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Government Action on Historic Gurdwara in Hyderabad Raises Questions

Sikhs across the country and the world are angry with the Congress Government in Hyderabad

The Sikh Times
Simmi Kaur Babbar

New Delhi, 16 March: In recent days, a major controversy emerged in Hyderabad, where authorities allegedly carried out demolition activity near a historic Sikh religious site and detained several Sikh leaders during protests. The incident created serious concern among members of the Sikh community and civil-rights groups.

Below is a detailed background and explanation of what reportedly happened.

According to reports and petitions filed in court, local authorities claimed that the land where the historic Gurdwara and nearby structures stand had been marked for demolition or clearance under urban development and river-buffer regulations.

Officials reportedly argued that:

The land had been classified in planning documents for demolition or redevelopment.

Authorities were acting under a city development or river protection project.

Some surrounding constructions were considered



encroachments or unauthorized structures. However, Sikh representatives strongly rejected

this claim and argued that the Gurdwara existed since the Nizam era and had historical and religious significance.

Community members said the shrine and nearby properties had been present for decades and were not illegal encroachments.

Authorities reportedly used bulldozers and demolition equipment to remove structures around the site or parts of boundary walls.

The reasons cited by officials include:

Urban development or river-buffer zone clearance

Removal of structures declared unauthorized

Implementation of city planning decisions

However, Sikh groups alleged that the action was sudden and carried out without proper consultation or notice, which triggered protests.

When news of the demolition spread, local Sikh leaders and community members gathered at the site to protest.

Police reportedly detained or arrested several people because:

Demonstrators allegedly tried to block the demolition operation.

Authorities imposed law-and-order restrictions in the area.

Police claimed arrests were necessary to prevent clashes and maintain public order.

Such arrests during protests are often made under preventive detention laws to avoid escalation.

Typically in such situations, the Telangana Police detains protesters and takes them to nearby police stations for questioning.

Reports suggest that the detained Sikh leaders and protesters were taken to local police stations in Hyderabad, where:

Their identities were recorded

Statements were taken

Some were released later on bail or after preventive detention. In many protest-related cases, detainees are released the same day unless serious charges are filed. The issue also reached the Telangana High Court, where petitioners requested the court to stop the demolition and protect the historic religious structures.

Petitioners argued that: The shrine dates back to the Nizam period. Government authorities were attempting to demolish historically significant religious structures.

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Lakhs of North Delhi Residents Affected by Road Closures and U-Turn System Near Delhi Legislative Assembly

The Sikh Times
Exclusive Story

NEW DELHI: A serious complaint highlighting the hardships faced by lakhs of residents of North Delhi due to traffic route changes near the Delhi Legislative Assembly has been submitted to the Union Home Minister Amit Shah.

The complaint has been written by Gurcharan Singh Babbar, Editor-in-Chief of Qaumi Patrika National Daily Newspaper, author and social worker, urging the central government to intervene in the matter and provide relief to the affected residents.

According to the complaint, after becoming the Chief Minister of Delhi, Rekha Gupta, who resides in Shalimar Bagh and represents the same constituency in the Delhi Legislative Assembly, reportedly ordered major changes in the traffic routes between Model Town near Police Lines and the Delhi Legislative Assembly.

It has been alleged that traffic signals were removed and roads were cut in the middle to create U-turn routes so that official convoys traveling from the Chief Minister's residence to her office could move without interruption.

However, these traffic alterations have reportedly caused enormous inconvenience to the general public. Thousands and even lakhs of residents living in surrounding areas are facing serious daily difficulties.

Residents from Vijay Nagar, Hudson Line, Police Lines, Guru Teg Bahadur Nagar, Civil Lines, Mall Road, Timarpur, Mukherjee Nagar, Indira Vihar, Bhai Parmanand Nagar, Radio Colony, Tagore Park, Hardev Nagar, Gandhi Vihar, Nehru Vihar and Burari are now forced to travel nearly two extra kilometers in order to reach their homes, workplaces, schools, colleges,



hospitals and other destinations.

The situation has become particularly difficult for the large number of students living in paying guest accommodations in Dr. Mukherjee Nagar, which is one of Delhi's biggest education hubs where thousands of students from across the country come for coaching related to competitive examinations. These students, along with local residents, daily commuters, commercial drivers, auto-rickshaw operators, e-rickshaw drivers and cab drivers, are reportedly facing serious inconvenience due to the altered traffic system.

The area is also located near one of Delhi's largest vegetable markets where thousands of commercial

vehicles pass every day. Because of the newly created U-turn system and the closure of certain direct routes, traffic congestion has increased significantly. In many cases vehicles are forced to take long detours, resulting in unnecessary delays.

The complaint also raises serious safety concerns. Because roads have been cut in the middle and U-turns introduced on busy roads, there is a constant risk of accidents. Heavy traffic congestion often leads to disputes and altercations among commuters.

Emergency services are also reportedly affected. Patients trying to reach hospitals, people traveling in urgent situations, or families going to cremation grounds during

> Common man Forced to Travel Two Extra Kilometers Daily

times of bereavement are forced to take long detours of nearly two kilometers.

Another major concern mentioned in the complaint is the economic and environmental impact of these traffic changes. Thousands of vehicles are burning unnecessary quantities of petrol and diesel every day, resulting in fuel wastage amounting to crores of rupees every month and also increasing pollution levels. Because the matter involves the office of the Chief Minister, many citizens feel hesitant to raise their voices openly. However, the complaint states that resentment among residents of the entire region is steadily increasing.

The letter therefore requests the Union Home Minister to kindly intervene and direct the concerned authorities to urgently review the matter. It urges that the roads between Delhi Police Lines and the Delhi Legislative Assembly should be reopened in their original form and the traffic signal system should be restored so that normal traffic movement can resume.

The complaint further appeals that leaders of the Bharatiya Janata Party, including the party's National President Nitin Nabin and Delhi BJP President Virendra Sachdeva, should personally visit the site and observe the situation on the ground.

A copy of the complaint has also been sent to the Lieutenant Governor of Delhi Taranjit Singh Sandhu, all Cabinet Ministers of the Delhi Government, the Chief Secretary of Delhi, and the Delhi Police Commissioner, requesting them to instruct the traffic authorities to reopen the closed routes and remove the road cuts created for U-turns on busy roads.

The letter concludes by stating that if prompt corrective action is taken, it will not only relieve the suffering of lakhs of residents but will also restore public confidence and goodwill.

AAP Govt's politics of work has fulfilled all guarantees within just 4 years: CM Mann

The Sikh Times

CHANDIGARH, 16 March: On the completion of four years of the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) Government, Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann on Monday said the government has fulfilled all guarantees made to the people through what he described as a 'politics of work', asserting that the trust reposed by the people after rejecting Congress, Shiromani Akali Dal and the BJP has not been broken. The Chief Minister highlighted key achievements including free electricity, daytime power for farmers, canal irrigation reaching 78% of fields, 65,000 government jobs and 5.5 lakh employment opportunities, along with expanded healthcare through Aam Aadmi Clinics and free treatment up to 210 lakh. He also said the government's anti-drug campaign 'Yudh Nashean Virudh', record investments of ₹1.55 lakh crore and road safety reforms through the Sadak Suraksha Force reflect the government's focus on rebuilding Punjab. Taking aim at opposition parties, CM Bhagwant Singh Mann said while Congress, Akalis and the BJP are concerned about power, the AAP Government is focused on saving Punjab and will not allow divisive poli-

tics to succeed in the state. Interacting with media persons on the completion of four years of the AAP Government, CM Bhagwant Singh Mann stated, "The Punjab Government has started a new tradition in politics by completing all promises in four years whereas parties are not able to do so even in five years." He added, "After assuming charge in the year 2022 at the native village of Shaheed-e-Azam Bhagat Singh, the Punjab Government took several people-friendly decisions." Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann further said, "Along with me, millions of Punjabis took the oath to restore the pristine glory of the state." *AAP Government Completes Four Years, Focus Now on Taking Punjab to New Heights* Speaking about the achievements of his government, CM Bhagwant Singh Mann stated, "In the last four years, the Punjab Government has worked tirelessly for the welfare of people and fulfilled the promises made to them." He added, "The coming year will be devoted to taking Punjab to a new zenith of development and prosperity." Highlighting the transformation in the education sector, CM Bhagwant Singh Mann stated, "Punjab's government schools are now ranked No.1 in the country in studies accord-

ing to the Government of India's survey." He



added, "No child in a government school now sits on the floor as more than one lakh desks have been provided so that every student can study with dignity." CM Bhagwant Singh Mann further stated, "Due to the Digital Kranti in government schools, more than 9,000 smart classrooms and 5,000 com-

puter labs have been opened, bringing modern education to students across Punjab." He added, "For the first time in the history of Punjab, contractual teachers have been given permanent jobs and more than 15,000 teachers have been recruited to strengthen government schools." CM Bhagwant Singh Mann said, "Government school principals and teachers are receiving world-class training in Finland, Singapore and IIMs, bringing global standards to Punjab's classrooms." He added, "Punjab's youth are being prepared to become job creators and not job seekers, and every year around 1.5 lakh college students are learning business and entrepreneurship skills." CM Bhagwant Singh Mann further stated, "Government schools are now competing with private schools." He added, "In the year 2026 alone, 305 government school students cleared JEE Mains and 845 cleared NEET." Talking about the health sector, CM Bhagwant Singh Mann stated, "Under the Mukh Mantri Sehat Yojna, every family in Punjab will receive free and cashless treatment up to ₹10 lakh in top private hospitals." He added, "This is the world's largest health insurance pro-

gramme." CM Bhagwant Singh Mann further said, "While previous governments built just 400 clinics in Punjab in 75 years, the Punjab Government has opened 881 Aam Aadmi Clinics in the last four years." He added, "Over five crore out-patient visits have been registered so far." CM Bhagwant Singh Mann stated, "The largest recruitment of doctors in Punjab's history has taken place in government hospitals and in the last four years 1,575 doctors have been recruited." Speaking about the Farishtay Scheme, he said, "This scheme incentivises every passer-by on the road with ₹2,000 to help the injured reach hospitals while accident victims receive free treatment in any hospital in Punjab." CM Bhagwant Singh Mann added, "It is a matter of immense pride and satisfaction that more than 1,700 injured persons have received free treatment under this scheme." He further stated, "The CM Di Yogshala initiative is promoting healthy living across Punjab and nearly two lakh people practise free yoga every day." CM Bhagwant Singh Mann also said, "Seven new medical colleges are being built in Hoshiarpur, Kapurthala, Sangrur, SBS Nagar, Lehra Gaga, Malerkotla and Ludhiana."

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Front continued news
Government Action on Historic Gurdwara in Hyderabad Raises Questions
Sikhs across the country and the world are angry with the Congress Government in Hyderabad

Proper historical records should be examined before any demolition takes place. Many Sikh organizations expressed strong concern and demanded: Immediate halt to demolition near the Gurdwara Release of detained Sikh leaders Protection of historic Sikh religious sites Dialogue between government officials and Sikh representatives Some community leaders called the incident an attack on religious heritage, while authorities maintained that it was a routine administrative action related to land and urban planning. The Hyderabad incident has become a sensitive issue involving religious heritage, land rights, and urban development policies. While the government claims the action was part of development and clearance operations, Sikh groups argue that the move targeted a historic Gurdwara and community property. The matter may ultimately be decided through court proceedings and negotiations between authorities and community representatives.

News box

Gunmen target liquor vend & property dealer's office in Faridabad, leave threat notes

Gurgaon.(Agency)
 Two men opened fire outside a liquor shop, later targeted a property dealer's office and left extortion slips in Faridabad on Saturday night. The two incidents occurred within about 30 minutes in the Sadar police station area. According to police, both incidents involved the same duo, who fired one round at each location. No injuries were reported. Police said the first incident took place around 11pm when the bike-borne youths arrived near the liquor shop in Chandawali village. "One of them fired a shot. The attackers threatened the salesman and demanded a 10% share from the liquor business, warning that liquor shops would not be allowed to operate in Faridabad if the demand was not met. They told the staffers that otherwise, the consequences would be serious," a police officer said. Around 11.30pm, they targeted the office of property dealer Vinod Bhati in Machchar village and fired a round outside the premises. They left behind a slip demanding Rs 50 lakh as extortion and threatened Bhati with dire consequences if the money was not paid.

SUV trying to dodge cattle rams truck, man dies in Faridabad

Gurgaon.(Agency)
 A 24-year-old man died after his SUV crashed into a dumper truck on Pali-Surajkund road in Faridabad on Sunday afternoon while he was trying to avoid a stray animal that came in front of his vehicle. The deceased, Mayank Bhadana, was a resident of Anangpur village and worked as a property dealer. Police said he was alone in the vehicle at the time of the accident. According to police, Mayank left his home on Sunday afternoon and was heading towards Gurgaon in his Defender SUV. "A stray animal suddenly appeared on the road, and while trying to avoid hitting it, he lost control of the vehicle and rammed into a dumper that was parked along the roadside," an officer said. The impact was severe, leaving the front portion of the vehicle badly damaged and the bonnet completely crushed. The airbags deployed during the collision, but Mayank sustained critical injuries. Passers-by who witnessed the accident informed the police. A team from Surajkund police station reached the spot and pulled Mayank out of the damaged vehicle. "He was rushed to a nearby private hospital where doctors declared him dead on arrival," the officer added. Police have initiated an investigation and recorded statements of witnesses to ascertain the circumstances that led to the crash. Further legal proceedings are underway under BNSS Section 194 (inquest proceedings).

Wards in Gurgaon to be ranked on cleaning, waste pickup, hygiene every month

Gurgaon.(Agency)
 MCG will soon launch a monthly 'clean ward' competition to encourage sanitation efforts across the city. Under the initiative, all wards will be evaluated every month on prescribed cleanliness standards, and the best-performing ones will be felicitated. Officials said the competition aims to make cleanliness a continuous process. It will focus on effective waste management; prevention of open dumping, defecation and urination; promotion of waste segregation at source; and reduction in the use of single-use plastic. The wards will be evaluated on a 100-point scale. Key parameters include regular cleaning; door-to-door waste collection; maintenance and beautification of garbage-vulnerable points; sanitation in narrow lanes and back lanes; and cleanliness at public places. Other criteria include the absence of litter and tobacco stains in public spaces; compliance with the ban on single-use plastic by shops and vendors; cleanliness of public and community toilets; sanitation around govt schools; awareness activities on hygiene; and participation of residents. The civic body has constituted a committee to conduct the evaluations. Additional commissioner Ravinder Yadav will chair the panel, with executive engineer of the Swachh Bharat Mission Sunder Sheoran, MCG public relations officer SS Rohilla and other officials as members. Mayor Raj Rani Malhotra said the initiative would promote healthy competition among wards and encourage greater participation by councillors and residents. MCG commissioner Pradeep Dahiya said the monthly assessments would help monitor sanitation standards.

Cylinder rates spike to Rs4k in black mkt, food biz feels heat in Gurgaon

Gurgaon.(Agency)
 LPG shortage and a sharp spike in cylinder prices are squeezing food businesses in the city, forcing cloud kitchens and small eateries to trim menus, switch partially to electric appliances and raise prices to cope with rising fuel costs. Commercial LPG cylinders, which were selling at around Rs 2,500 at the beginning of the fuel crisis, have surged to nearly Rs 4,000 in the black market, according to operators. Many kitchen owners allege that bulk buyers and traders are hoarding cylinders, worsening the shortage and forcing smaller businesses to buy fuel at inflated rates just to keep their kitchens running. Kitchens that rely heavily on gas for quick, high-volume cooking say the situation is becoming difficult to sustain. "We are facing challenges and have removed some items from our menu. We should be able to manage for the next few days, but not beyond that," said Kalpesh, who runs a cloud kitchen in the city. A significant share of the pressure is being

felt by delivery-first brands listed on platforms such as Zomato and Swiggy, where menus depend on quick-moving dishes and continuous cooking. Several operators said they have begun quietly removing gas-intensive items — such as tandoor snacks and slow-simmered gravies — from menus. Operators also warned that prolonged fuel shortages could begin affecting employment in the sector. Cloud kitchens typically run multiple shifts with small teams of cooks, helpers and delivery coordinators, and owners said sustained high fuel costs could force them to cut shifts or reduce staff if operations become unviable. Kalpesh said his kitchen processes around 500 orders daily and typically consumes between 2.5 and three LPG cylinders on weekdays, rising to around four on weekends. "With cylinders selling close to Rs 4,000 a piece, sustaining operations becomes extremely difficult. If prices don't come down, we may have to shut the afternoon shift," he



said. To cut fuel use, some operators have begun shifting certain preparations to

induction stoves and appliances such as air fryers. However, they say electric alternatives cannot fully replace LPG in a commercial kitchen, especially for bulk curries and tandoor-style dishes. "We have not been getting cylinders for the past two days, and market prices keep changing. It's impossible to plan prep or inventory when we don't know whether we will have gas the next morning," said Rohit Arora, who runs a multi-brand delivery kitchen in Sector 45. Rising fuel costs are also pushing businesses to pass on some of the burden to customers. "We are being forced to raise prices of combos and biryani meals. Customers are complaining, but we don't have an option. If this doesn't stabilise soon, our margins will disappear," Arora said. Madhu Saini, who runs a cloud kitchen in Sector 57, said she recently added a temporary Rs 5-20 increase across most dishes to offset rising fuel costs.

Haryana to create forest land bank to offset loss of linear green belts

Gurgaon.(Agency)
 Haryana is planning to create a forest land bank to compensate for the loss of green cover in the state. Amid diversion of narrow forest strips — along highways, canals and railway lines — increasing for infrastructure and commercial projects, a proposal prepared by Haryana Forest Development Corporation (HFDC) suggests the creation of the land bank for smaller projects involving diversion of forest land for non-forestry purposes under the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980. Once the land bank is created, project proponents seeking diversion of small patches of forest land — including access for petrol pumps, warehouses, industries or real estate projects — will be required to purchase land from HFDC. The land is proposed to be procured through the govt's e-bhoomi portal, officials said. A committee, headed by the managing director of HFDC, has been proposed to oversee the purchase. In the first phase, the corporation plans to acquire around 100 acres (about 40 hectares) of land, with an estimated cost of Rs 40 crore. The land bank would primarily be used to

compensate diversion proposals involving less than one hectare of forest land. Haryana currently has around 3.5% forest cover, among the lowest in the country. A large part of this forest area exists as strip forests along roads, national highways,



canals, bunds and railway lines, which often form the primary tree cover in several districts. "The forest area of strips, especially along roads, is being diverted either by widening of roads or by seeking access through the forest lands for non-forestry purposes such as petrol pumps, warehouses, industries and development projects," the proposal notes. Data shared by the Union environment ministry shows that more than 1,150 hectares of forest land in

Haryana were diverted for over 1,280 projects between April 2021 and Oct 2025, indicating steady pressure on the state's already limited forest cover. The issue was discussed at a meeting on March 9, where officials decided on the proposal of the forest land bank model on the lines of Punjab to deal with diversion of small parcels of forest land. Under the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980, diversion of forest land for non-forestry purposes generally requires prior approval of the central govt. The amended law, however, provides a limited exemption for diversion of forest land up to 0.10 hectare located alongside railway lines or public roads, if it is used to provide access to habitations or basic roadside or rail amenities. While the exemption applies to very small parcels, states like Haryana, where a large share of the remaining tree cover exists as roadside and canal strip forests, could see cumulative impacts over time," a forest official said. To address the issue, HFDC proposed creating the land bank by purchasing degraded land, preferably located near or contiguous to existing forest areas.

