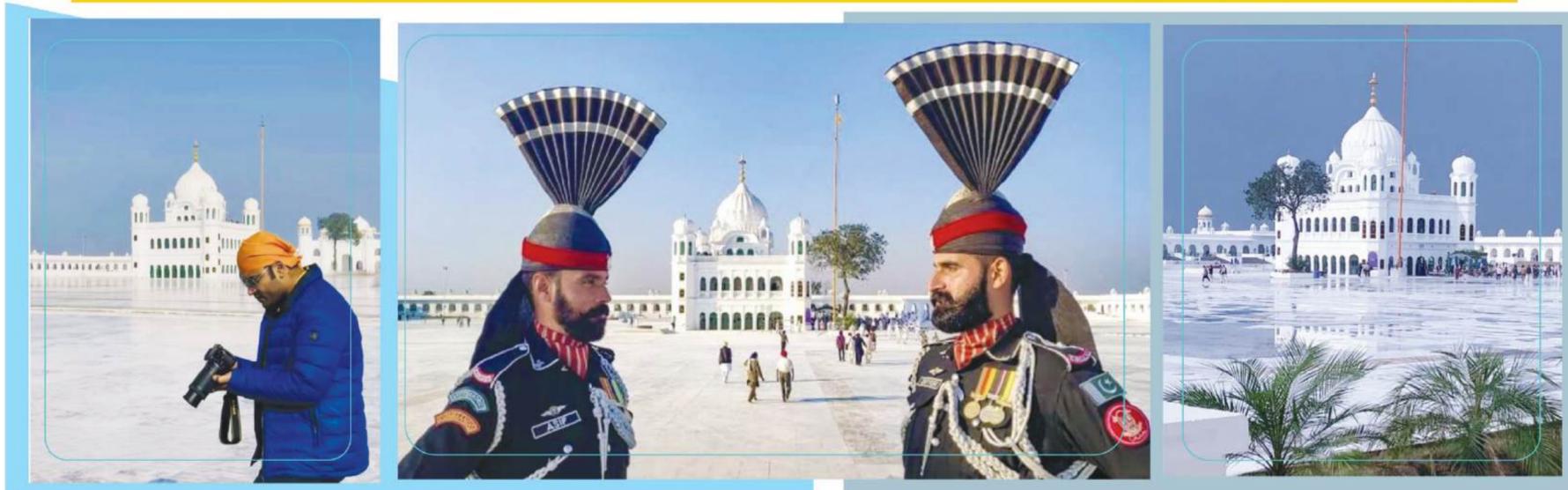


Kartarpur Corridor Reopening

Demand Intensifies Ahead of Baisakhi



The Sikh Times
Gurcharan Singh Babbar

New Delhi / Punjab, 18 March: A strong wave of emotion, faith, and expectation is rising across Punjab and the entire country, as Sikhs from all walks of life have once again urged the Government of India to reopen the sacred Kartarpur Sahib Corridor without any further delay. The Kartarpur Sahib Corridor, which provides visa-free access to one of the holiest shrines of Sikhism — Gurdwara Darbar Sahib Kartarpur, the final resting place of Shri Guru Nanak

Dev Ji — has remained closed due to the prevailing tensions between India and Pakistan. This closure has caused deep disappointment and distress among millions of Sikh devotees who consider pilgrimage to Kartarpur Sahib an essential spiritual journey. From Punjab to Delhi, and from small towns to global Sikh communities, there is a unified and powerful sentiment—that devotees are being deprived of their right to offer prayers at the sacred site associated with the founder of Sikhism. Sikh organizations, religious bodies, social institutions, and community leaders across the country have

repeatedly appealed to Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi to intervene and ensure that the corridor is reopened at the earliest. Many Sikh families have expressed emotional anguish, stating that they have been waiting for months to bow their heads at Kartarpur Sahib but remain unable to do so due to the continued closure. It is widely acknowledged among the Sikh community that the opening of the Kartarpur Corridor was a historic and landmark decision taken under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. For decades, the demand for access to Kartarpur Sahib remained

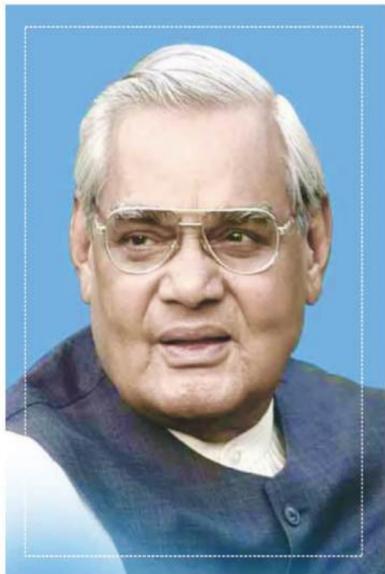
unfulfilled, as successive Congress governments did not approve the proposal. However, the Modi government not only accepted this long-pending demand but successfully facilitated the opening of the corridor, enabling lakhs of devotees to undertake the sacred pilgrimage without a visa. This step earned widespread appreciation from Sikhs in India and across the globe, strengthening their trust in the leadership of the Prime Minister. The recent closure, reportedly due to war-like tensions between India and Pakistan, has once again disrupted this

spiritual lifeline. The timing of the closure has further intensified concerns, especially with the auspicious festival of Baisakhi approaching — a day of immense religious significance for Sikhs. Devotees believe that being unable to visit Kartarpur Sahib during such an important occasion has added to their emotional and spiritual distress. There is a growing and urgent demand that the corridor should be reopened before the upcoming Baisakhi festival, allowing devotees to visit the sacred shrine and pay their respects to Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji.

Continued news page 2

"Atal in Name, Credit in Politics?"

The Sikh Times
Gurcharan Singh Babbar



New Delhi 18 March: A major political controversy is now brewing in the national capital over the Delhi Government's much-publicized 5 "Atal Thali" scheme—an initiative that claims to honor Bharat Ratna former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, but is increasingly being questioned for allegedly sidelining his legacy in its visual and promotional narrative. The scheme, launched with the stated objective of providing affordable meals to the poor, daily wage workers, rickshaw pullers, and economically weaker sections, has indeed brought relief to thousands. Long queues outside these canteens reflect both the success of the initiative and the desperation of the urban poor struggling with rising living costs. However, what should have been a purely welfare-driven initiative has now turned into a subject of sharp political debate and public outrage. If the scheme is named after Atal Bihari Vajpayee—a leader remembered across party lines for his humility, inclusive politics, and lifelong dedication to the poor—then why is his presence reportedly missing from the very canteens that carry his name? Why is it that in several locations, instead of Vajpayee's photograph, the branding and visibility allegedly highlight the current Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta?

This contradiction has triggered a larger and more uncomfortable question: Is this truly a tribute to Atal Bihari Vajpayee, or is it a

calculated political branding exercise under the cover of his name? Atal Bihari Vajpayee was not merely a political figure; he was a statesman who rose above party politics and commanded respect across ideological divides. His name carries moral weight, credibility, and emotional connect among millions of Indians. Using his name for a public welfare scheme naturally generates goodwill. But if the same scheme does not visibly reflect his identity, ideology, or contribution, critics argue that it crosses the line from tribute into political appropriation. Political observers believe that attaching Vajpayee's name to a subsidized food scheme ensures instant public acceptance, while simultaneously allowing the ruling leadership to dominate the visual narrative and claim political mileage. There is no denying that the 5 meal has become a lifeline for thousands.

Workers, migrants, and economically weaker citizens are benefitting daily. For them, the scheme is less about politics and more about survival. But governance is not only about delivery—it is also about intent, transparency, and ethical representation. When a scheme carries the name of a national icon, the expectation is that the icon's legacy will be honored in both spirit and presentation. The absence of Vajpayee's image or message at multiple locations, if verified widely, raises serious concerns about the integrity of that tribute.

In today's political landscape, visibility is power. Photographs, banners, hoardings, and branding are not just decorative elements—they are instruments of influence. The allegation that the Delhi Government's publicity machinery is dominated by the image of Chief Minister

Rekha Gupta, even in schemes named after other leaders, reflects a broader trend in Indian politics: centralizing credit while decentralizing responsibility. Critics argue that this creates a dangerous precedent where historical figures are used as symbolic shields, while contemporary leaders occupy the spotlight.

This issue is not merely about one scheme or one leader. It touches upon a deeper question: If the name of Atal Bihari Vajpayee is used, should it not come with dignity, visibility, and respect consistent with his stature? Should his contribution to the nation be reduced to a symbolic label, while the political narrative is controlled elsewhere? These questions are now being raised not just by political opponents but also by concerned citizens who see Vajpayee as a leader above partisan lines. There is a growing demand that the Delhi Government clearly define its policy regarding branding of public welfare schemes:

If a scheme is named after Atal Bihari Vajpayee, his photograph and message should be prominently displayed at every location. The scheme should reflect his ideology of inclusive governance and dignity for the poor. Political branding should not overshadow national legacy. Failure to address these concerns may deepen public skepticism and fuel allegations of political opportunism. The 5 Atal Thali scheme has the potential to become a landmark welfare initiative. But its credibility depends not just on affordability, but also on authenticity. If that legacy is invoked, it must be honored in full—not selectively used for political convenience. Otherwise, the question will continue to echo across Delhi: "If the scheme belongs to Atal, why does the credit seem to belong to someone else?"

'If Kejriwal is to be finished, there is only one way...': In Goa after 'agnipariksha', AAP convener takes aim at Modi

Arvind Kejriwal alleged that the Prime Minister was sending a message to all politicians by putting him in jail.

New Delhi. (Agency) Referring to the recent court verdict in the alleged Delhi excise policy "scam", AAP national convener Arvind Kejriwal on Tuesday said his party has passed an "agnipariksha (trial by fire)", adding that the court found no evidence in the allegations levelled against him and other leaders of this party. Speaking at a public meeting in Panaji, the former Delhi chief minister launched a scathing attack on Prime Minister Narendra Modi, accusing the PM of sending a "message to all politicians" by putting him in jail. "By putting me in jail, Modi ji has sent a message to all politicians that if you do too much work and talk about politics of honesty, I will put you in jail. AAP is the only party that talks of honesty in politics. I want to tell Modi ji... you tried everything to stop Kejriwal. You sent the CBI, ED, Income Tax, Delhi Police... put me and my companions in jail... I want to tell Modi ji that if Kejriwal is to be finished... there is only one way.

Kejriwal will have to be murdered. Otherwise, he will not bow down," Kejriwal said. Earlier last month, a Delhi court discharged AAP leaders Kejriwal, Manish Sisodia and others in the CBI's corruption case linked to the alleged excise policy scam. Kejriwal said the BJP brought Delhi to a standstill by putting AAP leaders in jail. "In a way, AAP did not lose the election in Delhi; they (the BJP) stole the election. I challenge Modi ji to hold an election in Delhi today. I can guarantee that the BJP will not win more than 10 seats and AAP will win more than 60 seats." "In a way, AAP... the party leadership, me... hum agnipariksha se nikal ke aye hein (we all have successfully come out of a trial by fire). In the last four-five years, attempts were made to defame AAP and the way the party has been continuously attacked, we too have undergone a trial by fire. Several allegations were levelled against us —



"Kejriwal has committed a liquor scam. Kejriwal pocketed Rs 100 crore," Kejriwal said. He said an attempt was made to create doubt among the public. "The way we were defamed and put in jail. Five senior-most leaders of a political party — me, Manish Sisodia, Satyendar Jain, Vijay Nair, Sanjay Singh — ...were put in jail. Manish and Satyendra were told to leave Kejriwal and join the BJP. Not a single leader of our party gave in.

Why? If we had done something wrong, we would have to join the BJP because we knew they could permanently keep us in jail. But we knew we were falsely implicated, and the case is false. We knew the matter would not stand in the court," Kejriwal said. He said that in the 600-page order, the judge said the case did not have an iota of evidence. "The hearings went on for five months. Koi saboot nhi hai, koi gawah nhi hai (There was no evidence, no witnesses). CBI, ED had gone to the court seeking a trial. The judge said there is no evidence to even begin a trial," he said. He also said that "false rumours" were spread that money from liquor scam was taken to Goa. "In the order, the judge has said not a single penny was dishonestly used in the Goa elections by AAP. In the order... this happens in the rarest of rare cases, the judge has written that the CBI officer who investigated this fraud case, disciplinary action should be taken against that officer," he said.

Front continued news

Kartarpur Corridor Reopening Demand Intensifies Ahead of Baisakhi

Various Sikh bodies have emphasized that reopening the corridor will not only fulfill the spiritual aspirations of millions but will also send a powerful message of goodwill, peace, and respect for religious sentiments. Sikh citizens across the country have expressed strong faith in Prime Minister Narendra Modi, stating that during his tenure, he has consistently shown respect and reverence towards Sikh Gurus and Sikh traditions. From visiting gurdwaras in India and abroad to participating in Sikh religious events, the Prime Minister has built a strong emotional connection with the Sikh community. Many believe that he understands the importance of Kartarpur Sahib in Sikh faith and will take necessary steps to address the issue. The Kartarpur Corridor is not just a passage between two countries; it is a symbol of peace, unity, and shared heritage. Its reopening would bring immense joy not only to Sikhs in India but also to the global Sikh diaspora. Community leaders have stated that reopening the corridor will create a wave of happiness across Punjab and the entire nation, strengthening communal harmony and reinforcing India's commitment to respecting religious sentiments. As voices grow louder and expectations rise, the Sikh community now looks towards the Government of India with hope and anticipation. The reopening of the Kartarpur Sahib Corridor before Baisakhi is being seen not just as a logistical decision, but as a deeply emotional and spiritual necessity. If reopened, it will undoubtedly be welcomed with gratitude and celebration by millions of Sikhs across the world.

News box

Biker on his way to hospital dies after truck knocks him down in Gurgaon

Noida.(Agency)

A man died after a speeding concrete mixer truck hit and dragged his motorcycle on the Gurgaon-Farukhnagar road on Monday night. Police have launched a search for the truck driver, who fled the spot after the incident. The accident occurred around 9pm. Police said the victim, Gaurav, a resident of Balaji Colony in Farukhnagar, was on his way to SGT Hospital to deliver food to his mother when the incident took place. Gaurav's brother-in-law Sunil Kumar, in his complaint, said Gaurav was riding a Honda Shine motorcycle when a rashly driven Tata mixer truck rammed into the vehicle.

Sanitation workers on strike for 4th day, waste piles up on Noida roads



Noida.(Agency)

Several sectors are reeling from untended waste even as sanitation workers and garbage collectors continued their strike for the fourth day on Tuesday. Unsanitary conditions and potential health hazards have left the residents from various sectors — 105, 5, 10, 52, 12, 19, 36, 51, 26, 82 and 40 — high and dry. The strike commenced on Saturday but matters snowballed on Monday after Noida Authority CEO Krishna Karunesh removed four sanitation workers, two supervisors and withheld salaries of some staffers over poor upkeep, resulting in piles of garbage accumulating on streets, roads and vacant plots. Police complaints were also filed by the Authority against some sanitation workers, who did not allow others to turn up for work. Authority officials, meanwhile, made alternate arrangements through private labourers and agencies, even as they were in talks with the workers and assured a resolution soon. The sanitation workers began the protest following Noida Authority's decision in Feb to officially merge the public health department with the work circles (civil department). This restructuring aimed to reduce confusion among staff, improve accountability and streamline civic duties under a single point of responsibility, replacing the previous independent functioning of the public health and civil departments. However, the workers protested, citing increased workloads and advocated enhanced compensation, comprehensive medical insurance and job security. "Why is additional civil work being imposed on us in place of our core sanitation work? The authority wants additional work without a salary hike. How are we supposed to feed our families?" said Ravi Kumar, a sanitation worker. CEO Karunesh told TOI that the situation became increasingly challenging, as every 10 days there seemed to be a reason for the workers to launch strike, highlighting "a pattern of repeated behaviour". He claimed that since taking charge in Jan this year, it marked the fourth strike by the workers in Noida. "Recently, we took a stand for cleanliness, which should not be compromised. But the following day, the workers ceased operations. An FIR was filed against six-seven individuals, who stopped others from coming to work. This cannot go on because, at the end of the day, the city and its residents end up suffering. When some of them came to discuss, we expressed our willingness to resolve the issue. Meanwhile, we communicated to the contractors to make alternate arrangements for 1,500 workers, as there are currently only 1,200 working on the ground. We expect them to be prepared to accommodate this number from alternate areas by tomorrow so that the city's operations are not interrupted. We will resolve the matter very soon, potentially by tomorrow," said Karunesh.

Waste pipeline empties into Aravali pond where animals come to drink in Haryana

Gurgaon.(Agency)

A pipeline — laid from a sewage treatment plant (STP) in a village to a waterbody inside the Aravali plantation area — has raised hackles of the residents amid ecological and legal concerns. Balyawas residents are questioning a "plan" to divert treated wastewater into a structure meant for groundwater recharge and wildlife use. The site lies barely 10 minutes from Golf Course Extension Road. A visit by TOI to the site on Tuesday found the pipeline recently laid through the plantation area and terminating near a small check dam within the forest patch. Residents said the pipeline was laid around four days ago and, so far, wastewater did not begin flowing through it. Residents said the pipeline is connected to the STP operated by MCG in Balyawas and is intended to channel treated wastewater towards the forest area. Meanwhile, a complaint was also submitted to the forest department by

the residents seeking intervention. It warned that discharge of STP water into or near such a water source could contaminate water meant for animals and affect the surrounding ecosystem. In a letter dated March 17, addressed to the divisional forest officer (territorial), the complainant alleged that laying a pipeline to discharge STP water into a forest waterhole "could amount to an illegal activity within an ecologically sensitive Aravali corridor connected to the Asola Bhatti Wildlife Sanctuary". The letter said, "The site already contains a waterhole maintained by the forest department and regularly filled with safe drinking water for wildlife." The complaint also said even treated STP water may still contain residual pollutants, pathogens, chemical contaminants, heavy metals and microplastics that could potentially degrade soil quality, contaminate groundwater and affect wildlife.

Residents, who accompanied TOI to the site, said diverting STP water into such structures could defeat their ecological purpose. "Even treated STP water may contain residual contaminants and



chemicals. These check dams were meant for rainwater harvesting and groundwater recharge. If sewage water is discharged here, it may alter water quality and affect wildlife that depend on these sources," said Vishal Singh, a resident. Locals pointed out that the water structure was created by the forest department as part of

conservation work in the Aravali hills. TOI found three check dams designed to slow rainwater runoff and allow it to percolate into the ground, helping recharge groundwater and support vegetation and wildlife in the semi-arid landscape. A senior MCG official said, "We are seeking a status update on the STP pipeline laid inside the Aravali plantation area to ascertain whether prior permission was taken and if such approval was required. If permission is found to be necessary, we will obtain it." Rajat Shukla, another resident, said the issue also raised concerns about groundwater safety. "Villages around this area rely heavily on tubewell water for drinking and irrigation. If treated wastewater eventually enters the ground through these structures, it could contaminate the aquifer over time," he said. Meanwhile, a forest department official said that they did not receive any such request from MCG.

Road dividing Gurgaon sectors 75 & 76 to stay shut for a month as GMDA lays drain

Gurgaon.(Agency)

GMDA has issued a traffic advisory announcing the temporary closure of the master road dividing sectors 75 and 76 for the next 30 days to facilitate drainage crossing for the under-construction leg-IV master stormwater drain. The ongoing drainage work being executed by GMDA is a key infrastructure project aimed at addressing chronic waterlogging along the SPR and adjoining sectors. With vehicular movement at the Sector 75-76 junction now completely halted, alternative routes have been put in place to minimise disruption. As per the advisory, vehicles coming from Vatika Chowk should continue on SPR towards NH-48 and use the cloverleaf loop near Kherki Daula toll to reach their destinations. Similarly, commuters travelling from Dwarka Expressway towards sectors 74 to 80 have been directed to take NH-48 and use the same loop. Traffic approaching from Rajiv Chowk has been advised to stay on NH-48 and proceed beyond Kherki Daula before taking suitable turns. At the same time, vehicles from Pachgaon Chowk and Manesar have been asked to

take a U-turn near the toll plaza to access internal sector roads. "Commuters are advised to avoid the Sector 75-76 crossing and use alternative routes via Darbaripur



Road and the Sector 76-77 dividing road to ensure smooth traffic flow," a GMDA official said. The 4.6-km reinforced cement concrete (RCC) box drain is being constructed along the SPR to tackle recurring flooding in newly developed sectors along the corridor. SPR, which connects Golf Course Extension Road to NH-48, has remained one of the most flood-prone stretches during the monsoon. Rapid urbanisation, loss of natural

drainage channels, and encroachments have led to frequent waterlogging in low-lying areas, causing traffic snarls. Once operational, the drain is expected to channelise rainwater from sectors 68 to 80 and reduce the load on the Badshapur drain, which often overflows during heavy rainfall. Key roads such as Sohna Road, SPR and Golf Course Extension Road are likely to see improved stormwater outflow. The Badshapur drain is among the city's three primary stormwater channels, carrying runoff from nearly 24,100 hectares between Ghata village and the Najafgarh drain. To ease this burden, the leg-IV drain was conceptualised as an additional outlet branching from the Badshapur drain near Vatika Chowk on Sohna Road and running along the SPR up to NH-48. The project received approval during GMDA's fourth authority meeting in May 2019. However, execution was delayed, with the tender floated nearly three years later. The project was eventually awarded in April 2023 with an initial deadline of Oct 2024. Officials now aim to complete the project before the onset of monsoon in June.

