

PM chairs key security meet on Middle East chaos, orders aid for stranded Indians

The Cabinet Committee on Security meeting, chaired by PM Modi, comes as the conflict in the Middle East intensifies, with the US and Israel carrying out strikes inside Iran and Tehran vowing retaliation, raising fears of a wider regional escalation.

New Delhi.(Agency) Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday chaired a high-level meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) to review the rapidly evolving global situation arising from the escalating Iran-Israel-US conflict and assess its potential impact on India.



Kalyan Marg, the official residence of the Prime Minister. The committee was briefed on the February 28 air strikes in Iran and the escalation that

followed across Gulf countries, and voiced serious concern for the safety of the large Indian community in the Middle East.

It also reviewed problems faced by Indian travellers and students due to the crisis, along with wider risks to regional security and economic activity.

The CCS directed all departments to take necessary steps to assist affected Indian nationals and stressed the need for an early end to hostilities and a return to dialogue and diplomacy. The CCS review comes as the conflict in the Middle East intensifies, with the US and Israel carrying out strikes inside Iran and Tehran vowing retaliation, raising fears of a wider

regional escalation that could disrupt global oil supplies and regional stability.

Meanwhile, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar has already spoken with counterparts in Iran, Israel and Gulf nations, urging restraint and emphasising India's concerns. India has repeatedly urged dialogue and diplomacy to resolve the issue.

Indian missions in the region have issued advisories asking citizens to avoid non-essential travel, remain vigilant and stay in touch with embassies. The Indian diaspora in West Asia is substantial, including about 3.9 million in the UAE, 2.75 million in Saudi Arabia, over 1 million in Kuwait, 830,000 in Qatar, 662,000 in Oman and around 347,000 in Bahrain.

Madhya Pradesh to hold first agriculture cabinet meet in tribal area, farmer sops on the anvil

The entire council of ministers will spend the day in the village, holding talks with intellectuals and farmers, along with an exhibition on agriculture and tribal welfare.

Bhopal.(Agency) A slew of key pro-farmer decisions will be taken at the agriculture cabinet meeting of the Dr Mohan Yadav government in the tribal-dominated Barwani district on Monday.

The meeting in the southwestern MP district's Nagalwadi village will be the first agriculture cabinet meeting of the state government this year. Importantly, the year 2026-27 has been dedicated by the government as 'Krishak Kalyan Varsh' (Farmer Welfare Year).

According to the state government's official statement, the entire council of ministers will spend the day in the same village, where a dialogue with intellectuals and farmers will also be held, besides an exhibition focused on

agriculture and tribal welfare. Following the agriculture cabinet meeting, the CM will interact with farmers and intellectuals.

During the dialogue, the government's

An exhibition showcasing tribal development and agriculture-based growth will be set up at the venue.

Housing a 6000-strong population, Nagalwadi is a predominantly tribal village, where the 800-year-old Bhilat Dev Temple is also located. The village holds a special significance in the faith and traditions of the tribal community.

After the meeting, the CM Dr Mohan Yadav, along with his council of ministers, will offer prayers at the ancient temple. Importantly, the state government is focussing on agriculture and allied activities in 2026-27. In the recent state budget, a massive 1.15 lakh crore-plus was allocated for the agriculture and farmers' welfare sector.

During the state cabinet meeting earlier this week, the government had allocated 10,500 crore for continuing five major agriculture and related schemes.



Urging Govt of India to intervene for safe evacuation of Punjabis trapped in war-hit Gulf region: CM Mann

The Sikh Times

CHANDIGARH, 2nd March: Amid escalating conflict in parts of the Middle East, Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann on Monday announced a 24x7 helpline to assist stranded Punjabis, asking families to call 0172 2260042, 0172 2260043 or WhatsApp +91 94787 79112 for immediate support. Stating that the state government is in constant touch with the Government of India to ensure their safe and prompt return, he said Punjab will extend full support and cooperation to those affected. Assuring fulsome support and cooperation to the distressed families of the Punjabis stuck in strife torn Middle East, CM Bhagwant Singh Mann stated, "The state government was constantly in touch with the Government of India (GoI) to ensure safe and prompt return of the people stuck. Due to the outbreak of conflicts in Arab countries, many Punjabis in these nations are facing serious difficulties.

The Punjab government has set up a helpline if any person or his family is stranded in these countries they can call on these numbers." He

necessary support and assistance to the stranded people as soon as possible." Expressing solidarity with the families of the youth and



assured full backing to those in distress and announced that a dedicated helpline and control room has been set up and will operate 24x7, adding, "People can call 0172 2260042 and 0172 2260043, or send a WhatsApp message to +91 94787 79112, if any kind of help is required." Reiterating the government's commitment, CM Bhagwant Singh Mann said, "We are committed to providing all

students stuck in Gulf countries, he said, "The state government stands firmly with these families in this hour of crisis." He also urged the Government of India to intervene for the safe evacuation of Punjabis stranded in the Middle East, adding that he hopes the Union government will take necessary steps to extend a helping hand to all those trapped in the war hit Gulf region.

Kerala CM blasts US 'hooliganism' against Iran, slams 'rogue state' Israel

Wayanad.(Agency)

Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan on Sunday alleged that the United States was displaying "hooliganism" against Iran and accused it of taking "irrational" actions that undermine the sovereignty of nations.

Inaugurating the first phase of a government-constructed township for landslide survivors here, the chief minister also criticised Israel, describing it as a "rogue nation" and a close ally of the US.

He alleged that the US was leading what he termed "imperialist aggression" against nations it considered hostile and claimed that such actions amounted to interference in the internal affairs of sovereign countries.

Vijayan further alleged that attacks were being carried out against Iran without justifiable grounds and that even the country's supreme leader was being targeted. The left veteran also termed the US action against Iran as an example of its "hooliganism".

He said just as individuals are expected to show basic courtesy and respect toward one another, countries, too, are expected to conduct themselves with a sense of mutual respect.

Stating that no nation can reasonably demand that others adopt identical views or policies, he said, yet certain states, backed by American imperial power—with its vast flow of arms, financial backing and a persistent appetite for war—appear to expect this from the rest of the world.

He sought to know what the situation was that warranted an attack against Iran. "The stand being taken is that nations it (the US) opposes will not be tolerated. They killed Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, whom that country regards as its sovereign leader, at his home along with his daughter, son-in-law and granddaughter," he said. "It is a mad act of American imperialism. Joining them in all this is Israel, another global rogue state," the CM said and urged everyone to express strong protest against such actions.

'Will ensure improvement of Delhi every year in air quality, transport, Yamuna': Delhi CM Rekha Gupta

New Delhi.(Agency)

In an interview on Sunday, Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta told Gayathri Mani, Kaunain Sheriff M and Monojit Majumdar about her government's achievements over the past year, her priorities and plans for the nation's capital—to make it clean, beautiful, financially stronger, and more inviting for a range of businesses. She also strongly countered the claims and allegations of the opposition AAP, and its leader Arvind Kejriwal.

He knows that the Election Commission of India will not hold elections just because he says so. His statements are only to mislead

the public. The decision of the court is part of a judicial process, it is not the final decision; there is the High Court and Supreme Court... We have seen so many ups and downs in court cases in this country; the fight for justice cannot end.

I'd like to ask those who claim to be kattar imaandaar (uncompromisingly honest), if your excise policy was so good, you should have stood by it; why did you withdraw it as soon as the investigation began? The commission of private vendors was increased by several times, the revenue that should have come to the government went to private parties... Why are there trails of



money laundering? Why did you try to destroy 170 mobiles, to delete the data? Did you want to generate revenue or to benefit someone? You will have to answer these

questions.

Also, this is not the only case against Mr Kejriwal, there are many others—relating to classrooms, Delhi Transport Corporation, medicines, mohalla clinics... Has he got a clean chit in all of them? As we look at the accounts of the previous government, we see something every day, there are signs of corruption everywhere... You (Kejriwal) ran away from Delhi... Had you been honest, you would have stayed and worked for the people of Delhi. But you took your entire syndicate to Punjab and started working with the drugs and liquor mafia there... You sold the country.

Excise policy case: What are the 5 key grounds CBI cited to challenge Kejriwal, Sisodia's discharge

New Delhi.(Agency)

In its plea before the Delhi High Court, the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has termed the trial court order discharging AAP leaders Arvind Kejriwal and Manish Sisodia—along with 21 others—in its corruption case in the alleged Delhi excise policy scam "illegal on the face of it". The petition has sought setting aside of the order and is expected to be heard on March 9 by Justice Swarana Kanta Sharma.

Some of the key grounds the probe agency has cited while challenging the discharge order are:

1. Trial court conducted a "mini-trial" The CBI argued that the court dealt with "separate limbs of conspiracy in isolation" by "selective reading of the prosecution

case, disregarding the material showing culpability of the accused".

According to the CBI, at the stage of framing of charges, the trial court has to take evidence provided by the prosecution at face value "based on broad probabilities". Taking a cue from an oral remark made by the court during the pronouncement of the verdict on Friday, the CBI further pointed out to the HC that the trial court spent four months reading only the file of the case, which, it argued, "shows that the appreciation of the evidence, which otherwise is not permitted at this stage in such detail, is clearly not the exercise that needs to be undertaken at the stage of discharge."

2. Trial court wrongly evaluated facts and



law in the case on a piecemeal-basis As per the CBI, the trial court has "given its own interpretation to various factual aspects and statements recorded by (CBI) and to documents attached," while discarding "the approver statements on absolutely untenable grounds". This, it said, "further reflects the incorrect understanding of law" by the trial

court.

"The piecemeal reading of evidence to disregard the conspiracy herein ought to be set aside (by the Delhi HC) when the entire chain of conspiracy stands duly established," the CBI has submitted.

It also pointed out evidence that the trial court did not appreciate which, according to the prosecution, establishes a chain in the conspiracy: A GoM report, last in the custody of Sisodia, that went "missing"; failure to consider evidence of the Excise department's senior officials attesting that no deliberation at all was conducted with regard to policy formulation; relaxation in turnover criteria for bidders from Rs 500 crore to Rs 150 crore to indicate the liquor importer and distributor M/s Indospirits.

News box

Contaminated Haryana wants mid-day meal items replaced

Gurgaon.(Agency)

Haryana school education department has directed Haryana Agro Industries Corporation Limited (HAICL) to immediately replace substandard and contaminated food items supplied to govt schools under the PM POSHAN scheme, following complaints from several districts. In a letter dated Feb 27, the department raised concerns over the quality and safety of dry rations being distributed to schools and sought an urgent explanation from the corporation. District education officers from Ambala, Fatehabad, Hisar, Kaithal and Yamunanagar reported that essential items such as jaggery (gur) and pulses were of poor quality. In some cases, supplies were found to be fungus-infested and unfit for consumption. The issue gained wider attention after a video showing allegedly substandard rajma being cooked for mid-day meals surfaced on social media.

Officials said the complaints pointed to lapses in quality control and storage during procurement and distribution. Given that thousands of students depend on the scheme for daily nutrition, the department termed the issue "grave" serious and called for immediate corrective measures. The directorate instructed HAICL to withdraw and replace all spoiled and low-grade rations with fresh and hygienic supplies without delay. It also sought a detailed status report explaining the reasons for the lapse and outlining steps to strengthen monitoring and quality checks across the supply chain. Officials were asked to ensure that no compromised stock remained in school kitchens. Teachers in affected schools expressed concerns over the condition of the supplies. "We noticed discoloration and an unusual smell when we opened the bags of rajma and gur. We immediately informed the authorities because we cannot take any risk with children's health," said a teacher. Another teacher said poor-quality meals affect both students' health and their trust in the system.

An education department official said the state govt has reiterated zero tolerance for negligence in the implementation of the mid-day meal programme and stressed that ensuring safe and nutritious food for students remains a priority.

Truck swerves, delivery agent crushed by its wheels in Gurgaon; driver arrested

Gurgaon.(Agency)

A 25-year-old delivery executive was crushed under a truck's rear wheels in Udyog Vihar on Saturday afternoon after the heavy vehicle allegedly took a sudden turn, forcing him to brake hard and lose control of his motorcycle. Krishna, a Kanpur resident who had been working in Gurgaon for the past several years, met with the accident around 4.30pm near Peepal Chowk, a congested intersection in the industrial belt known for constant movement of container trucks, vans and other heavy vehicles. Police said Krishna was riding behind the truck when it swerved unexpectedly. "To avoid hitting the vehicle, he applied the brakes. The motorcycle lost balance and skidded, throwing him onto the road. But before he could get up, he came under the truck's wheels and suffered critical injuries," an officer said. Passersby alerted police and helped rush him to a nearby hospital, where doctors declared him dead on arrival. The body was sent for an autopsy. Police registered a case at Udyog Vihar police station under sections 281 (rash driving) and 106 (causing death by negligence) of the BNS. "The driver was arrested from the spot and the truck seized. Further investigation is underway," a police officer said. Investigators are checking CCTV cameras near Peepal Chowk and along the adjoining road to reconstruct the sequence of events. They are also recording witness statements to determine whether the driver indicated before turning and whether any traffic rules were violated. Police said the truck's documents and the driver's licence are also being verified as part of the probe.

Private hospitals handle 7 in 10 births in Gurgaon, bring down Haryana government facility share

Gurgaon.(Agency)

Haryana's institutional delivery numbers appear strong at first glance. However, district-level data shows that Gurgaon and Faridabad are dragging down the public-sector share. In 2025, 98.7% of births in the state took place in health facilities. While govt hospitals handled 2.34 lakh deliveries — 47.7% — private hospitals conducted 2.5 lakh (51%). Home births, though a small share, still accounted for 6,249 cases (1.3%).

According to the district-wise breakup, in Gurgaon, only 29.4% of deliveries took place in govt hospitals (13,346 births), against 70.6% in private facilities (32,053). Faridabad shows a similar tilt, with 39.8% of deliveries in govt hospitals (18,908 cases) and 59.1% in private hospitals (28,022). In short, private hospitals handled seven in 10 births in Gurgaon, bringing down Haryana's govt facility share. This contrasts sharply with several other districts where public facilities remain the first port of call for childbirth. Panchkula (75.7%), Karnal (61.1%), Mahendragarh (52.9%) and Sirsa (54.8%) — all report a majority of births in govt hospitals, indicating a more balanced or public-leaning system outside the state's biggest urban centres.

Health officials attribute the private-sector dominance in Gurgaon and Faridabad to a dense network of private hospitals, perceived better amenities and higher out-of-pocket paying capacity among urban families. Public-health experts, however, warn that this pattern also signals under-utilisation of govt maternity services in districts that host some of the state's busiest public hospitals — an imbalance that can widen inequities in access and affordability. In the city, the skew towards private hospitals also reflects persistent capacity constraints in the public system. Doctors and patients at the Sector 10 Civil Hospital long flagged space and staffing shortages. In mid-2023, TOI reported that a 26-year-old woman delivered on a corridor floor outside the delivery room after labour pains began en route to the ward, an episode that triggered a departmental inquiry and a reshuffle of ward guards and staff. Doctors at the Sector 10 hospital in Gurgaon said,

Lifts & stairs: Revamp for footbridges at 3 major junctions on Delhi-Gurgaon Expressway

Gurgaon.(Agency)

Conventional long ramps and escalators that define most overbridge pedestrian crossings on NH8 will go. Foot overbridges along Delhi-Gurgaon Expressway are set for a design overhaul, with NHA opting for lift-based access instead of long ramps and escalators.

NHA officials said that new foot overbridges will be constructed with lifts and staircases as the mode of access. The move comes after repeated instances of ramps being misused by two-wheelers, leading to structural damage and escalators turning defunct due to theft, vandalism and poor upkeep. The redesign of foot overbridges comes alongside the dismantling of the foot overbridges required at the three major junctions along the expressway — IFFCO Chowk, Signature Tower and Rajeev Chowk — for upcoming infrastructure projects. The foot overbridges at IFFCO Chowk and Signature Tower will be removed for construction of the proposed Delhi-



Gurgaon-Bawal RRTS corridor by National Capital Region Transport Corporation along NH8. At Rajeev Chowk, the existing foot overbridges will be dismantled for the construction of a proposed interchange for Delhi-Gurgaon Expressway with the Sohna elevated corridor, aimed at easing congestion. The interchange project will be taken up by NHA. Earlier, NCRTC sought a no-objection certificate (NOC) from NHA for executing the corridor work on the highway stretch. The two footbridges will be reconstructed later by NCRTC with a revised design, the NHA officials said.

"Ramps are frequently misused by two-wheelers, which damages the structure. Escalators, on the other hand, are prone to theft and vandalism. Maintenance becomes a recurring issue," the NHA official said. The decision comes at a time when this pedestrian crossing infrastructure on the expressway remains inaccessible and neglected due to a lack of maintenance over the last three years. Despite repeated complaints, repairs remained pending, leaving commuters to navigate unsafe crossings. Escalators at several foot overbridges — including those at IFFCO Chowk, Rajeev Chowk and Signature Tower — remained non-functional for a long time, forcing commuters to climb steep staircases or risk crossing fast-moving traffic. At present, around 30 escalators are installed at various foot overbridges along the expressway, many of which are non-functional. At IFFCO Chowk, apart from non-operational escalators, parts of the roof covering the

bridge are missing. Similar conditions prevail at Rajeev Chowk and Signature Tower. The maintenance of these has been a long-standing issue between the civic agencies. NHA, which constructed the pedestrian infrastructure, maintained that the structures were meant primarily for local traffic and urged GMDA to take over their upkeep. In 2024, NHA wrote to the Haryana chief secretary seeking transfer of maintenance responsibilities. However, GMDA declined, saying that the structures fall within the national highway's purview. In 2025, GMDA again wrote to NHA, flagging safety concerns and mounting public complaints, and sought urgent repairs. However, road safety experts cautioned that replacing escalators with lifts may not address the core issue of usability. Founder of road-safety NGO TRAX Anurag Kulshrestha said, "Foot overbridges with ramps are not very successful. Climbing a structure that is almost the height of a two-storey building discourages usage."

Racket forges documents for foreigner's bail, 1 arrested from Faridabad

Gurgaon.(Agency)

A racket, which used forged documents to furnish a bail bond for a Polish national accused in a narcotics case, was busted, police said, adding that one person has been arrested in the case. Police arrested Anil Singh, a resident of AC Nagar, Faridabad, who drives an auto-rickshaw. Polish national Patryk Dziwinski was granted interim bail by Punjab and Haryana high court on Dec 23, 2025.

"Anil disclosed he would procure someone else's Aadhaar card, digitally replace the original photograph with his own, and submit forged surety documents in court to secure bail for accused persons who had no local guarantors," an officer said. The HC suspended Dziwinski's sentence for 15 days on medical grounds and directed that he be released on Dec 25, 2025, subject to furnishing bail bonds and two heavy local sureties to the satisfaction of the trial court. He was also directed to surrender before jail authorities on Jan 9, 2026, and not leave the NCR region

during the period. Police said the surety bonds were furnished before the duty magistrate on Dec 25. "However, the



matter took a dramatic turn when two men — Biswajit Malik and Naresh Kumar — were later produced before the court and stated that they never stood surety for Dziwinski. They alleged that impersonators forged copies of their Aadhaar cards and vehicle registration certificates, and used them to prepare fake bail documents," an officer said. After examining the original documents and

comparing them with those submitted in court, it found material variations and contradictions. On Feb 11, the chief judicial magistrate (CJM) directed registration of an FIR against the impersonators under sections 318(4) (cheating), 336(3) (forgery), 338 (forgery of valuable security), 340 (false document or electronic record made wholly or in part by forgery) and 61 (criminal conspiracy) of the BNS. Accordingly, the FIR was registered at the Shivaji Nagar police station. Dziwinski was arrested in 2019 from Qutub Plaza under DLF Phase-1 police station after more than 300g of opium was recovered from his possession. Court records also show that after being granted interim bail, Dziwinski did not surrender before jail authorities on Jan 9. In a subsequent order dated Jan 19, the HC directed the police to arrest him immediately and take him into custody. The CJM later issued notice to the SHO to inform the court about compliance with the HC's directions.

Gang of 4 holds Faridabad family hostage, robs businessman of jewellery

Ghaziabad.(Agency)

Four masked men stormed into a businessman's house in Faridabad's Mohna village, held his family hostage and fled with jewellery worth Rs 3 lakh on Sunday. Police said the incident took place around 2am, adding that the robbers fired a shot when hardware and fast-food businessman Praveen resisted and looted cash — Rs 8,000 too — too. The sound of the gunshot alerted neighbours, prompting the assailants to flee while issuing threats. An officer said, "The accused arrived on two bikes and a scooter, cut the wires of CCTV cameras installed on the road outside and then removed the glass panel of the main door to gain entry into the house." Praveen was asleep on the first floor with his wife, while his father, Veerpal, and mother, Krishna, were sleeping on the ground floor. One of the intruders, armed with a country-made pistol, allegedly held Veerpal and Krishna at gunpoint and threatened to kill them if they raised an alarm. The other three, carrying iron rods and a pipe, ransacked wardrobes and beds. The miscreants took away a gold chain, two gold rings, silver coins and silver anklets. They also forced Krishna to remove her earrings and gold chain.

"The accused, earlier, went upstairs and latched Praveen's room from outside. He woke up on hearing noises and, when the door didn't open, removed a plywood sheet fitted above the air-conditioner, reached out and unlatched the door from outside," an officer said. s he stepped out, he saw one of the men standing outside his parents' room. When asked to stay silent, Praveen picked up a flower pot and hurled it at the accused. The gunman then fired at him, but he escaped unhurt.

