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AISC - BABBAR DEMAND

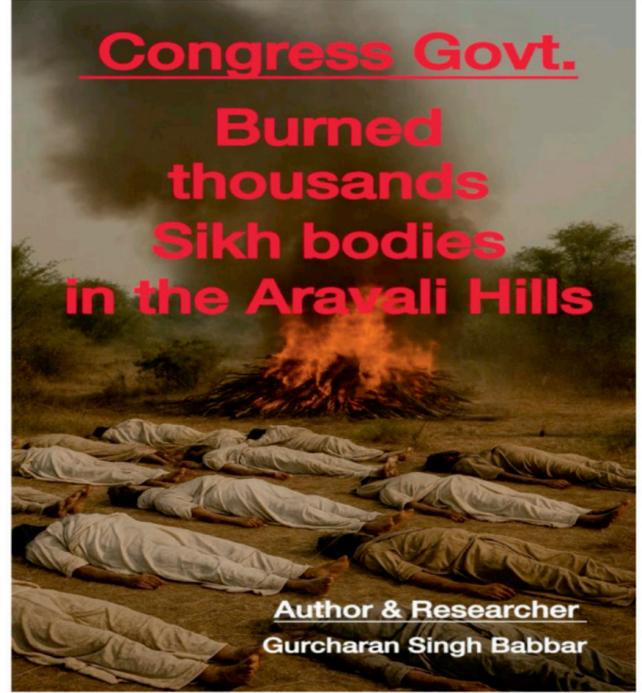
Reopen the November 1984 Cases

The Sikh Times Gurcharan Singh Babbar

In November 1984, following the assassination of former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, one of the darkest chapters in India's history unfolded...

delayed or denied. A democratic nation must ensure that no citizen feels unsafe because of their religion or identity. The events of November 1984 were not just an attack on a community; they were an attack on the Constitution of India and the values of equality, justice, and secularism.

When justice is seen to be done, faith in democracy is strengthened. When justice is denied, distrust deepens. Serious allegations have long been raised regarding the conduct of certain members of the Delhi Police during those tragic days.



Bengal SIR: CM Mamata slams BJP over mass deletion in TMC's core turf Amit Shah Launches Mascots For India's First 2027 Digital Census

Kolkata.(Agency) West Bengal Chief Minister (CM) Mamata Banerjee on Thursday launched scathing attacks on the BJP-led government at the Centre following deletions of thousands of voters belonging mainly to the Matua community across the state.



the post-Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in the state published on 28 February. Mamata wrote on X on Thursday, "It's unfortunate

that with conspiracy of the BJP the Central Government has landed the Matua brothers and sisters into an uncertain and confusing situation. It has been playing politics with the Matua community in the name of granting them citizenship.

Bengaluru.(Agency) Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Thursday soft launched a set of digital platforms and unveiled two mascots for Census 2027, marking the start of preparations for what will be the world's largest population exercise.

India survive Jacob Bethell scare to eke out narrow win against England, to face New Zealand in T20 World Cup final

The Sikh Times Simmi Kaur Babbar New Delhi: The T20 World Cup 2026 semi-final between India and England was billed as a heavy-weight contest, and everyone expected the match to go down to the wire at the Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai on Thursday.



knockout game. He was ably supported by Shivam Dube, Hardik Pandya, Axar Patel and Jasprit Bumrah and in the end, the hosts managed to do the needful and come out on top.

BJP Begins Final Candidate Screening For Assam Assembly Polls: Himanta Sarma

Assam (Agency) Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Wednesday ceremonially distributed appointment letters to newly selected Assam Civil Service (ACS) officers and other allied service candidates at the Damodardeva International Auditorium in Panjabari, Guwahati.

Forest Department fleet is expected to enhance mobility and operational efficiency, particularly in remote and forested regions of Assam. During a media interaction after the programme, the Chief Minister responded to questions regarding the upcoming elections, particularly about the contest in the Jorhat constituency and Congress leader Gaurav Gogoi.

Military conflict not a solution

PM calls for early end to Iran, Ukraine wars

Prime Minister Narendra Modi called for an early end to the wars in Ukraine and the Middle East, stressing that dialogue and diplomacy remain the only path to resolving global conflicts.

New Delhi.(Agency) Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday called for an early end to the Ukraine and US-Israel- Iran wars, stressing that dialogue and diplomacy remain the only way to resolve conflicts.



world's major diplomatic powers, are entering a golden era in our relationship. Our growing cooperation is giving new strength to global stability, development, and shared prosperity," PM Modi said.

News box

48 hours after brother, 2nd suspect in YouTuber Saleem Wastik attack killed in encounter in Ghaziabad

Gurgaon.(Agency)

Police on Tuesday night killed Ghulfam, the second suspect in last week's attack on businessman and YouTuber Saleem Wastik, in an encounter in Vasundhara, less than 48 hours after his brother Zeeshan was shot dead in a similar operation in Loni.

Ghulfam and Zeeshan worked as carpenters at a company in Noida and lived with their family in Khoda Colony. They claimed the brothers were seen on CCTV cameras fleeing on a bike, moments after Wastik was stabbed at his office in Loni on Feb 27. Police commissioner J Ravindra Goud said the SWAT team and crime branch received information about Ghulfam's movements around Indrapuram. "After informing senior officers, the SWAT team, under the leadership of ACP (crime), cordoned off the area in front of Vasundhara power station," Goud said. "Around 9.20pm, two persons were seen on a bike coming from the Vasundhara side. When an attempt was made to stop them, the bike riders turned sharply to the right at high speed and started fleeing under the elevated road," he added. The police team chased them. After a few metres, the motorcycle skidded on a mud mound, throwing the riders off. Goud said the men opened fire, injuring two head constables, Pushpendra Kumar Shukla and Sandeep Kumar. "With no other option remaining, we retaliated with fire. Ghulfam was injured," he said. His associate escaped, "taking advantage of the darkness and topography".

Noida man harasses women, sets his pet dog on them; held

Noida.(Agency)

A man was arrested on Tuesday for allegedly threatening two women and instigating his pet dog to attack them on Sunday morning. Complainant Manju, a resident of Basai village in Sector 70, told police that she was out buying milk with her neighbour Sumita near Pehalwan Market around 5am on Sunday when a man approached and began harassing them. She alleged that when they protested, the man set his pet dog loose to bite them, and the dog allegedly tore their clothes. The women managed to flee and eventually approached the cops the same day.

The women also alleged that the accused threatened them with a pistol, but cops said this claim was not substantiated and there was no gun involved in the incident. Additionally, the women had also alleged that the accused identified himself as 'Azad', but cops said the accused was identified as a man named Sunny.

When no arrests were made in the case initially, a large group of residents gathered at the Phase 3 police station, accusing the police of inaction and delaying the registration of an FIR. An FIR was subsequently registered on Tuesday and the accused was arrested. Further action is underway, police said.

Missiles overhead, no flights out: Ghaziabad family trapped in Kuwait

Noida.(Agency)

Nights in Al Ahmadi have become a test of nerves for this Ghaziabad family — the faint, frightening rush of missiles across the sky, a toddler jolting awake in tears, and a phone screen refreshed again and again for any sign that flights have resumed.

The 32-year-old husband, a consultant with a logistics firm in Kuwait for the past year, asked not to be named, saying he fears losing his job if identified. His wife Richa and their two-year-old son, Aryaveer, joined him around four months ago for what was meant to be a six-month stay. But since Sunday, the atmosphere has turned tense as Iran attacked US bases in the region, including in Kuwait, and commercial flights were suspended.

"We sometimes hear missiles being fired at a distance. It's unsettling, especially at night," Richa told TOI over phone from Kuwait. "My son wakes up startled and starts crying. We comfort him and try to stay calm. The authorities have been issuing regular advisories and maintaining order, which reassures us. We keep checking for updates on flights and hope there is clarity soon. Above all, we're grateful safety measures are in place, and we just want to return to India safely when the situation eases."

Her husband said work had not been suspended by Kuwait govt. So, he continues to report to office even as his focus stays at home. "I step out for work, but my thoughts are at home. My only concern is my wife and child. If any evacuation is arranged, I want them sent back immediately. Uncertainty over air travel has intensified stress," he added.

Back in Vasundhara in Ghaziabad, his parents said they had barely slept since the attacks began. "We've been watching news all day and late into the night. Every time we hear about fresh strikes or rising tensions, our hearts sink. We keep calling to check they are safe. As parents, we feel helpless sitting here while our children are hearing missiles overhead," said his 65-year-old father, Ashok Malik. Ashok said the family never imagined their grandson would be exposed to such scenes. "He is only two. This is not something a child should experience. We are praying the situation stabilises and the govt facilitates their safe return." Officials in the Ghaziabad administration said they had collected details of 19 people stuck across Bahrain, Dubai, Abu Dhabi and Kuwait. "Among the 19, there are 11 persons from three families living in Bahrain and Kuwait for jobs, two tourists stuck in Bahrain, while the rest are also working," an official said. In Noida, the administration has gathered details of 24 people, all in Sharjah in UAE.

64 pollution complaints, but zero green fines in 2025, enforcement gap widens in Faridabad

Gurgaon.(Agency)

Faridabad received 64 pollution-related complaints in 2025 but did not impose a single fine or environmental compensation on any violator.

All 64 complaints were marked "resolved" — according to a Right to Information (RTI) reply — raising fresh questions about the city's enforcement record. The RTI had been filed by Noida-based activist Amit Kumar. However, the reply, provided by the Ballabgarh regional office of Haryana State Pollution Control Board's (HSPCB), offers no details on the nature of violations, who the alleged offenders were or what corrective action was taken on the ground. "As per this office record, no fine or EC was imposed in the said complaints," the response notes. The activist said the reply reflects "a worrying pattern of denial" rather than enforcement. "They closed them (complaints) all. They are even saying there is no pollution hotspot. Basically, they are suggesting that everything is

fine," he said. The RTI reply was issued on Feb 8 in response to Kumar's application of Feb 5, seeking city-wise complaint data, action taken and penalties imposed. The new RTI came after a series of disclosures over the past year that point to systemic lapses in Faridabad's clean-air efforts. Environmental experts say the findings underline the need for stronger monitoring, transparent reporting and clear accountability in how agencies respond to pollution complaints. Without it, they warn, Faridabad risks continuing a pattern of slow progress, weak enforcement and missed clean-air targets. Govt data accessed by TOI in Feb 2025 showed that the city utilised just under 50% of the Rs 107 crore released to it under the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP), despite remaining a 'non-attainment city' for seven years. At the time, experts said that underutilisation of funds, slow execution and unclear accountability limited Faridabad's progress. A separate RTI in Oct 2025



found that the civic body — MCF — diverted NCAP funds for the construction of a sewage treatment plant (STP) — an expenditure explicitly flagged as "not permissible" by Central Pollution Control Board. A CPCB inspection also highlighted substandard plantation work, delays in tendering and slow implementation of key interventions.

Activists say the new RTI fits squarely into this pattern of poor utilisation and weak accountability. With no fines imposed in a full year, they argue, the deterrence mechanism remains virtually absent. Despite repeated complaints from areas such as NIT, Old Faridabad, Mewla Maharajpur and the industrial belt along Mathura Road, the HSPCB's reply says no location in the city is identified as a "major hotspot". Residents and environmental researchers, for years, flagged these pockets as chronic sources of dust, industrial emissions and waste burning. Faridabad remained one of the most polluted districts in NCR, though its PM10 levels gradually improved. Annual PM10 concentration dropped from 229 µg/m³ in 2020-21 to 153 µg/m³ in 2024-25, a 33% reduction — but still 2.5 times higher than the national safe limit of 60 µg/m³.

Erratic collection leads to garbage pile-ups in Greater Noida

Noida.(Agency)

For a couple of weeks now, garbage piles have sat undisturbed at the corners of roads in various sectors of Greater Noida. Residents across several sectors have claimed that the Greater Noida Authority has been ignoring their complaints about persistent sanitation issues and inadequate waste disposal services. The concerns are most pronounced in sectors Alpha, Beta, Gamma and Delta.

A resident of Sector Alpha 2, Surendra Bhati, said, "Although the Authority has a door-to-door garbage collection system, the vans are irregular and the service is erratic. Even when residents dump waste in street-side vats, the larger trucks fail to lift it. The garbage just keeps piling up."

A similar scene has emerged in front of a temple in block B of Sector Beta 1, right before the festival of Holi. The RWA general secretary of the sector, Harinder Bhati, said the Authority and its



contractors have not made any effort to follow up on their complaints and clean the area outside the temple. "If the areas around the temples aren't cleaned, how can the city be cleaned?" he asked. "Chief minister Yogi Adityanath has highlighted the importance of cleanliness during

festivals. However, the neglect by the Authority's public health department towards our sectors is disheartening." He urged the horticulture department officials to assess and address the state of the central verge green belts throughout the city. The rubbish pile-up in Sector Beta 1 has been aggravated by sewer overflow in various pockets. The president of the sector's RWA, Sangeeta Sharma, said, "We have complained to the Authority so many times. It feels like our pleas are falling on deaf ears."

GNDA officials said measures have been taken to address complaints of rubbish pile-ups, sanitation and horticulture-related issues. "Teams were deployed on Monday and Tuesday to clear the parks and roads of horticulture waste. They were directed to sweep roads and pick up garbage before the festivities commence. Action will be taken against contractors who failed to comply.

Cops scan Ghaziabad YouTube attacker's Instagram videos to look for motive

Ghaziabad.(Agency)

Police are scanning a social media account linked to Zeeshan — killed in a late-night encounter days after he was accused of a knife attack on YouTuber Saleem Wastik in his Loni office — hoping his videos would offer clues to what drove the assault. Officials said the Instagram handle, 'inspriewithzeeshan', contains dozens of posts in which Zeeshan presents himself as an Islamic speaker and comments on religion and current affairs, including references to the Babri Masjid, the Madina bus accident in which 45 Indian pilgrims were killed, and Palestine.

In a video uploaded on Dec 4, he says Babri Masjid is the "right" of every Muslim. In post from Nov 19, he says the 45 pilgrims killed in the Madina bus

crash had achieved shahadat (martyrdom). A senior officer said Zeeshan's mobile phone led them to his Instagram handle. Cops are also scanning his bank account to ascertain if he received foreign funds. "We have sought details of the account, including transactions," the officer said, adding they were trying to map his movements and contacts before the attack.

"We are still looking for a motive behind the attack," the officer added. Police said the Instagram account was created on Sept 26, 2025, and the last video was uploaded on Feb 17, 10 days before the attack on Wastik. Last Friday, Zeeshan and his brother Ghulfam arrived on a bike, parked outside Wastik's office in Loni and asked children nearby to move away. They then allegedly forced their way in, assaulted Wastik and

stabbed him more than 10 times, including in the abdomen and near the throat, before fleeing as family members rushed in. Wastik was taken to a private hospital, referred to GTB Hospital in Delhi, and later shifted to Max Hospital on Saturday. Police said his condition was still critical. After the Friday attack, an FIR was registered on a complaint by Wastik's son against two unidentified assailants and five others under BNS sections 109(1) (attempt to murder) and 3(5) (common intention). Police said they were examining all possible motives, including personal enmity and ideological differences. On Sunday night, Zeeshan was killed in an encounter in Loni, a day after chief minister Yogi Adityanath ordered a speedy arrest and an impartial probe.

NGT adds Ganga mission to Sahibi river pollution probe

Gurgaon.(Agency)

National Green Tribunal (NGT) has widened the scope of a long-running case pertaining to the Sahibi river pollution.

Noting that the Sahibi drains into Yamuna and ultimately Ganga, NGT has added National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) as a respondent to the case — in a move that has brought the matter under central-level environmental monitoring for the first time. During the hearing on Feb 25, the tribunal said that because Sahibi is linked to the Yamuna-Ganga basin, pollution in the river has "wider implications" beyond the region. It asked NMCG to file its reply before the next hearing on April 22. The case, filed by social activist Prakash Yadav from Kharkhra village, had raised concerns about untreated sewage, industrial effluents and encroachments entering Sahibi and eventually collecting at the Sahibi barrage near



Masani. "With Ganga Mission now part of the case, the issue has finally received the national-level attention it deserves," Prakash Yadav said, adding, "For years, villagers were forced to live with foul-smelling groundwater, damaged farmland and a dying river. We hope this step ensures accountability from all

agencies," he said. Counsel for respondents — Haryana Shehri Vikas Pradhikaran and district development and panchayat office, Rewari — accepted the notice on behalf of the newly added respondent and sought time to submit a response. Yadav's petition alleged that both treated and untreated sewage from the

Dharuhera and Rewari regions flowed into the Sahibi and settled in large quantities near the barrage, posing risks to groundwater and the surrounding ecosystem. He said that the riverbanks also suffered from increasing encroachments, further constricting the natural flow of water. The matter first reached NGT in Sept 2022, when the tribunal treated Yadav's email complaint as a petition. In its Sept 30, 2022 order, the NGT noted allegations that sewage from multiple STPs in Rewari was discharged into hundreds of acres of vacant land along the Sahibi river near Kharkhra and Khaliawas, causing waterlogging, contamination of hand-pump water and destruction of vegetation. Taking cognizance, the tribunal directed Haryana govt, Haryana State Pollution

Control Board (HSPCB), Rewari Municipal.

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PPCB and SGPC Join Hands for 'Plastic-Free Hala Mohalla' Campaign

Over 20 Lakh Biodegradable utensils Distributed Free of Cost to Langar Committees in Sri Anandpur Sahib

The Sikh Times

Chandigarh, March 5: In a significant stride towards merging faith with environmental stewardship, the Punjab Pollution Control Board (PPCB), in collaboration with the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC), successfully executed a comprehensive 'Plastic-Free

Hala Mohalla' campaign. The initiative aimed to preserve the sanctity of the historic Sikh festival while championing environmental cleanliness in Sri Anandpur Sahib. Under this pioneering campaign, the PPCB facilitated a large-scale shift to eco-friendly practices by providing lakhs of high-quality biodegrad-

able and compostable disposable utensils and other items free of cost to various Langar Committees (community kitchens) across the holy town. Providing details, an official spokesperson of Punjab Government stated that the campaign was formally inaugurated on March 1, 2026. A delegation led by PPCB

Chairperson, Mrs. Reena Gupta, and Member Secretary, Mr. Lavneet Dubey, formally launched the drive after Meeting with Jathedar of Akal Takht Sahib and Sri Keshgarh Sahib, Singh Sahib Giani Kuldeep Singh Gargaj. The department's groundwork for this campaign began weeks in advance, involving extensive coordination with Langar Committees to assess requirements and liaising with the district administration for seamless execution. To effectively curb the use of single-use plastic during the festival, the PPCB ensured the supply of over 20 lakh high-quality biodegradable alternatives. The eco-friendly distribution included 7 lakh biodegradable plastic

cups, 6.5 lakh biodegradable spoons, 2.5 lakh biodegradable plates, 5 lakh biodegradable bowls, 5,000 biodegradable garbage bags, 30,000 biodegradable carry bags (specifically for Karah Prashad) The on-ground success of the campaign was driven by the dedication of 20 specialized teams comprising PPCB officials and volunteers. These teams worked tirelessly in the field from February 27 to March 4, 2026, ensuring the alternatives reached every corner of the langar operations. "Guru Sahib's universal message, 'Pavan Guru Pani Pita, Mata Dharat Mahat', intrinsically teaches us to conserve our natural resources," said Ms. Reena Gupta, Chairperson of the

Punjab Pollution Control Board. "Therefore, for the Punjab Pollution Control Board, there could be no more meaningful initiative than protecting the holy land of Sri Anandpur Sahib from plastic pollution during the sacred occasion of Hala Mohalla. We are grateful to the SGPC and all the volunteers for making this vision a reality." The campaign has been widely praised by devotees and community leaders for setting a powerful precedent for how large-scale religious gatherings can adopt sustainable practices without compromising on service.