Pay & exchange empty cylinder: Gurgaon gets NCR's first LPG vending machine

Gurgaon.(Agency)

Gurgaon has become the first city in NCR to get an LPG ATM — a smart vending machine that can hand out a lightweight gas cylinder in just two to three minutes. Installed at Central Park Flower Valley in Sector 33 of Sohna, the Bharatgas Insta LPG machine brings automated, contactless distribution to a residential township at a time when supply is tight and consumers are looking for quicker refill options. The machine, officials said, dispenses composite LPG cylinders that are lighter, cleaner and easier to handle than conventional ones. Unlike traditional iron cylinders, which weigh about 31kg in total with 14kg of gas, the fibre-based composite version weighs around 15kg with the same quantity of gas. Its transparent body also allows users to check the gas level easily. The refill process is fully automated. A consumer with a registered Bharatgas composite cylinder connection enters a mobile number, verifies it through an OTP, scans the barcode or QR code on the empty cylinder, and completes payment digitally through UPI or a debit card. After a digital eligibility check, the machine releases a filled cylinder and stores the empty one inside. Officials said the ATM, installed on March 6, can hold 10 cylinders at a time. Once the stock falls to two, the nearest gas agency gets an alert and replenishes it. However, only four cylinders have been dispensed so far, largely because very few people know about the facility yet. An official said the composite cylinders are "easier to carry, safer to use and better in appearance because they are dust-free and corrosion-free". Consumers can also exchange a regular cylinder for a composite one at the machine. Residents said the biggest advantage of the machine is freedom from delivery schedules. Rajiv Kumar, a resident of Central Park, said the machine had made daily life far more convenient. "Earlier, we had to plan refills in advance and wait for delivery. Now, a cylinder can be collected in a few minutes at any time. The 24x7 access and simple digital process are especially useful for working families," he added. The rollout is part of BPCL's limited pilot to test automated LPG dispensing in select locations.

Talk softly, 70-yr-old man tells duo, beaten to death with stone in Gurgaon

Ghaziabad.(Agency)

A 70-year-old man was beaten to death with a stone after an altercation in Dundahera village on Monday. The incident took place around 4pm near Bank Gali when Jagdish objected to some men standing in front of a house and having a loud conversation. He asked them to talk softly or move away, which led to a heated argument between him and one of the men. The spat soon turned violent. "A man named Monu pushed Jagdish to the ground and began kicking and punching him," an officer said. Monu then picked up a large stone and struck him multiple times on his chest and head, leaving him critically injured. Police said on receiving information about the fight, they rushed to the spot. They found a blood-stained stone. Jagdish had already been shifted to a nearby hospital. At the hospital, Jagdish's son told the police that he had received a phone call from a resident of the village that his father had got into a fight with Monu. A case was registered at Udyog Vihar police station. Jagdish died of his injuries during treatment, after which murder charges were added to the FIR.



NCLT clears Adani Enterprises resolution plan, but legal hurdles remain for buyers of Jaypee Sports City

Noida.(Agency)

The National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) has approved Adani Enterprises' Rs 14,535-crore resolution plan for Jaiprakash Associates Ltd (JAL), under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, 2016. However, the fate of its stalled Jaypee Sports City project — and thousands of affected homebuyers — near the upcoming Noida International Airport hinges on the outcome of a parallel legal battle before the Supreme Court. The top court is set to hear the developer's petition challenging an Allahabad high court's March 2025 order, which upheld the decision of the Yamuna Expressway Industrial Development Authority (YEIDA) to cancel JAL's allotment of 1,000 hectares of land in Feb 2020. The Authority had cited non-payment of dues and failure to develop the designated Special Development Zone (SDZ). The Jaypee Sports City project, announced in 2010, envisioned a large integrated township anchored by a Formula 1 circuit,



alongside residential and commercial developments. Thousands of buyers invested in the project between 2010 and 2014, but construction stalled as the developer ran into mounting debt and delayed payments to lenders and the Authority. According to Sunil Sharma, vice-president of the Jaypee Sports City Welfare Society, JAL launched 12 housing projects within the YEIDA area, attracting around 4,600 investors. In addition, 13 projects were initiated by other developers on land sub-leased by JAL. None of the projects in the SDZ has been completed so

far, leaving homebuyers in prolonged uncertainty. Following persistent defaults, YEIDA cancelled the land allotment in Feb 2020, triggering legal proceedings. In its March 2025 ruling, the high court upheld the cancellation and directed the Authority to take over the incomplete housing projects and ensure their completion under existing agreements with homebuyers. The matter is now pending before the Supreme Court, which will determine the future course of the land parcel and the completion of residential projects under SDZ, including

Jaypee Greens Bougainvilles, Jaypee Greens Country Homes I & II, Jaypee Greens Greencrest Homes, Jaypee Greens Crowns, Jaypee Greens Kove, Jaypee Greens Buddha Circuit Studios, Jaypee Greens Kasia I, II and III, Jaypee Greens Sportsville, and Jaypee Greens Villa Expanza. JAL's insolvency process, meanwhile, was admitted in June 2024 under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, 2016, after the company defaulted on loans exceeding Rs 50,000 crore. Proceedings were initiated by ICICI Bank, which cited defaults across multiple loan facilities. Other lenders subsequently joined the case. The insolvency action followed a 2018 directive from the Reserve Bank of India, asking banks to initiate corporate insolvency proceedings against the company. The NCLT's approval of Adani Enterprises' resolution plan is expected to address a significant portion of JAL's debt, though the

treatment of its real estate assets remains closely watched.

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Until 2022, canal water was reaching only 26.50% of farmlands; now it has expanded to 78%: CM Mann

The Sikh Times CHANDIGARH, 18 March: Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann on Wednesday laid out a historic turnaround in Punjab's irrigation system, noting that the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) Government has, in just four years, ensured water supply to fields equivalent to the Bhakra canal by unlocking 10,000 cusecs from seasonal rivers and reviving a collapsing canal network. The Chief Minister said canal irrigation coverage has surged from just 26.50% in 2022 to 78% today, with long-defunct systems like the 22-km Sarhali canal brought back to life, round-the-clock water supply ensured through the Ferozepur-Sirhind feeder, and canal water reaching 1,446 villages for the first time since Independence. CM Bhagwant Singh Mann addressed a detailed press conference, presenting a comprehensive account of the Punjab Government's work in the irrigation sector over the past four years. "6,700 crore has been spent on canal lining, repair, modernisation and strengthening of infrastructure from April 2022 till now, which is the highest ever in Punjab's history," said the Chief Minister. He emphasised that Punjab has a total canal irrigation potential of around 75.90 lakh acres, but until March 2022, only 20.89 lakh acres, which was merely 26.5%, were actually receiving canal water. "Today, we have increased this coverage to nearly 58 lakh acres, taking utilisation to around 78%. This is almost three times the earlier figure," CM Bhagwant Singh Mann stated, adding that the Punjab Government has ensured maximum utilisation of canal water available in the state. Detailing the massive scale of work undertaken on the ground, he said, "We have spent around 22,000 crore to construct and restore nearly 13,000 km of canals, due to which canal water is now reaching 58 lakh acres. Along with this, around 7,000 water

channels have been restored." He further added, "A total of 15,539 canals have been cleaned and 18,349 watercourses have been revived, ensuring that even tail-end agricultural fields now receive canal water." Highlighting a major structural intervention, CM Bhagwant Singh Mann said, "For the first time in Punjab's history, 101 abandoned canals spanning 545 km have been revived. Many of these canals had been closed for 30 to 40 years and even filled up with soil. We restored them without acquiring even a single inch of land." He added that revival of rain-water channels alone has helped bring an additional 2.75 lakh acres under irrigation. "By restoring old canal systems, we have ensured that an additional 10,000 cusecs of water is now reaching fields. In effect, we have created a new 'Bhakra canal' without acquiring any land," he said. Sharing a striking example from Tarn Taran district, CM Bhagwant Singh Mann stated, "The 22-km-long Sarhali Minor canal had completely disappeared due to the negligence of previous governments. When our engineers began work, they discovered the canal buried underground. Even local people had forgotten about its existence. Today, we have revived it and made it fully operational." On strengthening major canal systems, he said, "The Ferozepur Feeder Canal, originally constructed in 1952, was upgraded in a record 35 days, increasing its capacity by 2,682 cusecs. Similarly, the Sirhind Canal, considered the life-

line of Malwa and built around 1950, has been upgraded after 75 years, increasing its capacity by 2,844 cusecs." He added, "Through lining of major canals like Sirhind and Patiala, we have increased water availability by around 1.5 MAF and ensured that even tail-end areas no longer face short-ages." Addressing a long-standing issue faced by farmers, CM Bhagwant Singh Mann said, "Earlier, water in canals used to be supplied on a rotational basis, forcing farmers to wait for their turn. For the first time, we have ended this system and ensured that farmers get water every day." He further highlighted that the government even ran canals in reverse direction towards Harike Pattan when required to ensure equitable distribution of water. Speaking about the Kandi region, CM Bhagwant Singh Mann said, "The Kandi Canal in Hoshiarpur, which had remained non-functional for nearly 40 years, has now been revived. People in this region understand the true value of water, and its return has brought immense relief." He added, "Due to expansion of canal infrastructure, around 1,400 villages are now receiving canal water for the first time since Independence. Many of these villages had not seen canal water for 20 to 50 years." He also noted that new canal systems such as Cheema Minor, Phillaur Minor, Karamgarh Link, Rajpura, Patran, Ghaggar and Kotla have contributed to expanding irrigation reach across regions. On infrastructure expansion, CM Bhagwant Singh Mann stated, "We have constructed 8 new canals and made 18 pump

systems operational to strengthen irrigation coverage in multiple districts. Highlighting administrative reforms, he said, "To improve efficiency, we have created dedicated canal water and groundwater divisions such as Fatehgarh Canal Division and Tarn Taran Canal Division, with permanent officers posted there to ensure accountability and faster execution." On groundwater conservation, CM Bhagwant Singh Mann said, "Our efforts have significantly reduced dependence on groundwater. In one village in Gurdaspur, groundwater extraction has come down from 61.48% to around 31%, which is a remarkable achievement. This will benefit future generations." He added that the government aims to further increase utilisation of surface water and reduce stress on groundwater resources. On disaster management and environmental restoration, he said, "7477 crore has been utilised from the State Disaster Mitigation Fund for 195 works aimed at flood prevention and water management. We have identified 199 desilting sites and deployed new chain-mounted machines to clean drains on a war footing." He further stated, "Desilting of rivers like Sutlej, Ravi and Ghaggar is underway with a target of removing 245 million cubic feet of silt, of which significant progress has already been made. Additionally, 206 km of river embankments are being strengthened to prevent flood damage." He added, "Under the Punjab Canal and Drainage Act, 2023, 849 out of 850 drains

have been notified to prevent encroachments and safeguard life and property." Highlighting a long-pending infrastructure project, CM Bhagwant Singh Mann said, "The Shahpur Kandi Dam project, which had been pending for over 25 years, has now been completed at a cost of ₹3,394.49 crore. This will enhance the efficiency of the Ranjit Sagar Dam and stop water from flowing into Pakistan." Taking a strong position, CM Bhagwant Singh Mann said, "Those who claimed to be saviours of Punjab's waters ended up destroying them. We have revived both our waters and our systems." Highlighting the broader impact, he added, "Canal water carries essential minerals, and its increased availability will significantly improve crop productiv-

ity. Farmers are happy as many are receiving canal water in their fields for the first time." Invoking Punjab's spiritual ethos, he said, "We are guided by the message of our Gurus, 'Pavan Guru, Pani Pita, Mata Dharat Mahat', and we are committed to preserving our natural resources." He further stated that the irrigation department is also being developed as a revenue-generating model, adding, "We have developed 26 tourist sites including boating facilities, rest houses, headworks and other infrastructure to promote tourism and generate revenue."

Public Notice It is for general information that I, SUBHASH KUMAR YADAV S/O RAJ NARAYAN YADAV residing at TC-646-647, Transit Camp, Rajghur Nagar, Tagore Garden, West Delhi, Delhi-110027, declare that the name of mine and my wife have been wrongly written as SUBHASH and POOLIA in my minor son namely SATYAM KUMAR aged 14 years in his School Record. I declare that the name of mine and my wife have been wrongly written as SUBHASH and POOLIA in my minor son namely SATYAM KUMAR aged 14 years in his Birth Certificate. The actual name of mine and my wife are SUBHASH KUMAR YADAV and POOLIA DEVI respectively, which may be amended accordingly.

NAME CHANGE I, SUVARNA Mother of No-2617228W Rank-HAV Name-HOSUR MALLIKARJUN BHIMAPPA residing at VPO-SHURPALI, TEHSIL-JAMKHANDI, DIST-BAGALKOT, KARNATAKA-587119, have changed my name from SUVARNA to SUVARNA HOSUR for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 18/03/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE I, BHIMAPPA Father of No-2617228W Rank-HAV Name-HOSUR MALLIKARJUN BHIMAPPA residing at VPO-SHURPALI, TEHSIL-JAMKHANDI, DIST-BAGALKOT, KARNATAKA-587119, have changed my name from SUVARNA to SUVARNA HOSUR for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 18/03/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE I, REENA THOMAS wife of JN-442268M Rank-SUB Name-BINU PT residing at HOUSE-PLAVILA-PADINJATTATHIL, MARUTHA MONPALLY, VILL & PO-POOYAPPALLY, DIST-KOLLAM, KERALA-691537, have changed my name from REENA THOMAS to REENAT for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 05/05/2025 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE I, MARIKUTTY Mother of JN-442268M Rank-SUB Name-BINU PT residing at HOUSE-PLAVILA-PADINJATTATHIL, MARUTHA MONPALLY, VILL & PO-POOYAPPALLY, DIST-KOLLAM, KERALA-691537, have changed my name from MARIKUTTY to MARY KUTTY for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 18/03/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE I, THANKACHAN PO FATHER OF JN-442268M Rank-SUB Name-BINU PT residing at HOUSE-PLAVILA-PADINJATTATHIL, MARUTHA MONPALLY, VILL & PO-POOYAPPALLY, DIST-KOLLAM, KERALA-691537, have changed my name from THANKACHAN PO to THANKACHAN for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 18/03/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE I, RAVINDER KUMAR S/O CHANDER PAL R/O 44 BHUJAPUR (102) FARIDABAD HARYANA 121101 HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO RAVINDER NAGAR

NAME CHANGE I, CHANDER KUMAR S/O KHACHEHU R/O 44 BHUJAPUR (102) FARIDABAD HARYANA 121101 HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO CHANDER PAL

NAME CHANGE It is for general information that I, Laxmi Narain S/O, Murali Lal, R/O B-983, Shastri Nagar, Ashok Vihar, PO: Ashok Vihar, DIST: North West Delhi, Delhi-110052, declare that name of mine and my wife has been wrongly written as Laxman and Yashoda in his minor son Nitin aged 17 years in his birth certificate no MCDOLIR - 2208-003179347. The actual name of mine and my wife are Laxmi Narain and Yasoda, respectively which may be amended accordingly.

NAME CHANGE I, SUMIT KUMAR SEHRAWAT S/O SATYABIR SINGH SEHRAWAT R/O H.NO-168, CHAUDHARI MOHALLA RANGPUR, PO-MAHIPALPUR, SOUTH WEST DELHI, DELHI-110037, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO SUMIT SEHRAWAT FOR ALL FUTURE PURPOSES

NAME CHANGE I, LAKHBI R/O LAKHBI SINGH S/O PRITAM SINGH R/O RZ-F-238, RAJ NAGAR PART-II, PALAM COLONY, SOUTH WEST DELHI, DELHI-110077, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO LAKHBI SINGH RANDHAWA FOR ALL FUTURE PURPOSES

NAME CHANGE I, BABITA DHAMA W/O UDAY SINGH DHAMA R/O M-542, BLOCK-MH-11, ASHIANA ANGAN, BHUWADI, ALWAR, RAJASTHAN-301019, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO BABITA BHATI FOR ALL FUTURE PURPOSES

NAME CHANGE I, RAJIBIR KAUJ W/O LAKHBI SINGH RANDHAWA R/O RZ-F-238, RAJ NAGAR PART-II, PALAM COLONY, SOUTH WEST DELHI, DELHI-110077, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO RAJIBIR KAUJ RANDHAWA FOR ALL FUTURE PURPOSES

Public Notice It is for general information that I, Laxmi Narain S/O, Murali Lal, R/O B-983, Shastri Nagar, Ashok Vihar, PO: Ashok Vihar, DIST: North West Delhi, Delhi-110052, declare that name of mine and my wife has been wrongly written as Laxman and Yashoda in his minor son Nitin aged 17 years in his birth certificate no MCDOLIR - 2208-003179347. The actual name of mine and my wife are Laxmi Narain and Yasoda, respectively which may be amended accordingly.

Public Notice It is for general information that I, Somya Bhatnagar D/O, Dinesh Chandra Bhatnagar, R/O H-108C, Janita Flat, District Garden, Jhansi, PO: Jhansi, DIST: East Delhi, Delhi-110055, declare that name of my father has been wrongly written as Dinesh Chand Bhatnagar in my 10th Class educational documents. The actual name of my father is DINESH CHANDRA BHATNAGAR, respectively which may be amended accordingly.

NAME CHANGE I, JOGINDER KUMAR legal father of KARITIKA DEVI residing at VILL-KURLA, PO-TRITHA, TEHSIL-DALHOUSIE, DIST-CHAMBA, HIMACHAL PRADESH-176303, have changed my minor daughter's name from KARITIKA DEVI to KRITIKA DEVI for all future purposes vide affidavit dated 18/03/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE I, VIJAY KUMAR SAINI S/O KAILASH NARAYAN R/O HOUSE NO. 524, SCHOOL BLOCK, JAIN MANDIR GALLI, MOTHER DAIRY, SHAKARPUR, DIST-EAST DELHI, DELHI-110022, have changed the name of my minor son RUDRAKSH SAINI aged 13 years and he shall hereafter be known as RUDRANSH SAINI.

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

NAME CHANGE It is for general information that I, POONAM BALAYAN W/O NAVEEN R/O KH. NO.-522, NEAR SHEELA BUA MANDIR, ALIPUR, NORTH WEST DELHI, DELHI-110036, declare that name of mine has been wrongly written as POONAM in my minor daughter namely NANCY aged 16 years in her School Record. The actual name of mine is POONAM BALAYAN which may be amended accordingly.

NAME CHANGE I, CHANDRA SEKHAR S/O ANIRUDH ROY R/O HOUSE No-571 Gali No-4 M.S Block Near Old Age Home Ranaji Enclave Najafgarh South West Delhi Delhi-110043 have changed the name of my minor son namely REYANSH SHEKHAR RAI aged 07 years and he shall hereafter be known as SHASHWAT RAI.

NAME CHANGE I, Lakshman Kumar S/O Chandra Kishor Mukhiya R/O Ward-05, PO-Marauna, Dist-Supaul, Bihar - 847408, have changed my name to Abhishek Kumar Mukhiya.

NAME CHANGE I, Babalu S/O Rampreet R/O House No-A-498, JJ Camp, Suraj Park, Samay Pur, Badli, North West Delhi, Delhi-110042 have changed the name of my minor daughter Anjali aged 10 years and she shall hereafter be known as Anjal.

NAME CHANGE I, hitherto known as KM PREETI SINGH D/O PADAM SINGH R/O FLAT NO-01 MIG PLOT-166, BLOCK-C, SHALIMAR GARDEN EXTN-II, SAHIBABAD, GHAZIABAD, UTTAR PRADESH-201005 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as PREETI SINGH.

NAME CHANGE It is for general information that I, KRISHNA SHARMA S/O RAJAN SHARMA R/O D-194, GALI NO-5 NEAR HAPPY TIME PUBLIC SCHOOL BHAJAN PURA, GARDI MENDU, PO-BHAJAN PURA, DIST-NORTH EAST DELHI, DELHI-110053, declare that name of my mother has been wrongly written as LAKSHMI SHARMA in my 10th and 12th class educational documents. The actual name of my mother is LAXMI SHARMA, respectively which may be amended accordingly.

NAME CHANGE It is for general information that I, AMIT SHARMA S/O JAGDISH PRASAD SHARMA R/O 168, PART-I, PALAM EXTN. OPP. SBI BANK, HAZRAN BASTI PALAM VILLAGE, SOUTH WEST DELHI, DELHI-110045, declare that name of my father has been wrongly written as JAGDISH SHARMA in my Aadhar Card-628920459829 and Voter ID card-TG10989673. And the name of my father has been wrongly written as J P SHARMA in my driving license-DL0920050022618. The actual name of my father is JAGDISH PRASAD SHARMA, respectively which may be amended accordingly.

NAME CHANGE I, hitherto known as JYOTI VATS alias JYOTI SHARMA D/O RAM KUMAR SHARMA W/O AMIT SHARMA R/O 168, PALAM EXTN PART-I, SEC-07, DWARKA, PALAM, SOUTH WEST DELHI, DELHI-110077, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as JYOTI SHARMA.

NAME CHANGE I, K. TULASI DEVI is legally wedded wife of GO No. 004428K, Rank-AEE (Civ), Name Shri T. MALLESWARAO R/O HNO 41-8/3-1/1, KOTTU SUBBARAO STREET, NEAR FIRE STATION, KRISHNALANKA, VIJAYAWADA, ANDHRA PRADESH-520013, have changed my name from K. TULASI DEVI to TADEPALI TULASI DEVI for all future purposes. Vide affidavit dated 18.03.2026 before Sub Divisional Magistrate Delhi.

NAME CHANGE I, hitherto known as Alok Varshney S/O Shankar Lal Varshney R/O C-186, Opp. Gyan Bharati School, Golf View Apartments, Saket, South Delhi, Delhi-110017 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Alok Kumar Varshney.

NAME CHANGE I, DHONDIRAM MADYALAPPA is legally father of J.C No. 462302H, Rank - Sub, Name - PATIL LAKASHMAN DHONDIRAM, presently residing at Vill - Bisur, Post - Bisur, Teh - Miraj, Dist - Sangli, State - Maharashtra - 416304, have changed my name from SHANTABAI DHONDIRAM PATIL and my date of birth from 11/01/1962 to 01/01/1961 for all future purposes. Vide affidavit dated 16/03/2026 before Public Notary Delhi.

NAME CHANGE I, KHUSHI TIWARI D/O Neeraj Tiwari R/O 271, Engineers Colony, Quarsi By Pass Road, Koli, Aligarh, Uttar Pradesh - 202001 Have changed my name to Tanisha Tiwari for all future purposes.

NAME CHANGE I, Rituu Tiwari W/O Neeraj Tiwari R/O 271, Engineers Colony, Quarsi By Pass Road, Koli, Aligarh, Up-202001 Have changed my name to Ritoo Tiwari for all future purposes.

