

PM Narendra Modi wishes countrymen on Eid-ul-Fitr

celebrations begin across nation

PM Narendra Modi extended Eid-ul-Fitr greetings to the countrymen on Saturday. He said that may the festival cultivate a sense of brotherhood and kindness in the country. President Murmu also wished the people on the occasion.

New Delhi.(Agency)

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday extending Eid-ul-Fitr greetings to the countrymen. He posted a message on social media platform, 'X' for the people, especially the Muslims for whom Eid



is one of the biggest festivals.

PM Modi's post on 'X'

In a post on 'X', the PM said, "Best wishes on Eid-ul-Fitr. May this day further brotherhood and kindness all around. May everyone be happy and healthy. Eid

Mubarak!" President Droupadi Murmu also extended greetings to the countrymen on Eid-ul-Fitr. In a post in Hindi on her official social media handle of 'X', the President said, "On the occasion of Eid-ul-Fitr I extend my greetings to all countrymen, especially Muslims. This festival teaches self-restraint, service, philanthropy, and compassion for the underprivileged. Let us take this opportunity to pledge to strengthen our society and nation."

Celebrations of Eid-ul-Fitr

Eid-ul-Fitr is being celebrated in India today, after the sighting of the Shawwal crescent moon. The festival marks the end of the Holy month of Ramadan, when Muslims across the world fast for a full 30 days. This is considered to be one of the most important festivals of Muslims.

On Saturday morning, huge crowds gathered at mosques across the country to offer Eid prayers. Delhi's famous Jama Masjid saw Muslims gathering early morning for the prayers on the special occasion. Markets in the city were abuzz with shoppers on Friday as people made last minute preparations for the festival.

Punjab to move court over Rs 1.44 lakh crore water dues; Rajasthan calls claim 'unconstitutional'

Jaipur.(Agency)

Punjab will move court to recover Rs 1.44 lakh crore in alleged water dues from Rajasthan after the latter rejected the claim, escalating the inter-state dispute into a legal battle.

Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann accused Rajasthan of using Punjab's water for decades without paying the due royalty. "We will fight the case in court, and the Rajasthan government will have to answer there," Mann said, claiming that payments were initially made but later discontinued.

According to Mann, the claim pertains to water supplied through the Ferozepur Feeder under a 1920 tripartite agreement involving the British administration, the princely



state of Bahawalpur (now in Pakistan), and the then ruler of Bikaner. He said Rajasthan continues to draw nearly 18,000 cusecs of water through the Rajasthan Feeder, but stopped payments after the signing of the Indus Waters Treaty.

Mann argued that while Rajasthan continues to benefit from the 1920 agreement, it invokes the 1960 treaty when the question of payment

arises. He added that the treaty did not explicitly address royalty payments nor nullify the earlier agreement.

"If calculated from 1960 to 2026, the total dues stand at Rs 1.44 lakh crore," he said, adding that Punjab has written to Rajasthan seeking talks on the issue.

However, the Rajasthan government has strongly rejected the claim, calling it "unconstitutional." State Water Resources Minister Suresh Singh Rawat said that under the 1920 agreement, any fee was payable to the British government, not Punjab. Citing Article 262 of the Indian Constitution, Rawat asserted that rivers are national resources and cannot be treated as commodities for sale.

Bhagwant Mann Govt to convene special Punjab Assembly session on Baisakhi to amend Jagt Jyoti Sri Guru Granth Sahib Satkar Act

The Sikh Times

AMRITSAR, 21 March: Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann on Saturday announced that the Punjab government will convene a special session of the Vidhan Sabha on April 13 to amend the Jagt Jyoti Sri Guru Granth Sahib Satkar Act, 2008 and bring in a stricter law against 'beadbi' (sacrilege). The proposed legislation will include stringent punishment, heavy fines, property confiscation and cover offences committed through digital content, with the draft being prepared in consultation with the Sant Samaj and legal experts. Asserting a zero-tolerance stance, the government said no one guilty of 'beadbi' will be spared. During a meeting with the members of Sant Samaj and religious leaders, CM Bhagwant Singh Mann stated, "The session will be convened on the occasion of Khalsa Sajna Diwas and the act will be formed in consultation with Sant Samaj and legal experts. Opinions from eminent lawyers across the country will also be sought while preparing the draft of this legislation to ensure exemplary punishment to perpetrators of this heinous crime." The Chief Minister said that during the session, necessary amendments will be made to the Jagt Jyoti Sri Guru Granth Sahib Satkar Act, 2008, enacted by the Punjab Government, to introduce a strong and comprehensive law to prevent 'beadbi'



protest and invite him to attend the special assembly session as well. The Punjab Government respects the sentiments of Sant Samaj and devotees and is committed to bringing a strict law that will deter any mischievous elements from committing acts of 'beadbi.'" The Punjab CM added that the law will include stringent punishments, heavy fines, and even confiscation of property of the accused. "The new act will also cover the 'beadbi' carried out through digital content. The Punjab government is working with full sincerity to prevent incidents of 'beadbi' of religious texts." CM Bhagwant Singh Mann assured

the Sant Samaj that the government respects the religious sentiments of everyone and no one guilty of 'beadbi' will be spared. CM Bhagwant Singh Mann also took to 'X' and wrote, "Today, at Sri Amritsar Sahib, a significant meeting was held with the Sant Samaj at the Circuit House, where discussions took place on amending the 'Jagt Jyoti Sri Guru Granth Sahib Satkar Act 2008' to prevent the desecration of sacred scriptures. In this regard, a special session of the Vidhan Sabha will be convened on April 13, 2026. We regard the sacred Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji as the Shabad Guru, from whom we receive teachings on truth, service, and humanity. If anyone attempts to hurt our faith through desecration, they will never be forgiven. The guilty will be given strict and exemplary punishment, and stringent laws will be enacted to protect the faith and honor of Punjab." Earlier, members of the Sant Samaj and various religious groups demanded that pending cases should be expedited to ensure strict punishment for the guilty. They also expressed gratitude to the AAP-led Punjab Government for organizing events commemorating the 350th Shaheedi Diwas of Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji. They appreciated the government's decision to grant holy city status to Sri Amritsar Sahib, Sri Anandpur Sahib, and Talwandi Sabo. The meeting concluded with a collective Ardas (prayer).

'I have been in favour of doves in West Asia or other conflicts': Tharoor

The Sikh Times

New Delhi: The damage being done to the combatants, the neighbourhood, and the wider region, including to India, due to the West Asia conflict has "crossed all acceptable limits" and it must be made to stop, Congress leader Shashi Tharoor has said. Interacting with reporters on the sidelines of an event here on Friday, Tharoor said that he's been someone who has always been "in favour of the doves" in this particular conflict and most of the conflicts. He was asked to comment on the hawkish remarks emanating from both sides when it comes to the West Asia conflict which began three weeks ago, with no end in sight. "This is a serious issue. This is not a small matter, it's affecting the ordinary lives of Indians and of others everywhere. I think that we should be part of (efforts), and ideally we should lead an international effort to bring this war to an end.

There are many countries that will join us. No one wants to see this war continue," he said. "If you saw the appeal from the Omani foreign minister, very, very important gesture. I think many, many countries are saying that we absolutely have to bring this war to a close. It is doing far too much damage and it's not clear at all what good it's doing to anybody," he underlined. He was also asked if in this environment of "hawks", there was a need some "doves" who want to see de-escalation. "I've been obviously somebody who has been in favour of doves, in this particular conflict and in most conflicts. War is a futile activity. In fact, I spent a lot of years in peacekeeping at the UN, and I can tell you soldiers are the last ones who want to see wars. They know how much horror, how much suffering, how much true loss is involved. No one wants to see war continue," he asserted.



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News box

Fire breaks out at guest house, four rescued

Gurgaon.(Agency)

A potential disaster was averted after police personnel and firefighters with the help of locals carried out a rescue operation at a guest house in Sector 28's Chakkarpur where a fire had broken out in the early hours of Friday.

The cause of the fire is yet to be ascertained. The blaze started around 1.30pm at the main entrance of the five-storey structure. The fire quickly filled the stairway and the upper storeys with dense smoke, blocking access to the building from the front. An officer said the building, rented by a private company as a guest house, had 18 one-bedroom units. Multiple occupants, including women, were inside the building at the time of the fire.

A team from Chakkarpur police chowki rushed to the spot after receiving information and alerted the fire brigade and other agencies. Senior officers, including DCP (east) Gaurav Rajpurohit and ACP (DLF) Vikas Kaushik also reached the site to supervise the rescue.

"During the fire, four people were trapped on the top floor of the guest house. However, the rescue operation was carried out successfully and the fire was doused," the officer said. "As the front entry was inaccessible due to heavy smoke, the team moved to the rear side and reached upper floors using ropes, grills and ladders," he added. Working alongside the fire brigade and police, the locals also helped evacuate all occupants safely from the building. Their swift action ensured that no casualties were recorded, the officer said.

The fire brigade later brought the blaze under control before it could spread further. Police said the coordinated effort of emergency services and the public prevented a major accident.

Haryana civic bodies told to shut illegal meat shops

Gurgaon.(Agency)

Directorate of Urban Local Bodies (ULB) has directed municipal corporations to launch a comprehensive drive to identify and shut down unauthorised meat shops operating within municipal limits, especially those functioning without licences and located near religious places. MCG officials, however, said they had already asked meat shop owners in the city to close their shops during Navratri, citing the "religious sentiments" of people. They said this is a routine exercise carried out every year ahead of the festival. "Our teams have already visited meat shops in markets and asked them to shut down considering religious sentiments. This is a regular exercise we do each year," said an MCG official. According to MCG, the city has 490 licensed meat shops. Online meat delivery platforms, however, continue to operate in the city. Meat sections in supermarkets are also functioning.

In an order issued on Thursday, the department asked all municipal commissioners and commissioners of corporations to ensure strict enforcement against stores selling meat without valid licence from the competent authority.

Jewellery missing, family suspects domestic help

Gurgaon.(Agency)

A complaint has been filed regarding the disappearance of jewellery from a house, with a resident accusing two domestic workers of stealing the valuables.

According to the complaint submitted to Sector 40 police station, Mohit Yadav, a resident of Sector 31, stated that the jewellery, including three gold chains, three lockets, a diamond ring, and two diamond mangalsutras, was kept in an almirah in his mother's room around two to three months ago. The matter came to light when the family was preparing to attend a function and found the jewellery missing. In his complaint, Yadav expressed suspicion against Sujeet and his wife, Nirmala, who were working as domestic help at the house and were aware of the almirah keys.

Noida to get its first Taj hotel: Rs 1,000 crore project to include 150-key hotel, ultra-luxury homes

Gurgaon.(Agency)

Realty firm Gulshan Group on Wednesday announced a Rs 1,000 crore investment to develop a Taj-branded hotel and residences in Noida, marking a major expansion in the luxury segment.

The company has partnered with Indian Hotels Company Ltd (IHCL), which will manage the project comprising a 150-key luxury hotel, 74 serviced apartments, and a penthouse. Construction has already begun, and the project is expected to be completed within five years. While the hotel and penthouse will be retained by the developer, the residences are projected to generate over Rs 2,000 crore in revenue. Located in Sector 129 along the Noida Expressway, the greenfield development will



be the first Taj hotel in Noida and is set to be the tallest under the brand. It will also mark IHCL's second Taj-branded residential project in India. The serviced apartments, each spanning around 7,500 sq ft, are positioned in the ultra-luxury segment, reflecting growing demand for premium living spaces in urban centres. IHCL MD and CEO Puneet Chhatwal said rising affluence and India's position among the top global economies are driving demand for luxury hospitality and branded residences, with the project expected to set a new benchmark in the NCR. Gulshan Group said strong demand for luxury housing in Noida underpins the development.

Bangladeshi held for providing emails used for bomb threats to schools in Gurgaon

Gurgaon.(Agency)

A 30-year-old Bangladeshi national has been arrested by a Gurgaon police team in connection with a series of bomb hoax emails sent to around 40 schools in Jan, triggering panic, evacuations and large-scale security checks. The accused, Saurabh Vishwas, alias Michael, was picked up from Ahmedabad on Thursday after a technical investigation by Cyber South police station traced his role in generating email accounts allegedly used to send the threats. Police said he entered India about nine years ago from Khulna via an illegal route and lived in West Bengal using forged identity documents. He initially worked odd jobs in Barrackpore before learning digital marketing and graphic design at local printing shops. For the past five years, police said, Vishwas has been working as a freelance designer and was involved in creating bulk email IDs. ACP (cybercrime) Priyanshu Dewan told TOI

he generated and shared nearly 300 Gmail accounts with another Bangladeshi national, Mamunur Rashid, suspected to be operating from Dhaka. Some of these accounts were allegedly used to send the hoax emails. According to police, Vishwas was in contact with Rashid through a Facebook group and supplied email IDs in exchange for cryptocurrency payments. He is believed to have received around 250 USDT (approximately Rs 23,000) for the accounts. ACP Dewan said the Jan 28 emails were part of a broader conspiracy aimed at creating fear and unrest. The messages, sent to multiple schools in Gurgaon, led to immediate evacuations and extensive searches by bomb squads, though no explosives were found. Investigators said the emails followed a pattern, referencing the chief minister and including demands linked to pro-Khalistan messaging. "The intent



was to create panic by targeting soft locations like schools," Dewan said. Police added that Vishwas managed to obtain Aadhaar, voter ID, PAN card and a driving licence during his stay in India. Authorities are now coordinating with

West Bengal Police to examine how these documents were procured. Officials say the probe is ongoing and is focused on identifying the wider network, including Rashid's role and possible links to similar incidents reported in other states.

While Vishwas has no known prior criminal record, multiple FIRs have been registered elsewhere over hoax threats.

The arrest comes after similar hoax bomb threats in March, when several schools received bomb threats sent from foreign servers, again prompting evacuations and intensive checks. Police said the threats were sent by 'Giang Do'. "These investigations are complex as multiple IP addresses and VPNs are used, but we are working on technical leads and expect breakthroughs," Dewan said.