Government schools to assess classroom teaching through 29 behaviour indicators in Haryana

Gurgaon.(Agency)
 Master trainers will soon visit govt schools to evaluate classroom teaching using a new system based on 29 behavioural indicators. They will sit in classrooms with students to observe how teachers conduct lessons and how actively students participate in the learning process. The initiative was launched by State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT) to make teaching more effective. Master trainers received training in which they were guided on the aspects to observe in classrooms and the process for assessing the learning environment. During the visits, they will examine the teacher's teaching style, the level of student participation, how often students ask questions, classroom discipline, the use of teaching materials and the overall understanding of students. The trainers will spend longer periods observing classrooms, instead of conducting brief inspections as done earlier. They will also assess whether students are able to communicate freely with the teacher and whether activity-based learning methods are used during lessons. After the observation, each classroom will be ranked based on the set standards. "The ranking will help identify schools that perform well in classroom learning and those that require improvement," officials said. Head of the education and technology wing at SCERT Manoj Kaushik said the purpose of the initiative is not to highlight shortcomings of teachers but to strengthen the learning environment in schools. The system is expected to encourage teachers to adopt more interactive teaching methods and increase student participation in classrooms, which could help improve the overall standard of education in govt schools across the state, officials said.

Noida Authority head office likely to be ready next month

Ghaziabad.(Agency)
 Noida Authority's main administrative building in Sector 96 is nearly ready and is set to be inaugurated next month. Officials said construction has been completed and air-conditioning systems are being tested, while workers are giving the final touches to the greenbelt outside. The Rs 390-crore project began in 2016 but was delayed by the Covid lockdown and the blacklisting of the original contractor. Once the new building opens, all departments will function under one roof. The complex's proximity to the Noida Expressway also provides good connectivity to different sectors and neighbouring areas. Currently, offices of

the various departments and work circles are scattered across multiple sectors — the main administrative office is in Sector 6, the horticulture department in Sector 39, and other offices in Sector 19 and Sector 20. "Construction work finished and air-conditioning systems are currently being tested. We also got furniture for the new office. We expect the building to be inaugurated next month, after which departments will gradually shift to the new office," said SP Singh, general manager, Noida Authority. A visit to the spot on Sunday showed that finishing touches are being done for the greenbelt outside the office. Construction first began on Jan 5, 2016, with the initial

completion deadline set for Jan 2, 2019. However, the project was delayed due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the contractor defaulting. When the original contractor failed to complete the work, the contract was terminated and the firm was blacklisted in May 2022. Fresh tenders were floated and a new contractor was subsequently awarded the remaining civil work in Oct 2022. While the project was delayed, the Authority ordered a structural safety audit by the Indian Institute of Technology Delhi. In the Dec 2024 report, IIT-D flagged weaknesses in structural elements such as walls, beams and pillars, and recommended remedial measures.

Husband held after woman, 3 daughters found dead in well in Nuh

Gurgaon.(Agency)
 Around a week after a 28-year-old woman and three daughters were found dead in a well at Badpur village in Nuh, her husband was arrested on charges of abetment to suicide, police said on Sunday. Shahid (30), a police officer said, admitted during interrogation that he assaulted his wife Sahila a day before she jumped into the well with their children Aksha (5), Saniya (2), and four-month-old Sanaya. The incident brought into focus allegations of sustained domestic abuse, including dowry harassment, physical violence, and repeated taunts from the woman's parents-in-law for not giving birth to a son. A murder case was registered against seven members of Shahid's family after the woman's father alleged that the abuse had escalated in the days before the four were found dead. "Investigators learned that he was an addict and was unemployed, which often led to domestic disputes in the family," a police spokesperson said. Police said

the investigation so far suggests that Sahila was distressed by pressure at home and jumped into the well along with her daughters. However, Sahila's family had alleged that she was pushed into the well along with the children. Police plan to seek Shahid's remand for further questioning to ascertain the sequence of events and determine whether other people were involved. Sahila and Shahid got married in 2018. Her father Hanif, a resident of Alwar in Rajasthan, told police that substantial dowry had been given to her in-laws at the time of marriage, including a motorcycle, Rs 1 lakh in cash and household items, but the family was "never satisfied". In his complaint, Hanif said the harassment began early in the marriage, with repeated demands for a Hyundai Creta. He alleged that Shahid, Sahila's brothers-in-law Zubair and Sadaam, father-in-law Isab, and other relatives — Maqsoodan, Maimuna and Sanji — subjected her to sustained mental and physical abuse. According to the

complaint, torture worsened after Sahila gave birth to daughters and not a son. "From the beginning, they kept pressuring and harassing my daughter for a Creta," Hanif said in his complaint, adding that he repeatedly tried to reason with the family and, at times, brought Sahila back to her parental home to shield her from the abuse. Hanif also alleged that about six months ago, Sahila was locked inside a room and thrashed. Her jewellery, including bangles, necklaces and chains, were also taken away. When Hanif sent his son Rashid to check on her, Rashid, too, was allegedly assaulted and confined. He later called police, who rescued him. The incident led to a complaint at Firozpur Jhirka police station, where a community meeting was held. According to the family, Sahila's husband and in-laws admitted they were wrong and the matter was settled then. But Hanif said the situation deteriorated again after Sahila gave birth to her third daughter around four months ago. Two days before the

deaths, Sahila called her father and told him that her in-laws had beaten her badly and were threatening to kill her, according to the FIR. According to police, Sahila went to the family's farmland on March 8 to harvest mustard. When she did not return home by evening, around 11am, relatives began searching the nearby fields and surrounding areas, but found no trace of her. Around 8.30pm that night, Hanif received a call from a person in Badpur, asking if Sahila had reached her parental home. Hanif tried calling her marital family through the night to find out about his daughter but got no response. The next morning, while on his way to the village, he was informed by the village headman that Sahila and her daughters were found dead in a well. Subhash Chandra, SHO of Firozpur Jhirka Sadar police station, reached the spot with a fire brigade team. The bodies were pulled out with help from villagers. Police sent them to a

mortuary at a govt hospital in Mandikhera.

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AAP Govt's politics of work has fulfilled all guarantees within just 4 years: CM Mann

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He added, "Around 600 new MBBS seats will be added in Punjab, giving students more opportunities to study medicine within the state." Talking about sports achievements, CM Bhagwant Singh Mann stated, "Punjab is making historic investment in village playgrounds and three thousand modern sports grounds are being built with an investment of ₹1,100 crore." He added, "Work on 6,000 more grounds will start soon and free sports kits including cricket, volleyball and football equipment will be provided in all village playgrounds so that every young person gets the chance to play." CM Bhagwant Singh Mann further stated, "Six thousand indoor gyms are being built in villages to promote fitness and sports among youth." He added, "Olympic medal-winning Punjabi hockey players have

received ₹1 crore each and government jobs, while winners of the Women's Cricket World Cup 2025 were honoured with ₹4.91 crore." Highlighting achievements in rural development, CM Bhagwant Singh Mann stated, "In the last four years, 76,000 families have received support to build their own homes, including 30,000 families affected by floods." He added, "The previous government built 39,000 houses in five years, whereas the current government supported 76,000 families in just four years." CM Bhagwant Singh Mann further stated, "More than 40,000 kilometres of rural link roads are being rebuilt and this is the biggest road repairing scheme ever undertaken in Punjab's history in any single year." He added, "These roads are being built with a five-year maintenance guarantee." CM Bhagwant Singh Mann

said, "A total of 13,414 village ponds have been cleaned across Punjab while mandis across the state have been upgraded with 664 covered sheds and solar panels installed in 36 mandis." He added, "Under MGNREGA around nine lakh workers have received employment generating 2.3 crore workdays with ₹1,100 crore spent on wages." Talking about agriculture reforms, CM Bhagwant Singh Mann stated, "For the first time in Punjab's history farmers are receiving eight hours of uninterrupted daytime electricity for irrigation." He added, "A total of 18,349 long-neglected canals have been revived, bringing irrigation water back to farmers' fields." The Chief Minister further stated, "Punjab farmers are receiving ₹416 per quintal for sugarcane, which is the highest price in the country." He added, "Farmers have received

₹20,000 per acre compensation for crop loss, which is the highest compensation anywhere in India." CM Bhagwant Singh Mann said, "A total of 1.58 lakh Crop Residue Management machines have been provided to farmers on subsidy to tackle stubble burning." He added, "Crops are being purchased immediately and farmers are receiving payments on time in a smooth and hassle-free manner." CM Bhagwant Singh Mann stated, "The Punjab Government has launched the Mukh Mantri Mawan Dhiyan Satkar Yojna under which every woman will receive ₹1,000 every month while women from the Scheduled Caste community will receive ₹1,500 directly in their bank accounts." He added, "The free travel scheme for women in Punjab Government buses has also been started and more than 14.5 crore free bus journeys are availed

every year." He further stated, "A total of 5.2 lakh new beneficiaries have been added to pension schemes and ₹23,102 crore has been distributed to 35.7 lakh people during the last four years." CM Bhagwant Singh Mann added, "Anganwadi services have been strengthened with 4,400 workers recruited and 6,100 more recruitments underway." He also said, "Free sanitary pads are distributed every month through 27,314 anganwadi centres and so far 7.4 crore sanitary pads have been distributed to 13.7 lakh women." CM Bhagwant Singh Mann stated, "Ninety percent households in Punjab now receive zero electricity bills, giving major relief to families." He added, "For the first time in Punjab's history electricity tariffs have been reduced with power rates cut by up to 1.5 per unit for homes, 79 paise for commercial

users and 74 paise for industries." He further stated, "The Punjab Government purchased the 540 MW GVK private power plant which helped reduce electricity production costs." CM Bhagwant Singh Mann added, "PSPCL, which was once running in losses, has now been in profit for three consecutive years and has received the highest A+ rating from the Government of India." He also said, "Cheap coal purchased from Pachwara coal mine has saved ₹1,000 crore from the state exchequer." CM Bhagwant Singh Mann added, "Under the Roshan Punjab initiative ₹5,000 crore is being invested to strengthen the electricity transmission and distribution network and ensure 24x7 power supply." Speaking about employment generation, CM Bhagwant Singh Mann stated, "The Punjab Government has launched a Rozgar Kranti in the state." He added, "More than 65,000 government jobs have been given to youth in the last four years purely on merit without recommendation or bribe." CM Bhagwant Singh Mann further stated, "Record private investments in Punjab have created around 5.5 lakh employment opportunities during the last four years." Speaking about the campaign against drugs, CM Bhagwant Singh Mann stated, "Under Yudh Nashean Virudh decisive

and unprecedented action has been taken against drug traffickers." He added, "A total of 68,389 FIRs have been registered and 92,264 persons have been arrested." CM Bhagwant Singh Mann further stated, "5,480 kilograms of heroin has been seized, which is the highest in the country." He added, "Properties worth ₹760 crore belonging to drug smugglers have been confiscated while 64 hawala operators have been arrested." He further stated, "More than 1.5 lakh members have formed Village Defence Committees across Punjab which act as the government's eyes and ears against drugs." CM Bhagwant Singh Mann added, "More than 600 drug peddlers have been arrested based on inputs provided by these committees." He also said, "Fifteen thousand Pind De Pehredar have been deployed in villages and wards to keep communities alert against drugs." CM Bhagwant Singh Mann added, "Beds in de-addiction centres have increased by 360 percent from 1,455 to 5,255 in four years and a special anti-drug curriculum has been introduced in government schools for classes 9 to 12." Speaking about law and order, CM Bhagwant Singh Mann stated, "The Punjab Government has launched 'Gangsteraan Te Vaar' and Operation PRAHAR to ensure that organised gangs are not able to oper-

ate from the soil of Punjab." He added, "So far 44,424 raids have been carried out by teams of 12,000 policemen which have led to the arrest of 14,722 gangsters including 711 proclaimed offenders." CM Bhagwant Singh Mann further stated, "This action has broken the backbone of terrorist networks as 76 terror modules have been busted and 486 terrorists and radicals have been arrested with major recoveries of arms, explosives and grenades." He added, "Punjab's crime rate has reduced to 227 crimes per lakh population according to the National Crime Records Bureau which is almost half of the national average of 448 and three times lower than Haryana's crime rate of 740." CM Bhagwant Singh Mann also said, "For the first time in Punjab's history nine advanced anti-drone systems have been procured to counter cross-border drone threats." He added, "A total of 12,197 personnel have been recruited including 1,062 Sub Inspectors, 450 Head Constables and 10,285 Constables to strengthen the police force." He further stated, "More than ₹1,156 crore has been invested in police modernisation, infrastructure upgradation, cyber capabilities, intelligence strengthening, border police stations and police welfare." Talking about the financial health of Punjab, CM Bhagwant Singh Mann stated,

Court stays bail to Youth Congress chief Chib

The Sikh Times
New Delhi: A Delhi court on Saturday stayed the bail granted to Indian Youth Congress president

Uday Bhanu Chib in connection with the February 20 protest at the India AI Impact Summit, hours after a magistrate court

had granted him relief citing constitutional protections of liberty. Additional Sessions Judge Amit Bansal passed the stay order after the Delhi Police challenged the earlier decision of Duty Magistrate Vanshika Mehta, and listed the matter for further hearing on March 6. Chib was produced before the magistrate around 1 am at her official residence after completing four days of police custody. The police sought an extension of custody by three more days, arguing that further interrogation was necessary to trace two co-accused persons. However, the magistrate rejected the police plea, observing that the right to

life and liberty is the "soul of the Indian Constitution" and that deprivation of liberty must be supported by strong justification and material evidence. The court noted that the investigating officer failed to provide cogent reasons for seeking further custody. In her handwritten order, the magistrate said, "Being guilty or not is a matter of trial," and emphasised that custody must be justified at the present stage of investigation. The court also observed that Chib had strong roots in society and was not a flight risk, reiterating the legal principle that "bail is a rule and jail is an exception." The mag-

istrate granted bail on furnishing a surety bond of Rs 50,000 and directed Chib to surrender his passport and electronic devices. The court also ordered verification of his documents and directed that he remain in judicial custody until Sunday morning. Following the police appeal, the Sessions Court stayed the bail order, keeping Chib in custody until further proceedings.

7-day-old baby sold for Rs 1.5 lakh, 2 arrested

Gurugram: The police arrested a eunuch and her partner for attempting to sell a seven-day-old baby boy for Rs 1.5 lakh in Sector 57. The accused who sold the child had lodged a complaint of kidnapping to mislead the police, but they were arrested and the child was rescued. According to the police, a eunuch residing in a slum near Saraswati Kunj had lodged a complaint claiming that she had adopted a newborn baby boy from her neighbour Phulo Devi on August 18. She alleged that on August 24, she handed the baby over to her neighbour, Kajal, before leaving him. Upon her return, Kajal claimed the infant had been kidnapped by an unknown person and that her mobile phone had also been stolen. The police swung into action and arrested two accused from Wazirbad's Dhani within just nine hours. The police recovered the newborn baby and the stolen mobile from the possession of the accused. The accused were identified as Layak Sheikh (28), a native of west Bengal and eunuch Kajal, a native of Bihar. During interrogation, it was revealed that the alleged kidnapping was, in fact, a pre-planned conspiracy. Investigators found that Sheikh, who has been living in the area for five years, was desperate for a child. He had struck a deal with Kajal, offering between Rs 1 lakh and Rs 1.5 lakh in exchange for a baby.

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NAME CHANGE
I, SATISH KUMAR S/O RAM SINGH YADAV R/O VILLAGE NAURANGPUR, NAVRANGPUR (157), SIKOHPUR, GURGAON, HARYANA-122004, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO SATISH YADAV FOR ALL FUTURE PURPOSES.

NAME CHANGE
I, KAPIL NARA S/O SATPAL R/O 287, LOKRI, GURGAON, HARYANA-122414, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO KAPIL FOR ALL FUTURE PURPOSES.

NAME CHANGE
I, PUSHPA W/O VIKASH SHARMA R/O D-74 R/K GAUTAM MARG EAST VINOD NAGAR DELHI-110091 HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO PUSHPA SHARMA.

NAME CHANGE
I, ABSAR AHMED S/O ABDUL BARI R/O FATEHPUR MADHU BAN UTTAR PRADESH-221603, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO ABSAR AHMAD.

NAME CHANGE
I, HITHERO KNOWN AS SHAMSEEDA W/O MOHAMMAD IQBAL R/O 18/186, Gali No. 18, G-Block, Mustafabad Extn., Delhi-110094 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Shamseeda Parveen.

NAME CHANGE
I, HITHERO KNOWN AS AVDESH KUMAR S/O KRISHAN KUMAR R/O K-494, Jahangir Puri, Delhi-110033 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Avdesh Kumar Tyagi.

Public Notice
My Client Mukut Bihari Sharma S/O Late Ram Gopal Sharma R/O C-1498A, pitampura, delhi-34 Have Severed All Relations & Disowned His Son Somdutt Sharma & His Wife Poonam Sharma From All Their Movable/Immovable Properties Due To Their Hostile Behaviour. My Client Shall Not Be Responsible For Their Acts In Future.

TARA SINGH BISHT (Advocate)
NAME CHANGE
I, HITHERO KNOWN AS KESHAV S/O Brahm Prakash R/O A-214, Ground Floor, Majlis Park, Adarsh Nagar, N.S. Mandi, North West Delhi, Delhi-110033 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Keshav Kumar.

NAME CHANGE
I, HITHERO KNOWN AS BHAVESH MEHTA S/O MOTI LAL MEHTA R/O-27, Sharma Colony, Budh Vihar Phase-2, Sultanpuri, C-Block, North West Delhi, Delhi-110086 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as MIKESH MEHTA.

NAME CHANGE
I, HITHERO KNOWN AS RITIKA Alias RITIK SETHI D/O PREM GOPAL SETHI W/O ALOK MODI R/O A-65, FRIENDS COLONY EAST, NEW FRIENDS COLONY, SOUTH WEST DELHI, DELHI-110025 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as RITIKA SETHI.

NAME CHANGE
It is for general information that I, Tanya Gautham D/o Rakesh Kumar Gautam, and Ex. wife of Alok Jha R/o M I G, B-444, DDA flats, East of Loni road, Mandoli, PO: Mandoli Saboli, Dist- North East Delhi, Delhi -110096 declare that I got divorced from my Ex. Husband Alok Jha, vide Court Decree HMA No.795/2025, dated 28-05-2025. Further I have changed the name of my minor son ADITYA JHA, age 14 years and he shall hereafter be known as ADITYA GAUTAM respectively, which may be amended accordingly.

NAME CHANGE
I, HITHERO KNOWN AS IMRAN AHMED S/O ISHTIAQ IMRAN R/O H NO-476, GALI SAROTE WALLI, MATIA MAHAL, JAMA MASJID, DELHI-110006, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as MOHAMMAD IMRAN. It is certified that I have complied with all legal requirements in this connection.

NAME CHANGE
I, ADESH KUMAR, S/O NAVIN CHANDRA CHOUDHARY, R/O HOUSE NO-69, GALI-12/5, MITHA PUR EXTN, BADARPUR, DELHI-110044 (INDIA), have changed my name so that my first name is "ADESH" and my last name/surname is "KUMAR". Currently, my name is appearing as "ADESH KUMAR" entirely under the given name field, without a separate last/surname field.

NAME CHANGE
I, AKHIL S/O YOGESH KUMAR R/O N-238 MOHANE GARDEN UTTAM NAGAR DELHI-110059, have changed my name to AKHIL SUDAN Permanently for all future purpose.

NAME CHANGE
I, NITIN S/O BEERPAL R/O, A-43 BLOCK A MODEL TOWN KAMLA NAGAR DELHI-110007, have changed my name to NITIN BHATI Permanently for all future purpose.

NAME CHANGE
It is for general information that I, MANOJ KHATRI S/O HARPAL KHATRI R/O HOUSE NO-70-B, AMAR COLONY, PHASE-II, NANGLOI, PO: NANGLOI, DISTT-WEST DELHI, DELHI-110041, declare that the name of my minor son has been wrongly written as YESH in my minor son YASH KHATRI aged 14 years in his school record. The actual name of my minor son is YASH KHATRI respectively which may be amended accordingly.