NAME CHANGE I, Surrender Solanki S/O Dalip Singh, WZ-306, Chhotli Mohalla, Jaat Choupal, Palam Village, PO: Palam Village, DIST: South West Delhi, Delhi-110045 have changed my name to Surrender Singh for all future purposes.

NAME CHANGE I, hitherto known as KM PREETI SINGH D/O PADAM SINGH R/O FLAT NO-01 MIG PLOT-166, BLOCK-C, SHALIMAR GARDEN EXTN-II, SAHIBABAD, GHAZIABAD, UTTAR PRADESH-201005 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as PREETI SINGH.

NAME CHANGE I, Subhasree Samal W/O Bharat Chandra Nayak R/O RZF -309, Gali No 6 Palam Colony Raj Nagar Part -2 Delhi 110077 Changed my name to Subhasree Samal

NAME CHANGE I, Jay Mala Kumari W/O Rajesh Kumar R/O H.No-A/7141 rajvir colony gharoni extension east Delhi 110056, Changed my name to Jaimala Dubey.

NAME CHANGE I, KUM DEEPA GUPTA W/O RAMESH KUMAR KHANDELWAL W/O WZ- 283/5 MADDI WALI GALI NO 1 VISHNU GARDEN TILAK NAGAR DELHI- 110018 have changed my name to RADHA KHANDELWAL Permanently for all Future purpose

NAME CHANGE I, NEETU W/O SURESH KUMAR R/O B-39 UGF SECTOR 8 DWARKA NEW DELHI -110077 have changed my name to NEETU KOLI Permanently for all Future purpose

NAME CHANGE I, hitherto known as SHRIKANT GYANESHWAR SHRIVASTAVA alias SHRIKANT GYANESHWAR S/O S.K. SHRIVASTAVA R/O 193, Samachar Apartments, Mayur Vihar Phase -1 Extension, East Delhi, Delhi -110091 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as SHRIKANT GYANESHWAR SHRIVASTAVA.

CONSTRUCTION OF LIFT/ESCALATORS AT VARIOUS STATIONS UNDER LUMDING DIVISION E-Tender Notice No. SCL/ENR/12 of 2026; dttd. 09.03.2026. E-tenders are invited by the undersigned for the following work: SN. 1. Brief Description of Item: Construction of Lift/Escalator and other ancillary works in connection with 12m wide FOB at Udaipur (UDPU), Dharmanager (DMR), Kumbhat (KUGT) & New Haffong (NH-G) stations under Amrit Bharat Scheme in Lumding Division. (Two packet system). Tender Value: ₹16,40,90,901.01; Bid Security: ₹9,70,500/-; E-tenders will be closed at 15:00 hrs. on 06-04-2026 and opened at 15:00 hrs. on 07-04-2026. The complete information with tender documents at above e-tender will be available upto 15:00 hrs. of 06-04-2026 in website <http://www.ireps.gov.in>.

DRM (Works), Lumding at Silchar NORTH EAST FRONTIER RAILWAY

NORTHERN RAILWAY 1st Corridor/um Name of Work: "Electrical work in connection with provision of wooden flooring, false ceiling, tiles, doors, painting etc. in rooms/halls at fourth floor and fifth floor at Rail Bhawan." The amendments in above said tender are as under: Tender No.- 63-SRDEE-G-DLI-2025-26

Table with 3 columns: Name of Work, Earlier published, Amended. It lists details for tender No. 63-SRDEE-G-DLI-2025-26 regarding electrical work in rooms/halls at fourth and fifth floors of Rail Bhawan.

Approx cost of the works in- [Rs. 10248551.00/-] [Rs. 10248551.00/-] Address of the office: Sr. Div. Elect. Engineer/General, New Delhi. Sr. Div. Elect. Engineer/General, New Delhi. Bid Security: Rs. 2013000.00/- Rs. 205000.00/- Date & time of submission of tender: 02.04.2026, 16.00 Hrs. 02.04.2026, 16.00 Hrs. Opening of tender: 02.04.2026, 16.00 Hrs. 02.04.2026, 16.00 Hrs. The tender document of above-mentioned tender has been modified kindly go through the amended documents available on www.ireps.gov.in and submit your offer accordingly. Tender No.- 63-SRDEE-G-DLI-2025-26 SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE 913/26

NAME CHANGE I, SHANTABAI is legally mother of J.C No. 462302H, Rank - Sub, Name - PATIL LAKASHMAN DHONDIRAM, presently residing at Vill - Bisur, Post - Bisur, Teh - Miraj, Dist - Sangli, State - Maharashtra - 416304, have changed my name from SHANTABAI DHONDIRAM PATIL and my date of birth from 11/01/1962 to 01/01/1961 for all future purposes. Vide affidavit dated 16/03/2026 before Public Notary Delhi.

NAME CHANGE I, NITU MENGI W/O Lakshya Handa R/O 175, Gangotri Apartment, F-Block, Vikas Puri, Delhi-110018, have changed my name to NEETU MENGI Permanently.

NAME CHANGE I, Kumari Shilpi Kumari D/O Deepak Acharya R/O House No -3467 Gali 76 Block E2 Molaband Badapur Delhi -110034 Changed My Name To Shilpi Acharya.

NAME CHANGE I, SATISH KUMAR S/O JAGANNATH SHAH R/O D/322 SHIV DURGA VIHAR LAKARPUR SURAJKUND FRIDABAD 121009 changed my name to satish shah

NAME CHANGE I, MOHAMMAD ISRAIL S/O MOHD HUSEN R/O 6631-32 BLDG NO.8 4TH FLOOR CHAMELIAN ROAD BARA HINDU RAO DELHI 110006 Changed my name to MOHD ISRAIL

NAME CHANGE I, Subhasree Samal W/O Bharat Chandra Nayak R/O RZF -309, Gali No 6 Palam Colony Raj Nagar Part -2 Delhi 110077 Changed my name to Subhasree Samal

NAME CHANGE I, Jay Mala Kumari W/O Rajesh Kumar R/O H.No-A/7141 rajvir colony gharoni extension east Delhi 110056, Changed my name to Jaimala Dubey.

NAME CHANGE I, KUM DEEPA GUPTA W/O RAMESH KUMAR KHANDELWAL W/O WZ- 283/5 MADDI WALI GALI NO 1 VISHNU GARDEN TILAK NAGAR DELHI- 110018 have changed my name to RADHA KHANDELWAL Permanently for all Future purpose

NAME CHANGE I, NEETU W/O SURESH KUMAR R/O B-39 UGF SECTOR 8 DWARKA NEW DELHI -110077 have changed my name to NEETU KOLI Permanently for all Future purpose

NAME CHANGE I, hitherto known as SHRIKANT GYANESHWAR SHRIVASTAVA alias SHRIKANT GYANESHWAR S/O S.K. SHRIVASTAVA R/O 193, Samachar Apartments, Mayur Vihar Phase -1 Extension, East Delhi, Delhi -110091 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as SHRIKANT GYANESHWAR SHRIVASTAVA.

CONSTRUCTION OF LIFT/ESCALATORS AT VARIOUS STATIONS UNDER LUMDING DIVISION E-Tender Notice No. SCL/ENR/12 of 2026; dttd. 09.03.2026. E-tenders are invited by the undersigned for the following work: SN. 1. Brief Description of Item: Construction of Lift/Escalator and other ancillary works in connection with 12m wide FOB at Udaipur (UDPU), Dharmanager (DMR), Kumbhat (KUGT) & New Haffong (NH-G) stations under Amrit Bharat Scheme in Lumding Division. (Two packet system). Tender Value: ₹16,40,90,901.01; Bid Security: ₹9,70,500/-; E-tenders will be closed at 15:00 hrs. on 06-04-2026 and opened at 15:00 hrs. on 07-04-2026. The complete information with tender documents at above e-tender will be available upto 15:00 hrs. of 06-04-2026 in website <http://www.ireps.gov.in>.

DRM (Works), Lumding at Silchar NORTH EAST FRONTIER RAILWAY

NORTHERN RAILWAY 1st Corridor/um Name of Work: "Electrical work in connection with provision of wooden flooring, false ceiling, tiles, doors, painting etc. in rooms/halls at fourth floor and fifth floor at Rail Bhawan." The amendments in above said tender are as under: Tender No.- 63-SRDEE-G-DLI-2025-26

Approx cost of the works in- [Rs. 10248551.00/-] [Rs. 10248551.00/-] Address of the office: Sr. Div. Elect. Engineer/General, New Delhi. Sr. Div. Elect. Engineer/General, New Delhi. Bid Security: Rs. 2013000.00/- Rs. 205000.00/- Date & time of submission of tender: 02.04.2026, 16.00 Hrs. 02.04.2026, 16.00 Hrs. Opening of tender: 02.04.2026, 16.00 Hrs. 02.04.2026, 16.00 Hrs. The tender document of above-mentioned tender has been modified kindly go through the amended documents available on www.ireps.gov.in and submit your offer accordingly. Tender No.- 63-SRDEE-G-DLI-2025-26 SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE 913/26

NAME CHANGE I, SUVARNA Mother of No-2617228W Rank-HAV Name-HOSUR MALLIKARJUN BHIMAPPA residing at VPO-SHURPALI, TEHSIL-JAMKHANDI, DIST-BAGALKOT, KARNATAKA-587119, have changed my name from SUVARNA to SUVARNA HOSUR for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 18/03/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE I, BHIMAPPA Father of No-2617228W Rank-HAV Name-HOSUR MALLIKARJUN BHIMAPPA residing at VPO-SHURPALI, TEHSIL-JAMKHANDI, DIST-BAGALKOT, KARNATAKA-587119, have changed my name from SUVARNA to SUVARNA HOSUR for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 18/03/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE I, REENA THOMAS wife of JN-442268M Rank-SUB Name-BINU PT residing at HOUSE-PLAVILA-PADINJATTATHIL, MARUTHA MONPALLY, VILL & PO-POOYAPPALLY, DIST-KOLLAM, KERALA-691537, have changed my name from REENA THOMAS to REENAT for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 05/05/2025 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE I, MARIKUTTY Mother of JN-442268M Rank-SUB Name-BINU PT residing at HOUSE-PLAVILA-PADINJATTATHIL, MARUTHA MONPALLY, VILL & PO-POOYAPPALLY, DIST-KOLLAM, KERALA-691537, have changed my name from MARIKUTTY to MARY KUTTY for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 18/03/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE I, THANKACHAN PO FATHER OF JN-442268M Rank-SUB Name-BINU PT residing at HOUSE-PLAVILA-PADINJATTATHIL, MARUTHA MONPALLY, VILL & PO-POOYAPPALLY, DIST-KOLLAM, KERALA-691537, have changed my name from THANKACHAN PO to THANKACHAN for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 18/03/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE I, RAVINDER KUMAR S/O CHANDER PAL R/O 44 BHUJAPUR (102) FARIDABAD HARYANA 121101 HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO RAVINDER NAGAR

NAME CHANGE I, CHANDER KUMAR S/O KHACHEHU R/O 44 BHUJAPUR (102) FARIDABAD HARYANA 121101 HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO CHANDER PAL

NAME CHANGE I, CHEGURU MAMATHA W/O VASU VENKAT REDDY residing at FLAT NO-230 EKTA APARTMENT DDA FLATS POKKET II DWARKA SECTOR 3 DELHI-110075, have changed my name to MEKALANITYA for all future purposes.

NAME CHANGE I, hitherto known as SHANKAR LAL S/O MAHESH LAL R/O A/91 3RD FLOOR, L CORNER FLAT NO-D-2 DUGGAL COLONY KHANPUR, DELHI-110062 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as SHANKAR KUKREJA. It is certified that I have complied with other legal requirements in this connection.

NAME CHANGE I, hitherto known as KIRPAL KUMAR S/O HARI LAL R/O B-119, 2ND FLOOR AHUJA APARTMENT, DUGGAL COLONY KHANPUR, DELHI-110062 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as KIRPAL KUMREJA. It is certified that I have complied with other legal requirements in this connection.

NAME CHANGE I, hitherto known as AMRITA D/O GHAN SHAM DAS R/O B-137 GROUND FLOOR, STREET NO-5, DELVI ROAD, DUGGAL COLONY, DELHI-110062 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as AMRITA AHUJA. It is certified that I have complied with other legal requirements in this connection.

NAME CHANGE I, hitherto known as SANJAY S/O DHARAMPAL employed as Inspector (Min) in the office of Licensing Unit, Delhi Police R/O 224, Shahpur Jat, New Delhi-110048, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as SANJAY KUMAR.

NAME CHANGE I, Ashish Kumar S/O Radha Kishan Shyam R/O 703005, Ground Floor, Shalimar Park, Bholanath Nagar, Ghazipur, Delhi-110032 have changed my name to Ashish Verma.

NAME CHANGE I, Ashish Kumar S/O Radha Kishan Shyam R/O 703005, Ground Floor, Shalimar Park, Bholanath Nagar, Ghazipur, Delhi-110032 have changed my name to Ashish Verma.

NAME CHANGE I, hitherto known as RAJENDRA KUMAR S/O DOLL RAM R/O A-345/1, Anar Puri, Nabi Karim, Pahar Ganj, Po: Swami Ram Tirth nagar, Dist: Central Delhi, Delhi-110055, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as RAJINDER KUMAR.

NAME CHANGE I, NARESH KUMAR S/O Kanwar S/O R/O 1518/1, Indira Nagar, Mugheshar Railway Crossing, Faridabad-121006, Haryana, have changed my name to NARESH KUMAR GOLLA permanently

NAME CHANGE I, hitherto known as SHIVKANT ARORA Advocate M-7, Intefive Law Offices A-74, LGF, Defence Colony, New Delhi -110024

GOVERNMENT OF MANIPUR PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT NIT TBL NO.5 OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, THOUBAL DIVISION, PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT, MANIPUR Dated, Thoubal, 18th March, 2026 The Executive Engineer, Thoubal Division, PWD, Manipur, on behalf of the Governor of Manipur invites item tender through open tender from registered contractors of PWD for 1 no. of Work each costing 1 crore within Thoubal District, Manipur. The procurement officer is Executive Engineer, Thoubal Division, PWD, Manipur. The tender details and documents shall be available from 20/03/2026 to 26/03/2026 at the office of the Executive Engineer, Thoubal Division, PWD, Manipur. Bid submission start date 20/03/2026 (at 11.00 am). Bid submission end date 26/03/2026 (at 03.00 pm). Date of opening of Bid 26/03/2026 (at 03.30 pm) Venue-O/o the Executive Engineer, Thoubal Division, PWD, Manipur. Sd/-Executive Engineer, Thoubal Division, PWD, Manipur.

ONE COACH SET OF PU FOAM CUSHION MATERIAL FOR LWACCN COACHES E-tenders are invited by the undersigned for the following work: 1. E-Tender No.: DB265199, Dated: 13-03-2026; Item Description:

NEWS BOX

Iran's Bushehr Nuclear Power Plant Hit In Israeli Strikes, Says UN Watchdog

world. (Agency)

The UN nuclear watchdog said on Wednesday that Iranian authorities had reported a projectile impact at the country's only operational nuclear power plant that caused no damage. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) "has been informed by Iran that a projectile hit the premises of the Bushehr NPP on Tuesday evening", the Vienna-based agency posted on social media. "No damage to the plant or injuries to staff reported." Agency head Rafael Grossi "reiterates his call for restraint during the conflict to avoid any risk of a nuclear accident", the statement said. The Bushehr plant in southwestern Iran has the Islamic republic's only operational nuclear power reactor and was first connected to the grid in 2011, according to the IAEA. Tehran has been under biting US sanctions since 2018, when Washington withdrew from a deal that granted Iran sanctions relief in return for curbs on its nuclear activities designed to prevent it from developing an atomic warhead. Iran has always denied any ambition to develop nuclear weapons, insisting that its activities are entirely peaceful.

Ali Larijani, Killed Along With His Son, Had Opposed Mojtaba's Elevation

World. (Agency)

Ali Larijani, a veteran politician who helped lead Iran's wartime efforts against the US and Israel, was killed in an Israeli airstrike, Iranian state media confirmed. He was 67. He was killed alongside his son, according to a statement released by Iran's Supreme National Security Council on Tuesday and published by state media. It didn't give any details about the circumstances of his death. Israel had said earlier on Tuesday that it had killed Larijani in an overnight strike, calling him Iran's de facto leader.

Larijani had been a mainstay of conservative politics in the Islamic Republic for decades, known for his shrewd pragmatism and ability to build alliances between the hardline and moderate blocs of the country's dominant Principlist faction. The loss of Iran's top security official, an integral part of its current leadership structure, further depletes the Islamic Republic's reserve of highly experienced senior figures who can be entrusted to keep the regime functioning.

"Larijani has long been the bridge builder between the military and political establishment," said Ellie Geranmayeh, senior policy fellow at the European Council on Foreign Relations. "He had been at the forefront of recent negotiations aimed at finding a political breakthrough with Washington."

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Larijani was appointed to his second stint as Iran's top security official in 2025 following Israel's first war on Iran. His role took on increased importance after February 28, when US and Israeli strikes killed Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and impelled the country's surviving political and military command to pursue a strategy of maximum economic disruption in the region. In an interview with Iranian state TV on March 1, the second day of the war, Larijani said he believed Israel, unable to dominate a hostile country of Iran's size in a region where it lacks friends and allies, aimed to fragment and effectively dismantle the Islamic Republic. The US, he said, had become entangled in that plan.

Cousin Lovers Safe In Florida After Statewide Ban On Marriage Fails



World. (Agency)

An attempt to ban first-cousin marriage in Florida failed at the last minute after the larger bill containing the proposal collapsed in the state House of Representatives. While Florida law strictly prohibits marrying direct ancestors, descendants, siblings, or close relatives like aunts and uncles, first cousins remain legally permitted to wed.

State Representative Dean Black slipped the ban on cousin marriage into a wider Department of Health bill, which would have made it illegal for first cousins to marry starting in July of this year. It was initially adopted without any discussion or pushback and was barely noticed for the remainder of the session. However, on the final day, disagreements over other elements in the bill created an impasse, and the legislation died as the clock on the session expired. Black explained that cousin marriage used to be commonplace in many communities. It was legal in all the then-34 states during the Civil War. There was a time when I think first cousin marriages were allowed because population densities were not great, and you know it was hard to find a mate back when Florida was a wilderness," Black told Action News Jax, as per the New York Post. 'It Should Come Back'

Despite the bill's unfortunate fate, Black expects that the proposal will be back in contention as soon as next year. He, however, did not promise the way it might be brought in.

"There are plenty of people here, and there are plenty of people you can find to be your lifelong partner without looking to your first cousin," said Black.

"So, yes. I think it should come back, whether it's a standalone bill, whether it's tagged onto some other bill. Not really sure. We'll have to see."

Trump calls NATO 'foolish' over Hormuz snub, says US needs 'no help' in Iran

Trump insisted that Washington was ready to go it alone against Iran, saying that even NATO allies had agreed that the Islamic republic needed to be confronted over its nuclear program.

WASHINGTON. (Agency)

US President Donald Trump lashed out Tuesday at "foolish" NATO over Iran, saying the United States needs no help after allies rebuffed his calls to join efforts to reopen the Strait of Hormuz. Trump said most US allies had rejected his push to escort ships through the crucial waterway, with French President Emmanuel Macron saying his country would "never" do so

until the situation was calmer. "I think NATO is making a very foolish mistake," Trump told reporters as he hosted Irish Prime Minister Micheal Martin in the Oval Office. "I've long said that I wonder whether or not NATO would ever be there for us. So this was a great test." But Trump insisted that Washington was ready to go it alone against Iran, saying that even NATO allies had agreed that the Islamic republic needed to be confronted over its nuclear program. "We don't need too much help. We don't need any help," Trump said. Minutes before the meeting, Trump made a lengthy post on his Truth Social platform saying US forces "no longer need" military help in the Iran war. Trump said that "most" NATO allies had said they did not want to get involved, along with Japan, Australia and South Korea, describing the decades-old military alliance as a "one way street."

"Because of the fact that we have had such Military Success, we no longer 'need,' or

desire, the NATO Countries' assistance -- WE NEVER DID!" The 79-year-old Republican has long criticized NATO, and since returning to power in January 2025 he has pushed its members into increasing their defense spending. Asked if he would



reconsider the US relationship with NATO as he has suggested in the past, Trump said it was "certainly something that we should think about" but added: "I have nothing currently in mind." Big mistake! But he repeated his criticisms of foreign

counterparts over the issue, saying British Prime Minister Keir Starmer "hasn't been supportive, and I think it's a big mistake."

Of Macron, he merely said that "he'll be out of office soon." The US leader had suggested on Monday that both Paris and

London would be ready to help, and said other countries he did not name were already on board. But Macron insisted Tuesday that France would not participate in operations to open the strait in the current context, but once the situation becomes "calmer" it could participate in an "escort system" alongside other nations.

Washington's request for

assistance. Iran has targeted the energy facilities of its crude-producing neighbors and attacked and threatened tankers transiting the Strait of Hormuz, all but closing the vital waterway through which one fifth of global crude oil passes.

Nearly 90 Ships Cross Strait Of Hormuz As Iran Exports Millions Of Barrels Of Oil Despite War

HAVANA. (Agency)

About 90 ships including oil tankers have crossed the Strait of Hormuz since the outset of the war with Iran and it is still exporting millions of barrels of oil at a time when the waterway has been effectively closed, according to maritime and trade data platforms. Many of the vessels that passed through the strait were so-called "dark" transits evading Western government sanctions and oversight that likely have ties to Iran, maritime data firm Lloyd's List Intelligence said. More recently, vessels with ties to India and Pakistan have also successfully crossed the strait as governments stepped up negotiations.

As crude prices spiked above \$100 a barrel, U.S. President Donald Trump pressured allies and trade partners to send warships and reopen the strait, hoping to bring oil prices lower. Most shipping traffic through the Strait of Hormuz, a waterway for global oil and gas transport that supplies roughly one-fifth of the world's crude oil, has been halted since early March, after the war started. About 20 vessels have

been attacked in the area. However, Iran has still managed to export well above 16 million barrels of oil since the beginning of March, trade data and analytics platform Kpler estimated. Due to Western sanctions and associated risks, China has been the



biggest buyer of Iranian oil. There has been "continued resilience" in Iran's oil export volumes, said Kpler trade risk analyst Ana Subasic. Iran has managed to profit from oil sales and also "preserve its own export artery" by using control over the chokepoint, said Kun Cao, client director at consulting firm Reddal. Iran's oil export data estimates are largely aligned with maritime traffic data.