India survive Jacob Bethell scare to eke out narrow win against England, to face New Zealand in T20 World Cup final

Contd.....Front page

Bethell, along with Will Jacks, formed a 77-run stand for the fifth wicket, and at one stage, it seemed that the duo would run away with the game for England. However, Axar Patel's brilliance in the deep brought the much-needed wicket for India, ending Jacks' knock of 35 runs. When the right-hander lost his wicket, England needed 82 more runs to win off 36 balls with five wickets in hand. Sam Curran then joined Bethell in the middle, and the duo mixed caution with aggression, and in no time, the young left-handed batter Bethell brought up his maiden T20 century. The England onslaught forced Suryakumar Yadav's hand, and he was made to bowl Arshdeep Singh and Jasprit Bumrah in the 17th and 18th over, and this turned out to be a genius move, as England, in the end, failed to get 39 runs off the final two overs, losing the contest by seven runs. India did not put a foot wrong after being asked to bat first by England captain Brook. Abhishek Sharma lost his wicket in the second over, bowled by Will Jacks, for 9 off 7 balls. However, that's the end of concerns for India as Sanju Samson and Ishan Kishan took the England bowlers to the cleaners, launching a pitch-perfect counterattack. The duo went hell for leather, attacking the likes of Jofra Archer, Jamie Overton, Jaks and Sam Curran inside the powerplay. To make matters worse for England, skipper Brook dropped the catch of Samson off the bowling of Archer in the third over, and from there on, the defending champions did not look back. Kishan and Samson put on 97 runs for the second wicket, and this stand was cut short by Adil Rashid as he sent the left-handed batter back to the hut for 39. Shivam Dube then joined Samson in the middle, and the duo carried on with the momentum. Samson could have very well gone for his century and taken some time in the middle; however, he prioritised the team's needs and perished for 80 while trying to get the most out of Will Jacks' bowling. Suryakumar Yadav (11) failed to leave a solid impression, but Tilak Varma (21), Dube (43) and Hardik (27) chipped in with solid knocks to take India's total to 253/7 in the 20 overs.

NAME CHANGE

I, Meenakshi Mittal W/O Manoj Kumar Mittal R/O B-14/48, Hanuman mandir road, Nawada, Kiran Garden, Uttam Nagar, DK Mohan Garden Delhi 110059, Changed my name to Meenakshi Mittal.

NAME CHANGE

I, Manoj Mittal C/O Meenakshi Mittal R/O B-14/48-49, Hanuman mandir road, Nawada, Kiran Garden, Uttam Nagar, DK Mohan Garden Delhi 110059, Changed my name to Manoj Kumar Mittal.

NAME CHANGE

I, Aprma W/O Anil Sharma R/O H. No. 150, Gali No-1, Bahadurgarh, Jhajjar, Haryana have changed my name to Aprama Sharma for all future purposes.

NAME CHANGE

I, Mohd Unus S/O SHOQUAT ALI R/O E 11/114/1, 184, Near Chand Masjid, Nehru Vihar, Karawal Nagar, North East Delhi, Delhi 110094 declare that the name of mine has been wrongly written as UNUS in my all Educational Documents and name of my father has been wrongly written as SHOKAT ALI in my 10th 12th Class Education Documents and as SAUKAT ALI in my Voter ID No. GZFO972836 and as SHAUKAT ALI in my PAN No. ABGPU1333F and in my Driver License No. P050200736098. The actual name of mine and my father are MOHD UNUS and SHOQUAT ALI which may be amended accordingly.

NAME CHANGE

I, Darshana Devi, W/O Mukesh Mongra R/O H. No. 394, Housing Board Colony, Sec-7 Ext., Gurgaon-122001, have changed my name from Darshana Devi to Darshana Mongra. Henceforth, I shall be known as Darshana Mongra for all purposes.

NAME CHANGE

I, Krish, S/O Raman Yadav, R/O House No. 5563, Rajendra Park, Gurgaon, Haryana, hereby state that my old name Krish will now be known as Krish Yadav for all purposes.

NAME CHANGE

I, Seema, W/O Balraj Hooda, R/O House No. 176/29, Jasbir Colony, Near Sheela Bye Pass, Rohtak - 124001, Haryana, have changed my name from Seema to Seema Hooda for all intents and purposes.

NAME CHANGE

I, Rajesh Kumar R/O A-831 Madipur J.J. Colony, Madipur, West Delhi, Delhi-110063, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as BEBI

NAME CHANGE

I, Shiv Kumar S/O SHIV CHARAN R/O House No-74, Burari, Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as DHARMENDER.

Public Notice

I, Sanjeev Kumar S/O Shree Ram Chander Sharma R/O, 133 Police Colony Near Laxman Public School, Haurz Khas, Sub District Haurz Khas, District South Delhi, New Delhi-110016, declare that I shall be known as Sanjeev Sharma for all purposes and purposes in future.

NAME CHANGE

I, Shiv Kumar S/O BALBIR SINGH R/O H NO-295A-3, ?? 77-82/1 Gali No-18, Harsh Vihar Mandoli, Mandoli, PO: Mandoli, Saboli, Dist: North East Delhi, Delhi-110093 have changed the name of my minor son SHANI aged 13 years and he shall hereafter be known as SUNNY

NAME CHANGE

I, Parmod S/O Raj Singh R/O Plot No-515 Near Mata Chowk, Shivpur Part 1, Dindarpur, Najafgarh, South West Delhi, Delhi-110043 have changed the name of my minor son Chand Baby O Sheetal aged 5 years and he shall hereafter be known as Khushant.

NAME CHANGE

I, Shiv Kumar S/O SURESH CHAND R/O C-22, Gali Number-2, Chandar Vihar, Mandawali, Shakar Pur Baramad, Shakarpur, East Delhi, Delhi-110092 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Bati.

NAME CHANGE

I, Shiv Kumar S/O BALBIR SINGH R/O H NO-295A-3, ?? 77-82/1 Gali No-18, Harsh Vihar Mandoli, Mandoli, PO: Mandoli, Saboli, Dist: North East Delhi, Delhi-110093 have changed the name of my minor son SHANI aged 13 years and he shall hereafter be known as SUNNY

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PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform you that I, Arun S/O Shri Azad Ram R/O Flat No-307, 3rd Floor, Gaushalia Road Kishan Ganj, Tower No-3 The Amanjals Phase-1, Sector-10, Central Delhi, Delhi-110005 declare that name of mine and my minor daughter has been wrongly written as Arun Otwal and Daizy Otwal in my minor daughter Daizy aged 17 years in her 10th Class Educational Documents. The actual name of mine and my minor daughter are Arun and Daizy.

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform you that Mrs. Shashi Bala is the owner of Property No. 322, addressing 300 sq. yds, out of Kharsa No. 49, situated in the Old Lal Dora (1908-09) of the Village Rani Khera, Delhi-110081. The initial owner of the entire property was Dr. Satish Kumar, as per the revenue records, who gifted the said property to his wife, Mrs. Shashi Bala, through a Gift Deed dated 07.02.2026, registered as Document No. 2026/141/902. Consequently, Mrs. Shashi Bala is the absolute and lawful owner of the aforementioned property. The property is free from all kinds of litigation, encumbrances, liens, charges, or claims. Please also note that the said property is proposed to be financed by Bajaj Housing Finance Ltd., Subhash Nagar Branch, New Delhi if any person(s) objection & regarding subject property, then kindly may submit his/her objection within 07 days from the date of the Notice in writing. The said objection may be kindly sent to the undersigned by way of the Registered Post on the address given below and by E-mail, failing which, the claim as per aforesaid shall be treated as null and void in respect of the subject property.

Public Notice

This is to inform you that I, Anbarasu, S/O Anbarasu S/O Signal Section, Air Force Station Rajokri, A F Rajokri S.O, South West Delhi, Delhi-110038 declare that name of mine, my wife and my minor son has been wrongly written as A. Anbarasu, A. Vijaya Rubini and A. Krishna in my minor son Krishna A aged 9 years in his School Records. The actual name of mine, my wife and my minor son are Anbarasu A, Vijaya Rubini A and Krishna A respectively which may be amended accordingly.

Public Notice

This is to inform you that I, ROHAN KUMAR S/O UPENDER KUMAR R/O G-14/AJ J CAMP TIGRI SOUTH DELHI NEW DELHI-110022, declare that name of my father has been wrongly written as OPENDER KUMAR in my 10th and 12th class education documents. The actual name of my father is UPENDER KUMAR which may be amended accordingly. It is certified that I have complied with all other legal requirements in this connection.

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform you that Mr. Sanjay Kumar intends to purchase the Ground Floor with the rights of Property Bearing No. RZ-84, measuring 100 Sq. Yds., out of Kharsa No. 15/141, situated in the area of Village Dabri Colony, known as Raghu Nagar, New Delhi, from Mrs. Renu and Mr. Gulshan. The initial original owner of the property was Mr. Rajinder Pal Garg, who transferred the property to Mr. Mahinder Kumar Mehra through Notarized GPA, ATS, and Will dated 18.03.1988. Subsequently, Mr. Mahinder Kumar Mehra transferred the property to Mrs. Krishana through Notarized GPA, ATS, and Will dated 04.10.1990. Thereafter, Mrs. Krishana transferred the property to Mr. Narender Kumar and Mr. Amit Chand through Notarized GPA, ATS, and Will dated 15.12.2003. Further, Mr. Narender Kumar and Mr. Amit Chand transferred the property to Mr. Bharat Bhushan and Mr. Manohar Mehta through Notarized GPA, ATS, and Will dated 06.01.2004. Thereafter, Mr. Bharat Bhushan and Mr. Manohar Mehta transferred the said floor to Mr. Jagdish Sharma through GPA, ATS, and Will dated 06.10.2009. Subsequently, Mr. Jagdish Sharma transferred the property to Mrs. Renu and Mr. Gulshan through Notarized GPA, ATS, and Will dated 21.04.2025. Consequently, Mrs. Renu and Mr. Gulshan are the absolute and lawful owners of the aforementioned property. The property is free from all kinds of litigation, encumbrances, liens, charges, or claims. Please also note that the said property is proposed to be financed by Bajaj Housing Finance Ltd., Gurgaon Branch, Haryana. If any person(s) objection & regarding subject property, then kindly may submit his/her objection within 07 days from the date of the Notice in writing. The said objection may be kindly sent to the undersigned by way of the Registered Post on the address given below and by E-mail, failing which, the claim as per aforesaid shall be treated as null and void in respect of the subject property.

NAME CHANGE

I, Vikas Kumar S/O KARTAR SINGH R/O HOUSE NO-55 STREET-5 NEAR SHEETA MATA MANDIR, WEST RAJIVNAGAR, GURGAON, HARYANA-122001, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO VIKAS YADAV FOR ALL FUTURE PURPOSES.

NAME CHANGE

I, VIPIN KUMAR S/O MAMAN SINGH R/O 499/28, GALI NO-8, NEAR GEETA ASHRAM, JYOTI PARK, GURGAON, HARYANA-122001, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO VIPIN PANCHAL FOR ALL FUTURE PURPOSES.

NAME CHANGE

I, Mohit Kumar S/O: Satyveer Singh, R/O gali no-4, Near Vikas nagar, Loni Dehat, Ghateel, Uttar Pradesh-201102, have changed the name of my minor son Shivanshu aged 11 years and he shall hereafter be known as VIVAN.

Public Notice

This is to inform you that I, MOHD SHEHROZ KHAN S/O MOHAMMAD USMAN residing at L-65, BLOCK 4, USMAD NAGRIMCD PLATS, NAND NAGR, NORTH EAST DELHI, DELHI-110093 declare that name of mine and my father has been wrongly written as MOHAMMAD SHEHROZ KHAN and MOHD USMAN KHAN in my all Educational Documents. The actual name of mine and my father are MOHD SHEHROZ KHAN and MOHAMMAD USMAN respectively which may be amended accordingly.

Public Notice

This is to inform you that I, Arti Devi W/O Rajkumar, R/O 260/14, mayur vihar satha, Bulandshahr, Bulandshahr, Uttar Pradesh-203001, declare that name of mine has been wrongly written as Arti in my minor daughter namely Soniya Rani aged 17 years in her 10th class educational documents. The actual name of mine is Arti Devi, respectively which may be amended accordingly.

NAME CHANGE

I, ANANDA is legally father of my minor son, PATIL ABHIJEET ANANDA, presently residing at At/Post - Thikpuri, Teh - Radhanagar, Dist - Kolhapur, State - Maharashtra - 416208, have changed my name from ANANDI to ANANDA PATIL and my date of birth from 01/01/1958 for all future purposes. Vide affidavit dated 05/03/2026 before Public Notary Delhi.

NAME CHANGE

I, ANANDI, is legally mother of my minor son, PATIL ABHIJEET ANANDA, presently residing at At/Post - Thikpuri, Teh - Radhanagar, Dist - Kolhapur, State - Maharashtra - 416208, have changed my name from ANANDI to ANANDA PATIL and my date of birth from 05/07/1964 to 01/01/1963 for all future purposes. Vide affidavit dated 05/03/2026 before Public Notary Delhi.

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Ramesh Pawar, S/O Sh. Ishwar Singh, residing at H. No. 82/1, Village Moti Bagh, South Moti Bagh, Delhi - 110021, do hereby solemnly affirm and declare that Ramesh (as mentioned in my old Passport) and Ramesh Pawar (as mentioned in my Aadhar and PAN card) are the names of one and the same person, which is myself. I am expanding my name from Ramesh to Ramesh Pawar to match my Aadhar and PAN records. Henceforth, I shall be known as Ramesh Pawar for all future purposes, including my Passport renewal.

NAME CHANGE

I, Neeraj S/O Raghubeer R/O H.No-4246-A, Gali No-3, Jai mata Market, Tri Nagar, North West Delhi, Delhi 110035 have changed my name to Neeraj Mittal for all future purposes.

NAME CHANGE

I, Raj Kail Mittal W/O Raghubeer, R/O H.No-4246-A, Gali No-3, Jai mata Market, Tri Nagar, North West Delhi, Delhi, 110035 have changed my name to Rajkail for all future purposes.

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform you that Mrs. Lovleen Sharma W/O NAVEEN SHARMA R/O B 14, Aishwaryam apt, plot no 17, sec 4, Dwarka, Delhi 110078, have changed my name to LOVLEEN SHARMA for all future purposes.

NAME CHANGE

I, Lovleen Sharma W/O NAVEEN SHARMA R/O B 14, Aishwaryam apt, plot no 17, sec 4, Dwarka, Delhi 110078, have changed my name to LOVLEEN SHARMA for all future purposes.

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NAME CHANGE

I, Raghbir Chand Mittal S/O Tek Chand, R/O H.No-4246-A, Gali No-3, Jai mata Market, Tri Nagar, North West Delhi, Delhi 110035 have changed my name to Raghubeer for all future purposes.

NAME CHANGE

I, Neeraj S/O Raghubeer R/O H.No-4246-A, Gali No-3, Jai mata Market, Tri Nagar, North West Delhi, Delhi 110035 have changed my name to Neeraj Mittal for all future purposes.

NAME CHANGE

I, Raj Kail Mittal W/O Raghubeer, R/O H.No-4246-A, Gali No-3, Jai mata Market, Tri Nagar, North West Delhi, Delhi, 110035 have changed my name to Rajkail for all future purposes.

NAME CHANGE

I, Lovleen Sharma W/O NAVEEN SHARMA R/O B 14, Aishwaryam apt, plot no 17, sec 4, Dwarka, Delhi 110078, have changed my name to LOVLEEN SHARMA for all future purposes.

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Mandoli jail inmate dies at GTB hospital

NEWS BOX

Kurdish dissident groups say they are preparing to join the fight against Iran with US support

IRBIL. (Agency)

Kurdish Iranian dissident groups based in northern Iraq are preparing for a potential cross-border military operation in Iran, and the U.S. has asked Iraqi Kurds to support them, Kurdish officials told The Associated Press. The Kurdish groups are widely seen as the most well-organised segment of the fragmented Iranian opposition and are believed to have thousands of trained fighters. Their entry into the war could pose a significant challenge to the embattled authorities in Tehran and could also risk pulling Iraq further into the conflict. Khalil Nadiri an official with the Kurdistan Freedom Party, or PAK, based in northern Iraq's semi-autonomous Kurdish region said Wednesday that some of their forces had moved to areas near the Iranian border in Sulaymaniyah province and were on standby.

He said Kurdish opposition group leaders had been contacted by U.S. officials regarding a potential operation, without giving more details.

Asked about reports that the Trump administration was considering arming Iranian Kurdish groups, Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth told reporters Wednesday: "None of our objectives are premised on the support or the arming of any particular force. So, what other entities may be doing, we're aware of, but our objectives aren't centered on that." Before the U.S. and Israel attacked Iran on Saturday, triggering a new war in the Middle East, the PAK had claimed attacks on the paramilitary Revolutionary Guard in retaliation for Tehran's violent crackdown on protests. But an official with the group said it had not sent forces from Iraq into Iran. If the Iranian and Iraqi Kurdish groups were to join the war, it would be the first entry of a significant ground force into the battle. The Kurdish groups have battle experience from the fight against the Islamic State group.

Ukraine Offers Help To Middle East To Stop Iranian Drones. But For A Price

Washington. (Agency)

Volodymyr Zelenskyy offered to send his best experts in shooting down Iranian drones to the Middle East if leaders there convince Vladimir Putin to agree to a month-long truce in Russia's war on Ukraine.

Four years of Russia's full-scale invasion has allowed Kyiv to develop unique expertise in intercepting drones, many of them Iranian-made Shaheds currently being deployed against countries such as the United Arab Emirates, Qatar and Saudi Arabia, the Ukrainian president said on Monday.

"I would suggest the following: leaders of the Middle East have great relations with Russians," Zelenskyy told Bloomberg News by phone from Kyiv. "They can ask Russians to implement a month-long ceasefire." "Once a truce was in place we will send our best operators of drone interceptors to the Middle East countries," he said. The ceasefire could also be called for two months or two weeks "so we can help the Middle East countries to protect civilians."

Zelenskyy made his long-shot offer after cities across the Middle East including Dubai became a target for Iranian drone and missile barrages at the weekend as Tehran retaliated for US and Israeli military strikes that killed Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and other top officials. Russia has repeatedly rejected US President Donald Trump's calls for a ceasefire in Ukraine in the past as Washington has sought to broker a peace deal, and it's unclear why Putin would agree to one now.

