN will still be needed for most urban property deals, low-value transactions may become simpler to complete.

Tax experts say the revision recognises that property values have risen and that the earlier limit no longer reflected the true value of many homes. **PAN STILL MANDATORY FOR HIGHER VALUE DEALS**

The proposal does not remove PAN requirements altogether. Property transactions worth Rs 20 lakh or more will continue to require PAN disclosure.

Asian shares mostly rise after Nvidia earnings beat expectations

Nvidia's earnings influence global financial markets both because it is the world's most valuable company and the biggest S&P 500 constituent and because it is benefiting from advances in AI-related technologies.

New Delhi.(Agency)

US futures fell while Asian shares mostly advanced on Thursday after strong-than-expected earnings from chipmaker Nvidia helped ease some investor worries over the artificial intelligence boom.

Tokyo's Nikkei 225 crossed the 59,000 mark for the first time, although it later gave up some gains, rising 0.2% to 58,715.33. Shares of SoftBank Group, which has a focus on AI technology, were up 3.5%. Chipmaker Tokyo Electron lost 2.8%. Share prices also pushed higher after Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi appointed two economists viewed as favoring keeping interest rates low to the board of the central bank. South Korea's Kospi surged 2.3% to

6,222.29, driven by gains for tech-related stocks. The index surpassed the 6,000 level for the first time on Wednesday. It has gained 44% since the beginning of this year after enduring a year of political upheavals that ended with former President Yoon Suk Yeol being sentenced to life in prison. Shares of Samsung Electronics, the country's biggest listed company, jumped 5.5%. Chipmaker SK Hynix gained 2.5%.

Hong Kong's Hang Seng lost 0.4% to 26,656.29. The Shanghai Composite index edged 0.1% lower to 4,144.08. In Australia, the S&P/ASX 200 added 0.5% to 9,174.50. Taiwan's TaieX picked up 0.2%, while India's Sensex traded 0.3% higher. Nvidia's earnings influence global financial markets both because it is the world's most valuable company and the biggest S&P 500 constituent and because it is benefiting from advances in AI-related technologies.

Its latest quarterly revenue jumped 73% from a year earlier to \$68 billion. The California-based company also gave a

forecast of \$78 billion for revenue in the current quarter, which exceeded analysts' expectations. Its CEO, Jensen Huang, said demand for Nvidia chips is still "skyrocketing."

"AI is here, AI is not going to go back,"

investors remain cautious.

Thomas Mathews, head of markets for Asia Pacific at Capital Economics, however argued in a research note on Thursday that "strong profit growth, as emphasized by recent earnings reports", including

Nvidia's, is a key reason to think the S&P 500 will do well in 2026. He forecast the S&P 500 at 8,000 by the year's end.

On Wednesday, the S&P 500 rose 0.8% to 6,946.13. The Dow Jones Industrial Average climbed 0.6% to 49,482.15, and the Nasdaq composite gained 1.3% to 23,152.08.

In other dealings early Thursday, US benchmark crude oil gained 16 cents to \$65.58 per barrel. Brent crude, the international standard, rose 21 cents to \$71.90 a barrel. Gold and silver prices fell on Thursday. The price of gold lost 0.3% and the price of silver fell 2%. The US dollar fell to 155.89 Japanese yen from 156.39 yen. The euro was trading at \$1.1817, up from \$1.1812.



Huang said during a conference call.

Nvidia rose 0.2% in afterhours trading following its earnings announcement, which came after markets closed on Wednesday. Its robust earnings helped alleviate some concerns over whether the AI craze is real and whether huge investments will pay off. But many

Karan Kundrra Flaunts

Tejasswi Prakash's

Face Tattoo, Fans Call It 'True Love'



Karan Kundrra and Tejasswi Prakash are among the most adored celebrity couples in showbiz. Fondly called 'TejRan' by fans, the duo has been going strong since they first met and fell in love on Bigg Boss 15. Now, the Kitani Mohabbat Hai actor has set major boyfriend goals by getting inked for his ladylove. What makes it even more special is that Karan got a massive portrait of Tejasswi tattooed on his chest.

Karan Kundrra Gets Tejasswi Prakash's Face Tattooed On Chest

In a video doing the rounds online, Karan Kundrra was seen showing off his tattoo at a Ramadan celebration in Mumbai. Dressed in a purple kurta, which he left slightly unbuttoned, the actor ensured the paparazzi got a clear look at the ink. His shy smile spoke volumes about his love, and fans have since been praising his grand gesture across social media.

There's a twist. Karan has not clarified whether the tattoo is temporary or permanent. But that hasn't stopped fans from gushing over his new tattoo. They poured into the comment section with love and admiration. One fan wrote, "Ye dono ek dusre se bahut pyar karte hai bs bich main koi rista na aa jaye." Another fan wrote, "Bhai Isse kehke hai true love." One fan wrote, "Wowwww lucky girl tezu." Another comment reads, "Dream husband material."