Police from Chhainsa police station and crime branch teams reached the spot and registered a case under sections 309(4) (robbery), 311 (robbery or dacoity, and use of any deadly weapon), and 351(2) (criminal intimidation) of the BNS and Section 25 of the Arms Act. Investigators suspect the accused may be locals, as they appeared familiar with the layout of the house. The men, aged around 25 to 30 years, spoke in a local

Poor lighting, rough patches: Travel on Dwarka Expressway stretch a nightmare

Gurgaon.(Agency)

Poor lighting along a key stretch of Upper Dwarka Expressway has emerged as a safety concern for commuters and residents of sectors 99 to 109. Malfunctioning streetlights have been reported repeatedly over the past year. This, along with rough patches and poor maintenance, puts thousands at risk every day, residents said. Complaints are addressed from time to time, but the problem returns within days, they said, adding that as a result, motorists depend largely on vehicle headlights during night travel. Poor visibility increases the risk of accidents in these newly developed sectors. The stretch connects several high-density sectors and also carries heavy traffic from nearby villages and colonies. Residents said uneven surfaces and damaged patches add to the danger,



especially during the monsoon. Ashok Dutta, president of Paras Dews in Sector 106, said inadequate lighting remains a persistent issue. "The stretch has uneven patches, and without proper lighting, this increases the risk of accidents. There is a higher risk of anti-social activities on the road due to poor visibility," he said. Residents also pointed to confusion over responsibility. While the road falls under GMDA, HSVP maintains the

streetlighting infrastructure. Residents said that this overlapping mandate led to a blame game, resulting in little sustained action on the ground. Alok Pandey, president of the RWA of Raheja Vedaanta, said repeated complaints have not brought lasting results. "We hope the authorities take swift corrective steps to restore proper lighting and ensure basic civic standards," he said. Gursimron Singh of Adani Oyster in Sector 102 called for clear accountability. "There is a coordination gap among agencies," he said. An HSVP official said the streetlights are generally functional and issues arise mainly due to temporary power disruptions. "The lights were installed around 13 to 14 years ago and are being maintained. Any upgrade would be undertaken by GMDA," the official said.

Ghaziabad school guard handed life term for shooting man dead on campus

Gurgaon.(Agency)

A sessions court has sentenced a 72-year-old school security guard to life imprisonment for shooting a man dead on the campus in 2018, holding that the prosecution proved he fired at close range during an argument inside the guard room. Additional district and sessions judge Junaid Muzaffar said the case did not fall in the "rarest of rare" category that would justify the death penalty. After considering the defence's submissions, the court awarded Shiv Vijay the life term and imposed a fine of Rs 25,000 under IPC Section 302, and three years' imprisonment with a fine of Rs 3,000 under Section 27 of the Arms Act for using a firearm without a licence. The sentences will run concurrently. The case was registered at Muradnagar police station on April 22, 2018, on a complaint by the school's administrative officer, Atul



Bhushan. Apart from Vijay, the FIR also mentioned one Natthu Singh under Section 30 of the Arms Act because the gun used in the shooting was licensed in his name. Natthu, whose son owns Jagatpal Perfect Security Systems and Services, died during the proceedings. Charges against Vijay were framed on June 24, 2019. The guard denied them, prompting the trial to proceed further.

The prosecution examined 10 witnesses, including the complainant. A key account came from Trishna Pal Singh, a school driver, who told the court the deceased was his nephew, Praveen. According to him, Praveen had come to the school (DPS, HRIT campus) that day seeking a driver's job. Singh said he took Praveen to meet Vijay in the guard room, where the three sat

together and drank. He testified that Praveen later misplaced his mobile phone and accused Vijay of stealing it, triggering an angry confrontation.

"In a fit of rage and intoxication, he pulled out his single-barrel gun and shot him at close range," Singh told the court. Two other drivers, Kunwarpal and Nareshpal, supported Singh's version. The defence argued that the prosecution witnesses were acquaintances of the deceased, and pointed to contradictions in their statements. But prosecutor Sunil Kaushik countered that the incident occurred in 2018 and witness statements were recorded nearly five years later, making minor inconsistencies "quite natural".

He also argued their evidence remained credible as that of "natural witnesses" present at the scene. The judge accepted

the testimonies of Trishpal Singh and Kunwarpal.

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# Canteen owner butchered for money, body parts dumped in Yamuna; 4 held

## The Sikh Times

New Delhi: Coveting gold and cash, a 29-year-old man, along with his live-in partner and associates, allegedly murdered a canteen owner, chopped his body into pieces and dumped them in Yamuna, the Delhi Police said on Monday. According to the police, the main accused, Happy alias Suraj (29), had befriended Anroop Gupta (48), who ran a canteen at Chhattisgarh Niwas in Dwarka, nearly a year ago. After noticing the gold ornaments that Gupta frequently wore, Happy grew greedy. He also learned that the canteen owner was living separately from his family. On February 18, Happy invited Gupta for a party at his rented home in Matiala Extension. There, Happy, along with his associates, tied Gupta with ropes and beat him with sticks, demanding money, Deputy Commissioner of Police (Dwarka) Ankit Singh said. The accused forcibly took the car keys, brought the vehicle to Matiala

and retrieved the gold ornaments. However, when Gupta refused to give them money, they stabbed him to death after brutally assaulting

which were transported by using Gupta's SUV. They disposed of the bags in the Yamuna river near Vrindavan," DCP Ankit Singh said in



him. "In a shocking act of brutality, Happy procured a machete and cut the body into pieces. The body parts were packed in three plastic bags,

the statement. In a bid to mislead investigators, they kept Gupta's mobile phone inside the car and did not switch it off. They also sent mes-

sages from the victim's phone to staff at the Chhattisgarh Niwas canteen asking them to close the outlet and go home. Another message was sent to Gupta's family stating that he was going on a vacation to Goa and should not be disturbed. The matter came to light when Gupta's family reported him missing at Delhi Police's Dwarka North police station on February 23 after they failed to contact him. After the missing report, a dedicated team to trace the canteen owner and a case was registered at Bindapur police station, the DCP said. "Details were also shared with the Uttar Pradesh Police. Following coordinated efforts with police in Mathura district, the mutilated body parts were recovered from the Yamuna river," he said. The police said that they checked CCTV footage for three days at toll plazas and the place of the incident to trace the victim's movement. It was found that Gupta had booked a bike ride on February 18 and left his SUV

parked at Chhattisgarh Niwas before heading to Matiala Extension. CCTV footage showed him entering a building there, they said. "He was never seen coming out. Four other persons were later seen entering the same building," DCP Singh said. Further scrutiny of CCTV footage revealed suspicious movement of the victim's car, which was later seen entering and exiting the basement of the building before heading towards the Yamuna Expressway on the intervening night of February 19 and 20. The DCP said, "NHAI toll data confirmed that the SUV travelled towards Vrindavan and returned to Noida within a few hours. The key conspirator, Happy, a resident of Hansi in Haryana, was identified from CCTV footage and traced." During interrogation, he confessed to hatching the conspiracy, along with his associates —Bhupender, Balram, Neeraj and his live-in partner Rakhi, the officer said. Bhupender, Balram and Rakhi

have also been arrested, while Neeraj remains absconding. Efforts are being made to trace and arrest him, the officer added. According to police sources, Gupta shifted to Dwarka Sector 14 around two months ago. "When he went missing, a team was immediately dispatched to the apartment where he was staying. We also got to know that he was staying with a woman there," the source said. He further said that Gupta's family members stay in Faridabad. A team also visited Faridabad and also checked the CCTV footage of the society in Dwarka as well. Gupta left his house and he was carrying a bag with him as well, the source said, adding that all the CCTV footage is being connected to ascertain the sequence of events. Police is also trying to identify the woman who was staying with Gupta, he said. According to the police, the mortal remains were handed over to the family members after autopsy.

## After couple found dead in Noida, man's family alleges murder, caste-based threats by woman's kin

New Delhi: Family members of the man found dead with his girlfriend inside a parked car in Noida on Saturday alleged that the couple may have been murdered, claiming they faced caste-based threats, even as police said prima facie the case appeared to be a suicide. The couple allegedly received taunts from the woman's family, and the man's family had received threats, including calls from international numbers warning of police action, they said. The bodies of Sumit, 32, a resident of Trilokpuri in Delhi, and Rekha, 26, of Sector 101 in Noida, were found with

gunshot wounds inside a locked car near Sector 107 earlier in the day. A pistol was recovered from his hand, police said. "We believe both have been murdered and were victims of casteism," a cousin of Sumit alleged. The couple had been in a relationship for over a decade and their families were aware of it, he said. "Sumit is my younger brother. He and the girl had been together for 12-15 years and she attended our family functions. There was never any pressure from our side," the relative told PTI. Alleging that the couple could have been murdered, he added that the

spot where the car was found was only a few hundred metres from the woman's village in Salarpur and described the circumstances as "suspicious". Police, however, said a pistol was recovered from Sumit's hand and the car was locked from inside, indicating a possible suicide. Senior officers and forensic teams have inspected the scene and a post-mortem examination is awaited, they added. Officials said all angles, including the family's allegations, are being examined as part of the probe. Further investigation is underway, they said.

## Minister Ravinder Indraj participates in sports, anti-drug campaigns

New Delhi: Delhi Government's Minister for Social Welfare and SC/ST/OBC Welfare, Ravinder Indraj Singh, on Sunday took part in a series of social, cultural and public awareness programmes across the city, reiterating the government's commitment to youth empowerment and social harmony. The minister began the day by attending the "Say Yes to Life, No to Drugs" pledge programme organised by the Anti Narcotics Task Force of Delhi Police in Shahdara district. MLAs and several social workers were present at the event. The programme was followed by the "Anuvrat Marathon 2026, Run for Unity, Say No to Drugs" campaign, aimed at encouraging young people to adopt a drug-free lifestyle. Addressing participants, the minister said, "Guiding youth towards the right path and building a drug free society is our priority." He further stated that such

awareness initiatives serve as a powerful medium for bringing positive change in society. Keeping youth away from substance abuse and inspiring them towards commitment to youth empowerment and social harmony. The minister began the day by attending the "Say Yes to Life, No to Drugs" pledge programme organised by the Anti Narcotics Task Force of Delhi Police in Shahdara district. MLAs and several social workers were present at the event. The programme was followed by the "Anuvrat Marathon 2026, Run for Unity, Say No to Drugs" campaign, aimed at encouraging young people to adopt a drug-free lifestyle. Addressing participants, the minister said, "Guiding youth towards the right path and building a drug free society is our priority." He further stated that such

instill discipline, energy and a positive direction in youth and play a vital role in building a healthy society. In the evening, the minister joined a Holi Milan celebration, where he extended his greetings to citizens. He highlighted that the festival symbolises social harmony, brotherhood and mutual goodwill. Summing up the day's engagements, Ravinder Indraj Singh emphasised that for holistic societal development, continuous efforts are required in education, sports, social awareness and cultural unity. Building a drug free and empowered society remains the core objective of these efforts.

**NAME CHANGE**  
I, RANJEET SINGH CHAWLA, son of Shri Darshan Singh Chawla resident of Flat No. 1103, Park Royal Apartment, Plot No. 10A, Sector-9, Dwarka, New Delhi-110077, have changed my name from CHARANJEET SINGH CHAWLA to RANJEET SINGH CHAWLA in future for all purposes. And CHARANJEET SINGH CHAWLA and RANJEET SINGH CHAWLA is the same and one same person.

**NAME CHANGE**  
I, RAMJEE YADAVA S/O GARIB YADAV R/O H NO 1246 FIRST FLOOR GALI NO-25 BLOCK-1 HARI NAGAR EXTENSION BADARPUR NEW DELHI-110044 have changed my name to RAMJEE YADAV Permanently for all future purpose

**NAME CHANGE**  
I, ANKIT GAUTAM S/O KAMAL KISHORE R/O 7-B KH NO 96/6 GALI NO-8 SUKHBIR NAGAR KARLA DELHI-110081 have changed my name to ANKIT GAUTAM Permanently for all future purpose

**NAME CHANGE**  
I, LEIMAPOKPA LILY LEIMA W/O THONGRAM KUMARJIT SINGH R/O J-G-27 A THIRD FLOOR D-2, KHIRKI EXTENSION, MALVIYA NAGAR DELHI-110017 have changed my name to THONGRAM LILY LEIMA Permanently for all future purpose

**NAME CHANGE**  
I, LALITA W/O-SANDEEP MISHRA R/O-44-45 3RD FLOOR GAURI SHANKAR BHAVANA BHOLA NATH NAGAR SHAHDARA DELHI-110032 HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO LALITA VERMA.

**NAME CHANGE**  
I, Nabeel Ahmed So Mohammed R/O Kambhar House, PO Bedradka, Puthur, PO-Mogral Puthur, Dist- Kasaragod, Kerala - 671124, have changed my name to Sainudeen A.

**NAME CHANGE**  
I, PRATEEK S/O VINOD KUMAR R/O 343/1, BHINI GARH, KHERI, NEAR RAILWAY STATION, GURGAON HARYANA-122001 HAVE CHANGED MY NAME PRATEEK SAHU ALL FUTURE PURPOSE

**NAME CHANGE**  
I, Anu H K W/O R Jayashankar R/O 100, Old No-27, D V G Road, Near Sai Gold Palace, Basavanaguda, Bangalore - South, Karnataka - 560004, have changed my name to Chinmayi Shankar

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
Notice is hereby given by SUNIL SAO who is purchasing Ground Floor, without roof rights of property No.133-A/B, area measuring 50sq. yds., Village Kilkari, New Delhi from Smt. Seema who is the owner of above-mentioned property Vide Sale Deed dated 14.11.2018 which is registered as Doc. No. 6082, Book No. 1, Vol. No. 773, Page No. 78-84, dated 14.11.2018, SR-V(1) and will be taking financial assistance from Aditya Birla Housing Finance Ltd. That The Sale Deed 27/06/1984, doc no. 3653 & Original Reinquisition Deed 13/07/2017, doc no. 3208 & Original Sale Deed 25/08/2017, doc no. 4094, vol no. 396, pages 133-140 registered in SR-V(1) & Original Sale Deed 14/11/2018, doc no. 6082, vol no. 773, pages 78-84 registered in SR-V (1) are lost/Misplaced. Public is being warned not to deal with the said document. Any person dealing with the said document would do so at their own risk & responsibility. Owner shall not be liable in any manner whatsoever for any loss incurred by such person. If anybody finds these document or notice any misuse of the above mentioned document, Concern person is required to communicate in writing to the undersigned at below address.

**Khairat & Khairat**  
Plot No. 100, 1st floor Okhla Phase III, New Delhi Ph. No: 011-49774545

**NAME CHANGE**  
I, Subhash Jain S/O Indrachand R/O 40, 4th Floor, B-Block, Mookathal Street, Purasawalkam, Vepery, Chennai, Tamil Nadu - 600007, have changed my name to Subhash Ghorawat.

**NAME CHANGE**  
I, Kurnari J W/O Rajkumar B R/O B-No-73, 2nd Main 9th Cross, Chamrajpet, Bangalore South, PO-Chamrajpet, Dist-Bangalore, Karnataka - 560018, have changed my name to Mohanakumari J.

**NAME CHANGE**  
I, Mumtaz Hussain W/O Nazmul Hussain R/O Atfabuddin Road, Dist-Dhubri, Assam - 783301, have changed my name to Mumtaz Zahan

**NAME CHANGE**  
I, Prema Prakash Hebbal W/O Maruti Desai R/O PO-Jamboti, Dist-Belagavi, Karnataka - 591302, have changed my name to Geeta Maruti Desai.

**NAME CHANGE**  
I, Panabaka Raveendra Babu S/O Panabaka Ramanaih R/O 10-2-289/36 Fit No-102, Shanti Nagar, Masab Tank, Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh - 500028, have changed my name to Ravindhranad Ramanaih.

**NAME CHANGE**  
I, Domaria Sakkena D/o Rajalingam Domaria and W/o Gitta Rajalingam R/O 2-1-1203/A, Lakshkar Singaram, Naimnagar, Hanamkonda, Warangal - Telangana-506001, have changed my name to D K H A Saxena

# Gold worth Rs 4.35 cr seized at Indira Gandhi International Airport in 2 smuggling cases

New Delhi: Customs officers at the Indira Gandhi International Airport have busted two separate gold smuggling attempts, seizing a total of over 3.17 kilograms of gold worth about Rs 4.35 crore and arresting three foreign nationals, officials said on Monday. In the first instance, Customs registered a case of smuggling on February 26 against a 39-year-old Chadian woman who arrived from Addis Ababa a day before, an official statement said. Acting on specific profiling and surveillance, officers intercepted the passenger for a detailed examination. During the search, gold

articles of high purity weighing 1,843 grams were recovered from her baggage. The seized gold was assessed at a tariff value of Rs 2.37 crore, officials said. The passenger admitted that the gold had been smuggled into India without payment of duty, officials said, adding that the recovery was made after she confessed the concealment was done "to evade Customs detection and payment of applicable duty". The gold was seized under Section 110 of the Customs Act, 1962, and the woman was placed under arrest under Section 104 of the Act for her alleged role in smuggling. In a separate inci-

dent, Airport Customs Preventive officers booked two Myanmar nationals in a gold smuggling case on February 23. The duo had arrived from Yangon, another statement said. The passengers were intercepted while crossing the green channel at the international arrival hall of Terminal-3. On thorough personal search and baggage examination, the two men admitted that they had concealed gold bars inside their rectum.

"Further, four gold bars were ejected by each of the passengers," the Customs statement said, adding that eight rectangular gold bars were recovered. The total net weight of the recovered gold was 1,329 grams, which was appraised at a

tariff value of Rs 1.98 crore. Both passengers were arrested under Section 104 of the Customs Act, 1962 for their involvement in the offence of smuggling, officials added.

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
General Public at large is informed that my clients Mr. Devender son of Shri Ranjeet and Mrs. Santosh wife of Shri Devender both resident of Near Bijli Office, A-26, Kumpur Pahari, Kusem Pur, South West Delhi-110057 has disowned their daughter Ms. Aakanksha, age about 24 years from their movable and immovable properties and other assets, with immediate effect due to their disrespectful behavior and day to day quarrel and threatening us for dire consequences and to implicated in false cases and she became out of control and severed all their relations with her. If anybody deals in any manner with the above named person, at his/her own risks and consequences. My clients shall not be held liable or responsible for the same in any manner. And have no concern/relations with the above named persons in his/her further life time in future.

**KANTA RANA Advocate**  
DELHI HIGH COURT  
CH.NO. 408A, Lawyers Chamber, DWARKA COURT NEW DELHI

**NAME CHANGE**  
I, MOHAMMAD ARSALAN S/O merajuddin R/O 4488 gali shahatara Ajmeri gate delhi 110006 HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO MOHD ARSALAN

**NAME CHANGE**  
I, MOHAMMED VASEEM S/O JALEEL AHMED R/O 444 POCK-ET-1 PASCHIM PURI PASCHIM VIHAR WEST DELHI-110063 HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO MOHD VASEEM

**NAME CHANGE**  
I, PARVEZ A HABIB S/O HABIB AHMED R/O A-292 1ST FLOOR BLOCK-A, NEW FRIENDS COLONY DELHI-110025 HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO PARVEZ HABIB FOR ALL PURPOSE

**NAME CHANGE**  
I, RAJAJI KHATOON Wife of No-5457491H Rank-HAV Name-IMRAN Presently residing at VILL-JAMALPUR MAHIPAT, PO-SARAKARA CHAKRAJMAL, TEH-DHAMEPUR, DIST-BINDUR, UTTAR PRADESH-246761, have changed my name from RAJAJI KHATOON to RAZIYA KHATOON for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 02/03/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

**NAME CHANGE**  
I, SOOVEDAR SINGH Father of PUNEET KUMAR Presently residing at VILL-KHERA, PO-AROLI, TEH-GORMI, DIST-BIHAR, MADHYA PRADESH-477660, have changed my name from SOOVEDAR SINGH to SUBEDAR SINGH for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 02/03/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

**NAME CHANGE**  
I, NIKITA GURUNG Wife of No-5457878L Rank-HAV Name-PRASANTA GURUNG Presently residing at VILL-CHITARY BUSTY, PO-DEOPALI, TEH-KAUBATI, DIST-DARJEELING, WEST BENGAL-734203, have changed my name from NIKITA GURUNG to NIKITA RAI GURUNG for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 02/03/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

**NAME CHANGE**  
I, NAGMA PARVEEN W/O HAMID ALI residing at C-40 STREET NO-18, NORTH GHONDA, DELHI-110053, have changed my name to PARVEEN FOR ALL PURPOSE.

**NAME CHANGE**  
I, KM YANDANA W/O SANJAY KUMAR VERMA residing at H NO-B-5478, GALI NO-15, B-BLOCK, NEAR GURUDWARA, SANT NAGAR, BURARI, DELHI-110084, have changed my name to YANDANA VERMA for all future purpose.

**NAME CHANGE**  
I, SANDEEP S/O SAUDAN SINGH R/O HOUSE NO-1596, DARBARIPUR ROAD, NEAR MATA MANDIR, BAD-SHAHPUR, GURGAON, HARYANA-122101 HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO SANDEEP YADAV FOR ALL FUTURE PURPOSES

**NAME CHANGE**  
I, KUSHUM LATA / KUSUM LATA W/O SATISH YADAV R/O HOUSE NO-104, VILLAGE JHULJHULI, SOUTH WEST DELHI, DELHI-110073, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO KUSUM FOR ALL FUTURE PURPOSES

**NAME CHANGE**  
I, KRISHNA PAL S/O SUKHBIR SINGH R/O H NO 585 DAKSHINI KINCHANPUR, MUZAFFAR NAGAR UTTAR PRADESH-251002, I HAVE CHANGED MY NAME KRISHAN PAL SHARMA FOR ALL FUTURE PURPOSES

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
It is informed to the public at large that my client, Vinita Saluja W/O Late Sh. Sanjay Saluja R/O 2nd Floor, House No. 156, Gali No. 31, South Anarkali, Krishna Nagar, Delhi-110051, hereby, declaring/ debarning/disowning/ severed all relations and ties with their elder daughter Manvi Saluja D/o Late Sh. Sanjay Saluja from her life, properties and estate, moveable or immovable situated at Delhi or outside of Delhi, because she is not in control of my client. My client is not responsible/ liable for any acts, deeds and things done by the above named person from today.