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

world. (Agency)

Nepal kicks off its first general election since a Gen Z-led uprising that ousted the former government last year, with a new crop of young candidates emerging to challenge the old guard's grip on power in the Himalayan nation.

Balendra Shah, a 35-year-old former rapper-turned-politician who was previously the mayor of the capital Kathmandu, has emerged as a front-runner with backing from many of the young voters behind last year's revolt. His party, the three-year-old Bahariya Swatantra Party, is supporting a corruption-busting platform of economic reform, channeling the grievances that animated the youth movement. In an interview, RSP Co-General Secretary Bipin Acharya said the election was a turning point for the country to usher in change. "Our focus will primarily be on two elements - economic and changes to the bureaucratic system," Acharya said.

Shah's main opponents are leaders from a handful of older parties, including Gagan Kumar Thapa, president of the centrist Nepali Congress, and KP Sharma Oli, the 74-year-old ex-prime minister who was ousted during last year's upheaval. Thapa is campaigning on economic reform, becoming party leader after an internal fracture following the protests. Oli's Communist Party of Nepal is pushing a platform of expanded social welfare schemes to address the economic concerns that helped fuel the protests.

Thursday's election comes just six months after deadly protests swept the nation, prompted by a ban on social media sites that eventually snowballed into nationwide convulsions against unemployment, corruption and inequality. Police eventually opened fire on demonstrators in Kathmandu, leading protesters to torch government buildings, smash through police barricades and storm the country's parliament. Within days, Oli had resigned, at least 70 people were dead and an interim government took over to oversee rebuilding and fresh elections.

U.S. looks to arm Kurdish militias to join conflict

Politically, the appetite in Washington for another major Middle Eastern ground war is extremely limited.

world. (Agency) . (Agency)

Reports from Washington indicate that American officials are discussing the possibility of supporting Kurdish militias and other Iranian opposition groups as tensions with Tehran intensify. According to reporting by CNN and The Wall Street Journal, US officials have explored contacts with Kurdish leaders operating near the Iranian border. The idea — reportedly under discussion within the CIA and the White House — would involve backing Kurdish forces along the mountainous frontier between Iraq and western Iran. The discussion points to a deeper dilemma confronting American planners. Air strikes can damage nuclear facilities, but eliminating a nuclear

programme entirely is far more difficult. Iran's nuclear infrastructure was deliberately designed after the Iraq experience to be dispersed, hardened and difficult to destroy from the air. Facilities such as the Natanz Nuclear Facility and the deeply buried Fordow Fuel Enrichment Plant form part of a network intended to survive aerial attack. Some enrichment facilities, including Fordow, were constructed deep inside mountains — estimates suggest roughly 80 to 90 metres beneath rock — precisely to withstand bombing campaigns. Iran has also accumulated significant stocks of enriched uranium. According to reporting by the International Atomic Energy Agency, some material has been enriched to levels approaching 60 per cent purity — still short of weapons-grade but far closer to it than ordinary civilian enrichment. Such material could potentially be enriched further if facilities survived or were rebuilt. As former IAEA director general Mohamed ElBaradei once remarked when discussing nuclear proliferation, "you cannot bomb knowledge." History offers a revealing precedent. After the Gulf War, inspectors from the International Atomic Energy

Agency and the UN Special Commission began one of the most intrusive disarmament operations ever attempted. Teams spent years tracking down and dismantling Iraq's nuclear infrastructure. Facilities missed during the



bombing campaign were gradually uncovered through inspections, document seizures and interviews with Iraqi scientists. Boots on the ground in Tehran? Who will substitute for the US?

Diplomats and inspectors involved in the process recall that mapping Iraq's nuclear programme took more than two years despite the destruction caused by the

bombing campaign. Hidden centrifuge components, technical designs and research networks continued to surface long after the war had ended.

As former chief weapons inspector David Kay later observed, inspectors discovered far more of Iraq's programme than had initially been expected because large elements had been concealed from outside scrutiny. Diplomats involved in the inspections recall that dismantling Iraq's nuclear infrastructure became a painstaking process that continued for several years after the war. The lesson was clear: bombing destroyed buildings, but dismantling the programme required physical access on the ground. Military planners have long recognised the same challenge. As former CIA director Michael Hayden once put it, "air strikes can set a nuclear programme back, but they rarely eliminate it." And if nuclear materials or equipment must be secured, that task inevitably requires forces on the ground. As former US defence secretary James Mattis once remarked when discussing proliferation risks, "if there are weapons of mass destruction, you have to secure them on the ground."

After calling US-Israel strikes illegal, Canada's Carney won't rule out role in Iran war

CANBERRA. (Agency)

Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney said Thursday that he couldn't rule out his country's military participation in the escalating war in the Middle East.

Carney's visit to Australia this week has been overshadowed by expanding war in the Middle East, sparked by a massive US-Israeli strike on Iran that killed its supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. Speaking alongside local counterpart Anthony Albanese in Canberra, Carney was asked whether there was a situation in which Canada would get involved. "One can never categorically rule out participation," he said, while stressing the question was a "hypothetical" one. "We will stand by our allies," said Carney, adding that "we will always defend Canadians." Carney had said the US-Israeli strikes on Iran were "inconsistent with international law".

However, he supports the efforts to stop Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon — a position that Canada takes "with regret" as it represented "another example of the failure of the international order." The Canadian leader reiterated on Thursday his call for a "de-escalation" of the conflict.



Carney's trip is part of a multi-country tour of the Asia-Pacific aimed at reducing reliance on the United States — a hedge against what he has described as a fading US-led global order. The Australia leg of the tour is aimed at bringing in investment and deepening ties with a like-minded "middle power" partner. Middle power rallying cry On Thursday morning he issued a rallying cry in Australia's parliament to "middle powers", urging them to work together in an increasingly hegemonic world order.

Nations like Australia and Canada faced a stark choice — work together to help write the "new rules" of the global order or have great powers do it for them, he said. "In this brave new world, middle powers cannot simply build higher walls and retreat behind them. We must work together," he said.

"Great powers can compel, but compulsion comes with costs, both reputational and financial," the former central banker added. "Middle powers like Australia and Canada hold this rare convening power because others know we mean what we say and we will match our values with our actions." The Canadian leader also said the two countries would together as "strategic collaborators" to pool their vast combined rare earth mineral resources. And he detailed renewed cooperation in areas from defence to artificial intelligence. "We know we must work with others who share our values to build solid capabilities," he told parliament. Otherwise, he warned, they risked being "caught between the hyperscalers and the hegemonies". The Canadian leader has frequently clashed with US President Donald Trump, who has repeatedly threatened to annex Canada and slapped swingeing tariffs on the country.

In a speech to political and financial elites at the World Economic Forum in January, Carney warned the US-led global system of governance was enduring "a rupture".

Pakistani man, accused of plotting terror attack in US, claims Iranian spies recruited him to kill Trump, Biden

world. (Agency)

The allegation sounded like the stuff of spy movies: A Pakistani businessman trying to hire hit men, even handing them \$5,000 in cash, to kill a US politician on behalf of Iran's powerful paramilitary Revolutionary Guard.

It was true, and potential targets of the 2024 scheme included now-President Donald Trump, then-President Joe Biden and former presidential candidate and ex-U.N. Ambassador Nikki Haley, the man told jurors at his attempted terrorism trial in New York on Wednesday. But he insisted his actions were driven by fear for loved ones in Iran, and he figured he'd be apprehended before anything came of the scheme. "My family was under threat, and I had to do this," the defendant, Asif Merchant, testified

through an Urdu interpreter. "I was not wanting to do this so willingly." Merchant said he had anticipated getting arrested before anyone was killed, intended to cooperate with the US government and had hoped that would help him get a green card. US authorities were, indeed, on to him — the supposed hit men he paid were actually undercover FBI agents — and he was arrested on July 12, 2024, a day before an unrelated attempt on Trump's life in Butler, Pennsylvania. Merchant did sit for voluntary FBI interviews, but he ultimately ended up with a trial, not a cooperation deal. "You traveled to the United States for the purpose of hiring Mafia members to kill a politician, correct?" Assistant US Attorney Nina Gupta asked during her turn

questioning Merchant Wednesday in a Brooklyn federal court. That's right," Merchant replied, his demeanor as matter-of-fact as his testimony was unusual. The trial is unfolding amid the less than week-old Iran war, which killed Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei in a strike that Trump summed up as "I got him before he got me." Jurors are instructed to ignore news pertaining to the case.

The Iranian government has denied plotting to kill Trump or other US officials. Merchant, 47, had a roughly 20-year banking career in Pakistan before getting involved in an array of businesses: clothing, car sales, banana exports, insulation imports. He openly has two families, one in Pakistan and the other in Iran — where, he said, he was introduced around the end.

Turkey says missile launched from Iran destroyed by NATO

KABUL. (Agency)

A ballistic missile launched from Iran and heading towards Turkish airspace via Iraq and Syria was destroyed by NATO air defence systems, Turkish officials said Wednesday. The defence ministry said it had been "engaged and neutralised by NATO air-and-missile defence assets deployed in the eastern Mediterranean." It did not specify the missile's intended target. Iran has been hitting sites across the region in retaliation after the United States and Israel launched strikes against it on Saturday. A Turkish official, speaking to AFP on condition of anonymity, said the missile had been "aimed at a base in Greek Cyprus but veered off course." Officials said fragments that fell in the Dorytol district in southern Turkey, near the Syrian border, had been identified as pieces of the interceptor used to neutralise "the threat in the air". No casualties were reported. Reacting to the incident, US Secretary of State Marco Rubio said in a call with Turkey's Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan "that attacks on Turkey's sovereign territory were unacceptable and pledged full support from the United States." State Department spokesman Tommy Pigott said. NATO stands firmly with all allies, including Türkiye, as Iran continues its indiscriminate attacks across the region," NATO spokeswoman Allison Hart said, using Turkey's official name. "Our deterrence and defence posture remains strong across all domains, including when it comes to air and missile defence."

The United Arab Emirates "strongly condemned" the missile launch as a "serious escalation", the foreign ministry said in a statement. Ankara summoned the Iranian ambassador to convey its "reaction and concerns" over the incident while Fidan warned Tehran against steps that could widen the conflict, a diplomatic source said. Fidan told his Iranian counterpart Abbas Araghchi in a phone call that "any steps that could lead to the spread of conflict should be avoided", the source added. Iranian news agency Tasnim said Araghchi told Fidan that Iran's retaliatory strikes were aimed at bases used to carry out operations against the Islamic republic. Turkey hosts a number of military facilities used by the United States and other NATO allies.

Wrong strategy

In an evening address, President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said Turkey was "taking all the necessary precautions" in consultation with its NATO allies and was issuing "warnings in the clearest terms to prevent similar incidents from happening again".

"If we, as a nation, want to live in peace and tranquility... we must constantly increase our deterrent capabilities. In these difficult times... we are leaving absolutely nothing to chance regarding the security of our borders and airspace," he said. Turkey, a majority Sunni Muslim NATO member, shares a 500-kilometre (315-mile) border with Iran.

Senate Republicans vote down legislation to halt Iran war in Congress' first vote on the conflict

Sen. John Barrasso, second in Senate Republican leadership, said GOP senators would send a message that Democrats are "wrong" for forcing a vote on the war powers resolution.

WASHINGTON. (Agency)

Senate Republicans voted down an effort to halt President Donald Trump's war against Iran on Wednesday, demonstrating early support for a conflict that has rapidly spread across the Middle East with no clear U.S. exit strategy. The legislation, known as a war powers resolution, failed on a 47-53 vote tally. It gave lawmakers an opportunity to demand congressional approval before any further attacks are carried out. The vote forced them to take a

stand on a war shaping the fate of U.S. military members, countless other lives and the future of the region. Underscoring the gravity of the moment, Democratic senators filled the Senate chamber and sat at their desks as the voting got underway. Typically, senators step into the chamber to cast their vote, then leave.

"Today every senator — every single one — will pick a side," Senate Democratic Leader Chuck Schumer said before the vote. "Do you stand with the American people who are exhausted with forever wars in the Middle East or stand with Donald Trump and Pete Hegseth as they stumble us headfirst into another war?"

Sen. John Barrasso, second in Senate Republican leadership, said during the debate that GOP senators would send a message that Democrats are wrong for forcing a vote on the war powers resolution. "Democrats would rather obstruct Donald Trump than obliterate Iran's national nuclear program," he

added. Trump administration scrambles for congressional support After launching a surprise attack against Iran on Saturday, Trump has scrambled to win support for a



conflict that Americans of all political persuasions were already wary of entering. Trump administration officials have been a frequent presence on Capitol Hill this week as they try to reassure lawmakers that they have the situation under control. Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth said Wednesday that the war could extend eight weeks, a

longer time frame than has previously been floated by the Trump administration. He also acknowledged that Iran is still able to carry out missile attacks even as the U.S. tries to control the country's airspace.

U.S. service members "remain in harm's way, and we must be clear-eyed that the risk is still high," Gen. Dan Caine, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said at the same press conference. Six U.S. military members were killed over the weekend in a drone strike in Kuwait.

Republican Sen. Joni Ernst of Iowa acknowledged the human costs of the war in her floor speech. One of the soldiers killed Sunday was from Iowa and a National Guard unit from her state was also attacked in Syria in December, resulting in the deaths of two other soldiers. "But now is our opportunity to bring an end to the decades of chaos," said Ernst, who herself served as an officer in the Iowa National Guard for two decades.

NEWS BOX

Bengaluru Navanirman Party calls ward list delay 'insult to top court'

BENGALURU. (Agency)
The Bengaluru Navanirman Party (BNP) on Wednesday criticised the state government for failing to meet the Supreme Court's deadline on conducting the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) elections, stating that the final ward-wise reservation list was not published by February 20 as directed. BNP founder Srikanth Narasimhan termed the delay a deliberate attempt to postpone local governance and bypass constitutional mandates.

"The state government's failure to meet the Supreme Court's deadline is not just a procedural lapse, but a direct insult to judicial authority and a betrayal of Bengaluru's citizens. Ward delimitation was completed months ago, leaving no technical reason for the delay.

It appears to be a calculated move to keep the city in administrative limbo, denying millions their right to elected representation and stalling vital local governance through ward committees and area sabhas," Narasimhan said. Echoing similar concerns, Rishvanjias Raghavan, BNP Youth Wing president, said that ward boundaries had already been finalised and the legal framework was in place.

"Officials have had ample time, yet the government continues to delay the reservation list. This shows the issue is not readiness, but unwillingness. Governance cannot function on excuses when systems are already prepared. Repeated delays and missed deadlines have eroded public confidence in the electoral process," he said.

Tripura to build four elephant passes to prevent man-animal conflict

Agartala. (Agency)
The Tripura government has announced plans to construct four elephant passes in Mungiakami area of Atharamura hill range in Khowai district, aiming to ensure the safe migration of wild elephants and minimise the risk of conflicts between humans and elephants. Mungiakami, situated at the base of the Atharamura Range, was recently designated an official elephant corridor after two elephants were tragically killed in collisions with speeding trains in 2024. This incident highlighted significant safety concerns for wildlife in the area.

Forest Minister Animesh Debbarma stated that the government has prioritised developing at least four dedicated elephant passes in the corridor. He revealed that work is underway to finalise a Detailed Project Report (DPR) to advance this plan. The minister also noted that additional elephant passes could be constructed in the future if further assessment justifies such a need.

Debbarma emphasised the importance of using scientific approaches to reduce human-wildlife conflicts. He outlined the Forest Department's ongoing efforts to advocate for dedicated wildlife safety measures as part of major infrastructure developments.

He highlighted the need for collaboration and discussion with agencies such as railway and road authorities to implement measures to relocate both local communities and wildlife to mitigate potential conflicts.

The minister further added that the Forest Department has already raised this issue with the Ministry of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change to seek support and guidance for effective implementation.

Andhra Minister announces comprehensive Godavari delta modernization plan

Vijayawada. (Agency)
Andhra Pradesh Water Resources Development Minister Nimmala Ramanaidu has outlined ambitious plans to revamp the Godavari delta irrigation system, assuring farmers of flood prevention and water supply to every acre. Making a statement in the Assembly at Amaravati on Thursday, Ramanaidu said that 10.13 lakh acres are currently under cultivation in the combined East and West Godavari districts, 4.83 lakh acres in the eastern and central delta, and 5.29 lakh in the



western delta. "In order to tackle flooding, the government has allocated Rs 13.4 crore for a survey and a comprehensive Detailed Project Report (DPR). Post-DPR, we will repair canals, drains, side slopes, lining, bed levels, gates, sluices, and cross-drainage structures," the Minister said. Ramanaidu highlighted the TDP's 2014-19 initiatives for delta modernization, accusing the previous YSRCP government of halting works midway without allocating anything and neglecting operation and maintenance, which deprived farmers of irrigation. "Preventing floods in the Godavari delta and delivering water to the last acre is Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu's objective," Minister Ramanaidu said.

13-year-old killed in 'accidental' firing at birthday party in Lucknow; kin allege foul play

Lucknow.(Agency)
A 13-year-old boy was shot dead during a friend's birthday party in Lucknow on Monday evening, said police, adding that three of the victim's friends have been detained and are being questioned to piece together what transpired.

While police suspect it is a case of accidental firing, they have lodged an FIR under charges of murder (BNS Section 103) against the three children, parents of the child whose birthday was being celebrated and their driver based on a complaint lodged by the deceased's father.

During preliminary investigation, police said they found that the victim, a Class VII student, and two of his friends had gone to a fourth friend's house to celebrate his birthday.

Children were 'playing' with the gun: Police Police said it appears the children allegedly got hold of a gun belonging to the father of the birthday boy, which was kept in his car. Police said they were allegedly playing with it in a room when the gun accidentally went off and a

bullet struck the 13-year-old on the forehead. The child was taken to a nearby hospital, where doctors declared him dead. The victim's family, however, has alleged foul play. In a video circulating on social media, the



teen's father, who runs an electrical shop, said his son was observing roza (fast) but insisted on going to his friend's birthday celebration, saying the latter would feel hurt if he did not show up. When contacted, the deceased's father told The Indian Express that the three

boys came to pick up his son from home. Later in the evening, he said he got a WhatsApp call from the father of the birthday child, asking him to come to the hospital. "We rushed to the hospital, but we were not allowed to see our child," he alleged. "After a long delay, the police finally showed us my son's body. He had a gunshot wound in the middle of his forehead," he said.

Dismissing claims of an accidental firing, he alleged that such a precise shot could not have been the result of children playing with a weapon. He further claimed that the accused's family has connections in high places. "The government has assured me that strict action will be taken in two days. Let's see what happens... If this had happened at our home, you can imagine how swiftly the government would have acted," he claimed.

In his police complaint, the father also alleged that the accused child's father had threatened him during a parent-teacher meeting. When asked what the issue was, he did not elaborate.

Shia protests continue for second day in Lucknow over Ayatollah Khamenei's killing



Lucknow . (Agency)
The protest by members of the Shia community in Lucknow over killing of Iran's Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, in an attack by the US and Israel forces, continued on the second day on Monday. Not only Chhota and Bara Imambara but shops in adjoining area were also closed for the consecutive second day.