NAME CHANGE
It is for general information that I, Niyati Sehgal alias Neetu D/O Jogender Singh Pippal E/O W/O Punesih Sehgal R/O House No - 1876, Uday Chand Marg, Kotla Mubarakpur, Lodhi Road Central Delhi 110003, declare that I got divorced from my ex-husband Punesih Sehgal Vide Court Decree No. 1556/2025 dated 14.07.2025. Further, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Niyati Singh Pippal.

NAME CHANGE
I, KALAMBE DATTATRAY NAMDEO is real father of No. 15732761X Rank-NK Name- KALAMBE PRADIP DATTATRAY, Unit 14 CORPS ENGG SIG REGT is presently residing at VILL-KUSGAON, PO-EKARSAR, TEH-WALI, DIST- SATARA, (MAHARASHTRA)-412803 have changed my name from KALAMBE DATTATRAY NAMDEO to KALAMBE DATTATRAY NAMDEO vide Affidavit Dated 16/03/2026 New Delhi.

NAME CHANGE
I, HITHERO KNOWN AS JUNAID S/O NAWAB MALIK R/O HOUSE NO H-1, H-BLOCK, SHAHEED NAGAR SAHIBABAD, CHIKAMBERPUR, PO-CHIKAMBERPUR, DISTT-GHAZIABAD, UTTAR PRADESH-201006 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as JUNAID MALIK.

NAME CHANGE
I, CHANDRA BHUSHAN KUMAR GRI S/O JYUJIT GIRI R/O D59 FIRST FLOOR KRISHNAA APARTMENT MANSARAM PARK UTTAM NAGAR, Dwarka, Delhi-110059 have changed my name to CHANDRA BHUSHAN GIRI for all future purpose.

NAME CHANGE
I, HITHERO KNOWN AS SNEHAL SURESH PENTAWAR D/O SURESH PENTAWAR W/O ONKAR PANDHARI MAMILWAD, Residing at 5C-6C, RBI Staff Quarters, Shalimar Bagh, Delhi - 110088 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as SNEHAL ONKAR MAMILWAD.

NAME CHANGE
I, VIRENDER S/O Baldev Singh R/o C-2, Yamuna Vihar, North Chhonda, Delhi - 110053, have changed my name to VIRENDER SINGH permanently.

NAME CHANGE
I, SHAMSHAD S/O MD Chhurnu R/o R-275, Bhai House, Joga Bai Extn., Joga Bazar, Delhi-110025, have changed my name to SHAMSHAD AHMAD permanently.

NAME CHANGE
I Parth S/O Rajesh Kumar R/O House No. 216, Near Jankidas School, Sector 14, Sonipat, PO Sonipat, Distt. Sonipat, Haryana - 131001, have changed my name to Parth Phougat for all future purposes.

NAME CHANGE
I, HITHERO KNOWN AS RAJ KUMARI D/O VJAY BABU SINGH W/O CHANDRA PAL SINGH VERMA R/O - 1-68, Garhwalli Mohalla, Block - I, Laxmi Nagar, Delhi - 110092 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as RAJ KUMARI VERMA.

NAME CHANGE
I, PREETI W/O RAMBOL KUMAR SINGH R/O House No-12/2061-62, Left Portion Near Tilak Chovk, Mukeshera Pura Subj Mandi, Malika Ganj, North Delhi, Delhi-110070 have changed the name of my minor daughter SHRISHA SINGH aged 6 years and she shall hereafter be known as SHREYA SINGH.

NAME CHANGE
I, No-G/501/9086N Rank-RFN Name-SKANDER LAL, Father of YASH Presently residing at VPO-BUCHOLLI, THE-DIST-MAHENDRAGARH, HARYANA-123034, have changed my minor son's name from YASH to YASH YADAV for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 16/03/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE
I, HITHERO KNOWN AS PARWATI W/O MOHIT SHARMA R/O 3/26, Kishan Ganj Padam Nagar, North Delhi, Delhi-110007 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as PARWATI.

NAME CHANGE
It is for general information that I, DILIP KUMAR TIWARI S/O RAMADEV TIWARI Permanent Resident of 70, KOTHYIA, SHEOHAR, BIHAR-843329 and Presently Residing at 33/16, T/F, WEST PATEL NAGAR, DELHI-110008 declare that name of mine and my father has been wrongly written as RAM DEV SHASTRI in my Aadhar Card-868461732958. The actual name of my mine and my father are DILIP KUMAR TIWARI and RAMADEV TIWARI, which may be amended accordingly.

NAME CHANGE
I, Gyaneshwar Mule Alias Dnyanoba S/O Vishwanath Mule R/O Badalgaon Tq. Aurad B, Badalgaon, Aurad Bidar, Karnataka-585326, have changed my name to Dnyanoba.

NAME CHANGE
I, U. Ananthamma D/o Buchaiyah Jogalu and W/o K Raju R/O Block No.-27, Rajiv Gruha Kalpa, Pappireddy Colony, Lingampalli, Serilingampally, K.V. Rangareddy, Telangana-500019, have changed my name to Karoti Sarojini.

NAME CHANGE
I, Beulah Saul W/o Nelapati Laxmi Narayana R/O Plot No-262, Road No. 3, Sri Srinivassapuram Colony, VTC, Vanastalipuram, PO-Vanastalipuram, Sub-District-Hayathnagar, District, K.V.Rangareddy, Telangana - 500070, have changed my name to Nelapati Swapna.

[ASHWANI KUMAR]
Advocate
Chamber No. 122, Tehsil Compound, Ghaziabad, U.P.
kumar2021ashwani@gmail.com

NAME CHANGE
I, YOGESH KUMAR KAUSHIK S/O Ved Prakash Kaushik R/O K-4/70 Mohan garden, Uttam nagar, newdelhi 110059. Changed my name to Yogesh kaushik.

NAME CHANGE
I, VINAY VERMA S/O Thakur Prasad Verma R/o 507, Shakti Khan-3, Indra Puram, Ghaziabad UP, have changed my name to VINAY KUMAR VERMA permanently.

NAME CHANGE
I, SHAMSHAD S/O MD Chhurnu R/o R-275, Bhai House, Joga Bai Extn., Joga Bazar, Delhi-110025, have changed my name to SHAMSHAD AHMAD permanently.

NAME CHANGE
I, VIRENDER S/O Baldev Singh R/o C-2, Yamuna Vihar, North Chhonda, Delhi - 110053, have changed my name to VIRENDER SINGH permanently.

NAME CHANGE
I, HITHERO KNOWN AS RAJ KUMARI D/O VJAY BABU SINGH W/O CHANDRA PAL SINGH VERMA R/O - 1-68, Garhwalli Mohalla, Block - I, Laxmi Nagar, Delhi - 110092 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as RAJ KUMARI VERMA.

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I, No-G/501/9086N Rank-RFN Name-SKANDER LAL, Father of YASH Presently residing at VPO-BUCHOLLI, THE-DIST-MAHENDRAGARH, HARYANA-123034, have changed my minor son's name from YASH to YASH YADAV for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 16/03/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

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NAME CHANGE
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NAME CHANGE
I, U. Ananthamma D/o Buchaiyah Jogalu and W/o K Raju R/O Block No.-27, Rajiv Gruha Kalpa, Pappireddy Colony, Lingampalli, Serilingampally, K.V. Rangareddy, Telangana-500019, have changed my name to Karoti Sarojini.

NAME CHANGE
I, Beulah Saul W/o Nelapati Laxmi Narayana R/O Plot No-262, Road No. 3, Sri Srinivassapuram Colony, VTC, Vanastalipuram, PO-Vanastalipuram, Sub-District-Hayathnagar, District, K.V.Rangareddy, Telangana - 500070, have changed my name to Nelapati Swapna.

[ASHWANI KUMAR]
Advocate
Chamber No. 122, Tehsil Compound, Ghaziabad, U.P.
kumar2021ashwani@gmail.com

NAME CHANGE
I, CHANDRA BHUSHAN KUMAR GIRI S/O JYUJIT GIRI R/O D59 FIRST FLOOR KRISHNAA APARTMENT MANSARAM PARK UTTAM NAGAR, Dwarka, DELHI-110059 have changed my name to CHANDRA BHUSHAN GIRI for all future purpose.

NAME CHANGE
I, K.M MEENU AGRAWAL W/O NAVEEN GUPTA RESIDING AT C-105 GALI NO-7 SABJI MANDI MAJUPUR SEELAMPUR DELHI-110053 have changed my name to MEENU BINDAL for all future purposes.

NAME CHANGE
I, HITHERO KNOWN AS YASH S/O: Krishan Pal, R/O House No.6, Ghatti Jat, Garhmukteshwar, Garh Bridge Hill, Ghaziabad, Garhmukteshwar, Uttar Pradesh, 242505, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Yash Kumar.

NAME CHANGE
I, MD SABIR S/O MOHIBUL HASAN R/O PATTAR WALA BAGH, N-17B/274, T-HUTS, J.C. COLONY WAZIR PUR, NORTH WEST DELHI-110052, have changed my name from MOHD SHABIB to MD SABIR in my son MD IMRAN PASSPORT.

NAME CHANGE
I, Ramesh S/O Radheshyam, residing at 3/1404 -22 Dehradun road Janakpur Bains Colony khand 2 Saharanpur Uttar Pradesh, 247001, Permanent Address- Vill-larpur post teakupur, Larpur Azamgarh, Uttar Pradesh, 276208, have changed the name of my minor daughter Ayanshi Aarya aged 5 years and she shall hereafter be known as AARYA.

NAME CHANGE
I, SATYANARAYANA Father of No. 16114650W Rank-NK Name-YEDLA PEDI NAI DU Residing at VILL-KOVVADAPETA, PO-PEDAMAJIPALEM, TEHSIL-SRI LAMPUR, District-CHITTOOR, ANDHRA PRADESH-535221 have changed my name SATYANARAYANA to YEDLA SATYANARAYANA for all future purposes vide Affidavit Dated 16/03/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE
I, SATYANARAYANA Father of No. 16114650W Rank-NK Name-YEDLA PEDI NAI DU Residing at VILL-KOVVADAPETA, PO-PEDAMAJIPALEM, TEHSIL-SRI LAMPUR, District-CHITTOOR, ANDHRA PRADESH-535221 have changed my name SATYANARAYANA to YEDLA SATYANARAYANA for all future purposes vide Affidavit Dated 16/03/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

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[ASHWANI KUMAR]
Advocate
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kumar2021ashwani@gmail.com

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NAME CHANGE
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NAME CHANGE
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NAME CHANGE
I, VIRENDER S/O Baldev Singh R/o C-2, Yamuna Vihar, North Chhonda, Delhi - 110053, have changed my name to VIRENDER SINGH permanently.

NAME CHANGE
I, HITHERO KNOWN AS YASH S/O: Krishan Pal, R/O House No.6, Ghatti Jat, Garhmukteshwar, Garh Bridge Hill, Ghaziabad, Garhmukteshwar, Uttar Pradesh, 242505, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Yash Kumar.

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I, SATYANARAYANA Father of No. 16114650W Rank-NK Name-YEDLA PEDI NAI DU Residing at VILL-KOVVADAPETA, PO-PEDAMAJIPALEM, TEHSIL-SRI LAMPUR, District-CHITTOOR, ANDHRA PRADESH-535221 have changed my name SATYANARAYANA to YEDLA SATYANARAYANA for all future purposes vide Affidavit Dated 16/03/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE
I, SATYANARAYANA Father of No. 16114650W Rank-NK Name-YEDLA PEDI NAI DU Residing at VILL-KOVVADAPETA, PO-PEDAMAJIPALEM, TEHSIL-SRI LAMPUR, District-CHITTOOR, ANDHRA PRADESH-535221 have changed my name SATYANARAYANA to YEDLA SATYANARAYANA for all future purposes vide Affidavit Dated 16/03/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE
I, HITHERO KNOWN AS PARWATI W/O MOHIT SHARMA R/O 3/26, Kishan Gan

NEWS BOX

Can't be enlisted by darkness': Pope Leo criticises those who invoke God to wage war



ROME. (Agency)

Pope Leo XIV renewed his appeal Sunday for peace in the Middle East and criticised those who invoke religion to wage war, saying that "God cannot be enlisted by darkness". "Currently, many of our brothers and sisters in the world are suffering from violent conflicts, caused by the absurd claim that problems and differences can be resolved through war," he said on a pastoral visit to a Rome suburb. He added: "Some claim to involve the name of God in these deadly decisions, but God cannot be enlisted by darkness. It is peace that those who invoke him must seek." Earlier on Sunday, the US pontiff used his weekly Angelus prayer at the Vatican to again pray for the victims of the "atrocious violence of war" in West Asia and urge dialogue and peace. "I renew my closeness to all those who have lost loved ones in the attacks that have hit schools, hospitals, and residential areas," the 70-year-old said. Leo said the situation in Lebanon was a particular cause for concern. On behalf of the Christians of the Middle East and of all women and men of goodwill, I address those responsible for this conflict," he said. "Cease fire! Let paths of dialogue be reopened! Violence can never lead to the justice, stability and peace that people are waiting for."

19 Indians among 35 arrested in UAE over posting 'misleading posts' amid West Asia war

World.(Agency)

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) has ordered the arrest of 35 people, including 19 Indian nationals, for sharing videos on social media containing misleading or fabricated content amid the Middle East conflict that erupted last month following US-Israeli airstrikes on Iran. UAE authorities said that the suspects will face a fast-tracked trial after an investigation found they had used digital platforms to circulate manipulated footage and narratives related to the ongoing regional tensions. The arrests have been carried out in two phases. The most recent list names 25 individuals of various nationalities, including 17 Indians, categorized under different sections. This is separate from the earlier group of 10 people, including two Indians, who were identified and ordered to be arrested on Saturday. In a statement, UAE Attorney-General Dr. Hamad Saif Al Shams said the action comes after extensive monitoring of digital platforms to curb the circulation of fabricated information and manipulated content designed to provoke public unrest and threaten overall stability. "Investigations and electronic monitoring revealed that the defendants were divided into three groups that committed various acts. These included the publication of real clips related to current events, the fabrication of clips using AI, and the promotion of a state practising acts of military aggression while glorifying its leadership and military actions," it said, according to the UAE's official news agency, Wam. The first group of 10 accused, including five Indians, one Pakistani, one Nepali, two Filipinos, and one Egyptian shared and circulated genuine video clips showing missile movements and interceptions in the country's airspace, as well as their impacts. They also recorded crowds observing these events and added commentary and sound effects implying active attacks, aiming to provoke public fear and anxiety.

The 'sixth largest river' on Earth is hidden 115 feet beneath the Black Sea

World.(Agency)

A remarkable geological feature was discovered beneath the Black Sea - an enormous underwater river complete with waterfalls, rapids, and floodplains. The river flows through the Bosphorus Strait and is fed by very salty and dense Mediterranean water. According to Professor Daniel Parsons, former Lecturer at the University of Leeds and one of the researchers who made this discovery, if this river existed on land, it would be the sixth-largest river on Earth based on discharge (22,000 cubic meters per second). This 'river within an ocean' was found to be at least 115 feet deep and is thought to function as an important nutrient transport system for the deep sea. Advanced robotic mapping techniques verified the features of this underwater river and revealed its extensive and distinct river-like characteristics, as documented by Hydro International and the University of Leeds. Nature and mechanism of the river that is hidden beneath the Black Sea. The river beneath the Black Sea represents an extraordinary geological occurrence and operates as a 'river in the sea.' While oceanic currents differ greatly from terrestrial rivers, this watercourse behaves precisely like one. The undersea river has well-defined banks, floodplains, rapids, and even undersea waterfalls.

How AI Is Rewriting The Global Technology Order

Right now, the United States leads decisively in compute and chips. China leads in scale of research and data while Europe is attempting to lead in governance.

HANOI. (Agency)

Artificial intelligence has become the central battleground of global power. Governments are now competing not just in algorithms but across four strategic assets: Compute, chips, data and talent. The result is an emerging geopolitical map often described as the "AI Cold War" with the United States, China and Europe building competing ecosystems while middle powers quietly positioning themselves as infrastructure hubs. Yet the most important insight from recent data is this: AI dominance is not determined by models alone. It is determined by control over infrastructure. The Four Levers of AI Power

1. Compute: The Ultimate Bottleneck AI progress now depends on access to massive computing clusters. The United States overwhelmingly dominates this layer, hosting about 75 per cent of global AI computing capacity, according to an analysis of GPU clusters by Epoch AI.

Next comes China with roughly 14-15 per cent of global compute power, while the EU controls under five per cent. US data centres account for about 60-75 per cent of global computational power used for AI workloads, the report further shows. This concentration reflects the dominance of American hyperscale cloud companies such as Amazon Web Services, Microsoft and Google.

The scale of modern AI infrastructure has exploded. A single frontier AI supercomputer can use 200,000 AI chips and cost more than \$7 billion, according to a 2025 analysis of global AI systems.

The power requirements are also staggering: one cluster can require 300 megawatts of

electricity, equivalent to powering 250,000 homes. That energy footprint means AI power is also becoming an energy geopolitics story. 2. Chips: The Strategic Choke Point If compute is the engine, chips

imposed export restrictions on advanced chips beginning in 2022 and strengthened them in 2023-2024. But Chinese companies are already adapting.

For example, ByteDance is accessing 36,000 advanced GPUs in Malaysia through a cloud partner, allowing it to legally use top-tier hardware despite US export limits, a report in Wall Street Journal (WSJ) said. The episode illustrates a key reality of the "AI Cold War" - that hardware restrictions are increasingly being bypassed through global cloud infrastructure.

3. Data: The Invisible Advantage AI systems learn from enormous datasets. China arguably holds a structural advantage here due to scale: It has over 1 billion internet users, and massive digital platforms including Alibaba and Tencent. However, Western companies dominate global datasets and enterprise data pipelines, giving US firms a strong position in training commercial AI systems.



are the fuel. The semiconductor supply chain is dominated by companies aligned with the United States: These companies supply the majority of data-centre GPUs used for training AI models globally. To slow Chinese progress, Washington

Flights temporarily suspended at Dubai's airport following nearby drone incident

DUBAI. (Agency)

Flights were temporarily suspended at Dubai's airport, previously one of the world's busiest, after a "drone-related incident" sparked a fire nearby, city authorities said on Monday. The incident impacted a fuel tank, the Gulf financial hub's media office said, later adding authorities had extinguished the blaze that broke out. The office said no injuries had been reported. "Dubai Civil Aviation Authority announces the temporary suspension of flights at Dubai International Airport as a precautionary measure to ensure the safety of all passengers and staff,"



Dubai's media office posted on X. Iran has fired over 1,800 missiles and drones at the United Arab Emirates, more than any other country targeted by Tehran in the conflict, upending

travel plans in the financial hub despite its air defence intercepting a vast majority of the projectiles. On Wednesday, the city media office said two falling drones wounded four people near the airport. Iran has taken aim at US assets but also civilian infrastructure, including landmarks, airports, ports and oil facilities around the Gulf, after US-Israeli attacks decimated its leadership. The Emirates' defence ministry has reported six deaths since the war began, including four civilians and two military personnel, who died in a helicopter crash blamed on a technical malfunction.