**Siddharth Kinra Advocate**  
Office: Advocates Hall, Chamber Building, Distt. & Sessions Courts, Dwarka-110079, New Delhi.

**NAME CHANGE**  
I, SHAHANA CHOUDHARY W/O ASLAM CHOUDHARY R/O NEAR NC DELHI C-472-A YAMUNA VIHAR DELHI SHASTRI PARK SEELAMPUR NORTH EAST DELHI 110053 HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO SHAHANA PARVEEN

**NAME CHANGE**  
I, Randhir Kumar S/O Harish Chandra Choudhary R/O Flat no-49/3 pocket 16 Adarsh Apartment Madhu vihar Palam Village sector 3 Dwarka DELHI 110045 have changed my name to Randhir Kumar Choudhary

**NAME CHANGE**  
I, Manita Dawar W/O Atul Dawar R/O 550/1-A Sidhi Vinayak Homes Mansrover Park shahadra DELHI 110032 Changed my name to Manita Dawar

**NAME CHANGE**  
I, Kartik Dawar S/O Atul Dawar R/O 550/1-A SIDHI VINAYAK HOMES MANSROVER PARK SHAHADRA DELHI 110032 Changed my name to Kartik Dawar

**NAME CHANGE**  
I, Atul Dawar S/O Radehy Shyam Dawar R/O 550/1-A Sidhi Vinayak Homes Mansrover Park shahadra Delhi Changed my name to Atul Dawar

**NAME CHANGE**  
I, No-9875013M Rank-CHOWKIDAR Name-LAL CHAND CHRENTY residing at RZ-87/1, GALI NO-4, DURGA PARK, VILLAGE, SOUTH WEST DELHI, DELHI-110045, have changed my wife's name from SHOBHA DEVI to SHOBHA PRAJAPATI for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 02/03/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

**NAME CHANGE**  
I, hitherto known as VRIJESH CHANDRA BHAPATRA S/O RAM PALAY TIWARI R/O Bhujaini Bhujaani, Sant Kabir Nagar, Uttar Pradesh-227175 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as VRIJESH TIWARI.

**NAME CHANGE**  
I, hitherto known as NAHID W/O TANVEER KHAN R/O B-414, BLOCK-B, SANGAM PARK, RANA PRATAP BAGH, NORTH DELHI, DELHI-110007 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as NAHID KHAN.

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
My clients AMAR KANT KUMAR and his wife SANGEETA R/O- A96, RAJA VIHAR, SAMAJ PUR BADALI, DIST: NORTH WEST DELHI DELHI-42, severes all relations & disowned/debarred their Son KALYAN and his Wife SONI JHA from their all movable & immovable property & assets due to their misbehavior. Anybody dealing with them shall do at their own risk.

**Kajal Kaur (Advocate)**

**NAME CHANGE**  
I, hitherto known as Kamal Jeet Kaur W/O Gurninder Singh R/O C-48, Second Floor, Sudershan Park, Near Corner Sweets, Moti Nagar, Ramnagar, West Delhi, Delhi-110015 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Kamaljeet Kaur.

**NAME CHANGE**  
I, hitherto known as Shamim W/o Saleem R/O House No-208, DDA Flats, Shastri Park, Seelampur, Seelam Pur, North East Delhi, Delhi-110053 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Rukhsana.

**NAME CHANGE**  
I, hitherto known as AHAMAD RAJA S/O AHMAD NOOR R/O 303A, GALI NO-1, C-BLOCK, NEHRU VIHAR, DELHI, GOKALPURI, NC OF DELHI-110094 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as AHAMED KHAN.

**NAME CHANGE**  
I, Rajat Bansal S/O Suresh Kumar Bansal R/O House No-208, Ground Floor, Category-II, Vaishali Enclave, Pitampura, Saraswati Vihar, North West Delhi, Delhi-110034 have changed the name of my minor son Thakursh Bansal aged 7 years and he shall hereafter be known as Thakursh S Bansal.

**NAME CHANGE**  
I, RAM YADAV father NO-1522711X, Rank-HAV, Name-JAGMOHAN YADAV residing at VILL-FATEHPUR, PO-KHUIYANA, TEHSIL-LAXMAN-GARH, DISTT-ALWAR RAJASTHAN-321607 have changed my name RAM YADAV to SHRIRAM YADAV for all future purposes vide Affidavit Dated 02/03/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

**NAME CHANGE**  
I, MOHAMMAD MUJEEB KHAN S/O MOBIN KHAN R/O B-227/A GALI NO -3, FAZALPUR DELHI-110092 have changed my name to MUJEEB KHAN Permanently for all future purpose

**NAME CHANGE**  
I, ZUHUB AHMAD S/O OF JAMEEL AHMAD R/O 62, QAZI WAREA, INFRONT OF IMAM BARA, KHURJA, DIST BULANDSHAHR, UTTAR PRADESH-203131 HAVE CHANGED MY NAME ZUHUB AHMED FOR ALL FUTURE PURPOSE

**NAME CHANGE**  
I, BIMLA VERMA W/O MANINDRA PRASAD R/O KALI BAGH , JORA INAR, BETTIHAJ , WEST CHAMPARAN BIHAR 845438 have changed my name to VIMLA VERMA Permanently for all future purpose

**NAME CHANGE**  
I, NIKHIL S/O BRU MOHAN R/O H NO 8, BLOCK 15 SUBHASH NAGAR TAGORE GARDEN DELHI-110027 have changed my name to NIKHIL ARORA Permanently for all future purpose

**NAME CHANGE**  
I, Nimita Bera, legally wife of Army NO. 14672961L NK Auto Tech (B Veh) Sanjay Bera, presently residing at Vill-Dakshin Basulpur, P.O.- Rannagar, Dist.-Purba Medinipur, State-West Bengal, inform that, I have changed my name & date of birth from "Nornita/28 Jan 1985 to Nimita Bera/06 Dec-1987 due to wrongly mentioned in my husband's Services documents, I confirm that nimita bera and nornita is same and one person

**NAME CHANGE**  
I, KRISHNA PAL S/O SUKHBIR SINGH R/O H NO 585 DAKSHINI KINCHANPUR, MUZAFFAR NAGAR UTTAR PRADESH-251002, I HAVE CHANGED MY NAME KRISHAN PAL SHARMA FOR ALL FUTURE PURPOSES

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
This is for the notice of the general public that a political party is proposed to be registered by the name of AAM JANATA UNNAYAN PARTY (name of the party). The office of the party is located at VILLAGE NARIKELBARI, PO- SOMPARA, PS- SAKTI PUR, DIST- MURSHIDABAD, WEST BENGAL- 742163. This party has submitted application to the Election Commission of India, New Delhi for its registration as Political Party under section 29A of the Representation Act 1951.

**Name and Address of the office bearers of the party are as follows:-**  
**PRESIDENT- GOLAM NABI AZAD, R/O- NO- 043, NARIKELBARI PASCHIM, NARIKELBARI, BERHAMPORE, MURSHIDABAD, WESTBENGAL-742163.**  
**GENERAL SECRETARY- MUKTADUL AHAMMED, R/O- MADHYA CHAKRANGAPARA, MILKI, REJINAGAR, MURSHIDABAD-742163.**  
**TREASURER- SABIR AHAMMAD BISWAS, R/O- MONJAL, SHAKTIPUR, 79, PARADERPARA, SHAKTIPUR, REJINAGAR, MURSHIDABAD-742163.**  
If anyone has any objection to the registration of AAM JANATA UNNAYAN PARTY (name of the proposed party) they may send their objection with reasons thereof, to the Secretary (Political Party) Election Commission of India, Nirvachan Sadan, Ashoka Road, New Delhi-110001 within 30 days of the publication of this notice.

**NORTHERN RAILWAY TENDER NOTICE**  
The Deputy Chief Engineer /Constl Northern Railway Shivaji Bridge, New Delhi, for and on behalf of the President of India invites open e-tender under Single Packet system for the following work:-

1) Name of work	Providing & Fixing Drain Covers over Drains in Platforms and Stabing of work Lines, Pathways, drainage works & other allied balance works in c/w and Development of coaching/ freight handling terminal at bijwasan on location DLI-RE section of Northern Railway
2) Completion period of the work	09 (Nine) months
3) Approx. Cost of work	Rs. 371.40 Lakhs
4) Earnest Money to be deposited	Rs. 3,35,700.00/-
5) Sale/availability of tender document on Rly. website	Tender documents will be available on IREPS web site i.e. www.ireps.gov.in from 03.03.2026 to 24.03.2026 upto 15.00 hrs.
6) Last date/Time of upload of tenders	24.03.2026 upto 15.00 hours. Tender documents can be uploaded by the tenderer on IREPS web site w.e.f. 03.03.2026 to 24.03.2026
7) Date and time of opening of tender	24.03.2026 at 15.00 hours

No-547-ACS-DRNOCOR-BWSN-CSB Dated-02.03.2026 706/26

**Public Notice**  
It is for general information that I, PRIYANSHI THAPA D/O PARVESH THAPA R/O Plot No-11-2d/23,24,25,27, Block-L2, Mohan Garden, Uttam Nagar, PO: D K Mohan Garden, Dist: West Delhi, Delhi-110059 declare that name of my father has been wrongly written as PARVASH THAPA in my Birth Certificate No-MCDDLIR-0103-000048662. The actual name of my father is PARVESH THAPA which may be amended accordingly.

**Public Notice**  
It is for general information that I, JADITYA DHUSIYA S/O KAMAL KISHORE, R/O 706/1, Rameshwari Nehru Nagar, Tank Road, Karol Bagh, Central Delhi, Delhi-110005, have changed my name permanently to JADITYA KASHYAP, for all future purposes.

**SERVER CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE**

NEWS BOX

## Why Is China Silent On Iran An Expert Decodes Beijing's Hidden Play

world. (Agency)

China's deep energy ties with Iran are suddenly under the harshest spotlight in years as US and Israeli strikes push Tehran into open confrontation and threaten the oil arteries that power the Chinese economy. Beijing has condemned the attacks and called for a ceasefire. But it has stopped short of any economic retaliation that could endanger the very energy flows it depends on. Before dawn on February 28, the United States and Israel launched coordinated strikes on Iranian nuclear facilities, missile installations and leadership compounds across Tehran, Isfahan and Qom. President Donald Trump labeled the assault "Operation Epic Fury," framing it as a decisive blow after months of stalled nuclear negotiations and mounting regional tension. Israel's parallel campaign, "Roaring Lion," focused on degrading Iran's ballistic missile capabilities and senior command structure. For China, the crisis is not abstract.

Beijing buys more than 80 percent of Iran's oil exports. In 2025, that translated to roughly 1.38 million barrels per day, accounting for about 13 to 14 percent of China's total seaborne crude imports. The exposure is substantial but not singular. China's two biggest suppliers remain Russia and Saudi Arabia, and since the escalation Chinese refiners have quietly trimmed Iranian purchases and leaned more on discounted Russian barrels to keep overall supply stable.

Balakrishnan, co founder of Avellon Intelligence, called Tehran's retaliation "a historic strategic blunder." In his view, Iran is not merely confronting a superior military coalition. It is "jeopardising its pivotal role as a linchpin in China's energy and geopolitical architecture in West Asia." Iran anchors a 25-year cooperation framework with Beijing covering energy, infrastructure and transport corridors tied to the Belt and Road Initiative. Discounted crude shipments, often routed through complex trading channels, have given China a steady supply cushion amid Western sanctions.

## US Officials Skeptical Of Regime Change In Iran After Khamenei Killing

Washington. (Agency)

Following the killing of Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei on Saturday, many senior US officials remain skeptical that the US and Israeli military operation against the Islamic Republic will lead to a regime change in the near term.

Before and after the start of the attack, U.S. officials, including U.S. President Donald Trump, had suggested that toppling the nation's repressive governing system was one of several U.S. goals, in addition to crippling Iran's ballistic missile and nuclear programs. "I call upon all Iranian patriots who yearn for freedom to seize this moment ... and take back your country," Trump said on Sunday in a video posted on Truth Social. But three U.S. officials familiar with U.S. intelligence said there is serious skepticism that Iran's battered opposition can topple the theocratic, authoritarian governing system that has been in place since 1979. No officials consulted by Reuters completely ruled out the possibility of the fall of Iran's government, which currently is buffeted by key personnel losses from ongoing U.S. and Israeli air strikes and is deeply unpopular following a January round of extraordinarily violent repression. But it is far from likely or even probable in the near term, they said.

Reuters reported earlier that Central Intelligence Agency assessments presented to the White House in the weeks before the Iran attack concluded that if Khamenei was killed, he could be replaced by hard-line figures from the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps or equally hard-line clerics, two sources said.

## "Reconsider Travel": US Raises Bahrain, Qatar Advisories Amid Iran Conflict

world. (Agency)

The United States raised its travel advisories for Bahrain and Qatar to Level 3 in the aftermath of the launch of US combat operations in Iran, citing security risks and potential disruptions across the Middle East. The State Department said it updated its Travel Advisory for Bahrain on February 28 "to reflect that the Department authorized the departure of non-emergency US government personnel and family members of US government personnel to leave Bahrain due to security concerns." The advisory increased "from Level 2 to Level 3."

The updated advisory states: "Reconsider Travel to Bahrain due to terrorism and armed conflict."

It added that "Following the onset of hostilities between the United States and Iran on February 28, there has been an ongoing threat of drone and missile attacks from Iran and significant disruptions to commercial flights." The department also warned that "Terrorist groups continue plotting possible attacks in Bahrain. Terrorists may attack with little or no warning." Separately, the State Department raised Qatar's Travel Advisory to Level 3 on March 1, up from Level 1, again authorising the departure of non-emergency personnel and family members due to security concerns. The updated notice states: "Reconsider Travel to Qatar due to the threat of armed conflict." It cited the same regional developments, noting that "Following the onset of hostilities between the United States and Iran on February 28, there has been an ongoing threat of drone and missile attacks from Iran and significant disruptions to commercial flights." The advisory further said, "The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has issued a Notice to Airmen (NOTAM) and/or a Special Federal Aviation Regulation (SFAR) for the region, including Qatar. This is due to risks to civil aviation from political and military tensions in the region."

# Trump says US, Israel prepared to sustain Iran strikes for 'four to five weeks'

## Trump tells The New York Times that US, Israel can sustain strikes for weeks; offers Venezuela-like model for Iran leadership transition while warning of possible casualties

world. (Agency) . (Agency)

In a telephone interview with The New York Times on Sunday, US President Donald Trump said the United States intends to maintain its military assault on Iran for "four to five weeks" if necessary, asserting that sustaining the intensity of the operation alongside Israel "won't be difficult," even as he acknowledged the likelihood of further American casualties.

Trump suggested multiple, at times contradictory, scenarios for a transition of

power in Tehran following the killing of Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, in a US-Israeli airstrike over the weekend. Among the options, he cited a model similar to the operation in Venezuela, in which only the top leader was removed while the rest of the government remained, newly willing to cooperate with the United States. "The country has been very substantially weakened, to put it mildly," Trump told The New York Times, adding that the Pentagon retained sufficient forces, missiles, and ammunition globally to continue the assault "if we have to. Trump also claimed that US and Israeli strikes had "knocked out a big portion" of Iran's navy, including nine ships and the navy headquarters. He indicated that the conflict could result in casualties, but expressed confidence that the military operations would ultimately pressure Iran into compliance. "Three is three too many as far as I'm concerned," he said, referring to projected American casualties.

On the question of Iran's future leadership, Trump was vague. He said he had "three



very good choices" for who could lead the country, but did not name them. He also suggested that Iran's elite military forces, including the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, might voluntarily surrender their arms to the Iranian populace, a scenario experts have considered unlikely. Trump repeatedly referred to his experience in Venezuela as a model for Iran, though analysts note significant differences in population, military capability, and

political structure make a direct comparison challenging. "Everybody's kept their job except for two people," he said of the Venezuelan operation, emphasizing the U.S. goal of removing only the top leadership while keeping the rest of the government functional. He left open the possibility of the Iranian people overthrowing their government, saying, "That's going to be up to them about whether or not they do. They've been talking about it for years so now they'll obviously have an opportunity." Trump also indicated that he did not consider Gulf Arab states necessary for US strikes on Iran, despite Tehran targeting several regional countries with missile and drone attacks. The interview, conducted from Mar-a-Lago approximately 36 hours after Khamenei's killing, came shortly after Trump received news of American casualties. He said he was about to meet with military generals and insisted that the U.S.-Israeli campaign remained "ahead of schedule."

## Israel hits Lebanon after Hezbollah fire, expanding Iran war

BEIRUT. (Agency)

Israeli forces launched strikes on Lebanon including the capital Beirut on Monday, the military said, after Tehran-backed militant group Hezbollah fired rockets at Israel in retaliation for the killing of Iran's supreme leader. An AFP journalist heard several loud explosions in Beirut early on Monday, as the Israeli military said it had "begun striking targets of the Hezbollah terrorist organisation across Lebanon." The Israeli strikes followed rocket and drone launches from Lebanon, the first attack on Israel claimed by Hezbollah since a November 2024 ceasefire agreement that followed more than a year of war between them. Hezbollah has been weakened from conflict with Israel, which it entered to support Hamas following the Palestinian militant group's deadly attack on Israel in October 2023 and the subsequent war in the Gaza strip. Israel has carried out regular strikes on Lebanon since

the ceasefire came into effect, usually saying it targets the militant group and accusing it of truce violations. On Monday, a military statement said Israeli forces "precisely struck" senior Hezbollah members in the Beirut area, and another in the south. Lebanon's state-run National News Agency



(NNA) reported Israeli strikes across the country, including in Beirut's southern suburbs where Hezbollah holds sway. Israel then issued a warning to residents of about 50 towns and villages in Lebanon's south and

east -- both Hezbollah strongholds. "Hezbollah's actions force the IDF (army) to act against it... For your safety, evacuate your homes immediately and move at least 1,000 metres (0.6 miles) away from your village to open areas," army spokeswoman Ella Waweysa said in a statement on X. Hezbollah earlier claimed responsibility for the rocket and drone attack on Israel, which it said was retaliation for the killing of Iranian supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei in a wave of US-Israeli strikes on Tehran at the weekend. It was also "in defence of Lebanon and its people, and in response to the repeated Israeli attacks", Hezbollah said.

An official from the group had told AFP last week that Hezbollah would not intervene militarily in the event of "limited" US strikes on its backer Iran, but would consider any attack against Khamenei a "red line".

## Last Total Lunar Eclipse Until 2029 Is Coming Today

Melbourne. (Agency)

On Tuesday March 3, the Moon will pass directly through Earth's shadow, creating a total lunar eclipse. Best of all, Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand are in a prime position to watch the show. This time, the eclipse even occurs at a reasonable hour - no need to set an alarm and crawl out of bed at a ridiculous time. On Tuesday evening, a dark shadow will begin to sweep across the bright and round full Moon. Once the Moon becomes fully immersed in shadow, it will take on a reddish glow. Astronomers call this "totality". But with the ominous appearance of a red Moon hanging large in the sky, it's no wonder that throughout history and across cultures it was seen as a portent of evil. In today's world, the name "blood moon" has readily captured public imagination. Watching a lunar eclipse

is a reminder that we are part of a fascinating universe. No special equipment is needed and it's usually not hard to find the Moon in the sky. Tomorrow's eclipse will be our last chance to see a blood moon until 2029, when it will ring in the New Year in the early hours of January 1. In this case, it'll take 75 minutes for the Moon to enter Earth's shadow - what's known as the partial eclipse phase. This will be followed by an hour of totality when the Moon turns red, and then another 75 minutes as the Moon emerges out of the shadow and returns to full brightness. Since Earth's shadow is so large compared to the Moon, everyone on our planet's night side experiences a lunar eclipse at exactly the same time. To know when to see the totality, we only need to make adjustments for different time zones.

**Total lunar eclipse on the night of 3-4**

March 2026

Click on your state or country to learn when the eclipse will begin and when totality will be visible. For Western Australia, a number of locations are given because the eclipse begins with the Moon below the horizon. The time of the eclipse depends only on time zone, but the time of moonrise is location specific. Across most of Western Australia the eclipse begins with the Moon below the horizon. As the Moon rises it will be partly in shadow, making it hard to spot, especially against the bright twilight sky (noting that the Moon is rising as the Sun is setting). However, just give it some time and the eclipsed Moon will become easier to see as it climbs higher in the east and twilight gives way to night. The eclipse will start later in the evening across the rest of Australia, with the Moon in the eastern sky.