Later in the evening, protests were organised after the Majlis in the Hussainabad area of the old city. Maulana Mohammad Mirza Yasooob Abbas, an Islamic cleric and speaker of All India Shia Personal Law Board as well as a member of the India Islamic Culture Centre, said a "majlis" was organised on Monday and that they would burn the effigy of US President

Donald Trump in the Hussainabad area.

Earlier in the day, Uttar Pradesh Congress president Ajay Rai visited Shia-dominated areas of old Lucknow to pay tribute to Ayatollah Khamenei. He also met senior Shia cleric Maulana Kalbe Jawwad and expressed condolences. Speaking on the occasion, Rai said that Ayatollah Khamenei chose "courage over surrender" and that his "martyrdom" deserved respect and remembrance. He also criticised the Narendra Modi-led Central government's silence on the issue, terming it "shameful" and saying it raises questions about the country's moral stance and its civilisational values. Rai further said that India and Iran have shared longstanding historical ties, which, he alleged, have been weakened by the present BJP-led government for the benefit of select interests. Expressing solidarity, the UP Congress chief conveyed deep condolences to Iran as well as to the Shia community across the world. Meanwhile, Maulana Abbas said that the protests and mourning would continue on Tuesday as well and the shops would also remain closed in the area.

Fitness certificate fee hike from Rs 1,000 to Rs 9,200 leaves Bengaluru auto owners shocked

BENGALURU. (Agency)
Auto drivers in Bengaluru have raised alarm over the steep hike in fitness certificate and inspection charges for autorickshaws over 15 years old, from what used to be Rs 1,000 to Rs 9,200 now.

They said that they were neither consulted nor informed in advance. The drivers argued that merely citing central government directions is insufficient, insisting the revision must be formally notified and objections invited before being enforced.

Speaking to , Chandregowda, who has owned and driven an autorickshaw for 22 years, said he recently paid Rs 9,200 to renew the FC for his vehicle, which has crossed 20 years. "Last year, I paid only Rs 1,000. This year, they charged Rs 9,200," he said, adding that he made the payment just days before his scheduled renewal in March. "We have been driving autos since the early 1990s. It is not easy for us to buy a new vehicle. Banks are reluctant to offer loans for older

drivers, and managing such a steep hike is very difficult," Chandregowda said, highlighting his plight of being stuck between paying high FC fees and unable to buy a new auto to pay less FC fee. Vasudev K, who has been plying an autorickshaw since 1991, said he



too was charged Rs 9,200 for renewing the FC of his 2004 model vehicle, which has been converted to electric. Until last year, he paid Rs 600 plus Rs 200 for the EV conversion, totalling Rs 800. "This is the first time I have paid such a high amount. There was no prior official intimation," he said. With his FC

renewal due in February, Vasudev said he had no choice but to pay as operating without a valid certificate would attract heavy penalties. Rudramurthy, General Secretary of Autorickshaw Drivers Union (ARDU), alleged the hike was excessive and enforced abruptly. He said inspection fees for new vehicles were raised from Rs 600 to Rs 800, and after eight years from Rs 800 to Rs 1,000, while rates for vehicles completing 15 years are now being charged around Rs 4,500, while those over 20 years are paying Rs 9,200.

He argued that under provisions cited by officials, any such change must first be discussed at the State level, notified formally, and objections invited before enforcement. "There should be a general notification, public objections must be called, and only then should revised rates be fixed. How can it be implemented unilaterally?" he questioned.

Madras HC doubts 'mamool mafia' in pleas against 300-cap on Marina shops

The court had recently ordered reducing the number of shops on the beach from 1,417 to 300, and restricted the goods to be sold to only three items - toys, fancy items and edibles.

CHENNAI .(Agency)
A special bench of the Madras High Court on Wednesday expressed doubt whether a mafia collecting 'mamool' is behind the petitions filed against reducing the number of shops on Marina Beach in Chennai to 300 from the existing 1,417.

"We suspect, don't ask for evidence, that rowdy elements and mafia gang collecting mamool from the traders may be behind these (impleading) litigations," the bench comprising justices R Suresh Kumar and AD Jagadish Chandira said while hearing the petitions relating to regulation of shops on the Marina and the impleading petitions filed by the left over vendors. However, the bench assuaged the tempers of the left over hawkers,

who have been facing eviction as the 300 shops were allotted through the lot system recently, stating the court will ensure the 1,117 vendors are accommodated in the vending zones available closer to the beach. "We will ensure you are accommodated at some other places - vending zones closer to Marina Beach," said the bench.



However, the bench made it clear that the hawkers cannot claim space as a matter of right, as they have been allotted only temporary shops for doing business on the beach. The court had recently ordered reducing the number of shops on the beach from 1,417 to 300, and restricted the goods to be sold to only three items - toys, fancy items and edibles.

HC takes suo motu notice of Gurdaspur encounter, summons DGP

The family of 19-year-old Ranjit Singh has alleged that he was picked up from his house on February 24 and was later killed in custody

Chandigarh.(Agency)
The Punjab and Haryana High Court has, on its own, taken notice of the controversial police encounter that claimed the life of 19-year-old Ranjit Singh in Gurdaspur district last week. A division bench of Justices Anupinder Singh Grewal and Deepak Manchanda has directed Punjab Director General of Police (DGP) Gaurav Yadav to personally appear before it at 2 pm on Thursday through video-conferencing and file a detailed reply on the sequence of events.

The case will be heard along with an unrelated matter concerning gangster Lawrence Bishnoi's jail interview. Court sources indicated that the bench has asked the DGP to come prepared with all facts, including the circumstances leading to the February 25

shooting. Ranjit Singh was one of the three youths named by police in the sensational February 22 double murder of Assistant Sub-Inspector Gurnam Singh and Home Guard jawan Ashok Kumar at a joint checkpoint in Adhian village, barely 2 km from the Pakistan border. Investigators had described the attack as an ISI-orchestrated strike aimed at spreading terror, with the trio allegedly paid around Rs 20,000 to carry it out. While Dilawar Singh was arrested immediately and Inderjit Singh was picked up later from Amritsar, Ranjit was declared killed in an "encounter" three days after the police officials' killings. According to the official police account, Ranjit was in custody on February 24 when he was taken



for the recovery of the weapon used in the double murder. During the operation near Puranashala, he allegedly tried to flee, opened fire on the escort party, and injured a senior officer before being shot dead in retaliation. Ranjit's family has strongly rejected

this version, insisting that he was picked up from his house on February 24 "only for questioning" and was later killed in custody. They have also alleged that the encounter was staged to quickly close the high-profile case, and pointed to the removal of

CCTV cameras in the area and demanded a proper post-mortem and independent probe.

As of Thursday afternoon, Ranjit's body had still not been handed over for the last rites.

The high court's decision to step in comes barely days after a Gurdaspur judicial magistrate issued sweeping preservation orders on call records, GPS data of all involved officers, and footage from the encounter site, while also directing a medical board to examine whether the injury to the police officer was self-inflicted.

This is the second instance in recent weeks when the Punjab and Haryana High Court has exercised suo motu powers in a sensitive criminal case; the first involved the murder of kabaddi promoter Rana Balachauria in Mohali.

Three die in two days, toll in goldsmith unit blast in Tamil Nadu touches five

CHENNAI.(Agency)

A week after an explosion caused by a suspected gas leak at a goldsmith workshop, the death toll has risen to five, as three more who were hospitalised with burns, died in the last two days.

Two others continue to remain under treatment, and the police said their condition is being closely monitored.

The owner of the workshop, Suman Bhag alias Biswajit (32) of West Bengal, who sustained more than 40% burns, had died at the hospital on the night of the incident on February 25. Srimanta Maal (48) died on Sunday.

Three others - Rakesh (26), Suraj Dholey (23) and Arabindu Langal (28) - died on Tuesday night and Wednesday morning.

The two men still undergoing treatment - Jayanta Sadhukhan (43) and Ananta Ketrupal (36) - had sustained more than 25% burns, the police said.

A senior police officer told in the case of burn injuries, it is difficult to assess a patient's condition before the 21-day mark.

"During this period, their condition remains critical. We are monitoring their status and closely following up with doctors at Government Kilpauk Medical College and Hospital," he said.

The explosion occurred around 8.30 pm on February 25 on the fourth floor of a building on Singanna Naicken Street in Sowcarpet, causing a portion of the housing unit to collapse.

A preliminary probe suggested the fire and the subsequent explosion occurred when a worker switched on a hand-held blowtorch in a room already filled with LPG from a leaked cylinder.

"Since they are dealing with gold, the workers usually work with the doors and windows closed. On the night of the incident too, they had latched the door and windows from inside. As they were melting the gold and using other metals, they did not notice the smell of the leaked LPG before turning on the blowtorch," the officer said.

Bail, bars and the burden of harsh laws

Harsh laws, even harsher bail provisions, investigations directed at political adversaries, protesting students, academics and journalists with the intent to topple and destabilise governments and silence dissent have become the order of the day. The Union government, working in tandem with the political party in power uses laws by weaponising their provisions.

We saw the spectacle of protesting Youth Congress workers at Bharat Mandapam, perhaps not an entirely engaging sight, being incarcerated under suspect provisions of the law. We have seen, in recent times, students of Jawaharlal Nehru University being proceeded against and incarcerated for objecting to the remarks of the vice chancellor. We witnessed Umar Khalid and others languishing in jail for years without bail. In the case of Khalid, his release from prison is not in sight. We have seen journalists writing against industry giants being visited with successive FIRs. At the same time, we have also seen ministers and political leaders of the present government, both at the Centre and the states, who are knee-deep in corruption and often make communal remarks seeking to disturb public order, yet are not proceeded against by the investigating agencies, maintaining a stoic silence. Now, we are seeing the unbundling of false and fabricated prosecutions with Special Judge Jitendra Pratap Singh discharging Arvind Kejriwal, Manish Sisodia and 21 others in the liquor policy case. I wonder how a prosecution in a bribery case relating to the alleged Rs 100-crore scam could have been launched by the Central Bureau of Investigation without hard evidence. I wonder why those in power fail to realise how destructive it is for human dignity to be imprisoned on the mere plea that an investigation is underway. Who will compensate Arvind Kejriwal for the 156 days he spent in custody? Who will compensate Manish Sisodia for the 530 days in jail? There is no accountability. In the process, the investigating agency at the behest of those in power, seeks to destroy reputations not just personally but politically. Incarceration results in personal agony when one is jailed alongside hardened criminals, thereby diminishing public confidence in the leaders of political parties.

For the court to find out after years of investigation that there was not even a prima facie case for the alleged criminal conspiracy or wrongdoing speaks volumes of the nature of investigation in our country. The finding that there was no evidence of an overarching conspiracy of criminal intent in the formulation of the 2021 excise policy, serious investigating lapses, reliance on uncorroborated statements, a chargesheet with significant gaps and implication of the accused without material, makes it apparent that the CBI, as an institution serves the political interests of the party in power. It also raises questions about the efficacy of the investigating procedures adopted by it. In situations like these, it is impossible to restore the status quo ante. Sometimes, it could also lead to political death. Surely, this is not how the investigating agencies should conduct themselves.

The saga does not end here. Allegations against Jharkhand CM Hemant Soren, again without substance, found him in jail for five months; an act of obvious vendetta politics with the intent to destabilise his government just before the assembly elections in the state. The Jharkhand Mukti Morcha still won, a body blow to the targeted prosecution. Former Chhattisgarh CM Bhupesh Baghel was targeted too, and his government was sought to be destabilised before the assembly elections. His son was later arrested along with thirteen others. The claim that such investigations are independent has been exposed. The country now realises that all such probes are targeted. The unbundling of the allegations against former Haryana CM Bhupinder Singh Hooda, where the chargesheet filed in 2018 was quashed in February 2026, again because there was no prima facie case on the allegation that the Associated Journals Limited was allotted a plot of land at an undervalued price, is yet another example of targeted prosecution.

Iran regime change may elude Trump

Tehran would want to be seen extracting revenge from Israel and the US

AFTER the June 2025 attacks by the US and Israel on Iranian nuclear facilities and military leadership, the US declared the Iranian nuclear programme as "obliterated". A fresh onslaught now can hardly be justified on the same grounds. Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei's assassination leads to the unavoidable conclusion that the real objective, with most of the ruling families in the Gulf endorsing it, is an Iranian regime change. Oman mediated and encouraged dialogue for a peaceful settlement of US-Iran differences. Reportedly, a deal had almost been finalised. Iran was to hand over its stockpile, containing 300-400 kg of 60% enriched uranium. This is a step away from 90% enrichment, which is required to produce 10 or more nuclear weapons. The attack may trigger that move. Unlike in June last year, Iran was now prepared to immediately retaliate, having rebuilt its defences and re-equipped its missile arsenal. China apparently provided new-generation defensive and offensive weapons. This would enable China to test the effectiveness of its missiles against US naval assets and anti-missile defence systems. This is crucial if it militarily attempts to occupy Taiwan, which it claims as its territory. There have also been reports of Russia upgrading the Iranian air defence systems. In the past, Iran had S-300 systems but not the more advanced S-400. Any military attack must have clear objectives and exit ramps. In June 2025, the US ended its intervention claiming total destruction of the Iranian nuclear programme. If the objective now is regime change, then multiple factors exist. Firstly, Iran is not Venezuela, where a pliant leadership immediately emerged after President Maduro's abduction by American special forces. The US intelligence successfully exploited divisions within the ruling establishment in Venezuela.

In Iran, the ruling dispensation is an alliance between the clerical order and the pro-regime Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC). Assisting them is the Basij, a paramilitary volunteer militia with 600,000 active members and 25 million reserves. The late Supreme Leader realised the threat to his life. However, he defied and led, while creating multiple layers of successors to all sensitive leadership positions. It also appears that instructions were issued to officers at the operational level to act without guidance from the higher ranks. This was to ensure that the chain of command's severance did not stall planned retaliation.

What happens next? The IRGC has announced massive

retaliatory attacks. In turn, US President Donald Trump has warned that "we will hit them with a force that has never been seen before". There is widespread public anger in Iran over Khamenei's death. The US assumption, based on Israeli arguments, that the assassination would make the Iranian regime collapse is probably mistaken. Although constitutionally the next Supreme Leader would be approved by the Assembly of Experts, a three-member interim leadership council will govern the country for the time being. It includes



Ayatollah Alireza Arafai, President Masoud Pezeshkian and the head of the judiciary, Gholam Hossein Mohseni Ejehei. According to a February 28 YouGov poll, only 33% of the Americans support the US attack on Iran, with 45% opposing it. Democrats are protesting over the US Congress being bypassed before starting a war. Consequently, President Trump may seek an early off-ramp to claim victory and end the campaign, although his real aim of regime change may not be achieved. It is likely that the late Supreme Leader's successor may be either another cleric, who is as or even more committed to religion-inspired governance, or a serving/former IRGC member. A prompt ceasefire, however, is unlikely. Iran would want to be seen extracting revenge from Israel and the US. This can mean considerable damage to institutions and infrastructure in Israel. The attack on all Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, except Oman, is foxing analysts. They wonder why Iran would alienate neighbours which had announced that their airspace and territory were barred for launching any attack on Iran.

The UAE and Bahrain signed the Abraham Accords with Israel in 2020. They did not withdraw even after Israel's massacre of Palestinians in Gaza. Furthermore, many nations have functioning US air or naval bases, including some with radars to track Iranian missiles. Also, there are news reports that Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman has been surreptitiously goading the Americans, alongside Israel, to decapitate the Iranian regime and disarm it, especially its nuclear programme. The rivalry between Shia Iran and Sunni Saudi Arabia is a historical one. Each claims the leadership of the Islamic world. Of the 12 Shia Imams, only one is buried in Iran (at Mashad). Saudis have ignored many Imam burial spots in their country. Having weakened Iran's surrogates like Hezbollah, besides overthrowing Syria's Shia Assad regime, Israel has focused on deposing the Iranian Islamic regime.

Iran is drawing the GCC countries into its standoff with the US and Israel. Dubai, after being targeted by Iranian missiles, might lose its charm as a tax-free haven as well as a trading and investment centre. Iran wants the American "puppets" to face reality and end their double game. Unless the Iranian regime gets replaced by a pro-West government, stability may not return to the Gulf anytime soon. India also stands to lose from these developments. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's unwillingness to criticise Israel during his recent visit, days before the

attacks, has robbed India of its neutrality. Iran is unlikely to forget it. Having ostensibly aligned with one side, Delhi will lose leverage if Iran's Islamic regime survives. In danger are security and remittances of the diaspora, Dubai and the Gulf as India's commercial entrepôt, and the reliability and cost of energy supplies. Just when the Taliban need military and economic support to fight Pakistan, Indian supply routes via Iran are blocked. The BJP may find ideological affinity with Zionism, but Sufism, which blended Islamic mysticism with Shia Islam, inspired the Bhakti movement. Sufism and Sikhism have deep historical and mystical links. That is why 130 of Baba Farid's sloks and shabads are in the Guru Granth Sahib. Thus, the developments in the Gulf and West Asia have economic and spiritual relevance for India. Hopefully Trump is merely bluffing and would allow Iran a face-saving retaliation without escalating the conflict. In that case, a quick off-ramp may be available. Otherwise, chaos and massive economic disruption are inevitable.

Punjab Congress leaders must unite

Punjab's small landholdings and high input costs make the fear of competition from heavily mechanised US farms an easy rallying cry

WHEN Rahul Gandhi chose Barnala for his mazdoor kisan maha rally, the target was twofold: Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his own divided party in Punjab. Rahul's sharpest barb was directed at the India-US interim trade pact. He described it as a "death warrant" for farmers and MSMEs. Alleging that the Centre conceded agricultural access under pressure from US President Donald Trump, he warned of a flood of American soybeans, pulses, apples, cotton and walnuts into Indian markets. In a state where agrarian anxiety runs deep, the charge is politically potent. Punjab's small landholdings and high input costs make the fear of competition from heavily mechanised US farms an easy rallying cry. Rahul's claim that New Delhi has committed to buying goods worth Rs 9 lakh crore annually and that a deal



stalled for months was cleared in "15 minutes" demands clarification from the Centre. If agriculture is indeed part of tariff concessions, farmers deserve transparency. Trade ambition cannot ride roughshod over rural

stability. Barnala was also about Congress housekeeping. The Congress party in Punjab remains hobbled by entrenched factional rivalries, leadership one-upmanship and competing caste-regional loyalties that have repeatedly undercut campaign coherence and booth-level mobilisation. Rahul's warning to leaders to "team up or sit at home" was overdue. The party cannot hope to channel farm discontent if it remains organisationally fractured ahead of the 2027 Assembly polls. Punjab BJP chief Sunil Jakhar dismissed the visit as theatrics. But the stakes are larger than partisan point-scoring. For the Centre, the issue is safeguarding agriculture while pursuing trade. For Rahul, it is about proving that internal unity can precede external credibility. The test is whether the Congress can convert agrarian anxiety into political momentum or will remain divided in the face of opportunity.

Hormuz closure could hit half of India's oil supply

India's crude basket might rise from the current \$70 per barrel to \$100 per barrel or even higher.