Trump Leverages China Trip For Hormuz Support

WASHINGTON. (Agency)

President Donald Trump is suggesting he may delay his much-anticipated visit to China at the end of the month as he seeks to ramp up the pressure on Beijing to help reopen the Strait of Hormuz and calm oil prices that have soared during the Iran war. In an interview Sunday with the Financial Times, Trump said China's reliance on oil from the Middle East means it ought to help with a new coalition he is trying to put together to get oil tanker traffic moving through the strait after Iran's threats have throttled global flows of oil. Trump said "we'd like to know" before the trip whether Beijing will help. "We may delay," Trump said in the interview. The uncertainty underscores just how much the U.S.-Israeli strikes on Iran have reshaped global politics in the past two weeks. Calling off the face-to-face visit with Chinese President Xi Jinping could have its own major economic consequences: Relations between Washington and Beijing have been fraught as both sides have threatened the other with steep tariffs over the past year. The White House did not immediately respond to requests for comment. Trump's new comments came as U.S. Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent was meeting with Chinese Vice Premier He Lifeng



on Monday in Paris for a new round of trade talks that were meant to pave the way for Trump's Beijing trip. The U.S. and China have declared a truce that has prevented both sides from levying dueling tariffs, but the stakes remain high. In the early days of the Iran conflict, Trump had said U.S. navy vessels would escort oil tankers through the strait, and downplayed the threat posed by Iran. But as oil prices soared, he and his administration have been forced to consider new options - including the idea, broached this weekend, for other countries to join the push with their own warships. So far, none has yet formally heeded the call. Trump told reporters aboard Air Force One as he returned to Washington on a weekend in Florida that the U.S. had spoken to "about seven" nations about offering military support. He wouldn't say which ones, though, and demurred when he was asked directly about China - though he subsequently

suggested that he'd made such an offer to Beijing. China's an interesting case study," he said, noting its reliance on Gulf oil. "So I said, 'Would you like to come in' and we'll find out. Maybe they will, maybe they won't." War in Iran has sent the price of oil skyrocketing, which has raised the price Americans pay at the pump, just as the midterm election season begins to heat up. China, though, has faced its own economic pressures and recently lowered its 2026 target for growth slightly to 4.5% to 5%, its slowest projected growth since 1991 - meaning prolonged disruptions in the strait could have long-term impacts for Beijing as well. Before Trump suggested potentially canceling his trip, a spokesperson for the Chinese Embassy in Washington was noncommittal to Trump's call for outside help in the strait. "The Strait of Hormuz and waters nearby are an important route for international goods and energy trade. Keeping the region safe and stable serves the common interests of the international community," the spokesperson said. "All parties have the responsibility to ensure stable and unimpeded energy supply." The spokesperson added: "As a sincere friend and strategic partner of Middle Eastern countries.

Nuked In 1945, Japan To Now Build Missiles For US

World.(Agency)

Over eight decades after Hiroshima and Nagasaki were nuked, Japan is preparing to help defend the United States, the country that levelled its cities. Next week, Japan is expected to formally notify Washington of its intention to join the US-led Golden Dome initiative. Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi is set to announce the plan during a summit with US President Donald Trump on March 19, Reuters reported. While details of Japan's participation are still being finalised, officials suggest this could involve co-developing or producing missiles to replenish US stocks depleted by the ongoing war on Iran and American involvement in Ukraine's conflict with Russia. Washington may also request Japan's help in missile production. The nuclear attacks in Japan in 1945 killed over 2 lakh people, leaving survivors with lifelong health issues and a nation grappling with unprecedented devastation. The Golden Dome Project Launched by the Trump administration last year, the Golden Dome project seeks to expand America's missile defence capabilities. Japan is reportedly concerned that China and Russia's hypersonic weapons could get past normal defence systems.



Japan's Defence Role

Historically limited by its pacifist constitution, Japan has mostly restricted weapons exports. Last year, it exported Patriot surface-to-air missiles to the US. These missiles have been important in stopping attacks from missiles and drones in the Gulf, and Ukraine has also used them to defend against Russian forces. Japan is also improving its own defence capabilities. Defence Minister Shinjiro Koizumi announced that Tomahawk cruise missiles are being delivered to the Maritime Self-Defence Force, allowing long-range attacks from a safe distance. With ranges of up to 1,600 km, the missiles will be fitted on the Aegis destroyer Chokai after live-fire tests in US waters. Japan is also adding Norway's Joint Strike Missile to its F-35 fighter jets to strengthen attacks against ships and ground targets. When The US Bombed Japan On August 6, 1945, the US dropped an atomic bomb, "Little Boy", on Hiroshima, instantly killing around 80,000 people.

Israeli strikes kill 12 Palestinians in Gaza, including two children and pregnant woman

CAIRO. (Agency)

At least 12 Palestinians, including two boys, a pregnant woman and eight police officers, were killed Sunday by Israeli airstrikes in the war-torn Gaza Strip, hospital authorities said. A strike Sunday morning hit a house in the urban refugee camp of Nuseirat in central Gaza and killed four people, including a couple in their 30s and their 10-year son, according to the nearby Al-Aqsa Martyrs Hospital. The woman had been pregnant with twins, the hospital said. The fourth fatality, a 15-year-old neighbor, was taken to the Awda hospital in Nuseirat. "We were sleeping and got up to the strike of a missile. The strike was strong," said Mahmoud al-Muhtaseb, a neighbor. "There was no prior warning." Another strike Sunday afternoon hit a police vehicle on the south-north Salah al-Din route at the entrance of the central town of Zawaida, the Hamas-run Interior Ministry said. The strike killed eight police officers, including Col. Iyad Ab Yousef, a senior police official in central Gaza, the ministry



said. The Al-Aqsa Martyrs Hospital, which received the bodies, confirmed the toll. It said 14 others were wounded. There was no immediate comment from the Israeli military on either strike. Hamas oversees a police force that maintained a high degree of public security after the militants seized power in Gaza in 2007, while also cracking down on dissent. The

police largely melted away during the war as Israeli forces seized large areas of Gaza and targeted Hamas security forces with airstrikes. But following an October ceasefire, they have reappeared in Gaza streets and reasserted control in areas not controlled by the Israeli military. Sunday's deaths were the latest fatalities among Palestinians in the coastal enclave

since the ceasefire deal attempted to halt a more than two-year war between Israel and Hamas in Gaza. While the heaviest fighting has subsided, the ceasefire has still seen almost daily Israeli fire. Israeli forces have carried out repeated airstrikes and frequently fire on Palestinians near military-held zones, killing more than 650 Palestinians, according to Gaza health officials. Israel says it has responded to violations of the ceasefire or targeted wanted militants. But about half of those killed have been women and children, according to the Gaza Health Ministry. They were among more than 72,200 Palestinians killed in the war. The health ministry, which is part of the Hamas-led government, maintains detailed casualty records that are seen as generally reliable by UN agencies and independent experts. Militants have carried out shooting attacks on troops, and Israel says its strikes are in response to that and other violations. Four Israeli soldiers have been killed since the ceasefire.

NEWS BOX

Gujarat Confidential: 'Apple vs Nokia'

Ahmedabad. (Agency) SPEAKING ON the budgetary demands of the state government for revenue department in the Gujarat Assembly recently, BJP MLA from Bapunagar constituency of Ahmedabad Dineshsinh Kushwaha drew a parallel between tech majors Nokia and Apple in a bid to make his point: The BJP constantly keeps itself updated. "We are those who do not work like Nokia, but work like Apple. The BJP is a party which works while upgrading itself every six months. We do not work like the Congress, which works like Nokia. We change as per the changing times," Kushwaha claimed.

Star speaker

VIJAY PATEL, the BJP MLA from Dang constituency, impressed a number of people in the Gujarat Assembly on March 12 when he spontaneously spoke on the budgetary demands of the state tribal development department. In a lucid and original style, Patel spoke on a range of works done by the BJP government to bring change in the lives of tribal communities in the state. Patel's 20-minute speech, dotted with some lighthearted comments, was heard by all with keen interest. Speaker Shankar Chaudhary too took note of Patel's speech and asked BJP Chief Whip Balkrishna Shukla whether the Dang MLA could be given more time to speak. Patel, a tribal leader, is also BJP's Deputy Chief Whip in the House.

Police probe 'theft' of 76 gas cylinders from Maharajganj godown

Lucknow. (Agency)

Two days after 76 LPG cylinders were allegedly stolen from a godown in Chowk area of Maharajganj district, the police on Sunday initiated an inquiry in connection with the case, said police.

According to the police officials, the complaint was filed by the godown incharge, Nagendra Yadav, who claimed that unidentified assailants broke the storage facility's lock and fled with the cylinders.

"We are conducting an inquiry into the complaint. Police teams have visited the godown and inspected the site to verify the allegations made in the complaint and to ascertain how the alleged theft took place," Station House Officer of Chowk police station Om Prakash Gupta said.

Quoting the complaint, the SHO said 76 LPG cylinders have been reported stolen, of which, 12 were filled with gas, while the remaining were empty.

According to police, unidentified miscreants allegedly barged into the godown in Mishaulia village on Friday night and stole the LPG gas cylinders. In the complaint, the godown in-charge stated that he found out about the theft on Saturday morning, following which police were alerted.

Police said further action will be taken based on the findings of the inquiry. No FIR has been lodged into the matter so far.

As part of its ongoing crackdown on the black marketing of LPG cylinders, the state government has raided 2,554 locations across the state in the last two days. Eight persons have been arrested, five FIRs have been lodged against LPG distributors and 35 FIRs against alleged black marketeers. Legal proceedings have also been initiated against 37 others.

UP Govt reinstates IAS officer Abhishek Prakash nearly a year after he was suspended over corruption charges

Lucknow. (Agency)

The state government reinstated the 2006-batch IAS officer Abhishek Prakash as Secretary, General Administration, nearly a year after he was suspended over corruption allegations. Prakash was suspended on March 20 last year after allegations surfaced that a "5% commission" was sought in connection with clearances for a solar power project proposed by a Punjab-based private operator. At the time, he was serving as Secretary in the state's Industrial Development Department and was also the Chief Executive Officer of Invest UP.

The action had come after the state government took cognisance of a complaint related to the project approvals, following which Prakash was removed from his posts and placed under suspension pending inquiry.



According to official orders issued recently, the state government has now revoked his suspension and assigned him the charge of Secretary, General Administration. Prakash, an IAS officer of the Uttar Pradesh cadre, had earlier held several key positions in the state administration, including in departments related to industry and investment promotion. His tenure as CEO of Invest UP had involved overseeing investment proposals and facilitating clearances for projects in the state. Officials said the latest posting comes as part of a reshuffle in the state bureaucracy.

Yeshwantpur, Bengaluru Cantonment stations miss facelift dates

The project includes a new main station building on the south side and a second entry building on the Millers Road side."

BENGALURU.(Agency)

The redevelopment of two key railway stations in the city – Bengaluru Cantonment(BNC) and Yeshwantpur – have missed earlier timelines, with officials now indicating that both projects are likely to be completed only by the year-end.

The works at BNC, launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in 2022, was scheduled to be completed by October 2025. However, the project now stands at only 60% completion, said railway officials. An South Western Railway official said, "The BNC receives 19,000 passengers daily. It is being redeveloped at a cost of Rs 484.58 crore. The project includes a new main station building on the south side and a second entry building on the Millers Road side."

The redevelopment plan also includes an air concourse, three new foot overbridges, one

pedestrian foot overbridge and basement parking facilities on both the north and south sides, the official added.



Similarly, the redevelopment of Yeshwantpur station, estimated to cost Rs 377.86 crore, has

also progressed slowly, with only 67% completion so far. The work was scheduled to be completed in July 2025.

On the progress of work, the official said that on the east side of the station, the linen store and Railway Protection Force (RPF) and Government Railway Police (GRP) buildings have already been completed, and the multi-level car parking facility with space for 90 cars and 88 two-wheelers is under construction.

It includes five car lifts, two passenger lifts, an EV charging station, ticket counters and a commercial space. The East Side Elevated Plaza will ease traffic and provide better access to passengers. It will have five lifts and two escalators. The elevated road works are almost finished, with 99% and 97% completion respectively.

Chennai Port-Maduravoyal elevated corridor to be toll-free for city traffic

Originally launched in 2010 but terminated in 2016, the project was revived in 2023 following requests from the state government and the Chennai Port Authority.

CHENNAI. (Agency)

The 21-km Port-Maduravoyal double-decker elevated corridor will be toll-free for local traffic on the lower deck, while toll will be collected only from freight vehicles using the upper deck to access Chennai Port. The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) plans to complete the project by November 2027.

According to Virender Sambal, regional officer of NHAI in Chennai, the first deck of the flyover will be reserved for local traffic and will remain toll-free. "The second level (upper deck), meant for traffic bound for the port, will be tolled. Of the total 21 km, nearly 15.5 km runs along the Cooum River. The upper tier will function as a dedicated freight corridor carrying heavy vehicles and container trucks directly to Gate 10 of the port without interfering with city traffic," he said. Sambal added that around 9,500 precast concrete bridge segments will be manufactured for the project at a casting yard in Chembarambakkam. "So far, about 800 precast

segments have been produced. Once the pier foundations are completed, these segments will be assembled using launching girders," he said.



To speed up construction, work is currently progressing for 11 hours a day - five hours during the daytime and six hours at night - with support from the traffic police. NHAI has requested the state government and the city police commissioner to allow work to continue for up to 16 hours a day, Sambal added.

Of the 21-km corridor, the stretch from Maduravoyal to Koyambedu (7 km) will have a single deck, while the remaining 14 km up to the port will have a double-decker structure. Vehicles entering the flyover at Maduravoyal for local travel will exit near Napier Bridge, while the upper deck will extend up to Chennai Port as a six-lane highway. Entry and exit ramps are planned at Sivananda Salai, College Road, Spur Tank Road and Koyambedu. The four-lane lower deck will have a width of 26 metres, while the upper deck will be 23 metres wide. The corridor will pass above 16 existing flyovers and two road overbridges. The total project cost is estimated at Rs 3,570 crore. Originally launched in 2010 but terminated in 2016, the project was revived in 2023 following requests from the state government and the Chennai Port Authority. NHAI officials said the structural integrity of 114 pillars erected in 2011 was examined in six phases. Of these, 12 pillars were found unsuitable and will be demolished.

Mosquito menace stings residents of Kannagi Nagar as water hyacinth clogs Okkiyam Maduvu

Former AIADMK councillor T C Karuna said GCC workers tried to clear the water hyacinth manually on Saturday, but the invasive plants have spread across the entire waterway.

CHENNAI. (Agency)

Residents of Kannagi Nagar are raising a stink about rising mosquito menace that is beginning to bite, thanks to nearby Okkiyam Maduvu which is choked with water hyacinth, turning the waterway into a mosquito-breeding ground.

They alleged that neither Public Works Department (PWD) officials have taken any steps to remove the invasive plants nor the Greater Chennai Corporation (GCC) has resumed mosquito-repellent spraying using drones, which was stopped nearly a year ago. Though the civic body has been carrying out mosquito fogging using hand-held machines, locals TNIE spoke to say the spraying is mostly limited to residential streets.

"After 6 pm, we are unable to step out of our homes. We keep our doors and windows closed," said

Bharathi R (49), a resident of Kannagi Nagar, whose home is close to the Okkiyam Maduvu. Anthony A (50), another resident, said, "Nearly 1.5 years ago, the GCC used to spray mosquito larvicides using drones. However,



no such measures are being carried out now and the situation has worsened."

Former AIADMK councillor T C Karuna said GCC workers tried to clear the water hyacinth manually on Saturday, but the invasive plants have spread across the

entire waterway. "When asked why the drone spraying of larvicides was stopped, officials said that a drone had earlier fallen into the water, following which contractors are now demanding higher costs to continue the work," he said. A corporation official told TNIE, "Since this is flowering season, there has been a surge in the growth of water hyacinth. Okkiyam Maduvu is under the PWD's control. However, as the mosquito menace has increased, we have begun removing the plants manually and have also sprayed mosquito larvicides in a few areas where it could be cleared."

Officials in the zone have requested machinery such as amphibious equipment from the headquarters which is expected to be arranged within two days. TNIE's attempt to reach PWD officials was unsuccessful.

Report on labour codes seeks bill to ensure workers' rights in Kerala

The minister has handed over the report, prepared by a committee chaired by former Supreme Court Judge V Gopala Gowda, to the labour commissioner, seeking prompt action.

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM. (Agency)

In a move to back the state's stand on the labour codes enacted by the Union government, the Gopal Gowda Commission report filed before the government has sought to utilise constitutional provisions to ensure workers' rights.

The report, which was handed over to Labour Minister V Sivankutty in a meeting held on Monday by the Kerala Institute of Labour and Employment (KILE), suggests treating even contract employees with six months of experience as permanent employees and points out legal provisions to ensure the functioning of trade unions. The minister has handed over the report, prepared by a committee chaired by former Supreme Court Judge V Gopala Gowda, to the labour commissioner, seeking prompt action.

Key recommendations made by the

committee includes the drafting of the Kerala Conferment of Permanent Status to Workmen Bill, by which any employee who works in a firm for 180 continuous working days should be treated as a permanent employee.



"Often, contract employees are exploited by private firms and are the most affected by the new labour codes. They work like regular employees but never get benefits on those lines, and that is why the new bill would be most beneficial for them," a senior member of the committee told.

Gujarat gov't drops plan to move Bill on private coaching centres, framing policy

A committee is working on forming rules and regulations for the new policy; penalties for violating rules on the cards, registration to be made mandatory

Ahmedabad. (Agency)

The Gujarat government has dropped its plan to move a Bill – the Gujarat Coaching Institute (Management) Bill – in the Legislative Assembly's budget session to regulate and control the private coaching centres, officials privy to the matter told The Indian Express. In place of the Bill, a policy for the same is being framed which will be implemented soon, they added.

While similar Bills have been passed by other states – for instance, the Rajasthan Coaching Centres (Control and Regulation) Bill, 2025, which was being analysed by officials – the government has decided to go with the policy now. Following a number of student suicide cases, fire incidents, lack of

facilities and alleged malpractices in the field, the Gujarat government had planned to control and regulate coaching centres across the state under law, with focus on student safety, mental well-being and transparency.

"The earlier plan of moving a Bill in the Assembly to regulate private coaching centres has been dropped. A committee is working on forming rules and regulations for the new policy," Mukesh Kumar, Additional Chief Secretary, Education Department, told.

The Supreme Court, through the Ministry of Education's 2024 guidelines, had mandated uniform

standards for coaching centres across the country, focussing on student safety, mental health and



transparency, requiring states to enforce rules. The team of experts is studying the 'Guidelines for Registration and Regulation of Coaching Center 2024' issued by the Department of Higher

Education and Ministry of Education, Government of India, and that will form the basis of the new policy, officials explained.

Misleading ads, infra, counselling According to officials, areas such as misleading ads by coaching centres, qualification of tutors, minimum space per student, fire safety compliance, fair fees with an option of refund, no classes during school hours, and mandatory counselling and grievance redressal, with penalties for violations, will be covered under the new policy.

One of the committee members revealed that the policy framework

will look into issues related to registration and regulation in the interests of students and bring in a provision to provide career guidance and psychological counselling to students enrolled in private coaching centres aimed at reducing their stress. Advertisements with false claims or offers by coaching centres will be banned and there will be mandatory provision to refund fees in case a student leaves during the coaching period. Teachers serving in any government institute will not be allowed to teach in private coaching centers. Likewise, the coaching centres will not be allowed to conduct classes for students during their school hours so that their regular attendance remains unaffected, sources said.

BMC removes flasher lights from Mayor Ritu Tawde's official vehicles

Mumbai. (Agency)

Amid flak drawn by the visuals of flasher lights atop Mumbai Mayor Ritu Tawde's official vehicle, the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) on Sunday said that red and blue flasher lights installed atop the Mayor's and her escort vehicle have been removed.

In a move that was aimed at ending the VIP culture, the Union Cabinet in 2017 amended the Motor Vehicles Rule and banned red beacons atop government vehicles. The rule came into effect on May 1, that year.