Gurgaon records cleanest air in 5 months, AQI turns 'satisfactory'

Gurgaon.(Agency)

The city recorded its cleanest day in 162 days on Friday, with the air quality index (AQI) dropping to 98 and entering the 'satisfactory' category for the first time since Oct 9 last year, when the AQI stood at 69. The day started with AQI at 115, in the 'moderate' category, but favourable weather conditions helped disperse the pollutants and bring the air quality up by the evening. Station-wise data showed variation across the city. NISE Gwal Pahari recorded an AQI of 67 and Vikas Sadan logged 92, both in the 'satisfactory' range, while Sector 51 recorded an AQI of 135 in the 'moderate' category. The improvement comes after a prolonged winter spell marked by sustained high pollution levels. The lowest air quality in these months was recorded on Jan 20, when the AQI touched 394. AQI began deteriorating after the first

week of Oct. By Oct 21, PM2.5 levels surged to 370, pushing the city into the 'very poor' category. In Nov, the condition worsened further and AQI remained above



250 on most days of the month. On Nov 2 and Nov 11, pollution peaked for the month with AQIs of 357 and 378, respectively.

The trend continued through Dec, with AQI largely above 260 and multiple spikes

pushing the air in the 'severe' category, including an AQI of 322 on Dec 13, 345 on Dec 15 and 364 on Dec 23.

Jan emerged as the most polluted month of the season, with several consecutive days recording AQI levels above 350 and multiple peaks in the 370-390 range.

Feb brought only marginal improvement, with air quality largely oscillating between the 'poor' and 'very poor' categories, barring a brief dip to 148 on Feb 19.

March saw fluctuating conditions before easing in the latter half of the month.

The city recorded several days with AQI above 300 - 322 on March 7, 307 on March 10, 304 on March 11 and 301 on March 12 - before readings dropped to 129 on March 16 and 154 on March 19, setting the stage for Thursday's sharper improvement.

Book exchange fair to be held at six locations across Noida this Sunday

Noida.(Agency)

With the academic year drawing to a close, the annual textbook exchange initiative is set to gather pace in Noida. The Maghdutam Rangmanch team will host the free textbook exchange fair at Maghdootam Park in Sector 50 on Sunday from 10am to 1pm. In a first, this year's event will be simultaneously hosted at five additional locations - Alok Vihar 2 in Sector 50, Apex Athena apartment complex and Golf City Club in Sector 75, Cleo County in Sector 121, and the Noida Public Library in Sector 15. The fest, hosted under the banner of Daryaganj, The Annual Used Textbook Donation Mela, is inspired by the tradition of Delhi's Daryaganj book market, known for its second-hand book sales. Designed to promote the art of giving and sharing within the community, the fest encourages residents to donate school textbooks they no longer need at the end of the academic year and take home others that can help them in the coming academic year. Vinod Agarwal from the Meghdutam



Rangmanch team, which organises cultural and social events at the park, noted the significance of this year's expanded initiative. "Books left after the exchange will be collected by the Noida Public Library to benefit schools in their network," he added. According to Agarwal, the Daryaganj concept is not only about exchanging books, it also highlights the joy of sharing knowledge and resources, solidifying the values of community spirit and support.

"We are thrilled to increase accessibility by having multiple donation points. This pushes forward the idea of reusing textbooks while fostering a sense of

community," he said. Gurvinder Singh, also from the Meghdutam, said that the event has gained popularity over the years and they anticipate a good turnout this year as well, adding, "We've seen a great response, and more locations this year can only enhance that." "The aim is to inspire others in the community to hold similar events, spreading the message of giving and sustainability in education," said Anuja Agrawal, another member.

In past editions of the event, hundreds of textbooks across a wide range of subjects exchanged hands. "Typically, we see around 500 textbooks exchanged each March, along with 200 general books throughout the year during our monthly events," said Vinod Agarwal.

He urged residents and book lovers to participate in the event, not only to gain access to free educational material but also to contribute to a noble cause. "The fair promises to be a wonderful opportunity for families to refresh their children's study materials while fostering a culture of sharing," he added.

After probe, Haryana govt takes charge of Al-Falah University

GHAZIABAD.(Agency)

Al-Falah University, already under a dark cloud after the names of three doctors linked to the institution surfaced in the investigation into the Nov 10 blast near Red Fort that killed 15 persons, will now be run by a govt-appointed administrator.

Officials said Haryana moved in after an inquiry found multiple statutory violations and irregularities in the university's functioning, carrying out a sweeping reshuffle of its administrative and financial set-up. The teaching faculty will, however, remain completely untouched. Senior IAS officer Amit Aggarwal was appointed administrator at Al-Falah and took charge on Wednesday. Also serving as commissioner and secretary in the industries and commerce department, he will oversee the university's financial and administrative affairs. To keep academic work running for the university's 1,700-odd students, the state also deputed a team from JC Bose University of



Science and Technology in Faridabad to serve in additional positions. Ajay Ranga, registrar of JC Bose University, will also serve as vice-chancellor.

Rajeev Kumar Singh, its controller of examinations, will take over the same role at Al-Falah. Ravi Kumar Sharma has been appointed chief finance and accounts officer, while Meha Sharma will serve as registrar. Abhinav and Rajdeep have also been assigned administrative duties under the

vice-chancellor and registrar.

"The govt will now handle key administrative and financial functions, but there will be no disruption to teaching. The faculty will remain unchanged, and the university is expected to continue regular academic operations without affecting students. The assigned team will manage day-to-day affairs in the larger interest of the university," an official said.

The intervention follows an inquiry by IAS officer Shyamal

Misra, which found several statutory breaches and irregularities in the functioning of the institution. It also comes in the wake of a tougher legal framework passed by the Haryana Assembly on Dec 22 to tighten oversight of private universities. The Haryana Private Universities (Amendment) Bill has added a new clause to Section 44, spelling out penalties for maladministration, false or misleading disclosures, and failure to meet academic and regulatory standards. The state can now stop admissions in specific courses, impose fines from Rs 10 lakh to Rs 1 crore, and, in extreme cases, order phased dissolution if corrective steps are not taken within 30 days.

Al-Falah became the centre of a white-coat terror module last year after Umar Un Nabi, an assistant professor at the university, was found to have driven a car laden with explosives near Red Fort and

blown it up on Nov 10, killing 15 persons.

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Gurcharan Singh Babbar
Mob : 9654077232, 9971359517

Website : www.thesikhimes.in
Email : sikhimesindia@gmail.com

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Major industrial investments validate Punjab's improving law & order and governance: CM Mann

The Sikh Times
CHANDIGARH, 21 March: Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann on Saturday presented a focused report card on law and order under the AAP Government as part of the ongoing series 'Shandaar Chaar Saal Bhagwant Mann De Naal', aimed at placing a clear, sector-wise account of four years of governance before the people. He asserted that Punjab's improving law and order is now visible on the ground, driven by a zero tolerance policy against drugs and a sustained crackdown on organized crime, alongside police reforms and rising investor confidence. The Chief Minister said the Punjab Government's campaign 'Yudh Nashaan Virudh' has led to decisive action, with over 95,000 smugglers arrested, 772 crore worth of illegal assets seized, and more than 1,100 gangs dismantled, while measures like the anti-drone system have checked cross-border smuggling. He added that record police recruitment, modernisation, and initiatives like the Sadak Surakhya Force underline the strengthening of law enforcement in Punjab. Taking on the Akali leadership, he said those who patronised gangsters and allowed criminal networks to flourish are now attempting to rewrite history, but cannot escape accountability. Addressing a press conference, CM Bhagwant Singh Mann stated, "Punjab Government has adopted a zero tolerance policy against drugs, and no leniency has been or will be shown against violators of the law. Exemplary punishment will be ensured," said CM Bhagwant Singh

Mann, adding, "From March 2022 till now, 95,881 drug smugglers and suppliers have been arrested and 71,228 FIRs have been registered under the NDPS Act." check the supply of drugs and weapons, the state government has installed an anti-drone system. Punjab is the first state to have this system." He added, "We had asked the



Detailing the crackdown, the Chief Minister stated, "6,109 major/commercial consignments of drugs have been seized, along with the arrest of 10,085 major traffickers. Special focus has been placed on drug hotspots, leading to recovery of 5,625 kg heroin, 3,461 kg opium, 1,628 quintals poppy husk, and 4.96 crore injections, tablets, capsules, and syrups." He further added, "54.47 crore drug money has been recovered and 3,440 proclaimed offenders in NDPS cases have been arrested. Properties worth 772 crore have been seized from 1,556 smugglers." Highlighting action against organized crime, CM Bhagwant Singh Mann said, "After the formation of the Anti-Gangster Task Force (AGTF), 2,858 gangsters and criminals have been arrested, 35 neutralized, and 1,105 gangs busted, 2,267 weapons and 655 vehicles used in crimes have been recovered." He added, "Since April 6, 2022, AGTF has solved 38 sensational cases, including major murder cases, extortion rackets, bank robberies, gang arrests, and terror-linked conspiracies across Punjab and nearby regions up to March 2026." Emphasising border security, he noted, "Punjab has around 560 kilometre border with Pakistan, and to

19,973 people, and shifted 27,413 injured to hospitals." Highlighting technological upgrades, he said, "Safe City projects have been implemented in SAS Nagar and Jalandhar and will soon be launched in Ludhiana, Amritsar, and Patiala." He added, "Punjab Police is a national police force fighting to safeguard the unity, integrity, and sovereignty of the country." On action against fugitives, CM Bhagwant Singh Mann said, "The state government is leaving no stone unturned to extradite gangsters operating from abroad. Whenever inputs are received, they are flagged for issuing Red Corner Notices." Reinforcing confidence in Punjab's law and order, he stated, "Punjab is one of the safest and most peaceful states in the country. Investment is the best parameter to judge law and order, and the fact that a major steel plant has started operations with an investment of ₹3,200 crore reflects this reality." He added, "Several leading global companies are making a beeline to invest in Punjab, and many have already started operations. The state is hosting major events and will host the Asia Cup Hockey in October." Taking aim at previous regimes, CM Bhagwant Singh Mann said, "Those who patronised and promoted drug culture in Punjab are now claiming to eliminate it. Everyone knows who gave tickets to gangsters and appointed them as Halqa in-charges. These leaders are responsible for the rise of gangster culture and are still extending legal and other support to such elements." Director General of Police Gaurav Yadav and other senior officials were also present on the occasion.

Police arrest teenage realtor for gunning down gardener over closed gate in south Delhi

New Delhi: Santal, who also worked as a caretaker of the property, was shot in the chest. Police have arrested 19-year-old Piyush Yadav, a local real estate agent, for gunning down the older man. They said the incident took place around 2 am near the Shamsan Ghat in Dera village. "A police team rushed to the spot after receiving information that women were crying loudly in the neighbourhood. Upon reaching, it was found that a man had been shot and was lying motionless near the cremation ground," an officer said. An empty cartridge was recovered from the spot, he said. "During the investigation, it was revealed that the accused had a verbal altercation with the victim over the closing of a gate of the property. The altercation escalated, and in a fit of rage, Piyush allegedly shot Santal and fled the spot," the officer said. When questioned, Piyush confessed to the crime and led the police to the gun he had hidden in his house. Police said Santal took care of several properties in the vicinity, while Piyush Yadav ran his real estate business from Chhatrapur Phase 2. Santal's body was taken to Safdarjung Hospital for a post-mortem.

Delhi University rolls out 'zero tolerance' policy for campus defacement

New Delhi: With the Delhi University Students' Union (DUSU) elections for fast approaching, the university administration has announced a stringent "zero tolerance" policy against defacement, under the banner of its "Green Election, Clean Election" initiative. The announcement was made following a meeting on Tuesday, attended by the Chief Election Officer, members of the Proctorial Board, Maurice Nagar SHO, DUSU office bearers and student representatives. An official statement from the DU Election Committee said, "The committee also apprised the representative that there would be zero tolerance for defacement during the current DUSU elections." All candidates have been directed to use only handmade posters and to strictly adhere to specified campaign expenditure limits. The university's crackdown follows complaints from past years, when graffiti, unauthorised banners and posters covered walls, flyovers, and metro pillars across both North and South campuses. This year, authorities say, enforcement would be much more vigilant.

Panipat man charred to death, another injured as car catches fire after accident in Delhi

New Delhi: A 40-year-old man was charred to death while another was injured after their car caught fire following an accident in outer north Delhi's Hulambi Khurd area in the early hours of Sunday, an official said. The incident occurred around 2 am near Jhanda Chowk on Urban Extension Road II, under the jurisdiction of Narela Industrial Area police station, the official added. According to the police, a PCR call was received and a team rushed to the spot where they found a white Ertiga in a burnt condition. The driver was found dead, while another was rescued from the adjacent seat. He was injured. The driver was identified as Vipender and the injured as Jagbir, both residents of Haryana's Panipat, police added. Jagbir was immediately shifted to the SRHC Hospital in Narela, while the dead body was moved to the BJRM Hospital, a police officer said. Initial investigation suggests that the Haryana-registered SUV might have lost control and crashed before catching fire, though the exact cause is still under investigation, the officer said. A case has been registered, and further investigation is underway to ascertain the cause of the fire and the circumstances surrounding the accident, the officer added.

3 held for performing car stunts on road

New Delhi: The police have arrested three individuals for performing dangerous car stunts on a public road, after a video of the incident went viral on social media. Three vehicles used during the stunts have also been seized. According to the police, the video, which circulated widely online, captured the suspects engaging in risky behaviour near the Shobha City traffic signal in Sector 108, under the jurisdiction of Rajendra Park police station. In the footage, three young men were seen standing atop a moving car. Behind them, several others were spotted in 8 to 10 vehicles, with sunroofs open and some individuals emerging from windows while filming the stunt and performing hazardous manoeuvres. The arrested accused has been identified as Himanshu (22), a resident of Khaika village near Sohna, Sagar (24) and Kaushal (24), residents of Peeragarhi in Delhi. "The accused not only endangered their own lives but also put the safety of others at risk by performing these stunts on public roads," said a police spokesperson. "We have recovered three vehicles used in the act — two Mahindra Thars and one Toyota Fortuner. A further investigation is underway, and more arrests are expected soon."