A COUPLE of weeks before Israeli and American missiles began raining down on Iran, one of the Islamic nation's two naval wings, the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps Navy, shut down the Strait of Hormuz for several hours as it conducted an exercise to test its new defence doctrine, the 'Smart Control of the Strait of Hormuz.' The objective was to show to the world that Iran had the capability to block any seaborne trade through the strait. More than 20 million barrels of crude oil pass through the Strait of Hormuz every day. That makes up 25% of the world's crude shipments and 20% of global crude consumption. For us, the importance of the strait is even larger: 50% of India's crude imports transit through it. Any sustained blockade will increase our crude import costs dramatically, over and above the impact it will have on global crude prices. Defence analysts are divided over whether Iran can actually implement the blockade for long. Some say that Iran has war-gamed this exact scenario for years and has built up maritime defence capabilities that rival the best in the world. Janes, the much-respected defence analysis group, once called Iran the "foremost... practitioner of small boat 'swarm' tactics", which is of crucial value in the Strait of Hormuz. It also has over 5,000 naval mines, including Chinese-made EM-52 rising mines, that can lie dormant on the sea bed until they sense there is a high-value target above. Iran also has the largest anti-ship missile arsenal in West Asia, including the short-range Noor and the mid-to long-range anti-ship ballistic missiles (ASBMs), Khalij Fars, Zolfaghar Basir and Qasem Basir. Other defence experts say that the US and Israel have abundant firepower to take out this entire naval configuration within a few days and clear up the Strait of Hormuz within a week. Yet, even if this were true, they would not be able to rule out guerrilla strikes on ships,

like the Houthi rebels have demonstrated in the Red Sea. That means ships will need to pay very high insurance premia to transit through the strait. Already, the additional war risk premium (AWRP) charged on ships that travel through the region has risen from 0.05-0.1% to 0.5-1% of the vessel's hull value.

That means a very large crude carrier (VLCC) with a hull value of \$100 million will have to pay up to \$1 million in insurance. In some cases, major maritime insurers have simply withdrawn insurance coverage for any ship going through the Strait of Hormuz. This will have a deadly impact on the crude 'basket' we import, whose price is estimated using a combination of the price of heavy sour crude from Oman and Dubai and sweet Brent crude.

We will have to pay more for the crude coming from the Gulf and also increase our dependence on crude from North America, which will drive up our import price. Estimates suggest that if the disruption in Hormuz continues, India's crude basket might rise from the current \$70 per barrel to \$100 per barrel or even higher.

There are four major effects of any large rise in crude prices on our economy. The first is the impact on our oil import bill and the current account deficit (CAD). The second is the cost of refining crude. The third is the impact on the price of fuel that a common citizen pays at the local petrol pump. And the fourth is the effect on what the Centre and states earn from taxes on petrol and diesel. Estimates suggest that for every \$10 increase in the global price of a barrel of crude, our oil import bill will go up by

\$13-14 billion since we pay lower prices than the global average. If global oil prices rise to \$100 per barrel, our oil import bill will rise by \$30-40 billion. Other things remaining the same, this will raise our CAD — the gap

Rs 115 and Rs 135, depending on which state they are in. That, in turn, will have a huge impact on the overall retail inflation. It is estimated that for every \$10 increase in the global price of crude, the consumer price index rises by one-third of a per cent. A \$100 per barrel crude could add a full percentage point to retail inflation. That will force the RBI to reverse its stance on interest rates by raising them to curb inflation. In a situation where both investment and consumption are already strained, this would have a dampening effect on India's GDP growth.

One way to compensate for the inflationary impact of rising crude prices is for both the Centre and states to reduce the taxes levied on petrol and diesel. Currently, the Centre imposes Rs 13 per litre as central excise on petrol and Rs 10 on diesel. State VAT rates vary widely, ranging from 16% to 26%, depending on the fuel type.

If retail prices are to be kept where they are, the Centre could end up losing as much as Rs 1.5 lakh crore in tax revenue, which will push up the fiscal deficit to 4.6-4.7%. The government will have to

borrow more to fill the gap, increasing the supply of government bonds and pushing up yields. Corporates will also have to follow suit by offering higher returns on their bonds.

In short, whether the rise in crude prices is passed on to consumers or absorbed by the government, interest rates could rise and affect India's GDP growth in the coming financial year.



between our imports and exports — to 2.3% of the GDP. If crude import prices rise, oil refineries will proportionately increase their refinery gate prices — the price at which they ship it to petrol pumps — to maintain their profit margins. If the Centre and state governments continue to tax at the same rate as they currently do, consumers will spend much more when they buy petrol and diesel. At \$100 per barrel, refineries will sell petrol at Rs 80 per litre and consumers will end up paying between

MBBS student killed after speeding Fortuner hits vehicles in Gorakhpur

Gorakhpur.(Agency)

A tragic road accident has been reported from Gorakhpur, where a speeding SUV coming from the wrong side rammed into several vehicles, killing an MBBS student.

The incident occurred on the Mohaddipur-Kaubagh Overbridge on Wednesday night. According to eyewitnesses, a speeding Toyota Fortuner entered the overbridge from the wrong direction and crashed into multiple vehicles.

During the collision, a scooter rider, identified as Akash Pandey, a third-year MBBS student of BRD Medical College, was severely hit. The impact was so strong that his body was thrown and got stuck on the railing of the overbridge. Local residents and police from Shahpur Police Station and Cantt Police Station rushed to the spot after receiving the information. With the help of locals, the injured were taken to the district hospital, where doctors declared Akash Pandey dead. Other injured victims are currently undergoing treatment in serious condition.

Police later recovered the body and sent it to the mortuary. The Fortuner involved in the accident has been seized, and the driver, Golden Sahani, has been taken into custody.

According to Abhinav Tyagi, a case of culpable homicide not amounting to murder has been registered against the driver, and he is being questioned.

Akash Pandey was originally from Sant Kabir Nagar District. News of his untimely death has caused deep grief among students and doctors at the medical college as well as in his hometown.

Partial curbs continue in parts of Kashmir for fourth day over Khamenei killing protests

Srinagar.(Agency)

Partial curbs on the movement of people and public assembly continued in parts of Kashmir for the fourth consecutive day on Thursday to prevent further protests over the killing of Iran's Supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

The restrictions were imposed on Monday, a day after several parts of Kashmir witnessed massive protests following the killing of Khamenei in joint strikes by the United States and Israel.

Despite the restrictions, protests have been reported from some areas during the past three days. Minor clashes between protesters and security forces were also reported, leaving several people injured, including some security personnel.

Officials said partial restrictions remained in force in sensitive areas on Thursday. Mobile internet services also continue to remain temporarily suspended as a precautionary measure.

A heavy deployment of police and paramilitary personnel, including the Central Reserve Police Force, was seen in several sensitive areas. Lal Chowk in Srinagar remained out of bounds after being barricaded late on Sunday. The restrictions remain in place a day after Chief Minister Omar Abdullah held an interaction with religious scholars, civil society members and representatives of trade and business bodies in Srinagar. A joint appeal for peace was issued after the meeting. Speaking after the interaction, Omar Abdullah said people could express their emotions in mosques, shrines and imambaras, but stressed that such expressions should remain peaceful.

UP: Youth stabbed to death after dispute with neighbour in Lucknow

Lucknow.(Agency)

A shocking murder case has emerged from the Dubagga area of Lucknow, where a minor dispute turned violent and led to the death of a 22-year-old man. The victim was allegedly stabbed to death by a neighbor, along with the neighbor's mother and sister, police said on Thursday.

The incident occurred in the Begariya locality on Wednesday evening, around 5 pm.

According to reports, Rajendra Gautam was standing outside his house and talking to his neighbor Nishu when Mohit, who lives in the same village, arrived on a motorcycle and allegedly started abusing them without any provocation.

When Rajendra objected, an argument broke out and soon escalated into a physical fight between the two. Hearing the commotion, Mohit's mother, Ranjana, and his sister Shivani rushed to the spot.

During the altercation, Rajendra's 22-year-old son Suraj Gautam came forward to defend his father. It is alleged that Shivani went inside the house, brought a knife, and, along with her brother and mother, attacked Suraj. Shivani reportedly stabbed Suraj multiple times, leaving him critically injured.

Family members rushed Suraj to the trauma center for treatment, but the doctors declared him dead due to the severity of his injuries. Suraj worked at a private firm and was considered the promising son of the family. His death has left the family devastated.

Station House Officer Shrikant Rai of Dubagga Police Station said that a murder case has been registered. The main accused, Shivani, has been taken into custody and is being interrogated. Police teams are conducting raids to arrest the other accused who are currently absconding.

Woman's body found in Meerut mustard field, four men nabbed for murder — then a passport changed the case

The victim was initially identified as an Ambala resident based on an Aadhaar card found on the body. Then, a woman from Delhi disputed her identity. Police have now turned to MEA for assistance

Lucknow . (Agency)

On February 21, the decomposed body of a woman, with her face disfigured, was found in a mustard field along the service road on the Meerut-Bijnor Highway. Based on an Aadhaar card found near the body, police established her identity as Ambala resident Archita Arora, aged 35. Meerut Police later arrested four men in connection with the crime. Earlier this week, however, the case saw a twist. A woman from Delhi contacted the Meerut Police claiming the victim was from Turkmenistan. The woman, also from the Central Asian country, said she was the deceased's friend and shared her passport.

While the document sported a different name — Muhabbat Nazhmudinova — police said the photo in it matched the one on the Aadhaar card. They also found the woman had been living in India for about 15 years.

But since the woman's features couldn't be ascertained, police have now contacted the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) for assistance. "We have written to the MEA with details of the case and have forwarded the passport that was provided to us, requesting the ministry to verify it and share details regarding the visa and travel documents of the woman," said Superintendent of Police, Meerut, Abhijeet

Kumar, adding that they are trying to contact the victim's friend for more details.

Behind the murder

According to police, preliminary investigation suggested that the woman had been murdered



elsewhere and her body later dumped in the field. A flammable substance also appeared to have been poured on her face to conceal her identity and destroy evidence. A case under BNS sections of murder and destruction of evidence was registered at Mawana police station in Meerut and police collected and examined 500 CCTV

recordings from cameras installed in and around the crime scene — and identified the car in which the body was brought and dumped.

During the probe, police identified the victim as Archita based on the Aadhaar card. A team was sent to Ambala to get more details, only to find that she had shifted to Delhi several years ago. Police said they then decided to trace the car using the number plate seen in the footage, which led them to a hotel in Meerut. When they examined footage from the premises, police said they found the woman had visited the hotel.

Police said they questioned the hotel manager, Chanchal Kumar alias Bunt, who eventually admitted to killing her. According to police, the woman had a dispute with Kumar and his associates over payment-related issues at the hotel. Police claimed the argument escalated and the accused suffocated the woman by pressing a blanket over her face, leading to her death. They then allegedly transported the body and dumped it in a mustard field along the highway in an attempt to evade identification and mislead investigators. Police arrested Kumar and his three accomplices — Arvind alias Monu alias Gurmukh, Sandeep alias Rahul, Vivek alias Kaka. All four hail from Meerut, said police, and have been sent to jail.

Dentist held for using IVF facility for illegal activities

A senior police officer from Ulhasnagar in Thane district said that police teams are currently conducting raids to trace the mastermind. The racket allegedly involved luring needy women to "donate" their eggs multiple times using forged identity documents.



Mirzapur.(Agency)

Police probing the inter-state female egg smuggling racket, which was operated from Thane district, have arrested a dentist from Nashik who allegedly facilitated illegal surrogate mother contracts at an IVF facility registered in his wife's name, an official said on Wednesday. With the latest arrest, the number of individuals in police custody has reached six.

A senior police officer from Ulhasnagar in Thane district said that police teams are currently conducting raids to trace the mastermind. The racket allegedly involved luring needy women to "donate" their eggs multiple times using forged identity documents.

A Badlapur Police officer stated that Dr Amol Patil, who operates the 'Malti IVF Center' in Nashik's Mumbai Naka area, was arrested late Tuesday night. "Investigation revealed that while the IVF facility in Nashik is officially permitted in the name of Dr. Patil's wife, the accused, who is a dentist, was allegedly using the center to facilitate illegal surrogate mother contracts and egg smuggling," he added.

Maharashtra CEO-led delegation heads to South America for Colombia elections

Mumbai. (Agency)

A five-member delegation from Maharashtra, headed by state Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) S Chockalingam, will travel to Colombia as international observers in the International Observation Mission for the elections to the Congress in the South American country from March 6 to 10. The elections in Colombia are slated to be held on March 8.

Along with Chockalingam, the delegation includes Ashirwad Kumar, District Election Officer and Collector, Solapur; Manohar Ramchandra Parkar, Joint Chief Electoral Officer and Deputy Secretary, Maharashtra; Priyesh Lakhchand Mahajan, Electoral Registration Officer, 59-Ramtek Assembly Constituency and Sub-divisional Officer, Ramtek, Nagpur and Sagar Ashok Shirke, Booth Level Officer (Talathi-Ozar), Niphad, Nashik.

Under the Election Commission of India (ECI)'s Global Engagement for Electoral Excellence

(GEEE) initiative, a comprehensive exercise has been undertaken to examine international best practices in electoral management and to disseminate India's institutional experience and expertise at the global level. As part of this, specific countries have been identified and allocated to the respective CEOs of the state for focused engagement.

Maharashtra has been assigned the Republic of Colombia for this purpose. Accordingly, as directed by the Commission, a five-member delegation, led by the Chief Electoral Officer, Maharashtra, shall undertake an official visit to Colombia from March 6 to 10 to advance the objectives

of the said initiative.

The delegation is setting out on the mission based on an invitation from the president of the National Electoral Council of Colombia. Indian International Institute of Democracy and Election Management (IIIDEM) has obtained the required clearance for the visit from the Ministry of External Affairs and approval from the Election Commission of India.

Congress picks Kangra leader for Rajya Sabha, signals strategic shift in Himachal politics

Dharamshala.(Agency)

The All India Congress Committee (AICC) has surprised many political observers by nominating Kangra District Congress Committee chief Anurag Sharma as the party's candidate for the lone Rajya Sabha seat from Himachal Pradesh. The seat will fall vacant after the completion of the six-year term of BJP member Indu Goswami on April 8.

The decision marks a shift from the party's usual practice of fielding nationally prominent leaders for Rajya Sabha seats from Himachal Pradesh. Instead, Congress has opted for a grassroots leader from within the state, a move seen as politically cautious and strategically significant after the embarrassment it faced in the 2024 Rajya Sabha election.

In the previous election, despite having a clear majority in the 68-member Himachal Pradesh Assembly, the Congress candidate lost due to cross-voting by party MLAs. The episode had exposed internal divisions and

dealt a major political setback to the ruling party. Against this backdrop, the upcoming election and the choice of candidate are being viewed as a litmus test for the Congress leadership. Political observers believe the nomination of a young organisational leader indicates the party's attempt to strengthen its base and cultivate a new generation of leaders, in line with its broader focus on youth leadership.

The move is also seen as aligned with the broader emphasis on younger leaders within the party. The choice of Sharma, who hails from Kangra district, is also politically significant. Kangra is the largest and most populous district in Himachal Pradesh and plays a decisive role in the state's electoral politics.

The Congress leadership appears keen to consolidate its position in the region, especially after the BJP made inroads there following political defections during the 2024 Rajya Sabha episode.

Ready to detain, but no one to run it: Why nobody wants the keys to Mumbai's detention centre for illegal migrants

While crackdown on Bangladeshi nationals in Mumbai has gathered pace over the past year, the detention centre meant to support it remains locked up. Here's why.

Mumbai. (Agency)

As the ruling Mahayuti government ramps up rhetoric on cracking down on illegal Bangladeshi nationals, a detention centre built exclusively to hold such migrants before deportation has remained unused for months — a casualty of bureaucratic deadlock over who should run it.

The two-storey facility at Bhoiwada in central Mumbai has been "almost ready" for several months. It has 20 rooms, each with two bunk beds on either side, and can hold up to 80 persons.

According to sources, the Social Justice and Special Assistance department thinks their staff are not equipped to handle foreign nationals picked up by the cops. Police officials, in turn, say the migrants are neither accused in a

criminal case nor in judicial custody, and therefore not theirs to keep. Nobody wants the keys.

In the meantime, Bangladeshi nationals detained for staying illegally are being held in police station lock-ups until they are put on a train to the Indo-Bangladesh border and "pushed" across. Last year alone, Mumbai police acted against 1,058 such nationals.

The Maharashtra government had in July 2024 approved two detention centres in the state for illegal foreign nationals. A Government Resolution issued on July 25 envisaged a temporary facility at Bhoiwada to hold 80 persons, and a permanent one at Balegaon SRPF grounds in Navi Mumbai with capacity for 213. While the Navi Mumbai centre has gone through tendering, it will be some time



before it is operational.

The crackdown on Bangladeshi nationals has gathered pace over the past year, but the detention centre meant to support it remains locked up. "Initially we were

hoping the detention centre would be operational last year. The deadline was then revised to February. Now we are hopeful it will at least start in March," an official said. A senior police officer

said the detention centre will fall under the Social Justice and Special Assistance department, as per new MHA guidelines. The shift reflects a broader change in strategy: unlike earlier, when illegal Bangladeshi nationals were prosecuted, had FIRs registered against them and were kept in prison pending trial, they are now directly pushed back without prosecution. This means they can no longer be held in police station lock-ups or jails and doing so would amount to illegal detention. The detention centre at Bhoiwada was the answer to that problem. Crucially, it will not be manned by a law enforcement agency but by the SJSA, precisely because those held there are not criminal accused but illegal immigrants awaiting deportation.

Shimla.(Agency)

Himachal Pradesh known for mainly pleasant weather and below normal temperature witnessing sudden spike in the day temperature as Sundernagar of Mandi district recorded 32 degrees around eight to nine degrees above normal.

According to Indian Meteorological department the entire Himachal Pradesh is in the unusual heat wave condition as Mer cury in the month of March cross April levels.

According to the Meteorological Centre in Shimla, the maximum temperature in Sundernagar at Neri in Hamirpur touched 32.2°C, which is the highest recorded in early March in nearly two decades.

Several other towns in the state also experienced high temperatures during the past 24 hours, indicating an unusual warming trend across the hill state.

Una recorded 31.5°C, while Kangra reported 30.8°C. Temperatures in Solan and Bhunjar also reached 30.0°C each, showing a sharp rise above normal levels in many parts of the state.

In the mid-hill region, Nahan recorded 26.8°C, while the state capital Shimla touched 24.1°C, which is about 8.9 degrees above normal and among the highest temperatures recorded in the first week of March in the city. The tourist town Manali recorded 24.0°C, which is 9.6 degrees above normal.

In the tribal area of Kalpa, the temperature climbed to 22.6°C, around 14 degrees above normal, creating April-like conditions in the region. Although Kalpa's all-time March record is 24.4°C, set on March 20, 2010, such a high temperature has never been recorded in the first week of March.

The Meteorological Department has said that the weather is likely to change soon. A fresh Western Disturbance is expected to become active from March 7, which may bring rain in several mid-hill areas and light snowfall in the higher regions of Lahaul-Spiti, Kinnaur, Chamba and Kullu over the following few days.