At least 89 ships crossed the Strait of

Hormuz between March 1 and 15 — including 16 oil tankers, according to Lloyd's List Intelligence, down from roughly 100 to 135 vessel passages per day before the war. More than one-fifth of the 89 vessels were believed to be Iran-affiliated, while Chinese and Greece affiliated ships are among the rest, it said. Other vessels also have been getting through.

The Pakistan-flagged crude oil tanker Karachi, controlled by the Pakistan National Shipping Corp., passed through the strait on Sunday, Lloyd's List Intelligence said.

Shariq Amin, a spokesman at the Pakistan Port Trust, refused to confirm or deny which route the MT Karachi had used but he said the ship would soon safely reach Pakistan.

The India-flagged liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) carriers Shivalik and Nanda Devi, both owned by state-owned Shipping Corp. of India, also traveled through the strait around March 13 or 14, according to Lloyd's List Intelligence. LPG is used as a primary cooking fuel by millions of Indian households.

At Least 6 Killed In Israel Strikes On Central Beirut, Says Lebanon

Tehran. (Agency)

Lebanon said Israel struck central Beirut early Wednesday without warning, killing at least six people, as the Israeli military announced it was targeting the country's south. Lebanon was drawn into the Middle East war on March 2 when Iran-backed militant group Hezbollah launched rockets towards Israel in response to US-Israeli strikes that killed Iranian supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. Israel has responded with intense strikes in multiple Lebanese regions and ground operations in the south and has hit central Beirut several times, with and without warning. Lebanon's official National News Agency (NNA) said a strike in the early hours of Wednesday hit an apartment in the central Zuqaq al-Blat neighbourhood, a densely populated area close to the

government's headquarters and several embassies. It said the strike occurred near where the Israeli military last week hit a Beirut branch of the Hezbollah-linked financial firm Al-Qard al-Hassan.

In last week's strike, the Israeli military issued an evacuation warning in advance, but no such warning was given before the latest raid. The NNA said two other strikes targeted two apartments in the central Basta district, another densely populated area that Israel struck during a 2024 war with Hezbollah. An AFP correspondent saw first responders at the scene in Basta where the walls of apartments on two adjacent floors appeared to have been blasted off. Lebanon's health ministry reported a preliminary toll for both strikes of six dead and 24 wounded. Human remains at the scenes would

require DNA testing to determine their identity, the ministry added. New Warnings The Israeli military subsequently issued an evacuation warning for a building in central Beirut's Bashoura neighbourhood. An accompanying map indicated the target building was the same one that Israel's army struck last Thursday, also after an evacuation warning, causing damage but without destroying it. The NNA later said that the building was hit, as AFP correspondents heard a blast and APFTV footage showed smoke billowing from the area. The Bashoura area is adjacent to Beirut's commercial centre, where many large companies and government institutions are based, and is also near residential buildings and food outlets. Local media reported gunfire in the area to wake people who were asleep in the pre-dawn hours.

Satellite images begin to show damage wrought by Iran war

The US and Israel have been striking a wide variety of targets, including leadership figures, military bases, missile and air defense sites. Iran has responded with drone and missile fire targeting Israel and nearby Gulf Arab nations.

DUBAI. (Agency)

Satellite images are beginning to be released giving a glimpse into the toll of the Iran war, with ships ablaze in an Iranian port and destroyed buildings at an American base.

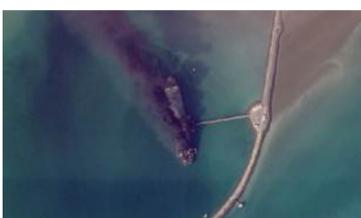
Information has so far been scarce about the damage being done across the Middle East, particularly when it's inside closed military facilities, since the start of the war on Feb. 28. The images come from Planet Labs PBC, a San Francisco-based firm used by media outlets, including The Associated Press. Planet Labs has put a two-week delay on its imagery becoming public citing

concerns its imagery could be used by "adversarial actors." High-resolution images also have been published by competing firms. Other providers, like the US Geological Survey, have been publishing lower-resolution imagery as well that's been useful. The US and Israel have been striking a wide variety of targets, including leadership figures, military bases, missile and air defense sites and positions of the paramilitary Revolutionary Guard and its volunteer force, the Basij. Iran has responded with drone and missile fire targeting Israel and nearby Gulf Arab nations. Here's a look at what's visible in a selection of Planet Labs' pictures, as well as others.

Burning ships in Bandar Abbas, Iran Some of the most dramatic images from Planet Labs so far have been in Bandar Abbas, home to a major Iranian military port next to the crucial Strait of Hormuz connecting the Persian Gulf to the Arabian Sea. Images taken on March 2 show ships ablaze at the port. The U.S. military's Central Command has been targeting Iran's naval assets and says it has sank or damaged more than 100 Iranian vessels so far in the war.

Major impact at 5th Fleet headquarters in Bahrain

The island kingdom of Bahrain, home of the US Navy's 5th Fleet, has seen heavy Iranian fire targeting both military bases and oil installations. A March 1 image shot by Planet Labs shows a major building at



the base destroyed, as well as two radomes — geodesic domes covering radar antennas — likely by Iranian missile and drone fire. The Navy has not offered a clear breakdown in the damage done so far at the base, but Iran has repeatedly claimed to have attacked it. Online videos have also shown incoming fire targeting the base. During the 12-day war in June, Iran attacked and destroyed a similar radome at

Al Udeid Air Base in Qatar used for secure communications.

French naval base hit in Abu Dhabi In Abu Dhabi, the capital of the United Arab Emirates, there's damage seen at France's Camp de la Paix naval base. Satellite images from March 3 show damage to two large hangar-like buildings at the facility. The base is near Zayed Port, in Abu Dhabi, and close to its Cultural District that includes the Louvre Abu Dhabi and other major museums both open and still under construction.

Fires seen burning

The US Geological Survey's Landsat satellites also have been key in spotting major fires. Imagery from Landsat taken on Monday showed a fire at Dubai International Airport after an Iranian drone strike set a fuel tanker ablaze at the world's busiest airport for international travel, causing a plume of noxious black smoke. Another fire was also seen on Monday at Oman's southern port in Salalah, which came under attack from suspected Iranian drones on March 11, though Tehran has denied it launched them in its campaign targeting Gulf Arab states. The fire apparently has been burning since then.

NEWS BOX

Godown keeper sells LPG cylinders worth Rs 17L; held

Gorakhpur.(Agency)

A godown keeper was Tuesday arrested for allegedly selling 954 LPG cylinders worth Rs 17.57 lakh stored in the facility located in Jhagadiya area here and thereby causing their storage, police said.

The move came after an individual from Surat who runs a gas agency in Jhagadiya, Bharuch and had taken the warehouse on rent lodged a police complaint after noticing the missing LPG cylinders.

As per the details, Digvijay Valvi, the agency operator, questioned the employee, Piyush Gamit, who hails from Nikoli in Bharuch, regarding the shortage. Valvi then went to the police and lodged a complaint against the godown keeper on Monday night. Police registered an offence under BNS 316(3) (criminal breach of trust).

Jhagadiya inspector G I Rathod said, "On the basis of the complaint, we arrested the accused godown keeper, Piyush Gamit, on Tuesday, who had been working in the godown for 13 years. We are trying to dig out information from the accused to find out whom has he sold the cylinders to."

Yaksh App helps identify murder accused, vehicle lifters' gang: UP Police



Shimla. (Agency)

The Uttar Pradesh Police's recently launched Yaksh App helped identify an absconding murder accused in Firozabad by matching his current appearance with his old photographs and a vehicle lifters gang in Rae Bareilly, officials said. The murder accused, Sanjay Singh, was concealing his identity, they added.

A non-bailable warrant was issued for the arrest of Sanjay Singh after a case of murder was registered against him at Linepar police station. The application verified his identity and he was taken in custody, a police spokesperson said. The accused was produced in court on Sunday. Also, Rae Bareilly police claimed to have unearthed a gang of vehicle lifters using the app.

A case was filed after police received information about the theft of a Scorpio SUV on February 16. Police used the application identifying all the CCTV cameras in the area. Following surveillance, the main accused, Pradeep, and other gang members were arrested on Monday, officials said. Five stolen vehicles and a car used in the crime were recovered, they added.

Bengaluru apartments seek rollback of 'discriminatory' solid waste management charges

BENGALURU.(Agency)

The Bengaluru Apartment Federation (BAF) has demanded the immediate withdrawal of the "discriminatory" solid waste management charges imposed on apartment communities.

"Since mid-January this year, new regulations have unfairly classified user fees on solid waste in apartment complexes with over 100 units as bulk waste generators. While an independent house under 2,000 sqft pays a nominal fee of Rs 100 per month through property tax, apartment residents are being charged Rs 12 per kg. Coupled with a 18 per cent GST burden, this amounts to approximately Rs 360 per month per flat, a staggering 600 per cent increase in waste disposal costs," said Satish Mallaya, federation president, which represents over 1,000 members.

The federation said instead of forcing associations to sign contracts with waste processing units, the Bengaluru Solid Waste Management Limited (BSWML) should directly collect a parity-based user fee from apartments without GST and appoint the waste processors directly.

Addressing the media on Tuesday, BAF office-bearers expressed disappointment over the legislative stagnation and highlighted that two years have passed since Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar assured the Legislative Assembly of a new law to replace the outdated 1972 Act. Although the Karnataka Apartment Ownership (and Management) Bill (KAOMA) 2025 draft has been ready since July 2025, and public consultations were held following a prior BAF press conference on December 2 last year, the Bill has still not been tabled. While suggestions were sought and reviewed by the DCM, no preparations have been made to introduce the legislation.

"The delay in passing the KAOMA 2025 is leaving citizens struggling to manage their apartments issues, resolve disputes, and protect their ownership rights. To safeguard the interests of lakhs of apartment owners, we request the DCM and all legislators to pass this Act in the current budget session," the federation said in a release.

Gujarat may table UCC Bill in Assembly next week

Panel suggests common legal framework for all religions and communities on marriage, divorce, inheritance, adoption and other issues: Sources

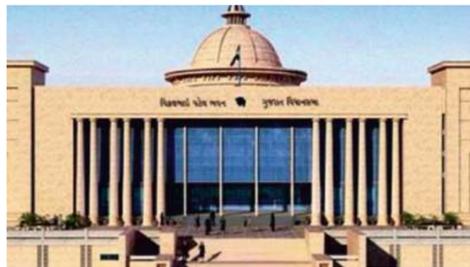
Ahmedabad.(Agency)

Gujarat is set to move a draft Bill on the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) in the state Assembly on March 24, a day before the ongoing budget session concludes, government sources said.

The move comes after a panel headed by retired Supreme Court judge Justice Ranjana Prakash Desai submitted the UCC report to chief minister Bhupendra Patel on Tuesday morning. The report prioritises equal rights and protection of women and emphasises geographical and cultural diversity of Gujarat.

The sources stated that the draft Bill has been approved to be included in the business of the House in the Business Advisory Committee meeting held Tuesday. If passed, Gujarat will become only the second state after Uttarakhand to implement a uniform civil

code. Also, the state government plans to move three other Bills on the last two days of the



budget session. Following the submission of the draft report, chief minister Bhupendra Patel in a post on X stated, "The high-level committee formed under the chairmanship of

retired Supreme Court judge Justice Ranjana Prakash Desai for the implementation of Uniform Civil Code (UCC) in Gujarat submitted its detailed and final report to the state government..."

The presentation made while submitting the report to the CM stated that the committee has suggested a common legal framework for all religions and communities on issues like marriage, divorce, inheritance and adoption, the government authorities stated. "The committee has suggested a uniform legal framework for all religions and communities on issues like marriage, divorce, inheritance and adoption in this draft report. In particular, equal rights and protection of women have been given priority in this draft. The geographical and cultural diversity of Gujarat has also been kept in mind in this report," the CM's post read.

'Attempt was made to depict their condition was such that could result in death': Court on complainant, victims

The court of Additional Sessions Judge Jignesh Pandya had, on Monday, convicted five persons and acquitted 35 others while pronouncing its judgment in the case that was reported from Una in Gir Somnath district on July 11, 2016.

Ahmedabad. (Agency)

EVEN AS the district sessions court of Gir Somnath at Veraval on Tuesday sentenced five persons convicted in the 2016 case of public flogging in Una to five years' rigorous imprisonment and a fine of Rs 5,000 each, the court raised questions over the conduct of the complainant and victims in the case and ordered to give them Mahatma Gandhi's autobiography - Satya na Prayogo - as compensation under the provisions of the Bharatiya Nagrik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS) "to enable them to come out of the mental trauma and to counter injustice within the limits of the law."

The court of Additional Sessions Judge Jignesh Pandya had, on Monday, convicted five persons and acquitted 35 others while pronouncing its judgment in the case that was reported from Una in Gir Somnath district on July 11, 2016.

The five were convicted for charges like voluntarily causing hurt using dangerous

weapons, wrongful confinement and intentional insult to provoke breach of peace and humiliating the members of the Scheduled Caste communities under the provisions of the



IPC and Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act commonly known as Atrocity Act.

On Monday, the court announced their punishment while awarding them maximum

sentence of rigorous imprisonment for five years and fine of Rs 5000 each. A senior lawyer connected with the case said that as all the five convicts have spent more than five years in jail as undertrial prisoners, they are likely to get a set-off against the sentence.

The five convicts include Ramesh Jadav, Rakesh Joshi, Nagjibhai Vaniya, Pramodgiri Gausvami and Balvantgiri Gausvami.

In its judgment, however, the court has raised questions over the conduct of the complainant and the victims in the case, while discussing the aspect of awarding compensation to the victims under the provisions of Section 395 of BNSS. The court has observed, "The objective of this section is to rehabilitate the victim. Therefore, at the time of ordering compensation, victims' social and financial condition and established conduct should be taken into consideration."

LPG crisis: Karnataka HC notice to Centre, state on hoteliers' plea

The petitioners' counsel, K Satish said some hotels have also stopped purchasing perishable goods such as vegetables, meat, eggs and fruits, fearing imminent closure.

BENGALURU. (Agency)

The High Court of Karnataka on Wednesday sought a response from the Union and state governments on a petition filed by the Bangalore Hotels Association (BHA) and four others. The BHA's plea seeks directions for uninterrupted supply of commercial LPG cylinders to the hotels and restaurants in Bengaluru.

Justice Sachin Shankar Magadam directed the governments to submit by Monday their responses along with the proportionate share of the state, total supply of cylinders this month and the stock available.

The petitioners' counsel, K Satish, informed the court that Bengaluru has around 40,000 eateries, and around 6,00,000 labourers work in them. Many of these

establishments have trimmed their menus and shortened business hours, while some others have even temporarily shut down their business, leaving the



workers jobless. He said some hotels have also stopped purchasing perishable goods such as vegetables, meat, eggs and fruits, fearing imminent closure.

Advocate Satish submitted that the

government issued the Natural Gas (supply) Order, 2026, after assessing the disruption of natural gas supply due to the ongoing conflict in West Asia. The March-9 order makes it abundantly clear that there shall be only 80% supply to industrial and commercial consumers, subject to operational availability, he said.

According to the policy framed by the state government, only 1,000 commercial LPG cylinders per day would be supplied throughout the state, which is less than 5% of the regular supplies, he alleged.

Meanwhile, counsel for the Union government submitted that the situation was not anticipated, and he will seek instructions, as the supply of commercial LPG cylinders is a policy decision.

Technopark hit by water woes; private tankers fill 80% in Thiruvananthapuram

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM (Agency)

Technopark — the biggest IT park in the country — is grappling with a severe water crisis with over 80% of its daily requirement currently being met through private tanker supply. Sources said the park — home to around 490 companies and 75,000 employees - has been heavily dependent on tanker water for several months now.

The daily water requirement at the IT park is estimated at 10-15 lakh litres. However, supply from the Kerala Water Authority remains critically low covering only a fraction of the demand. It is learned that the KWA is able to supply only 1 lakh litres daily for the rapidly expanding park prompting the park authorities to look for short-term and long-term measures.

To address the crisis, the Technopark has invested in a modern water treatment plant in the campus. "The work is under way and the facility is expected to be operational within three to four months. There are two natural ponds within the campus and it will be used for addressing the crisis," said a source. Besides this,

the IT park is planning to dig an artificial rain water harvesting pond in the low-lying area identified within the campus. It is learned that the project launched by KWA to lay a new pipeline to give better water supply is progressing at a snail's pace. The project conceived before the pandemic faced major setbacks after the contractor withdrew citing a surge in material costs, leading to



legal hurdles.

With the advent of summer, around 50 tanker lorries are currently deployed to cater to Technopark. It is learned that phase I and III are the worst affected by the water crisis. Not only Technopark, the areas surrounding the park including 20 wards in Kazhakoottam region are under severe water crisis.

Over 37 lakh litres of liquor valued at Rs 293 cr seized in Bihar in 2025

Patna. (Agency)

Bihar police and State Narcotics Control Bureau jointly recovered 37.75 lakh litres of liquor in 2025 valued at Rs 293.58 crore in Bihar. Sources at the police headquarters said on Wednesday that the police and the bureau have recovered 3,14,610 litres of liquor per month leading to total recovery of 37,75,321 litres of liquor in 2025 whereas 2,88,425 litres have been recovered per month leading to a total recovery of 34,61,096 litres in 2024.

Lauding the joint efforts of the bureau and the security personnel, Prohibition and State Narcotics Control Bureau ADG Amit Kumar Jain said that 7,41,368 litres of liquor were recovered in the first two months of the current year. The estimated value of 34.61 lakh

litres of liquor stood at Rs 153.12 crore in 2024 whereas 37.75 lakh litres of liquor recovered in 2025 were valued at Rs 293.58 crore and 7.41 lakh litres of liquor recovered till February this year were valued at Rs 60.59 crore, the ADG said.

The Bureau alone has recovered 8,05,502 litres of liquor in 2024 whereas 10,27,741 litres of liquor have been recovered in 2025 and 2,47,809 litres have been recovered in the first two months of 2026, Jain said, adding that the state has recovered 28 per cent more liquor in 2025 over the preceding year of 2024.

The state police and bureau have arrested 1,25,575 suspects in connection with excise cases in 2025 whereas 22,827 persons have been arrested till February

2026, he said. Out of the 1,25,575 arrested, 76,795 suspects are those who were caught consuming liquor while 48,780 were either engaged in the business of liquor or supplying it, besides 1,236 were the suspects arrested outside the state.

Of 22,827 suspects arrested till February 2026, 14,755 were those who consumed it and 8072 were either businessmen or suppliers.

The bureau carried out operations outside the state and conducted four raids in which eight persons were arrested from Jharkhand in 2024 besides making a recovery of 28,210 litres of liquor, while 76 persons were arrested in 38 raids carried out in state like Jharkhand, UP, Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh. Five suspects have been arrested in three raids conducted

in UP and Jharkhand in the first two months this year, ADG said.

According to him a total of 203 persons, who were arrested in connection with 152 cases, have been convicted in 2025 whereas 12 persons were convicted this year.

Of the 203 convicted persons, two persons have been awarded life imprisonment, while 20 have been given more than 10 years of sentence, 177 given less than 10 years of sentence and four persons were handed down with less than two years of sentence.

Of the 12 convicted in the first two months this year, three were awarded more than 10 years of sentence, nine less than 10 years of sentence.

The state police and state narcotics control bureau have seized various

types of narcotics and contraband drugs such as ganja, charas, heroin/brown sugar/smack, cocaine, doda, opium, chemical drugs, and CBCS, Jain said.

The authorities have seized 10,450.5 kg of ganja in 2023, 13,483.6 kg in 2024 and 31,915.3 kg in 2025 and 7415.882 kg till February this year, he said adding that 78.403 kg of charas in 2023, 282.291 kg in 2024, 394.02 kg in 2025 and 14.72 till Feb 2026.

Similarly, 23.689 kg of heroin/brown sugar/smack were seized in 2023, 41.996 kg were seized in 2024, 65.089 kg seized in 2025 and 8.6437 kg seized till Feb 2026, he said while stating that Doda, Opium, chemical drugs CBCS too have witnessed a steady rise in the seizure of these items too.

Bihar gives fresh momentum to women empowerment through agriculture

Patna.(Agency)

Women's participation in agriculture is steadily emerging as a key driver of empowerment in Bihar, with the state Agriculture Department ensuring greater inclusion of women farmers across its schemes. According to official data, nearly one-third of the state's agricultural workforce now comprises women.

Official sources said on Wednesday that the agriculture department has been actively promoting their involvement by earmarking at least 30 per cent participation for women in various subsidy-based schemes.

These include high-value and emerging sectors such as mushroom cultivation, makhana, papaya and dragon fruit farming. The sources said that the impact of these initiatives is also reflected in the beneficiary data of Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi. Out of more than 8.6 million farmers receiving benefits under the scheme in Bihar, over 2.63 million are women, highlighting their growing role in the agricultural economy.

Officials said that increased participation of women in agriculture is not only boosting farm productivity but also strengthening rural livelihoods. With improved access to subsidies and modern farming practices, women are contributing significantly to income generation, nutritional security, and sustainable development.

To further enhance inclusion, the state government is ensuring that at least 30 per cent of beneficiaries in schemes like the Dragon Fruit Development Scheme and other horticulture initiatives are women.

Similar provisions are being implemented under programmes for papaya cultivation, expansion of mango and litchi orchards, and the Chief Minister's Horticulture Mission, including schemes for fig and strawberry cultivation as well as cluster-based horticulture.

Ladakh direly needs clarity, stability

THE Union government reiterated its commitment to a constructive dialogue with stakeholders regarding safeguards for Ladakh, shortly after Vinai Kumar Saxena assumed charge as the Lt Governor on Friday.