Karan Kundrra-Tejasswi Prakash's Love Story From Bigg Boss 15

Karan and Tejasswi first met during their stint on Bigg Boss 15, where she eventually became the winner. What began as a friendship inside the house soon turned into love, with Karan confessing his feelings on national television. After the show, they made their relationship official and have remained inseparable since. The couple has often been spotted together at events, holidays and red carpets, while also collaborating professionally. Karan frequently supported Tejasswi during her Naagin 6 shoot, and the two appeared together in music videos like Rula Deti Hai and Baarish Aayi Hai.

Karan On Meeting Tejasswi's Parents For The First Time

Earlier in 2025, during an appearance on Bharti Singh's podcast, Karan Kundrra opened up about meeting Tejasswi Prakash's parents for the first time. Recalling the moment, he shared, "I sat with her parents for 30 minutes, after which her mom said, 'You can take my daughter with you now.'"



Jaya Bachchan Breaks Silence On Her Paparazzi Clashes Affecting Agastya Nanda: 'No Power On Earth'



Veteran actor and Rajya Sabha MP Jaya Bachchan often grabs headlines for her sharp exchanges with the paparazzi, with several such videos going viral over the years. Recently, she sparked fresh debate after commenting on photographers' behaviour and attire. Amid the chatter, some industry insiders speculated that her frequent clashes with the media could be impacting her grandson Agastya Nanda and the reception of his films. However, Jaya firmly dismissed the claim as she believes her equation with paparazzi would not affect her grandson's career. She even recalled how Amitabh Bachchan was banned for 15 years.

Is Jaya Bachchan's Strained Relation With Paparazzi Affecting Agastya Nanda's Career?

Agastya's streaming debut The Archies and his theatrical release Ikki failed to live up to expectations. This has led to speculation that Jaya's strained relationship with the media might be impacting his early career.

In an interview with Variety India dismissed the theories and said that no external force can alter his fate. "No power on earth can change my grandson's destiny. If Agastya is destined to be a star, nothing can change it. Agastya will have his own equation with the press. It has nothing to do with me," she said.

Jaya Bachchan Recalls When Amitabh Bachchan Was Banned by the Press for Over a Decade

Jaya Bachchan also cited her husband, Amitabh Bachchan, as an example. "At the peak of his stardom, Amitji was banned by the press for nearly 15 years. Did that impact his career?" she questioned. She added, "Agastya will have his own relationship with the press. It has nothing to do with me."

Jaya Bachchan Says 'Agastya is special'

Earlier, in an interview with Bollywood Hungama, grandmother Jaya lauded Agastya for his dedication and individuality. "Luckily, Agastya is a fast learner. Neither of his parents are actors, so he's leaning on his grandparents and his Maamu (uncle) for guidance. You know me, I wouldn't praise anyone, least of all my own children or grandchildren. But Agastya is special. That child is determined to forge his own path, just like I once did. Like me, he won't follow the herd," Jaya said.

Bhumi Pednekar On 'Hyper Masculine' Films: 'I'm Not The Audience For Them'



Bhumi Pednekar's film choices have often stood out for being bold and meaningful, and her recent project Daldal is yet another example of that. While she continues to receive praise for her performance, the actor also recently chose to speak about something significant.

In an interview shared by The Indian Express, Bhumi spoke soon after the release of the O Womaniya! report by Amazon Prime Video India. The report highlights the hits and misses of female representation in Indian entertainment in 2024. Reflecting on the findings, she pointed out that scripts offering dignified and well-written roles for women seem to have reduced over time.

Bhumi Pednekar Thinks Men Are 'Naturally Prioritised'

According to the report, female representation behind the camera saw a noticeable dip. Women held only 13 percent of head of department roles across key areas such as direction, cinematography, editing, writing, and production design, which is a drop from the 15 percent recorded in the previous report.

advertisement

Reflecting on this, Bhumi shared that she has been working in the industry for over a decade and has noticed a sharp decline in scripts that offer women substantial and dignified roles. She explained that when overall opportunities begin to shrink, it naturally impacts representation across the board, which could also be one of the reasons fewer women are seen in technical positions today. She added, "Because within a conditioned hierarchy, men are naturally prioritised which is wrong."

Bhumi also looked back at her own journey and revealed that in her entire career, she has worked on a women-led set only once. In the last three years, she has done two to three films directed by women, even though she consciously seeks out and continues to chase such opportunities.