Is US using Indian ports to strike Iran? New Delhi fact-checks claim

New Delhi.(Agency)

India has rejected claims that the US was using Indian ports to launch strikes against Iran, calling the report "fake and false". New Delhi's reaction came after a former US Army Colonel claimed in an interview that the US Navy had begun relying on Indian ports in the ongoing war with Iran. In an interview with a US-based channel, One America News Network, Douglas Macgregor said. "All of our bases have been destroyed. Our harbour installations are destroyed. We are actually having to fall back on India and Indian ports, which is less than ideal; that is what the navy says," he said. However, the Press Information Bureau (PIB), the government's fact-check bureau, called the claim "fake."

statement suggesting that the United States is using Indian naval bases to attack Iran, amidst the ongoing Iran-US conflict. This claim is fake," PIB tweeted. The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA)'s official fact-check account also swiftly dismissed the claim. "Fake News Alert! Claims being made on OAN, a US-based channel, that Indian ports are being used by the US Navy are fake and false. We caution you against such baseless and fabricated comments," the MEA FactCheck handle posted on X. **INDIA EXPRESSES CONCERN OVER MIDDLE EAST FLARE-UP** The MEA on Tuesday called for an immediate halt to the escalating conflict in Iran and the wider West Asia region, warning that prolonged instability could endanger Indian citizens, economic interests and regional

stability. "India strongly reiterates its call for dialogue and diplomacy. We raise our voice clearly in favour of an early end to the conflict," Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said in a statement. The MEA said India had first expressed concern when hostilities broke out on February 28. At that time, New Delhi urged all sides to exercise restraint, avoid escalation and prioritise civilian safety. "Unfortunately, during the holy month of Ramadan, the situation in the region has deteriorated significantly and continuously," Jaiswal said. Chaos broke out in the Middle East after the US and Israel carried out strikes against Iran on February 28, killing Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. Iran retaliated with



missile attacks targeting Israeli and American military bases in Gulf countries. In a further escalation, a US submarine torpedoed an Iranian warship in the Indian Ocean on Tuesday night, killing 87 people. The vessel, IRIS Dena, had earlier been on a

friendly visit to India. Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi slammed the US for attacking the Iranian frigate and said Washington would "bitterly regret" setting such a precedent. The war has now entered its sixth day with no signs of easing. According to Iranian state media, more than 1,000 people have been killed in Iran, around a dozen in Israel and at least six US troops have died in the fighting. Amid the escalating tensions, India has set up a special control room in New Delhi to assist its citizens in the region. According to the MEA, the facility operates from 9 am to 9 pm (IST) and can be reached via the toll-free number 1800-118-797 or landlines +91-11-23012113, +91-11-23014104 and +91-11-23017905.

Grandmother pours boiling water on 4-year-old for splashing colour on her on Holi

New Delhi.(Agency)

A four-year-old boy suffered severe burn injuries after his grandmother poured boiling water on him when he tried to splash coloured water on her as part of Holi celebrations in Maharashtra's Nagpur, police said. CCTV footage showed the boy trying to play by splashing water on the woman, identified as Sindhu Thackeray, who is seen carrying a bucket of hot water. Angered by the child's actions, the woman is seen pouring the entire bucket of hot water over him. The video then shows the child writhing in pain.



The video goes on to show another woman standing nearby pouring normal water on the boy in an attempt to cool him down. The child ended up suffering 45 per cent burns below his waist, the police said. The visuals have gone viral on social media, sparking outrage and calls for action against the woman. The child has been admitted to a hospital, and police have initiated the process of registering an offence against the woman, news agency PTI reported.

CCTV Shows 'Ex-Muslim' YouTuber's Stabbing By 2 Men In Ghaziabad Home

New Delhi.(Agency)

Popular YouTuber Saleem Wastik, known for his public identification as an 'ex-Muslim' and appearances on television panels, was stabbed multiple times by two men in his home in Uttar Pradesh's Ghaziabad last week, leaving him in a critical condition. A CCTV footage of the incident has emerged, showing the two assailants, identified as Zeeshan and his brother Gulfam, entering the YouTuber's home and slashing him with a knife. The nearly four-minute disturbing clip shows Saleem sitting on his sofa and watching a video on his mobile phone when the two assailants - both wearing a kurta



pyjama and jackets - entered his home through the glass door. They arrived on a motorcycle without a number plate, wearing helmets that they did not remove. Within a few seconds, they began stabbing the YouTuber. Several blood marks were seen on the floor as the accused kept stabbing him. The assailants can be heard saying, "You are insulting our Prophet, you are insulting our Lord". Saleem sustained serious injuries to his neck, abdomen and ear, officials said. According to accounts from the scene, the accused had attempted to slit his throat. Residents and family members immediately rushed him to a nearby 50-bed hospital. He was later referred to Guru Teg Bahadur (GTB) Hospital in Delhi - where he is currently undergoing treatment. A case was filed by Saleem's son, Usman. Both the accused, who were carrying a reward of Rs 1 lakh, were killed in two separate encounters with the police. While Zeeshan was killed on March 1, Gulfam died from his injuries on March 3. Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, in a statement, said, "Those who play with law and order will not be spared. There is no place for terror in Uttar Pradesh, and the law will take its course."

Fake hospitals, ghost patients and bogus doctors: Inside the multi-crore insurance scam uncovered in Gurgaon

New Delhi.(Agency)

Fake hospitals set up just to dupe insurance firms of lakhs, bogus patients roped in to act as real claimants, fabricated bills, tests and records: The Gurgaon Police has unearthed a large-scale fake insurance bill claims racket after a raid on Galaxy One Hospital in New Nihal Colony last month. Police arrested the hospital owner, A S Yadav (55), his two sons on Wednesday, as well as three employees during the raid on February 18, in connection with the case.

The raiding team recovered nearly 60 allegedly fake insurance claim files linked to around 25 firms. ACP (West) Abhilaksh Joshi said at the time that fraud to the tune of at least Rs 1 crore was unearthed so far. The matter first came to light during a raid by the Chief Minister's flying squad in May last year at the same hospital, police said, when a doctor was found using 'MBBS/MD' with his name without possessing an actual

degree. On February 14 this year, a complaint was filed by the CM's flying squad at Bajghera police station, said police, after which an FIR was filed. The hospital was then raided.



Police said Yadav was running the Nihal Vihar hospital from a rented property. Nestled on the main road of the locality that falls under Palam Vihar Phase 1, the now-locked hospital occupies three storeys of a weathered building, its facade marked by blue signboards and

posters depicting surgical procedures, maternal care, and medical consultations. "In normal course, medical claims involve three parties: the hospital, middlemen, and the insurance companies. These companies do not manually check claims and bills themselves, but have private investigators to check necessary records like admission and history," he said.

Explaining the modus operandi of the racket, police said first, a legitimate-looking hospital would be set up specifically to cater to defrauding insurance companies. ACP (West) Joshi said, "We found Yadav was running four other fake hospitals, which were set up as medical institutes only on paper but acted as sites for the fraud. These are in Farukhnagar (Gurgaon district), Dwarka etc. They were set up for a two-year period beginning 2018 just for the fraud."

Congress announces six candidates for Rajya Sabha polls; renominates Singhvi in Telangana

New Delhi.(Agency)

The Indian National Congress on Thursday unveiled its list of six nominees for the upcoming Rajya Sabha elections across multiple states. In Chhattisgarh, Phulo Devi Netam has been re-nominated, while Karambir Singh Boudh will contest from Haryana. The party has fielded Kangra District Congress Committee president Anurag Sharma in Himachal Pradesh. In Telangana, the Congress has named two candidates - Abhishek Manu Singhvi and Vem Narendar Reddy. In Tamil Nadu, M Christopher Tilak has been nominated. The candidate list received approval from Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge and was formally announced by AICC general secretary

K C Venugopal, who confirmed that the leadership had finalised nominees for the respective states. Following his nomination, Vem



Narendar Reddy expressed gratitude to the party leadership. "My heartfelt thanks to the honorable Sonia Gandhi for announcing me as the Congress Party's Rajya Sabha candidate, to the Congress Party National President Mallikarjun Kharge, to the Leader of

Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi, to AICC Secretary KC Venugopal, to MP Priyanka Gandhi, to Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, to Congress Affairs In-charge Meenakshi Natarajan, to Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka, to PCC President Mahesh Kumar Goud, and to the Congress Party High Command," he wrote on X.

Rajya Sabha elections

The Election Commission of India has scheduled elections to 37 Rajya Sabha seats on March 16 across 10 states, including Maharashtra, Telangana, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal and Bihar. The notification was issued on February 26, with March 5 as the last date for filing nominations. Scrutiny will be held on March 6 and withdrawals are permitted until March 9.

Caught on CCTV: Owner killed, 3 critical after gunmen open fire at Rajasthan hotel

Armed assailants opened fire at a hotel in Rajasthan's Churu district, killing the owner on the spot and injuring three others.

New Delhi.(Agency)

A businessman was killed and three others were injured after armed assailants opened fire at a hotel in Rajasthan's Churu district on Wednesday. CCTV footage of the incident, widely circulating on social media, showed the attackers firing more than 10 rounds within seconds before fleeing the scene. According to police, the attackers entered the hotel, The Royal Treat, at around 3 am and opened fire. The hotel owner, Maniram Manda, was shot and died on the spot. Three others -- Bhikharam Jat, Shrawan Jat and Prabhu Ram Prajapat -- were seriously injured in the attack. The injured are said to be in critical condition and have been shifted for advanced medical care. The CCTV footage shows three assailants barging into the restaurant area, where at least 10 people were present. They opened



fire at those inside, and two individuals were seen collapsing to the floor. One of them appeared to try to stop the assailants by throwing objects at them, but the firing

continued. The assailants were seen repeatedly firing at the victims, who were already on the ground, including at close range, before fleeing the spot.

Churu Superintendent of Police Jai Yadav said police reached the spot after receiving information about the incident and launched an investigation. The area has been sealed, and evidence was collected with the help of a dog squad and a forensic science laboratory (FSL) team. Police said they are scanning CCTV footage to identify the accused, and three teams have been formed to trace and arrest the assailants, who are being searched for in different areas. Police said Maniram Manda was a liquor and hotel businessman. The motive behind the attack remains unclear, though officials said the deceased may have had a dispute with someone, which could have led to the shooting. Family members of the hotel owner have been informed and have reached the spot. Police said efforts are ongoing to identify and apprehend the attackers.

Laxmi Brand announces Diwali giveaway winner, awards New Jersey family a brand new Lexus RX 350

Laxmi, the flagship brand of HOS Global Foods, has grown into a trusted, culturally authentic staple for diaspora families living away from home across the US and worldwide. Renowned for its wide reach and steady supply of great tasting ethnic foods, Laxmi, from HOS Global Foods is synonymous with delivering products that stand for quality, purity and everyday value to South Asian Consumers.

New Delhi.(Agency)

Laxmi, the flagship brand of HOS Global Foods and the largest South Asian food importer and distributor in the United States, offering a robust portfolio of ambient grocery staples and frozen convenience foods, today announced Udayakumar Balathandayutham of New Jersey as the grand prize winner of its nationwide 'Grab More, Win More' Diwali giveaway. The announcement was marked by a warm and celebratory ceremony at Lexus of Bridgewater, where the Balathandayutham family was presented with the keys to a brand-new Lexus RX 350, reflecting Laxmi's enduring commitment to honoring cultural traditions, rewarding consumer loyalty, and bringing families together through shared moments around food. Watch the video here. "This giveaway represents more than a prize; it reflects our commitment to bringing families together through the traditions and flavors that connect them to their roots. It closely aligns with our vision of bringing culture alive through the celebration of authentic ethnic food, flavour, and family," said Neil Soni, CEO of HOS Global Foods. "For over 50 years, Laxmi Brand has played a meaningful role in uniting families with authentic products that deliver the comfort and familiarity of home, even when far from it. This milestone underscores our continued dedication as a trusted community partner to the South Asian diaspora," added Amrapali Soni, COO of HOS Global Foods. Laxmi, the flagship brand of HOS Global Foods, has grown into a trusted, culturally authentic staple for diaspora families living away from home across the US and worldwide. Renowned for its wide reach and steady supply of great tasting ethnic foods, Laxmi, from HOS Global Foods is synonymous with delivering products that stand for quality, purity and everyday value to South Asian Consumers. The brand offers a wide range of authentic South Asian foods in the ambient and frozen categories. Today, Laxmi strives to cater to the ever-evolving needs of its consumer base by matching changing food habits with newly launched value-added product ranges. Udayakumar Balathandayutham, winner of the Diwali giveaway, was welcomed with cheers from members of the Laxmi brand team as he received the keys.

NEW

Win the toss, win the match? How dew will impact T20 World Cup semifinal in Mumbai

New Delhi. (Agency)

As the sun sets over the Arabian Sea this Thursday, the floodlights of the Wankhede Stadium will illuminate more than just a high-stakes 2026 T20 World Cup semi-final between Suryakumar Yadav's India and Harry Brook's England. They will also catch the first glints of moisture on the outfield grass — the invisible protagonist that has historically dictated the fate of matches at this iconic venue. In the high-pressure cauldron of a World Cup knockout, the toss is often a matter of tactical preference. At Wankhede, however, it is a matter of geography.

The Wankhede Stadium is effectively a waterfront property. Its proximity to the coast creates a unique atmospheric trap. As evening temperatures drop in Mumbai, the high humidity drifting in from the Arabian Sea reaches its dew point and condenses rapidly onto the playing surface. For the fielding side, this transforms the cricket ball into something resembling a bar of soap. Spinners lose the ability to grip the seam for



purchase, while fast bowlers struggle to control their release. Conversely, for the chasing side, the wet grass acts as a lubricant, allowing the ball to skid off the surface and on to the bat with ease, making strokeplay significantly easier under lights. Historically, the numbers at Wankhede tell a clear story: in T20s overall, the team fielding first has won 123 times compared with 92 victories for sides batting first. However, this T20 World Cup has thrown up a slight anomaly. Contrary to the traditional "chase-to-win" manual, teams batting first have successfully defended totals in three of the seven night games played here so far. In India's tournament opener against the USA, the expected 200-plus fireworks never materialised; instead, the hosts had to grind out 161, a total that eventually proved sufficient for a 29-run victory. West Indies then successfully defended 196 by 30 runs against England in a night game, before later posting 254 against Zimbabwe to secure a commanding 107-run win.

Arsenal stretch lead at top of Premier League as Man City falter

LONDON. (Agency)

Premier League leaders Arsenal stretched their lead over Manchester City to seven points on Wednesday with a nervy win at Brighton, while Pep Guardiola's men were held to a costly 2-2 draw by Nottingham Forest. The Gunners have long been favourites to win their first English league crown since 2004 but Pep Guardiola's men have loomed large in their rear-view mirror. On a busy night of action, Arsenal drew first blood in the battle for English title as Bukayo Saka celebrated his 300th Arsenal appearance with a goal in the ninth minute at Brighton's Amex Stadium. The England man received the ball on the right before cutting in and hitting a shot from the edge of the penalty area which took a deflection off



Carlos Baleba before squirming through the legs of goalkeeper Bart Verbruggen.

The home side dominated possession and had more shots but Arsenal kept them at bay, digging deep to see out a nerve-jangling 1-0 win. "This was a really difficult one after everything we've been through in the last few weeks," Arsenal boss Mikel Arteta told TNT Sports. "Every game in the Premier League offers you different things. Big credit to the boys because the effort they put in is astronomical. Second-placed City, who have a game in hand, appeared to be on course to stay within five points of top spot.

But they twice surrendered their lead to relegation-threatened Forest, whose battling performance kept them out of the drop zone, above West Ham on goal difference. January signing Antoine Semenyo volleyed home for City in the first half but Morgan Gibbs-White produced a moment of magic to pull Forest level, backheeling home in the 56th minute. That sparked a renewed sense of urgency from City and they were back in front just six minutes later after the unmarked Rodri headed home Rayan Ait-Nouri's corner.

India need Kuldeep Yadav vs England: Vaughan suggests big change for semi-final

T20 World Cup: Michael Vaughan has urged India to consider playing Kuldeep Yadav against England in the T20 World Cup semi-final. The former England captain believes Kuldeep's record against England makes him a strong tactical option.

New Delhi. (Agency)

Former England captain Michael Vaughan has suggested that India should consider bringing Kuldeep Yadav into their playing XI for the T20 World Cup semi-final against England, pointing to the wrist-spinner's strong record against English batters.

India has largely stuck with a settled bowling combination throughout the tournament, relying on Varun Chakravarty and Axar Patel as their main spin options, with Washington Sundar tried and shelved over the group stages. The spinners have given ample support to spearheads Jasprit Bumrah

and Arshdeep Singh. Kuldeep, however, has featured only once in the tournament so far. His lone appearance came against Pakistan, where he returned impressive figures of 1 for 14. Speaking on CricBuzz, Vaughan said the left-arm wrist-spinner could be a valuable option against England's batting line-up. "I would play Kuldeep Yadav. Kuldeep, over the years, has had England on toast in any format. He has always been a bowler England have struggled to pick. Do you need Tilak Varma or Shivam Dube down the order? Instead, I would be playing the left-arm leg-spinner against this England batting lineup. We don't know if Kuldeep is in form as he hasn't played. But him against the England batters will be a good matchup for India," Vaughan said. However, Vaughan also acknowledged that India may prefer to retain their current balance rather than make a late change before a knockout clash. "But Gautam Gambhir's history is to generally



pack the batting. He sets up T20 teams where you've got a real powerful insurance at 7, 8 and 9. So what I am saying potentially won't happen, but it would be worthwhile to play Kuldeep against this England batting

lineup." **WHY SHOULD KULDEEP PLAY VS ENGLAND?**

Vaughan's suggestion is largely based on Kuldeep's impressive record against England in T20 internationals.

Across his appearances against England, the wrist-spinner has taken eight wickets while conceding just 77 runs from 12 overs, maintaining an economy rate of 6.41. His variations and ability to turn the ball away from right-handers have historically troubled England's aggressive batting unit.

Despite those numbers, India have preferred to continue with their existing spin combination in the T20 World Cup, using Varun Chakravarty and Axar Patel as the primary options. With a place in the final at stake, it remains to be seen whether captain Suryakumar Yadav and head coach Gautam Gambhir will stick with their established formula or consider introducing Kuldeep as a tactical change against England.

Mohammad Amir says bad things about India to stay in the news: Kaif tears into pacer

Former India batter Mohammed Kaif tore into Pakistan pacer Mohammad Amir for making inflammatory comments about the Indian cricket team. Kaif slammed Amir, stating that he said such things to stay relevant in the news.