The government also revoked the detention of climate activist Sonam Wangchuk, who had been held under the National Security Act following violent protests in Ladakh last year. He was released after his wife, Gitanjali Angmo, stated that he had no political ambitions and would not pursue the path of agitation.

Yet activism and politics are not defined by ambition alone; influence and mobilisation often take subtler forms. The government argued that the prolonged period of bandhs and agitations had harmed Ladakh's peace-loving society and affected students, job aspirants, businesses, tour operators and the tourism-driven local economy.

An uneasy calm has prevailed since the protests of September 24, 2025, which left four persons dead and around 90 injured. Public agitation has subsided, but beneath the quiet lies a deeper political drift — marked by confusion, miscalculation and a widening gap between expectations and political reality.

When Ladakh was separated from Jammu and Kashmir and granted Union Territory (UT) status in October 2019, the Buddhist-majority district of Leh celebrated. For decades, its leaders had demanded precisely this outcome. In contrast, Shia-majority Kargil observed the day as a "black day." The separation seemed to resolve a long-standing grievance — but only briefly. Within a year, the initial euphoria in Leh faded. The abrogation of Article 35A triggered anxieties over land ownership, employment and demographic vulnerability. Celebrations quickly gave way to demands for constitutional safeguards. What began as a narrative of liberation soon turned into a search for protection. This shift exposed a fundamental contradiction. Ladakh, which opposed the special constitutional framework associated with Article 370, now seeks similar — if not stronger — protections through inclusion in the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution. The Ministry of Home Affairs has posed a pointed question: why abandon one form of constitutional exceptionalism only to demand another?

The Sixth Schedule was crafted primarily for parts of the North-East, where distinctive historical trajectories, insurgencies and tribal autonomy movements shaped its evolution. Ladakh's demographic, anthropological and political realities do not neatly align with those circumstances. To project the Sixth Schedule as constitutional "nirvana" oversimplifies a complex institutional arrangement.

Yet the demand carries emotional weight. Much of the anxiety stems from perceived political disempowerment under the UT model, which lacks an elected legislature. Decision-making is seen as concentrated in administrators appointed from outside the region. This perception persists despite the dramatic rise in Central funding — from roughly Rs 57 crore annually before 2019 to nearly Rs 6,000 crore today. Economic packages, however, cannot substitute for political voices.

Developments in Kargil reveal further complexity. Shia mobilisation has grown more assertive, subtly reshaping Ladakh's internal political balance. Public expression of solidarity with Ayatollah Ali Khamenei (who was assassinated recently) has underscored the transnational dimensions of Shia identity. These developments have impacted Leh and sections of Sunni-majority Kashmir alike, reflecting broader shifts within Muslim politics over the past decade.

Ladakh's instability, therefore, is not merely administrative; it is also sociological. Buddhist monastic networks in Leh and the Shia clerical leadership in Kargil continue to shape public sentiment. Political demands increasingly transcend technical constitutional debates.

The Indian State, however, has yet to articulate a coherent political narrative of its own.

Touchstones: Cricket, politics and faith

The resilience and courage of a tiny isolated Iran may well be the hole that sinks the might of a high-handed US-Israeli action

I have to confess that I'm not at all a sports-mad person. Wimbledon, World Cup cricket matches or Super Bowl — nothing would drive me to spend hours before a TV screen, screaming my lungs out or sobbing my eyes dry. Perhaps this is to do with the traditional girl-boy divide: few girls of my generation were as mad about sporty events as the boys were. In my own home, later, my father-in-law, husband, our three sons and the male kitchen staff became a team as they cheered every cricket match. I grumbled about how many cold drinks, snacks and popcorns had to be provided and how the kitchen smelt of burnt food while our cook and helper sat transfixed with the men in the sitting room. Jubilation (if India won) and deep gloom (if we lost) were a predictable aftermath too. If even a person like me sat in front of all the recent matches and prayed that India wins the final, I cannot understand why the Congress party chose to stay away from the final match in Ahmedabad. Was it because the stadium is named after you-know-who or because the chief of the BCCI is the son of you-know-who? Whatever the reason, it was another example of how absurd it is to drag sports into the political arena. I can recall another classic cricket match (was it an India-Pakistan one?) where Rahul, Priyanka and Robert Vadra were present and leapt from their seats at every boundary hit by our players and the victorious arms they raised in keeping with the rest of the spectators that day. They effortlessly became one of the cheering masses and everyone commented on how easily they blended with the rest of the janta. If that image has remained etched in my memory, where were they when India played a memorable match, with so many boundaries that one has lost count?

It is a fact that cricket in the subcontinent is nothing short of a cult. India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka — what binds us is just a deep love for this British game that we have made our own. Look next door if you need convincing: what is the passionate support for Imran Khan's political party but an extension of the huge love Pakistan has for this legendary cricketer? His political naivete is subsumed by the passionate patriotism he evokes in every Pakistani heart. One day, when he is finally released, the tide of anger against the petty reasons for keeping him imprisoned for so long, will smash his rivals like a sixer shot clean over their heads.

That said, let us now turn our attention to our present champions. Unlike so many other teams that participated, this is one that has players from every part of India. North, South, East or West, there is something infectious about their total dedication to each other as a team. From a humble fisherman's village to a suave good-looking dude from Punjab, from the boondocks of Bihar to that blonde cockerel from Gujarat — you tell



me, what's not to love? And it seems that there is an endless supply of these smashers and leapers just waiting to be given a chance. Contrast this with the stodgy, ageing gora teams, and you will understand what I'm trying to point out.

No son of a Gavaskar or Tendulkar is picked because his father has clout. No dynasties are important when sons of politicians and famous past players are considered. This is a lesson that we need to apply in our choice of political leaders. The selectors may occasionally err but their commitment to giving each hopeful applicant a fair chance is now an established law. How one wishes our political parties would have the courage to do so too. And now to the elephant in the room: the fast-developing events in the Middle East. Here again, politicians who are out of step with the deep cultural history of the region will have to eventually concede that this is an unknown territory. The resilience and courage of a tiny isolated Iran may well be the hole that sinks the might of a high-handed US-Israeli action. Europe, Canada, Australia and

the rest of the white world is doomed to re-live the medieval history lessons it was taught by the tribal kingdoms of the Middle East. In just over a week, this tiny state has paralysed the vital consignments of oil and blocked the sea lanes that keep the rest of the world afloat. And while the aggressors saw just the unpopularity of its political government, they had badly under-estimated its deep cultural pride in its Shia religious identity.

From my own limited exposure to the Shia temperament in Awadh and its memories of Karbala, who on earth gave the go-ahead for killing their Ayatollah in the holy month of Ramzan? Or the consequences of martyrdom that will haunt them for a long, long time? In these deracinated times, the deep cultural beliefs of every major religion — Hinduism, Islam or Christianity — cannot be forgotten. For, those who cannot understand these deep memories embedded in the rituals of fasting and expiation (Ramzan, Lent or Chaitra Navratri) across the world will continue to be puzzled by their resilience and commitment to fight for their faiths.

Ahmedabad air crash probe: AAIB must allay doubts

The arrest of the AAP-backed sarpanch with 18 kg of heroin in Tarn Taran district is a new low for the drug-afflicted state

DAYS after the Union government informed Parliament that the probe report of the Ahmedabad Air India crash would be out "very soon", the country's Aircraft Accidents Investigation Bureau (AAIB) has itself come under scrutiny. The US-based Foundation for Aviation Safety (FAS) has alleged that the bureau ignored key evidence pertaining to the June 2025 crash which claimed 260 lives in one of India's biggest air disasters. The global aviation industry and the victims' families deserve an investigation that is not only thorough but also transparent. The perception of opacity raises doubts that must be addressed urgently. The FAS, a premier non-profit organisation that monitors the aviation industry as well as government regulators, has claimed that it possesses documentary proof suggesting a troubling pattern of electrical and electronic failure in the Boeing 787 Dreamliner aircraft that was involved in the crash. This reportedly includes incidents



of burnt wires and repeated replacement of a major power distribution component. If authentic, such evidence could

potentially point toward systemic aircraft issues rather than human error. The foundation has alleged that its repeated offers to share this sensitive information with the investigators have received no response. These accusations are serious because any air mishap probe must consider every credible lead. International aviation safety norms stress openness, cooperation and the free exchange of safety-related data. Ignoring or delaying the review of relevant evidence risks undermining the credibility of the probe. The foundation has argued that by failing to acknowledge these technical concerns, the preliminary report has indirectly reinforced speculation that the pilots were responsible for the disaster. It's worrisome for India, whose civil aviation sector is expanding rapidly, that premature assumptions and conclusions are gaining traction. The final probe report must not only be comprehensive but also beyond reproach.

How not to be the Leader of Supposition

← **The Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha needs to pursue serious issues consistently and offer alternatives. A wealth of institutional history can inspire Rahul Gandhi in this role**

The Congress-initiated, INDI-Alliance-supported motion to express lack of confidence in the Speaker of the Lok Sabha was destined to be defeated. Going by the speeches of the opposition leaders, it was clear that there was little substance to the motion. On the other hand, going by the frontal attack by speakers from the treasury benches, it proved to be yet another self-goal for the opposition in general and the Congress in particular.

The onus of this flop show lies undoubtedly with the Leader of Opposition, Rahul Gandhi. The 2024 verdict, in which India's Grand Old Party won almost 100 seats, created a fertile ground for Rahul to prove his political acumen, understand parliamentary practices, hone oratorical skills and, above all, display his leadership talent. But alas, over the last two years, Rahul has failed to establish much worth noting on these fronts. On the contrary, factors like a seeming lack of application, inconsistent participation in the Lok Sabha, unserious demeanour including making serious allegations without providing concrete evidence have done serious damage to the institution of LoP.

From A K Gopalan to Sushma Swaraj, there were many LoPs who hugely contributed to the prestige and decorum of the office. In the first Lok Sabha, Comrade Gopalan could not be officially appointed LoP as the formal role had not been established yet. Nonetheless, his scholarship, activism and oratorical skills made him the de facto LoP. As a parliamentarian, AKG was known for his commitment to the rights of the working classes. From the BJP, leaders like Atal Bihari Vajpayee, L K Advani, Swaraj and Arun Jaitley enhanced the prestige of the LoP's office through their conduct in the House as also their intellectual contribution during

deliberations. Remarkably, in 1994, Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao asked Vajpayee, then the LoP, to lead the Indian delegation to the UN Human Rights Commission in Geneva to defend India's position on Kashmir, a move that spoke volumes about the healthy mutuality between the PM and the LoP. Advani, too, made a significant mark as the LoP and vacated the position in 2009 in favour of his younger party colleague Swaraj.

Known for her powerful oratory, Swaraj demanded accountability of the government. She was known for her content-rich speeches and flawless argument on economic policies, corruption, price rise and security issues. On certain occasions, she almost forced the government to retreat on contentious legislative issues.

Rahul Gandhi had such an inspiring legacy of always-watchful LoPs to further build upon. But sadly, at least till today, he has not quite risen to the opportunity. Not just non-Congress LoPs, Rahul could have learnt from his parents and his granny, too. Indira Gandhi, who briefly played the LoP's role, realised the importance of activism beyond the Lok Sabha. Many journalists in those days wrote at length about her tireless travels across the country. Apart from her legendary elephant ride to Belchhi in Bihar, she would often spend 10-12 hours a day on the road. With this in the backdrop, there are at least three things that Rahul must improve upon if he wants to be taken seriously as the LoP, the extremely important constitutional position he occupies. First, he must provide some evidence of his alternative vision. He vehemently criticised the farm laws, assailed the government on its handling of diplomatic relations with

neighbouring countries, and attacked the Centre's approach to the unrest in Manipur. But merely attacking the government is not enough. He could have provided alternative visions on these issues and told countrymen as to how he would have dealt with them in a qualitatively better fashion. For example, he keeps on harping about inadequate representation of

that he would take up certain key issues and follow up on them consistently. For him, it was easy to criticise the GST by calling it the "Gabbar Singh Tax". However, neither he as the LoP nor the states ruled by the Congress have followed up on whatever substantive GST reforms they deem fit.

That takes up to the third important factor, which is re-building the Congress party organisation. Structured efforts to re-invigorate India's GOP are not apparent today. Had Rahul used all the days he spent abroad on such an effort, his party cadres would have felt more enthused. How can a non-resident LoP enthuse—forget cadres—even his own party's members of Parliament? Remember how some Congress MPs were chuckling cheekily when Home Minister Amit Shah was attacking him on the point of his repeated foreign visits? The LoP cannot just take things for granted. If he believes that there are issues about which the people of the country are agitated, he has to establish it in multiple ways, at multiple forums and on multiple occasions. Winning brownie points, playing the victimhood card, ridiculing the Prime Minister and other senior BJP leaders certainly would not cut any ice. It is easy and alluring to be a 'Leader of Supposition'. But to be an effective Leader of Opposition, one needs many things like engaging with opinion-makers, taking the pains of meeting industry leaders, undertaking extensive travel within the country, making studied arguments and, thereby, creating a definitive mark.



marginalised communities in government, judiciary and even in academia. But then, there is no substantive evidence to suggest that his party's governments in Karnataka, Telangana or Himachal Pradesh have gone the extra mile to ensure adequate representation to the marginalised. American essayist Ralph Waldo Emerson famously said, "A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds." Looks like Rahul has taken this a tad too seriously. Post his Bharat Jodo yatra, it was expected

Woman's mutilated body found in field in Hamirpur

Hamirpur.(Agency)

In Hamirpur district, a shocking incident was reported from Maudaha police station area where a woman's body was found lying in a field in Ramna village early in the morning on Wednesday.

Local residents who were passing by noticed the body and were horrified to see that the woman was completely naked. The scene was further disturbing as stray dogs had partially mutilated the body.

Initially, villagers tried to identify the woman, but her identity remains unknown. Someone informed the police, who arrived at the scene along with a forensic team. The body was taken into custody and sent for postmortem. Police estimate the woman to be around 35 years old, though confirmation is pending. Prima facie, there are suspicions that she may have been gang-raped and murdered. However, officials stated that the exact cause of death will only be confirmed after the postmortem report.

Investigations are ongoing, and efforts are being made to identify the victim by contacting nearby villages. The incident has created panic and outrage in the area.

Man killed in suspected honour killing in Lucknow

Lucknow.(Agency)

A sensational case resembling an honour killing has emerged in the Ashiyana area of Lucknow. A 32-year-old man, Vishnu Yadav, was allegedly beaten to death by his father-in-law, advocate Teerath Raj Singh, who opposed his daughter's love marriage. The incident occurred on Tuesday night at the family residence, police said on Wednesday.

Vishnu had married Singh's daughter Sakshi four years ago against the family's wishes. On Tuesday, he visited his in-laws' house at his wife's insistence. Later that night, an argument broke out between Vishnu and his father-in-law, which escalated into violence. In a fit of rage, the accused allegedly struck Vishnu multiple times on the head with a wooden cot leg, causing fatal injuries. Vishnu died on the spot. Sakshi was also injured while trying to intervene.

Police arrived at the scene with a forensic team and collected evidence. The main accused and four daughters have been taken into custody. Authorities are investigating whether the murder was premeditated or the result of a sudden altercation.

Himachal HC takes cognisance of alleged irregularities in Rora Khadd Hydropower Project in Kinnaur

Shimla.(Agency)

Himachal Pradesh High Court has taken serious cognisance of alleged irregularities in the construction of the 20-megawatt Rora Khadd Hydroelectric Project in Yula village of Kinnaur district, registering the matter as a Public Interest Litigation. A Division Bench comprising Chief Justice Gurmeet Singh Sandhawalia and Justice Bipin Chandra Negi issued notices to the State government and other concerned parties, seeking their response on the issue.

The court took suo motu cognisance based on media reports highlighting concerns raised by residents of Yula village. Locals have alleged large-scale negligence in the execution of the project, particularly objecting to indiscriminate blasting and the unscientific dumping of debris.

The court has directed the authorities to conduct a comprehensive inspection of the ongoing construction activities at the project site. Officials have been asked to examine adherence to prescribed safety standards, assess the present status of the project, and submit a detailed status report before the next date of hearing.

According to the villagers, such practices have not only endangered the fragile ecology of the region but have also posed a serious threat to nearby habitations. A video of the project went viral recently dumping the muck in the river directly.

Kangra bank launches e-vehicle loan scheme on 106th Foundation Day

Dharamshala.(Agency)

The Kangra Central Cooperative Bank Ltd. launched its new "E-Vehicle Loan Scheme" on the occasion of its 106th foundation day, offering one of the lowest interest rates in the market. Launching the scheme on Tuesday at the bank's head office in Dharamshala, Managing Director Zafar Iqbal said the initiative aims to finance the purchase of electric four-wheelers for personal use. He said the scheme carries an attractive interest rate of around 7.5 per cent, making it affordable for a wide range of customers.

The loan facility will be available to government employees, private individuals, professionals, traders, farmers and other eligible borrowers. Under the scheme, government employees can avail loan up to 40 times their salary, while non-salaried individuals can get up to twice their annual income. The repayment period has been fixed at up to seven years with minimal margin requirements.

Punjab: AAP MLA Sukhanand gheraoed, evacuated by police as SAD accuses ruling party of 'stealing' block samiti chief poll in Baghapurana

The Punjab Block Samiti election controversy intensified in Baghapurana, Punjab after Shiromani Akali Dal accused the ruling Aam Aadmi Party of manipulating the chairman poll results in Moga district, prompting protests and police deployment.

Chandigarh.(Agency)

Tension prevailed in Baghapurana town of Punjab's Moga district on Tuesday after the Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) accused the ruling Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) of "stealing" the block samiti chairman election, "despite having a lesser number of elected members".

Furious SAD workers allegedly vandalised the gate of the block development and panchayat officer (BDPO)'s office, alleging that AAP's Baghapurana MLA Amritpal Singh Sukhanand was holding "negotiations with some elected women members of the SAD". As the tension grew, a heavy police force reached the spot and evacuated the MLA amid heavy sloganeering by SAD workers against the AAP, accusing the ruling party of "brazen hooliganism".

Later, SAD workers, led by the party's Baghapurana in charge Tirath Singh Mahla, blocked the national highway and staged a sit-in at Baghapurana Main Chowk. Sukhjeet Singh Mahla, Youth Akali Dal leader and son of Tirath

Singh Mahla, said, "In the 25-member block samiti body, SAD has 13 elected members, the AAP 8, the Congress 3 and one is Independent. One Congress member was also supporting us,



so our strength was 14. Even then, the AAP declared its candidate won the election. They locked our nine women members in a room, stopped them from voting and marked them absent in the election. This is nothing but pure hooliganism. They have openly stolen the

election and thrown democracy in the wind." MLA Sukhanand, meanwhile, claimed that five SAD women members did not "vote on their own will" after he spoke to them. "It is true that we have eight elected members. Along with the support of an Independent and one Congress member, our strength was ten. But later, I convinced five women members of SAD not to vote, and they agreed. So, they did not vote on their own will. We did not lock anyone in a room to stop them from voting," the MLA told The Indian Express over the phone.

He said police would take action against SAD workers for vandalising public property at the BDPO office. The protest was lifted late on Tuesday after a DSP-rank officer reached the spot and held talks with the protesting SAD leaders. "They have asked to file an official complaint against our women members held captive in a room. We will move the high court seeking cancellation of the election hijacked by AAP," said Sukhjeet Mahla.

India would have looked very different if Bhagat Singh were first PM: Mann

Chandigarh.(Agency)

A day after Speaker Kuldar Singh Sandhwan refused to allow the Opposition Congress to move a resolution before the Punjab Assembly seeking the highest civilian award for Bhagat Singh, Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann said on Tuesday that India would have looked very different if the freedom fighter had been the country's first Prime Minister.

"If Bhagat Singh were alive, and had been allowed to lead the nation after Independence, the entire direction of the country would have been different. Sixteen years after his martyrdom, the country became independent. By 1952, when the first elections were held, Bhagat Singh would have been around 45 years old. He should have been the first prime minister of the country. The entire map and destiny of the nation would have been different had he led India," Mann said, addressing a gathering in Dhuri.

Hitting out at the AAP government and the Speaker for refusing to allow the Congress's resolution, as the House on Monday unanimously passed another resolution seeking Bharat Ratna for Bahujan Samaj Party founder Kanshi Ram, Leader of the Opposition Partap Singh Bajwa said on Monday that the blocking of the resolution has exposed the gap between AAP's rhetoric and its actions. "It is deeply ironic that the AAP government frequently invokes the ideals of Bhagat Singh and claims to take inspiration from his ideology, yet when an opportunity arose to formally recommend the highest civilian honour for him, it failed to act."

Accompanied by Cabinet ministers Aman Arora, Harpal Singh Cheema, Dr Balbir Singh and Barinder Goyal in Dhuri, the chief minister said, "Bhagat Singh was born on September 28, 1907, and was martyred on March 23, 1931, at just 23 and a half years of age. He fought for the country's freedom. His way was different because he was young and aggressive, while Nehru and Gandhi had their own approaches. But later, we reduced Bhagat Singh's legacy to merely offering flowers once a year on March 23.

Gas agency owners flag harassment incidents during LPG delivery, demand security cover

Chandigarh.(Agency)

Mentioning growing incidents of threats, abuse and manhandling, LPG gas agency owners in Bathinda have sought security cover for their delivery staff and vehicles, particularly in rural areas. During a meeting with District Food and Civil Supplies Controller Daljit Singh Sandhu on Tuesday, agency owners flagged safety concerns affecting smooth distribution of domestic LPG cylinders. According to the dealers, delivery staff are increasingly being stopped by villagers — some claiming affiliation with farmer unions — and forced to hand over cylinders without valid booking. When staff refuse, they are allegedly threatened or misbehaved with. Paramvir Singh, a gas agency dealer, said that as per government norms, domestic LPG cylinders can

be booked after 25 days of the previous delivery in urban areas and 45 days in rural areas. "However, our staff faces pressure as villagers often gherao delivery vehicles and demand cylinders in exchange for empty ones without booking. When denied, they resort to intimidation," he said.