# Oil prices rise sharply after attacks in West Asia disrupt global energy supply

## Crude surges over 7% amid attacks on vessels in Strait of Hormuz; OPEC+ plans modest output boost fail to ease market fears

NEW YORK. (Agency)

Oil prices rose sharply Monday as U.S. and Israeli attacks on Iran and retaliatory strikes against Israel and U.S. military installations around the Gulf sent disruptions through the global energy supply chain. Traders were betting the supply of oil from Iran and elsewhere in the Middle East would slow or grind to a halt. Attacks throughout the region, including on two vessels travelling through the Strait of Hormuz, the narrow mouth of the Persian Gulf, have restricted countries' ability to export oil to the rest of the world. Prolonged attacks would likely result in higher prices for crude oil and gasoline, according to

energy experts. West Texas Intermediate, the light, sweet crude oil produced in the United States, was selling for about \$72 a barrel early Monday, up around 7.3% from its trading price of about \$67 on Friday, according to data from CME group. A barrel of Brent crude, the international standard, was trading at \$78.55 per barrel early Monday, according to FactSet, up 7.8% from its trading price of \$72.87 on Friday, which had been a seven-month high at the time. Higher global energy prices could lead to consumers paying more for gasoline at the pump and shelling out more for groceries and other goods, at a time when many are already feeling the impacts of elevated inflation. Roughly 15 million barrels of crude oil per day, about 20% of the world's oil, are shipped through the Strait of Hormuz, making it the world's most critical oil chokepoint, according to Rystad Energy. Tankers traveling through the strait, which is bordered in the north by Iran, carry oil and gas from Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Iraq, Qatar, Bahrain, the UAE and Iran.

Iran had temporarily shut down parts of the strait in mid-February for what it said was a military drill, which led oil prices to jump about 6% higher in the days that followed. Against that backdrop, eight countries that



are part of the OPEC+ oil cartel announced they would boost production of crude Sunday. The Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries, in a meeting planned before the war began, said it would increase production by 206,000 barrels per

day in April, which was more than analysts had been expecting. The countries boosting output include Saudi Arabia, Russia, Iraq, the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Kazakhstan, Algeria and Oman.

"Roughly one-fifth of global oil supply passes through the Strait of Hormuz, a vital artery for world trade, meaning markets are more concerned with spare capacity on paper," said Jorge León, Rystad's senior vice president and head of geopolitical analysis, in an email. "If flows through the Gulf are constrained, additional production will provide limited immediate relief, making access to export routes far more important than headline output targets." Iran exports roughly 1.6 million barrels of oil a day, mostly to China, which may need to look elsewhere for supply if Iran's exports are disrupted, another factor that could increase energy prices.

## Blasts in Kabul as Afghan govt says responding to Pakistan attacks

KABUL. (Agency)

Explosions were heard in the Afghan capital Kabul on Sunday, AFP journalists said, with the Taliban government saying they were responding to aerial attacks by Pakistan. A spokesman for Afghanistan's defence ministry said that "air defence strikes were carried out against Pakistani aircraft in Kabul".

Months of cross-border clashes have flared again since Thursday, when Afghanistan launched an offensive along the frontier, with Pakistani forces hitting back on the border and from the skies. The renewed violence came after Afghan residents and officials said troops from both countries had been battling along the border, with the fighting coming alongside multiple strikes including the former US air base at Bagram. Earlier, residents in multiple areas bordering Pakistan told AFP of fighting, while the Afghan government said three people were killed overnight in drone strikes and shelling. North of the capital Kabul, air strikes "hit Bagram air base", according to a resident who AFP is not naming for security reasons.

A second resident said "it was very strong, which shook the area. There was smoke and fire coming out north of the airport", describing the dawn raid as "very terrifying". The provincial spokesman, Fazl ul Rahim Maskin Yar, said Pakistani jets "attempted to bomb" the base, but there were no casualties or damage.

Pakistan acknowledged bombing key cities Friday including Kabul and Kandahar, which is home to Afghanistan's supreme leader, but has not commented on Sunday's strikes.

The presence of security forces was boosted in central Kabul on Sunday evening, with increased checks on cars, an AFP journalist said. Late Sunday evening, Afghan officials claimed to have retaliated with strikes on multiple bases in Pakistan that caused "significant damage", including in the major city of Rawalpindi, though there were no immediate Pakistani reports of such attacks. "Any further violations of our airspace or acts of aggression by hostile Pakistani elements will be met with a swift, decisive, and proportionate response," the Afghan Ministry of Defence posted on X, with a video of a drone flying into the distance.

Border clashes

Before dawn, AFP journalists in the capital heard an explosion followed by successive gunfire, with Taliban government spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid saying anti-aircraft fire was being shot at Pakistani planes. Drones were also heard by an AFP journalist in the border province of Khost, while in Jalalabad city -- between Kabul and the border -- an AFP photographer saw a jet. The Afghan government's deputy spokesman, Hamdullah Fitrat, said Pakistani fire had killed 36 civilians across multiple provinces since Thursday, which Islamabad has not commented on.

NEWS BOX

**Illegal racket selling exotic animals and birds busted in Ahmedabad**

Ahmedabad. (Agency)

The Ahmedabad City Detection of Crime Branch (DCB) has busted "a large-scale, illegal, and highly hazardous breeding and sales racket of exotic animals and birds" being operated from within a residential property in Navrangpura area of the city, said an official release from DCB on Sunday.

As per the release, during the raid at Ravalbhai Apartment based on a tip off, the DCB officials found various expensive and rare species of animals and birds kept in various cages inside the residential flat. These animals and birds include a Red-handed Tamarin infant, Persian Cats and kittens, Hamsters of various sizes, Mini Lop rabbits, Leather Lab Dwarf, African Grey Parrots, Blue and Gold Macaws, Eclectus Parrots, Galah Cockatoos, Sulphur-crested Cockatoo, African Lovebirds, Budgerigars and Finches.

According to a senior official of the DCB, the raid was conducted on Saturday night and the 'accused person', whose name has been withheld, is under detention and is being questioned.

The DCB release stated, "The documents presented by the accused via the 'PARIVESH' portal appear incomplete and suspicious upon primary inspection. According to experts, keeping wild and exotic creatures in such high numbers within a congested residential area without any biosecurity or scientific infrastructure poses a severe risk of Zoonotic diseases (diseases transmitted from animals to humans), which can be fatal for local residents. Furthermore, utilising a residential property for commercial breeding is a serious regulatory violation."

**BJP, BRS trying to politicise Sharada Peetham issue: Minister Sridhar Babu**



Siliguri. (Agency)

**HYDERABAD.** IT & Industries Minister D Sridhar Babu on Sunday visited Sri Sharada Peetham at Kokapet and said that confusion surrounding land belonging to the institution arose due to lack of clarity in information, while maintaining that there was no dispute over its ownership.

The minister inspected the Raja Shyamala temple and other ongoing construction works. He also held discussions with Uttar Peethadhipathi Swatmanandendra Saraswati Swami. Later speaking to the media, Sridhar Babu said that the land belonged to the Peetham and that the issue was addressed after the facts were brought to the government's notice. "There was no intention to create any difficulty. Once the matter came to our attention, necessary corrections were made," he said.

Emphasising that the state government respects all religions, he assured support for the Peetham's developmental and spiritual activities. He added that steps would be taken to avoid similar misunderstandings in the future. He alleged that certain leaders from the BJP and BRS were attempting to politicise the issue.

**Traffic restrictions to be in place for Attukal Pongala**

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM. (Agency)

The city police will enforce traffic restrictions in Thiruvananthapuram city from 1pm on Monday to 8pm on Tuesday in connection with the Attukal Pongala. Heavy vehicles, including container lorries and trucks ferrying goods, will not be allowed to enter the city or park on the roadsides. Parking along main roads and roads near the Attukal Bhagavathy temple has also been banned.

The ban will cover Killipalam-Padassery-Attukal bund road, Attakulangara-Kamaleswaram road, Kamaleswaram-Valiya Palli road, Konchiravila-Attukal road, Chiramukku-Ayranimuttam road, Killipalam-Attakulangara road, Attakulangara-Eanchakkal road, Manacaud-Market road, Chiramukku-Ayranimuttam road, Vettimuricha Kotta-West Fort road, Mithranandapuram-Sreekanteswaram road, Pazhavangadi-Central Theatre road, Pazhavangadi-SP Fort Hospital road, Mele Pazhavangadi-Power House road, Thakaraparambu road, Sreekanteswaram-Punnapuram road, Kaithamukku-Vanchiyoor road, Vanchiyoor-Pattoor road, Vanchiyoor-Nalumukku road, Uppidamoodu-Chettikulangara-Overbridge road, Kunnupuram-Uppidamoodu road, and Ayranimuttam-Kalady-Maruthokkadavu road.

Private vehicles ferrying devotees will not be allowed to park on main roads near the temple or near the NH, MC Road and MG Road. Parked vehicles that obstruct traffic movement or create security issues will be towed. The police have issued directions against setting up hearths on footpaths laden with costly tiles, and parking vehicles close to the hearths.

**Barmati crash Jay Pawar questions AAIB preliminary report, seeks wider action against VSR**

**Pawar also raised concerns about VSR Ventures, the company that owned the aircraft involved in the crash, and urged the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) to take stricter action.**

Mumbai .(Agency)

Jay Pawar, son of former deputy chief minister of Maharashtra, late Ajit Pawar, on Sunday criticised the preliminary report of the Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB) on the Baramati airport crash that claimed the life of his father, calling it incomplete and lacking transparency. Expressing disappointment with the findings, Jay Pawar said in a social media post late Sunday, "I have read the preliminary report investigated by the AAIB. It causes me deep regret and pain to see that this report has not been prepared thoroughly or comprehensively. The people of Maharashtra, as well as the families who lost their loved ones in this accident, deserve transparent answers and the truth, not just formal information," he said. Pawar also raised concerns about VSR Ventures, the company that owned the aircraft



involved in the crash, and urged the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) to take stricter action.

"We cannot rule out the possibility that the same issues for which the DGCA grounded certain VSR Ventures aircraft may also exist in their other planes. If serious lapses in safety

regulations and procedures have been found, it is necessary to take strict decisions regarding the entire VSR fleet rather than limiting action to only a few aircraft," he said.

He added that passenger safety must be prioritised and suggested the DGCA consider suspending operations of the entire VSR fleet if necessary. Jay Pawar's cousin and Nationalist Congress Party (SP) MLA Rohit Pawar had earlier questioned the seriousness of the preliminary report. Rohit Pawar has repeatedly questioned the functioning of VSR Ventures and raised concerns about the impartiality of the ongoing probe by the DGCA. He has also demanded that the Union Civil Aviation Minister step aside until the inquiry is completed, alleging that leaders linked to the Telugu Desam Party have investments in VSR Ventures.

**FIR against 8 for 'using casteist slurs' against Dalit deputy sarpanch of Gujarat village**

Ahmedabad . (Agency)

A Dalit Deputy Sarpanch from a village in Gujarat's Sabarkantha district has lodged a complaint against eight persons for allegedly intimidating him and using casteist slurs against him at a meeting after the gram panchayat decided to remove a dilapidated bird feeder tower at the village.

The alleged incident was reported from Memadpur village of Prantij tehsil on February 26. The village Deputy Sarpanch, who has lodged the police complaint, has been identified as Kanjibhai Arkhabhai. In his police complaint, the Deputy Sarpanch has named eight persons from the village identified as Atulsinh Parmar, Rameshji Chauhan, Himmatsinh Parmar, Manharsinh Parmar, Pintusinh Parmar, Udesinh Parmar, Hathhisinh Parmar and Aniruddhsinh Parmar. Based on the complaint, an FIR has been registered under the provisions of the Bharatiya Nyay Sanhita and Scheduled Castes & Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocity) Act.

As per the FIR registered by Kanjibhai with

Prantij Police Station, Kanjibhai Arkhabhai, a farmer, has been discharging his duties as the Deputy Sarpanch of Memadpur village for the past six months.



According to the complainant, the village panchayat had passed a resolution to demolish a bird feeding tower in the village as it was in a dilapidated condition. For this, he had gone to the place along with some other villagers on February 25. At this time, some of the accused had told them that the bird feeding tower was

built by their ancestors and should not be demolished.

The Deputy Sarpanch and others told them that they will discuss the issue during a meeting with the villagers at night. Subsequently, as they assembled in the presence of village leaders around 8.30 pm, one of the accused said the bird feeding tower was built by their ancestors and that they will demolish it themselves and build a new one. According to Kanjibhai, some of the accused targeted him by using casteist slurs against him, alleging that only he was interested in getting the bird feeding tower demolished.

This was allegedly followed by a scuffle during which the accused threatened the Deputy Sarpanch and others against demolishing the bird feeding tower.

Following a complaint by the Deputy Sarpanch, an FIR has been registered against the eight persons. Deputy Superintendent of Police A K Patel, who is investigating the case, said that investigation is underway and none has been arrested so far.

**Ahead of Holi, Pune Rural Police seize 478 kg marijuana worth Rs 2.39 crore in Baramati**

Pune. (Agency)

In a major drug bust ahead of Holi, the Pune Rural Police seized 478.950 kg of marijuana concealed in 465 adhesive-taped packets and hidden inside empty water drums abandoned on a farm in Baramati. Police suspect the consignment was stockpiled to cater to increased demand for narcotics during the festival period.

According to the police, on Saturday evening, Baramati police received specific information from a confidential informant that two plastic drums containing marijuana had been kept in an agricultural field at Jaloche, Pimpali Road in Baramati. A police team was immediately dispatched to the spot.

On reaching the location, officers found the area to be open, isolated and situated in an agricultural zone. Two white plastic drums of 1,500-litre capacity were found locked with latches and steel padlocks. Police said a strong

smell resembling marijuana was emanating from the drums. A spot panchnama was conducted in the presence of a gazetted officer and government panch witnesses. The drums were then taken to the Baramati police station, where a seizure panchnama was carried



out under CCTV surveillance and in the presence of a gazetted officer. Police found 465 ganja packets wrapped in khaki paper and sealed with adhesive tape inside the two drums — 232 packets in the first drum and 233 in the second.

The total weight of the seized contraband was 478.950 kg,

valued at Rs 2.39 crore in the illegal international market, police said.

"Prima facie, it appears that unknown suspects had brought the large quantity of marijuana to the Baramati area with the intention of selling it during the Holi festival. However, due to the strict checkpoints, vehicle inspections, and night patrols, the suspects are believed to have abandoned the drugs in the two drums at the spot and fled," said Police Inspector Shreeshaail Chivadshetti of Baramati police station.

Police said further investigation is underway to identify the suspects, trace the source of the contraband and map the supply network behind the consignment. Officers are analysing CCTV footage from nearby highways and toll plazas and verifying the ownership of the seized drums, as well as the routes suspected to have been used for transportation.

**Karnataka High Court orders judicial probe into police encounter of migrant labourer in Hubballi**

Bengaluru .(Agency)

The Karnataka High Court Monday ordered an independent inquiry by a judicial magistrate into the alleged police encounter of a migrant labourer from Bihar in Hubballi last year. The deceased was accused of raping and killing a minor girl.

A Division Bench of Chief Justice Vibhu Bakhru and Justice C M Poonacha directed the report to be submitted to the court by June. The court passed the order while hearing a petition filed by the People's Union for Civil Liberties (PUC).

The bench orally said, "If there are gaps found in the procedure followed by the police in the report of the magistrate, we will refer it to a Central agency for further investigation".

During the last hearing, the court asked counsel appearing for PUC to respond to the Karnataka Government's suggestion to constitute a judicial inquiry.

Appearing for PUC, Senior Advocate Aditya Sondhi Monday submitted that a judicial inquiry is mandatory and that a First

**Minors kill 14-year-old friend, dump body in Vihar Lake to stage drowning**

Mumbai .(Agency)

The Bhandup police have detained three minors for allegedly killing their 14-year-old friend and dumping his body in Vihar Lake to make it appear as an accidental drowning.

The crime came to light after the post-mortem report ruled out drowning and revealed that the boy, Siddharth Londhe, had died due to a severe head injury caused by a blunt object. "There was no water content in his lungs or abdomen. He died due to a head injury," said an officer involved in the investigation.

The three accused, aged between 14 and 15, were produced before the Juvenile Justice Board on Saturday and sent to the Dongri remand home. One of them was Siddharth's classmate, while the other two studied in Class 8 at another school in Bhandup. All four boys lived in the same locality in Bhandup West.

Siddharth, a Class 8 student, lived in Tulshet Pada with his parents and younger brother. His father works as an electrician in Andheri.

On February 22, Siddharth left home around 3 pm after lunch, telling his parents he was going out to play. When he did not return by evening, his family began searching and later approached Bhandup police, who registered a kidnapping case as he was a minor.

The next day, Siddharth's grey T-shirt and black slippers were found near Vihar Lake. The fire brigade was called in and his body was recovered from the lake later that evening. Initially, an Accidental Death Report was registered, with police suspecting drowning.

During questioning, two of the boys told police they had gone swimming and claimed Siddharth drowned while they tried to rescue him. As the post mortem report was awaited, they were allowed to leave.

However, the post-mortem report received on February 26 contradicted their version. Police summoned the boys again and interrogated them separately. They allegedly confessed to assaulting Siddharth.

Information Report (FIR) should be registered, and that a Special Investigation Team (SIT) should be formed to investigate the matter.

In its order, the bench recorded the submission of Advocate General Shashi Kiran Shetty. Shetty argued that there was no need to register an FIR naming the police officers



because the entire incident had been recorded. He added that if any additional offences are identified during the investigation, they can be included in the FIR.

Shetty also stated that the Karnataka CID, which has now been assigned the case, will investigate all aspects of the incident. However, there is no objection to issuing a direction for an inquiry by a judicial magistrate.

**Declared murdered in court, but still 'alive' in govt records: Navi Mumbai cop's family fights on**

**On April 21 last year, a Panvel court sentenced three people, including a former inspector, for murdering Assistant Inspector Ashwini Bidre Gore. Ten months later, authorities refused to issue her death certificate saying the judgment may get overturned, leaving daughter's legal rights in limbo**

Mumbai.(Agency)

Her murder sparked public outrage, triggered debate, and ultimately led to the conviction of a former police inspector, but on record, Assistant Inspector Ashwini Bidre Gore is still "alive". The administrative anomaly has caused the Gore family to run from one office to another seeking intervention, but finding no relief.

"The entire administration is currently trying to show that Ashwini Bidre was not murdered but is alive," her exhausted husband Raju Gore wrote in a letter on February 6, yet again seeking authorities' intervention. "Therefore, now we are completely disappointed...as a last resort, we are now requesting that instead of suffering further



injustice, we, my daughter and I, be allowed to euthanise."

Gore has reasons to be anguished. On April 21 last year — nine years

after his wife, 37, employed with the Navi Mumbai police, went missing — a Panvel sessions court sentenced former police inspector Abhay Kurundkar, 61, and two others to seven years. Since they had already spent that time as undertrials, they were released from jail.

Kurundkar, who was in a relationship with Ashwini, was proved to have killed her after she pressed him to marry her. Though her body was never recovered, the court held that circumstantial evidence conclusively established that she was killed at Kurundkar's residence, her body dismembered and disposed of in a creek.

Ten months later, family members say that the authorities continue to stall registering her death, citing

the possibility of a stay or reversal of the trial court's order. This means that the family's access to service-related financial benefits from the police department is now blocked. Since the sentence last year, the family says it has written "28 times" to various authorities, even addressing his letters to the President of India, Chief Justice of India and Bombay High Court, seeking their intervention.

"I was first made to go from one office to another," Gore, a farmer and a former Maharashtra Navnirman Sena activist, tells The Indian Express.

"Then I was informed that since the matter is pending before the judiciary, they cannot issue a death certificate... I told them there cannot be a stay on death."

## Touchstones: Lows of higher education

The huge brouhaha that has exploded over the recent AI event held in Delhi really shook up the capital. First, there was utter chaos on the roads leading up to Bharat Mandapam — the worst traffic mess I have ever seen in Delhi. The rush of delegates, visitors and the forever-roving crowd of those who go to such places only to make reels for posterity and their family, were just left to fend for themselves on the first few days. Then came the shameful episode of Galgotias University and the Chinese robotic dog that a ‘Communications’ person from the university was unable to explain, and last but not least, the demonstration by the Youth Congress volunteers that brought the house down (to say nothing of their clothes).

Enough masala to provide hours of tu-tu, main-main TV debates, so let me not repeat all that. My concern is with what we have made of the concept of a university, or education in general. The first modern Indian university was set up in 1858 in Calcutta. Years later, Lord Curzon initiated education reforms though he is now remembered for all the wrong reasons — the partition of Bengal, the loot from India and the precious jewels and artefacts he took with him to England. However, we often forget that he established the Archaeological Survey of India (that predates the Royal Architectural Society of England, by the way) and ordered restoration of several historical sites (including Akbar’s tomb at Sikandra vandalised by a Jat ruler).

Calcutta was followed by universities in Madras and Bombay and later, by Allahabad, Lucknow, Delhi, to name a few. A special kind of architecture (broadly Indo-Saracenic) with towers, turrets, huge campuses with buildings marked for science and humanities, impressive libraries, senate halls with stained glass windows and balconies, gardens, hostels for girls and boys — all these follow a similar architecture.

From my memories of my alma mater in Allahabad, I can recall wide verandahs where students roamed to lofty tutorial and staff rooms. Humanities were then the most popular courses and entire generations of the civil service were filled with alumni from Allahabad, also then known as the Oxford of the East.

Similarly, Bombay became the hub of legal studies, and its advocates, jurists and constitutional experts (many Muslim and Parsi names) were legends known for their distinguished careers. Jinnah, Nanavati, Palkhiwala, Seervai, Tyabji are some names that come readily to mind. I am not so familiar with Madras but even Lucknow university had a renowned centre for botany in the years gone by. Medical education was provided by some outstanding colleges that have largely kept their reputations intact. Panjab University, partitioned into two campuses in 1947, held its own for decades.