New Delhi. (Agency)

Former India cricketer Mohammed Kaif has called out Mohammad Amir for his constant badmouthing of the Indian cricket team. Amir, who had earlier called Abhishek Sharma "nothing but a slogger" and predicted that India would not reach the semi-final of the T20 World Cup, faced strong pushback from Kaif a day ahead of the India vs England game. Speaking on his YouTube channel, Kaif said that Amir makes inflammatory comments about India to stay in the news and should not be given the relevance that he so desperately seeks. Kaif added that there was no need to acknowledge Amir's views on India or on cricket, as they did not come from genuine analysis. "Did Amir

really not know that India would reach the semifinals? Of course, he knew that the defending champions would make it. But they say these things because it becomes news. We must not give them importance. There is no need for us to come down to their level and reply," he said on his



YouTube channel. Kaif also questioned Amir's cricketing credentials, referring to Pakistan's T20 World Cup group-stage game against the USA. Kaif reminded fans — and perhaps Amir — that the Pakistan pacer failed to restrict the USA in the Super Over of that match by bowling a number of wides. Kaif said that a bowler who could not even win a game against the USA was not worth taking seriously. "The loss they faced against the USA in 2024 — it was the same

bowler who was responsible. In that over, he conceded only one boundary, but bowled too many wides. His balls did not even land on the stumps. Who got scared against that USA team and made his side lose the game? I don't have to say more," Kaif said. In his concluding remark, Kaif also slammed the entire Pakistan team and the country's cricketing culture. He said that the country was many years behind India in the sport and lacked leadership in key positions across its structure.

"Why are we focusing on him? The country is so far behind in the sport — they have no players, no solid captain, no solid bowler, nothing. Just let them be. We don't have to respond to everything they say. They cannot come to our level. They have different problems. If we focus on their comments, it is like we are giving them importance, and that is what they want anyway," he concluded. Pakistan were knocked out of the T20 World Cup 2026 from the Super 8s stage. This is the second straight World Cup in which they have failed to reach the semi-finals of the tournament.

Jos Buttler out of form: But should India be wary of England's sleeping giant

New Delhi. (Agency)

Jos Buttler has built a reputation over the years as one of those batters who can flip a game on its head in a matter of overs. When he finds his rhythm, the game can slip away from bowlers in a blur of scoops, flicks and towering hits. That ability to flip the momentum of a match almost instantly made Buttler one of England's most dangerous limited-overs batters. In seven matches, Buttler has managed only 62 runs at an average of 8.85. Even more surprising is that he has fallen for single-digit scores in each of his last five innings, a streak that hardly matches the reputation of one of England's greatest white-ball players. Yet big tournaments have a strange way of offering second chances. Buttler now has the perfect stage to change his narrative when England face India in the high-stakes semi-final at the Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai on Thursday. The question that naturally follows is simple. Should India still be wary of a champion waiting for his moment?

WANKHEDE: WHERE FORM CAN BE REWRITTEN

Buttler has good reason to believe a turnaround could arrive in the semi-final, particularly at the



Wankhede Stadium, a venue that has often brought out his best. Among overseas players, he is the second-highest T20 run-scorer at the iconic ground. Across 31 matches here, Buttler has scored 909 runs at an average of 32.46 and a strike rate of 143.82. Mumbai has frequently been a happy hunting ground for him.

In fact, his strike rate at the venue is higher and his average not far behind that of Rohit Sharma, a player who knows the Wankhede better than most. It was at this very ground in 2022 that Buttler smashed a brilliant 116 off 65 balls for Rajasthan Royals to guide them to a thrilling 15-run victory over Delhi Capitals.

His T20 numbers in Mumbai also tell an interesting story. In six innings he has scored 30, 26, 21, 21, 15 and 7. Those knocks show he has often found a start here but has not yet produced the kind of defining innings that leaves a lasting mark.

History meets high stakes in Mumbai as India face confident England in semifinal

Mumbai. (Agency)

Nearly four decades ago, England silenced a packed Wankhede Stadium by knocking India out of a World Cup semi-final. On Thursday night, the same venue hosts another chapter in that rivalry as defending champions India take on England in the semi-final of the men's T20 World Cup with the winner set to meet New Zealand in the final. Few grounds capture the emotional extremes of Indian cricket quite like the Wankhede. For millions of fans, it remains the site of one of the sport's most cherished memories — Gautam Gambhir's gritty 97 and MS Dhoni's unforgettable six that sealed the 2011 ODI World Cup. Yet the ground has also witnessed heartbreak. Kapil Dev's side saw their title defence crumble here in the 1987 World Cup semi-final, while nearly



three decades later MS Dhoni's team fell short against West Indies in the 2016 T20 World Cup semi-final. India meet England in the second semi-final at the Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai at 7 pm IST. The match will be televised on Star Sports and streamed live on JioHotstar in India. History, triumph and disappointment are never far from the surface at this venue. And as India prepare for another high-

stakes knockout here, the sense of occasion is unmistakable. It is perhaps this heavy air of what if that led the Indian camp to delay their training session on matchday minus two. In a bid to control the controllables, the team opted to avoid the shadow of the lunar eclipse, taking no chances with cosmic alignment when the stakes are this terrestrial. On Thursday evening, the Wankhede is expected to transform into a cauldron of noise. A packed and fiercely partisan crowd will gather in anticipation, hoping the ground that once delivered Indian cricket its greatest triumph can once again inspire the home side. Standing in India's path are England — a team that has become a familiar opponent in the knockout stages of the T20 World Cup.

Suryakumar Yadav vs Adil Rashid: Ashwin picks key battle for IND vs ENG semi-final

T20 World Cup: R Ashwin believes Suryakumar Yadav's battle against Adil Rashid could shape the India vs England T20 World Cup semi-final. The former spinner feels India hold the edge at Wankhede but must execute well.

New Delhi. (Agency)

Former India spinner Ravichandran Ashwin has highlighted a crucial tactical battle ahead of the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2026 semi-final, pointing to the contest between India captain Suryakumar Yadav and England leg-spinner Adil Rashid as one of the defining matchups when India face England in

Mumbai on March 5. India head into the semi-final at the Wankhede Stadium after navigating a tricky Super 8 stage. They suffered a setback against South Africa but bounced back strongly with must-win victories over Zimbabwe and West Indies to seal a place in the last four. England, led by Harry Brook, arrive with momentum after an unbeaten Super 8 campaign in Sri Lanka. Their only loss in the tournament came earlier at the Wankhede Stadium against West Indies. Speaking on his YouTube channel, Ashwin suggested that the battle between Suryakumar and Rashid could shape the direction of the semi-final.

"If we can chase 195 against the West Indies, we can do that against England as well. Their bowling is nothing special as such," Ashwin said. "We are playing in India, we are playing at the Wankhede, our favourite ground, so we have the edge. But having the edge does not mean that we will win. No excuse will work, your batting, bowling and fielding have to be on point. It

will not work if they say 'if only we had done that'. We just need a little luck." India's batting has faced occasional challenges against spin during the tournament.



Opposition teams have frequently used off-spin during the Powerplay to trouble India's top order and exploit the presence of several left-handers in the line-up. **SURYAKUMAR VS ADIL RASHID: KEY BATTLE IN MUMBAI**

Ashwin believes the contest between Suryakumar and Rashid could be a decisive moment in the semi-final, given the England spinner's strong form in the tournament.

Rashid has been England's most consistent bowler in the competition so far. In seven matches, the leg-spinner has claimed 11 wickets while conceding 209 runs from 26.4 overs at an economy rate of 7.83.

Suryakumar, meanwhile, has been one of India's key performers with the bat. The Indian captain has scored 231 runs in seven matches at an average of 38.50 and a strike rate of 135.88.

Against spin, Suryakumar often relies on sweep and slog-sweep variations to disrupt the bowler's rhythm, though those shots have brought mixed results during the tournament. His familiarity with the Wankhede surface could prove valuable in the semi-final. Having played several seasons at the venue with the Mumbai Indians in the Indian Premier League, Suryakumar understands the pace and bounce the pitch can offer.

Sensex, Nifty open in green as markets snap 3-day losing streak; RIL up 2%

New Delhi, (Agency)

Benchmark stock market indices opened with gains on Thursday, breaking their 3-day losing run as heavyweight shares like RIL, Adani Ports gained up to 2%, tracking Asian markets. The S&P BSE Sensex was up 245.39 points to 79,361.58, while the NSE Nifty50 gained 85.50 points to 24,566.00 as of 9:30 am. Dr. VK Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist, Geojit Investments Limited, said that from the market perspective, the problem with an ongoing war is that sudden developments like attacks on oil facilities, can impact the market. If crude spikes, the market will be impacted. On the other hand, couple of days of smooth oil trade can trigger a risk-on facilitating a market rebound. India outperformed yesterday with only a 1.5% cut in the Nifty compared to the 12.1% crash in South Korean Kospi. Markets which did well this year are facing huge volatility triggered by profit booking," he added. Going forward, high volatility in response to news/events will keep the market volatile. This will give opportunities to investors to slowly accumulate high quality stocks and wait with lots of patience. Perhaps emotional intelligence is more important now than financial acumen."

Morgan Stanley lays off 2,500 employees across divisions: Report

New Delhi, (Agency)

US-based investment banker Morgan Stanley has reportedly laid off about 2,500 employees, or roughly 3 per cent of its global workforce, starting in early March, reports have said. The job cuts are not linked to artificial intelligence-related reforms but stem from shifting business priorities, a revised global location strategy and performance reviews of employees, according to a Wall Street Journal report, citing sources. The reported layoffs span across the bank's three major divisions such as institutional securities, wealth management and investment management affecting front-office roles, revenue-generating roles and back-office positions, though financial advisors are not impacted. Morgan Stanley was yet to comment on the report. The move follows a similar round of job cuts last spring when the bank laid off 2,000 employees.

The layoffs coincide with Morgan Stanley posting a record full-year 2025 revenues of \$70.6 billion, and a 47 per cent surge in revenues for the final quarter. The bank employs 82,992 people across over 40 countries as of December 31, 2025.

Morgan Stanley, in a recent report, had suggested that long-term impact of AI on jobs may be less severe than many expect. According to the report, while some roles will be automated, most workers are unlikely to be permanently left behind. Instead, many are expected to shift into new types of jobs, including roles that do not yet exist. The bank said artificial intelligence will change the nature of work rather than eliminate it entirely. Twitter co-founder Jack Dorsey recently announced that Block, the payments company he founded, will cut its workforce by nearly half due to AI-led changes. The company will cut its workforce from over 10,000 people to just under 6,000. Several tech industry leaders have said that most white-collar roles that rely on computers could be automated within the next 12 to 18 months.

According to reports, Amazon has laid off staff across its robotics unit, with at least 100 white-collar jobs affected. This comes after a January cut of about 16,000 jobs at the company.

India's Goldilocks zone resilient: RBI member on Middle East impact & eco outlook

New Delhi, (Agency)

At a time when there are grave concerns arising out of the US-Israel and Iran war, an external member of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) rate-setting panel said the Middle East crisis poses some immediate-term challenges for the Indian economy. He, however, said that the war is unlikely to dent long-term economic growth momentum.

Nagesh Kumar called for the introduction of fiscal and monetary policies to work in a coordinated manner to push GDP growth to a higher trajectory, PTI reported. The external member of the RBI's rate-setting panel said that the immediate challenges on the growth front are the rising in oil prices, the exports getting hit due to the conflict and impact on remittances. "The breakout of the Middle East conflict poses some immediate-term challenges for the Indian economy by raising oil prices, disrupting exports destined to the region and the potential loss of remittances, besides threatening security of the Indian diaspora in the region," Kumar told the news agency in an e-mailed interview.

Kumar further said that as the US-Israel and Iran conflict escalates, the oil prices are likely to harden. "Hopefully, the crisis will be resolved soon, given the high stakes that the world has in the region," he added. He further advised the diversification of oil sources as it could help mitigate risks. "The opening up of Venezuelan oil supplies for India is also likely to be helpful, as it diversifies the options," he said. Kumar further said that even if the Middle East crisis ends quickly and sanctions on Iran are lifted, India may gain from cheaper oil supplies.

Addressing the inflation worries as the geopolitical tensions simmer, Kumar maintained that the India's inflation outlook remains benign. As per the official data, Headline CPI was recorded at 1.3 per cent in December 2025. According to the new data series, it is projected to be around 2.5 per cent in FY2026. The inflation outlook is not showing any concerns of overheating," he said. The external member of the RBI's rate-setting panel was hopeful that despite global tensions, India's growth story is intact and the lower inflation figures provides an opportunity for India to stay in the "Goldilocks" zone for longer.

Rupee stabilises after record low, but oil price swings threaten outlook

New Delhi, (Agency)

The rupee steadied on Thursday after plunging to a record low in the previous session, but pressure on the currency is far from over. The ongoing war in West Asia has rattled global oil markets, strengthened the US dollar and unsettled investors, pushing the rupee to its weakest level on record. The currency slipped past Rs 92 per dollar on Wednesday, its lowest level ever, before stabilising on Thursday following suspected intervention by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). As of 10:37 am, the rupee was trading at Rs 91.61 against the dollar, recovering part of the steep losses recorded earlier in the week. The rebound has brought some immediate relief to currency markets, but analysts say the underlying pressures on the rupee have not disappeared.

CRUDE OIL VOLATILITY HITS RUPEE

Financial markets tend to react quickly to

geopolitical shocks, and the war in West Asia has done exactly that. The Middle East sits at the heart of global oil production, and even the possibility of supply disruptions can send prices swinging sharply. In recent days, fears that the conflict could affect energy flows from the region have pushed crude prices higher. Oil prices have jumped nearly 10% to the \$76 to \$78 per barrel range, reflecting rising uncertainty in global energy markets. For India, which imports the vast majority of the oil it consumes, such spikes can quickly ripple through the economy. Because crude oil is traded internationally in US dollars, Indian refiners must buy dollars to pay for those imports. When oil prices rise, the demand for dollars increases, which typically pushes the rupee lower. In short, higher oil prices often translate directly into pressure on the rupee.

WHY OIL PRICES MATTER SO MUCH FOR THE RUPEE



India imports roughly 85% of its crude oil, making the economy highly sensitive to movements in global energy prices. When oil becomes more expensive, India's overall spending on imports rises. This increases the country's import bill, or the total amount of money it spends buying goods from abroad. Higher oil prices can also widen India's trade deficit, which happens when a country imports more goods than it exports. When more dollars

leave the country than enter it, the domestic currency usually weakens.

According to Jateen Trivedi, Vice President, Research Analyst for Commodity and Currency at LKP Securities, the recent surge in crude prices has been a major factor behind the rupee's decline. He said the rupee weakened by about 0.55% to trade near 92.10 as escalating geopolitical tensions in West Asia and increasing US involvement pushed oil prices higher. The spike in crude prices has increased concerns about India's import costs and the broader impact on the country's external balance.

STRONG DOLLAR IS ADDING TO THE PRESSURE

Oil is not the only factor weighing on the rupee. The US dollar has also strengthened globally as investors move money into safer assets during periods of geopolitical uncertainty. When tensions rise in global markets,

Amid Evolving Situation in Middle East, will petrol and diesel price rise in India? Govt says...

New Delhi, (Agency)

New Delhi: Crude oil prices went up more than 2 per cent on Thursday amidst escalating Middle East tensions. Supply constraints continue to choke oil trade in the aftermath of closure of Strait of Hormuz by Iran.

In the early morning trade, the April contract of the benchmark crude on the Intercontinental Exchange was trading at \$83.26 per barrel, up by almost 2.43 per cent from its previous close. India imports over 85 per cent of its crude oil requirement of which around 50 per cent is supplied by Middle Eastern countries through the Strait of Hormuz, flows from which have been disrupted following the Iran war. While a continuous increase in oil prices would impact India's import bill, India maintains that it is in a reasonably comfortable position as far as crude oil, LPG and LNG are concerned. Media reports quoting government sources has said that India has a stock of 25 days of reserve for crude and 25 days of products including the quantity that is in transit on ships headed for the country's ports. There is no indication currently of a rise in retail prices of diesel and petrol in India. India has diversified its oil sources by increasing imports from

Africa, Russia as well as the US and building resilience through strategic reserves. The country has also strengthened its energy security by diversifying its oil imports to countries outside the Gulf in the past few years and a large volume of supplies do not come through the Strait of Hormuz now. Government



says India well stocked with crude oil and inventories. Following the outbreak of hostilities in the Middle East and the evolving global energy situation, Hardeep Singh Puri, Minister of Petroleum & Natural Gas, recently briefed the media on the country's preparedness in the current circumstances. It was informed that India is the third largest importer, fourth largest refiner, and fifth largest exporter of petroleum products

globally. Puri said that the country is well stocked with crude oil and inventories of key petroleum products including petrol, diesel and ATF to deal with short-term disruptions arising from the Middle East. It was further apprised that in the last few years, India has ensured both availability and affordability of energy for its population by diversifying its sources. Indian energy companies now have access to energy supplies that are not routed through the Strait of Hormuz. Such cargoes will remain available and help mitigate supplies that may be temporarily affected enroute through the Strait of Hormuz. The Ministry has established a 24x7 Control Room to continuously monitor the supply and stock position of petroleum products across the country. At present, the Government is reasonably comfortable in terms of stocks. Safeguarding the interests of Indian consumers remains the highest priority. Based on continuous monitoring, the Government is cautiously optimistic that phased measures can be taken, if required, to further mitigate the situation.

US beauty major Estee Lauder to acquire Ayurveda brand Forest Essentials

New Delhi, (Agency)

American beauty major the Estée Lauder Companies is set to acquire Forest Essentials. The company said it has entered into an agreement to buy the remaining interests in the Indian luxury Ayurveda brand, subject to regulatory approvals, with the transaction expected to close in the second half of 2026. Founded in 2000 by entrepreneur Mira Kulkarni, Forest Essentials will continue to be led from India even after the acquisition. Kulkarni will remain at the helm of the brand, with its headquarters staying in New Delhi, and her son, executive director Samrath Bedi, continuing in his leadership role. "The brand will maintain its fully integrated operational ecosystem in India, spanning research and development and in-house manufacturing," Estée Lauder said. Stéphane de La Faverie, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Estée Lauder Companies, told Business Standard that the acquisition will not alter the identity of Forest Essentials. The brand name, product strategy and price positioning will remain unchanged, with Kulkarni and her team continuing to develop the portfolio and guide its strategy. "Our philosophy is always to honour and respect the brand DNA," de La Faverie said. "What we will bring is the operational scale to help the brand reach the next level." The acquisition is also strategically significant for the US beauty conglomerate's global footprint. Combining Forest Essentials with Estée Lauder's existing portfolio will make India the company's largest emerging market, he said. For Estée Lauder, which celebrates its 80th anniversary this year, the move builds on a relationship that began with a minority investment in 2008, which was increased to 49 per cent in 2020. "This marks a meaningful new chapter in a partnership built over the past 18 years," de La Faverie said. Kulkarni said Estée Lauder brings both expertise and respect for the brand's origins. "They understand that our cultural roots and Indian-based operations are central to our success," she said, expressing confidence that the company will prove to be "a partner who sees our Indian identity not as a limitation, but as our greatest strength". Forest Essentials currently operates nearly 200 freestanding stores across India, and its net sales are projected to grow in the low double digits.

Buy rating on RIL shares; brokerage says 'attractive valuation after decline'

New Delhi, (Agency)

In recent times, the shares of Reliance Industries (RIL) have been on the decline. The RIL stock felt the heat due to simmering tensions in the Middle East and the relentless selling by foreign investors in the Indian stock market. However, in a sign of relief for the existing investors and the people who are planning to buy RIL shares, many brokerage houses now believe that the decline has been excessive and the stock is available at an attractive valuation at current levels. Brokerage firm Motilal Oswal has backed Reliance Industries and advised investors to buy the shares of India's biggest conglomerate. The brokerage says the company has a strong business model and the upcoming



triggers could result in its earnings swell in the coming years.