College student raped at birthday party in Gurugram: Police

Gurugram: Gurugram police arrested a Delhi resident for allegedly raping a 19-year-old college student during a house party in Sector 33 in Gurugram, officials said on Tuesday. The victim, who is a Delhi University student and is originally from West Bengal, had come to her friend's flat on Saturday for a birthday party, where alcohol was being consumed, they said. It is alleged that late at night, the accused, under the influence of alcohol, began molesting the woman. After this, he allegedly took the victim to a secluded area of the apartment during the party and sexually assaulted her, taking advantage of her intoxicated state. Shocked by the attack, the victim resisted and raised an alarm. She also alerted her friend, and the accused fled from the spot, said the police. The victim approached the police the next day. A case of rape under Section 64 (1) of the BNS was registered at Sadar Police Station, and a medical examination of the victim was conducted. Her statement was also recorded before a judicial magistrate, they added. "The accused, who lives in Rohini, has been arrested. He had come to the party at the invitation of a friend. Preliminary investigation revealed that the accused committed the crime under the influence of alcohol."

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given to the General Public that Mr. Manish Singh S/o Mr. Shalendra in respect of Portion of Residential Freehold Plot No. E-772, area measuring 25 Sq. Yds., i.e., 20.90 Sq. Mtrs., out of Khasra No. 16, situated at Sudhir Enclave in the area of Village Hakikatpur alias Khudabans, Pargana & Tehsil District Ghaziabad, U.P., by virtue of Notarized GPA dated 16/07/2025, ATS and Will, executed by Mr. Sadhusharan Shah S/o Mr. Anand Shah and said property to be sold to Komal and same to be finance by SMFG India Home Finance Co. Ltd., General public hereby informed that if anybody has any charge/interest in the said property or any kind of dispute kindly inform the undersigned in writing on the below mentioned address within 07 days of the present.

Rahul Raj, Advocate,
SG Associates (Law Firm)
B-01, Plot No. 20, Kaushambi, Ghaziabad-201010.
E-MAIL: sgassociatespl@gmail.com, Ph: 0120-4968888, 8130309204.

NAME CHANGE

I, Shalini Rani Chawla W/o Sachin Chawla, J-1085, 3rd Floor, Rajouri Garden Dist. West Delhi, New Delhi P.O. : Rajouri Garden, Pin Code : 110027 have changed my name to Shalini Chawla for all future purposes.

NAME CHANGE

I, Seema Rani W/o Mukesh Sagar S/o 47/1 M3M Soltide, Block S, Near Commercial Places, Sector 89, Hayatpur, Gurgaon - 122505 have changed my name to Seema Garg for future purposes.

NAME CHANGE

I, SHIVHIGVAN S/o Parmeshwar Ram, R/O HOUSE NO 12-13 ADDITIONAL FLOOR PORTION 2ND FLOOR, PKT 15 SEC 24, BACK SIDE OF SOV. EREIGN SCHOOL, ROHINI, Rohini Sector-24, Ritlala, North West Delhi, Delhi, 110085 have changed my name to Shivbhagvan for all future purposes.

NAME CHANGE

I, Mohd Abid S/o Sughan Ali R/o H.No.B-250, Street No.13/8, Abdul Hamid Marg, Subhash Vihar, Delhi-110053 have changed my name to Abid Malik.

NAME CHANGE

I, Sazauddin S/o Sughan Ali R/o H.No.B-250, Street No.13/8, Abdul Hamid Marg, Subhash Vihar, Delhi-110053 have changed my name to Sughan Ali.

NAME CHANGE

I, ARHAM AHMED S/O RASHID AHMED, R/O RASHID AHMED HOUSE NO 534 STREET MO-39 JAKIR Nagar, OKHLA, 110025, HEREBY DECLARE THAT MY NAME HAS BEEN CHANGED FROM MOHAMMAD ABDUL ARHAM TO ARHAM AHMED, FOR ALL PURPOSES.

NAME CHANGE

I, JC-343745A, Rank-NB SUB, Name-AJIT SINGH residing at WILL-BASS BIJOLI POKASANI, DIST-JHUNJHUN, RAJASTHAN-333029, have changed my mother's name from BHAWARI to BHANWARI for all future purposes vide affidavit dated 21/03/2026 before Notary Public Delhi.

NAME CHANGE

I, CHANDAN KUMAR S/O JAI PRAKASH JHAR/O C-67, GALI NO-16, Wazirabad Village, Wazirabad, Po: Burari, Dist: North Delhi, Delhi-110084 have changed the name of my minor son KESHAV KUMAR aged 12 years and he shall hereafter be known as KESHAV JHA.

NAME CHANGE

I hitherto known as DS AGGARWAL W/O SATISH KHOSLA R/O 245, Nirri Colony, Ashok Vihar, North West Delhi, Delhi-110052 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as RAVINDER KHOSLA.

NAME CHANGE

I Anil Kumar S/o Jayanti Bhai R/o B-1-299, Block-B1, J J Colony, Raghubir Nagar, Tagore Garden S.O., West Delhi, Delhi-110027 have changed the name of my minor son Bablu aged 12 years and he shall hereafter be known as Vaibhav.

NAME CHANGE

I hitherto known as Yatharth S/o Sanjay Kumar R/o H.No-C-223, Street No-8, Near Gokal Puri, Ganga vihar, North East, Delhi-110094 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Yatharth Dixit.

NAME CHANGE

I Farhan Zafar Ahmad S/o Firoz Ahmad R/o Fraser Road, Bandra, Bagicha, Near Samrat Hotel, Patna GPO, Patna, Bihar-800001, have changed my name to Farhan Ahmad

PUBLIC NOTICE

Mr. Ashish Kumar Karn and Smt. Kumkum Kumari, Owner of the Residential Flat/Dwelling Unit No. G-1306, on 13th Floor, in Tower-G, in the "HOMES 121" built on Plot No. GH-01, situated at Sector-121, Noida, Distt. Gautam Budh Nagar, U.P. by Transfer deed executed by Mr. Atul Kaushik and Smt. Veena Kaushik in Favour of Mr. Ashish Kumar Karn and Smt. Kumkum Kumari duly regd. vide doc no 73, vol no 11670, page no 179-204 dated 05.01.2023. Therefore, by way of this Public Notice it is hereby notified that any person, Attorney and/or entity, firm/company, society and/or member of the Society, Bank, HUF/member of HUF, Financial Institution having any claim, charge, interest, or lien whatsoever with respect to the Said house except the charge of SBI RACPC Sector 55 Noida or otherwise, may notify to undersigned only or to my rahulkumargupta281401@gmail.com with documentary proof within 15 days from the date of this publication of notice, failing which any such claim etc. shall be deemed to be null and void, whereas title shall be deemed to be clear, and marketable without any defect or encumbrance and free to create equitable mortgage.

RAHUL KUMAR GUPTA (ADVOCATE)
Off. 43B, Third Floor, Patparganj Village, Mayur Vihar, Phase-I, Delhi-11, M-NO- 7252922875

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

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

BMW crash in Delhi: Court denies bail to Gaganpreet Kaur, directs preservation of CCTV footage

New Delhi: A Patiala House Court on Wednesday denied bail to Gaganpreet Kaur, who was arrested in connection with the fatal BMW crash that took place in Delhi on September 14. The court has also issued a notice on an application filed by Kaur's counsel seeking the preservation of CCTV footage from the accident site. The matter is scheduled for hearing on Thursday. Kaur, 38, a resident of Gurugram, was sent to two-day judicial custody following her arrest on Monday. The accident resulted in the death of Navjot Singh, a Deputy Secretary in the Department of Economic Affairs. Singh was riding a motorcycle with his wife when it was allegedly hit by Kaur's BMW near Delhi's Dhaura Kuan area. While Singh died on the spot, his wife sustained serious injuries. According to Delhi Police, medical reports confirmed that Kaur was not under the influence of alcohol at the time of the crash. Her blood test came back negative for alcohol.

Delhi gov't announces Rs 6K monthly aid for persons with disabilities

New Delhi: The Delhi Government has announced a special financial assistance scheme for persons with disabilities requiring high support, under which eligible beneficiaries would receive Rs 6,000 per month. Chief Minister Rekha Gupta said the initiative aims to ensure dignity and security for persons with disabilities and their families. Approved earlier by the Delhi Cabinet, the scheme would be formally inaugurated tomorrow by Union Home Minister Amit Shah on the occasion of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's birthday. The financial support would be directly transferred to Aadhaar-linked bank accounts of beneficiaries and can be used to cover the cost of caregivers, therapies, counselling, assistive devices and other essential services. According to the Chief Minister, individuals with at least 40 per cent disability who are certified as having "High Support Needs" — with a score between 60 and 100 by the District-level Assessment Board — would be eligible for the scheme. Applicants must also be residents of Delhi for at least five years, have a family income below Rs 1 lakh annually, and complete Aadhaar-linked verification. Registrations and applications would be processed online through the government's e-District portal. Calling the move a "historic decision" for one of the most vulnerable sections of society, Gupta said,

PUBLIC NOTICE

General Public is hereby informed that I, Mrs. Jyoti Mehtani, am filing Applications in L&D/NDMC for substitution/Mutation of the Flat No. 24A, 24B and 24C situated at New Central Market(Shankar Market) Connaught Place, New Delhi-110001 in the name of Mrs. Jyoti Mehtani on the ground of sale through GPA, SPA, ATS and Relinquishment Deeds in my favour. If there are any objections/claims from the general public on these applications, the same shall be communicated to L&D/NDMC with supporting documents through registered post or by visiting L&D/NDMC or through an email at soestate@ndmc.gov.in within 30 days of publication of this notice.

Mrs. Jyoti Mehtani
Address: Flat No. 24, Shankar Market, Connaught Place, Delhi - 110001
Phone No.: 9812024417

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given to the General Public on behalf of our client (SMFG India Credit Co. Ltd.) that Sateesh Kumar is claiming to be the owner of Residential Plot of land area measuring 250 sq. yds., out of Khasra No. 165, situated in Village-Illahabans, Pargana and Tehsil-Dadri, District-Gautam Budh Nagar vide a Sale Deed dated 26.05.2025 executed by Mr. Manoj Lohia in favour of Mr. Sateesh Kumar in respect of the said property, duly regd. with Document No. 5074 (SRO-II, Noida). All persons are hereby informed that above owner wants to mortgage the said property and intends to obtain a loan from our client (SMFG India Credit Co. Ltd.) against the said property, if anybody has any objection/s upon the ownership of above owners over the said property, its mortgage/litigation, and any other objections, kindly inform the undersigned in writing on the below mentioned address within 07 days of the present.

For Kumar & Associates (Advocates & Consultants)
Office No. 200, SF, 23, Shivaji Marg, Najafgarh Road, Moti Nagar, Opp. DLF Tower, New Delhi-110015
E-mail: legal@knaegal.com, Ph.: 011-41112527, 41112528

NAME CHANGE

I, JETAVAT ANSUYABEN MAHENDRASINH Mother of No-15826447H Rank-NK Name-JETAVAT JAYRAJINSINH MAHENDRASINH residing at A-31, JANKI HIGHTS, BH PARIMAL BUNGLOWS SARDAR CHOWK, P.O-P.S.-KRUSHNA NAGAR, TEH-DIST-AHMEDABAD, GUJARAT-382345, have changed my name from JETAVAT ANSUYABEN MAHENDRASINH to JETAVAT ANSUYABEN MAHENDRASINH JETAVAT for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 21/03/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE

I, JETAVAT MAHENDRASINH Father of No-15826447H Rank-NK Name-JETAVAT JAYRAJINSINH MAHENDRASINH residing at A-31, JANKI HIGHTS, BH PARIMAL BUNGLOWS SARDAR CHOWK, P.O-P.S.-KRUSHNA NAGAR, TEH-DIST-AHMEDABAD, GUJARAT-382345, have changed my name from JETAVAT MAHENDRASINH to MAHENDRASINH DEVDENRASINH JETAVAT for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 21/03/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE

I, SIDDAVVA Mother of No-2615450Y Rank-HAV Name-MARUTI MAKKALAGERI residing at VPO-DURAJUNDI, TEH-GOKAK, DIST-BELAGAVI, KARNATAKA-591310, have changed my name from SIDA/DAVVA to SIDDAVVA MAKKALAGERI for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 21/03/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE

I, YALLAPPA Father of No-2615450Y Rank-HAV Name-MARUTI MAKKALAGERI residing at VPO-DURAJUNDI, TEH-GOKAK, DIST-BELAGAVI, KARNATAKA-591310, have changed my name from YALLAPPA to YALLAPPAMA MAKKALAGERI for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 21/03/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE

I, JC-442002A Rank-SUB Name-S MANIKANNAN Father of M DINESH KUMAR residing at VPO-ERAVANGUDI, TEH-UDAYARPALAYAM, DIST-ARJUNUR, TAMIL NADU-621803, have changed my mother's name from M DINESH KUMAR to DINESH KUMAR M for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 21/03/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Mr. Sunder Lal Owner of the Residential House No 035 , Block- SP, Sector-63A, Noida, Gautam Budh Nagar, U.P. by Transfer deed executed by Mr. Mahesh Chand in favour of Mr. Sunder Lal duly regd. vide doc no 7851, vol no 9913, page no 1-50 dated 31.10.2018 Mr. Sunder Lal have lost Original death certificate of Mr. Jay Prakash and will dated 12.07.2010 of Mr. Jay Prakash of said property, for which complaint lodged to the police. Therefore, by way of this Public Notice it is hereby notified that any person, Attorney and/or entity, firm/company, society and/or member of the Society, Bank, HUF/member having any claim, charge, interest, or lien whatsoever with respect to the Said house except the charge of SBI RACPC Sector 55 Noida or otherwise, may notify to undersigned only or to my rahulkumargupta281401@gmail.com with documentary proof within 15 days from the date of this publication of notice, failing which any such claim etc. shall be deemed to be null and void, whereas title shall be deemed to be clear, and marketable without any defect or encumbrance and free to create equitable mortgage.