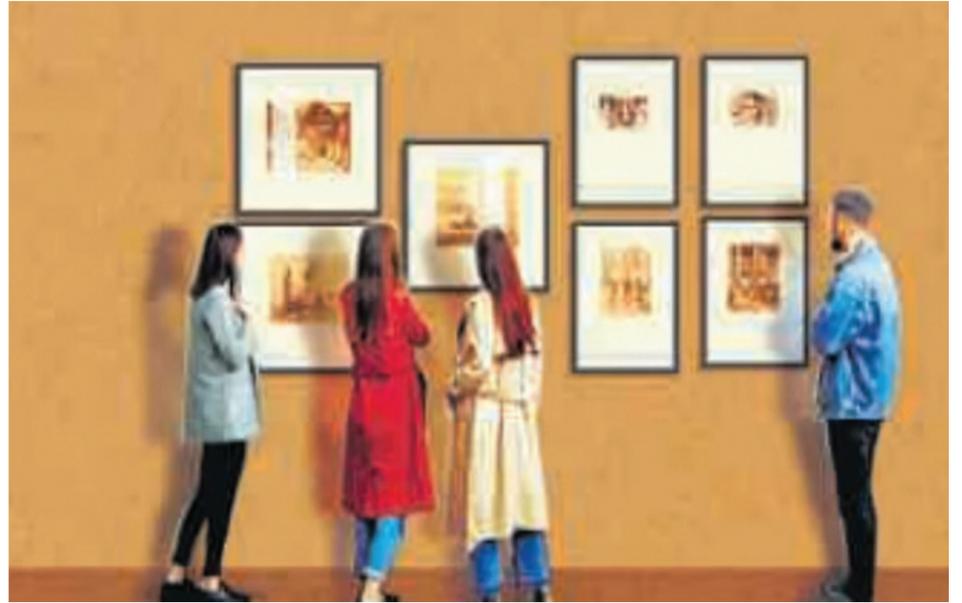
The short point that I wish to make is that there was a grand tradition of higher education funded and run by the State. In addition, there were individual institutions (such as the BHU, the AMU) where generous donors and philanthropists created impressive centres of higher learning. However, it is with the establishment of the IITs that this landscape changed radically. Gone were the sprawling spaces with dreamy towers and turrets and in their place came gleaming concrete and glass buildings with state-of-the-art labs, as the focus moved from the humanities to science and engineering. Students who graduated from there went abroad, earned huge salaries and never came back. Our brightest and best started the brain drain that is responsible for a dumping down now visible at every level of education. English-medium education acquired an aspirational pull and with the mushrooming of so-called convent schools and English medium schools even in villages, the local government-run schools became passe. Something else also followed these changes: a dialogue between science education and the humanities was slowly lost. So, we had brilliant scientists who never regarded history or literature with respect, and on the other hand, our historians.

## The afterlife of the colonial image

Ultimately, the strength of typecasting lay in its refusal to offer definitive conclusions. Curator Sudeshna Guha deftly wove rare material, rigorous scholarship and a sharply articulated vision, transforming a colonial archive into a space for critical reflection

One of my favourite mediums of visual expression is photography. Photographs often reveal more than what meets the eye; they contain layers of meaning that unfold through careful reading. As colonisers, the British were meticulous documenters. Photography emerged as a “vital mode of data capture and transmission” in the 19th century, particularly as ethnographic surveys were developed by the Western world from the 1830s onward to study the races, cultures and perceived characteristics of the colonised and the “other.” In February 2026, DAG presented a much-needed re-examination of this vast colonial archive at Bikaner House, New Delhi. Titled *Typecasting: Photographing the Peoples of India, 1855-1920*, and curated by historian Sudeshna Guha, the exhibition brought together nearly 200 photographs produced over 65 years. It assembled albumen and silver-gelatin prints, cartes-de-visite, cabinet cards, postcards, folios, albums, and rare publications. At its centre were folios from *The People of India*, the eight-volume series compiled by John Forbes Watson and John William Kaye between 1868 and 1875. The series was among the most ambitious colonial attempts to catalogue the subcontinent’s population.

The material revealed the geographic and social reach of ethnographic photography. Lepcha and Bhutia communities from the northeast, Afridis from the northwest, and Todas from the Nilgiris appeared alongside occupational and social categories such as Parsis, merchants, barbers, coolies, snake charmers, and dancing girls. The curatorial framework centred on a critical interrogation of typology. Categories such as caste, tribe, occupation, and community were shown to be historically constructed rather than inherently fixed. As photography became a key instrument of modern anthropology, it lent these categories the authority of visual evidence. At the same time, photographs were presented as mutable objects whose meanings shift across contexts, viewers, and historical moments. The display emphasised ambiguity, interpretation and the instability of photographic truth. The exhibition also foregrounded the agency of the photographed subjects. Through posture, dress, and self-presentation, individuals participated in shaping their own visibility. This reframed ethnographic photography as a space of negotiation rather than a purely extractive colonial gaze. Photographs by Benjamin Simpson and Charles Shephard showed how communities were fixed within administrative and military frameworks, including the labelling of certain groups as “criminal” or as “martial races.” In contrast, Samuel Bourne’s documentation of a



Toda settlement in the Nilgiris revealed how ethnographic photography functioned within networks of colonial administration, missionary activity and early anthropological research.

The images also demonstrated how textual framing shaped interpretation. Portraits by Willoughby Wallace Hooper revealed how notions of tribal authenticity were constructed through controlled settings and symbolic attributes. William Johnson’s widely circulated photographs, accompanied by descriptive letterpress, transformed individuals into representatives of social categories. His portraits of urban elites, when contrasted with labouring figures photographed by Edward Taurines, reflected the visual hierarchies through which colonial photography organised Indian society into ordered categories of class, occupation, and respectability. Samuel Bourne’s *A Group of Kashmir Females*, Srinuggur arranged and aestheticised female subjects within narratives of beauty and spectacle. Photographs by GR Lambert & Co. depicting Indian migrant families in Southeast Asia expanded the geographic frame, revealing the imperial networks through which Indian identities were documented and

circulated. The exhibition also examined the afterlives of ethnographic imagery. Subjects such as nautch performers, widely reproduced as “girls,” moved from administrative and anthropological contexts into commercial and voyeuristic circuits.

Presented as an India Art Fair parallel exhibition and part of DAG’s long-term effort to build one of the country’s largest collections of early photography, typecasting functioned as a project of archival recovery. By framing the material through a critical lens, the exhibition invited contemporary audiences to revisit colonial visual archives and reflect on the enduring legacies of classification that continue to shape social perception. Ultimately, the strength of typecasting lay in its refusal to offer definitive conclusions. Curator Sudeshna Guha deftly wove rare material, rigorous scholarship and a sharply articulated vision, transforming a colonial archive into a space for critical reflection. An elegant, richly illustrated catalogue edited by Guha crowns the exhibition, with contributions from Christopher Pinney, Ashish Anand, Ranu Roychoudhary, Suryanandani Narain, and Omar Khan, extending its intellectual resonance well beyond the gallery

## Law over loot: SC enforces mining ban in Aravallis

The SC’s blunt message underscores a deeper truth: environmental compliance cannot be negotiated district by district

THE Supreme Court has delivered a line that should echo across every scarred ridge of the Aravalli Hills: “We say ‘stop mining’ and you stop.” It is a constitutional reminder that environmental rule of law is not optional. For decades, the Aravallis — among the world’s oldest mountain ranges — have been gouged by illegal and quasi-legal mining. Despite repeated bans and regulatory frameworks, extraction has continued through loopholes, weak enforcement and political complicity. The result is visible from space: denuded hills, depleted aquifers and rising dust pollution choking parts of Rajasthan and Haryana, with spillover impacts on the NCR.

Compounding this damage is the entrenched mining mafia that has thrived in regulatory grey zones, brazenly flouting court orders and environmental norms. Operating with impunity and often shielded by local patronage networks, these cartels have turned ecological plunder into a parallel



economy, mocking both governance and judicial authority. By maintaining its ban and seeking expert

inputs on whether mining can ever be sustainably permitted in the region, the SC has struck a necessary balance between caution and consultation. But the burden of proof must lie firmly on those who seek to mine, not on fragile ecosystems struggling to survive.

The Aravallis function as a natural barrier against desertification from the Thar, recharge groundwater, moderate climate extremes and support biodiversity. To reduce them to revenue blocks is ecological myopia. Successive administrations have failed to implement clear court directives. If expert panels are constituted, they must be independent, transparent and science-driven, not a fig leaf for reopening extraction. The SC’s blunt message underscores a deeper truth: environmental compliance cannot be negotiated district by district. The executive must now decide whether it will listen or once again look the other way while the hills disappear.

# Creating an enabling AI ecosystem is the big challenge for India

It's the right time to empower the youth with skill sets which will help them navigate the AI boom

The Delhi AI Impact Summit has established India as a significant and aspiring AI power. New Delhi has been able to articulate a normative vision of how AI should be harnessed for the larger global good — and this is a lofty vision. Our Edit and Op-Ed pages dissected the gains and the learnings from the summit. The summit’s most consequential silence concerned labour, writes former financial adviser IMF & World Bank Udaibir S Das in his Op-Ed article *India’s AI ambition faces structural limits*. Although its theme was ‘Welfare for all, Happiness of all’, India’s technology services workforce — roughly 5.8 million people — had no structured presence in the summit’s power forums.

The AI summit was part policy forum, part technology and trade exposition but, ambitions must be tempered by inescapable realities such as energy poverty and water stress, writes former Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran in his Edit article *India’s AI road dotted with challenges*. AI depends upon immense data-crunching capacity which comes from high-end Graphics Processing Units (GPUs), he says. Compare the numbers: The US is estimated to have 1.5 million GPUs in operation, China has half a million GPUs, India has only 38,000. While India seeks to play a significant role in the global AI pursuit, it has a very modest capability and does not rank among the top five AI-capable nations, writes C Uday Bhaskar Director, Society for Policy Studies, in his Op-Ed article *India’s AI vision lofty, capability limited*. Yes, India is a major adopter of AI and the crowd surge at the Delhi summit reflects the enthusiasm of the younger Indian demography. Creating an ecosystem that is enabling and empathetic to nurturing AI in the long term will be the abiding Indian challenge.

In her Op-Ed *Equipping kids to face AI’s brave new world*, senior financial journalist Sushma Ramchandran writes



that this is the right time to empower the youth and schoolchildren with skill sets which will help them navigate the AI boom. The nature of jobs will change as the need for different types of skills emerges with new technology. Investment in basic education must be enhanced along with a significant upgrade of infrastructure. Only then will it be possible for the next generation to deal effectively with the problems and perils of a future with AI, she writes. The spectacle mounted by Indian Youth Congress activists at the AI Impact Summit at Delhi’s Bharat Mandapam signified a new low in the history of protests. The shirtless protest proved to be beneficial for the BJP government at the Centre. As the Congress made the protest a solo affair,

Rahul Gandhi could not escape accountability, says senior journalist Radhika Ramaseshan in her Edit article *Congress scores another own goal*. Rahul either oversteps the unstated limits of a convincing counter-campaign against the BJP or falters on facts due to a lack of thorough homework or gets the theme, timing and mode of protests wrong. In the IYC fiasco, the last factor proved to be his undoing, she writes.

On the other end of the spectrum is another viewpoint where former Planning Commission member Arun Maira writes in his Edit piece *A blueprint for all-round growth that modern economies cannibalise human society to feed economic growth*. The Viksit Bharat goal should be reset to make India a more inclusive society by

2047, for which he has given lasting solutions so that India’s economy can become an engine of its own growth — form more local, cooperative enterprises; denser local economic webs composed of small enterprises, local systems; solutions cooperatively developed by communities; use capital frugally, among a few steps. Formal, large-scale enterprises are not creating enough good jobs even in developed countries, he argues.

The bust of Edwin Lutyens, the principal designer of imperial New Delhi, was replaced with that of C Rajagopalachari, the last Governor General of India, inside Rashtrapati Bhavan. Can replacing the bust of Lutyens with Rajaji transform the institutional ethos of the space or merely alter the gallery of memory? asks RJD MP Manoj Kumar Jha in his Op-Ed *Cosmetic changes won’t heal the nation*. Decolonisation, if it is to mean anything, cannot remain a ceremonial exercise performed at roundabouts and renamed avenues. It must travel inward into the grammar of governance and the conscience of society, he feels. When citizens today encounter an unresponsive bureaucracy or a coercive policing system, they are often encountering the afterlife of colonial rule, he writes.

The US has begun ‘major combat operations’ in Iran and Israel has launched missile attacks against Iran. Does US have any right to overthrow the Iranian regime and dictate policy to it? asks ORF Distinguished Fellow Manoj Joshi in his Op-Ed article *India’s Iran dilemma deepens amid war talk*. 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.

## UP: Man killed while crossing railway track in Lucknow

**Lucknow.(Agency)**  
A young man died after being hit by a train while crossing a railway track in Lucknow on Monday morning. The accident occurred near Bhitauli crossing under the limits of Madiyaon police station. The deceased has been identified as Soaib, a resident of Janakipuram Extension Sector-3. He earned his livelihood by selling bangles door-to-door and was the sole breadwinner of his family.  
According to eyewitnesses, Soaib was crossing the railway track with Bluetooth earbuds in his ears. At the same time, a speeding train approached the crossing. It is suspected that because he was wearing the Bluetooth device, he could not hear the sound of the approaching train or its horn.  
He was struck by the train and thrown several meters away due to the impact. His body reportedly landed near a pile of wooden logs lying beside the railway track.  
The incident caused panic in the area. Upon receiving information, Government Railway Police (GRP) and local Madiyaon police reached the spot. Officials recovered a Bluetooth device, a wallet, and a mobile phone from the scene.  
The body has been sent for post-mortem examination, and further investigation is underway. Family members rushed to the scene after being informed about the tragic accident.

## Leopard attacks woman farm worker in UP's Hidayatpur, leaves her seriously injured

**Bijnore.(Agency)**  
A 50-year-old woman from Hidayatpur village in the Kadarabad area was seriously injured after being attacked by a leopard at Murliwala Farm on Monday morning.  
According to reports, the incident occurred when Momina Khatoon was working with other female labourers in a sugarcane field owned by Jeevan Singh, located about three kms from her village. The women were peeling sugarcanes when a leopard suddenly emerged from nearby bushes and pounced on her, attacking on her neck.  
The sudden assault left Momina Khatoon severely injured. Her co-workers, Mindro Bai, Sharan Jeet, and Manjeet Kaur, quickly responded by shouting and hitting the leopard with sugarcane sticks, managing to drive away the animal and rescue her.  
Upon receiving information about the incident, her family members rushed to the spot and immediately took her to the Community Health Centre (CHC), where she is currently undergoing treatment.  
The attack has created panic among farmers and villagers working in nearby fields. Local residents claim that the leopard is still roaming in the surrounding farmland, raising concerns about safety. Forest Department officials arrived at the scene after being informed. Ranger Pradeep Sharma stated that compensation would be provided to the injured woman as per government provisions. He also assured that a cage would be installed in the area to capture the leopard.

## I condemn protests taking place in Lucknow on Iran issue: UP BJP MLA

**Lucknow.(Agency)**  
A ruling BJP MLA has strongly opposed protests by a section of Muslims against the killing of Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei in the ongoing US bombing campaign sparking a wider West Asia conflict.  
"In a democracy, every citizen has a right to express one's views. But in this context, an important question arises: is our morality principle-based or selective?" questioned BJP MLA Dr Rajeshwar Singh.  
He asked why global human rights voices were not as vocal when a proposal was floated to raise the age of child marriage to 9 years in Iran, sparking a heated debate, and when thousands of young students took to the streets and many young people lost their lives in the harsh crackdown?  
"Similarly, when girls' education was restricted in Afghanistan, universities were closed to girls, and women's participation in public life was curtailed, where was the widespread and organized protest then?" questioned the MLA from Sarojini Nagar constituency in Lucknow in a statement on Monday.  
Dr Singh said there has been a strong reaction to international events in Lucknow for the past two days. "The question isn't why someone is speaking out — speaking out is a right in a democracy. The question is whether we show equal sensitivity to every injustice or respond according to circumstances and political convenience," he argued.  
He said human rights are universal. The issue of women's dignity transcends borders. "The lives of young people cannot be valued by geographical or political context. If we talk about justice, equality, and dignity, these principles must apply equally everywhere," he said. Dr Rajeshwar Singh said "selective outrage weakens credibility". Principled, impartial, and universal sensitivity are the hallmark of true morality, he added.

## From drones to debris: Indian expats in Dubai and Doha describe panic amid escalation of Iran war

As strict lockdowns are enforced and flights to India are suspended, community leaders are stepping in to accommodate stranded travellers while urging calm across the diaspora.

**Jalandhar . (Agency)**  
As tensions escalate following fresh attacks on Iran by Israel and the United States, and the subsequent retaliation, Indians living across the Gulf region Sunday described scenes of anxiety, loud explosions, and disrupted travel, urging calm while governments issue safety advisories.  
"Drones and missiles visible in the sky", said SP Singh Oberoi, a renowned Dubai-based businessman and philanthropist, associated with the Sarbat Da Bhala organisation. He told The Indian Express that the situation is tense and the impact of the attacks is visible even from the United Arab Emirates. "The attack is quite intense. One can clearly see drones and missiles passing overhead from Dubai. A lot of debris is also falling, which has caused losses here as well," Oberoi said.  
He added that the <https://indianexpress.com/article/india/missiles-in-sky-fear-on-phone-10-million-indian-diaspora-faces-war-10560090/> government has advised residents not to step out unless absolutely necessary. "People have been told not to move out. Thousands of

passengers from India and other countries are stranded at Abu Dhabi, Dubai and Sharjah airports due to flight disruptions," he said.



Oberoi said his organisation is assisting stranded passengers despite movement restrictions. "Under Sarbat Da Bhala, we are accommodating several people at our own places. I appeal to people not to panic. The government here is cooperative. We have faced a pandemic before,

and we will overcome this, too. People must remain calm."  
Transporter from Kapurthala: "Everything is closed" Agam Sharma, a transporter originally from Kapurthala and settled in Umm Ul Quran near Dubai since 1989, said the UAE authorities have issued strict advisories.  
"The advisory clearly says remain inside your homes. If you need to move out, you must have a solid reason. Everything is closed, and we are staying indoors," he said. He confirmed that flight cancellations have left many stranded.  
"Several flights to and from India have been cancelled. A large number of people are stuck and contacting us from Dubai and Sharjah airports. We are ready to help stranded people, but currently, we are not allowed to move out. There is a lot of uncertainty about what will happen next." Another Indian expatriate, Amarjit Singh, currently living in Doha, said the conflict's impact was also being felt in Qatar's capital. "We have heard loud noises of bombs. Drones and missiles were also seen in the skies. Authorities have asked people to remain alert and follow official instructions," he said.

## Gujarat DGP chairs high-level meet over rising bomb threats

**Ahmedabad.(Agency)**  
Amid a spate of bomb threat incidents across Gujarat, Director General of Police Dr. K L N Rao on Monday convened a high-level crime conference to review the law and order situation and strengthen coordinated efforts to address key security concerns across the state.  
Addressing recent bomb threats reported across multiple cities, he said, "Police were treating the matter with utmost seriousness. Preliminary investigations indicated that the threats had been issued using VPN services, with several locations traced to foreign sources, and efforts were underway to identify the original sender."  
The conference covered districts under Rajkot City, Rajkot Range, Junagadh Range and Bhavnagar Range. Senior officials participated in detailed discussions on key issues affecting the region, including reducing road accidents, curbing drug-related crimes and intensifying action against cyber crime.  
Emphasising collective responsibility, the DGP highlighted the importance of inter-district coordination to ensure safer communities across all participating districts and cities.  
Speaking about the meeting, the DGP said: "In Rajkot city, in Rajkot range, in Junagadh range and in Bhavnagar range, all the districts that have come and participated, about all these districts and cities, a crime conference has been held. And we have discussed many topics. Especially, how we can reduce road accidents, and about the pollution of drugs, we have decided to work together."  
He said, "We have also discussed about cybercrime. In that too, all the help lines are 1930, for drugs it is 1933, it is 1908. You can contact us on all these help lines."  
"And if you have any complaint against them, you can do it. And the police, especially in cybercrime, we have been able to act on it. We request all the citizens to do so," he further added.  
The conference mainly focused on reducing road accidents, controlling drug-related issues and strengthening action against cybercrime. Citizens were urged to use the helpline numbers and report complaints to the police.

## Hills razed, khair trees felled at Mirzapur village: People allege 'land mafia' nexus, call for action

**Mirzapur.(Agency)**  
Serious allegations of large-scale environmental violations have surfaced from Mirzapur village under Majri Block in the Kharar Assembly constituency, where residents claim hills are being flattened, forests cleared, and prohibited khair trees felled to carve out illegal plots and farmhouses.  
Villagers allege that, in blatant disregard of laws and court orders and purportedly in collusion with officials from the Revenue Department, Forest Department, Wildlife Protection, Panchayat & Rural Development, Mining



Department, and police, natural hill terrain is being levelled. Seasonal rivulets ("choes") are reportedly being filled with soil and diverted while unauthorised roads have been constructed to facilitate vehicular access. Iron fencing has allegedly

been erected to demarcate and sell land unlawfully. These allegations were raised by panchayat members and residents who invited Punjab BJP State Media head Vineet Joshi to the village to address their grievances. BJP Majri Mandal president Mohit Gautam was also present.  
"Mushtarka Malkan" land under dispute Village representatives, including Numberdar Krishan Chand, Panch Sher Singh, Panch Nirmal Singh, Panch Pati Rakha Ram, Panch Pati Pala Ram, and former sarpanch Husn Chand, alias Makhana, stated that the land being sold is "Mushtarka Malkan" (joint ownership land) with nearly 500 shareholders. They emphasised that no formal partition has taken place so far, and government records do not specify individual ownership portions.  
"In such a situation, how can possession be claimed merely on the basis of purchase from one shareholder without proper partition?" they questioned. They added that legal partition must be conducted by the Revenue Department in the presence of the Patwari, Kanungo, Tehsildar, and SDM, a process that has not been undertaken to date.