Films Are Largely 'Hyper Masculine'

Bhumi made it clear that for her, choosing a project is not just about gender but about aligning sensibilities and creative understanding. She shared that while what truly matters is what a person brings to the table, she does enjoy working with women because of the shared experiences and emotional awareness they often bring.

Sushmita Sen

Marks 3 Years After Heart Attack With Powerful Fitness Video: 'No Excuse, Just Result'

Sushmita Sen celebrated a major milestone in her fitness and career by posting a motivational video on Instagram. The 50-year-old shared clips of herself working out, flaunting her toned abs, swimming, and maintaining a lean figure, with the text overlay: "No excuse, just result." She captioned the post: "Thank you God!!! #3years I love you guys!!! #duggadugga," marking three years since surviving a heart attack.

Sushmita, who won Femina Miss India at 18 and represented India at Miss Universe 1994, has never shied away from sharing personal struggles. After 3 years of her attack, she is now focused on her health. Speaking in an old interview with NDTV about her heart attack in 2023, she said it "was meant to happen" and acknowledged that fitness cannot always prevent genetic conditions. "Both my parents have heart issues. That I survived and healed quickly is a huge blessing," she added.

3 Years After Sushmita Sen's Heart Attack Surgery

Sushmita explained that her fitness journey after the heart attack has been gradual. Starting with warm-ups, stretches, and light floor exercises, she has now incorporated weight training. She avoids running but is allowed to pace walk, ensuring all movements are dynamic. "You must listen to your body and what it allows on a given day," she emphasized.

On the work front, Sushmita was last seen in Aarya 3, nominated for the International Emmy Awards for Best Drama Series. She filmed intense action scenes just a month after her heart attack and described the experience as "cathartic" and a "whole new beginning" both personally and professionally.

Proud Mother and Fitness Inspiration



Sushmita is a mother to two adopted daughters, Renee and Alisah.

She recently shared a core workout session with Alisah, calling her "my inspired gang" and inviting fans to join them in staying fit. Through her dedication to fitness, resilience in the face of health challenges, and ongoing professional success, Sushmita Sen continues to inspire fans, proving that determination and discipline lead to real results.



What's your summer Beauty Remedy?

For most working professionals, heading to a salon once every week is next to impossible. At such a time, most women rely on homemade treatments that are not only inexpensive, but also make it easy to care for your skin and hair while sitting at home.

We share with you some easy-to-do ones -

To get rid of tan

Instead of booking yourself for a fruit facial at your local salon, apply a spoon of yoghurt mixed with either honey or lemon squeezed into it to improve your complexion. You should try this therapy at least thrice in a week so that the tan reduces faster.

Treating eyebags

Most women fail to recognise that eyebags or lines under the eyes can be easily treated at home by performing a few facial exercises combined with the application of sandalwood and rose water paste, instead of going in for non-invasive eye treatments.

Removal of dead skin cells

Instead of applying a scrub on your face and body every two to three weeks, you can make a thick paste of rice and milk and apply it on your body once every week. This course mixture will remove the dead skin cells from your face and body and will make it shine.

Treating hair fall

Most women experience hair fall during summer. This is because apart from washing your hair on a daily basis, you are also prone to excessive sweating on your scalp. To make sure that you don't lose out more hair, apply a paste of reetha and coconut oil on your scalp twice in a week. You can wash your hair with buttermilk to ensure that your hair stays luscious and shiny while also reducing hair fall.

Dark patches on the skin

Apart from tanning, another problem which is quite persistent during the warmer months is dark patches on the sun due to exposure to the harmful rays of the sun. To ensure that your skin stays smooth, soft and without blemishes, you can unboiled cold milk along with a paste of almonds and apply this mixture on the patches to reduce the discolouration.



6 face packs to get rid of Suntan

- It is natural that our skin would get tanned when exposed to this scorching heat.
- Apart from applying sunscreen lotion you can also try out these face packs to help remove the tan.



It's blazing hot in Chennai. Despite the heat we have to step out for work and for other activities. It is natural that our skin would get tanned when exposed to this scorching heat. Apart from applying sunscreen lotion you can also try out these face packs to help remove the tan. City-based skin care expert Vasundhara Ravi gives us six homemade face packs that will keep your skin looking fresh this summer.

Barley pack

Grind 30 grams of barley with 20 grams of khus khus. Mix this powder with five drops of lemon juice and a few drops of rose water to make a smooth paste. Apply this paste on the exposed areas. Leave the pack on for half-an-hour and wash your face with cold water.

Dal pack

Take two tablespoon of tuvar dal, two tsp green

gram dal, two tsp cucumber seeds, two tsp channa dal. Grind all these into a fine powder. Add two pinches of kasturi manjal and two tsp cucumber juice to this powder and make a paste. Apply this on the tanned areas. Leave it for half-an hour and wash it.