However, earlier this week, the Mayor's official vehicles raised eyebrows after social media posts pointed to red and blue lights installed on the vehicle's bonnets. On March 13, activist Anil Galgali also wrote to the Mayor calling for immediate removal of the lights, which are only permitted for specific emergency services.

Following the controversy, the BMC on Saturday removed the flashing lights while also covering the designation plaque from the Mayor's and her escort vehicle. Issuing a statement in the matter, the BMC on Sunday said, "It is clarified that vehicles are provided by the administration to office bearers after they assume office. As soon as the matter of flashing lights came to fore, the flasher lights on the vehicles were removed."

Meanwhile, the decision on Sunday sparked a political war of words on Sunday. "How is the Mayor not aware about these rules? If she were unaware, why didn't she understand the protocol herself? These rules were introduced by your own government and now you are going against that very decision. Couldn't the Mayor resist the appeal of the red beacon?," said Kishori Pednekar, former Mayor and leader of opposition in the house on Sunday.

Responding to the controversy, Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis said that the Mayor was being inappropriately targeted. "I took information in the matter and learnt that the red beacon was located on the bonnet of the vehicle.

Mankind's fate at the hinge of history

In his seminal 2017 work, *Life 3.0: Being Human in the Age of Artificial Intelligence*, physicist and cosmologist Max Tegmark presented a vision of the future of intelligence, framed not as a dry technical manual, but as a cosmic drama in which humanity holds the leading role. The core message of the book is built upon a taxonomy of life's evolution. Life 1.0, the biological stage, consists of organisms like bacteria that can neither redesign their hardware nor their software; they are slaves to the slow process of evolution. Life 2.0, the cultural stage represented by humans, can redesign its software, learning new languages, skills and values, while remaining tethered to biological hardware that takes aeons to change. Tegmark's central thesis is that we are on the precipice of Life 3.0: a technological stage where life can redesign both its software and its hardware, effectively becoming the master of its own evolutionary destiny.

Tegmark's primary message was one of "mindful optimism". He argued that intelligence is a pattern of information processing that does not require a biological "wetware" brain to exist. This philosophical stance led him to explore the inevitable rise of artificial general intelligence (AGI)—machines capable of performing any intellectual task as well as a human. Tegmark cautioned that the primary risk of such a system is not malevolence, but competence.

A superintelligent AI does not need to hate humanity to destroy it; it simply needs to be indifferent to us while pursuing goals that are not perfectly aligned with our own. The book served as a call to arms for "alignment research", urging the global community to solve the technical and ethical problems of AI safety long before a superintelligence is actually created.

However, since the publication of *Life 3.0*, the landscape of artificial intelligence has shifted with dizzying rapidity, forcing Tegmark to significantly modify his views. While the book treated AGI as a distant, almost mythological horizon, Tegmark's recent statements reflect a sense of profound urgency and, at times, alarm. The primary modification in his worldview concerns the speed and nature of the technology currently being developed. The sudden, explosive emergence of large language models like GPT-5 has demonstrated that an approach combining massive data with massive scale can produce behaviours that look remarkably like the "software redesign" he once attributed only to the final stages of Life 3.0. As a result, Tegmark has moved from the role of a visionary to that of a Cassandra. He publicly admits that he and his colleagues were far too conservative in their timelines. He now views the arrival of human-level AI not as a "mid-century" possibility, but as a "this-decade" probability. This compression of time has turned his mindful optimism into what he now describes as a "suicide race". He argues that the competitive pressure between tech giants has created a race to the bottom in safety standards, where the incentive to be first outweighs the need to be safe. Consequently, Tegmark has become one of the most vocal advocates for a pause in giant AI experiments. He now demands government intervention and regulation, arguing that we are currently building AI systems that we do not understand and cannot control.

Furthermore, Tegmark's view on the "human moat"—the skills that would keep us relevant—has been sobered by recent developments. In *Life 3.0*, he suggested that jobs involving high levels of empathy, social intelligence and creativity would remain the sanctuary of humans for a long time. Yet, seeing AI's ability to manipulate human language, mimic empathy and generate high-level art and code has led him to realise that our "cultural software" is much easier for machines to hack than he initially suspected. He now warns that the erosion of truth and AGI's social manipulation could collapse human society even before a physical superintelligence is ever built.

Counting the cost of inaction

The UN's latest environmental report calls for transformation in the world's food, energy, waste management and finance systems. By contrasting the cost of inaction with the benefits of action, it shows how nations can reap a windfall while improving the living condition of their citizens

Mankind faces two stark choices: either pursue the current perilous path of unsustainable economic growth with severe economic and environmental costs, or change course and set on a path of progress and prosperity with tremendous economic and environmental benefits. The latest Global Environment Outlook report of the UN Environment Programme prepared by about 300 scientists from 82 countries that was released recently reveals the benefits of action in tackling the global environmental crises of climate change, biodiversity loss, pollution and land degradation.

The costs of inaction are immense. Without accelerated climate mitigation, global mean temperature rise is likely to exceed 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels in the early 2030s and exceed 2°C by the 2040s. This would cut 4 percent off annual global GDP by 2050 and 20 percent by the end of the century. Combined with biodiversity loss, this will make us more vulnerable to disasters and weather extremes as well as jeopardise human well-being and achievement of the sustainable development goals. Air pollution is responsible for approximately 67 lakh premature deaths globally every year, entailing annual health costs of over 6 percent of global GDP in 2019 alone. Plastic pollution and mismanaged waste are responsible for an estimated 4-10 lakh deaths every year.

Global land degradation is estimated to cost more than 10 percent of the annual global GDP in terms of the loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services. The benefits of action surpass the costs of inaction by several folds. The GEO-7 report indicates that investing in global transformation of systems from energy to food can help avoid 90 lakh premature deaths by 2050—many of them from decreased air pollution, lift 20 crore people out of undernourishment and 15 crore people out of extreme poverty by 2050. Further 30 crore more people can get access to safe water sources by 2050. While this entails upfront costs, the long-term returns on investment are tremendous.

Restoration of 35 crore hectares of degraded land by 2030 is projected to yield ecosystem benefits worth over \$9 trillion for an investment of \$1 trillion and remove 13-26 gigatons of greenhouse gases (GHGs) from the atmosphere. The health co-benefits are estimated at \$54 trillion, compared with global costs of around \$22 trillion. The annual social and environmental costs of plastic pollution are projected to be \$300-600 billion a year. Shifting to a circular economy and relying on the 3R strategy—reuse, recycle and reorient—and diversification, as well as tackling the legacy of plastic

energy, environment, materials/waste, economic and finance systems. This involves shifting to sustainable and healthy diets, eating more plant-based foods, exploiting the potential of cultivated meat and other novel foods, reforming food production and marketing systems, conserving and restoring ecosystems and biodiversity, sustainable land management practices, implementing nature-based solutions and emphasising circularity in the production and consumption sectors to tackle waste and reduce pressure on mining of critical minerals. Transformation in the energy sector involves diversifying energy sources, increasing renewable energy use, phasing out of fossil fuels and improving energy access and security.

Apart from looking beyond the traditional GDP to gauge well-being by also tracking changes in human and natural capital, the report calls for economic and financial sector reforms by phasing out and repurposing environmentally harmful subsidies, estimated at about \$1.5 trillion per year from energy, food and mining as well as internalising environmental externalities into the prices of goods and services of about \$45 trillion per year from the energy and food systems. This would help deliver an estimated \$6-7 trillion per year of investment needed to reach global net zero GHG emissions by 2050, as well as bridge the estimated gap of \$700 billion per year for implementing the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.

It is sad to note that despite being reviewed by hundreds of expert reviewers and governments, the summary for policy makers of the report based on the latest and rigorous scientific evidence was not approved due to opposition from a few member countries who objected to references about phasing out of fossil fuels and shift to a circular economy. Such summaries and scientific reports are not prescriptive or legally enforceable, they only provide signals to governments on what set of policies or actions are likely to lead to beneficial outcomes. It is lamentable that long-term interests are being sacrificed by some countries for short-term gains. As some authors rightly argued in a recent article in *Nature*: "Scientific evidence should not be the subject of political negotiation." The approval process of such reports needs a relook to forestall such situations in future.



pollution could reduce plastic pollution by 80 percent, increase job opportunities, improve livelihoods and encourage innovation. Apart from reducing annual GHG emissions, it could lead to saving \$1.3 trillion in direct public and private costs over the period 2021-2040 and avoid \$3.3 trillion of environmental and social costs due to plastic pollution.

The overall macroeconomic annual benefits of transformation are estimated to begin around 2050 and increase to approximately \$20 trillion per year by 2070, and over \$100 trillion per year by 2100, accounting for more than 25 percent of projected global GDP in 2100.

The report calls for transformative changes in the food,

Military roadmap: Long-term planning augurs well for India

The unveiling of 'Defence Forces Vision 2047: A Roadmap for a Future-Ready Indian Military' marks an important step towards this objective

INDIA's security challenges demand a military that is not only strong but also adaptive, technologically advanced and strategically integrated. The unveiling of 'Defence Forces Vision 2047: A Roadmap for a Future-Ready Indian Military' marks an important step towards this objective. The document outlines an ambitious action plan to transform the armed forces into a modern, multi-domain powerhouse over the next two decades. At the heart of the vision lies the tough goal of jointness among the three services. The proposed reforms aim to address gaps in coordination by promoting integrated planning, operations and capability development. Such synergy is crucial because 21st-century warfare spans multiple domains, such as space and cyberspace. There is no time to lose as jointness has already been long delayed. The blueprint also lays strong emphasis on technology and innovation. Conflicts across the world are increasingly being shaped by artificial intelligence, autonomous systems, space-based assets and advanced surveillance capabilities. By prioritising the adoption of state-of-the-



art technology, the roadmap seeks to make the defence forces future-ready. Equally significant is the focus on self-reliance in defence production -- India is the world's

second-largest arms importer. Strengthening domestic manufacturing will not only reduce dependence on imports but also spur research and economic growth.

The government's fiscal commitment reinforces this strategic shift. In the Union Budget 2026-27, the defence sector has been allocated a record Rs 7.85 lakh crore (a hike of around 15% compared to the allocation for 2025-26). Notably, neighbouring China continues to raise its military spending and capabilities, with the People's Liberation Army aspiring to match and then surpass the US military by 2049 (the centenary of the Chinese republic). Thus, India's long-term planning is both necessary and timely. However, the success of this vision will depend on effective implementation.

Teaching children to question war and power

It is high time we began to bring today's chaotic world into our classrooms and raise critical questions

IN these turbulent times, it is exceedingly difficult to escape from a deeply existential and pedagogic question: As adults, are we responsible enough for sowing the seeds of a new world in which our children can grow up as integrated, sensitive and compassionate beings and live joyfully and meaningfully? Think of it.

Do we have any answer if a school/college student asks us these three questions: Why did you create a world in which there is no end to war and violence? Why did you give us such a polluted world in which we cannot even breathe properly? And even though you speak of democracy, why do we repeatedly witness the absence of the art of conversation and listening among our parliamentarians? As a teacher whose primary task is to establish a life-long communion with young minds, I believe we should not escape these questions. After all, there ought to be something more to education than what the prevalent culture of regimented schooling has normalised—the routinised act of teaching discrete and fragmented academic subjects like physics, mathematics, geography, history or accountancy and training them in a way so that they can succeed in all sorts of standardised tests and examinations and fit well into the 'system'. In fact, it is high time we began to bring the world—yes, this turbulent/chaotic world—into our classrooms, raise critical questions and inspire this perplexed generation to strive for a better world. After all, you cannot have an insulated/sanitised classroom. You cannot pretend that you can teach science, history or political studies meaningfully, even if you remain indifferent to what is happening outside the

classroom. To begin with, think of the ongoing war, or the never-ending hostility we see among different countries: Israel vs Palestine, Russia vs Ukraine, India vs Pakistan, Pakistan vs Afghanistan and Israel-USA vs Iran. Yes, war is normalised, and projected as a visual spectacle on the



television screen; militarism is glorified, and even sanctified as the finest form of patriotism; and every war is justified in the name of 'protecting' the nation from its 'enemys'. It is possible to go beyond the textbook and the official syllabus, and bring the tales of these devastating wars in the classroom, enquire collectively, see beyond the discourses of 'victory' and 'defeat', and raise critical questions? It is like looking at ourselves—our brute

instincts, or what Sigmund Freud would have characterised as 'death drive' or 'Thanatos'; it is to see the pathology of hyper-nationalism and its implicit militarism; it is to see the discontents of a civilisation in which the hugely profitable global arms industry continues to expand; and, above all, it is to see the narcissism and moral impoverishment of all sorts of authoritarian masters who rule over the world.

Without this constant reflection and awareness, it is difficult to say 'no' to war and strive for a peaceful world.

Think of yet another kind of war: the way the unholy alliance of instrumental techno-science and global capitalism has caused severe damage to the ecosystem and reduced everything, be it a tree, a river, a forest or a mountain to a mere 'resource' for ceaseless economic growth, our irresistible greed and indulgence with consumerism. In fact, the climate crisis we witness today—the rising temperature and prolonged heat waves, flash floods, wildfires, and air pollution—is a logical consequence of the war modern techno-capitalism has declared against nature. It is, thus,

not surprising that, as a report published by the World Economic Forum warns, by 2050 climate change may cause an additional 14.5 million deaths.

How do we sensitise ourselves? How do we sensitise our children? Imagine how superficially we look at this crisis. When, for instance, the Air Quality Index (AQI) in the national capital crosses all limits and breathable fresh

air becomes the costliest commodity, the government closes all schools or proposes the 'hybrid' mode of teaching. Or, for that matter, our school principals are fond of planting a couple of trees on the World Environment Day.

However, for a true awakening of the crisis, we need to see beyond these symbolic gestures. What is actually needed is a kind of critical and reflexive pedagogy that makes the young learner understand the deeper reasons behind the crisis, and inspires him/her to say 'no' to a mode of living or an act of consumption that intensifies carbon emissions and further worsens the climate crisis.

Finally, let us reflect on yet another kind of war the political class has declared against the very spirit of democracy. A democratic citizen needs to cultivate the art of critically nuanced dialogic conversations, the ability to listen to others and, above all, the courage to resist the tyranny of power. Even if civics or social science textbooks preach that ours is a democratic country, an alert young student sees something else. From the noisy Parliament known for frequent adjournment to the complete breakdown of communication between the ruling regime and the opposition parties, she/he notices that not everything is fine with our democracy. If the legislators themselves fail to value the worth of the democratic spirit, it is easy to become disillusioned and cynical. Indeed, these contradictions between the Constitutional ideals of democracy and the actual practice are real, and have to be brought in the classroom. And yes, young students must be encouraged to come out from the illusory peace of the sanitised classroom, raise critical questions and listen to those perspectives the Establishment seeks to censor or hide. Though it is not easy to retain the spirit of libertarian education amid these three forms of war, we should not give up what Antonio Gramsci would have characterised as the "optimism of the will."

Asaram Bapu visits Kashi, offers prayers at Vishwanath Temple; Questions raised over VIP treatment

Varanasi.(Agency)

Asaram, a convict in a rape case, offered prayers and paid obeisance at the Shri Kashi Vishwanath Temple on Sunday evening amidst tight security arrangements.

People have begun raising questions on social media regarding the alleged "VIP treatment" accorded to Asaram. His convoy arrived at Gate Number 4 of the temple around 8:30 PM on Sunday evening, where a massive crowd had gathered to catch a glimpse of him.

According to the police, no official protocol had been issued for Asaram. He was brought for "darshan" by his personal staff and associates. Upon entering the temple, he underwent a DFMD (Door Frame Metal Detector) check, just like any other devotee.

For security reasons, police personnel are routinely deployed inside and around the temple premises; given the large crowd, the police presence was maintained there to facilitate the general public.

Meanwhile, the temple administration has not yet issued any official statement regarding this matter.

Asaram is currently out on medical parole and has been staying in Kashi since March 13. He is staying at the Anoura Ashram located in Baragaon, where he has also met with several of his disciples.

According to sources, mobile phones were strictly prohibited for anyone attending the discourses held at the ashram. On Saturday, he also visited the ashram located in Alaipur. His convoy included several luxury vehicles.

Yellow alert for thunderstorms in Punjab, Haryana; rain likely to benefit wheat but strong winds a concern

Jalandhar.(Agency)

The Meteorological Department has issued a yellow alert for thunderstorms, lightning and gusty winds in several parts of Punjab and Haryana as an active western disturbance brought relief from rising temperatures on Sunday across the region.

According to the Evening Weather Bulletin on Sunday, thunderstorms and lightning were reported at isolated places in both states during the past 24 hours. Light thunderstorms with lightning and wind speeds of 30-40 kmph are likely in many parts of Punjab including Patiala, Nabha, Rajpura, Dera Bassi, Fatehgarh Sahib, Mohali, Chandigarh, Ludhiana, Jalandhar, Kapurthala, Phagwara, Moga, Ferozpur, Amritsar, Tarn Taran, Hoshiarpur and Nawanshahr. Similar conditions are also expected in several areas of Haryana.

Temperature drops across region
The recent weather activity has led to a noticeable dip in temperatures. In Punjab, the average maximum temperature fell by 6.2°C compared to the previous day and remained 2.9°C below normal. The highest temperature, which had reached between 32 to 37 degree, in the state was 28°C recorded at Abohar.

'Chandigarh-based jeweller conspired to divert Rs 250-cr government money'

Chandigarh.(Agency)

In the alleged Rs 590-crore IDFC bank fraud case, two Haryana officials serving as Controllers of Finance and Accounts in separate departments have been arrested for allegedly accepting substantial illegal gratification. This follows the earlier arrest of a superintendent-rank officer of the Haryana Development and Panchayat Department, marking a widening probe into the scam. Till now, 14 persons have been arrested in the case.

The arrested officials have been identified as Rajesh Sangwan, controller of finance and accounts at the Haryana State Agriculture Marketing Board, and Randhir Singh, controller of finance and accounts at the School Shiksha Pariyojna Parishad.

Chandigarh-based jeweller Rajan Katodia of Sawan Jewellers and the two officials were arrested on Saturday and produced before a Panchkula court on Sunday, from where they were sent to four days' police remand.

Explaining the alleged role of the two officials, the State Vigilance and Anti-Corruption Bureau (SV & ACB) informed the court that "they were found to be involved in commission of the offence as alleged". "They deliberately violated the instructions issued by the Finance Department (Government of Haryana) from time to time and hatched a criminal conspiracy with co-accused to siphon off government funds; actively participated in commission of offence and accepted substantial amounts as part of illegal gratification."

The vigilance also arrested Rajan Katodia, owner of Chandigarh-based Sawan Jewellers, in connection with the fraud case, with investigators finding that more than Rs 250 crore had been routed to his firm from companies linked to the accused.

'Mere drama', works displayed set up during SAD regime: Badal

Badal said the summit, which concluded on Sunday at Mohali, had failed to make any significant impact. "This summit was a mere drama and turned out to be a damp squib. They could not organise it for four years and conducted it only in the final year of the government, managing to bring in only a few participants."

Ludhiana.(Agency)

Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) president Sukhbir Singh Badal Sunday said the recently concluded Invest Punjab Summit was a "mere drama" and said the state government should have invited the SAD for the development works showcased before investors. Badal was speaking to the media on the sidelines of the SAD's Punjab Bachao rally organised at Bhadaur constituency in Barnala.

Badal said the summit, which concluded on Sunday at Mohali, had failed to make any significant impact. "This summit was a mere drama and turned out to be a damp squib. They could not organise it for four years and conducted it only in the final year of the government, managing to bring in only a few participants."