## Rs 34.80 lakh defrauded in the name of Australia work visa; consultancy owner, manager and associate booked

**Complainant Harkirat Singh, a resident of Tarkhanawali village, Gurdaspur district, stated in his complaint to the SSP that he wanted to migrate to Australia. After seeing an advertisement on social media, he contacted the consultancy.**

**Mohali.(Agency)**  
A case of alleged fraud amounting to Rs 34.80 lakh in the name of arranging an Australia work visa has surfaced in Mohali. The Phase 11 police registered a case against the owner, a manager, and an associate of Sign Visa Consultant, operating from Unit No. 709, CP-67 Mall, Sector 67.  
Complainant Harkirat Singh, a resident of Tarkhanawali village, Gurdaspur district, stated in his complaint to the SSP that he wanted to migrate to Australia. After seeing an advertisement on social media, he contacted the consultancy. The firm's owner Karandeep Singh, along with Amandeep Singh and employee Kamal, allegedly assured him that the visa would be processed within 10-15 days, quoting an expense of Rs 10 lakh per person.

According to the complainant, he paid a total of Rs 34.80 lakh through bank transfers and cash on behalf of himself, his brother, and friends. He alleged that the company provided visa copies and flight tickets, but upon verification, the visas were found to be fake. The documents were reportedly declared forged at the Delhi airport as well. Later, the accused allegedly issued five cheques for Rs 25 lakh, but the amount was never returned. After the DSP (Headquarters) confirmed fraud in the inquiry report, the SSP ordered registration of the case. Police have booked the accused under sections 316(2), 318(4), 61(2) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) and Section 24 of the Immigration Act. A previous fraud case has already been registered against the said company.



## All BJP workers should visit booths, meet voters on Holi, says UP BJP Gen Sec Dharampal Singh

**Varanasi.(Agency)**  
Uttar Pradesh BJP General Secretary (Organization) Dharampal Singh reviewed organisational activities in separate meetings with the district in-charges of all 16 districts falling under the Kashi region, and all the Mandal Presidents of BLA-1 Varanasi District and Metropolitan Area here.  
In the meetings held on Sunday, discussions were held in detail about the challenges in public service, innovations in working styles, and how to make the organisation more effective, dynamic, and people-centric.  
Reviewing the ongoing work under the Voter Intensive Revision (SIR) program, State General Secretary (Organization) Dharampal Singh said that the holy festival of Holi is two days away.  
On this occasion, all workers should visit their booths and meet voters, wish them for the festival, and ensure that no eligible voter's name is left unvisited during the SIR. He directed that if any voter has received

a notice, they should enquire about the reason and submit the relevant form along with the necessary documents to the BLO. He stated that voting is a fundamental right of every citizen in a democracy, and no eligible voter's name should be left off the voters' list. He also advised that young people who have attained the age of 18 on January 1, 2026, should complete Form 6 and submit it to the BLO so that they can be included in the voters' list.  
Singh stated that after Holi, Mandal-level workshops will be held under the Pandit Deendraya Training Maha Abhiyan-2026. Each Mandal-level workshop will be held separately, followed by district, regional, and state-level workshops. He emphasised that training is not merely a means of imparting information, but a process of personality development for workers. This will bring uniformity to the organisation's working methods and further intensify the spirit of service, dedication, and national interest.

## Olbana Negasa Yadate and Meskerem Tesfaye Fikadu of Ethiopia emerge as maiden winners in full marathon event

In the men's category, Aggrey Kiprotich Rono of Kenya claimed the second spot with a time of two hours 17 minutes and 41 seconds while Sylas Chebii of Ethiopia claimed the third spot with a timing of two hours 17 minutes and 42 seconds.

**Chandigarh. (Agency)**  
Olbana Negasa Yadate of Ethiopia and Meskerem Tesfaye Fikadu of Ethiopia emerged as the maiden winners in the full marathon event in the Chandigarh International Marathon conducted by the UT Sports Department on Sunday morning. Yadate clocked a timing of two hours and 17 minutes and 41 seconds while Fikadu clocked a timing of two hours and 31 minutes and 14 seconds to claim the title in men's and women's categories respectively.  
In the men's category, Aggrey Kiprotich Rono of Kenya claimed the second spot with a time of two hours 17 minutes and 41 seconds while Sylas Chebii of Ethiopia claimed the third spot with a timing of two hours 17 minutes and 42 seconds. In the women's category, Ruth Chelangat Wakabu of Kenya

claimed the second spot with a timing of two hours and 31.15 seconds while Rita Jelagat of Kenya claimed the third spot with a timing of two hours and 33.57 seconds. In full marathon, the winners in each category got a cash reward of Rs 7 lakh each while the second-placed and third-placed athletes got a cash award of Rs 5 lakh and Rs 3 lakh respectively.  
In the half-marathon event, Harmanjot Singh of India claimed the top spot in the men's category with a timing of one hour two minutes and four seconds. Panchanan Bera of Kenya claimed the second spot with a timing of one hour two minutes and nine seconds while Kemboi Kevin Kiprono of Kenya claimed the third spot with a timing of one hour two minutes and 14 seconds. In the women's section, Tsehay Desalegn

from Ethiopia claimed the top spot with a timing of one hour 14 minutes and 38 seconds. The second spot was claimed by Iveen Chepkemoi of Kenya with a timing of one hour and 15 minutes and 42 seconds. The third spot was claimed by Munni Dev of India with a timing of one hour 15 minutes and 42 seconds. The winners in the half marathon event were given a cash award of Rs 4 lakh each while the second-placed and third-placed athletes were given a cash reward of Rs 3 lakh and Rs 1 lakh and 50,000 each. In the 10-km run, Sahil Kapoor of India won the title while Gaurav Kasana of India came second. The third spot was claimed

by Sawan of India. In the women's event, Sonoya claimed the top spot while Senayit Ayele of Kenya claimed the second spot. The third spot was claimed by Anjali of India. The winner in this category got a cash award of Rs 2 lakh each while the second-placed and third-placed athletes got a cash award of

Rs 1.50 lakh and Rs 1 lakh each. The total prize money of the marathon was Rs 1,00,16,000 and the prize money slabs for the full marathon were Rs 20,000 to Rs 7 lakh. In the half marathon, the prize money slabs were from Rs 15,000 to Rs 4 lakh while the prize money slab for the 10-km timed run was Rs 7,000 to Rs 2 lakh. Prizes were distributed across categories ranging from 18 years to 50-plus years categories and apart from age category awards, three overall winners in each competitive segment also received cash awards. Participants in the 5-km run also received medals and certificates in recognition of their participation.



# Airlines extend flight cancellations due to Iran-US conflict, travellers stranded

New Delhi.(Agency)

Air India has extended the suspension of all its flights to and from the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Israel and Qatar until midnight, 11.59 pm on Monday, as escalating tensions arising from the Israel-Iran conflict continue to disrupt aviation operations across West Asia. The airline also announced that select Europe-bound flights scheduled for March 2 have been cancelled due to operational constraints linked to restricted airspace over parts of the Middle East.

**AKASA AIR SUSPENDS WEST ASIA OPERATIONS**

Budget carrier Akasa Air also announced

suspension of flights to and from Abu Dhabi, Doha, Jeddah, Kuwait and Riyadh until March 2, 2026.

The airline said passengers holding bookings affected by the disruption until March 7 may opt for a full refund or reschedule their travel without any additional charges. Air India Express has meanwhile cancelled more than 110 flights due to airspace restrictions over Iran and neighbouring regions.

International carriers have also been impacted. Dubai-based Emirates temporarily suspended operations to and from Dubai until 1500 hrs UAE time on March 2, while flight operations at Doha's Hamad International Airport remained suspended following closure of Qatari airspace.

**AIRSPACE CLOSURES DISRUPT WESTBOUND ROUTES**



A day earlier, airport authorities had warned of widespread disruption to westbound international travel after several Middle Eastern countries shut their airspace following the sharp escalation in the Iran-Israel conflict.

In a travel advisory issued on March 1, IGI Airport urged passengers to check flight status with airlines before leaving for the

airport, cautioning that international services could face delays, diversions or last-minute schedule changes. According to sources, around 100 flights – including 60 departures and 40 arrivals – were cancelled at IGI Airport amid the evolving situation.

Similar disruption was reported at Mumbai's Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport, where 125 flights – 67 departures and 58 arrivals – were cancelled.

At Tiruchirappalli International Airport, airport authorities reported cancellation of 17 arrivals and 16 departures on March 1, along with additional cancellations scheduled for March 2.

**MOCA ACTIVATES PASSENGER ASSISTANCE MECHANISM**

Amid mounting passenger disruption, the Ministry of Civil Aviation said its Passenger Assistance Control Room (PACR) has been

actively addressing grievances and travel-related queries. The ministry said complaints received through social media platforms, the AirSewa portal and dedicated helplines are being closely monitored and prioritised. In coordination with airlines and airport operators, the PACR has resolved 411 passenger grievances during the ongoing crisis.

Helpline numbers issued by Indian embassies in affected countries have also been shared with travellers to facilitate coordination and assistance.

**AIRLINES SUSPEND OPERATIONS ACROSS REGION**

Airspace restrictions over Iran and neighbouring regions have severely affected international aviation corridors linking India with Europe and West Asia. Air India Express alone cancelled more than 110 flights due to operational limitations.

## Coordinate, integrate, optimise to move smoothly

New Delhi.(Agency)

The entry point to a city is the gateway to creating a perception about the city's makeup. Delhi is unfortunate in this matter. While the medieval and colonial rulers built appropriate gates to the fort cities, the same has not happened in 21st century Delhi. While the walled city from the Mughal era is replete with structures like the Delhi Gate, Kashmir Gate, Mori Gate, Lahori Gate and Turkman Gate, the British also built the War Memorial (India Gate) hexagon at the outskirts of their regality.

The capital city of medieval era could only be accessed by road. During the British rule, the railways and airway were introduced. The British also built imposing structures like Delhi Junction (Old Delhi) and the New Delhi stations.

The unplanned expansion of the city in the 21st century has, however, stolen from it the grandeur of the entry point. With the city now expanding into three states (the National Capital Region), there are multiple entry points. The railway stations too have now become part of densely populated localities. The airport, although still in the outskirts of the city, has all of its roads choc-o-bloc full. Thus there is no smooth entry to the capital city.

This situation was best illustrated in the observations at the meeting of the Commission for Air Quality Maintenance (CAQM). The commission flagged congestion at MCD toll plazas as a significant concern, stressing the need for urgent rollout of barrier-free tolling systems to curb vehicular emissions in Delhi-NCR.

The commission went on to highlight the need for expeditious implementation of barrier-free-multi-lane free flow systems integrated with RFID and Automatic Number Plate Recognition technologies to ease traffic snarls and reduce pollution. While the measures are appreciated, the roads reaching the airport from the city, and the traffic jams outside the railway stations need to be addressed.

## Adani Group To Make India's Longest Wind Turbine Blade

New Delhi.(Agency)

India will make its longest onshore wind turbine blades at 91.2 metres as Adani New Industries Ltd (ANIL) scales up production at its Mundra facility in Gujarat, reflecting a maturing wind manufacturing ecosystem backed by policy support and a push for clean energy self-reliance.

The blades will be deployed on next-generation turbines designed to improve energy output, particularly at low- and medium-wind sites. The Mundra plant currently manufactures blades of 78.6 metres and 80.5 metres.

The new 91.2 metres marks a significant leap in design complexity, materials engineering and manufacturing capability. According to industry sources, an initial set of 91.2 metre blades have already been erected on a new turbine model, with serial production expected to begin within the current calendar year.

**Why Blade Size Matters**

Blade length combined with higher rated capacity is a critical determinant of wind energy output. A 91.2-metre blade enables a rotor diameter of approximately 185 metres, sweeping an area of nearly 26,600 square metres. A larger swept area, with higher rated capacity wind turbines potentially allows it to capture more kinetic energy from wind, improving capacity utilisation and increased power output.

This is particularly relevant for India, where a large share of potential wind sites fall in low-to-medium-wind regimes. Larger rotors and higher hub heights make these locations commercially viable, expanding wind deployment beyond traditional high-wind corridors. The shift towards turbines rated above 5 megawatts (MW) is therefore as much about geography as it is about technology.

To put the scale in perspective, a blade of this length is comparable to the size of a football field and taller than a 30-storey building. Each rotation sweeps an area larger than three football fields combined.

**Manufacturing Scale And Investment**

ANIL's blade manufacturing facility at Mundra has a current capacity of 2.25 gigawatts (GW) per annum, equivalent to about 450 blade sets annually. The company plans to scale this to 5 GW in phases, with a longer-term ambition of reaching 10 GW.

Mundra is evolving into a multi-technology renewable manufacturing hub, housing wind turbines, solar modules and supporting component facilities within a single ecosystem. Investments in wind manufacturing so far are estimated up to Rs 3,000 crore, with future capital expenditure focused on automation, advanced tooling and materials research, including recyclable blade materials and larger rotor designs.

## Row after Sikh woman's turban removed at exam centre in Madhya Pradesh

New Delhi.(Agency)

A controversy erupted in Madhya Pradesh's Ratlam district after an Amritdhari Sikh woman appearing for an examination conducted by the Madhya Pradesh Public Service Commission (MPPSC) was allegedly asked to remove her turban during security checks at an exam centre.

The incident took place at a school that was a designated centre for the examination on Sunday. According to available information, Gurleen Kaur, who is an Amritdhari Sikh (an initiated Sikh), was asked to remove her dhumala (turban) before the examination during frisking.

The matter came to light after members of the local Sikh community were informed. Soon, several members of the community gathered outside the examination centre, expressing



strong displeasure over the incident. On receiving information about the gathering, police and administrative officials reached the spot. Members of the Sikh community demanded an

apology from the woman staff member who had allegedly asked Kaur to remove her turban.

Following prolonged discussions between community representatives and officials, Sub-Divisional Magistrate Prateek Sonkar and Centre Superintendent Subhash Kumawat publicly expressed regret over the incident in front of the Sikh community and apologised. After the apology, the matter was considered to be resolved by both sides.

Kaur, who is a resident of Chittorgarh in Rajasthan, had arrived in Ratlam a day earlier to stay with relatives and had reached the centre in the afternoon to appear for the examination.

## Crash That Killed Ajit Pawar Was One Of Many: Checks 10-Year Data

New Delhi.(Agency)

Ten years before the recent Jharkhand air ambulance crash, a similar flight from Patna to Delhi had a very different, miraculous outcome. In 2016, an air ambulance operating from Patna to Delhi went down in Najafgarh. Unlike the Red Airways crash that killed all seven on board, everyone in this accident survived. The pilots were hailed as heroes for averting a disaster.

But the subsequent probe by the Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB) exposed deeper concerns. The aircraft, a 27-year-old VT-EQO owned by Alchemist Air Pvt. Ltd., with a non-scheduled operator permit, had been grounded for five months before the accident.

In its final report, the AAIB noted that no



procedure existed within the organisation to assess actual fuel consumption of its aircrafts.

"Absence of a procedure for assessing realistic fuel consumption rate of an aged aircraft is also a cause of concern," the AAIB had said, while listing improper fuel planning leading up to engine starvation as a probable

cause of the accident.

Now, a decade later, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation or DGCA has cracked down on non-scheduled operators following a spike in accidents - including the January Baramati crash involving VSR Ventures that left all on board -- including NCP leader Ajit Pawar -- dead.

After analysing ten years of data, the regulator flagged SOP violations, flawed flight planning and training gaps. In a significant shift, it fixed accountability on senior executives and Accountable Managers, not just pilots. Additionally, the watchdog also grounded four VSR-owned aircraft over serious safety lapses.

## Loss of a century, Veiled women mourn Iran's Khamenei in Delhi's Karbala

**With posters of Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, women protesters were seen emotionally charged, and said they felt they had lost someone from their own family. Dressed in black and with tears in their eyes, they chanted anti-Israel, anti-US slogans. Read here**

New Delhi.(Agency)

Women in black abayas and niqabs stood shoulder to shoulder, some whispering prayers, others openly weeping. Many had never attended a public protest before. Yet on Sunday evening, they stepped out of their homes, bringing children, sisters and elderly mothers along at Delhi's Shah-e-Mardan Karbala in Jor Bagh, to mourn the killing of Iran's Supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. For them, this was not distant geopolitics. It felt personal. Zaibun Nisa Zaidi from Laxmi Nagar arrived with six members of her family. She clutched her candle tightly as she spoke, her voice steady but her eyes moist. "He stood for humanity. He raised his voice for the oppressed," she said. "What was the fault of an 86-year-old man? If standing with humanity is a crime, then we are all guilty."

Around her, women nodded in agreement. Dilkash, a first-year BSc student from Ghaziabad, said she woke up to the news early in the morning. The shock, she said, stayed with her through the day. "He was a rebar, a guide," she explained softly. "He united Shias and Sunnis across the world and always sided with the oppressed. His demise is not just a community's loss. It is a loss for the world."

A few steps away stood Seerat, balancing her one-year-old daughter on her lap. The child, unaware of the gravity of the gathering, played with the edge of her mother's niqab. Seerat, however, could barely contain her tears. "It is the loss of a century," she said, breaking down mid-sentence. "He was



like a father to us. This feels like we have lost someone from our own home." Her sister, Shahana, described how the family reacted when news first emerged of the attack on Iran. "We stopped cooking. We did not eat properly. We kept praying for his safety," she said. "When his death was confirmed on Sunday morning, we wept as if we had lost a family member."

For 53-year-old Nishat Fatima, the journey to the vigil was physically demanding. Unwell but determined, she came from New Ashok Nagar. Holding her daughter's hand, she said, "I had to come," she said. "It was important to be present. It was an inhuman act against an elderly man." As candles flickered in the evening breeze, the gathering remained peaceful. There were prayers, tears and quiet conversations about faith, justice and loss.

In those lanes of Karbala in South Delhi, thousands of kilometres from Tehran, grief dissolved borders. For the women who gathered there, the passing of an 86-year-old leader was not merely a headline. It was a moment of mourning that felt intimate, immediate and deeply personal.

## Centre Warns States Of Violence, Protests Amid Iran-Israel Tensions: Sources

**The Ministry of Home Affairs, according to sources, has directed states to closely monitor the activities of pro-Iran and anti-Iran groups.**

New Delhi.(Agency)

As tensions between Iran and Israel continue following the killing of Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei, the Ministry of Home Affairs has issued an alert to various states regarding possible violence and sporadic protests in the country. The alert comes in the wake of nationwide protests by the Shia community following the killing of Iranian leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei on February 28. The Ministry, according to sources, has said that international developments could impact India's internal security, and security agencies should remain on high alert.

The directive sent to states urges them to closely monitor the activities of pro-Iran and anti-Iran groups. In particular, instructions have been given to strengthen security around the Iranian, US, and Israeli embassies and consulates, sources said.

The Ministry of Home Affairs has also pointed to potential threats posed by Shia militias as well as terrorist organisations like the Islamic State and Al-Qaeda. Intelligence inputs indicate that terrorist groups may exploit the tense atmosphere to foment unrest.

In addition to embassies, the security alert lists major tourist destinations, Jewish institutions, and establishments affiliated with Western countries as potential targets, sources added. The Centre has advised states to increase the deployment of security forces at important and sensitive locations. Additionally, local police have been instructed to conduct thorough checks in crowded areas and sensitive locations and detect explosives such as Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs). The Ministry has also placed special emphasis on monitoring social media to prevent the spread of inflammatory messages and rumours. Cyber cells have been instructed to monitor digital content that could disturb communal harmony. Directors General of Police of all states have been asked to ensure that rapid response teams are ready to prevent any untoward incident.

**Iran Israel Tensions**

Israel, with the help of the US, launched a preemptive attack on Tehran on Saturday, pushing the Middle East into a renewed military confrontation and further dimming hopes for a diplomatic solution. The Pentagon dubbed the strikes on Tehran as "Operation Epic Fury" - in a flashback to 2025's "Midnight Hammer".

NEW

### Rulayega kya pagle? Sanju Samson's hilarious reaction to Surya's praises

New Delhi. (Agency)

Suryakumar Yadav's praise for Sanju Samson went to a point where the wicketkeeper hilariously asked his captain to stop or else he would start crying. Samson played an innings of a lifetime to help India get over the finish line and make their way into the semi-finals of the T20 World Cup 2026. The wicketkeeper-batter broke the record of Virat Kohli for the highest score in a successful run-chase for India in T20 World Cups, scoring 97 off 50 balls. He hit the winning runs and on his way back to the dugout, was greeted by Suryakumar, who took his cap off and bowed down to him. In a video released by the BCCI, Suryakumar was seen talking non-stop about Samson and the hilarious reply from the wicketkeeper can be seen towards the end of the clip. WHAT DID SURYA SAY ABOUT SAMSON?

Suryakumar reiterated his statement on



Samson from after the game to start the video and revealed how the wicketkeeper told the players to put the team ahead of everything else during the camp.

"I always say good things happen to good people and at the right time. No better time, no better stage for someone like him to step up and give the team what the team required. The moment he came into the side, I think the first thing that he said amongst the group when we sat together was, let's do something which the team wants, not what you want," said Suryakumar.

The Indian skipper refused to talk about the tough period Samson had as he was in and out of the side and was made to bat in the middle-order. However, he said that Samson played a courageous knock and deserves all the plaudits. "In life, we've seen so many things, so many ups and downs. I don't want to take you back to what happened in the whole year, losing his position, batting out of position, and then coming back batting at the same position."

"It's not easy to win the World Cup. The World Cups, the ICC tournaments, the games which you play in ICC tournaments are won by courageous people, and this was a courageous knock."