RAHUL KUMAR GUPTA (ADVOCATE)
Off. 43B, Third Floor, Patparganj Village, Mayur Vihar, Phase-I, Delhi-11, M-NO- 7252922875

NEWS BOX

Iran targets US-UK base 4,000 km away in Diego Garcia, signals longer strike reach: Report

WASHINGTON. (Agency)

Iran recently fired two ballistic missiles toward the joint US-UK military base at Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean. The Wall Street Journal reported Friday, citing US officials.

Neither missile hit the target, which is around 2,500 miles (4,000 kilometers) from Iranian territory, but the launch suggests that Tehran has missiles with longer ranges than previously thought, the report said. The Pentagon declined to comment.

One of the missiles failed in flight, and the other was targeted by an interceptor fired from a US warship, though it was not clear if the missile was hit. The Journal reported. Diego Garcia in the Chagos Islands is one of two bases Britain is allowing the United States to use for "defensive" operations in Iran.

American forces have stationed bombers and other equipment at the base, a key hub for Asia operations, including the US bombing campaigns in Afghanistan and Iraq. Britain has agreed to hand back the Chagos Islands to Mauritius after holding it since the 1960s, and maintains a lease for the base on Diego Garcia, the largest of the islands.

Pakistan Nurtured Terror For Decades. It Has Now Come Home To Roost

MEXICO CITY. (Agency)

For decades, Pakistan cultivated terror networks as instruments of foreign policy. The Global Terrorism Index (GTI) 2026 documents, with clinical precision, what that calculus has produced. Pakistan ranks first on the GTI for the first time, becoming the world's most terror-affected country in 2025, with 1,139 deaths, 1,045 attacks, 1,595 people injured, and 655 hostages. Its score of 8.574 puts it ahead of every other country on the index. This is Pakistan's deadliest year since 2013, and the sixth consecutive year in which terrorism deaths have risen. Across South Asia, it is the only country where the situation worsened in 2025; every other nation in the region recorded an improvement. The two provinces doing most of the dying are Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan, with 74 per cent of attacks and 67 per cent of deaths. The dominant group is the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan. In 2025, the TTP conducted 595 attacks and was responsible for 637 deaths, or 56 per cent of all terrorism fatalities in the country. Targeted assassinations rose 450 per cent. Police fatalities climbed. The group has incorporated drones into its operational toolkit. Between 6,000 and 6,500 TTP militants are now operating from inside Afghanistan, using the territory as a staging ground for cross-border strikes, with 85 per cent of TTP attacks concentrated within 10 to 50 km of the Afghan border. The GTI's borderlands analysis traces the geography of Pakistan's tribal belt, which was for decades a semi-governed sanctuary for the Taliban, the Haqqani Network, al-Qaeda, and eventually the itself. Ethnic Pashtun continuity across the Durand Line allowed terrorists to move freely. Pakistani madrassas inside Afghan refugee camps were the ideological incubators for many of the people who would become the Taliban, and later, the TTP.

US Man Jailed For Killing Bird That Tried Stealing Daughter's Food

world. (Agency)

A US man was sentenced to eight months in jail after he decapitated a seagull that tried to eat his daughter's French fries. 30-year-old Franklin Ziegler pleaded guilty to third-degree animal cruelty for the July 2024 incident, which took place in front of horrified onlookers on the North Wildwood boardwalk. While his total sentence was 263 days, Ziegler was released from the Cape May County Jail last month after receiving credit for time already served. In addition to his time behind bars, he was ordered to pay a small fine of \$250 and placed into a recovery court programme. "He was released from Cape May County Jail on Feb. 12 following a guilty plea entered in Cape May County Superior Court," Ziegler's attorney, Jack Tumelty, was quoted as saying by the New York Post. "Mr Ziegler was sentenced to recovery court probation (special



probation) on Thursday, March 12, 2026, and will be receiving outpatient treatment."

'Slap On The Wrist'

On July 6, 2024, Ziegler was arrested near the Surfside Pier at Morey's Piers in North Wildwood after witnesses saw him decapitate a seagull. Enraged because the bird tried to take his daughter's French fries, Ziegler reportedly approached staff members while clutching the dead bird and asked for a trash bag. A grand jury indicted him on animal cruelty charges on June 24, 2025, a year after the initial charges were filed. The sentencing, however, has not gone down well with animal rights activists, who claimed that Ziegler's jail time was just "a slap on the wrist." "This was a brutal act of torture committed in broad daylight in front of children," said Dolly Stanley, the senior campaigner for In Defense of Animals' Justice. "It is extremely disappointing that while the FBI recognises the link between domestic violence and animal cruelty.

At least 10 people killed in South Korean factory fire

City fire chief said the cause was not immediately known, but the blaze appeared to have spread rapidly, with witnesses reporting an explosion.

SEOUL. (Agency)

South Korean rescue workers on Saturday recovered the remains of 10 people from the charred wreckage of an auto parts factory in the central city of Daejeon, where a blaze likely triggered by an explosion injured at least 59 others and left four missing. The Ministry of the Interior and Safety said 25 people were seriously injured but officials didn't immediately confirm whether any were in life-threatening condition. More than 500 firefighters, police and emergency personnel were deployed to contain the fire and conduct rescue operations after the fire broke out Friday afternoon. Videos and photos from the scene showed



thick gray smoke billowing from the complex and some workers jumping from a building. Nam Deuk-woo, fire chief of the city's Daedeok district, said the blaze destroyed a factory building that firefighters initially could not enter over fears it might collapse. Searches for the missing workers began late Friday after officials deployed unmanned firefighting robots to cool the structure and conducted a safety inspection. The remains of one

person were found on the second floor of the building, while nine others were discovered in what is believed to have been a gym on the third floor, Nam said. He said rescuers had searched all accessible areas as of Saturday morning, and that the remaining four were likely trapped beneath collapsed rubble. Further safety inspections were planned before crews attempt to remove the debris and search for the missing workers. Nam said police have

identified one of the workers who died, while genetic testing was being conducted on the other nine. The fire was reported at about 1:18 p.m. Friday. Nam said the cause was not immediately known, but the blaze appeared to have spread rapidly, with witnesses reporting an explosion. Firefighters focused on preventing the blaze from spreading to an adjacent facility and isolating explosive chemicals. Nam said workers recovered more than 100 kilograms (220 pounds) of highly reactive chemicals from the site. Some people were injured when they jumped from the building to escape, while others suffered from smoke inhalation, officials said. As of Saturday morning, 28 people were hospitalized and four of them underwent surgeries for broken bones and other injuries. About 120 vehicles and pieces of equipment, including aircraft, an unmanned water cannon vehicle and two firefighting robots for hard-to-reach areas, were deployed along with hundreds of personnel. South Korean President Lee Jae Myung called for the full mobilization of personnel and equipment to contain the fire and support rescue operations.

Trump administration sues Harvard, saying it violated civil rights law and seeking to recover funds

CARACAS. (Agency)

The US Justice Department filed a new lawsuit on Friday against Harvard University, saying its leadership failed to address antisemitism on campus, creating grounds for the government to freeze existing grants and seek repayment for grants already paid. The lawsuit, filed in federal court in Massachusetts, is another salvo in a protracted battle between the administration of US President Donald Trump and the elite university. "The United States cannot and will not tolerate these failures," the Justice Department wrote in the lawsuit. It asked the court to compel Harvard to comply with federal civil rights law and to help it "recover billions of dollars of taxpayer subsidies awarded

to a discriminatory institution." The lawsuit also asks a judge to require that Harvard call police to arrest protesters blocking parts of campus and to appoint an "independent outside monitor," approved by the government, to ensure it complies with court orders. Harvard did not immediately respond to a request for comment. The lawsuit comes after negotiations appear to have bogged down in the months-long battle with the Trump administration that has tested the boundaries of the government's authority over America's universities. What began as an investigation into campus antisemitism escalated into an all-out feud as the Trump administration slashed more than \$2.6 billion in research funding, ended federal

contracts and attempted to block Harvard from hosting international students. In a pair of lawsuits filed by the university, Harvard has said it's being unfairly penalized for refusing to adopt the administration's views. A federal judge agreed in December, reversing the funding cuts and calling the antisemitism argument a "smokescreen." Ted Mitchell, president of the American Council on Education, a major association of colleges and universities, accused the administration of launching a "full scale, multi-pronged" attack on Harvard. Friday's lawsuit, he said, is just the latest attempt to pressure Harvard to agree to changes favored by the administration. "They pound again," Mitchell said.

US pauses sanctions on Iranian oil stranded on tankers at sea until April 19

FLORIDA. (Agency)

US officials have announced that the Trump administration will lift sanctions on Iranian oil stranded at sea under a one-month license as the White House tries to bring down soaring oil prices.

The pause applies to Iranian oil loaded on ships as of Friday and is set to end April 19. "By temporarily unlocking this existing supply for the world, the United States will quickly bring approximately 140 million barrels of oil to global markets, expanding the amount of worldwide energy and helping to relieve the temporary pressures on supply caused by Iran," US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent said. Iran had earlier on Friday threatened to expand its retaliatory attacks to include recreational and tourist sites worldwide, as the US announced it was sending more warships and Marines to the region. Hours later, President Donald Trump said on social media that his administration in fact was considering "winding down" military operations in the region.



His post came after another climb in oil plunged the US stock market. The mixed messages came as the war has shown no signs of abating. Iran launched more attacks on Israel and energy sites in neighbouring Gulf Arab states, and the region marked one of the holiest days on the Muslim calendar. Iranians were also celebrating the Persian New Year, known as Nowruz, a normally festive holiday, as Israeli airstrikes landed in Tehran. With little information coming out of Iran, it was not clear how much damage its arms, nuclear or energy facilities have sustained in the punishing US and Israeli strikes, which began February 28 -- or even who was truly in charge of the country. But Iran's attacks are still choking off oil supplies and raising food and fuel prices far beyond the Middle East. The US and Israel have offered shifting rationales for the war, from hoping to foment an uprising that topples Iran's leadership to eliminating its nuclear and missile programmes.

Not A Minor Problem: Young People Make Up 42% Of Terror Cases In The West

HONG KONG. (Agency)

Radicalisation is getting younger, faster and harder to detect as minors now make up 42 per cent of all terror-related investigations in the West, with recruitment timelines collapsing from months to weeks as online propaganda, isolation and psychological trauma pull children into extremist pipelines at unprecedented speed.

The Global Terrorism Index 2026 shows minors account for 42 per cent of all terror-related investigations in Europe and North America, a threefold rise in just three years. The shift is as sharp as it is structural since the radicalisation curve has shortened from months to weeks, driven by many factors including the exploitation of childhood trauma. "The average radicalisation timeline has contracted dramatically... now capable of occurring within a matter of weeks, driven by short-form online propaganda, algorithmic amplification, and the exploitation of youth developmental vulnerabilities," the report said under the heading 'Trends in Youth Radicalisation'. Eighty-seven per cent

of radicalised minors show a history of neglect or psychological abuse, while 77 per cent have experienced abandonment. These are not hardened ideologues but emotionally exposed children pulled into extremist funnels



designed to exploit their vulnerabilities. The recruitment ecosystem is optimised for short attention spans and volatile identities, a feed-based pipeline where mobilisation happens faster than states can intervene. The motivations fracture neatly along geography. In the West, the drivers are alienation, loneliness, and online echo chambers. In sub-Saharan Africa, the story is different with 71 per cent of youth recruits citing security force abuse as the tipping point, and one in four citing

unemployment. One pathway is psychological, the other structural, and both are accelerating. What unites them is the operational pattern as the surge in youth-linked terror plots showed. Yet they remain largely amateur. Between 2022 and 2025, 97 per cent of plots involving minors were foiled, compared to a 68 per cent interception rate for adult-only conspiracies.

The minors are plentiful but unskilled, as shown by a rising volume of attempts rather than a rise in lethality. The risk is cumulative since a generational cohort entering adulthood is already ideologically primed. Extremism is another lone-actor enterprise, the data shows. Over the past five years, 93 per cent of attacks in the West were carried out by solo perpetrators, a pattern mirrored in youth cases.

Today's adolescent extremist is less a recruit of a structured group and more a self-curated ideological hybrid, drawing from jihadist tropes, far-right aesthetics, misogynistic subcultures, conspiracies, and apocalyptic lore. The GTI notes a rise in "ideologically unclear" attacks with 40 per cent of all incidents in 2025 lacking coherent ideological grounding.

US, Israel Airstrikes Cripple Iranian Rocket, Satellite Programs

DUBAI. (Agency)

The Iranian space program, one of the most advanced in the Middle East, has suffered extensive damage from US and Israeli airstrikes, potentially driving Tehran to deepen cooperation with China and Russia.