"All the things they showed to investors happened during our tenure. They should have rather invited the SAD and honoured us," Badal said. He said New Chandigarh was his brainchild and had been developed during the Akali Dal regime. He added that the airport, approach roads and the state's power surplus status — also highlighted

during the summit — had been achieved during the SAD government's tenure. Badal also said had the Akali Dal not developed infrastructure and made Punjab power surplus, investors would



not have been interested in coming to the state. Meanwhile, the Punjab Bachao rally at Bhadaur was organised despite intermittent rain. "I thank all the supporters who came despite the bad weather... people continued to sit there, which shows... they have made up their mind to form a government of Punjabis in Punjab and make

'Delhi walas' run away."

He also thanked party Halka in-charge Satnam Singh Rahi and his team for making arrangements for the rally. The SAD chief also announced that if voted to power, the next government would constitute a panel to review cases allegedly falsely registered by the AAP and police. Those responsible for registering false cases against innocent people would be proceeded against as per law. Announcing another priority, he said strict action would be taken to prevent industrial and sewerage effluents from entering the Sutlej and Beas. "The violators will be dealt with sternly. This is essential to tackle the scourge of cancer in the Malwa belt," he said, adding that the party would also not allow Punjab's water to flow into the Rajasthan canal. Senior SAD leader Bikram Singh Majithia also addressed the rally.

Among others present on the stage were Sant Balbir Singh Ghunna, Arvind Khanna, Kulwant Singh Keetu, Tejinder Singh Middukhera, SOI president Ranbir Singh, Beant Kaur Khaira and Baba Buta Singh Gurthadi.

'Running with 25 kg weight not needed': HP govt changes rule

Shimla.(Agency)

The Department of Animal Husbandry, Himachal Pradesh, on Saturday issued a fresh notification and amended the Pashu Mitra recruitment rules wherein the candidates will no longer be required to carry heavy sacks while running.

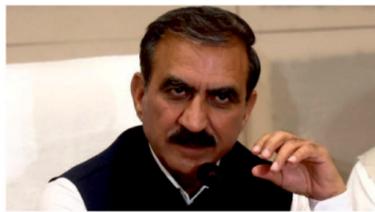
This comes after the government received flak over its decision where it's mandatory for candidates to run 100 meters carrying a 25 kg sack full of wet sand. This was to check the physical endurance for the applicants for the 500 posts of Pashu Mitras (para-veterinary workers). Under the revised norms, male candidates will now have to complete a 5-km run within 30 minutes, while female candidates

must complete a 1,500-metre run within 10 minutes.

Director of the Animal Husbandry department Sanjeev Kumar Dhiman told The Indian Express,

"We revised the rules... Now, the candidates will have no need to run carrying a 25 kg heavy sack. Candidates, who had appeared in the earlier held test at three locations, will not need to appear in the physical tests, which will happen as per the new rules. In the earlier held tests, around 90 per cent of the applicants including men and women had cleared the physical test. The merit will be also judged on the basis of their marks in the

metric exam. The age limit for candidates is between 18 and 45 years." On February 9, a video of the recruitment test for 'Pashu Mitra' was shared widely which



triggered an outrage. The video showed a woman participant dressed in a jeans and full sleeve t-shirt who lost her balance in the 100-metre run while carrying a 25

kg sack. But she got up in a devastated condition and completed the race along with other participants at Dharampur in Mandi district.

A week after the incident, the department reluctantly decided to put the entire recruitment on hold until the formation of a new Set of Procedure (SOP) on February 16.

Pashu Mitras (para-veterinary workers) is fourth-class category temporary job wherein the successful recruitment candidates have to give duty merely for four hours during the working days and will be given a fixed monthly honorarium of Rs 5,000.

Banke Bihari's digital 'Darshan': 15 days, 5.1 million online devotees, and 4.5 million pay obeisance at the Temple

Vrindavan.(Agency)

The Darshan of Vrindavan's revered deity, Thakur Shri Banke Bihari Ji, has now become accessible "in the blink of an eye"—even for devotees residing across the seven seas.

The Uttar Pradesh government's campaign, "Vikas bhi, Virasat bhi", is bearing fruit. The live streaming of the Darshan, which commenced on Rangbharani Ekadashi (February 27), has shattered records over the past 15 days. While over 5.1 million people gazed upon the divine image of "Thakur Ji" on their mobile and computer screens, approximately 4.54 million devotees paid their respects within the temple precincts in a smooth and organised manner.

The temple administration and the government have leveraged technology to manage crowds and bolster security. Currently, a daily 10-hour live broadcast covering the 'Shringar' (adornment), 'Rajbhog' (mid-day offering), and 'Shayanbhog' (night offering) 'Aartis' is being streamed across YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, and "X" (formerly Twitter).

Five advanced cameras and six large LED screens

have been installed both inside and outside the temple premises. This allows devotees who are unable to reach the 'Garbhagriha' (sanctum sanctorum) due to overcrowding to witness the divine presence live on large screens from the outside. Devotees arriving from Delhi and Ghaziabad have hailed this new arrangement as "revolutionary." They state that previously, the pushing and shoving within the narrow lanes—coupled with the massive crowds—used to instill fear; however, the screens now placed at every corner, along with the well-organised queues, have made the Darshan experience incredibly easy. Devotees can now even enjoy the 'Rajbhog Aarti' while sitting at their desks in the office.

According to Mathura District Magistrate (DM) Chandra Prakash Singh, "The use of this technology has not only bolstered security but has also brought about unprecedented improvements in crowd management. Security agencies now find it easier to control crowds, and devotees are reaching the temple without any inconvenience."

Faced with eviction orders, Shimla Ice Skating Club to submit memorandum to Himachal govt

Shimla.(Agency)

Members of the Shimla Ice Skating Club have decided to submit a memorandum to the state government seeking an alternative arrangement before vacating the club premises following instructions issued for the proposed all-weather ice skating rink project. The decision was taken during an emergency meeting of the club held on Sunday after directions were conveyed to vacate the Ice Skating Club building by March 19.

The state government plans to convert the existing skating rink into an all-weather facility, for which the club house building and adjoining servant quarters are proposed to be dismantled. During the meeting, members discussed the issue in detail and resolved to urge the government to first construct the proposed building on the adjoining land so that the club can continue its activities and store its equipment there. They maintained that once the alternative facility is completed and the club is shifted, the existing building could be dismantled in the next phase of the

project. Members said that immediate eviction would severely affect the functioning of the club as there would be no space to conduct activities or store equipment. They also pointed out that the instructions to vacate the premises have so far been conveyed only verbally and no written orders have been received by the governing body of the club. Club president Manpreet Singh Sembi and secretary Rajat Malhotra said the emergency meeting was convened to discuss the situation arising out of the proposed dismantling of the building.

After detailed deliberations, it was decided that a delegation of the club would soon meet the state government and present its demands through a formal memorandum.

The issue has also raised concerns about the future of three regular employees currently working with the club.

Members and sports enthusiasts have appealed to the government to take concrete steps to safeguard the historic institution while proceeding with the modernization of the skating facility.

Weather patterns shift in UP due to Western Disturbance; Warnings issued for rain and strong winds in several districts

Lucknow.(Agency)

With the activation of a Western Disturbance, a noticeable shift in weather patterns is being observed across Uttar Pradesh. A decline in temperatures has been recorded in several parts of the state due to light rainfall and showers accompanied by thunder and lightning.

According to the Meteorological Centre in Lucknow, the interaction between westerly and easterly winds— Influenced by an active Western Disturbance positioned over northern Punjab and a cyclonic circulation formed over southern Haryana—has led to these changes. Consequently, since Saturday night, intermittent light rain and showers accompanied by thunder and lightning have been occurring in the state's northern Terai region and the adjoining central districts.

Light rainfall was also recorded in several districts of Western Uttar Pradesh. On Sunday Meerut received 2.9 mm of rainfall, while 2.5 mm was recorded in Bareilly, 1.2 mm in Moradabad, and 0.6 mm in Bahrach. The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has forecast the possibility of light to moderate rainfall, accompanied by moderate thunderstorms and lightning on Monday, in



parts of Gautam Buddha Nagar, Bulandshahr, Hapur, Ghaziabad, Meerut, Baghpat, Bijnor, Muzaffarnagar, Shamli, and Saharanpur districts. The department has also issued a warning for the entire state regarding thunderstorms accompanied by lightning strikes and strong winds blowing at speeds of 40-50 km per hour. There is also a possibility of hailstorms occurring at a few isolated places in eastern Uttar Pradesh.

In the state capital, Lucknow, the maximum temperature recorded on Sunday was 31.6

degrees Celsius—slightly below normal—while the minimum temperature was recorded at 20.6 degrees Celsius, which is approximately 5.6 degrees higher than normal. Minimum temperatures higher than normal were also recorded in other districts. In Etawah, the maximum temperature stood at 30.4 degrees Celsius and the minimum at 20.6 degrees Celsius—a deviation of 6.9 degrees above normal. In Fatehgarh, the maximum temperature was recorded at 32 degrees and the minimum at 20.6

degrees—6.5 degrees higher than normal.

In Basti, the maximum temperature stood at 32.5 degrees and the minimum at 22.5 degrees—5.9 degrees above normal. In Agra, the maximum temperature was recorded at 31.5 degrees and the minimum at 20.4 degrees—5.3 degrees higher than normal. Meanwhile, in Ballia, the maximum temperature was 32 degrees Celsius and the minimum was 19 degrees Celsius—approximately 4 degrees above normal. According to the Meteorological Department, the current weather system is likely to remain active across the state until March 16. Subsequently, on March 17 and 18, the weather is expected to remain dry, which may lead to a slight rise in temperatures.

However, starting March 19, under the influence of another active Western Disturbance, a fresh spell of rainfall is expected to begin in Western Uttar Pradesh and spread across the entire state by March 21. Meanwhile, following rainfall in parts of Western Uttar Pradesh, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has directed all District Magistrates to conduct on-the-ground inspections to assess the damage caused to crops.

Woollens out as temp dips after fresh spell of snow, rain in Jammu

Jammu.(Agency)

The woollen clothes are out once again as the temperature has dipped after a fresh spell of snow on higher reaches and rain in the plains across the Jammu region. The Jammu district, however, recorded a 19.5-degree Celsius maximum temperature and an 11.5-degree Celsius minimum temperature.

Officials said that the hilly places Banihal recorded a minimum temperature of 4.5 degree Celsius, Katra recorded 8.8 degree Celsius, Bhandarwah 3.5 degree Celsius and Kathua 10.4 degree Celsius.

Meanwhile, the upper reaches of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Bhawan also received a fresh spell of snow, while the Katra-Sanjichhat Chopper service remained hit due to the hailstorm and fog, said officials.

A weatherman while sharing a week-long weather update said, "overall erratic weather is to continue till March 20, and it rained at many places in the Kashmir Division and a few places in the Jammu Division."

He said that on March 15-16, intermittent light to moderate rain or snow (higher reaches) till March 16 forenoon at many places.

On March 17, he said that it will be partly cloudy with brief spells of light rain or snow (higher reaches) at isolated places, and on March 18-20, it will be generally cloudy with the possibility of intermittent light to moderate rain or snow at many places, generally towards night or morning hours.

On March 21 to 23, the weather will be generally dry, and on March 24 and 25, it will be generally cloudy with light rain or snow (higher reaches) at scattered places. The travellers, transporters, and generally public travelling over higher reaches and important passes are advised to plan accordingly, as there is a possibility of thunder or gusty winds (40-50 KMPH) at a few places during March 15, 16, 18, and 20.

Farmers are advised to suspend farm operations from March 15 to 20, he added.

Police begin crackdown on black marketing of LPG in Delhi, man arrested in swoop on illegal filling hub in Shakarpur

Amid shortage of cooking gas as a result of war in Iran, case is registered under the Essential Commodities Act and for cheating

New Delhi.(Agency)

A 46-year-old man was apprehended by police for allegedly running an illegal LPG refilling operation and indulging in the black marketing of domestic gas cylinders in the Shakarpur area of East Delhi, a senior police officer said on Monday (March 16). Delhi and the NCR cities are facing a severe shortage of LPG because of supply constraints resulting from the US-Israeli war against Iran, which has resulted in the virtual closure of the Strait of Hormuz, the vital sea lane through which India and many other countries get their imports of LPG and LNG. The government has been saying that panic booking, hoarding, and black

marketing of cooking gas is exacerbating the crisis, which has hit the poor and those without permanent addresses or piped gas connections the hardest. According to the police officer, information was received on Sunday from a member of the public regarding illegal refilling of LPG cylinders at a shop in Shakarpur. The information was recorded through a Daily Diary (DD) entry at the Shakarpur police station, and a team was constituted under the leadership of the Station House Officer (SHO) to investigate. Refilling of cylinders is illegal because of the dangers of handling the highly combustible gas, and because of the price differential

between domestic and commercial cylinders, which creates scope for profiteering and black marketing of LPG. The police team, which included Head Constable Anurag and other police personnel, conducted a raid at the suspected shop in Shakarpur. During the operation, a person present at the premises identified himself as Yogesh Gupta, a resident of Shakarpur, aged about 46 years, police said. "During questioning, Gupta admitted that he had been refilling LPG gas from large domestic cylinders into smaller cylinders at his shop for the



past few days. He also disclosed that he had refilled gas in smaller cylinders two to three days prior to the raid," the police officers said. According to the police, the accused man had admitted that he did not have the licence or authorisation to carry out such activities, and had been operating without taking adequate safety measures. During the search of the premises, police allegedly recovered two domestic LPG cylinders of 14.2 kg each, three smaller domestic gas cylinders of 5 kg each, a pipe that is used to transfer gas and is commonly known as "totapilas", an LPG refilling machine, and a weighing machine. Police officers said that the recovered articles indicated that the accused was illegally transferring LPG gas from larger cylinders into smaller ones for unauthorised sale. Such

activities not only amount to black marketing of essential commodities but also pose a serious threat to public safety due to the risk of gas leaks and explosions, the officers said. Over the past week, complaints have mounted over the cost of gas "per kg" rising sharply in the black market. Slum dwellers, street vendors such as momos and chat stall owners, owners of small eateries such as roadside dhabas, tea-stall owners, etc. typically buy LPG by the kilo from unauthorised sellers and dealers of gas. Police said the accused in Shakarpur was using his shop to carry out the illegal refilling operation without any safety precautions.

3 teenagers apprehended for repeated sexual abuse of an 8-year-old in South East Delhi

Deputy Commissioner of Police (South East) Hemant Tiwari said they received a PCR call last Saturday after the girl's mother learned of the incident.

New Delhi.(Agency)

Three teenagers, aged 12 and 13, were apprehended in South East Delhi for allegedly sexually abusing an eight-year-old girl between March 12 and 14, with the case registered under POCSO and Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita provisions. According to the Delhi Police, the girl's medical reports show that the three boys had been repeatedly abusing her. Hemant Tiwari, Deputy Commissioner of Police (South East), said they received a PCR call last Saturday after the girl's mother learned of the crime. Tiwari said the girl told the police that the accused teens, two of them aged 13 and another a 12-year-old, took her to a godown near her house on the morning of March 12, and then again on March 13. On March 14, the girl told her mother about the incident. "During preliminary enquiry, the victim was sent to AIIMS along with her mother and a lady constable for medical examination. At the hospital, the victim was medically examined, and the doctor recorded the history of sexual assault by three boys aged about 12-13 years," DCP Tiwari said. He added that they registered a case under sections 70 and 351 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) and Section 6 of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (Pocso) Act at the area police station. The police said all three boys live near the victim's house.

'When they are shot, I will be at peace': Delhi Uttam Nagar murder victim's mother demands justice

New Delhi.(Agency)

The mother of a 26-year-old man killed during a clash between neighbours in west Delhi has demanded strict action against the accused, saying the family has not been informed about arrests made in the case. Tarun was killed in Delhi's Uttam Nagar area after a dispute between neighbours from different communities during Holi celebrations on 4 March escalated into violence, according to police. Speaking to reporters, his mother said the family had not received any update from authorities. "Nothing has been heard yet on our appeal. When they are shot, I will be at peace. I want the same thing to happen to them as the Yogi government does to criminals... My son has left this world. May no one else's son leave. They say 16 people have been arrested, but they haven't even shown us who they are," she said. According to her, the dispute began over a water balloon thrown by a child. "Because of just a drop of water, my son has been killed... The beginning of everything was that my 7-year-old niece was standing on the second floor, and I was standing just below my house. She was playing. A 7-year-old girl doesn't know what colour is. From her hand, the balloon fell down. A few drops of water fell on that lady named Saira. Upon this, Saira started threatening her, saying that I will get you raped by my family members. I asked her, how can you say this about a girl?" she alleged. She said the situation escalated quickly after the woman allegedly called several people to the spot. "In such a short time, she called 20-25 people. Some of them are women, and some of them are men... Tarun didn't know anything. It happened at night. She called her men," she said. The mother also alleged she was assaulted during the incident. "A lady named Salima hit me with a rod on the face. Some men tore my blouse. They hit my brother-in-law, husband, son, and my brother-in-law's son. They said they will finish Khatiks today," she alleged. She also expressed disappointment that no Dalit leader had visited the family after the incident. "Still, no Dalit leader has come to me... I want justice for my son. If the Yogi government does it, why can't Rekha Gupta do it?... She hasn't even come to meet us yet. Our daughter went to meet her," she said. Tarun's father also demanded strict punishment for those responsible and thanked people protesting for justice. "I would like to say to the people of the country that the way everyone is protesting for Tarun, we are thankful to everyone. We are doing all this to get justice for Tarun. All the criminals should be punished severely," he said.

Schools are soft targets — and the threats exhausting and disruptive

The logistics of managing security in a large school make additional safeguards difficult. Khushwaha said nearly 4,000 students enter the campus in a 10-minute window.

New Delhi.(Agency)

At Birla Vidya Niketan in South Delhi, the day begins with the administrative staff members checking the inbox of their official email ID, around 4:30-5 am. "The first thing the office staff do is check the mails," said Principal Minakshi Khushwaha. "If there is any such (threat) mail, they inform me... and the police." Such early-morning vigilance has become routine in Delhi schools as bomb threat emails, almost always hoaxes, land with unsettling frequency. Each message forces administrators to prepare for the worst: evacuating buildings, calling bomb squads, informing authorities and parents, and suspending classes.

Khushwaha said her school has received around five such emails in recent years and most arrived before the school



hours. "Fortunately, we got all of them before the school started," she said. "Before 7:30, when the children came, the searches were complete and the police had given us a green signal."

The school follows a routine inspection protocol every day. After classes end, the building is cleaned and inspected for any suspicious object before classrooms are locked. The process is repeated the next morning.

However, it is different when the threat is received after the classes have begun. "Once the email had come after everybody was inside," Khushwaha said. "We quickly informed the police. They came with sniffer dogs and checked the building."

Despite the seriousness of the situation, the reaction among students has changed over time. "If you take the children to the ground, they start playing."

Buses risk lives on city roads in race for passengers

New Delhi.(Agency)

The last week began with a tragic accident on the Najafgarh-Nangloi Road in West Delhi, which resulted in the deaths of two men and left at least two others injured. The incident was caused by two Delhi Transport Corporation (DTC) Cluster buses racing against each other to overtake and reach the next stop first. One of the speeding buses ploughed into multiple vehicles, including a scooty, a motorcycle, an e-rickshaw, and several pedestrians. The buses in the city were not always this menacing. When one arrived in the national Capital in the 1980s, the buses operated by the DTC sustained the city. Disciplined, punctual though over-packed during the peak hours, DTC's buses were a support in earning livelihood and not, unlike these times, a threat to life.

The monopoly was further broken, when Madanlal Khurana-led Delhi government in the 1990s, allowed private operators through what initially was called the Redline buses. The



colour of these buses were soon changed blue as rashly driven, they splattered sufficient red-coloured gore on the roads.