Highlighting a recent incident in the Maur constituency, a dealer on the condition of anonymity said a delivery worker was allegedly forced to hand over around 30 cylinders without booking, leaving genuine consumers without supply. "Usually only two or three persons accompany a delivery vehicle, making them vulnerable," he added. Sources said that even police intervention at some places failed to

fully resolve such situations. Dealers maintained that their staff are assisting villagers with online booking and e-KYC processes, yet many continue to insist on receiving



cylinders without following due procedure. Similar incidents have also been reported in the Sangat area of Bathinda where delivery vehicles were reportedly surrounded by locals. Holding

agencies accountable for each cylinder delivered, owners said administrative support is crucial to ensure fair distribution and staff safety. As a temporary measure, some agencies have stopped door-to-door delivery in villages and are instead asking consumers to collect cylinders from common points such as village gurdwaras by personally making phone calls to them rather than making any announcements. The dealers thus asked the administration to resolve these issues at the earliest by providing adequate security. Acknowledging the issue, Deputy Commissioner Rajnish Dhiman stated "such incidents are limited to a few areas. We have assured them that the administration would address them".

Demolition drive at Park Plaza hotel sparks political uproar in Jalandhar

Jalandhar.(Agency)

Tensions flared in Jalandhar on Tuesday evening after the Municipal Corporation (MC) launched a demolition drive at the Park Plaza Hotel, which is owned by Punjab Kesari newspaper, triggering protests and a political showdown at the site.

Acting on alleged illegal construction, a team from the MC's building branch, accompanied by heavy police force, arrived at the hotel in Civil Lines around 6.30 pm and began demolition using excavators. The front portion of the building, including a canopy and two pillars, was partially brought down.

Officials said the action was taken following a court hearing in the Jalandhar Session Court, which reportedly did not grant any relief to the hotel owners, Chopra Hotels Private Limited. The demolition was carried out under the directions of the Municipal Commissioner. The operation was led by MTP Meharban Singh, along with ATP Ravinder Singh, ATP Vikas Dua, draftsman Shavinder Kaur and Inspector Ajay Kumar. According to officials, the MC's drawing branch had earlier conducted a measurement of the building and identified certain portions as unauthorised, which were targeted in the demolition. Previous attempts to take action had been delayed due to pending court orders. The



demolition quickly turned controversial as political leaders and supporters gathered at the site. Former MLA Rajinder Beri, along with councillor Sherry Chadha and other Congress workers, reached the spot and engaged in a heated argument with officials, temporarily halting the demolition. Soon after, leaders and workers from both the Congress and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) staged a protest at the site, alleging high-handedness by the administration. Police intervened to disperse the protest and detained BJP leader Sheetal Angural and former AAP MP and now BJP leader Sushil Kumar Rinku.

The hotel has been under scrutiny for nearly a month, with the MC issuing notices over alleged illegal construction. Sources claimed that the hotel management had approached the court and obtained a stay on the demolition. However, police and officials maintained that no such relief was granted, justifying the action. Partap Singh Bajwa, Leader of Opposition, Punjab Assembly, on his X handle said: "AAP's actions in Punjab are raising serious concerns about press freedom and misuse of state power. Targeting media house @punjabkesari and @JagbaniTv simply because they refuse to toe the line exposes a worrying intolerance towards journalism".

BJP tried 'vote chori' in Haryana, says Congress, initiates action against 5 MLAs for cross-voting

Chandigarh.(Agency)

The Congress on Tuesday accused the BJP of indulging in "vote chori" in the Rajya Sabha polls for two seats in Haryana even as it initiated disciplinary action against five of its MLAs who allegedly cross-voted in the keenly watched election where the counting went past midnight following allegations of violation of vote secrecy.

Amid the turmoil, one of the three acting presidents of the Haryana Congress, Ram Kishan Gujjar, resigned from party membership and relinquished all posts and responsibilities. His wife is an MLA.

While BJP's Sanjay Bhatia (58) sailed through to the Upper House, it was a narrow win for Congress' Karamvir Singh Boudh (61) over Independent candidate Satish Nandal, as cross-voting dented his margin. Congress general secretary in charge of Haryana, B K Hariprasad said, "We will issue show-cause notices to the MLAs. If their explanation satisfies us, it is fine; otherwise, we will take action against them." Those facing action include two women MLAs, two legislators from the Mewat

region, and one from Fatehabad district. Leader of Opposition and former chief minister Bupinder Singh Hooda confirmed that the party has initiated proceedings but declined to reveal names, citing party principles. "The Congress is aware of the five MLAs, and the high command has been informed. Appropriate action will be taken



against them," Hooda said, clarifying that the anti-defection law does not apply in this case.

"They did not betray the party; the betrayal was against the people who elected them. The names will come out once the party takes action. Some have already resigned, but resignation should come from the MLA concerned who deceived the public," he added.

Budget Session to be 'extremely challenging' for govt as Oppn to raise stalled projects, law & order: Jai Ram

Shimla.(Agency)

Leader of the Opposition Jai Ram Thakur on Tuesday indicated that the Opposition BJP were preparing to corner the Congress government during the second phase of the Budget Session of the Himachal Pradesh Assembly beginning Wednesday.

"The upcoming Budget Session will be extremely challenging for the government, as the Opposition has submitted rule-bound notices on stalled development works, poor law and order and other public issues. Providing satisfactory responses to these queries will prove to be an arduous task for the government," the former chief

minister said. Launching a scathing attack on the Chief Minister Sikhvinder Singh Sukhu government, Thakur alleged, "An atmosphere of distrust has developed against Himachal Pradesh across the ruling dispensation and the chief minister."

Addressing mediapersons at his office on the Assembly complex, Thakur raised serious concerns over alleged corruption, deteriorating law and order, and the worsening financial condition of the state. Thakur alleged that the chief minister

has been "misleading the House with false statements," calling it a



pattern of governance that warrants investigation as a possible breach of privilege. He also accused the

government of "deviating from established parliamentary traditions", claiming, "For the first time in the state's history, discussions on the Governor's address were deliberately delayed, reflecting confusion and lack of direction within the government."

Thakur alleged that a large syndicate is currently active, engaging in extortion by misleading people under the guise of Section 118 of the Himachal Pradesh Tenancy and Land Reforms Act, which deals with the transfer of agricultural land to non-

agriculturists, and claimed that this illicit activity is driving a continuous exodus of industries from the state. "Even after three and a half years, the trend of shutting down institutions established in the public interest has yet to cease," he said. Taking the government to task over the issue of corruption, he raised strong objections to the decision to exempt the Anti-Corruption Bureau and the Vigilance Department from the purview of the Right to Information Act. "What exactly constitutes "confidential information" that the government seeks to conceal from the public," he questioned.

Three children among at least nine killed in fire near Palam Metro; some escaped by jumping off 4-storey building, others not so lucky

Building housed clothes and cosmetics shops in basement and lower floors; residential quarters above. Fire broke out early in the morning; LG, CM express distress and condolences

New Delhi.(Agency)

At least nine people are confirmed to have been killed in a fire that broke out in a four-storey building housing both shops and residents near Palam Metro Station in southwest Delhi on Wednesday (March 18) morning. Three of the dead are children, Delhi Fire Services officials said.

Several people could still be trapped in the building, the officials said. Fire crews were working to rescue them, Fire officers said. The Fire Service said it had received a call about the fire at 7 am and immediately dispatched 30 fire tenders to the spot. Several people were pulled out of the burning building and rushed to hospital, where nine were declared dead. At least seven other people have been admitted to hospital, officials said.

The building, owned by one Rajendra Kashyap, comprises a basement, ground floor, and four storeys, with a temporary tin shed on the roof. There are clothes and



cosmetics shops in the basement and on the ground and first floors, and residences on the two higher floors. "Two persons jumped from the building early in the fire, and they have been admitted to hospital. Cooling, search, and rescue

operations are ongoing," an official said.

At Manipal Hospital, eight people were declared dead, including Pravesh (33), Kamal (39), Ashu (35), Lado (70), Himanshi (22), and three minor girls aged 15, 6 and 3 years. At IGI Hospital, one woman, Deepika (around 28), was brought dead, while a man, Anil (around 32), and a two-year-old girl are undergoing treatment.

At Safdarjung Hospital, a 29-year-old man, Sachin, has been admitted with around 25% burn injuries. There have been several earlier instances of fires in the capital in March.

Delhi Lieutenant Governor Taranjit Singh Sandhu wrote on his X account: "Deeply distressed by the fire incident in a residential building near Palam Metro. My thoughts are with those affected by this tragic loss. Rescue and firefighting operations are being closely monitored, with all necessary support being extended." Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta said she was

extremely distressed to learn about the fire incident.

"As per the information received, 6 feared dead, few people still trapped inside the building. District Administration, Delhi Fire Service Department & Delhi Police are leading the rescue operation. A magisterial enquiry has been ordered to investigate the incident. Praying for everyone's safety!," she posted on her official X handle.

Earlier this month, two people were charred to death after a fire broke out at a plastic toys warehouse in central Delhi's Sadar Bazaar on Holi (March 4). In a separate incident, a teenage girl had died in a fire at a JJ cluster in northwest Delhi's Rohini that same day, officials recalled. More recently, on March 12, a major fire broke out in a cluster of jhuggis at Mansa Ram Park near the fish market in Matiala, in southwest Delhi's Uttam Nagar, in which approximately 80 shanties were burned to the ground. There were no deaths reported in this fire.

Burglar who stole induction cooktop amid LPG shortage held by Delhi Police

New Delhi.(Agency)

A burglar who stole an induction cooktop amid the ongoing LPG shortage was held by South-West Delhi, officials said on Wednesday. According to police, the accused was apprehended by the Anti-Burglary Cell team of the South-West District in connection with a burglary case registered at Palam Village police station. The case was lodged on March 6 following a complaint regarding theft of a laptop and other household items.

DCP South-West Amit Goel said that the accused was identified as Biki Chaudhary, a native of Kolkata, West Bengal, presently residing in Gurugram, Haryana.

Police recovered stolen items from his possession, including a Milton induction cooktop, a pair of Red Tape shoes, and clothes. During interrogation, the accused confessed to his involvement in the crime. Officials said a dedicated team conducted CCTV analysis and developed technical inputs to track down the suspect before successfully apprehending him. Further investigation in the case is underway.

6 Ukrainians, American in NIA net: 'Supply of drones to insurgents, illegal entry in Mizoram'

These are the key charges against the seven foreign nationals — six Ukrainians and one from the US — who were detained by law enforcement agencies in an extraordinary operation Friday at three airports on charges of conspiring to carry out terrorist activities against India.

New Delhi.(Agency)

Illegally entering restricted areas in Mizoram, crossing into Myanmar without permits, training ethnic armed groups and facilitating the supply of drone consignments from Europe to insurgent-linked networks.

These are the key charges against the seven foreign nationals — six Ukrainians and one from the US — who were detained by law enforcement agencies in an extraordinary operation Friday at three airports on charges of conspiring to carry out terrorist activities against India.

The American national was detained by the Bureau of Immigration at Kolkata airport. Of the six Ukrainian nationals, three were detained at Lucknow airport and three at Delhi airport. All were brought to Delhi and produced before a

magistrate Saturday, who remanded them to three days' custody. On Monday, their custody was extended until March 27, an additional 11 days.

According to documents submitted by



the NIA in court, the US national has been identified as Matthew Aaron Van Dyke. The six Ukrainians have been identified as Hurba Petro, Slyviak Taras, Ivan Sukmanovskiy, Stefankiv

Marian, Honcharuk Maksim and Kaminskyi Viktor.

The seven men were arrested mainly under Section 18 (punishment for being part of a terrorist conspiracy) of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA), along with other relevant sections.

The NIA's FIR stated that the six arrested Ukrainians were part of a group of 14 nationals from the country who had entered India on tourist visas on separate dates, and had flown to Guwahati. From Guwahati, the Ukrainians had allegedly travelled to Mizoram without the requisite document, that is the Restricted Area Permit (RAP), also known as Protected Area Permit (PAP). It is not immediately clear where the arrested American joined the Ukrainian group.

Only minutes before collapse, schoolchildren crossed bridge

New Delhi.(Agency)

Yash, a Class 8 student of a school in Roop Nagar, had crossed the iron foot overbridge over the Najafgarh-Wazirabad drain around 8.30 am on Saturday. A few minutes later, the bridge collapsed, resulting in the death of a woman.

"Due to exams, my school now starts late, at 9 am. I crossed the bridge just minutes before it collapsed. I found out about it only after reaching school," Yash told The Indian Express, adding that many of his schoolmates also crossed the bridge on Saturday.

"Now, we will have to take a longer route to reach the school," he said.

According to Yash, a bigger tragedy was averted on Saturday, as due to annual exams, many schools have changed their timings. "Many children who would normally take this route, did not cross the bridge in the morning," he said.

Bhanwar Singh (63), who lives at Gur Mandi in Rajpura, echoed Yash.

"Had the bridge collapsed a few minutes earlier, there could have been a much greater loss of life... Roop Nagar has four schools. Many children cross the bridge to attend school every



morning," he said while standing near the collapse site. According to Singh, the bridge collapsed between 8.30 am and 9 am.

While authorities said the bridge was 33 years old, Singh claimed it was over 50 years old. "I have seen this bridge for over 50 years. Its condition was poor, as it was not properly maintained. People had sought repairs but nothing was done." "Until 1984, both sides of the bridge — Roop Nagar and Rajpura — had dense vegetation. This area was part of Sahibi river, whose water flowed into the Yamuna. Over time, it became polluted... and turned into a drain," he added. Singh claimed the bridge was last repaired in the late 1990s.

Anil, an e-rickshaw driver, said the bridge was meant for pedestrians, but people also used it for two-wheelers.

Retired banker's accounts drained of Rs 1.29 crore after 48-hour digital arrest

When the victim realised what had transpired for 48 hours, he lodged an FIR with the Cyber Crime Police in Greater Noida. Cyber crime officials said that they will investigate the matter further.



New Delhi.(Agency)

The ugly spectre of 'digital arrests' continues to haunt Indians. In the latest instance, scammers posing as TRAI officials have duped a retired bank manager of Rs 1.29 crore after holding him under 'digital arrest' for two days.

The scammers, who are still at large, claimed that a SIM card issued in the victim's name was being used illegally. They also threatened to arrest the retired bank manager, who resides in Greater Noida, if he did not cooperate.

To convince the victim, they also showed a fake courtroom on the video call. The 'digital arrest' reached its climax when the scammers sought Rs 1.29 crore from the victim under the pretext of verifying his personal details.

When the victim realised what had transpired for 48 hours, he lodged an FIR with the Cyber Crime Police in Greater Noida. Cyber crime officials said that they will investigate the matter further.

RISING CASES OF 'DIGITAL ARRESTS'

In this scam, cyber fraudsters contact targeted individuals through calls, SMS, or social media platforms. They pretend to be law enforcement officials and falsely accuse victims of crimes such as money laundering, identity theft, or other serious crimes.

Victims are then threatened with immediate 'digital arrest' unless they comply with demands. As the conversation progresses, scammers attempt to extort money or personal information from unsuspecting individuals.

At least two big cases of 'digital arrests' have come to the fore this year. A 70-year-old woman in Uttarakhand's Dehradun was held under 'digital arrest', which led to her losing Rs 3.09 crore. After facing the ordeal for several weeks, she lodged a complaint with the local police in February 2026.

In Delhi, an elderly NRI doctor couple was cheated of Rs 14.85 crore in a prolonged cyber fraud in which scammers kept them under 'digital arrest' for over two weeks in January 2026. Authorities have repeatedly urged citizens not to panic over such calls and to verify any claims directly with official agencies before transferring money.

To ease Mathura Road, Kalindi Kunj congestion, Delhi govt proposes alternate route spanning 4.5 km

New Delhi.(Agency)

With an eye on improving connectivity and removing bottlenecks between South Delhi and neighbouring cities of Noida and Faridabad, the Delhi government is planning to construct a nearly 5-km-long two-lane road from Aali Vihar to Mathura Road. The proposed stretch aims to decongest Ashram-Aali corridor and Kalindi Kunj junction, used by lakhs of commuters everyday.

Officials said the proposed stretch — along the Agra Canal in Eastern part of the national capital — will not only provide access in the vicinity of Aali village in South East Delhi but also improve connectivity to Noida, and Sarita Vihar, and other major parts of South Delhi, helping ease traffic congestion, said officials. The Ministry of Road Transport and Highway (MoRTH) has given a sanction of Rs 38.03 crore under the Central Road and Infrastructure Fund for the construction of the 4.5-km

stretch. The project was also discussed at a recently-held meeting of The Northern Zonal Council, which comprises Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Rajasthan, Delhi, Jammu and Kashmir, Ladakh, and



Chandigarh. Currently, the Ashram-Kalindi Kunj stretch, an arterial route that provides connectivity between Noida and South and Central parts of Delhi, witnesses heavy traffic congestion. In the absence of a direct road connectivity to

the main city, the residents of Aali village and nearby densely populated areas also use this stretch, worsening the traffic snarls, said officials.

Under the proposed project, three roads will be constructed — Aali Vihar to Lal Shiv Mandir (0.40 km), Lal Shiv Mandir to Road no 13A (1.70 km) and a 2.4-km road from Pocket D Sarita Vihar to Aali Village and Aali Vihar to Mathura Road.

"The proposed stretch will provide the first formal and direct access route to Aali village, significantly improving mobility and ensuring convenience for residents of the densely populated locality. Once constructed, the stretch will help ease major traffic bottlenecks along the Ashram-Aali corridor and Kalindi Kunj junction, offering a much-needed route for smooth intra-city movement," said a senior government official.

Gurgaon Commuters Alert: Key SPR Stretch Closed, Traffic to Likely Be Hit for Weeks

Officials said these measures are aimed at ensuring commuter safety and reducing congestion during the construction work, while also expressing regret for the inconvenience caused.

New Delhi.(Agency)

If you travel on Gurugram's Southern Peripheral Road (SPR), be prepared for delays and diversions over the next few weeks.

The Gurugram Metropolitan Development Authority (GMDA) has temporarily closed an important crossing between Sectors 75 and 76 from Tuesday evening to carry out work on a major stormwater drain project, a GMDA spokesperson said. The closure is expected to last about a month for this stretch. According to GMDA officials, commuters should avoid this stretch and instead use alternate routes like Darbaripur Road and the road between Sectors 76 and 77.

Meanwhile, Gurugram Traffic Police said that ongoing drain construction along the SPR will affect movement across a larger stretch — from Sectors 74 to 80 — as well as nearby areas like Shikohpur and Manesar



Police Lines. The disruption could continue for around 60 days, police said. To manage traffic, the police have suggested the following alternate routes:

Vehicles coming from Vatika Chowk should take SPR towards NH-48 and use the cloverleaf near Kherki Daula Toll, according to traffic police. Commuters

travelling from Dwarka Expressway towards Sectors 74-80 should use NH-48 via the Kherki Daula cloverleaf, police said. Those coming from Rajiv Chowk should continue on NH-48 past Kherki Daula Toll to reach their destinations, according to police. Traffic from Pachgaon Chowk (Manesar side) should take a U-turn at Kherki Daula Toll, police said.

Officials said these measures are aimed at ensuring commuter safety and reducing congestion during the construction work, while also expressing regret for the inconvenience caused.

The project is part of GMDA's larger plan to improve Gurugram's drainage system, especially along the fast-developing SPR corridor, officials said. Once completed, the new drain is expected to help prevent waterlogging during the monsoon by managing rainwater more effectively, they added.

NEWS BOX

Vinicius Jr hits brace as Real Madrid dump 10-man City out of Champions League

New Delhi. (Agency)

Vinicius Jr. scored a fantastic brace as Real Madrid eased past Manchester City 2-1 and dumped Pep Guardiola's team out of the UEFA Champions League. Arsenal reached the quarterfinals of the competition after they beat Bayer Leverkusen 2-0 at home and won the tie 3-1 on aggregate. Bodo/Glimt's fairytale run in the Champions League came to an end as Sporting Lisbon thrashed them 5-0 after extra-time to complete a 5-3 aggregate win. Defending champions Paris Saint-Germain piled on the misery on Liam Rosenior and Chelsea as they beat the Blues



3-0 to record an 8-2 aggregate win and move to the quarterfinals. The spotlight on Tuesday, March 17, was firmly on Vinicius and Los Blancos, who eliminated City from the competition for the third consecutive season. The Brazilian put Madrid in front from the spot after Bernardo Silva was deemed to have handled the ball inside his own box. This also meant that the home side were reduced to 10 men. Vini Jr. got a measure of revenge against the City fans as he celebrated with a crying gesture. In 2024, the City fans unveiled a banner telling the Brazilian to stop crying after Rodri won the Ballon d'Or. "The last time we came here, the Manchester City fans (who put up a banner that read 'Stop crying' after Rodri won the 2024 Ballon d'Or ahead of the Brazilian) were making fun of me," Vinicius said. "I wasn't disrespecting City fans but it was a way for me to prove myself to them." But City weren't ready to give up without a fight. Erling Haaland levelled the score in the 41st minute, but the tie was heavily in favour of Alvaro Arbeloa's men, who had won their home leg tie 3-0. Second-half drama saw goals from Manchester City duo Jeremy Doku and Rayan Ait-Nouri, along with Real Madrid's Federico Valverde and Vinicius Jr, all ruled out. However, Vinicius had the final say, striking from close range in the 93rd minute to seal his brace.

MSD Unplugged: Dhoni is a Man Utd fan with a personal 'Shisha Man', says Sam Billings

LONDON. (Agency)

There is a side to MS Dhoni that rarely makes headlines. Former England wicketkeeper Sam Billings offered a peek behind the curtain this week, painting a picture of the CSK veteran off duty. "He is a Manchester United fan. We watched every United game because you can't leave the hotel and go downstairs to the hotel bar. He leaves his hotel room open. He has a little shisha man who looks after the shisha," Billings said. It is a familiar scene to those who have shared a dressing room with Dhoni. Former Australia batting coach Michael Hussey echoed the same sentiment on The Overlap earlier. "His room is available, open 24 hours a day. Anyone can go up there and just sit. Players just sit around, they start talking cricket, some of



them like the shisha. That is their way of socialising," Hussey recalled. For someone who has been in the public eye for two decades, Dhoni's way of unwinding is straightforward enough. An open door, a United match and good company. **DHONI IS GOING NOWHERE** Off the field, the shisha and football. On it, another IPL season beckons. Chennai Super Kings CEO Kasi Viswanathan confirmed ahead of IPL 2026 that Dhoni will be available for the full campaign. He will play the matches, all matches," Viswanathan told reporters in Chennai. On the question of his exact role, the CEO left it to the coaching staff. "That's a cricketer's decision which will be taken by the cricketer's staff. They will decide whether he is going to play as a batter, a wicketkeeper-batter or as an Impact Player," he added. Dhoni has been training in Chennai alongside his teammates after earlier net sessions in Ranchi. At 44, questions about how long he will continue have become a fixture of every IPL build-up.