Fruit pack

Soak 10 grams of dry raisins and two dates in 50 ml tea decoction for two hours. Then grind this into a smooth paste. Add a tsp of papaya pulp, apply the mix on face, neck and other exposed areas. Rinse after 10 minutes.

Orange pack

Dry orange peel (mandarin orange) and powder it. Take a tsp of this powder and add one tsp curd, a tsp Multani mitti, and one tsp sandal paste. Add a little water and mix it into a fine paste. Apply the paste on the tanned areas and leave it on for 20 minutes. Wash off with water.

Aloe vera pack

Mix two tsp of aloe vera pulp, three tsp tomato juice, one tsp Multani mitti and one tsp sandal paste. Apply on tanned areas. Leave on for 15 minutes, pat on cold milk. Leave on for five minutes and then wash off with water.

Potato pack

Mix one tsp potato juice (grate and squeeze), one tsp tomato pulp and two tsp green gram flour. Apply this mixture all over the tanned areas. Leave it on for 20 minutes and wash.

Are skin woes dampening your summer spirit?

Fret not, here's addressing a host of skin-related queries so that you can make the most of that gorgeous summer shift dress.

Sweltering weather is synonymous with rising hems and plunging necklines. So don't let problem-ridden skin come in the way of daring summer dressing. "Eat for beauty," advises nutritionist and food consultant, Naini Setalvad. Paying a little attention to the changing needs of your body this summer can go a long way.

What are the diet essentials for the summer months?

Setalvad recommends a heavy breakfast, a light lunch and a medium dinner. "Fried food, red meat and dry fruits (except raisins) should be avoided. Eggs are heat producing and should be kept to a minimum; fish is a good option. Light grains like rice and wheat are okay for the diet but millets should be avoided," she states. "Yoghurt cools down the digestive system. So try to include raitas in your meals or use yoghurt as a salad dressing," she adds. Dr. A prati m Goel, dermatologist, says that antioxidants helps to counter the damage caused by over exposure to the sun. "Raw tomatoes are an excellent source of antioxidants. The bottom line for great summer skin, however, is maximum hydration," she explains.

What does one drink in summer for optimum hydration?

Setalvad strongly recommends raw mango drinks (popularly known as aam panna in most parts of India). Avoid alcohol and sugary fluids like sherbets and aerated drinks. Salted lemon water, buttermilk, jal jeera and caffeine-free herbal infusions like peppermint or coriander drinks are ideal.

Does a predominantly fruit and vegetable diet ensure great skin?

Not all veggies are ideal for summer. Pumpkins, snake gourds, cucumbers, tomatoes and lettuce are good for light summer meals. Setalvad suggests incorporating slices of raw mango into

Go skintastic this Summer!

salads or snacks. "Mango pickle is an excellent option since it helps to replenish the essential salts lost due to perspiration," she explains. Melons and mangoes are well known 'summer fruits'. However, the innocuous mango is often thought to be responsible for pimples. "Don't blend mangoes with milk or sugar," warns Setalvad. Mango is alkaline while milk is acidic, resulting in a disrupted pH. This

an emulsion of your regular moisturiser by mixing it with a little water and applying this to the face and neck. She suggests a natural remedy to rejuvenate tired, summer skin. "Pack grated cucumber in a piece of muslin cloth and place this on the face for 20 minutes," she suggests. Fungal infections proliferate in summer due to dampness induced by excessive perspiration. Using a light anti-fungal dusting powder can help nix rashes and infections.

How does one choose the right sunscreen?

The stunningly bold Honda Amaze is here

Honda

Recommended By Colombia

'Sunscreen' is a golden word in summer. But it is a fact that it doesn't agree with all skin types. In such cases, make the most of physical protection in the form of broad-rimmed hats, sunglasses, full-sleeved cotton clothing, etc. "If sunscreen is too greasy for you, use aloe vera and calamine. This is especially good for acne-prone skin," says Dr Goel. He explains that over-the-counter sunscreens are of two kinds chemical and physical. "The chemical ones need to be applied 20 minutes prior to sun exposure whereas the physical ones (that contain titanium or zinc oxides and benzones) act instantly," she says.

Handy tips

- As inviting as they are, avoid pack aged facial wipes as most of them contain alcohol that could eventually harm your skin.

- Mineral water sprays are a good alternative when there is no provision for a face wash.

- Use a cold compress after long periods of sun exposure. It helps to instantly cool down the skin. Applying tomato juice or buttermilk relieves minor sunburn.



causes indigestion and skin break outs when the body tries to eliminate the accumulated toxins. Setalvad also suggests sprinkling dry ginger powder on mango in order to reduce the risk of flatulence.

What is the basic skin care regimen that one should follow during summer?

Your skin needs moisturising even in summer. Dr Goel recommends making