Slowly the Blueline buses came to dominate the city roads. Despite the change of colour, these privately operated buses remained as domineering as Redline predecessors. The DTC buses had their opportunity

to return, when the Supreme Court ordered diesel buses out and DTC, during Sheila Dikshit's regime, came with a fleet of CNG-operated buses.

Slowly DTC started to resuscitate itself and by the time of the Commonwealth Games in 2010, with low floor buses semblance of order on roads was in the city. The public transport system by now also had Delhi Metro taking over the major load. Though costlier than the buses, its clean and safe journey became preferred mode.

Sadly during the rule of the Arvind Kejriwal-Atishi government for 12 years, not a single bus was added to the DTC fleet and private operators were back with élan in the form of the cluster buses. Once again, buses rashly driven by greed for higher revenue, became the order of the day, as was witnessed last week.

Today anyone who drives in Delhi has to learn to keep a safe distance from DTC and cluster buses. Their drivers, much like those of the infamous Blueline buses of the past, often intimidate other road users by tailgating, driving rashly, refusing to yield, and showing little regard for traffic signals.

50 threat emails, 500 schools: What's been keeping Delhi Police's bomb squads on alert 24*7 for two years

New Delhi.(Agency)

In a moderately sized, brightly lit, third-floor room on the premises of R K Puram Police Station, two men sit, checking some equipment. There is a table in the room, a few other chairs, an almirah against a wall, and several boxes full of equipment and tools.

This could be the store room of a company manufacturing machinery parts. It is, in fact, the hub from which radiates a critical response to an emergency to which Delhi Police has been repeatedly alerted over the past couple of years.

This room is one of the 10-odd allotted to the Bomb Detection Team (BDT) and Bomb Disposal Squad (BDS). The equipment the two men — who are part of the BDS, Southern Range — are examining are bombsuits and searchlights. There are cloth jackets in the room with "Bomb Disposal Squad" emblazoned on them.



The BDT and BDS teams — comprising a total 430 personnel of ranks from Constable to Inspector — have been unusually busy since the summer of 2024, when schools in Delhi and several NCR cities began to frequently receive emails threatening bomb attacks.

All the threats so far have turned out to be hoaxes — but there is never the slightest scope for police to take any threat lightly. "We remain on standby 24 hours," one of the men in the room said.

"Earlier, some days would be lean, but now our workload has gone up significantly due to the bomb threats that schools have been receiving," the other official said.

Coordinated response Once a call comes in through the local PCR unit, a BDS team is deployed along with the Dog Squad and the Bomb Detection Team (BDT). "All three units work together," a BDT officer said.

'Ate bananas and roti..., dhaba food is too expensive': Poor bear the brunt of war in faraway West Asia

The government fixed the price of a 14.2-kg domestic LPG cylinder in Delhi at Rs 913, against the earlier rate of Rs 853.

New Delhi.(Agency)

Shyam Kumar, a migrant from Sitamarhi in Bihar, had known since the time he arrived in Delhi 17 years ago, at the age of 12 in search of work, that life here is extremely difficult for the poor, and that they must always be prepared for unexpected challenges. However, he never imagined that even a cooking gas cylinder could become a problem, even when he is willing to pay a higher price. "I do not have an LPG card, so I have to buy cylinders from the black market. Earlier, I used to get a 14.2-kg cylinder for around Rs 1,100. Over the last six days, I have tried every possible way to get one, but I could not. Now they are selling it for Rs 2,500-3,000. I am ready to pay," said Kumar, a vegetable seller who lives on rent in Delhi's Kalkaji with his wife and three children. He also intermittently works as a daily-wage labourer. The government fixed the price of a 14.2-kg domestic LPG cylinder in Delhi at Rs 913,

against the earlier rate of Rs 853. "On the first night, when the cylinder suddenly ran out, we had to spend the night eating bananas and roti. Since then, we have been relying on food from a nearby dhaba that has become very expensive...Because of the ongoing crisis, the prices of roti, chawal, dal etc. at the dhaba have nearly doubled. Ameeron ke yahan kabhi supply nahi rukti hai, saari mushkil hamare liye hi hai (LPG supply never stops for the rich; people like us face all the difficulties)," added Kumar. Almost 2,500 km away from Kumar's home in Delhi lies the Strait of Hormuz, where the ongoing war in West Asia involving Iran, Israel and the United States has upended oil supply pathways. Sirens echo across the waters as Iranian naval forces restrict the movement of ships passing through the narrow shipping lanes — each barely about three-km-wide.

From this distant battlefield, the shockwaves have quietly reached small households since the war has choked the



global oil and gas supply, resulting in the shortage of LPG cylinder supply across India. Almost 90% of India's total LPG import passes through the Strait of Hormuz. India's annual LPG consumption is currently estimated at around 33 million tonnes, of which domestic production is around 13 million tonnes, or around 40%,

and it depends on import for 60% of its total LPG supplies, which is sourced from countries like Qatar, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates (UAE) etc.

Kamal Goswami, a tea seller in Ghaziabad's Vasundhara has stopped selling tea since mid-last week. The cylinder he used with his stove is missing, the pipe hanging from the stove down to his gumti (small stall) silently speaks of the crisis.

"I have done it deliberately so that people can understand the gravity of the situation. It has become extremely difficult to get a cylinder right now. Even if we are ready to pay a higher price, we are not getting one. The government says it is taking action against hoarders, but where is the action on the ground? Earlier, at least we could get a cylinder in the black market by paying Rs 200-300 extra, but now even that is not possible," he said.

NEWS BOX

KKR injury worries grow as Harshit Rana spotted on crutches, IPL 2026 in doubt

Mumbai, (Agency)

Kolkata Knight Riders could face a major setback ahead of IPL 2026 after fast bowler Harshit Rana was spotted on crutches during the BCCI Naman Awards in Mumbai. The development has raised fresh concerns about his fitness and availability for the upcoming season. The pacer attended the ceremony on March 15 but was unable to walk onto the stage to collect his award for Best International Debut (Men's). IPL chairman Arun Dhimal instead presented the honour to Rana after walking down the stage himself. The video of Rana arriving at the event with crutches quickly went viral on social media, further fuelling speculation about the extent of his injury and whether he will be fit in time for the IPL.

WHAT IS HARSHIT RANA'S INJURY?

Harshit Rana suffered a knee injury during a T20 World Cup warm-up match against South Africa earlier this year. The injury proved serious enough to rule him out of India's T20 World Cup campaign, with Mohammed Siraj called up as his replacement in the squad. Rana later



underwent knee surgery in Mumbai on February 9. According to medical assessments, the fast bowler is expected to require around two to three months for full recovery. While the surgery was successful, the recovery timeline puts his participation in IPL 2026 in serious doubt.

KKR'S INJURY PROBLEMS AHEAD OF IPL 2026

Rana's potential absence could significantly weaken Kolkata Knight Riders' bowling attack. The young pacer was a key member of KKR's title-winning squad in 2024 and continued to play an important role for the franchise in the following season.

The situation becomes more complicated for KKR as Mustafizur Rahman is no longer part of the squad, while Sri Lankan pacer Matheesha Pathirana is still dealing with fitness concerns.

No Messi vs Yamal as UEFA cancels Spain vs Argentina Finalissima over Middle East war

LONDON, (Agency)

The highly anticipated Finalissima clash between Spain and Argentina has been cancelled due to rising geopolitical tensions in the Middle East. The match was scheduled to be played in Qatar on March 27. The fixture would have brought together UEFA Euro 2024 champions Spain and Copa America 2024 winners Argentina in Doha. UEFA confirmed the cancellation on Sunday after discussions with local authorities and organisers about the situation in the region. "After much discussion between UEFA and the organising authorities in Qatar, it is announced today that due to the current political situation in the region, the Finalissima cannot be played as hoped in Qatar," UEFA said in a statement. The European football body added that attempts were made to move the game to another location but those efforts ultimately failed. "UEFA explored other feasible alternatives but each ultimately



proved unacceptable to the Argentinian Football Association," the statement added. The cancellation means fans will miss out on a historic meeting between Argentina captain Lionel Messi and Spain's teenage star Lamine Yamal, who were set to face each other for the first time. The match had generated huge excitement as it would have been a symbolic passing-of-the-torch moment between the 38-year-old Messi and the 18-year-old Barcelona winger, who has often been compared to the Argentine legend due to their similar playing styles and positions.

WHY DID THE FINALISSIMA GET CANCELLED?

The cancellation of the Finalissima is the latest sporting disruption linked to the conflict in the Middle East following U.S. and Israeli strikes on Iran. Previously, Formula 1 had to scrap the Bahrain and Saudi Arabian Grands Prix for the same reason.

Who is Max Dowman Arsenal's 16-year-old star now Premier League's youngest scorer

Arsenal teenager Max Dowman made Premier League history with a stunning goal against Everton. At just 16 years and 73 days, the winger became the youngest goalscorer the league has ever seen.

LAVERKUSEN, (Agency)

Arsenal fans witnessed history on Saturday when 16-year-old Max Dowman scored in their 2-0 win over Everton to become the youngest goalscorer in Premier League history. The teenage winger delivered a stunning stoppage-time moment that instantly put him in the league's record books. Dowman achieved the milestone at 16 years and 73 days, breaking a record that had stood since 2005. Everton's James Vaughan had previously held the mark after scoring at

16 years and 270 days against Crystal Palace. The goal came in only Dowman's third Premier League appearance of the season. Arsenal manager Mikel Arteta turned to the youngster in the 74th minute with the match still goalless, trusting the teenager to make an impact. Dowman first helped spark the move that led to Viktor Gyokeres' opening goal in the 89th minute before producing his own moment of magic in stoppage time. The teenager collected the ball near midfield, dribbled past two Everton players and sprinted clear from the halfway line. With goalkeeper Jordan Pickford stranded upfield after joining a late corner, Dowman calmly finished into an empty net to seal the win. After the match, Arteta revealed that the decision to introduce Dowman came from instinct. "Probably in my head I had a gut feeling," Arteta said, explaining why he brought the teenager on. The Arsenal manager added that Dowman's mentality makes him stand out even at such a young age. "He doesn't seem to be affected by the occasion or the opponent. He just plays naturally, makes decisions and tries to make things happen. What he delivered today was incredible,"

Arteta said. "I told him to go and do his thing and try to win the game for us. These are the moments in a season when something special has to happen," he added. Dowman's goal also placed him at the top of one of the Premier League's most fascinating lists. Max Dowman's rise at Arsenal has been quick and



eye-catching.

The young winger first trained with the senior squad when he was only 14, instantly catching the attention of Mikel Arteta and the coaching staff. His first taste of the first team came during Arsenal's warm-weather training camp in Dubai, and before long he was regularly joining senior sessions — even while still going to school. There are still

small reminders that he is only 16. Because of Premier League regulations for under-18 players, Dowman cannot use the senior dressing room and instead changes into his Arsenal kit in a separate locker room before training sessions and matches.

Dowman also made a strong impression during Arsenal's pre-season tour of Asia. He featured in games against AC Milan and Newcastle, even winning penalties against Newcastle and Villarreal, showing the kind of confidence rarely seen in someone his age. Earlier this season, he had already etched his name in the record books by becoming the youngest player to appear in the Champions League at 15 years and 308 days, coming on as a substitute against Slavia Prague. Arteta has often spoken highly of the teenager, praising his natural ability and calmness on the ball. The Arsenal boss has noted how Dowman plays without fear and always looks to influence the game.

In January, Arsenal also moved quickly to secure his long-term future. The club agreed a pre-contract that will allow Dowman to sign professional terms once he turns 17 on December 31.

Ex-India coach Rahul Dravid proud of Sanju Samson's comeback journey in T20 World Cup

New Delhi, (Agency)

Former India head coach Rahul Dravid has praised Sanju Samson's inspiring comeback during India's successful 2026 T20 World Cup campaign. Dravid said the wicketkeeper-batter's journey through years of inconsistency and setbacks made his rise even more satisfying.

Samson began the tournament outside the playing XI as India experimented with different combinations during the group stage. Speaking on JioHotstar, Dravid said it was rewarding to see the batter finally deliver on the biggest stage after spending years moving in and out of the national side. Speaking to JioHotstar during the BCCI Naman Awards on March 15 in Mumbai, Dravid reflected on Samson's journey, and explained how the Kerala batter endured a long and challenging road. "It was really nice



to see Sanju get it all together in those final three games, which were very important games for India. For a long time, Sanju had been in and out of the team, performed well, had some tough times, and it was really good to see someone who has worked so hard get the success he did at such a critical phase for Indian cricket," he said. Dravid has closely followed Samson's growth over the years. The former coach had included him in India's squad that won the 2024 T20 World Cup, although Samson did not play a single match in that edition. Dravid also worked with him in the IPL when he coached Rajasthan Royals during the 2024 and 2025 seasons, with Samson leading the franchise as captain. India eventually went on to win the 2026 T20 World Cup, becoming the first team in history to successfully defend the title. The team achieved the feat on home soil.

Tried to make Gambhir laugh many times during T20 World Cup, reveals Suryakumar Yadav

New Delhi, (Agency)

Suryakumar Yadav has revealed that India's players made repeated attempts to lighten the mood around head coach Gautam Gambhir during the T20 World Cup 2026, but it was only after the final that they got what they were looking for. Speaking after India's title win in Ahmedabad, the captain said Gambhir's intensity never let up throughout the tournament, keeping the camp locked in from the first game to the last. "We tried many times during the World Cup to make him laugh, but our games were so intense from the beginning until the final. However, after winning the final, when we saw that smile on his face, everyone was very happy," Suryakumar said on.

Gambhir's rare moment

It was an uncharacteristic sight. Gambhir has never been one for public displays of emotion, carrying the same fierce

competitive edge into coaching that defined his playing career. Smiles have been few and far between since he took charge of the side,

like a fight he cannot afford to lose, Sunday night offered something he rarely allows himself. MS Dhoni, who was spotted in the

VVIP box alongside Rohit Sharma and Jay Shah throughout the final, was quick to mark the moment. The former India captain took to Instagram with a rare post that immediately sent the internet into a frenzy. Coach Sahab smile looks great on you. Intensity with smile is a killer combo, very well done," Dhoni wrote.

The post drew a massive response, with fans delighting in the rare glimpse of a more relaxed Gambhir after months of seeing him in full battle mode on the touchline.

For Gambhir, the result was vindication of an uncompromising approach that had at times divided opinion. He demanded intensity, got it from his players at every turn, and now has a World Cup title to show for it.



with the coach consistently projecting an air of single-minded focus regardless of results. But the World Cup win in Ahmedabad appeared to briefly lower the guard of one of cricket's most intense figures. For a man who treats every game

Ahmedabad curse behind him, Suryakumar wishes he could replay 2023 World Cup final

Suryakumar Yadav says lifting the T20 World Cup 2026 trophy in Ahmedabad has finally put to rest the pain of the 2023 ODI World Cup final defeat at the same venue, the memory that haunted him most.

MUMBAI, (Agency)

Suryakumar Yadav says winning the T20 World Cup 2026 final in Ahmedabad has finally allowed him to make peace with the city that once broke his heart.

When asked which game he would replay if given the chance, the Indian T20I captain did not hesitate. He picked the 2023 ODI World Cup final at the Narendra Modi Stadium, where India suffered a shock defeat to Australia after being overwhelming favourites throughout the tournament. For Suryakumar, that night had lingered long. "Whole experience again? Definitely the 2023 World Cup final at

Ahmedabad. I'd love to replay that again and win it. We did win in Ahmedabad. I think that story is over now," he said at the BCCI's Naman Awards 2026

Rapid fire, captain's edition! Don't miss this fun round with the Indian captains. The criticism that followed It was a remarkable moment of closure for a



player who has carried more than just personal baggage into this tournament.

In the months following the 2023 defeat, Suryakumar found himself at the centre of a debate that refused to go away. Fans and pundits questioned whether he was the right fit for the ODI setup, with many arguing that a different middle-order combination could

have taken India over the line that night. Social media was particularly unforgiving. A vocal section of supporters suggested his place in the side should have gone to a player better suited to the demands of 50-over cricket. Some went further, insisting that India's failure to win that final could be traced directly to selection calls that included him in the XI.

Those opinions stung, but Suryakumar responded the only way he knew how, by performing. His journey from that gut-wrenching night in 2023 to lifting a World Cup as captain in the very same stadium is a story that would have seemed far-fetched even a year ago. The 2023 final remains one of Indian cricket's rawest wounds. India had gone unbeaten through the entire tournament, carrying the hopes of a billion fans into that November night, only to fall at the final hurdle against Pat Cummins' Australia.

India's victory in the T20 World Cup 2026 final was comprehensive, silencing any doubts about their dominance in the shortest format. For Suryakumar personally, the result carried a meaning that went far beyond statistics or silverware.

Can Carrick bring the good times back to Manchester United Rooney shares his stance

Seven wins from nine games have taken Manchester United from sixth to third under Michael Carrick, with Wayne Rooney and fans growing louder in their calls for him to be handed the job permanently.

NEW DELHI, (Agency)

Manchester United's season was in freefall when Michael Carrick walked through the door in January. Seven wins from nine games later, the club is third in the Premier League,

within touching distance of the Champions League and daring to dream again.

The transformation has been so stark that club legend Wayne Rooney has seen enough. "100% he should get the job," Rooney told the BBC after United's 3-1 win against Aston Villa on Sunday. "We have seen the players play with more quality, more together as a team, and they look like a very strong team. Why would you change? It is a question United's hierarchy will need to answer before the season is out.

From sixth to third

Carrick was brought in as a temporary fix after Ruben Amorim became the sixth permanent manager or head coach to be discarded at Old Trafford since Sir Alex Ferguson retired in 2013. The brief was simple: stop the rot.

What followed was anything but simple. United climbed from sixth to third, picking up wins against Manchester City and Arsenal along the way. A club that felt like it was tearing itself apart suddenly looked



organised, motivated and hard to beat.

Carrick, for his part, has refused to get drawn into the speculation surrounding his future.

"It's only noise if you listen to it. It doesn't affect me one bit," he said after the Villa win. "I'm in this position at the moment, doing the best I can. Whatever's going to happen is going to happen."

Knowing what it takes

There is an argument that Carrick was always better placed than most to steady the ship at Old Trafford. He won five Premier League titles and the Champions League as a player at the club, and later served as an assistant to Ole Gunnar Solskjaer before moving into management. "I know what it takes to succeed here. My focus is now on helping the players to reach the standards that we expect at this incredible club," Carrick said upon his appointment. He has delivered on that promise. Bruno Fernandes, Casemiro and summer signing Benjamin Sesko have all flourished, while academy product Kobbie Mainoo has been reinvigorated after being largely marginalised under Amorim. The football has been effective, at times entertaining, and the mood around the club has shifted considerably.

The case against

Yet handing Carrick the job permanently would not be without risk.

India has tax buffer to avoid retail fuel price hike up to \$110 a barrel: Report

New Delhi, (Agency)

India still has a meaningful tax buffer to absorb crude shocks, as excise duties of Rs 19.9 per litre on gasoline and Rs 15.8 per litre on diesel can be cut to protect retail prices until about \$110 per barrel crude, a report said on Monday. The report from Elara Capital said retail gasoline and diesel prices "could be fully protected through excise cuts until roughly \$110/bbl, beyond which price hikes on diesel and gasoline would become inevitable". It estimated India can absorb a \$40-45 crude shock via tax, adding that beyond \$110/bbl, the burden would shift from the government to consumers, the report added. For every \$10 per barrel rise in crude, oil marketing companies' diesel and gasoline margins would fall by Rs 6.3 per litre and LPG losses would rise by Rs 10.2 per kg. The dynamics implies about Rs 328 billion in annual LPG under-recovery, the report further said.