Bangladesh regretting T20 World Cup snub? Sports ministry to review boycott stance

Bangladesh sports minister Anamul Haque orders probe into the country's T20 World Cup boycott and BCB elections, plans talks with ICC over board's future and governance issues. Haque wants to see if there was a failure of sports diplomacy in the call.

New Delhi. (Agency)

Bangladesh sports minister Aminul Haque plans to set up a second committee to investigate why Bangladesh was unable to participate in this year's T20 World Cup in India and Sri Lanka. Haque said that a second committee will be formed to look into the boycott call and see if the withdrawal from the event amounted to a failure of sports diplomacy. Bangladesh's decision to snub the

T20 World Cup came from Mustafizur Rahman's unceremonious exit from IPL, forcing them to ask for a change in venue from India. The ICC decided to reject Bangladesh's request and this forced the BCB to continue with their stance of boycotting the tournament. They were replaced by Scotland in the tournament. Haque said that the matter will be investigated after Eid and such a mistake will not be repeated in the future. We will try to find out why we didn't go to the World Cup. We have to understand why our sports diplomacy fell short. We will form an investigation committee on this subject after Eid. We have to strengthen our sports diplomacy and make sure we don't repeat this mistake in the future. "ICC TO DECIDE FUTURE OF BCB?"

On March 11, the sports ministry decided to form an investigation committee to look into allegations about irregularities, abuse and manipulation of power during the BCB elections last year. This caused the board to react strongly, saying that the move to form the committee amounted to interference from the government. Haque

said that once the committee submits their report within 15 working days, he will discuss the matter with the ICC. "We are all aware of direct interference from our previous government in the BCB elections last year," Haque said. "I have spoken about



it on a number of occasions. Following allegations from Dhaka clubs and the districts, we have formed an investigation committee. I will read their report, but my next step will come after I have spoken to the ICC."

There were strong allegations that former

captain Tamim Iqbal and a large group of Dhaka club officials engineered the elections. Accusations were also made against BCB president Aminul Islam ahead of the polls. Weeks ahead of the elections, Aminul had written to the sports ministry urging it to replace councillors from select districts. Tamim also claimed that the BCB revised the nomination deadline on two separate occasions. Haque said the investigators will examine the process through which the district administrators changed their nominations before the elections. The investigation committee will speak to the BCB election commissioners, the current board president, BCB directors and the CEO. It will also get in touch with the district administrators who nominated the BCB councillors," Haque said. "There is an allegation that many of these district administrators sent the name of a new councillor after having already nominated one, following receipt of a letter [from Aminul]. I believe there has to be a neutral investigation of these matters."

India vs Pakistan set for Men's Hockey World Cup 2026, arch-rivals grouped together



New Delhi. (Agency)

The Indian men's hockey team are all set to renew their rivalry with Pakistan in hockey as the arch-rivals have been grouped together for the upcoming men's Hockey World Cup 2026 in August. India and Pakistan are in Pool D, alongside England

and Wales, and will play their matches in the Netherlands. The Indian women's team also face a tricky lineup at the Women's World Cup, being drawn in Pool D alongside China, England and South Africa. The full schedule is set to be announced soon, with all eyes on the date for the India vs Pakistan

clash on the men's side of things. India have been unbeaten against Pakistan in men's hockey since 2016, with their last meeting coming during 2024 during the Asian Champions Trophy. Both teams were supposed to face off in the Asia Cup 2025 in Rajgir, Bihar, before Pakistan decided to pull out of the tournament, citing security concerns. India went on to win the title and secure their spot in the World Cup. Pakistan hockey endured a testing past few months after the players were subjected to an embarrassing ordeal during the Australia tour of their Hockey Pro League leg. However, they were able to turn things around in Egypt during the World Cup qualifiers and made it to the tournament for the first time in eight years.

India have a superior head-to-head record over Pakistan since 2013, winning 17 out of their 26 matches. The Indian women's team also secured their passage into the World Cup through the qualifiers and will look to continue their resurgence in Sjoerd Marijne's second stint as coach.

Riyan Parag Interview: RR captain finds leadership lessons in EPL's relegation battle

New Delhi. (Agency)

Rajasthan Royals captain Riyan Parag was in London last week, watching West Ham hold Manchester City to a 1-1 draw at the London Stadium. On the face of it, an IPL captain attending a Premier League game is nothing more than a holiday. But Parag wasn't just there to watch football. He was there to learn. It was perhaps an odd choice for a game. West Ham are in the middle of a relegation battle, clutching at straws with just 29 points from 30 games, every fixture now carrying the weight of consequence. When City took the lead through a Bernardo Silva chip, 60,000 Hammers fans didn't flinch. Four minutes later, Bowen swung in a corner, a moment of



chaos followed in the box, and Mavropanos headed home. West Ham had nicked a point against one of Europe's most decorated sides, refusing to give up till the final minute in a resilient defensive display. The draw not only helped them sneak a point against a rampaging City side, but more importantly kept them alive in the Premier League, their fight stretching on for at least another week. The stadium, by Parag's own account, was deafening from start to finish, riding every tackle and clearance, demanding effort and feeding off it in equal measure. And while watching from the stands, something clicked. **PARAG'S WEST HAM PARALLEL** During his trip to London, the newly appointed Rajasthan Royals captain had sat down with West Ham skipper Jarrod Bowen. The conversation went somewhere most pre-organised interviews don't, drifting away from rehearsed answers into something more honest, more difficult to articulate.

Senegal stripped of AFCON title in bizarre decision overturn, Morocco crowned winners

Morocco has been awarded the 2026 African Cup of Nations title after the Confederation of African Football (CAF) overturned the final win of Senegal. The CAF ruled that Senegal had forfeited their game after they left the field during the final following a controversial penalty being awarded to Morocco.



penalty was awarded to Morocco in the final few minutes of stoppage time. **INTERNATIONAL FOOTBALL: FULL COVERAGE** Senegal returned to the field after 14 minutes to win the game 1-0 in extra-time, thanks to a goal from Papa Gueye after Brahim Diaz missed the penalty after the restart of the match. However, now the result has been turned into a 3-0 victory for Morocco. The decision adds another layer of controversy, where the walk-off and the fight between fans and spectators had the CAF saying that the image of African football was tarnished. The Senegalese Football Federation (SFF) said that they will take the matter to Court of

Arbitration for Sport (CAS), in a bid to overturn the decision made on Tuesday. "This is a travesty; this decision is based on absolutely nothing. It has no legal foundation," Abdoulaye Seydou Sow, the Secretary General of SFF, told state broadcaster RTS1. "And from what we saw this morning when the hearing began, we already had serious doubts — clearly, the judge did not come to rule on the case, he came to carry out orders." The president of the federation will get in touch with the lawyers; we will engage with the appropriate authorities, and then we will go to the Court of Arbitration for Sport, which will issue the final decision. "We will not back down. Senegalese people should have no doubt. The truth is on Senegal's side, the law is on Senegal's side." The decision now means that Morocco has become AFCON champions for the second time in their history, 50 years after their first title win. The Royal Moroccan Football Federation appreciated the decision and said they were made the appeal to have the rules of the competition properly applied.

King returns to protect the crown, as Kohli touches down in Bengaluru for IPL 2026

IPL 2026: The king is back. Virat Kohli has touched down in Bengaluru ahead of IPL 2026, ready to lead RCB's title defence.

NEW DELHI. (Agency)

Virat Kohli is back in Bengaluru. And this time, he arrives as something Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) fans have never seen before. A champion defending his crown. Kohli was instrumental in Royal Challengers Bengaluru's title-winning campaign last season. He amassed 657 runs at a blistering strike rate of 144.71 and an average of 54.75, with eight half-centuries to his name. The batting icon will be eager to pick up where he left off as RCB look to become the first side in recent memory to

successfully defend the IPL title. The Bengaluru-based franchise ended an 18-year wait to claim its first-ever IPL title last season. Rajat Patidar emerged as an unlikely hero, leading them to the promised land. The task now is to do it all over again. **AKING IN HIS PRIME** Last season was the latest chapter in a remarkable purple patch for Kohli. He had already won his first T20 World Cup title in 2024 before retiring from both T20 internationals and Test cricket. The IPL is now one of the last stages where fans can regularly watch him in action. Every appearance counts. Every season matters more than the last. At 37, Kohli shows no signs of slowing down. His numbers last season were not just good for his age. They were good by any measure. He remains one of the most complete batters in the format, capable of anchoring an innings or shifting gears at will. For a side looking to



defend a title, having Kohli at the top of the order is as reassuring as it gets. The hunger, too, appears undimmed. Kohli has spoken openly about what this franchise means to him. RCB is not just a team he plays for. It is personal. **CRICKET RETURNS TO CHINNASWAMY** And what a stage it promises to be. On March

28, RCB will feature in the season-opener against SunRisers Hyderabad at the iconic M Chinnaswamy Stadium. The fixture carries extra significance given the uncertainty that once hung over the venue. Following RCB's historic title win, a tragic stampede outside the stadium claimed 11 lives and left over 40 injured. Cricketer activities were suspended. The venue was stripped of the Ranji Trophy final between Karnataka and Jammu and Kashmir, which was moved to Hubballi amid safety enhancement works. But cricket is coming back. The Karnataka cabinet has granted approval for IPL matches to resume at the ground. A strict 35,000-capacity cap is in place, with multi-departmental oversight ensuring the venue meets the highest safety standards.

Why gold isn't rising despite Iran-US war and what it means for your money

New Delhi, (Agency)

Gold, which is usually the first choice for investors during uncertain times, is not behaving as expected. Even as tensions between the US and Iran continue to escalate, gold prices have remained largely steady, leaving many wondering what is holding the metal back.

MUTED START DESPITE GLOBAL TENSIONS

Gold and silver began Wednesday's session on a slightly weak note on the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX). Investors are staying cautious as they wait for the US Federal Reserve's policy decision, which is expected to give clearer signals on interest rates. At the time of writing, gold was trading at Rs 156,000, marginally up by Rs 15 or 0.01%, while silver saw a modest rise of Rs 757 or 0.30% and was priced at Rs 253,870. The overall trend suggests a market that is watchful rather than reactive. **STRONG DOLLAR IS LIMITING GOLD'S APPEAL**

One of the biggest reasons behind gold's muted performance is the strength of the US dollar. As global uncertainty rises, investors are putting money into the dollar instead of gold. A stronger dollar makes gold more expensive for buyers using other currencies, which reduces demand.

INTEREST RATE WORRIES ARE PLAYING A ROLE

Another key factor is interest rates. With crude oil prices rising due to Middle East tensions, inflation concerns have increased. This has reduced expectations of rate cuts by the US Federal Reserve. Higher interest rates make assets like bonds more attractive compared to gold, which does not offer any returns. Moreover, gold has already seen a strong rally in recent months. Many investors are now choosing to book profits instead of adding fresh positions. This is keeping prices within a narrow range rather than pushing them higher.

Unlike earlier crises, investors today have more choices. Apart from gold, they are also turning to US Treasuries and cash positions. This shift is dividing the demand that would otherwise have gone fully into gold.

Bosch and Tata Autocomp form a 50:50 JV to build EV motors and e-axles

New Delhi, (Agency)

Bosch Limited has approved a new joint venture with Tata Autocomp Systems Limited, marking a fresh push into India's electric vehicle supply chain. The decision came during a board meeting on March 18, 2026, with both companies expected to sign the formal agreement on March 23.

E-axles and traction motors don't get much attention in headlines, but they quietly define how an EV drives. With India's EV market picking up pace, this partnership looks well timed. Bosch and Tata Autocomp plan EV component push

The two companies will form a private limited joint venture focused on manufacturing, selling, and servicing e-axles and electric traction motors. Both sides will hold equal stakes, making it a 50:50 partnership. The JV will begin with a small capital base of ₹10 lakh, which will later scale up to ₹94 crore depending on funding needs. Governance will also remain balanced, with a six-member board where each company nominates three directors.

Strict terms and structure in place

The agreement includes a five-year lock-in period, which means neither company can transfer its shares during that time, except to non-competing affiliates. After the lock-in, any transfer to competitors will need approval from the other partner. The joint venture will initially not be treated as a related party transaction. After the capital is subscribed, it will become an associate company of Bosch.

Why this matters for India's EV space

Bosch reported a turnover of ₹18,087 crore in FY2024-25, and Tata Autocomp posted ₹3,959 crore. That scale shows this is not a small experiment.

Sebi seeks public comments on changes to nomination norms for demat accounts, mutual fund folios

New Delhi, (Agency)

India's market watchdog, the Securities and Exchange Board of India, on Tuesday issued a consultation paper proposing changes to nomination norms for demat accounts and mutual fund folios, seeking public comments. The regulator said the proposals aim to modify its January 10, 2025, circular on nomination facilities in the securities market to improve the ease of investor onboarding and align processes with banking norms. Under the existing framework introduced last year, single-holding investors were allowed to authorise one nominee (excluding minors) to operate their accounts in case of physical incapacitation, provided they remain mentally capable of contracting. However, nominees are not permitted to update key account details such as bank information or contact details. The current rules also mandate investors to provide at least one personal identifier of the nominee, such as PAN, driving licence number or the last four digits of Aadhaar, along with full contact details, relationship status, and date of birth in case of minors. Investors can nominate up to 10 persons in a mutual fund folio, while Power of Attorney (PoA) holders are not allowed to nominate. Moreover, the market regulator has flagged implementation challenges and risks associated with allowing nominees to operate accounts. The SEBI noted that the industry has cited high compliance costs, difficulty in maintaining audit trails, and potential risks of fraud, misuse and legal disputes. To address this, it has proposed allowing the existing Power of Attorney mechanism to be used in cases where an investor is incapacitated but still capable of entering into a contract.

Air India restores long-grounded Boeing 777, completes revival of 30 aircraft

The aircraft, a Boeing 777-300 ER registered as VT-ALL, returned to commercial operations in March 2026 after remaining out of service since February 2020.

New Delhi, (Agency)

Air India has brought a long-grounded widebody aircraft back into service after completing an extensive restoration effort, marking the revival of all aircraft that had remained non-operational in its fleet at the time of privatisation.

The aircraft, a Boeing 777-300 ER registered as VT-ALL, returned to commercial operations in March 2026 after remaining out of service since February 2020. According to the airline, the restoration of VT-ALL completes the revival of 30 aircraft, both widebody and narrowbody, that had been grounded for several years when Air

India returned to the Tata Group in 2022. The restoration work on VT-ALL began in April 2025, with the aircraft entering the AIESL maintenance, repair and overhaul facility in Nagpur the following month for a comprehensive, end-to-end refurbishment programme.

Images of the process show the aircraft stripped down to its internal structure during the overhaul, with cabin interiors, fittings and panels removed to access critical systems. Engineers carried out extensive repair, replacement and testing work before reassembling and upgrading the aircraft. The effort involved around 3,500 man-hours and more than 4,000 maintenance tasks. Over 3,000 key components were installed, including engines, auxiliary power unit systems and thrust reversers. The work also included 80 mandated modifications, including structural reinforcement. Major systems such as air conditioning, landing gear,

hydraulics, oxygen systems, avionics and engine systems were overhauled or replaced as part of what the airline described as a full systems rebuild. Air India said each stage of the restoration,



including component replacement and system checks, was carried out under regulatory oversight, with the aircraft undergoing detailed testing before returning to service. The aircraft has completed its regulatory test flight and has been granted the Airworthiness

Review Certificate, a mandatory requirement for resuming commercial operations. The cabin interiors were also refurbished, including rectification of seats and inflight entertainment systems. The updated configuration includes 306 seats in economy class, 35 in business class and four in first class. Air India said the revival of VT-ALL involved coordination across multiple engineering and operational teams, including maintenance, planning, technical services and quality assurance. With the return of VT-ALL, the airline said all previously grounded aircraft identified after privatisation have now been restored and returned to service. The airline added that the Boeing 777 aircraft, including VT-ALL, are scheduled to undergo a full retrofit starting in 2027, which will include new cabin products and updated interiors.

IRDAI forms working groups to address gaps in health insurance ecosystem

Mumbai, (Agency)

India's insurance regulator has brought together insurers and healthcare providers to address persistent gaps in the health insurance system, setting up multiple working groups to improve coordination, transparency and patient experience. The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) on Tuesday held a high-level industry interaction with hospital networks, insurers and sector bodies to chart out a reform roadmap through five specialised working groups. The initiative comes amid ongoing concerns over claim delays, disputes between hospitals and insurers, and rising medical costs, all of which have affected policyholders' experience despite the growth of health insurance coverage. The working groups, which will be co-chaired by representatives from hospitals and insurance companies, are expected to focus on operational bottlenecks that have long hindered seamless service delivery.

A key area of focus is the development of a joint code of conduct aimed at improving trust and transparency between insurers and healthcare providers. This includes efforts to streamline hospital discharge processes, standardise empanelment

practices and create clearer mechanisms for dispute resolution.

Another group will work on categorising healthcare providers using data-driven parameters such as accreditation and geography, with the aim of bringing consistency to how hospitals are onboarded and managed by insurers. The regulator is also pushing for wider adoption of the



National Health Claims Exchange (NHCE), a digital platform intended to standardise and speed up claims processing. A dedicated group will identify process bottlenecks that have slowed its uptake so far. In addition, the working groups will undertake analytical studies on claims patterns, including the balance between cashless and reimbursement claims, as well as the drivers of medical

inflation. These studies are expected to inform future policy decisions and pricing strategies in the sector. Another focus area is the design of simplified, low-cost insurance products aimed at expanding coverage. The regulator said this could include integrating wellness features and creating pathways that link outpatient care to hospitalisation, with the goal of improving both affordability and preventive care. IRDAI chairman Ajay Seth said the collaboration between insurers and healthcare providers is essential to building a more efficient and patient-centric system, emphasising the need for coordinated action across the ecosystem. The working groups are expected to begin their activities from April and will operate over timelines ranging from two to four months. Their findings are likely to feed into future regulatory frameworks and industry standards. While the initiative signals a more hands-on regulatory approach, its effectiveness will depend on whether it can resolve longstanding friction between hospitals and insurers, particularly around pricing, claims approvals and accountability.

JIO IPO DRHP expected in March: Reliance readies India's largest Public Offer

New Delhi, (Agency)

Reliance Industries is expected to launch the Initial Public Offering (IPO) of Jio Platforms Limited soon. According to a report by The Economic Times, the Mukesh Ambani-led RIL is preparing to file its Draft Red Herring Prospectus (DRHP) with Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) by the end of March 2026. This draft is expected to include the company's financial figures up to the end of December.

Global & Domestic Banks Steering JIO IPO. The Reliance management seems to be very serious about it. JIO IPO launch plans. The company has appointed 17 major bankers on Tuesday to manage the public offer.

The report stated that nine global banks have been selected for the important role of advisors. These global names include, JPMorgan Chase & Co., Citigroup Inc., Goldman Sachs Group Inc., Morgan Stanley, and HSBC Holdings PLC. Domestic banks such as JM Financial Limited, SBI Capital Markets Limited, Kotak Mahindra Capital Company, Axis Capital Limited, have also been entrusted the responsibility as advisors. The proposed JIO IPO gained momentum after the government made a major and favorable change in listing requirements. As per the new rules, large issuers are now allowed to dilute (reduce) only 2.5% of their equity when

entering the stock market. This important change makes it easier for a large cap company like Reliance to bring an IPO. Market experts are of the view that JIO IPO could become the largest IPO in India's history so far. The report stated that the proposed JIO IPO may involve the sale of shares by existing investors (secondary share sale). If all things move in the right direction, people planning to apply for the IPO, could get a chance by the end of this year. However, it is important to note that the exact size of this transaction, its structure, and the right timing for entering the market are still being finalized and may be subject to change.



only ask for the minimum access required to function. This approach is widely accepted across the world as a safer way to protect user data. Sharing Zerodha's philosophy, Kamath said the company has consciously avoided asking for unnecessary permissions.

"Don't do unto others what you don't want done unto you has been at the heart of the Zerodha philosophy," he said. He added that the firm's trading app reflects this thinking. He added that its trading app, Kite, does not ask for any permissions on mobile devices.

BALANCING SECURITY AND PRIVACY

Kamath also pointed out that strong regulations can ensure safety without invading user privacy. He credited Sebi's framework for striking the right balance. He said such frameworks strike a better balance compared to relying on intrusive permissions.

Nithin Kamath criticises banking apps for seeking unnecessary permissions

New Delhi, (Agency)

Zerodha founder and CEO Nithin Kamath has raised concerns over the kind of permissions banking apps seek from users. He said many of them go beyond what is actually needed and raise serious concerns around user privacy and data safety.

'I DON'T USE NET BANKING APPS ON MY PHONE'

Kamath said he avoids using net banking apps on his phone because of the permissions they demand. According to him, asking for access to SMS, contacts and phone data in the name of security does not make sense. "I don't use net banking apps on my phone because the mandatory permissions they ask for make no sense," he wrote on X. He pointed out that globally, good cybersecurity practices focus on limiting access, not expanding it.

UNDERSTANDING THE 'LEAST PRIVILEGE' RULE

Kamath referred to the Principle of Least Privilege (PoLP), which means apps should

Sensex up 2,000 points this week: Why is market gaining despite ongoing Iran war

New Delhi, (Agency)

Stock markets have staged a sharp recovery this week, with the Sensex gaining over 2,000 points, or around 2.7%, from last week's low. The rebound comes even as tensions in the Middle East continue, raising questions about what is driving the market higher despite global uncertainty.