Why did RIL shares decline

Due to escalating tensions in the Middle East, there has been a sharp jump in the prices of crude oil and LNG. After this, RIL's shares fell about 4 per cent in a month. The Reliance Industries traded with 2.82 per cent gains at Rs 1,382.90 apiece at the time of writing this article

on 5 March 2026. The brokerage said that the recent decline in RIL share price is bigger than justified from the company's business perspective, because an increase in crude oil prices may in some cases benefit the company rather than harm it.

RIL's Advantage: How Crude Oil Prices Can Boost Profitability

According to analysts, there has been a sharp rise in diesel, which has increased from around \$20 per barrel to about \$35-42 per barrel. Putting forward its points, Motilal Oswal states that Reliance's refinery produces a large amount of diesel, so if diesel margins remain high, the company's Gross Refining Margin (GRM) could also jump.

How companies can embrace AI without losing control

Almost every major organisation now uses AI in customer-facing products. But this rapid adoption has exposed an uncomfortable truth. Governance frameworks have not kept pace with the speed of innovation.

New Delhi, (Agency)

Indian enterprises are not easing into AI; they are hard-wiring it into the core of their operations. Almost every major organisation now uses AI in customer-facing products. But this rapid adoption has exposed an uncomfortable truth. Governance frameworks have not kept pace with the speed of innovation. Research shows that more than 70% of employees regularly bypass workplace AI

policies, and over 80% accept AI outputs without independent verification. The solution is not to slow innovation but to rethink how it is governed. Security should not be seen as a barrier to progress. Instead, it must act as the system that allows organisations to innovate safely and at scale. The real challenge today is no longer whether companies should adopt AI. It is how they design systems where the safest path is also the easiest and fastest way for employees to work.

THE SHADOW AI TAX

Shadow AI exists for the same reason shadow IT once did. When official systems are slow or restrictive, employees find quicker alternatives. The cost of these shortcuts is rising. In India, the average cost of a shadow AI-related breach has reached Rs 17.9 million per incident. Yet only 42% of organisations currently have policies to detect or manage shadow AI usage. This is not simply a compliance issue. It is largely a design problem. Strict bans often encourage employees to work around official systems. Instead of tightening restrictions, organisations need to build

better infrastructure where secure tools are easier to use than unsafe ones. When security becomes the simplest option, shadow behaviour naturally declines.

IDENTITY AS INFRASTRUCTURE



Artificial intelligence has crossed an important threshold. AI systems are no longer limited to analysing information. Many now perform tasks such as updating records, processing payments, or triggering workflows.

In this environment, accountability cannot rely on informal oversight. It must be built into the system itself. Identity and access management provides that control layer. It allows organisations to monitor both

human and machine identities operating within their digital environment.

According to Okta's AI at Work 2025 study, 53% of Indian executives say identity and access management is essential for

successful AI adoption. India is already becoming a leader in securing non-human identities, which are increasingly used by automated systems and AI agents. Each AI agent should operate with its own identity and have permissions limited to what it truly needs. Access should follow the principle of least privilege across both data and operational layers. Credentials should also be tied to verified devices, while outbound connections must be restricted to approved systems. Without these controls, a compromised AI system could gain broad access and cause significant damage. Individual identities for AI agents, controlled network access, and detailed activity logs make it far easier to detect threats and prevent misuse. As AI becomes more active in business processes, identity management becomes a critical foundation of digital infrastructure.

Nora Fatehi

Slams Trolls After Her World Peace Appeal Amid Middle East Tensions Sparks Backlash

Actress Nora Fatehi, who is quite active on social media, recently shared a video on Instagram amid the rising tensions in the Middle East. In her video, she assured her fans that she was safe while urging people to prioritise unity and peace. She emphasised that the fear of uncertainty is affecting people globally, and that peace and stability are what everyone truly seeks. Now, Nora has posted another video saying her appeal for world peace amid the Iran-Israel conflict had upset many, and she was criticized simply for advocating peace.

What has Nora Fatehi said in new video

On March 3, Nora shared a new video on her Instagram handle, calling out people who 'have lost touch with the ability to have comprehension skills and listening skills'. She slammed the trolls for the unnecessary backlash. She was heard saying, "I think a lot of people have lost touch with



the ability to have comprehension skills and listening skills. And I think that's something that we used to learn back in the day in school. So, you know, comprehension skills, critical thinking skills, and reading abilities, and being able to just listen. I think a lot of people have skipped that stage in life, especially now with social media and phones...I think we haven't been able to push our brains to that level of being able to understand things. But I do maintain my stance on world peace and unity."

She further said, "If you don't think you are a part of that sentence, because every country and every person is a part of the world. So if I speak generally on people and wanting people to live in peace, and if I speak against chaos, and if you have a problem with that, then you need to go check yourself. Morally,

there's something wrong with you."

Nora said her message about worldwide exhaustion from ongoing chaos spoke for everyone, irrespective of geography or faith. If calls for peace irritate or threaten someone, she believes they need to look within. The actress further added, "While I'm reflecting today, because you know, I just did my prayers, and I'm about to break my fast, and I'm sitting here, and I'm thinking, and I'm like, wow, you know, we live in a world today where people get upset, they get angry, if you speak about world peace, that's scary." Along with the video, she wrote, "Standing on business.. If world peace and unity is triggering you then please get some help."

Meanwhile, Nora was last seen in Ayushmann Khurrana and Rashmika Mandanna's Thamma, where she made a special appearance in the song Dilbar Ki Aankhon Ka.



Rashmika Mandanna Flaunts Sindoor, Mangalsutra As She Walks With Husband Vijay Deverakonda



Newlywed actor Rashmika Mandanna was spotted wearing a mangalsutra and sindoor as she walked hand in hand with husband Vijay Deverakonda following their traditional visit to his native village in Telangana. The couple, who tied the knot on February 26 in Udaipur, appeared relaxed and radiant during their latest public outing. Videos circulating online show the pair smiling and interacting warmly with locals as they returned from Thummanpet village in the Nagarkurnool district. Their visit was part of customary post-wedding rituals conducted with family members and well-wishers.

Rashmika Embraces Bridal Traditions

Rashmika opted for an elegant beige printed saree accentuated with a bold red border. She completed her look with layered gold chains, her mangalsutra (thali), and sindoor adorning her hair parting. Her soft curls and minimal makeup added to the understated bridal glow that fans quickly praised across social media.

Vijay complemented her in a white floral print kurta paired with crisp white pyjama trousers, keeping his look classic and traditional. The couple walked closely, often pausing to greet villagers who had gathered to catch a glimpse of them. Following their intimate wedding ceremony in Udaipur, attended by close friends and family, the duo reportedly performed a Satyanarayana Swamy Vratam and guruhapravesam ceremony at their newly built home in Thummanpet. The house-entering ritual marked the beginning of their married life in keeping with long-held customs.

Locals welcomed the star couple with festive cheer, music and blessings. The atmosphere reflected both celebration and pride, as residents turned out in large numbers to witness the couple's visit.

Temple Visit And Grand Reception Ahead

Soon after returning from Rajasthan, Rashmika and Vijay also visited the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanam temple in Hyderabad to seek divine blessings. They distributed sweets to devotees and briefly interacted with fans, further amplifying the buzz around their wedding.

Ayesha Khan Opens Up About Receiving Rape Threats, Reveals She Was Dropped From A Song For Being 'Fat'



Actress Ayesha Khan had a successful 2025, featuring in Aditya Dhar's blockbuster Dhurandhar. She appeared alongside Krystle D'Souza in the song Shararat, which has been topping charts since the film's release. Amid the appreciation coming her way, Ayesha recently opened up about being dropped from a song because of her body size. She also spoke about being sexualised on Instagram and receiving rape threats.

Ayesha Khan talks about getting trolled on social media

Ayesha has previously addressed the trolling she faces online. During her stint on Bigg Boss 17, she received backlash over her association with Munawar Faruqui. Speaking at the We The Women event, she recalled being removed from a T-Series song during her college days. She revealed that she was set to feature as the second lead in the track while she was in Class 12, but was replaced just a night before the shoot because she was considered "fat."

During the conversation, she shared that she took her time to feel confident about her body and appearance. She shared that she is "almost every day sexualised" for her body on Instagram and feels judged regardless of what she wears.

Ayesha said, "I am almost every day sexualised for my body on Instagram. I wear a normal top; people have a problem, I wear skirts, people have a problem. I have to think before posting. If I have to think before wearing something or wanting to post something, just because someone else is going to sexualise me, it's, of course, a very sad space to be in. I don't know, there's a very thin line I keep struggling, sometimes I think I'll post whatever I want, but other times I am not in the mood to see any comments telling me whatever they would have done to me if they had a chance."

She went on to reveal that she gets "rape threats every day." She continued, "Because you are a potential rapist if you had the strength or you could do what you are saying, you would do it. So it's very scary that these are actual human beings around us. These are not just comments. I have had rape threats every day. I so wish something strict could be done about it. There are days when it triggers my wounds, scares me that if I were not this famous or powerful like I am today, it could have happened."

Rukmini Vasanth

Ashika Ranganath Back Saphami Gowda After She Calls Out Inappropriate Pap Angles

On March 3, actress Saphami Gowda took to social media to call out paparazzi for "deliberate zoom-ins and inappropriate angles" of women in the industry. Rukmini Vasanth, Ashika Ranganath, and Divya Spandana have now extended their support. They reposted the strong note shared by Saphami.

Actresses come out in support of Saphami Gowda

Kannada actor Rukmini Vasanth and Divya Spandana reposted the statement on their Instagram stories. Reposting the same note, Ashika Ranganath wrote, "Let's normalise respect - not violation. Deliberate zoom-ins and inappropriate angles are disrespectful and unacceptable."

In her slamming note, Saphami called out the 'unacceptable' behaviour by the paparazzi.

She spoke about the inappropriate video angles of female actors shot at public events. She even asked the paps to focus on the work and not the bodies.

Her note read, "As women in the film industry, we stand together in addressing a recurring issue. Repeatedly, videos and photographs of female actors at public events are shot and circulated from inappropriate angles, with unnecessary zooms that focus on our bodies rather than our work. This behaviour, carried out by a few individuals, is

disrespectful and unacceptable. We are here for our craft. We are here for our cinema."

She further wrote, "We unequivocally condemn deliberate zoom-ins and inappropriate angles. They are clear violations of dignity and will not be normalised or tolerated. We expect those covering events to maintain professionalism,



basic respect, and decency. We stand united in setting this boundary. We stand in solidarity with every woman who has experienced this - and we will continue to support one another in demanding respect." In another story, she requested media friends to show support over this concern. She wrote, "There are journalists and media friends who have shown immense respect and with whom we have felt extremely secured with. We request them to support us against these handful who are brutal in how they capture and project the ladies."



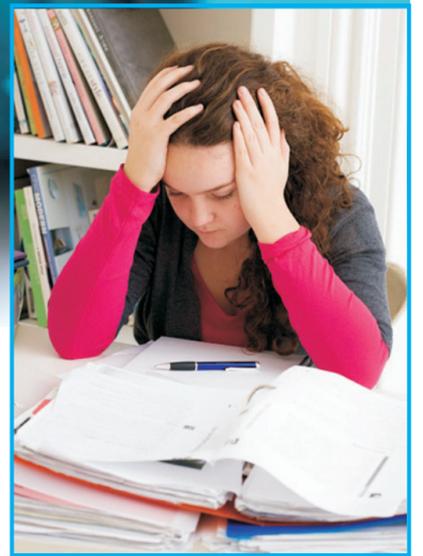
10 ways to beat Exam Stress

It is that time of the year when exams are approaching and stressed-out students are poring over their books. The trick is to relax and revise. Stressing out will only work against you. Here are a few ways to beat exam anxiety.

1 Start with embracing a positive attitude. There is no way to avoid an exam. If you let negative thoughts reign your mind, you will find it difficult to succeed. No one can encourage you more than yourself.
 2 Set up a routine and follow it through. Wake up early to get more time during the day. Make a small to-do list and abide by it.
 3 A change in the place of study helps. Try to find a few different study spots that you feel comfortable and productive in. The more bored or distracted you are by your environment, the harder it is to focus on your books.
 4 One of the most common compromises that students tend to make during this stressful period is sleep. You need your eight-hours now more than any other time of the year. A well-

rested body and mind will grasp information more easily.
 5 Eat healthy and follow a balanced diet. Eat fresh, whole foods whenever possible and drink lots of water. Avoid sugary, processed snacks, which will spike your blood sugar and make you feel sluggish.
 6 Everybody has that one friend who talks about how he has been studying for 20 hours. It is not the duration that matters. It is the quality. If you finish the same number of chapters in a shorter period time, you are the winner.
 7 It is always easy to study the stuff that you already feel comfortable with when you should really be tackling the tougher parts that you aren't so familiar with. Mock tests are a great way to not only test your current knowledge but will help to identify the areas that need more focus.

8 It is important to revise. If you have already covered your portions, take time out to revise. But don't overdo it. Go slow and don't keep revising the same thing over and over again. If you have revised a chapter ample number of times, take a break and chill out. Don't be afraid of feeling confident.
 9 Take a stroll after long study hours. Go out in the open and take in some fresh air. A walk in a park, by the lakeside relaxes the mind and body. Take a friend along if you want, but don't talk about exams and don't discuss chapters during this leisurely stroll.
 10 Exercise to beat stress. Include a 30-minute workout into your daily routine. This will help you to concentrate better while studying.

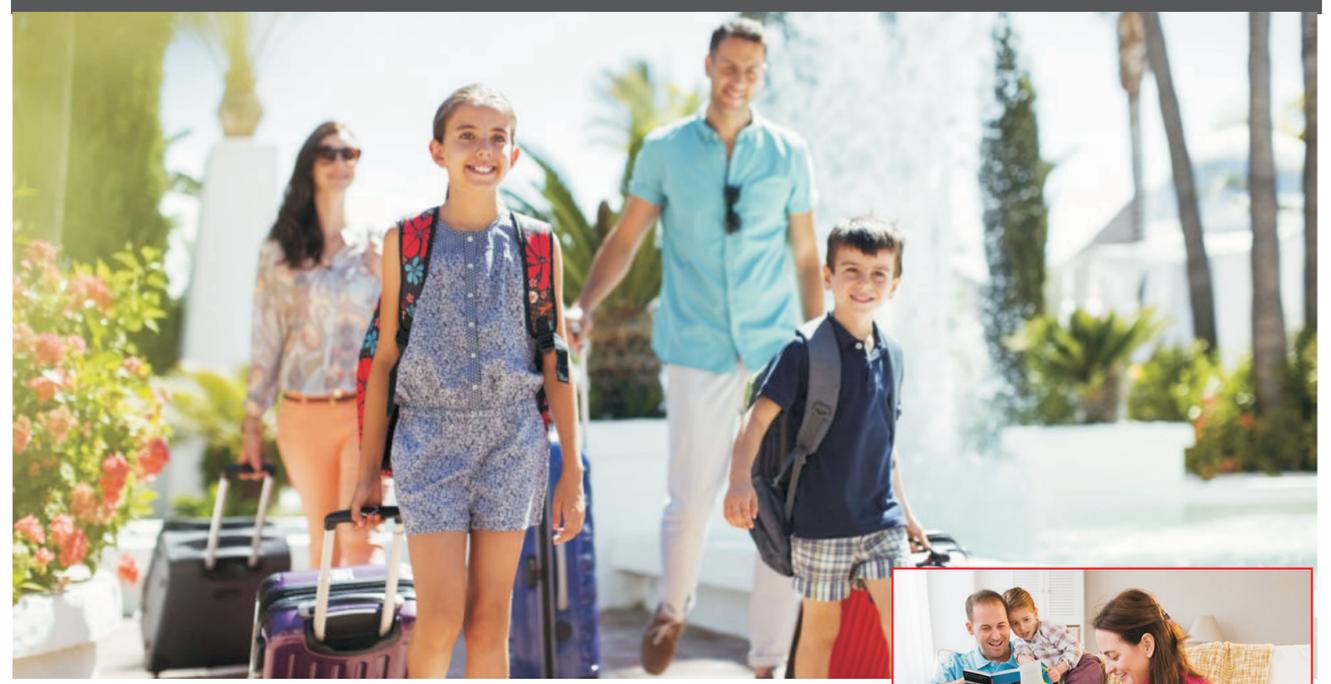


Study links job problems to Parenting



Parents, take note! If your kids have problems at work, you may be responsible to some extent for the trouble, according to a new study which found a link between parenting styles and workplace behaviour.
 "It really is about both parents, but because mothers are typically the primary caregivers of the children, they usually have more influence on their children," said Peter Harms from University of Alabama in the US. Researchers studied manager-employee relationships in the workplace and found a link between parenting styles and workplace behaviour.
 Their research was based on the work of John Bowlby, an early psychoanalyst, who argued that the way parents treat their offspring could have long-term implications for how their children approach relationships.
 In particular, the work focused on how parents acted when their infants cried out for help.
 Babies learn over time that they can either count on their parent to come to their rescue right away or they need to escalate to high levels of distress in order to get attention. Or, if babies learn that parents are not a reliable source of comfort, they stop making overt appeals for help. Individuals with reliable parents view others as potential sources of support.
 These people are often categorised as having anxious or avoidant attachment depending on the style they adopted to cope with distress.
 "Your boss is sort of like your parent," said Harms. The findings showed that when anxious followers were paired with supportive leaders, they were perfectly fine. But when they were paired with distant, unsupportive leaders, the anxiously attached employees reported higher levels of stress and lower levels of performance.

Things to keep in mind when you're travelling with kids



Travelling with kids is never easy. Whether you're travelling with one, twins or more, it can be a tedious and testy time for most parents. Here's what you need to keep in mind...
 Carry enough toys to keep your child(ren) entertained during the journey. This means toys, colouring books, building blocks, books or puzzles — anything that will capture the attention of your child for at least a couple of hours. And don't forget to carry your child's favourite toy. The last thing you need is a full blown tantrum on the airplane because he/she is missing her favourite teddy bear. Don't forget to carry medication. Many children tend to suffer from motion sickness or an upset tummy especially while travelling and you don't want to be caught off guard in an unknown place with no medicines. Carry some bandaids as well.

While allowing your child to pack their own bag may seem tempting, avoid doing that unless you're okay with lugging around heavy luggage. Instead, let them help you with the packing so that they know exactly what goes into their suitcase.
 Read up beforehand about the climate of the place that you're about to visit. This will give you a fair idea of what to pack and what you can skip carrying unnecessarily.
 Always carry a hand sanitiser, antibacterial wet wipes and tissues in your handbag because you never know when the need arises. Not only will this ensure that your child is (relatively) germ-free but will also help in case of spillage.
 As a parent you're expected to keep your child entertained during those long journeys, so in the rare case when your child does not want to play with his/



her toys, make sure you have a stock of stories/ anecdotes that you can recite to them. It helps, of course, if you have a vivid imagination!