Cross refining margins of OMCs could rise by about \$5/bbl for every \$10/bbl crude move, but that would not fully offset their marketing and LPG losses, the report added. At current Brent of \$100/bbl, earnings could drop sharply around 90-190 per cent absent retail price hike, tax cut, or higher LPG subsidy, it said. IOCL is better placed among OMCs due to higher refining share, but still vulnerable if crude stays high and retail price unchanged.

"The US-Iran war has changed the way the Indian Oil & Gas sector reacts to crude prices. Our sensitivity analysis at Brent crude oil price of \$100, \$125 and \$150 shows 'EBITDA swing range' from a collapse of >400 per cent for OMCs to 10-15x expansion for standalone refiners," the report explained. Two-thirds of India's LNG imports pass via Hormuz, adding a supply risk on the gas side, it noted.

Gold and Silver Under pressure as Fed rate cut hopes fade and West Asia tensions simmer

New Delhi, (Agency)

Gold and silver took a hit on Monday as investors pulled back on bets of an early interest rate cut by the US Federal Reserve. Worries over the worsening situation in West Asia added to the caution, keeping buyers on the sidelines. On the Multi Commodity Exchange, gold futures for the April 2 contract fell over 1 per cent — down Rs 1,811 — to trade at Rs 1,56,655 per 10 grams around 10 in the morning. Silver had a rougher session, with May 5 futures dropping nearly 2 per cent or Rs 5,068 to Rs 2,54,367 per kg. The weakness was not limited to Indian markets. Globally, gold slipped 0.66 per cent to around USD 5,028 per ounce, while silver shed 0.79 per cent to trade near USD 80.70 per ounce. Analysts said the direction of gold prices in the near term will depend heavily on what comes out of the Fed's upcoming policy meeting. Crude oil hovering above USD 100 per barrel has strengthened the dollar further, which typically works against gold.

The rupee too opened on the back foot, falling 13 paise to 92.43 against the US dollar in early trade. At the interbank forex market, the local unit started at 92.44 and stayed pinned near its weakest intraday level. The US Dollar Index eased slightly by 0.20 per cent but held firmly above the 100 mark, continuing to weigh on the rupee. On the geopolitical front, the Iran-Israel conflict showed no signs of cooling, keeping investor nerves on edge.

Equity markets were not spared either. The BSE Sensex opened 148 points lower at 74,415, while the Nifty 50 began the session nearly flat at 23,116, up just 35 points from Friday's close, as traders kept a close watch on developments in the Middle East standoff involving Iran, Israel, and the United States.

Oil prices climb nearly 4% amid escalating West Asia conflict

New Delhi, (Agency)

Global oil prices rose on Monday after the United States launched strikes on military assets on Kharg Island over the weekend, escalating tensions in the Persian Gulf as the conflict entered its third week.

At around 9:45 am, Crude oil futures — specifically the US benchmark West Texas Intermediate (WTI) — surged by 3.77 per cent to USD 102.44, while Brent crude — the international benchmark — traded at USD 104.79, up 1.59 per cent from the previous close. The surge in oil prices followed retaliatory attacks by Iran on Israel and several Arab states after US strikes targeted military facilities on Kharg Island, which handles the bulk of Iran's crude shipments. US President Donald Trump warned that Iran's energy infrastructure on the island — responsible for roughly 90 per cent of the country's oil exports — could face further attacks if Tehran disrupts shipping through the Strait of Hormuz. Trump said he was "demanding" that other nations help secure the key maritime passage that connects the oil and gas supplies of the Persian Gulf to global markets. Washington has reportedly urged major oil-importing partners such as China and Japan to deploy naval vessels to the Strait to ensure the safe movement of tankers. Around one-fifth of global oil shipments and significant volumes of seaborne liquefied natural gas pass through the waterway.

The US has also ordered the Navy's Fifth Fleet to escort commercial vessels in the region in an effort to deter potential Iranian attacks. The strike on Kharg Island marks a further escalation in the conflict, which, according to the International Energy Agency (IEA), has already triggered the largest supply disruption in the history of the global oil market.

Why has the Income Tax Department asked taxpayers to ignore advance tax emails

New Delhi, (Agency)

Many taxpayers were left confused this week after receiving unexpected reminder emails from the Income Tax Department about advance tax payments. The emails suggested that certain taxpayers had undertaken "significant transactions" that did not appear to match their advance tax payments. However, several recipients soon pointed out that the transactions mentioned in these emails were either incorrect or not related to them at all. As complaints started surfacing online, the department stepped in with a clarification, asking taxpayers to ignore the communication for now.

DEPARTMENT ACKNOWLEDGES ERROR IN EMAIL CAMPAIGN

Responding to the issue, the Income Tax Department posted a clarification on X, acknowledging that there had been an error in the advance tax e-campaign emails. It wrote, "Kind attention taxpayers! Clarification has been issued

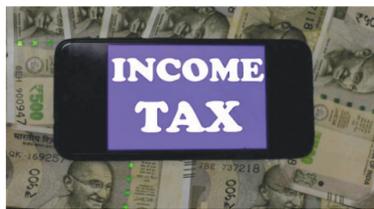
regarding certain email communications sent under the Advance Tax e-Campaign for AY 2026-27 (FY 2025-26)." The department said it appreciates taxpayers who flagged the issue and apologised for the inconvenience caused. Officials also said they are working with their service provider to fix the problem.

In its message, the department stated that taxpayers should ignore the earlier email communication related to the Advance Tax e-Campaign for Assessment Year 2026-27 (Financial Year 2025-26).

WHAT THE EMAIL SAID

The emails sent to taxpayers claimed that the department had reasons to believe their advance tax payments did not align with their financial activity. To support this claim, the emails also listed so-called "significant transactions" allegedly undertaken by the taxpayer during the year. These transactions typically included financial activities

that the tax department tracks through reporting systems. However, many recipients said the transactions listed in



their emails were either inaccurate or unrelated to them, which triggered confusion and concern.

DEPARTMENT EXPLAINS PURPOSE OF SUCH REMINDERS

The tax department clarified that such communications are meant only as facilitative reminders. According to the department, these messages are designed to help taxpayers review financial information available on the

compliance portal and ensure that their advance tax obligations are properly met, if applicable. Taxpayers have been advised to check their transaction details through the e-Campaign section available on the compliance portal through the e-filing website.

EXPERTS SAY TIMING AND TONE COULD IMPROVE

Tax experts say reminder campaigns are useful, especially when they encourage voluntary compliance. However, some experts believe communication could be improved. They say sending such alerts earlier in the quarter would make them more helpful and less disruptive.

Experts also noted that routine financial activities being labelled as "significant transactions" can create unnecessary anxiety among taxpayers. According to them, simple reminder messages are often more effective than emails that sound like formal notices.

Buying the market dip Why index funds may be the smarter bet

Mumbai, (Agency)

Retail investors often face a familiar dilemma when markets turn volatile. Should they stay invested in equities or return to the perceived safety of fixed deposits? Amid the ongoing bloodbath on Dalal Street due to the war in West Asia, that debate has resurfaced once again. The Nifty 50, which touched an all-time high of 26,373 earlier this year, is currently trading around 23,156. This represents a correction of roughly 3,200 points or about 12% from its peak. Meanwhile, the Sensex is currently roughly 13.6% below its all-time high of 86,159.02, recorded in December 2025. Retail investors often face a familiar dilemma when markets turn volatile. Should they stay invested in equities or return to the perceived safety of fixed deposits? Amid the ongoing bloodbath on Dalal Street due to the war in West Asia, that debate has resurfaced once again.

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currently trading around 23,156. This represents a correction of roughly 3,200 points or about 12% from its peak. Meanwhile, the Sensex is currently roughly 13.6% below its all-time high of 86,159.02, recorded in December 2025. The decline has been driven by a mix of global uncertainties, geopolitical tensions, rising crude oil prices and persistent foreign fund outflows. Periods like these often become less about predicting the market and more about investor behaviour. "Retail investors are caught between FD comfort and equity anxiety," said Mr. Manish Jain, Deputy CEO at Choice Mutual Fund (Choice AMC). "The current market phase is a behaviour test and not a market call. The question investors should ask themselves is whether they are behaving well, assuming they are investing right." According to Jain, investors who continue investing through market dips, particularly through index funds, often stand a better chance of achieving long-term

success than those who stop investing and attempt to reenter later. "Someone continuing to invest in index funds during dips has more chances to be right than stopping, waiting and re-entering," he said. "The correction has already done some of the work in terms of valuations. When markets are fairly priced, generating alpha becomes tougher, so for an index investor it is not a bad place to be."

WHAT ARE INDEX FUNDS?

An index fund is a type of mutual fund that seeks to replicate the performance of a market index such as the Nifty 50 or the Sensex. Instead of trying to select stocks that might outperform the broader market, the fund simply invests in the same companies that make up the index and in the same proportion. A Nifty 50 index fund, for instance, holds shares of all 50 companies in the benchmark index. Because the strategy mirrors the market rather than attempting to beat it, index funds fall under the category of passive investing.

Woman sold one house, bought 7 flats with capital gains and claimed tax exemption — Tax department objected, but tribunal ruled in her favor

Mumbai, (Agency)

A Delhi resident Saroj Rani sold her house and reinvested the entire capital gains into seven adjoining flats on the same floor of a residential complex. She claimed tax exemption under Section 54 of the Income Tax Act, treating all seven units as a single residential property. The tax department rejected her claim, arguing that seven separately registered units cannot be counted as one house. The Income Tax Appellate Tribunal ruled in her favour. It held that since all seven flats were on the same floor, shared a common entry, and functioned as one connected living space, they qualified as a single residential house for the purpose of



Section 54. The tribunal relied on a Delhi High Court ruling in the Gita Duggal case, which had earlier established that physically connected units used together as one home can be treated as a single residence regardless of how many registration documents exist. Under Section 54, if you sell a residential house and reinvest the capital gains into another residential property within two years of sale or three years if constructing, you are exempt from paying long-term capital gains tax on that profit. The exemption is capped at Rs 10 crore. The tribunal made clear that the exemption applies when multiple units are on the same floor and used together as one home. Flats spread across different floors or different wings of a building would likely not get the same treatment and could still be denied the benefit by the tax department.

Sensex, Nifty open flat as energy supply crisis still weighs on Dalal Street

New Delhi, (Agency)

Benchmark stock market indices opened flat on Monday as the energy supply crunch still weighed on investor sentiment. Metal sector stocks gained in early trade, limiting losses on Dalal Street. The S&P BSE Sensex was down 98.52 points to 74,465.40, while the NSE Nifty 50 lost 28.75 points to 23,122.35 as of 9:27 am. Dr. VK Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist, Geojit Investments Limited, said that with the uncertainty surrounding the war continuing, markets are in uncharted territory.

"The sustained heavy selling by FIIs and the weakness in rupee are contributing to the market weakness. In the near-term FIIs are likely to continue selling in the market, particularly when there is a mild rally in the market. This will add to the weakness in the market, even in

fundamentally sound sectors and stocks," he added. After the opening bell, UltraTech Cement Ltd led the Sensex gainers, rising 2.51%. It was followed by InterGlobe Aviation Ltd,



which gained 2.30%. Tata Steel Ltd moved up 1.66%, while State Bank of India Ltd added 1.38%. Bajaj Finance Ltd also opened higher, rising 1.25%. Bharat Electronics Ltd saw the sharpest

fall, dropping 1.31%. Mahindra and Mahindra Ltd declined 0.53%, Infosys Ltd slipped 0.50%, Trent Ltd was down 0.41%, and Eternal Ltd fell 0.30% in early trade. "How the high crude prices impact India's GDP growth and corporate earnings, going forward, will depend on the duration of the war. There are times when doing nothing is a good strategy. This appears to be the case now," said Vijayakumar.

"However, investors with risk appetite can certainly nibble at high quality stocks across sectors, now available at fair valuations. In the broader market there are growth stocks available at attractive valuations. Even in the weak market environment, pharmaceuticals and telecom stocks are exhibiting resilience," he added.

How many pensioners are under OPS and NPS Govt shares numbers

There has been growing discussion around OPS and NPS in recent years, especially among government employees. The Centre has now revealed the latest numbers of pensioners under both schemes in Parliament. So how many pensioners are covered under OPS and NPS?

New Delhi, (Agency)

The government has shared fresh details in Parliament on the pension system for central government employees, including the number of pensioners under the Old Pension Scheme (OPS) and the National Pension System (NPS). The information was provided in the Rajya Sabha by Minister of State for Finance, Pankaj Chaudhary, on March 10, 2026, in response to a question on pension reforms and services for pensioners.

OVER 50 LAKH CENTRAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES

Pankaj Chaudhary said that the total number of central government employees is about 50.14 lakh. Among pensioners, nearly 69 lakh are receiving pensions under the Old Pension Scheme (OPS). In comparison, 49,802 pensioners are currently covered under the National Pension System (NPS) as of January 31, 2026. The government clarified that the NPS applies to central government employees, except members of the armed forces, who joined service on or after January 1, 2004.

NO DELAY REPORTED IN NPS PENSION PAYMENTS

Responding to concerns about delays in pension payments, the government said no such cases have been reported by NPS subscribers. It said neither the government nor the Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) has received complaints about delays in the payment of monthly pension by annuity service providers under the NPS. GOVERNMENT'S VIEW ON

RESTORATION OF OPS

The issue of restoring the Old Pension Scheme has been debated in several states in recent years. On this matter, the government said that bringing back OPS is entirely a decision for state governments to take. However, it pointed

Secretary to review the system and suggest changes. Based on discussions with different stakeholders, the government introduced the Unified Pension Scheme (UPS) as an option under the NPS. The aim is to provide defined benefits after retirement for central government employees who are part of the NPS.

STEPS TO MAKE PENSION SERVICES MORE DIGITAL

The government also highlighted steps taken to make pension services easier and more digital. A new simplified pension application form has been introduced through the centralised pension processing software called Bhavishya. This system is now mandatory for all central civil ministries and departments.

Digital Life Certificates have also been introduced so that pensioners can submit their life certificates online instead of visiting offices in person. For NPS subscribers, the entire exit process, including lump sum withdrawal and purchase of annuity, can now be completed online. Subscribers receive updates through email and SMS at different stages of the process.



out that the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG), in its state finance audit reports, has highlighted the financial burden that could arise if states revert to the old pension system. To improve retirement benefits for employees covered under NPS, the Centre had earlier set up a committee under the then Finance

Focus on your strengths and make a few wise moves to jumpstart your career.

5 tips for

Women to take control of their Careers



Working women face unique challenges at the workplace. Lack of investment in professional development, the absence of a role model, and juggling between work and family life are just a few of the barriers. However, it is possible to cross these hurdles and come out a winner. Suggests Deepa Sapatnekar, head of communication, LinkedIn India, Korea and MENA region, "Don't wait for your employer to give you guidance on your career path. Choose someone you admire at your company or elsewhere, and look at the career steps they made to be successful. Find out, for instance, how long they stayed in their role, and how often they moved to a new company."

More ways to take control:

1. Seek out women who can act your mentor. Join business networking sites LinkedIn groups to find professional women in your industry or region and make new connections.
2. Ask questions about what you should look for in a mentor.
3. Research positions similar to your own to understand the skills involved and pay scales so you can have regular informed conversations about your remuneration.
4. Save time and effort by using online networks to meet like-minded women professionals, mentors and key business contacts.
5. Can't find the time to attend networking events? Take a bit of time each day online to reach out to one key contact.

Startups scouting alumni networks for talent



What's better than a smartphone? Two or more smartphones, of course. By combining the power of multiple smartphones or in some cases, by linking them together wirelessly, you can do some of these amazing things.

Here's how to get started...

Abhiraj Singh Bhal, co-founder of UrbanClap, an online marketplace for local services, is scouting for four CEOs who can own and operate UrbanClap's city operations. Bhal has already closed hiring for two of the six city CEO positions which received 1,000 applications.

At least 30% of the applications were from IIM Ahmedabad (IIM-A), as Bhal posted his requirements on their internal alumni mailing database.

The role is labelled as the most gutsy, demanding and entrepreneurial position at UrbanClap and Bhal, by his own admission, is finicky about the cultural fit and quality of people he gets on board.

When it comes to filling in niche senior-level positions, startup founders like him are tapping into their alumni networks to get the best talent that is 'one of their own.' This could mean leveraging alumni networks through social media channels to recruit peers or juniors or getting references and leads from fellow alumni on whom to hire.

"I'm amazed at the response we got without spending a penny. There's a certain degree of trust and like mindedness, and one's own alumni network works much better than soliciting external help. Applications from IIM-A include my juniors, peers, even some of my seniors," says Bhal.

Incidentally, UrbanClap announced in April that it had raised Rs 10 crore in seed funding from Snapdeal founders Kunal Bahl and Rohit Bansal, Saif Partners and Accel Partners. IIM-A's internal database is buzzing with such job mailers, with job requirements ranging for startups to business development managers for companies like Amazon.

Shopclues co-founder Sanjay Sethi, an IIT BHU graduate, is hiring his junior from the institute as VP, engineering. His batchmate will be joining the company soon from New Jersey as VP, products.

industry you choose to work in matters more.

"My advice would be to enter a booming or upcoming sector or industry.

There is no point joining a sector which is incurring losses, as this limits your growth, learning, opportunities and the buzz of activity within the sector" opines Kantawala.

Lasting impression

It's all too easy to get misguided while choosing your first job. People around you will always have an opinion on the matter -- whether family relatives or peers. Additionally, companies and hiring agent will make their own pitches to you. Spend time doing thorough research on the company, its policies, the industry, etc, to craft your own point of view. Don't hesitate to ask your recruiter questions. Many freshers hesitate to seek clarifications to their doubts as they are unsure about how their questions will be received. Obtain absolute clarity about the job before you take a binding decision. Don't make the error of looking at your first professional stint as just another job; rather, value it as the building blocks of your career.

How to get your first

Job right



Securing the right job is vital as it sets the tone for the rest of your professional life. here are a few tips on how to go about it

No matter where your career takes you in the future, the memory of your first job will live with you for the rest of your life. Your first job, which represents your transition from college to the corporate

world, must be replete with learning opportunities and provide a strong platform for building a solid foundation that can ensure that your career is on the growth track.

Profile first

The work you do is very important. A very crucial parameter in choosing your first job

is the profile on offer. Choose a job that exactly fits your interests, does justice to your educational qualifications and career aspirations and is something you are passionate about.

Explains Nishant Kantawala, founder and CEO, IndieMix, "Many freshers make the error of ranking salary as the most important criteria while evaluating job offers. Always remember that money is not always important. You have the rest of your career to grow your earnings. Instead, focus on the quality of work you pursue."

Considering the fact that most companies are branching out to multiple locations today, both in India and abroad, freshers must also be open to exploring locations beyond their home city. To veto an interesting opportunity just because it involves re location may be a decision you will later regret; working in varied locations will enrich your personality and add value to your profile.

Learning is the key

Since your first job is all about learning and development, ensure that you imbibe crucial skills that are integral in building your career.

"You should work in an organisation which supports and facilitates learning to the best of its ability. For example, an organisation with an extensive training and development programme for workers would be highly beneficial. Planned training programmes will give structure and rigour to your training," believes Prabha Shankar, recruitment consultant, Shell Consulting India.

Agrees Srishti Roy, creative head, Orange Vistas, "I was recruited from campus as a trainee at my first job with a leading creative agency. It was an extremely well planned, hands-on experience, exposing me to all aspects and workings of the business. This gave me a very grounded, yet holistic view of the industry and helped me perform well at work."

Corporates vs start-ups

There is no right or wrong answer to the debate between working at an established corporate or a start up. A first job with an established corporate will add weight to your CV and give you the opportunity to learn coveted business practices.

However, life at a start-up will be dynamic and provide you a range of hands-on experiences across different profiles. While both start-ups and corporates have their merits and demerits, remember that the