### Abhishek Sharma's lack of form: His head is muddled, says Anil Kumble

MEXICO CITY. (Agency)

Team India secured their passage into the semi-finals of the T20 World Cup 2026, but concerns remain over opener Abhishek Sharma's form, as the young batsman was dismissed for 10 off 11 balls, continuing a difficult run in the tournament.

India vs West Indies: Scorecard | Highlights  
Abhishek's struggles have become a focus of discussion as India prepares to face England in the second semifinal following their five-wicket win over the West Indies in Kolkata. The opener scored a fifty against Zimbabwe but once again failed to make the most of his chance in Kolkata. Abhishek has scored 80 runs in six matches with an average of 13.33 and a strike-rate of 131.14. Speaking on ESPNcricinfo, Kumble said that the opener's head seems to be a bit muddled at



the moment and there is a clear lack of confidence. "The head is a bit muddled. There is lack of confidence. You want others to take the pressure off and India have done well. Now that India have won, he'll say, I need to start contributing. England will pose a different challenge. They also have Jacks. I don't see Harry Brook holding back Jacks. He has bowled in the powerplay, so he bowls well," said Kumble.

NO FINGER-POINTING FOR NOW

Former South Africa captain Faf du Plessis commented on the situation and said that India's win will shield Abhishek for now. Du Plessis said that the conversation now will be if the opener can turn things around in the semi-final. The nice thing is that they won. When you are winning, the guy that is out of form gets carried by the team. If you lose, there is finger-pointing. A guy needs to take the brunt of the loss. So, if India would have lost tonight, there would have been a lot of finger-pointing at him. So now there is a hopeful outlook - can he do it in the semifinals or can he turn it around?" du Plessis said.

# Not built in a day: The making of Jammu & Kashmir's Ranji Trophy triumph

**For decades, Jammu & Kashmir flirted with promise without sustaining it. Their maiden Ranji Trophy title was no miracle, but the product of structural reform, cultural reset, and relentless discipline. It is proof that ambition, when engineered properly, can finally endure.**

New Delhi. (Agency)

The snow-clad peaks of the Pir Panjal range have long looked down upon a cricketing culture defined by what-ifs. On most winter mornings in Jammu, the outfield wears a thin veil of frost. Fast bowlers love it. Batters endure it. For decades, this was the rhythm of

cricket in Jammu & Kashmir: seam-friendly pitches, fleeting promise, and seasons that dissolved before spring. For over sixty years, J&K were the romantic underdogs of the Ranji Trophy. That changed on a sweltering afternoon in Hubballi, Karnataka. When J&K secured their maiden Ranji Trophy title after overcoming the eight-time champions Karnataka in the final, a watershed moment unfolded. A 291-run first-innings lead and a second-innings batting masterclass had turned the impossible into a foregone conclusion.

The trophy was lifted in 2026, but the first bricks had been laid years earlier, in a radical restructuring that moved J&K from a collection of isolated talents to a professional powerhouse.

For decades, J&K cricket oscillated between promise and frustration. Talent emerged - Parvez Rasool, Umran Malik, Vivrant Sharma - but the structure around it remained inconsistent. Infrastructure lagged. Preparation was regional. Ambition was cautious. The shift began with a sub-committee formed to rethink everything.

"The main reason I would say is the vision of Mithun Manhas," said Brigadier Anil Gupta, who was part of that restructuring body along with Manhas and then BCCI secretary Jay Shah. "He played cricket in J&K and he



wanted to make some drastic changes." Those changes were both structural and cultural. "Among those drastic changes was that we selected a coach who was not from here. We selected a captain who was not from J&K. We selected a support staff team that was given continuity."

THE RED MITTI TRANSFORMATION  
And then came the most literal transformation.

"The most significant change was that we created red-mitti wickets in Jammu. When our team used to go and play outside, they used to struggle because there was no practice on red-clay wickets. Once we made that change, the difference was what we saw last year - in Mumbai, we saw the result."

For years, J&K players had grown up on green surfaces that rewarded seam bowling. But championships in India are often decided on the grind of playing across different types of pitches. Exposure was no longer accidental; it was engineered. "We backed the talent," Gupta said. "We wanted the talents to apply themselves."

PROCESS OVER HYPE  
When Ajay Sharma joined as head coach, the framework was in place. What remained was mindset. "I believe that behind everything there is a proper process," Sharma said.

From the beginning, expectations were explicit. "Mithun Manhas also had a vision when he brought me in as coach—he said, brother, we have to win the Ranji Trophy." The ambition had evolved.

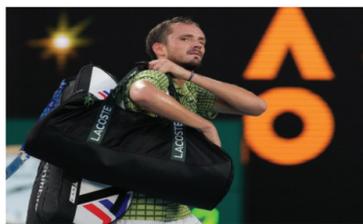
## Daniil Medvedev stranded in Dubai with his family due to Middle East conflict

**Former world No. 1 Daniil Medvedev, along with his family and team, was stranded in Dubai on Sunday, a day after winning the Dubai Duty Free Tennis Championships for his 23rd career ATP title.**

Bayamon. (Agency)

Former world No. 1 Daniil Medvedev's title-winning week in Dubai has taken an unexpected turn, with the Russian star, his family and his team stranded in the United Arab Emirates after regional airspace was shut down following escalating tensions in the Middle East. The disruption came a day after Medvedev clinched the Dubai Duty Free Tennis Championships title, his 23rd career ATP crown. The airspace closure followed the United States' airstrikes on Iran on Saturday, leaving several players unable to leave the country. Medvedev told Bolshie Tennis in Russian that there is no clarity on when flights will resume. "The situation is unusual, but basically, the only

thing is that the airspace is closed, naturally," Medvedev said. "So, no one knows when we'll be able to fly out. It's not clear whether this will last long or not." "We're just waiting to see what happens in the coming hours or days. They keep



gradually pushing back the airport reopening time."

The 2021 US Open champion said he has remained calm despite the uncertainty.

"As strange as that sounds, on the court, I'm very emotional, but in real life, it might actually help me to be more emotional at times - so, for me, everything is normal," Medvedev said. "Naturally, I've received a lot of messages from friends and family, and everyone is worried, but I can say for my part that everything is fine." Several other players are also stranded in Dubai,

including fellow Russians Andrey Rublev and Mirra Andreeva, as well as Dutchman Tallon Griekspoor. Griekspoor withdrew from the Dubai final due to a left hamstring injury sustained during his semifinal win over Rublev. The players are scheduled to compete at the BNP Paribas Open in Indian Wells, California, where main-draw action begins on Wednesday. Medvedev and Rublev are also slated to take part in The Eisenhower Cup mixed doubles exhibition on Tuesday. Medvedev's partner is Andreeva, while Rublev is set to team up with American Amanda Anisimova. Canadian Felix Auger-Aliassime, who lost to Medvedev in the semifinals, managed to depart on one of the final flights out of Dubai on Saturday. According to reports, he has reached Indian Wells and was scheduled to practise on Sunday. Doubles players Harri Heliövaara, Mate Pavić, Henry Patten and Marcelo Arevalo are also reportedly stranded. Heliövaara and Patten had defeated Pavić and Arevalo in the Dubai doubles final.

With the Indian Wells tournament around the corner, players, coaches and officials now face a wait for further updates, hoping the airspace reopens in time to avoid disruption to the ATP calendar.

## T20 World Cup: Sunil Gavaskar, Ravi Shastri slam mid-match laser show in Kolkata

Kolkata. (Agency)

Former India captains Sunil Gavaskar and Ravi Shastri on Sunday questioned the need for a laser show during the drinks break of the T20 World Cup Super Eights clash between India and West Indies at the Eden Gardens in Kolkata.

India vs West Indies: Scorecard | Highlights  
India were 53 for two in pursuit of 196 when the powerplay ended and the scheduled break was taken. Truth be told, the hosts were in a spot of bother, having lost Abhishek Sharma and Ishan Kishan without much contribution. It was a high-intensity contest where any lapse in concentration could have proved costly. Yet, during the three-minute interval, the stadium lights were dimmed and a laser show was conducted, briefly plunging the ground into darkness. The spectacle lasted close to three



minutes, leaving Sanju Samson and Suryakumar Yadav to readjust to the floodlights once play resumed.

Both Gavaskar and Shastri raised concerns that the sudden change in lighting conditions could disrupt the batters' focus and vision. "The laser show during the two-and-a-half or three minutes of the drinks break it's not easy on the batters, or anybody

for that matter," Gavaskar said on commentary. "To get your eyes used to the light, to get the bright lights again, you have darkness around you." Gavaskar questioned whether such entertainment was necessary during a global tournament.

"You have a laser thing going on. This is the World Cup. And for two and a half minutes, do you need this kind of entertainment? In the IPL, it's fine in the middle of the IPL. Not in the knockouts, but in the middle of the IPL, that is fine. But at the moment here, in the World Cup, do we need these laser shows in the middle of the drinks break, at the drinks interval?"

Shastri echoed the sentiment, emphasising the impact on players' concentration. "And from the players' point of view, to switch back on, is never easy. It's serious stuff."

# Iran conflict: Women wrestlers safe, accommodated in hotel near Tirana airport: Head coach

**Around Rs 4 lakh has been transferred to my bank account for hotel, food and other expenses during our stay here, says Dahiya**

New Delhi. (Agency)

"Women's wrestling team head coach Virender Dahiya said all his wards are safe and have been shifted to a hotel near Tirana airport in Albania. As many as 16 wrestlers along with the support staff including Dahiya reached the country to compete in the second Ranking Series that began on February 25.

They were scheduled to fly back to India on Sunday morning via Dubai but their flight got cancelled due to US-Israel attacks on Iran. The men's freestyle team returned to the

country as their competition got over a couple of days ago. The bouts for men's Greco-Roman wrestlers are underway and even they might have to change their itinerary given the global crisis.

"We are safe here and have been shifted to a good hotel near the airport," Dahiya told The New Indian Express from Tirana. The coach said the Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) president Sanjay Kumar Singh, former chief Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh and other office-bearers spoke to him and the wrestlers and assured them of every possible help.

"Brij Bhushan sir even transferred Rs 4 lakh to my account so that we can pay for accommodation, food and other necessary stuff here in Albania. All of them personally spoke to us and assured us all the help we needed. The federation is trying to arrange an alternative flight for us through a different route," the coach added. India women won three silver medals and two bronze in the competition. Priyanshi Prajapat (50kg), Meenakshi (53kg) and Neha (57kg) finished

second in their respective weight categories



while Muskan (50kg) and Savita (62kg) returned with a bronze each. Earlier, Sujat Kalkal clinched the gold medal in the 65kg weight category. The wrestlers were provided accommodation by the organisers but had to vacate their rooms by 11 AM local

time on Sunday. The coach communicated the same to the WFI following which the federation arranged accommodation for them. The wrestlers are alone to get stranded due to the global crisis as two-time Olympic medallist PV Sindhu also got stuck at the Dubai International Airport since Saturday. She was supposed to board a flight for Birmingham to take part in the All England Championships scheduled from March 3 to 8 but has been stuck at the airport along with her team members — coach, training, physio et al, just waiting to get out of this tense situation. The closure of airspace over gulf has forced the Badminton Association of India (BAI) to change travel plans for other shuttlers as well. They were supposed to leave for England later than Sindhu. The BAI, along with the help of Sports Authority of India, has informed that some of the shuttlers are now leaving via airports in Africa and Singapore.

## Rupee slips past 91 as Iran conflict drives oil higher, equities lower

MUMBAI.(Agency)

The rupee weakened to its lowest level in a month on Monday, breaching the 91 mark again, amid escalating tensions in Iran that spurred a sell-off in risk assets and pushed oil prices up by over 6%. Domestic equities fell more than 1%, compounding concerns for India, which imports roughly half of its energy from the Middle East. The currency closed at 91.235, its weakest since early February.

Over the weekend, the US and Israel launched strikes on Iran, targeting the country's top leadership, including Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and senior military officials. In retaliation, Tehran fired missiles at Gulf nations hosting US assets, raising fears of a prolonged regional conflict that could disrupt shipping and aviation.

Government bonds also came under pressure, with the yield on the 10-year benchmark rising 3 basis points to 6.6901%. Traders noted that the Reserve Bank of India intervened as the rupee breached the 91 level, offering support in the non-deliverable forwards market, while foreign banks continued to sell spot dollars. Brent crude futures jumped nearly 6% during the day, hitting an intraday high of \$82 per barrel. Precious metals, however, saw more muted gains: gold on the CME rose 2.5%, while silver gained 1.5%. On the domestic front, April gold futures traded 3.14% higher at Rs 1,67,198 per 10 grams, silver March futures rose 3.27% to Rs 2,84,000 per kg, and March crude on MCX surged 7.7% to Rs 6,564 per barrel. Higher oil prices present a compounded risk on top of weak capital flows, which have already been weighing on the rupee," said Dhiraj Nim, economist and forex strategist at ANZ.

## EPF interest rate cut coming? CBT meet may decide 8.20% rate for FY26

New Delhi.(Agency)

A key decision on the EPF interest rate for 2025-26 is expected soon, with speculation that the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) may slightly trim the rate from the current 8.25 percent. Reports suggest the interest rate could be brought down to the 8.20 percent-8.25 percent range when the EPFO's Central Board of Trustees meets in early March to review returns and financial sustainability. The possible revision comes amid global market volatility, weaker equity performance, and falling bond yields — factors that influence EPFO's investment income. Since the organisation invests heavily in government securities and equities, subdued returns may impact its ability to maintain last year's rate. Currently, EPF deposits earn 8.25 percent interest — the same rate approved for recent years — and any change would mark only a marginal

# Gold jumps Rs 6,000, silver soars Rs 10,000: How Iran-US tensions affect your money

New Delhi.(Agency)

Gold and silver prices shot up sharply on Monday as rising tensions between Iran and the US unsettled global markets. Investors rushed towards safe-haven assets, pushing bullion prices significantly higher on the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX). At 11:45am, MCX Gold was trading at Rs 1,67,601, up by Rs 5,497 or 3.39%. Silver saw an even sharper move, climbing Rs 9,806 to trade at Rs 2,92,450, up 3.47%. The sudden spike reflects growing nervousness across financial markets as geopolitical risks intensify in the Middle East.

### WHY ARE GOLD AND SILVER RISING?

Whenever there is fear or uncertainty in global markets, investors tend to move money into assets considered safer. Gold has traditionally been seen as a store of value during crises. Silver, though more volatile, often follows gold's

direction. Apart from geopolitical concerns, inflation worries, steady central bank buying and expectations of easier US monetary policy have also supported bullion prices. Jateen Trivedi, VP Research Analyst — Commodity and Currency at LKP Securities, said volatility is likely to remain high. "Gold and silver prices are set to remain highly volatile with gap up on the opening session tomorrow as the Middle East conflict involving renewed US and Israeli military action against Iran continues to dominate global risk sentiment. A sharp escalation in hostilities, with coordinated strikes and retaliatory moves fueling uncertainty and diminishing hopes of a quick diplomatic resolution. This elevated geopolitical risk can drive investors toward traditional safe-haven assets like gold and silver, and widely expecting a gap-up opening for bullion markets." He added that as global equities come under pressure, money naturally shifts into precious metals,



which act as a hedge against uncertainty. Rising crude oil prices, especially due to fears of disruption through the Strait of Hormuz, are also adding to risk-off sentiment. However, he cautioned, "If over the weekend there are diplomatic developments or indications of de-escalation, precious metals could see profit-taking after an initial spike of 3-6%."

### KEY LEVELS TO WATCH

Market experts say gold is currently trading within a defined range after correcting

from earlier record highs. Ponmudi R, CEO of Enrich Money, explained the current technical picture, "MCX Gold futures are trading in the 1,65,000-1,70,000 range after consolidating post the sharp correction from all-time highs near 1,80,000-1,81,000. While price currently in short-term consolidation with a positive tilt, holding firm above critical support zones." He pointed out that strong buying interest has been seen in the Rs 1,58,000-Rs 1,62,000 zone. "A sustained hold above this base, followed by a breakout above 1,65,000, may revive momentum toward 1,70,000-1,75,000, preserving a bullish medium-term perspective." On silver, he said, "MCX Silver futures are trading around 2,75,000-3,00,000 following gap up. The long-term bullish framework remains firmly intact, supported by favourable global cues amid heightened geopolitical tensions."

## Middle East conflict: Sensex crashes 3% at open, trims losses but still down by 1,000 points

At the open, the Sensex tumbled as much as 3.4% or 2,743.46 points to hit a low of 78,543.73, while the NSE Nifty dropped 519.4 points, or 2.06% to 24,659.25

New Delhi.(Agency)

Indian equity market faced the brunt of the ongoing conflict in West Asia with the benchmark BSE Sensex crashing more than 2,700 points at opening while NSE Nifty50 fell nearly 520 points. The gap-down opening was expected due to a full-blown crisis in the Middle East after US and Israeli forces targeted key Iranian sites over the weekend. At the open, the Sensex tumbled as much as 3.4% or 2,743.46 points to hit a low of 78,543.73, while the NSE Nifty dropped 519.4 points, or 2.06% to 24,659.25. The Indian market also trimmed losses and at 10.30 am, Sensex was down about 1,000 points and Nifty was down 300 points. The

conflict also had a severe impact on the rupee which opened at 91.26 against the US dollar on Monday. It settled at 90.98 a dollar on Friday. The fall in the Indian market mirrored the global trend as Japan's Nikkei 225 and South Korea's Kospi fell as much as 2-



3% in early trade before trimming some losses. Hong Kong and the Chinese market also opened in the red. The attacks from both sides have intensified geopolitical risks in West Asia and triggered immediate repercussions for global energy markets. The attacks have heightened fears of a Strait of Hormuz closure, a vital chokepoint through which nearly 20% of global crude oil flows daily. In early trade, Brent crude futures jumped 13% to trade above \$82 a

barrel, its highest level since January 2025. The prices pared some gains as session progressed. For India, this spells trouble: soaring crude prices heighten inflation risks, driving up bond yields. Higher yields compress equity multiples, prompting investors to flee stocks. India imports 85-90% of its energy needs, with about 60% sourced from the Gulf region.

"If Iran chooses to mine the strait or use its stockpile of short-range missiles against tanker traffic, oil prices could spike above \$100 per barrel. A prolonged closure of the strait, analysts warn, could tip the global turmoil further," said Tanvi Kanchan, Associate Director, Anand Rathi Share and Stock Brokers Limited. Kanchan added, "Strong macroeconomic fundamentals provide long-term confidence and reinforce the case for India as a structural investment destination. However, the Iran conflict will cause short-term volatility. The market had already priced in much of the expectation of strong Q3 GDP data, and with a geopolitical shock of this magnitude hitting simultaneously, sentiment is likely to be driven by fear and oil prices."

## Oil prices rise sharply in market trading after attacks in Middle East disrupt global energy supply

New Delhi.(Agency)

Oil prices rose sharply when market trading began Sunday, as U.S. and Israeli attacks on Iran and retaliatory strikes against Israel and U.S. military installations around the Gulf sent disruptions through the global energy supply chain. Traders were betting the supply of oil from Iran and elsewhere in the Middle East would slow or grind to a halt. Attacks throughout the region, including on two vessels traveling through the Strait of Hormuz, the narrow mouth of the Persian Gulf, have restricted countries' ability to export oil to the rest of the world. Prolonged attacks would likely result in higher prices for crude oil and gasoline, according to energy experts. West Texas Intermediate, the light, sweet crude oil produced in the United States, was selling for about \$72 a barrel Sunday night, up around 8% from its trading price of about \$67 on Friday, according to data from CME group.

A barrel of Brent crude, the international standard, was trading at around \$79 per barrel Sunday night, according to FactSet, up about 8% from its trading price of \$72.87 on Friday, which had been a seven-month high at the time. Higher global energy prices could lead to consumers paying more for gasoline at the pump and shelling out more for groceries and other goods, at a time when many are already feeling the impacts of elevated inflation.

Roughly 15 million barrels of crude oil per day — about 20% of the world's oil — are shipped through the Strait of Hormuz, making it the world's most critical oil chokepoint, according to Rystad Energy. Tankers traveling through the strait, which is bordered in the north by Iran, carry oil and gas from Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Iraq, Qatar, Bahrain, the UAE and Iran. Iran had temporarily shut down parts of the strait in mid-February for what it said was a military drill, which led oil prices to jump about 6% higher in the days that followed. Against that backdrop, eight countries that are part of the OPEC+ oil cartel announced they would boost production of crude Sunday. The Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries, in a meeting planned before the war began, said it would increase production by 206,000 barrels per day in April, which was more than analysts had been expecting. The countries boosting output include Saudi Arabia, Russia, Iraq, the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Kazakhstan, Algeria and Oman.



adjustment aimed at protecting the long-term stability of the fund's corpus rather than a sharp reduction in benefits. While some trade unions are pushing to keep the rate unchanged, the final call will depend on EPFO's income-expenditure balance and overall investment performance for the year.

For now, the decision remains under review, and the official rate for FY26 will be announced after the CBT meeting and subsequent approval from the Finance Ministry.

## Israel-Iran war: Airline stocks in red as flight disruption continues for 3rd day

New Delhi.(Agency)

Global and Indian airlines cancelled and diverted hundreds of flights for a third straight day on Monday after the escalating US-Israel and Iran war prompted widespread airspace closures across West Asia and the Gulf.

Airlines in the Asia Pacific (APAC) region posted losses in early trading sessions. Interglobe Aviation Ltd, that operates IndiGo, dipped 4.24 per cent. Singapore Airlines tanked over 6 per cent in early trading on Monday, while Japan's ANA and JAL each dropped over 4 per cent, while Australia's Qantas slipped over 4 per cent. Major transit centres, including Dubai, Doha and Abu Dhabi, were shut for extended periods, forcing carriers to suspend, reroute or cancel routes to Tel Aviv, Dubai, Beirut, Tehran, Riyadh and other regional destinations.