The Americans and Israelis have targeted infrastructure for satellites and rockets, part of an effort to destroy technology that could be used for weapons programs, according to Jim Lamson, an Iran expert and researcher at King's College London. The targets include Iran's main satellite developer as well as facilities of the Defense Ministry and the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), which are working on both weapons and space launch vehicles (SLVs), he said. "The same organizations in the IRGC and the Defense Ministry that develop SLVs also produce ballistic missiles, so a lot of these facilities are co-located," Lamson said. "They're going to get mowed down." The Israel Defense Forces on March 8 announced it struck a command-and-control center for

Iran's Khayyam, a Russian-made surveillance satellite launched by Roscosmos, Moscow's version of NASA, in 2022. On March 16, the IDF said the Israeli Air Force destroyed a compound in Tehran used to develop military space programs, including anti-satellite weapons. Among other facilities attacked are the main research center of the civilian Iran Space Agency, the space command of the IRGC's Aerospace Force and an IRGC facility for rocket assembly and testing, Lamson said. Critics of Tehran have long said its space program is part of a plan to develop weapons, given the shared technology between rockets and long-range missiles, and President Donald Trump's administration sanctioned the space agency during his first term. "Iran's work on space-launch vehicles - including its two-stage, liquid-fueled Simorgh satellite carrier rocket - likely shortens the timeline to produce an ICBM due to the similarities in technology," General Anthony Cotton, then-commander of US

Strategic Command, testified to US senators in March 2025. One US-Israeli goal now is preventing their adversary from having access to orbit, said John



Sheldon, Abu Dhabi-based founding partner of AstroAnalytica Ltd., a space consultancy. "You can do that on a lot of the ground infrastructure without touching assets in space," he said. The attacks on Iranian facilities don't necessarily mean the Islamic Republic can no longer use the satellites linked to those stations. There may be other centers for the Khayyam in

Iran, for instance, and Russia likely is able to control the satellite, said Tal Inbar, senior research fellow at the Missile Defense Advocacy Alliance. "You can assume that Russia has control of the satellite, not only Iran," he said. Moscow is currently providing Iran with various forms of intelligence, including satellite imagery and drone targeting tactics, in an effort to help Iran hit back at US forces in the region, Bloomberg has reported.

The Iranian government will likely emerge from the war with a space program that's severely weakened, said Lamson, of King's College London. With the ability to make satellites or launch rockets severely degraded, he added, Iran will probably end up relying even more on friendly countries with far more advanced programs. The impact from the war "may make them more dependent or more active in pursuing satellite and SLV technologies from the Russians and the Chinese," Lamson said, referring to space launch vehicles.

NEWS BOX

Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation unveils Rs 250-crore startup policy, reserves 15% of mega projects for innovators

Ahmedabad.(Agency)
The Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation (AMC), in coordination with Smart City Ahmedabad Development Limited (SCADL), on Friday announced the 'Ahmedabad Innovation and Startup Policy 2026,' touted as a first-of-its-kind initiative at the municipal level.
To address urban challenges through new technologies and innovative ideas, startups will be given priority in large projects. In AMC projects exceeding Rs 50 crore, up to 15 per cent of the work will be reserved for startups, said a statement.
This scheme will be rolled out as per the Centre's MSME guidelines. Through the provision of the Right of First Refusal (ROFR), startups will be allowed to advance their solutions during the tendering process. The possibility of raising funds through 'Innovation Bonds' is under consideration to scale successful solutions across the city.
"Under this policy, Ahmedabad will emerge as a "living laboratory" for startups, young innovators, researchers, and students from across the country, where they will be able to test their innovative technologies and ideas in real-world conditions. Startups will be directly given opportunities to address issues such as rapid repair of potholes, flood prediction, smarter waste management and reduction of air pollution," AMC authorities said.

Surat textile units to stay shut 2 days a week to control production, tackle labour crisis

Surat. (Agency)
Hit by a labour crisis, the textile processors of Surat have decided to reduce working hours and close their units for two days in a week to control production and cost overruns.
While every year around the Holi festival, there is a labour shortage in March, because the workforce returns to their home states, this year it has got aggravated on account of the LPG supply crisis due to the West Asia conflict, says president of the South Gujarat Textile Processors Association (SGTPA) Jitu Vakharia.

Mill and processing house owners say that on normal days, workers get one day off per week but even that is cancelled during "high demand" periods. These two days of shutdown would be inclusive of the weekly-off. They also told this newspaper that they foresaw a fall in demand given that consignments meant for export are lying at ports or in transit.
The power looms in Surat employ over eight lakh migrants mostly from UP, Bihar and Odisha and according to Vakharia, almost 30 per cent have gone home, leading to the shortage. The SGTPA convened a meeting with the textile industry clusters to discuss the current labour shortage, fabric demand, and other aspects where it was decided to keep the mills closed for two days in the week.

Gusty winds, rain, hail storm take toll on mango crop in South Gujarat

Ahmedabad.(Agency)
A day after gusty winds, unseasonal rainfall and hailstorm hit South Gujarat, horticulture department teams on Friday started a survey to assess the loss of mango crop in Surat, Navsari and Valsad.
Following a sudden change in weather, high-speed muddy winds blew across various districts of South Gujarat such as Surat, Bharuch, Navsari, Valsad, and Dang on Thursday night, leaving a trail of destruction. Some parts of South Gujarat also received rainfall and hailstorms.



The high-speed winds uprooted trees and hoardings at several places. In one such incident, Nitin Vaja (32), a snacks vendor at Shayona Plaza in Parvat Patia of Surat, died after a signboard fell on him. According to the weather department, wind at around 65 kmph started blowing around 7.30 pm on Thursday. By around 9.40 pm, the wind speed had been reduced to 56 kmph and the situation returned to normal later.
Due to high-speed muddy winds, several flights from Surat International Airport were delayed by over 1.5 hours on Thursday night. Surat fire department officials said that from 7.30 pm to 10.30 pm, a total of 75 complaint calls were received from the public about the uprooting of trees and falling of banners and signboards. The farmers in South Gujarat are the most affected due to the high-speed wind and unseasonal rainfall and hailstorm. In several orchards, mangos fell to the ground, leading to significant losses to farmers.

NIA seeks 'proclaimed offender' status for 3 Kalyan youths in ISIS case

Mumbai .(Agency)
The National Investigation Agency (NIA) has sought that the three youths from Kalyan, who had allegedly left the country in 2014 to join terrorist organisation ISIS, be formally declared as absconders. There have been unconfirmed reports about the death of the three between 2015 and 2017.
The NIA moved a plea on Friday before the special court, where the trial against the fourth youth, Areeb Majeed, who was allegedly part of the group, but had subsequently returned, is currently on.
The NIA plea sought to declare Saheem Tanki, Fahad Shaikh and Aman Tandel, proclaimed offenders. The plea was moved under Section 84 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, through which a court can issue a proclamation declaring an absconding person to appear before it. Non-bailable warrants were issued against them in November 2018.
The NIA has told court that it had made efforts to ascertain the whereabouts of the three men,

however, no conclusive information could be gathered and the warrants could not be executed. The NIA told the court that the three are 'intentionally evading the process of law and avoiding appearance' before the court.



The NIA has alleged that all four in their early 20s-had left India from their homes in Kalyan, near Mumbai on May 25, 2014, for Iraq, claiming to go for a religious pilgrimage, but

had thereafter joined ISIS. A case under terror charges was filed against the four in India. In 2014, there were unconfirmed reports about Majeed's death. In November 2014, Majeed had returned and was arrested by the police.

In 2015, there were unconfirmed reports that Tanki had died after a call was purportedly received from an unknown number in Iraq by his friend, claiming that he had died. In 2016, it was claimed that a list issued by the terrorist organisation named Tandel as one of the men killed while fighting forces in Syria. In 2017, an unknown caller in a call received by Shaikh's family had claimed that he had died in Syria. The NIA had not confirmed any of these 'deaths' and the warrants were issued against them in 2018, citing that they had remained absconding. The trial against Majeed, who was behind bars between 2014 and 2021, before being granted bail by the high court, is currently ongoing.

Nashik 'godman' case widens: SIT recovers 100+ videos, seizes cash, weapon from Kharat's premises

Accused, self-styled godman Ashok Kharat, i in police custody; videos under scrutiny for blackmail angle; property papers worth crores recovered

Mumbai. (Agency)
The Special Investigation Team (SIT) probing allegations against self-styled godman Ashok Kharat recovered over 100 videos, Rs 8 lakh in cash, a pistol and three live cartridges, and around 50 property documents during searches on Friday, officials said. The video count is significantly higher than the 58 initially suspected, and the SIT is examining them to establish whether they were used for coercion or blackmail and whether more victims are involved.
The SIT also detained Neeraj Jadhav, Kharat's former office assistant, for questioning. Police suspect Jadhav accessed CCTV footage from Kharat's laptop, created video clips and used them to threaten at least one woman. Jadhav is also named in a case registered at Shirdi police station in February 2026 in connection with a morphed obscene video of a 24-year-old woman. That case has now been brought under the SIT probe. The property documents recovered include papers

linked to Kharat and his family members, covering plots, bungalows and other assets whose value could run into several crores, though an assessment is underway. Two laptops



were also seized during the searches. Kharat was arrested earlier this week after a 28-year-old woman approached Sarkarwada police station on March 17, alleging that he sexually assaulted her over several years beginning

around 2019, under the pretext of performing rituals, invoking divine powers and threatening dire consequences if she did not comply. Police said several of the alleged acts took place at his office in Nashik. The case has been registered under provisions related to rape as well as the Maharashtra Prevention and Eradication of Human Sacrifice and other Inhuman, Evil and Aghori Practices and Black Magic Act.
"We are recording statements, questioning Jadhav and analysing the footage to establish how the videos were recorded, whether they were used for coercion or blackmail, and whether more victims are involved. We are also examining whether the videos were recorded at the accused's premises," a police officer said.

A video circulating on social media, which is being examined by the police, purportedly shows Kharat performing a treatment on a girl using a device resembling a cable-crimping tool. Police said no formal complaint has been received in connection with that video so far.

'No street vendors shall be allowed...': SC orders status quo at Bhadra Plaza

Lucknow. (Agency)
In a relief to the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation (AMC), the Supreme Court has ordered status quo at the Bhadra Plaza area while adding that "no street vendor shall be allowed to operate from the carriageway".
A three-judge bench of the Supreme Court comprising Chief Justice Surya Kant, Justice Joymalya Bagchi and Justice Vipul Pancholi passed the order while considering the petition moved by the AMC challenging a March 13 order of the Gujarat High Court.
Acting on two public interest litigations, a division bench of the High Court had given a range of directions to the AMC including to put up all the certified street vendors at their designated places in the vending zone at Bhadra Plaza area latest by March 21. In October 2025, the AMC had carried out an eviction drive at the Bhadra Plaza area during which street vendors were evicted. The AMC's petition was heard by the Supreme Court on Friday.

Highlighting public safety, traffic and law and order implications of permitting vending at Bhadra Plaza area, one of the most congested and historic parts of Ahmedabad, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the AMC, urged the apex court to intervene in the matter, said a lawyer connected with the matter. Posting the matter for further



hearing on April 6, the Supreme Court bench ordered, "In the meanwhile, status quo, as on date, shall be maintained by the parties. No street vendor shall be allowed to operate from the carriageway."
HC order
The High Court on March 13 had directed that the 586 certified street vendors be "immediately placed" back in the designated

vending zone at the Bhadra Plaza area by March 21.
The court had also rejected the submissions of the AMC that the interim arrangement for relocation of street vendors, made following the HC order of October 16, 2025, had to be continued till the survey and preparation of a new plan for identification of the Bhadra Plaza area as a vending zone and rehabilitation/relocation of the certified street vendors are completed by the corporation.
The High Court had also directed the Municipal Commissioner of the AMC to file a personal affidavit of compliance with the directions of the court.
The HC order came on two PILs moved by Self Employed Labour Organisation (SELO) and Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA). The petitioners had submitted that almost 506 street vendors had been carrying on their trade of selling goods in and around the three gates of Bhadra Fort for about 45 to 50 years — and that it was a "natural market".

Punjab minister Laljit Singh Bhullar resigns amid 'harassment' row over official's death by suicide

Chandigarh (Agency).
Punjab Transport Minister Laljit Singh Bhullar resigned on Saturday morning, hours after a Punjab Warehousing Corporation (PWC) official allegedly died by suicide, accusing him of harassment.
Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann sought and accepted Bhullar's resignation from the Cabinet, and directed Chief Secretary K A P Sinha to conduct an inquiry into the allegations. "The chief minister has zero tolerance for negligence. While the inquiry is underway, action has already been taken," a spokesperson for Mann said.
The development comes after Gagandeep Randhawa, a PWC district manager posted in Amritsar, allegedly died by suicide. In a video that surfaced after the incident, he purportedly claimed he had taken the step out of fear of Bhullar and indicated he would not survive.
The video went viral, prompting Opposition parties to demand immediate action. The Congress called for criminal proceedings against Bhullar, alleging mental and physical harassment, and

sought his arrest. The Opposition also claimed that Randhawa had been assaulted at the minister's residence and was unable to bear the humiliation, allegations that have yet to be confirmed.
"The allegations being made against me are completely baseless and false, but our party always supports the truth and always stands with the truth. Therefore, I want the allegations made against me to be investigated properly so that the right decision can be made," Bhullar, the MLA from Patti constituency, said in a post on Facebook.
"Therefore, until this investigation is completed, I will request the party and our honourable Chief Minister to accept my resignation from the post of minister so that my post as minister does not become a hindrance in this matter and a proper investigation is carried out in this matter," he added.
Mann, who was attending Eid-related events in Malerkotla earlier in the day, returned to Chandigarh and acted on the matter before addressing the media on the state's law and order situation.

Is your DCP changing? Here is how Mumbai's new policing zones will affect over 50 lakh residents

Mumbai Police announced a major restructuring of its policing zones late last year — adding two new zones and four new police stations — but the full picture of how the city's policing map has been redrawn is only now becoming clear.