The rise on Dalal Street follows a steep fall last week, when markets dropped sharply due to the Iran conflict and rising crude oil prices. Both Sensex and Nifty had entered a correction phase, with investor sentiment turning weak. The S&P BSE Sensex gained 492.29 points to 76,563.13, while the NSE Nifty50 added 163.65 points to 23,744.80 as of 10:38 am. The main drivers for today's rally were gains in information technology (IT) and auto sector stocks.

OIL PRICES COOL OFF FROM RECENT HIGHS

A key trigger for the market's recovery has been the movement in crude oil prices. As of 10 am, Brent crude was trading at \$101.12 per barrel, down 2.22%, while WTI crude was at \$93.16, down 3.17%. The fact that oil prices have not surged sharply beyond recent highs has reduced

immediate pressure on markets.

Dr. VK Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist at Geojit Investments Limited, said, "Despite the uncertainty regarding the war markets have staged a bounce back. One factor that enabled this bounce back is crude remaining around the \$102 level and fears of spiking above \$120 not materialising." He added, "The near-term scenario will be one of markets responding mildly positively to some good news and negatively to bad news."

RECOVERY DRIVEN BY BARGAIN BUYING AND DII SUPPORT

One of the main reasons behind the current rise is bargain buying. After the sharp fall last week, many stocks were available at lower levels, which attracted investors back into the market. At the same time, domestic institutional investors have played a key role in supporting the market. Data for March so far shows that foreign institutional investors have sold shares worth Rs 70,989.96 crore, while domestic institutional investors have bought shares worth Rs 88,345.38 crore.

This shows that while FIIs have been heavy sellers, DIIs have absorbed the selling pressure with strong buying, helping the market stabilise and recover. Strength in global markets, especially in Asia, has also supported the recovery.



Positive cues from global markets have helped improve investor sentiment even as geopolitical risks remain.

SECTOR ROTATION AND SELECTIVE BUYING

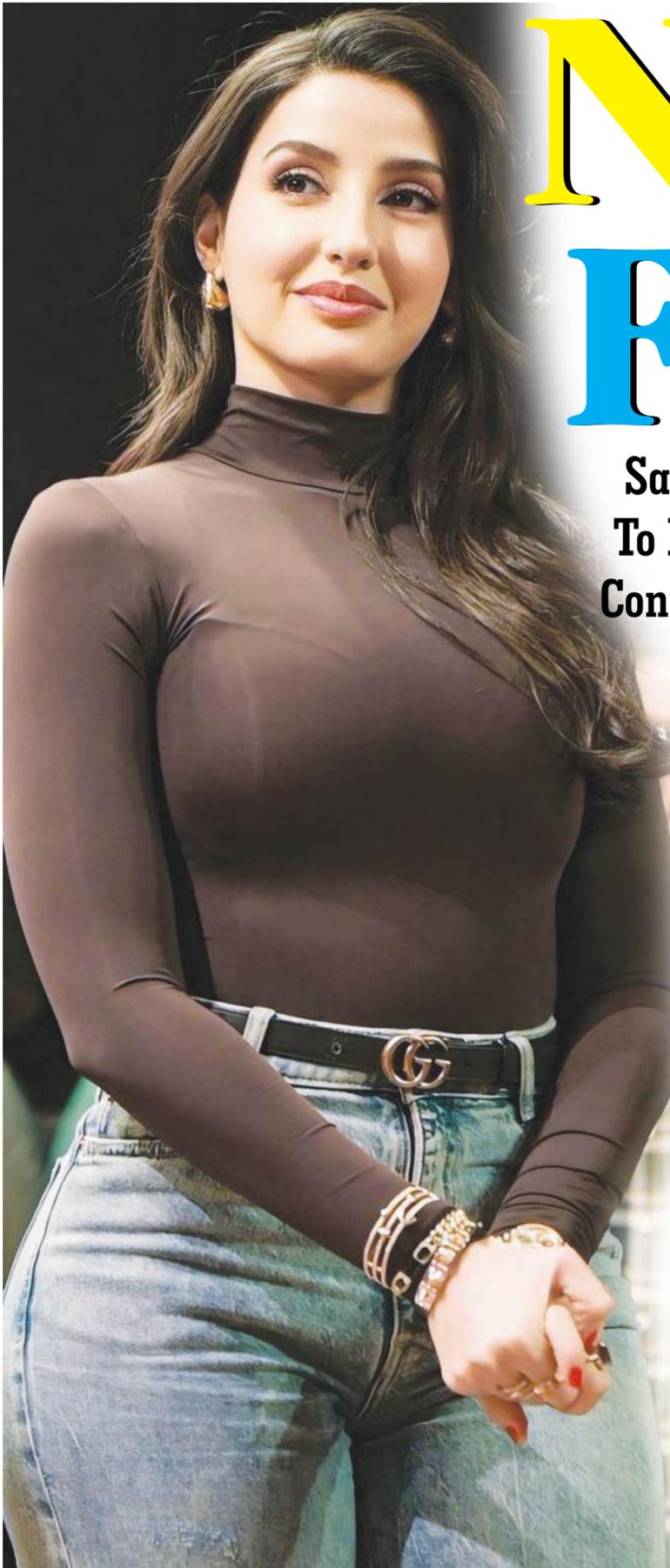
According to Vijayakumar, foreign investors, while overall sellers, are still selectively buying in certain sectors. "Despite being sustained sellers in the market, FIIs have been selectively buying

in some sectors like telecom. This partly explains the resilience in telecom stocks," he said. He also pointed to a shift in investment trends. "There is a portfolio churn appening away from IT and highly valued FMCG stocks towards telecom, pharmaceuticals, defense and select financials. Market leaders and fancied stocks in these segments will continue to be resilient even in a choppy market," he added. **TECHNICAL VIEW: RANGEBOUND BUT POSITIVE BIAS**

Technical indicators suggest that the market may remain steady in the near term.

Aakash Shah, Technical Research Analyst at Choice Equity Broking Private Limited, said, "Overall, the market setup suggests a range-bound to mildly bullish undertone for the session."

He added, "Traders may continue to focus on banking, financials, and capital goods stocks, which are showing relative strength. However, with indices approaching key resistance levels, a stock-specific approach with disciplined risk management remains advisable for the trading session ahead."



Nora Fatehi

Sanjay Dutt's Song Sarke Chunar To Return With New Version Amid Controversy? Here's What We Know

As Sanjay Dutt and Nora Fatehi's recently released track "Sarke Chunar" from "KD - The Devil" faces a lot of backlash for its objectionable lyrics and suggestive choreography, the makers have taken down the song from YouTube. Now, in the latest update, IANS has learned that the makers are working on a new version of the track, with new lyrics, which is expected to reach the audience shortly.

While further details regarding when the new version of "Sarke Chunar" will be released is unknown for now, the decision has been taken keeping in view the ongoing controversy surrounding the song. Recently, The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) issued a notice over the alleged use of objectionable and double-meaning lyrics in "Sarke Chunar". Additionally, advocate and social activist Vineet Jindal also filed a complaint with the cyber cell of the Delhi Police, asking for legal action against the makers of the track.



He alleged in the complaint that the track has obscene lyrics not suitable for public consumption, especially given the fact that the track is available on various digital platforms.

After the song reached the audience, it was subjected to a lot of criticism, with many terming the lyrics as vulgar and inappropriate.

Over and above this, composer and singer Armaan Malik also called the song a "new low" for songwriting. Former cricketer Harbhajan Singh has also voiced his opposition to the song in his latest social media post. He even called out Nora Fatehi and Sanjay Dutt being part of the song.

"Sarke Chunar" has been crooned by Mangli, with the lyrics provided by Raqeeb Alam. The song is composed, arranged, and produced by Arjun Janya. Backed by Venkat K Narayana under the banner of KVN Productions, "KD: The Devil" stars Dhruva Sarja, along with Sanjay Dutt, Reeshma Nanaiah, Shilpa Shetty, V Ravichandran, Ramesh Aravind, and Nora Fatehi in significant roles.

This Funny Caption On Parineeti Chopra's Video Had Raghav Chadha Laughing Out Loud



Parineeti Chopra and Raghav Chadha are easily one of the cutest celebrity couples around. While the two always look great together, it's their playful social media banter that often steals the spotlight. Something similar happened recently. Parineeti was recently spotted out and about in the city, and a hilarious caption on her paparazzi video caught everyone's attention. It was so funny that Raghav Chadha couldn't resist reposting it on his own social media with a cheeky caption of his own.

Raghav Chadha And Parineeti Chopra React To A Funny Caption

The series of events unfolded like this. Parineeti Chopra was recently spotted out and about in the city, looking stylish in a grey wrap dress, which she paired with heels and sunglasses. While she looked effortlessly chic, it was the caption on the paparazzi video that truly stole the show. The caption jokingly read, "Attitude toh aisa jaise Bharat ke sabse handsome aur yuva sansad sadasya ki biwi ho?" Raghav Chadha was quick to repost the video on his Instagram story with an equally cheeky caption that said, "Hahaha, yeh text likhne wale ne toh din bana diya."

Parineeti later shared Raghav's story and added a couple of laughing emojis, clearly enjoying the hilarious moment. It wasn't just Parineeti and Raghav who enjoyed the caption, even the internet seemed to agree. The comments section on the video quickly filled with similar reactions. One user wrote, "Woh toh hai hi!" Another commented, "No doubt... she should be proud... hona hi chahiye... such a great guy." Someone else added, "Bilkul, isme koi shaq nahi."

Some Adorable Moments Of The Couple

The couple recently attended a family wedding in Thailand and shared some adorable glimpses from the trip with their Instagram followers. Parineeti posted a carousel of 12 photos capturing sweet moments from the getaway. The pictures showed the couple posing together, strolling around the country, and enjoying some relaxed time during the trip. Raghav's mother was also present with them. One of the slides showed Parineeti and Raghav dressed in stylish traditional outfits for the wedding, and the two looked absolutely lovely together. Parineeti captioned the post, "In the land of mango rice, without a single photo of mango sticky rice. JK. Some chill time in Chinatown, followed by a divine family wedding. Double win."

John Abraham Proves Age Is Just A Number With His Muscular Physique At 53



John Abraham continues to redefine age and fitness with his relentless dedication to health and discipline. The 53-year-old actor recently grabbed attention after a paparazzi video captured him confidently flaunting his muscular physique. He was spotted at the Mumbai airport on Tuesday.

John kept it effortlessly cool in a casual ensemble. He wore a black t-shirt with matching black track pants and slippers. The actor paused, smiled and posed for pictures before making his way through the airport. Fans couldn't help but notice his impressive fitness and well-maintained build.

John Abraham Attends Force 3 Muhurat

John Abraham will next be seen in the third instalment of the Force franchise, Force 3. The film's production officially began in Gujarat earlier this month. The actor, along with co-stars Harshvardhan Rane and Tanya Maniktala, kicked off the shoot with a traditional muhurat puja ceremony.

Force 3's initial shooting phase is concentrating on scenes with Harshvardhan and Tanya. John is expected to film his portions in the coming days. The early schedule focuses on laying the groundwork for the storyline. The production team picked Gujarat for the opening schedule, drawn to its diverse landscapes that fit the film's action-packed narrative.

Harshvardhan shared a glimpse from the puja ceremony on his Instagram handle. In the caption, he wrote, "May the #FORCE 3 with us. Dir by @bhav.dhulia Written by @simaabhashmi. 1st schedule in #Gujrat."

John Abraham is set to reprise his iconic role as ACP Yashvardhan Singh in Force 3. The project, which was initially expected to begin filming by late 2025, eventually commenced production in early 2026. Reports also suggest that the film's storyline might take cues from the original Force, rather than following the tone set by Force 2.

John Abraham to Play Rakesh Maria in Rohit Shetty's next

The actor also has Rohit Shetty's next film, based on police officer Rakesh Maria, in the line-up. As per a Bollywood Hungama source, "Rohit Shetty's next is titled Maria IPS. Rohit, lead actor John Abraham, and others in the core team felt that this was an apt title considering that it's based on the life of a police officer named Rakesh Maria."

Shraddha Kapoor's

Aunt Tejaswini Kolhapure Reacts To Actress' Wedding Rumours With Rahul Mody

Shraddha Kapoor and Rahul Mody have been in the headlines for their rumoured romance, and as reports about their wedding have been circulating online, fans are now awaiting happy news from the couple. In a recent conversation, Shraddha Kapoor's aunt, Tejaswini Kolhapure, spoke about the ongoing rumours regarding Shraddha's wedding.

When, in a conversation with Free Press Journal, Tejaswini Kolhapure was asked if there is any truth behind the ongoing rumours, the actress laughed and said, "Really, I don't know about it. I have no idea about it."



She also spoke about Shraddha carrying forward the family legacy. Tejaswini shared, "Of course, it is a lovely feeling. I think everybody has added to this. Padmini (Kolhapure) was the first one. To see the kind of stardom that Padmini had, that era was different; you can't compare that to what you see now. Of course, Shraddha has taken it ahead. We are very happy with how the family name is carried forward."

Well, the reports surrounding Shraddha's marriage to Rahul Mody often make it to the headlines, but the two have never officially

confirmed this news. **Shraddha Kapoor's Reply to a Fan's Question 'Shadi Kab Karoge'**

Recently, the actress was interacting with fans when one curious follower asked the question, "When will you get married?" Shraddha's response instantly sparked a buzz across social media platforms. Shraddha Kapoor recently posted a promotional video about jewellery. Immediately, the comment section was filled with questions about her marriage. A fan asked her, "Shadi kab karoge?" to which the actress replied, "Main karoongi, you vivah karoongi (I will get married)." The reply went viral in no time.

Shraddha Kapoor Confirms Dating Rahul Mody With Adorable Video

Shraddha Kapoor has finally put an end to months of speculation by confirming her relationship with writer Rahul Mody in the most adorable way.

The Stree 2 star shared a lighthearted video of herself playfully staring into the camera while Rahul zoomed in and out on her face. At one point, she even cheekily said, "Hatt," making the clip even more endearing.

Speculation about Shraddha and Rahul's romance first began in early 2024 when the two were spotted leaving a dinner date in Mumbai. Since then, they have been seen together on several occasions, including the star-studded pre-wedding celebrations of Anant Ambani and Radhika Merchant, as well as private movie screenings.





Your skin needs attention not just once a week, but daily if you want it to be healthy.



5 things Your skin needs everyday...

If you depend on just fortnightly clean up sessions or the monthly facials to prep up your skin, you're not doing your skin any favours. Here are simple things that your skin needs everyday...

Moisturising

Your skin is sensitive — take good care of it and nourish it with moisturisers.

Moisturising twice a day is important if you want your skin to look healthy, blemish-free and improve your complexion.

Water

When you drink water, it flushes out toxins from your body and allows cells to absorb vital nutrients. It also makes sure that your digestive

system works properly. And your skin needs water the most to keep it hydrated. It also removes skin impurities, which cause acne and pimples and keeps the skin looking healthy and smooth. Ensure that you have at least eight to 10 glasses of water daily if you want glowing skin.

Antioxidants

Antioxidants are found in fruits, vegetables, certain fish and oils. Antioxidants have free-radical-fighting activities, which kill molecules that damage healthy cells. Are you getting enough Vitamin C and E? While vitamin C helps build collagen for plump

skin, Vitamin E protects cell membranes. Vit C is found in whole grains, apples and citrus fruits, while Vit E is present in wheat germ oil, almonds and peanut butter.

Sunscreen

No matter how cloudy or rainy it is outside, wearing sunscreen is a

must 365 days of the year. Sunscreen not only protects you from skin cancer but also delays the signs of ageing that are caused due to sun exposure. So if you don't want discoloured, wrinkled, pigmented and flabby skin, ensure that you slap on that sunscreen no matter what. Use a sunscreen with an SPF of at least 30 and apply it 20 minutes before you step out. Re-apply every few hours so that the effects are maximum.

Cleansing

If you want to remove dirt and grime from your skin and keep it oil free, daily cleansing is an absolute must. Cleansing also removes the residue of all the skin products you use and keeps your skin looking fresh and clean. Use a cleanser that suits your skin type and is soap-free so that it is gentle on your face. Women with extra dry skin should opt for a creamy cleanser while those with sensitive skin should opt for an alcohol-free cleanser. If you have an oily skin, use an acidic cleanser, which breaks up sebum — your skin's oily secretion that causes clogged pores. When you use a cleanser, gently massage it into your face for about 30 seconds so it gives good results.

Various cosmetics and skin care products are widely available in stores and salons. With these products it is easier for women (and men) to achieve a healthy, smooth and beautiful skin.

However, even though these products are effective, not all of these are safe.

Cosmetics are supposed to help women look beautiful, but these products are often so full of harmful synthetic chemicals that they could leave you with unsightly skin conditions. Yes, most makeup products and cosmetics are terribly harsh on your skin and numerous studies report that they are carcinogenic. Moreover, cosmetics and makeup can inhibit your skin from breathing and can harbour bacteria and help external impurities causing skin problems. So...we give you a list of 10 cosmetic and makeup products that can cause significant harm to your skin and body - the list is by no means complete; it is just the tip of the iceberg!

Lipstick

Lipstick dries the moisture out your lips; whereas, lip balms are better. Therefore, if you want

10 cosmetics that can harm your skin

bright colour lips use lip-balm first then put lipstick on top. Some lipsticks and lip-glosses contain oils and chemicals that can damage your lips rather than help them look beautiful. Lead is sometimes found in harmful amounts in red lipsticks. Health problems associated with lead ingestion are brain damage and behavior abnormalities. Many of lead's side effects are irreversible. Mineral Oil found in lipsticks acts like a second nonporous skin, blocking the real skin's pores, and can interfere with skin cell development and proper functioning.

Moisturisers

It is a fact that, sun damage and pollution ruin your skin so it is good to wear a 'good' moisturiser to block the UV sunrays and harmful pollutants away from your face. Nonetheless, moisturisers and creams that contain mineral oil and paraffin have been shown clinically to damage the skin barrier and increase moisture loss from the skin. Virtually all the popular cosmetic moisturizers and emollients sold by skin care companies contain high concentrations of detergents and detergent-like chemicals that damage the skin and degrade the skin's natural protective function. The frequent use of moisturisers by most of us (in order to obtain a smooth radiant and young-looking skin), results in the body absorbing and assimilating the harmful synthetic

chemical ingredients of these products that can damage the skin, exacerbating skin problems instead of enhancing the skin's beauty and health.

The solution is to purchase products that contain vegetable oils. Particularly oils high in gamma linoleic acid that effectively suppresses inflammation. A good moisturiser should be made of water, hydrosols, plant oils, and emulsifiers. Using natural products, you can maintain the beauty of your face for longer.

Kajal

Kajal and Surma are traditional Indian cosmetic preparations used to makeup beautiful eyes. However, kajal can have numerous adverse effects on the eyes; for example, development of chemical, toxic and infective conjunctivitis, uveitis, glaucoma, dry eye and conjunctival discoloration. Hence, it is best to avoid use of kajal and surma or any makeup that goes inside the eye. No eye makeup should be used during any eye infection, injury, surgery, etc. Furthermore, the tissue around the eyes dries out as you get older; rendering the eye shadow as the worst offender!

Nail polish

You must be wearing a lot of heavy, dark and shimmering nail polish on your nails, because you love to decorate your nails and get that glamorous look. Nevertheless, you must be wondering if it will ruin your skin and nails in any way. The answer is - if you use harsh colours like red or black, also if

you wear it every day - all the time, then YES they'll be ruined. Dark polishes could stain your nails and turn them yellow. Furthermore, when your nail polish has acetone it means that it is more likely to weaken and damage your nail strength because it is a harsh chemical.

Talcum powder

The chemical ingredients in talcum powder, like silicates talc is not only a potent carcinogen, it also causes allergies and infection in lungs. Talc absorbs moisture and so we use talcum powder to avoid perspiration. But this causes much damage to our skin. Talc particles are asbestos like, capable of moving through the reproductive system. They get embedded on the lining of the ovary, if applied in large excess. This finally results to ovarian cancer.

Bleach creams

Skin bleaching is popular with darker-skinned people to obtain a fairer and even skin tone. Hydroquinone cream, the most common type of skin bleach can result in undesirable effects and significant skin damage. Hydroquinone is a fairly caustic substance with known adverse effects on the skin including redness, peeling, a rash, dryness and burning where you've applied the cream. Strong chemical bleach breaks down the oils that are supposed to keep your skin soft and supple and prevent formation of wrinkles.

On the other hand, whitening can actually be healthy for your skin provided the skin lightening and brightening products contain natural ingredients; such as, organic herbal extracts and essential oils.

Waxing

Waxing for hair removal has its

drawbacks; some people experience ingrown hairs, red bumps, and minor bleeding. Waxing on face causes the skin to sag earlier than it normally would as it pulls your skin and is harsh. Facial skin is very delicate and waxing will only damage it. Waxing with waxing strips can be painful when the strip is removed from the skin and can cause infection if the skin gets bruised. The wax strip may disturb hair follicles, causing hair to begin to grow in different directions.

Hair colours and hair dyes

Before colouring your hair, it's important to know that allergic reactions to dyes can cause hair loss, burning, redness, itchy scalp, facial swelling and breathing difficulty. There are many chemicals in hair dyes that are known to be dangerous to human health. One of the worst chemicals found in hair dyes is P-Phenylenediamine, which is known to pose the following dangers: cancer, reproductive toxicity, neurotoxicity, allergies, immune-toxicity, irritation of skin, eyes, and/or lungs.

Deodorants & antiperspirants

Scientific studies have shown that ingredients in deodorants and antiperspirants are harmful for your skin and body. It is a fact that deodorants cause irritation (because of alcohol) and redness which leads to itching and eventually pigmentation of the skin. The harmful effects of antiperspirants are greater than deodorants due to aluminum compounds in antiperspirants that block the sweat glands and can lead to conditions like contact dermatitis and allergy. Sweat glands discharge the waste from our body as sweat and if the waste is not being discharged from the body, it is unhealthy.

Fragrance

It is important to be informed that there are dangerous chemicals in cosmetics. Fragrance chemicals present in fabric softeners, laundry detergents, perfumes, personal care products, air fresheners and many other products contribute to health and environmental problems.