Indian carriers were also hit as IndiGo recorded the highest number of cancellations among non-West Asian carriers. At New Delhi airport, 410 flights operated by Indian carriers were cancelled on February 28, about 350 flights on March 1, and at least 300 flights were expected to be impacted on March 2, according to reports.

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) earlier informed it was coordinating with airlines and related agencies and had activated a Passenger Assistance Control Room to assist stranded travellers. Air India extended the suspension of all flights to and from the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Israel and Qatar until 11.59 pm on March 2. With Iranian and Iraqi airspace closed, Air India said it was using routes via Oman, southern Saudi Arabia and Egypt, adding about 30-40 minutes of journey to Europe-bound flights, raising operating costs.

## Sunil Bharti Mittal conferred Lifetime Achievement Award by GSMA

New Delhi.(Agency)

Sunil Bharti Mittal, founder and chairman of Bharti Enterprises, has been given the Lifetime Achievement Award by global telecom industry body GSMA at the ongoing Mobile World Congress in Barcelona on Monday, Bharti Airtel said in a statement. The award, presented in the presence of Felipe VI, the Prime Minister of Spain, Pedro Sánchez, the President of Catalonia, Salvador Illa, and global industry leaders, recognises his role in reshaping the global telecommunications landscape and expanding connectivity across operators, governments, businesses and billions of consumers worldwide. The award has been given to a handful of industry leaders in GSMA's history. The honour recognises contributions

that have left an enduring and defining mark on the global communications ecosystem. On receiving the award, Mittal said, "I am deeply honoured to receive this recognition and sincerely thank the GSMA for this award. I accept it not only as a personal milestone, but as a tribute to India's telecom journey, the collective spirit of Bharti, and the rise of Indian telecom companies on the global stage. Equally, the award reflects the progress of an industry that has connected billions and belongs to the customers we serve, the teams who built our institutions, and the partners who believe in the transformative power of connectivity." "Telecommunication is a force that expands opportunity, places essential services in the palm of every individual and unlocks human potential. Helping shape its evolution into a powerful

accelerator of modern progress has been a privileged responsibility. As innovation accelerates, we will continue to work with our partners & stakeholders to ensure that growth advances equity and creates lasting opportunity for generations to come," he added. Mittal has built Bharti Airtel into one of the world's leading mobile operators, with operations across India and Africa, ranking among the top-three globally and serving over half a billion customers. He pioneered the expansion of mobile services across emerging markets and served as Chairman of the GSMA from 2017 to 2018, where he championed policies that encouraged investment and innovation while strengthening the industry's commitment to connecting the unconnected and advancing digital inclusion.

# Sensex crashes 1,300 points amid Iran-US conflict: 6 things you need to know

**The S&P BSE Sensex fell sharply in early trade, and the NSE Nifty50 also slipped more than 1%, as investors reacted to the fast-changing situation between the US, Israel and Iran.**

New Delhi.(Agency)

Dalal Street opened in the red on Monday, starting the week on a bearish note as rising conflict between Iran and the US shook global markets. The S&P BSE Sensex fell sharply in early trade, and the NSE Nifty50 also slipped more than 1%, as investors reacted to the fast-changing situation between the US, Israel and Iran. The S&P BSE Sensex tanked 884.35 points to 80,402.84, while the NSE Nifty50 dropped 267.45 points to 24,911.20 as of 9:29 am. This marks the steepest intraday fall for the Nifty since February 1 and for the Sensex since April 7, 2025. Dr VK

Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist at Geojit Investments Limited, said uncertainty will remain high in the near term. "The uncertainty related to the war in West Asia will loom large over the market in the near-term. The major risk from the market perspective is the energy risk arising from the surge in crude," he added.

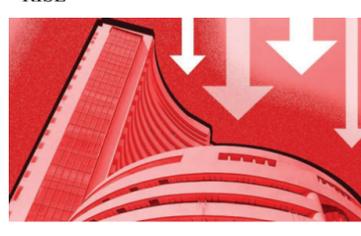
### GLOBAL TENSIONS TRIGGER RISK-OFF MOOD

Markets turned weak after coordinated US-Israel strikes on Iran over the weekend. Reports said Iran retaliated with missile and drone attacks on US bases in the Middle East. The situation has now moved from limited hostilities to active military exchange. Brent crude surged more than 7% on Monday to the highest level in months. Brent futures climbed to about \$82.40 a barrel in early trade. Earlier, Brent had already risen to a 7-month high of around \$72.8 per barrel. Tehran also said it has closed navigation through the Strait of Hormuz, reported news agency Reuters. The Strait of Hormuz handles nearly 20% of global oil flows and more than 40% of India's crude imports pass through this route. Any disruption here raises fears of supply

shortages and higher oil prices.

Rising crude prices hit market sentiment as India imports most of its oil needs. Higher oil prices increase the country's import bill and can put pressure on the rupee and inflation.

### RUPEE WEAKENS, BOND YIELDS RISE



The rupee depreciated against the US dollar in early trade. At the same time, government bond yields moved higher. Rising oil prices increase inflation risk, and higher inflation can push bond yields up. Higher yields often reduce the appeal of equities. JM Financial Institutional Securities said the situation marks a sharp escalation in Middle East tensions. "The coordinated US-Israel strikes on Iran

mark a sharp escalation in Middle East tensions, shifting the situation from limited hostilities to active military exchange after Iran retaliated with missile and drone attacks on US bases," JM Financial said. It added that the reported elimination of Iran's Supreme Leader and senior security officials increases the risk of further escalation and raises the likelihood of disruption to the Strait of Hormuz. "While media reports indicate disruption to shipping activity in the Strait, confirmation of a complete and sustained closure remains unclear, making the probability and duration of supply interruption the key variable for markets," the brokerage noted.

### OIL EMERGES AS KEY RISK FOR INDIA

JM Financial said crude oil is now the key macro factor for Indian equities. "Every USD 1 increase in crude raises India's annual import bill by approximately USD 2bn. Prolonged tensions may increase logistics and marine insurance costs, disrupt Gulf shipping routes and pressure the trade balance," it said. It further added that if disruption in the Strait of Hormuz becomes serious.



# Rashmika Mandanna

## And Vijay Deverakonda Fly Economy After Wedding, Leave Fans Surprised

Rashmika Mandanna and Vijay Deverakonda got married on February 26, in a beautiful traditional ceremony in Udaipur. Fans went gaga over the dreamy photos from their wedding ceremony. A day after tying the knot, the couple headed back to Hyderabad, and much to their fans' surprise, they were seen flying economy class. A video of the newly married couple boarding the commercial flight from Udaipur is going viral on social media. They were seen beaming with joy as they headed to their seats.

### Rashmika Mandanna Shares 'Yay' Moment On Flight After Wedding With Vijay Deverakonda

The video shared by a makeup artist on Instagram shows Rashmika and Vijay on their flight back to Hyderabad from Udaipur. The 'Liger' actor was all smiles as he interacted with the crew and waited for them to be seated. Meanwhile, Rashmika was also seen grinning widely and excitedly waving at the passengers who cheered for them. She made a small 'yay' gesture, expressing her joy. Check out the video below!



### Fans React

The video was posted with the caption, "And finally here is Mr & Mrs Deverakonda." Netizens gushed over the newly married couple, while some were surprised to see them travelling in economy. "I don't know why I'm so happy for them," wrote one fan, while another one commented, "Her happiness is gorgeous." A third netizen wrote, "They fly economy?" while another comment read, "Flying economy after their wedding, thought they'd fly private."

"He gave her the window seat!!! Green forest," pointed out one netizen. Meanwhile, a few social media users claimed that Rashmika and Vijay booked the whole flight for the wedding guests. "This makes sense, they booked the whole flight," read a comment.

### Vijay Deverakonda's Note After Marriage With Rashmika Mandanna Goes Viral

After their wedding, Vijay and Rashmika shared dreamy photos from their wedding along with heartfelt notes for each other. Vijay's caption for his ladylove won hearts, and netizens couldn't stop gushing over the couple. "One day, I missed her. Missed her in a way that made me feel like my day would've been better if she were around. Like my meals would've felt more wholesome if she were sitting across from me."

## Akshay Kumar, Wamiqa Gabbi Kick Off Bhoot Bangla Promotions In Nashik



Akshay Kumar and Wamiqa Gabbi have officially kickstarted promotions for their upcoming horror comedy Bhoot Bangla, setting the tone for what promises to be one of the most anticipated genre releases of the year. The actors were spotted heading to Nashik for the first leg of promotions, dressed in coordinated white shirts and blue denim, drawing attention for their easy camaraderie.

Sharing glimpses from the journey on social media, Wamiqa wrote, "Heading towards Nashik... starting first day of promotions of Bhoot Bangla... need your wishes and prayers," signalling the beginning of the film's promotional campaign.

The film marks Wamiqa's first on-screen collaboration with Akshay Kumar and also reunites Akshay with director Priyadarshan after a gap of 14 years.

### About Bhoot Bangla: A Return To Classic Horror Comedy

Directed by Priyadarshan, Bhoot Bangla blends old-school slapstick humour with atmospheric horror elements, a combination that has previously delivered cult hits in Hindi cinema.

Set against the backdrop of a mysterious, crumbling mansion steeped in folklore, the film revolves around characters who find themselves entangled in supernatural chaos. The "bangla" in the title refers to an ancestral estate believed to be haunted, with secrets buried within its walls. What begins as a routine visit gradually spirals into a series of eerie yet comedic encounters involving restless spirits, hidden passageways and unexpected twists.

Known for his mastery in balancing humour with tension, Priyadarshan has crafted the film with practical effects, situational comedy and character-driven chaos rather than relying solely on jump scares. The narrative draws inspiration from classic haunted-house tales while adding a contemporary layer of satire, misunderstandings and supernatural mischief. The tone carries shades of Priyadarshan's earlier comic sensibilities while leaning into a darker, more atmospheric setting, making it nostalgic yet fresh.

## Bengali Actress Subhashree

## Ganguly Stranded In Dubai With Son After Flight Cancellations



Flight suspensions linked to escalating tensions in West Asia have left several Indian nationals unable to return home, including actor Subhashree Ganguly and her young son. Subhashree had travelled to Dubai with her son Yuvaan during his school holidays. However, amid the ongoing conflict in the region and subsequent airspace restrictions, she has been unable to fly back to India. According to her husband, filmmaker Raj Chakraborty, both mother and son are safe and following official advisories.

Authorities in the UAE have reportedly advised residents and visitors to remain indoors as a precaution. Subhashree and her son are complying with the instructions while monitoring developments closely.

The disruption in travel services follows heightened tensions in the Middle East after military strikes involving the United States and Israel targeting sites in Iran. As a precaution, parts of Gulf airspace have faced temporary closures, leading to widespread flight cancellations and uncertainty for travellers.

Actor Sonal Chauhan has also been affected by the cancellations. She publicly appealed for assistance after finding herself stranded in Dubai without a confirmed return plan.

Addressing Prime Minister Narendra Modi through social media, Chauhan wrote, "Hon'ble PM @narendramodiji, I am currently stranded in Dubai due to the ongoing crisis." In a subsequent message, she added, "With flights canceled and no clear way to return to India, I respectfully seek the Government's guidance for a safe journey home. Grateful for any support extended."

Her appeal drew significant attention online, with some users urging authorities to intervene swiftly. One social media user commented, "Requesting concerned authorities to please look into this urgently. Citizens' safety should be the top priority." Others advised her to reach out directly to Indian diplomatic officials in the UAE.

Chauhan is known for her work in Hindi and Telugu cinema and gained recognition after starring opposite Emraan Hashmi in Jannat. Before her film career, she won the Miss World Tourism 2005 title and worked as a model.

# Bhumi Pednekar

## Bhumi Pednekar Says 'Hope Came True' As She Celebrates One Month Of Daldal, Shares BTS Moments

Bhumi Pednekar has been enjoying the love she is getting for the series Daldal. It has been one month since its release. Marking the special milestone, the actress took to social media to share an action-packed behind-the-scenes (BTS) video from the sets, giving fans a glimpse of the intense effort that went into creating the gripping drama.

Taking to her Instagram handle, Bhumi Pednekar shared the raw video featuring all the major action scenes and also penned a thank-you note for her fans. She writes, "It's been one month since Daldal released... and I have spent these weeks feeling nothing but gratitude. Looking back at these BTS moments reminds me of the chaos, the nerves, the long days, and the quiet in-betweens that shaped this journey. But more than anything, it reminds me of the love that came after. In the last month, I have read your messages, seen your edits, received your calls, watched your videos, and gone through every DM... sometimes twice. Thank you for opening your hearts to the show. Thank you for holding the characters with so much warmth. Thank you for seeing the effort, the intention, the honesty we tried to bring to every frame. As artists, we hope silently that our work reaches people in the way we imagined it. With Daldal, that hope came true because of you." One of the fans wrote, "Thank you for this wonderful piece of work everyone all the actors and the entire team."

### Bhumi Pednekar's Daldal To Return With Season 2?

Well, now there is growing buzz around the return of psychological crime thriller as creator Suresh Triveni recently opened up about plans for a possible second season. He revealed that the team is keen to continue the gripping narrative, raising hopes among fans. Mid-

day quoted creator Suresh Triveni talking about the second season of the series. He said, "We are ready to go for it. The writers have given three to four years working on the show, and they're raring to go." Triveni mentioned he has ideas to explore them further. He shared, "We have a couple of ideas. Also, I'm taking all the feedback from season one. We will take the right decision if everything falls in place."

### Bhumi Pednekar On Playing A 'Flawed, Broken' Cop



### In Daldal

DCP Rita Ferreira of the Mumbai Crime Branch, played by Bhumi Pednekar, is at the core of the storm. Now, the actress has opened up about her character. "Rita is a cop, but she's extremely flawed, broken, complex, complicated. She has more shades of black than white, which isn't how we usually see cops portrayed on screen," Bhumi told Elle India. "I got to play a hero while doing a lot of anti-hero things," she added.



# How to have a skin-friendly Holi



**The festival of colours is around the corner, and while you want to celebrate the day in all its shades, Holi is not the best day for your skin.**

From dryness to itching, redness and rashes to even allergic reactions, chemical-based colours can wreak havoc on your skin. Instead of stressing over the damage they may cause, take preventive steps to safeguard your skin against harsh chemical after-effects.

**Pre-holi skincare**

**Cover your skin:** The most effective way to prevent your skin from absorbing synthetic chemicals is by coating it with a thick layer of oil. Says Sushma Khan, make-up expert, "Apply a generous coat of almond oil, let it soak for 10 minutes, then apply another coat. This will not only keep your skin supple and retain its natural moisture but also act as a waterproofing layer against liquid colours."

Apart from almond, you can also use coconut oil. To prevent nails from staining use petroleum jelly or a transparent nail enamel.

**Wear sunblock for the festivities:** Since you are going to be spending most of your time outdoors, it is imperative to use sunblock. Says Dr Navin Taneja, "Opt for a waterproof sunscreen with SPF 30 or above, so that it doesn't get washed away by the splash of colours. For acne-prone skin, use a fluid-based oil-free sunblock." This not only protects your skin against UV rays

but also prevents the absorption of chemical colours. Smear your lips and eyelids with a thick coat of SPF enriched lip balm as these areas of the skin are most prone to dryness, and hence to damage.

**Post-Holi skincare**

**Cleanse without soap or face wash:** After you've concluded the day's celebrations, do not wash your face with soap immediately. Says Aakriti Kochar, beauty and make-up expert, "Soap is alkaline and causes further dryness. Instead, use a cleansing milk or lotion, which soothes the skin while cleansing. Massage it on the skin and then wipe off with moist cotton wool to remove the first loose layer of colour from your skin."

**How to shower after Holi:** After you have cleansed your face and other exposed skin with a cleanser, go for a cold shower, using a Ph-balanced soap or body wash to rinse off any colour that is left behind. Says Dr Taneja, "Avoid using hot water as it tends to dry up the skin. Also, refrain from excessive scrubbing as it will only damage the

skin further."

**Moisturise regularly:** Skin tends to naturally exfoliate in a few weeks' time and shed dead cell layers and with it, the synthetic colours. However, if you want to fasten the production of natural sebum, always keep your skin moisturised. Massage copious amounts of olive oil into it to restore its natural liness.

**What not to do:** Say no to procedures like chemical peels, photofacial, lasers and microdermabrasion for at least two weeks after Holi. Bleaching, shaving, waxing and even facials and clean-ups should be avoided for at least a week.

**Cut-and-keep guide to post-Holi packs:** "After you've removed the packs, apply a mixture of aloe vera and lemon juice on your face. This soothes and rejuvenates the skin," says

**Oily skin**

**You need:** 2 tsp natural clay powder, 4 tsp water, 1 tsp glycerine

**What to do:** Mix the ingredients in a bowl and generously apply on cleansed face. Leave on for 20 minutes or till your skin starts feeling stretchy. Wash the clay away with a wet cloth in circular motions.

**Normal skin**

**You need:** 2 tsp masoor dal, 1 tsp flour, 2 tsp rose water, ½ tsp ground turmeric

**What to do:** Mix and apply on your skin and let it dry for 20 minutes. Scrub off with your fingertips and then wash with cold water.

**Dry skin**

**You need:** 1 tsp soya bean flour, 2-3 tsp milk, 1 tsp glycerine, a pinch of sea salt, 3 drops of aromatic oil (optional)

**What to do:** Make a paste and apply on your face. Leave on for not more than 10 minutes. Gently scrub off in circular motions and then rinse off with a moisturising facewash.



## Add colours to your life in a new way

Holi is the festival of colours, joy and a sense of togetherness. So, even if you are not playing with colours this Holi, it's time to add some colour to your life.

1. Be grateful to what life has offered you. Celebrate love in your life. Even if we are living in an age where communication is instant, there is much pleasure in writing a letter. So, send a note in bright colourful handmade paper and experience the joy of simple pleasures in life.

2. As most of us will be having a Holi holiday, even if you hate playing with colours, you can always arrange a party in the evening. Invite your friends over and cook a meal for your loved ones. Take this

**Holi is the occasion to celebrate colours of life in different way. So, look beyond the obvious and add colours to your life**

occasion to decorate your house with flowers and perfume candles. And add something more to the evening by wearing an ethnic Indian outfit.

3. Be innovative. Add a dash of creativity, play with your imagination. Change the decor of the house. Use colours in your decor with your imagination

### Colour me up some Holi

Chennaiites are gearing up to celebrate the festival of colours in all its glory

According to many, Holi is the least expensive festival to celebrate. You don't need to invest in new clothes or buy expensive gifts; all you need are colours — ranging from dry to wet to crystals to organic and herbal — some balloons and old, old clothes. Up north, on March 27, the streets will turn blue and green and pink and purple with people matching the colours on the road.

But even Chennai is catching up with the fun of Holi with some pockets like Anna Nagar and Sowcarpet where the festival is big enough to compete with cities in the north.

"Even here no one dares to wear

new clothes, not just on the day it is played, but at least a week before that. For all you know, someone is aiming at you as you're on your way to work," says Gayatri, a resident of Sowcarpet. The reason why Sowcarpet in the heart of the city witnesses this festival at its epitome is because it has a large population of immigrants from Rajasthan. With the economy opening up, the festival has reached many other areas in this southern metropolis. Due to the recent economic boom, many people from Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal, and other north Indian states are employed in the automobile, IT and hospitality industries, which has taken the penetration of this festival of colours even further. "But it isn't as big as north India," says Indu Bhandari, a resident of Anna Nagar.

### Holi special Make colours at home this

# Holi!

**Holi is a festival of colours, laughter and joy. But these bright colours which bring can be harsh on your beautiful skin and hair since they are loaded with various harmful dyes and chemicals.**

The best way to enjoy this colourful festival without any effect on the skin is by opting organic colours over synthetic colors. Though organic colours can be a little heavy on your pocket, but they will save you from unnecessary trips to the dermatologist. Today, we help you out by providing a list of colours which can be made at home and will be light on the pocket as well. Try these making these vibrant colours at home and enjoy this colourful festival, without worrying about your beautiful skin.

**Ravishing red**

**Dry:**

-Red Sandal Wood powder can be used as red dry colour for your colourful red play. Besides, sandalwood is also loaded with many skin soothing properties. -Hibiscus flowers can be dried and powdered to be used as dry colour. Flours can be mixed with them to increase their quantity.

**Wet:**

-Mix 2 spoons of sandal wood powder with a litre of water. Bring it boil and dilute it before splashing it over your friends. -Peel red pomegranates and boil it in water to get that red colour.

-Mix 2 spoons of turmeric powder and a little lime powder or drops of lemon juice in water. Dilute it and the mixture is ready to use.

**Green**

**Dry:**

-Mehendi or heena powder can

be mixed with flours, to get that green colour.

-Grind leaves of spinach, coriander, mint and other leafy vegetables together and dry it to obtain green colour.

**Wet:**

-Mix dry heena powder with some water, to get green wet colour.

**Yellow**

**Dry:**

-Mix 2 spoons of turmeric powder with 4 spoons of besan, to get that rich yellow colour.

**Wet:**

-Mix turmeric powder in water to get a brilliant yellow colour.

**Magenta**

-Use some dried beet root and powder it, to get a beautiful magenta colour.

-Boil the peels of onion in half litre of water to obtain a light magenta colour.

**Purple**

-Mix juice of black grapes or jambul with water to remove stickiness and to get that rich purple colour.

Try these colours at home and enjoy this colourful festival without any side effects. Happy Holi!



WISH YOU ALL A HAPPY AND COLOURFUL HOLI