Mumbai. (Agency)
In Mumbai, when the usual channels fail — when a complaint is ignored, when a neighbour's dispute turns ugly, when a builder encroaches on common land — there is one person people reach for: the DCP. The Deputy Commissioner of Police is the officer most Mumbaikars know by name, the one building societies petition, the one local politicians call, the one whose office becomes the last resort before a problem becomes a crisis.
For roughly 50 lakh of those Mumbaikars, that name and that phone number is about to change. While the decision to restructure the city's policing zones — with the addition of two new zones and



four new police stations — was announced late last year, the full picture of how the policing map has been redrawn is only now becoming clear. The details reveal

a significant reshuffling of which senior officer is responsible for which part of the city, with residents of areas such as Ghatkopar, Tilak Nagar, Versova

and Malad set to wake up to a new DCP.
To understand the scale: a typical Mumbai police station has nearly three to five lakh people under its jurisdiction. Ghatkopar police station alone covers 13 lakh residents. Tilak Nagar covers six lakh. Versova three lakh. Malad 4.5 lakh. All of them will now have a new address for their DCP. The reshuffle will also alter the character of some of the city's most high-profile policing zones. Zone 9 — a much sought-after posting stretching from Bandra to Andheri, home to several Bollywood stars particularly in the Oshiwara-Versova belt — will lose that stretch to the newly formed Zone 12. The

Oshiwara-Versova corridor, which previously fell under the West region, will now come under the North region.
The overhaul, approved by the state Home Department late last year, takes the total number of policing zones from 13 to 15 and increases the number of police stations to 97. For most Mumbaikars, the daily texture of policing, the constable on the beat, the familiar station house, will not change overnight.
But for the roughly 50 lakh residents whose stations are moving zones, there is a significant shift: a new DCP to approach, new protocols to navigate, a new senior officer to build a relationship with.

Haryana man gets life term for harassing, pushing woman to death off speeding train

Mumbai.(Agency)
A court in Fatehabad has sentenced Sandeep, alias Hanuman, a resident of Kalwan village in Jind, to life imprisonment for the murder of a woman he pushed from a speeding train after molesting her in September 2022.
Additional District & Sessions Judge Tarun Singal on Thursday handed the convict life imprisonment under Section 302 (murder) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) and imposed a fine of Rs 1 lakh for the murder, and three years of imprisonment with a fine of Rs 10,000 under IPC Section 354(A) for sexual harassment.
The court observed, "The prosecution has successfully proved that the accused intentionally committed obscene acts with the woman, with bad intention and in order to outrage her modesty, and committed her murder intentionally, causing her death by pushing her from the moving train."

The victim, a mother of two children aged 11 and 9, was on her way to Tohana from her paternal house on September 1, 2022, when the incident took place. Her son, who was travelling with her, got down at Tohana railway station and immediately informed his father about the incident. The family searched for her throughout the night and found her body near the railway tracks at around 4 am.
According to the victim's family lawyer Vikram Mittal, "The accused jumped off the train before reaching the Tohana railway station out of fear and suffered injuries. He was admitted to a government hospital in Tohana. The minor child identified him from a photograph shown by the police. During the trial, 26 witnesses were examined, and around 80 documents were presented, with the most crucial testimony coming from the victim's husband and her 9-year-old son." In his remarks, the ADSJ emphasised, "It is high time that both society at large and persons of such nature should realise that finding a woman alone is not an opportunity but is the responsibility."

Science for a new trade era

With the draft text of the India-European Union free trade agreement now public, attention must shift from the headlines to the regulatory architecture shaping India's agricultural engagement with one of the world's most standards-intensive markets. Its provisions span sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) measures, sustainable food systems (SFS), climate action, gender equality, biodiversity and marine resources, signalling deeper integration where systems credibility matters as much as tariffs.

The FTA reflects a shift from production-centric agricultural science to regulatory- and sustainability-oriented science. Competitiveness will increasingly depend on surveillance, traceability, risk-assessment, sustainability metrics and alignment with global benchmarks. For India, this places the agricultural research and innovation system, led by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research, at the centre of implementation. Science, in effect, becomes trade infrastructure. SPS credibility: Despite India's price competitiveness in several commodities, access to the EU has often been shaped less by tariffs than by SPS requirements. Concerns over residues, pest status, disease outbreaks and approvals have shaped trade continuity.

The negotiated SPS text responds through clearer regulatory disciplines. Import approvals must rest on transparent risk assessment and scientific reasoning. Surveillance of pest and disease status and review of emergency actions reinforce this evidence-based framework. India's emphasis on regenerative agriculture and natural farming complements this evolving regulatory direction. Equivalence allows different regulatory systems to be accepted if they deliver comparable outcomes, shifting the focus from identical standards to demonstrable regulatory performance supported by reliable monitoring and institutional competence. Technical consultations enable structured engagement where concerns arise, including emergency measures. Their effectiveness will depend on India's capacity to respond with coordinated technical expertise across its agricultural science institutions.

Sustainability: The sustainability provisions widen the mandate of agricultural science. The SFS chapter—the first such standalone framework in any FTA concluded by India—establishes cooperation on responsible input use, reduction of food loss and waste, antimicrobial resistance, animal welfare and sustainability across production, processing and consumption. Rather than treating sustainability as a compliance threshold, the FTA embeds dialogue, research exchange and technical cooperation within the trade architecture. Trade and sustainable development (TSD) provisions extend this approach. Climate cooperation promotes mutually supportive trade and climate policies aligned with low-emission and climate-resilient pathways. Agriculture is both climate-sensitive and emission-relevant; stress-tolerant crops, resource-efficient production systems and adaptation across agro-climatic zones increasingly shape competitiveness. Provisions on biodiversity and genetic resources recognise the trade relevance of sustainably managed biological resources, ecosystem valuation and access to genetic material under international frameworks. For an economy rich in plant and livestock diversity, this elevates agrobiodiversity governance, including germplasm conservation, indigenous breeds and seed systems as a trade-relevant scientific function. Cooperation on forest governance similarly highlights traceability, certification and deforestation-linked sourcing within agri-commodity supply chains. In fisheries and aquaculture, the FTA promotes sustainable sourcing, responsible practices, capacity building and research collaboration. Given the importance of marine exports, benchmarks such as stock management, disease control and value-chain traceability increasingly shape market access. India's fisheries research institutions therefore become central to this interface.

Kanshi Ram's enduring legacy

The Bahujan Samaj Party supremo transformed personal experiences of caste exclusion into a powerful political movement for change.

BORN on March 15, 1934 in a Ramdasia Sikh Dalit family at Khawaspur village in Punjab's Rupnagar district, Kanshi Ram rose from the margins of caste-ridden society to become one of the most transformative political leaders of modern India. Emerging from a community historically pushed to the bottom of the caste hierarchy, Kanshi Ram turned his personal experience of social exclusion into a lifelong mission to challenge the structures of caste power that had defined the Indian society for centuries.

In a country where caste hierarchy has long shaped access to dignity, resources and political authority, Kanshi Ram understood that the struggle of the oppressed could not succeed through isolated protests or symbolic inclusion. Inspired by the emancipatory ideas of Ambedkar, he recognised that real liberation required organisation, political consciousness and, ultimately, the capture of state power by those who had historically been excluded from it. For Kanshi Ram, democracy could not remain meaningful if the vast majority of people remained outside of decision-making structures.

Beginning with the creation of BAMCEF, followed by the mobilisation platform of Dalit Shoshit Samaj Sangharsh Samiti and culminating in the formation of the Bahujan Samaj Party in 1984, Kanshi Ram built a movement that transformed scattered social grievances into a disciplined political force. His assertion that "political power is the master key" captured the essence of his vision. Kanshi Ram's project aimed at social transformation - a restructuring of democracy in which the Bahujan majority would not remain subjects of power but become its rightful holders. From a small Ramdasia Dalit household in Punjab, Kanshi Ram built a nationwide movement that challenged centuries of caste domination and reshaped the political imagination of millions. Yet today, as political parties from the Indian National Congress to the Bharatiya Janata Party and the Samajwadi Party invoke his name and commemorate his birth anniversary, an important question remains: are they carrying forward the vision of Kanshi Ram or merely appropriating the symbolism of a leader whose politics sought to transform the structures of caste and power in India? He formed the BAMCEF in the late 1970s. It brought together employees from marginalised communities. By mobilising them, he sought to create an intellectual and organisational backbone for the emerging Bahujan movement.

To reach the masses, he launched the Dalit Shoshit Samaj Sangharsh Samiti in 1981. The DS-4 carried the message of Bahujan unity to villages, towns and working-class neighbourhoods across North India. It was an attempt to politically unite the vast majority of population against entrenched caste domination.

The next step in Kanshi Ram's strategy was the creation of a political vehicle capable of translating social awakening into state power. In 1984, he founded the Bahujan Samaj Party, a party explicitly designed to represent the interests of the Bahujan majority. The BSP transformed the language of anti-caste struggle into an organised electoral force. Indian democracy, he argued,



had long been dominated by a privileged caste that controlled political institutions. By mobilising oppressed communities, Kanshi Ram sought to convert numerical strength into political power. His formulation "Jiski jitni sankhya bhari, uski utni hissedari" captured this democratic principle of proportional participation.

The success of the BSP in Uttar Pradesh demonstrated the transformative potential of this strategy. Under Kanshi Ram's guidance, leaders from historically oppressed communities emerged at the centre of political power. His mentorship of Mayawati, who later became the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, symbolised the shift from token representation to actual leadership by Dalits within the state structure. Through these organisational experiments, Kanshi Ram transformed the fragmented struggles of marginalised communities into a coherent political movement capable of challenging centuries-old structures of caste power. More importantly, Kanshi Ram instilled a sense of political self-respect among millions of people who had long been excluded from the centres of authority. His movement did not merely seek concessions from the existing system. It aimed to reshape the system itself.

From social justice to social transformation

Jobless graduates : Employment must keep pace with education

The challenge is crystal clear — the economy has to ensure that the benefits of education are not frittered away.

EDUCATION alone is no longer a guarantee of employment — that's the stark truth revealed by the 'State of Working India 2026' report. Nearly 40 per cent of young graduates remain unemployed, and only about 7 per cent secure stable salaried jobs within a year. These numbers point to a mismatch between job creation and access to higher education. Each year, roughly 5 million graduates enter the workforce, but barely half of them find employment — and fewer still get secure, well-paying jobs, says the report prepared by Azim Premji University. This disconnect risks turning India's demographic dividend into a demographic liability. With the working-age population set to peak before 2030, the window to harness this youthful energy is rapidly narrowing. If adequate, gainful employment opportunities are not generated, the country could face rising frustration among the educated youth, alongside stagnant incomes and slowing economic mobility. It's not only about quantity but also quality.



Many graduates emerge from institutions that struggle with faculty shortage, outdated curricula and weak industry linkages. At the same time, sectors capable of

absorbing skilled labour — such as manufacturing and high-value services — have not expanded sufficiently. The result is a bottleneck where degrees outpace demand.

Encouragingly, there are signs of progress. Occupational barriers linked to caste and gender are gradually weakening. However, these gains will matter little without parallel growth in job generation. India must shift its focus from enrolment to employability. This means investing in vocational training, strengthening industry-academia partnerships and prioritising labour-intensive sectors. Economic policy must be aligned with the realities of a rapidly expanding educated workforce. The challenge is crystal clear: the economy has to ensure that the benefits of education are not frittered away.

India's energy policy: A masterclass in 'loss control'

New Delhi must adopt a 'risk avoidance' doctrine propelled by thorium, which is not merely an alternative fuel

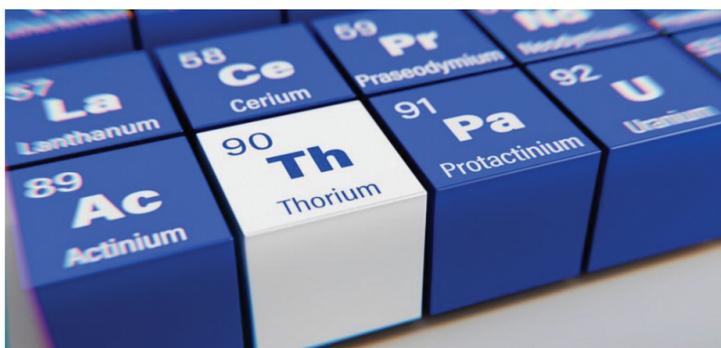
IN its historic judgment on March 11, 2026, the Supreme Court of India allowed the first-ever case of passive euthanasia to end the life of Harish Rana, who has been in a vegetative state since 2013. It shows that judicial prudence ultimately rests on logic, practicability and reason beyond the temporary veil of emotion. With this decision, the apex court has partially reviewed its own verdict in the Aruna Shanbaug case of 2018, whereby, such a request was denied. It has given the green signal to passive euthanasia under the safeguards spelled out in the same judgment. Euthanasia refers to the practice of intentionally terminating human life to relieve the person from suffering and undignified existence. Proponents justify it as an extension of the autonomy to choose a respectful exit in order to get rid of unbearable pain and persistent trauma. For them, it is a compassionate alternative to prolonged agony.

On the other hand, opponents warn against its misuse, stating that vulnerable patients may feel pressured into choosing death. It would also erode societal and familial commitment to the care of sick persons. Disability rights groups caution that validating death for whatever reasons may signal that some lives are "less worth living." The law esteems the lives of men as not only valuable to their own possessors, but also valuable to the State which protects them and for the protection and amelioration of which the State exists. The State is politically duty-bound to prevent persons from taking their own lives, as much as it is obliged to prevent them from taking the lives of others. Euthanasia has two forms: passive and active. Passive euthanasia amounts to withdrawing a patient from the life-support system and clinically-assisted nutrition and hydration. Active euthanasia calls for a medical professional administering drugs with the consent of the family

members of the patient to cause death. Passive euthanasia has been accepted in many healthcare systems the world over, including India, where courts allow it under strict safeguards to relieve a terminally ill person from pains when there is no hope of recovery. Under societal norms and practices, passive euthanasia is a part and parcel of everyday social life, when near and dear ones reconcile to the fate that the ill or aged person has no chance of survival and they take a call to stop all human interventions, allowing death to arrive naturally and peacefully.

In Jainism, Santhara, also known as Sallekhana, is a religious practice involving the voluntary, gradual cessation of food and liquid intake until death. Practitioners view this act as spiritual discipline intended to thin human passions, purify the soul and detach from the material body to destroy karma and achieve a peaceful end to life. While passive euthanasia is mercy, active euthanasia is a crime. Active euthanasia is illegal in India and in major parts of the world. Only 10 countries, including the Netherlands, Belgium, Canada and Spain, have validated it under strict legal layers of eligibility checks, second opinion and cooling-off period. The instant judgment of the SC in the Harish Rana case is the culmination of prolonged judicial deliberations on the subject of right to self-destruction from time to time. In State of Maharashtra vs Maruti Sripati Dubal (1986), the Bombay High Court opined in favour of the 'right to die', saying that "right to live includes right not to live." It declared Section 309 of the Indian Penal Code, 1860 (IPC), criminalising attempt to commit suicide,

unconstitutional. Contrary to that, the Andhra Pradesh High Court took the opposite view in Chenna Jagadeeshwar's case (1988) and held that Section 309, IPC, is not unconstitutional and self-effacement is a serious crime. The controversy was settled by the apex court in P Rathinam vs Union of India (1994), upholding



the views expressed by the Bombay High Court in the Maruti Sripati Dubal case. A couple of years later, the SC revised its viewpoint and established in Gian Kaur vs State of Punjab (1996) that the right to live under Article 21 does not include the "right to die" or "right to be killed." Justice JS Verma observed, "Right to life is a natural right embodied in Article 21 but suicide is an unnatural termination or extinction of life and incompatible and inconsistent with the concept of right to life." While rejecting the petition of activist Pinki Virani seeking passive euthanasia for Aruna Shanbaug, who remained in a vegetative state for more than four

decades, the SC issued guidelines in 2011 to allow the withdrawal of life support under specific circumstances and judicial supervision. In the Common Cause vs UOI (2018), the apex court formally recognised the "right to die with dignity" as a fundamental right under Article 21. It also legalised the use of advance medical directives,

allowing competent adults to issue written instructions (living wills), specifying their medical preferences should they become terminally ill or incapacitated.

Accordingly, keeping in view the popular public opinion, the lawmakers decriminalised attempt to commit suicide and omitted the offence from the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023. It was, perhaps, a precursor to the validation of passive euthanasia by the SC in the instant case. In 2023, a Constitution Bench modified and further simplified the procedural requirements established in the Common Cause case of 2018,

introducing specific timelines for medical boards and reducing the role of the judicial magistrate to improve accessibility.

The decision on passive euthanasia revolves around balancing respect for personal choice and the protection of the vulnerable. The prudent approach should focus on safeguards in the form of transparent and clear medical diagnosis, repeated informed consent of the patient and his family members, robust palliative care and mental health assessment to ensure that euthanasia is not chosen simply because no other alternative of pain relief is available.

Historic budget to propel Dharamshala's growth: former Mayor Jaggi

Dharamshala.(Agency)

Former Mayor Devendra Jaggi has termed the Municipal Corporation's latest budget, presented by Mayor Neenu Sharma, as "historic," stating that it will chart a new course for Dharamshala's development, sanitation, and modern infrastructure. Jaggi said the budget has been designed not only to address current needs but also to accommodate future requirements, aiming to transform Dharamshala into a model and well-organised city. Highlighting key provisions, he noted that to promote solar energy, a rebate of up to 10 percent of the house tax has been proposed to encourage the adoption of clean energy. For the welfare of sanitation workers, the budget for the first time includes a "Safai Saathi Kalyan Fund" with a provision of Rs 10 lakh to support their social and economic empowerment. To enhance cleanliness and secure a place among the country's clean cities, Rs 50 lakh has been earmarked under the "TOP Mission" to strengthen the sanitation system. Plans have also been made to introduce e-vehicles under City Service to improve public transport, ease traffic congestion, and reduce pollution. Jaggi further said that significant infrastructure projects have been proposed, including Rs 1 crore for an approach road from Charan Pul to the footpath ground, Rs 5 crore for drains and ducts from Red Cross Chowk to ITI Chowk, Rs 1 crore each for footpath development in McLeodganj and Kotwali areas, and Rs 1 crore for development and maintenance of parks across all wards.

Mirwaiz alleges house arrest; thousands pray at Jamia Srinagar

Srinagar.(Agency)

Kashmir's chief cleric Mirwaiz Umar Farooq on Friday alleged that he was put under house arrest, preventing him from delivering the Friday sermon at the historic Jama Masjid in Srinagar. Despite his absence, thousands of devotees thronged the grand mosque in the old city and offered congregational prayers on the last Friday of the holy month of Ramadan, marking a rare occasion as authorities permitted prayers at the Jamia after several years. Mirwaiz said this was the third consecutive Friday during the holy month of Ramzan when he was put under house arrest. "For the third consecutive Friday in Ramzan, I have been put under arbitrary house arrest—never conveyed in writing, but enforced by placing police vehicles and large contingents in front of my gate and the entire area, choking gully points and lanes with concertina wires, disallowing traffic movement, all to prevent me from delivering the Friday sermon at Jama Masjid!" Mirwaiz said on X. He further alleged that such measures reflect panic among the authorities. "While it conveys panic of the rulers, the centrality of Jama Masjid for the Muslims of the region has unfortunately always been a thorn in their side, as are Muslim institutions and identity, which they want to undermine. But such measures cannot erase identity nor weaken faith."

UP: Preparation on for 5th Ground Breaking Ceremony with new projects worth Rs 7.5 lakh cr

Lucknow.(Agency)

Uttar Pradesh has witnessed a transformation over the past 9 years that goes far beyond numbers, representing a comprehensive economic and industrial shift. Under the visionary leadership and well-planned strategy of Yogi Adityanath, the mantra of "Reform, Perform and Transform" has given the state a new identity on the investment map. Officials here on Friday said as a result of this planned governance approach, projects worth approximately ₹15 lakh crore have already been grounded through 4 Ground Breaking Ceremonies (GBCs), and preparations are underway for the fifth Ground Breaking Ceremony with new projects worth ₹7.5 lakh crore. When the government assumed office in 2017, Uttar Pradesh was lagging significantly in investment and entrepreneurship. A structured and point-wise strategy was developed to improve the situation. The first step focused on systematic reforms, followed by effective implementation of policies through performance, and ultimately transforming the state's overall image. A clear roadmap was prepared for every sector, and the investment process was made transparent and faster. Obstacles in the path of investment and industry were identified, and under Ease of Doing Business, 99% of minor criminal provisions were removed across 13 Acts, making business operations simpler.

SKM announces statewide dharna over water crisis, MSP, debt waiver on April 6

The morcha also demanded repealing Sections 78, 79 and 80 of the Punjab Reorganisation Act. Terming the sections "discriminatory", the morcha sought cancellation of "illegal" agreements and awards related to water sharing.

Nashik . (Agency)

The Samyukt Kisan Morcha (Punjab) on Friday announced outside the offices of Deputy Commissioners across the state on April 6, demanding the resolution of the alleged water crisis, legal guarantee of Minimum Support Price (MSP), complete debt waiver for farmers and labourers and immediate implementation of the agricultural policy drafted by the Punjab Agriculture Commission.

The decision was made at a meeting held at Shaheed Karnail Singh Isru Bhawan in Ludhiana under the chairmanship of farmer leaders Prem Singh Bhangu, Mukesh Chander Sharma, and Baldev Singh Latala. The morcha said joint district-level meetings would be held on March 31 to finalise the strategy for the April 6 protests, during which memorandums of their demands would be submitted to the government.

Raising alarms over the depleting groundwater table, the SKM said that despite Punjab's water resources being on the verge of exhaustion, governments failed to act seriously. It reiterated its long-pending demand for ensuring canal water to every farm and a safe drinking water supply, and called for resolving

the issue based on riparian and basin principles. The morcha also demanded repealing Sections 78, 79 and 80 of the Punjab Reorganisation Act. Terming the sections "discriminatory", the

government policies" pushed them into a debt trap. It also sought MSP for all crops based on the C2+50 per cent formula recommended by the Swaminathan Commission.

The morcha accused the Punjab government of delaying the implementation of the agricultural policy drafted by the Punjab Agriculture Commission. It recalled that Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann had last year assured them of its implementation by March 31, but "the government is now backtracking on the promise". SKM leaders further said its struggle would continue against the Free Trade Agreement, Electricity Amendment Bill, Seed Bill, four labour codes and issues related to MGNREGA, in line with the broader programme of the Samyukt Kisan Morcha (Bharat).

The meeting also condemned the arrest of farmers protesting for the reopening of the Shero Sugar Mill and demanded the immediate revival of the sugar mill. The morcha, meanwhile, reviewed the rally held in Barnala on March 10 and expressed satisfaction with the participation of farmers and labourers.



morcha sought cancellation of "illegal" agreements and awards related to water sharing. On the economic front, the SKM demanded complete debt waiver for farmers and agricultural labourers, stating that "wrong

Over 1,000 govt buildings unused despite huge spending: CM Sukhu

Shimla.(Agency)

Over one thousand government buildings constructed at a cost of crores of rupees, but still unused, came up for discussion during Question Hour in the Himachal Pradesh Assembly on Friday. Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu informed the House that 1,098 government buildings across the state are currently lying vacant and are yet to be utilised.

Replying to a question by BJP MLA Satpal Singh Satti, the Chief Minister said these buildings belong to various government departments, boards and corporations as well as health and educational institutions. He said crores of rupees had been spent on constructing these buildings over the years, but many of them remain unused.

Sukhu added that the number could increase as information from some departments is still awaited. Satti suggested that such buildings should be identified and put to proper use so that government resources are not wasted and the infrastructure can also generate additional revenue. He also said that responsibility should be fixed on officials involved in the construction

of such unused buildings to prevent similar wasteful expenditure in the future. The MLA further urged the government to issue detailed guidelines for the construction of government buildings to avoid misuse of resources.

Replying to a question by BJP MLA from Baijnath J R Katwal, Chief Minister said that hydropower generation depends on several factors such as the availability of water, disruptions caused by natural disasters, and problems related to silt, among others. In such a situation, it is not possible to fix a specific energy production target for any financial year, nor is there any provision to do so. Similarly, solar power generation also depends on the availability of sunlight. He said that during the financial years 2023-24 to 2025-26, a total of 1,19,237.57 million units of energy were produced in the state, with hydropower contributing the largest share. The Chief Minister stated that Himachal Pradesh has a hydropower generation potential of 22,950 MW, out of which about 13,000 MW of electricity is currently being generated. He further informed that 188 hydropower projects

are currently operational in the state, while 24 projects are under construction. Approval for five hydropower projects is still pending, while six projects are entangled in legal disputes. Besides this, six projects have been found to be unfeasible.

He also said that the state is expanding solar energy generation. In 2024-25, about 188 MW of solar power was produced in the state, while by March 31 this year, solar power generation capacity of 209 MW is expected to become operational.

MLAs Sukhram Chaudhary and Dr Hansraj had also asked supplementary questions in this regard. Responding to another question related to energy production raised by BJP MLA from Jandhuta J R Katwal, the Chief Minister said hydropower generation depends on several factors such as water availability, disruptions caused by natural disasters and the problem of silt. Therefore, it is not possible to set a fixed energy production target for any financial year. He said the state has a hydropower generation potential of 22,950 MW, out of which about 13,000 MW is currently being harnessed.

Tata Steel commissions Rs 3,200-cr project in Punjab, adds EAF route to produce steel

Chandigarh.(Agency)

Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann on Friday inaugurated Tata Steel's scrap-based electric arc furnace (EAF) built with an investment of nearly Rs 3,200 crore.

"This is a momentous day as history has been created to give a major fillip to the economic development of the state. Today, Punjab has become the first state in India to start steel production using green energy through this electric arc furnace-based plant. It is a red-letter day for Punjab as Tata Steel has taken responsibility to illuminate the future of 2,600 to 2,700 families directly, and 8,000-10,000 indirectly. This world-class plant is equipped with cutting-edge green energy technology," Mann said.

The 0.75 million tonne per annum (mtpa) scrap-based facility is designed to achieve CO2 emissions less than 0.3 tonnes per tonne of steel, Tata Steel said in a statement. It said, Friday marked a historic milestone in the company's journey toward sustainable steelmaking with the introduction of its scrap-based EAF facility at Hi-Tech Valley, Ludhiana.

"As India accelerates its transition towards a climate-resilient future, sustainability has become a national imperative — one that

demand urgent, collective action. The EAF reflects Tata Group's long-term commitment to building a greener, more resilient industrial future," Tata Steel chairman N Chandrasekaran said. TV Narendran, CEO and managing director of Tata Steel, and other senior government

officials and company representatives were present at the event.

"The Ludhiana EAF marks a defining milestone in Tata Steel's journey towards achieving net zero by 2045. It reflects how Tata Steel is rethinking capital investment for the circular economy by backing technologies that reduce resource intensity, while remaining globally competitive," Narendran said, thanking the Punjab government for its support. Designed to support low-carbon steelmaking, the plant will use nearly 50 per cent renewable energy. The facility will use 100 per cent steel scrap as raw material, sourcing 40 per cent scrap from the company's steel recycling plant in Rohtak, Haryana. The plant would produce construction-grade steel rebar under the company's flagship retail brand, "Tata Tisco", which would enable Tata Steel to further augment its market presence in the construction segment.



Speaking on the occasion, Mann drew a sharp contrast with previous governments, asserting that industries that once left Punjab due to "flawed policies" are now returning under a "pro-industry regime".

Congratulating the Tata Steel team, he said, "When a company like Tata Steel invests in a state, it reflects trust, confidence and belief in its future. Tata Steel's presence sends a clear message that Punjab is ready for the next phase of industrial growth. This investment is not just a project, but an opportunity for the youth of Punjab, our engineers, our skilled workforce and for Punjab's manufacturing sector to grow stronger".

Timely March rain rescues Punjab wheat crop, raises bumper harvest hope

Chandigarh.(Agency)

A timely intermittent spell of rainfall across Punjab and Haryana since March 15 has brought major relief to wheat farmers, significantly improving crop conditions and raising hopes of a bumper harvest. The change in weather comes after an intense heat wave around March 12, when temperatures had surged to unusually high levels for this time of the year.

Around March 12, several parts of Punjab recorded daytime temperatures between 34°C and 37°C, nearly 5-6°C above normal, while night temperatures remained relatively high at 15°C to 19°C. These conditions had started to resemble late April rather than early March and had raised concerns among farmers, as the wheat crop was in the crucial grain-filling stage. Such high temperatures during this phase can lead to shrinking of grains and early ripening, ultimately affecting yield.

However, the weather has changed sharply over the past few days. As per the latest observations on March 20, maximum temperatures in Punjab have dropped significantly, ranging mostly between 18°C and 24°C, which is 6°C to 10°C below normal in many areas. For instance, Chandigarh recorded a maximum of 18.8°C, Ludhiana 21.6°C, and Ferozepur around 24.1°C. At the same time, minimum temperatures have also declined, falling to 10°C to 16°C, with Gurdaspur recording as low as 10°C. This sharp fall in temperatures, around 13°C to 18°C from March 12 to March 20, has been accompanied by widespread rainfall.

K C Tyagi resigns from JD(U) over 'persistent neglect' within party

Lucknow. (Agency)

Former Rajya Sabha member K C Tyagi, who along with Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, helped lay the groundwork for socialist politics in Bihar, has resigned from JD(U). "Persistent neglect" within the party on various issues, coupled with silence of Nitish Kumar—often regarded as the "Chanakya" of politics—ultimately paved way for Tyagi's resignation. He is now engaged in exploring a new path for himself. K.C. Tyagi has stated it is impossible to imagine the Janata Dal (United) in Bihar without Nitish Kumar. Tyagi made these remarks in an exclusive interview with UNI on Saturday. He said he would soon find a new political home for himself.

Responding candidly to questions regarding the JD(U), Tyagi affirmed that his personal relationship with Nitish Kumar would remain unaffected. He, however, noted that the void created in Bihar following Nitish Kumar's move to the Rajya Sabha would be an emptiness that simply cannot be filled.

When asked about the future of the JD(U) in Bihar once Nitish Kumar steps away from the state government, Tyagi said "In Bihar, Nitish Kumar is akin to the very soul of the JD(U). Just as a body ceases to exist once the soul departs, it is extremely difficult to predict what future awaits the JD(U) in Bihar once Nitish becomes actively involved in

Delhi-centric politics. No other leader can ever fill the void left by the immense respect that party workers in Bihar hold in their hearts for Nitish Kumar."

According to sources close to Tyagi, he had advocated conferring "Bharat Ratna" upon Nitish Kumar. While this demand received support from several leaders, including union Minister Chirag Paswan, Tyagi ultimately found himself isolated within the JD(U) itself over this very issue.

In particular, Nitish Kumar's silence compelled Tyagi to take this difficult decision. Tyagi had worked extensively alongside Nitish Kumar to build the JD(U) in Bihar. Sources said only time will tell how firmly the JD(U) will be

able to stand in Bihar following Nitish Kumar's move to the Rajya Sabha.

When asked where he would go after leaving the JD(U), Tyagi replied, "Wait and see; a decision regarding this will be reached by March 22. If one intends to remain in politics, one must join some platform; however, I will make an announcement regarding this very soon. Some of my political friends, supporters, and party workers are organizing a meeting of like-minded individuals on March 22 to discuss the current political landscape of the country.

We will continue to draw inspiration from the thoughts and ideals of Bharat Ratna Chaudhary Charan Singh, Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia,

and Bharat Ratna Karpoori Thakur."

When asked about reports suggesting that he might join the Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD), Mr. Tyagi reiterated, "As I have already told you, please wait. Everything will become clear in due course. This is not the time for any kind of speculation."

Responding to a question regarding the demand to confer the Bharat Ratna upon Nitish Kumar, Tyagi stated, "Is Nitish Kumar not deserving of this honor? Is there any other leader today—like Nitish Kumar—who remains unblemished despite decades of political life? Nitish Kumar is a true gem of the socialist movement, and he is, indeed, worthy of this prestigious award."

'After 4 hours in the sky': Air India plane returns to Delhi as 'wrong aircraft' deployed for Vancouver

Air India flight AI185, operating from Delhi to Vancouver on 19 March, returned to Delhi due to an operational issue and in line with established standard operating procedures.

New Delhi.(Agency)
After flying for around four hours, a Vancouver-bound Air India flight had to return to Delhi's Indira Gandhi International (IGI) Airport after the airline realised it had deployed the wrong aircraft which did not have the permission to enter the Canadian airspace, sources said on Friday.

Aircraft AI 185, operated by a Boeing 777-300 extended range (ER), flies from Delhi to Canada daily. However, on Thursday, a B777-200 long-range (LR) version took off from Delhi at 12:18 pm. The aircraft was not approved for the flight to Canada.

It had flown eastward for around four hours before turning back while near the Chinese city of Kunming, according to flight tracking website Flightradar24. It landed in Delhi safely in the evening and passengers were disembarked, the airline said. The flight for Vancouver departed on Friday morning.

Sources also said that had the aircraft reached Canadian airspace and not been allowed to enter, it would have been a bigger problem. "Air India flight AI185, operating from Delhi to Vancouver on 19 March, returned to Delhi due to an operational issue and in line with

established standard operating procedures. The aircraft landed safely, and all passengers and crew had disembarked," an Air India spokesperson, meanwhile, said. "We sincerely regret the inconvenience caused to our guests by this unforeseen situation. Our ground teams in Delhi had provided all necessary assistance, including offering hotel accommodation, while every effort was made to fly the passengers to their destination at the earliest. The flight for Vancouver departed this morning with the passengers," the spokesperson added.



Hello Gurgaon, AI chatbot calling: Clear your municipal corporation dues, please

New Delhi.(Agency)

If you live in Gurgaon, you could soon get a phone call — from the civic body of the city. On the other end will be a woman — or a voice that sounds like that of a woman.

"Namaste, main Nagar Nigam se baat kar rahi hun", the caller will likely say at the beginning of the conversation. You will be asked your name, and then the caller will tell you what civic dues you have pending.

Finally, you will be gently asked if you are facing any problems in paying for civic amenities. You could be forgiven for wondering if the civic authorities have hired an exceptionally polite and gentle new bunch of recruits to reach out to residents of Gurgaon. In fact, the voice isn't a human at all, it is an artificial intelligence-powered (AI) chatbot.

The Municipal Corporation of Gurugram (MCG) is preparing to deploy an AI-powered voice that will call residents about their unpaid water and property bills, as well as a range of other issues, such as outdated records. These calls will be followed by WhatsApp messages to the



residents, complete with official links, urging them to update details or clear dues. "We will roll out four chatbots in the coming weeks and months, starting with dedicated ones for property and

water bills, as well as chatbots linked to sanitation services and street vendors," MCG Additional Commissioner Yash Jaluka told. Jaluka said that of the nearly 1.9 lakh water connections in the city, around 70,000 were not linked to the consumer's property ID — which is the geo-tagged registration of housing plots with the Urban Local Bodies department of the Haryana government.

Jaluka said that while in many cases, home addresses and phone numbers are incorrect, some connections are still in the name of the old owners though the properties have changed hands. Setting the records straight is important because fresh water connection applications will not be processed without these details, Jaluka said.

Espionage racket busted: 5 Juveniles among 9 held for sharing photos, videos, GPS coordinates of sensitive locations with foreign handlers, say cops

New Delhi.(Agency)

Four men were arrested and five juveniles detained on Friday for allegedly running a cross-border espionage network that filmed military establishments, railway stations and other sensitive installations across the country and transmitted photographs, videos and GPS coordinates to foreign handlers, the Ghaziabad police said.

Officers said that the main accused — identified as Naushad Ali, a resident of Bihar's Muzaffarpur, and Sameer alias Shooter from Bhagalpur — are currently at large.

Officers said Suhail Malik, identified as the alleged key handler of the gang, was arrested earlier. "The accused arrested on Friday were identified as Ganesh (20) from Nepal's Gulmi district; Vivek (18) from Bihar's Purnia; Gagan Kumar Prajapati (22) from Uttar Pradesh's Meerut; and Durgesh Nishad (26) who lives in Navi Mumbai but hails from Uttar Pradesh's Jaunpur," an officer said.

Additional Commissioner of Police (Ghaziabad) Raj Karan Nayyar said that on March 14, officers at Kaushambi police station were informed that some people were sharing videos and photos of railway stations and other important locations with some foreign numbers, and that they were recruiting other youths for such jobs too. "Six people were arrested. An SIT was formed. Names of 11 people emerged. Nine of them were held on Friday," he said. Police said the six accused arrested earlier included a woman and that footage and locations of sensitive locations were found on their phones.

The ADCP said that the accused revealed that they were "assigned tasks" by people operating from other countries. "They had set up some solar-powered CCTV cameras. Further investigation is underway," Police said two of these CCTV cameras were secretly installed at Delhi Cantonment and Sonapat railway stations, and the accused shared the feed with handlers abroad in real time.

Schoolboys allege they were beaten by attackers who 'asked their names'

One of the students alleged that the attackers had singled them out from a group of seven schoolboys after asking their names, and because they were wearing skullcaps.



New Delhi.(Agency)

An FIR under Section 110 (attempt to commit culpable homicide) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023 (BNS) has been registered against unknown persons after two schoolboys alleged they were assaulted by some other boys as they were returning home from school in Mustafabad in Northeast Delhi earlier this week.

One of the students alleged that the attackers had singled them out from a group of seven schoolboys after asking their names, and because they were wearing skullcaps. "Around 40-45 people attacked us. They asked our names. Since my friend and I were wearing skull caps, we became their primary targets," he told The Indian Express on Friday. He said he had

suffered a broken nose, a deep cut on his head, and multiple injuries on his hands.

A senior Delhi Police officer said two groups of schoolboys appeared to have clashed over a minor reason. A case had been registered at the Dayalpur police station, and an investigation had been opened, he said.

"The attackers have not yet been identified, and the cause of the incident has not been established. It will be determined once the accused are apprehended. CCTV footage has been accessed," the officer said. According to the complainants, they had written their Hindi examination on March 16, and then gone to a nearby mosque to offer namaz. "Around 1.30 pm, after offering namaz, we were walking home when the group attacked us," one of the boys said. "I fell unconscious. After some time, I was taken to GTB Hospital," he said.

The boy said that the attackers appeared to be from another school, and "except for one, all of them were in school uniforms". "I don't know why they attacked us," he said.

Delhi Govt may ask automakers to set up EV charging infra at showrooms

Under the proposal, the manufacturers have been asked to ensure adequate and timely supply of electric vehicles across all eligible segments.

New Delhi.(Agency)

Eyeing a wider shift towards electric mobility in the Capital, the Delhi government is planning to ask all vehicle manufacturers operating in the city to ensure the deployment of at least one public charging station per dealer. This is one of the key aspects of the proposed Delhi Electric Vehicle (EV) policy, which is expected to be announced during the Budget session next week on March 24, The Indian Express has learnt. The policy will be notified after that, said officials, adding that it will remain in force from the date of notification till March 31, 2030, unless extended or

modified by the government. "There are around 400 vendors or car dealers operating in Delhi. For instance, let's say Maruti, Mahindra and others have 15 showrooms in Delhi, they will have to set up charging stations as given in the policy...So, the government may also make it mandatory," said a senior government official.

The government aims to achieve 30% EV penetration by 2030. "The key focus is to push the people to switch to electric vehicles. For that, we need a strong charging infrastructure. Currently, the

city's charging infrastructure does not meet the requirement,"



the official added. Under the proposal, the manufacturers have been asked to ensure adequate and timely supply of electric vehicles across all

eligible segments. "Original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) shall aim to stabilise the cost of EVs to make it affordable for the residents of Delhi," states the proposal.

Among other measures, the Transport department plans to electrify all its bus depots for charging its own buses as well as cars, two wheelers and autos. There are around 80 bus depots, including erstwhile cluster depots, which are now under DTC. The government is also set to

incentivise the purchase of two wheelers in the first three years of rolling out the policy in a phased manner.

Come next year, only e-autos will be registered in a bid to reduce the number of CNG autos on the road. Only e-bikes will be registered from 2028 onwards, said officials.

"Vehicular emissions are the largest contributor (23%) to the air pollution in Delhi. Two wheelers constitute approximately 67% of the total vehicle stock in Delhi, making their rapid electrification critical for achieving meaningful reductions in vehicular emissions," the proposal reads.

'Humane approach': Now, pay only 25% of DJB infra charge to begin house construction in Delhi

Officials said that the move also helps the residents in seeking hassle free water, sewer and electricity connection while building a new house or building.

New Delhi.(Agency)

In what can be pitched as a step forward to ensure ease of constructing homes in the Capital, the Delhi government has decided to rationalise infrastructure charges. The Delhi Jal Board (DJB) has approved a policy reform to ease the burden of Infrastructure Charges (IFC) — a longstanding hurdle in the construction and redevelopment across the city, said officials.

"We were receiving repeated complaints that high IFC was stopping people from building their homes. This was neither fair to citizens nor efficient for the system. We decided to fix it with a practical and humane approach," Water Minister Parvesh Sahib Singh told reporters on Friday.

With the latest revision, consumers and developers will now be able to obtain a

provisional No Objection Certificate (NOC) by depositing just 25% of the applicable IFC at the stage of building plan approval. The remaining 75% of the amount will be adjusted later based on the final applicable rates at the time of water connection sanction. Singh said, "We are reshaping the system to suit people, not forcing people to struggle with the system. With just 25% payment, construction of a house can begin. The remaining amount will be fairly adjusted later."

The move, officials said, will help the DJB earn revenue and keep a record of consumers and prevent water theft. "In recent years, changes in IFC calculation methodology, shifting from occupancy-based assessment to floor-area-based charges led to a sharp

increase in costs. In many cases, charges rose 5 to even 10 times, creating a heavy financial burden and halting construction and redevelopment activity



across Delhi," explained an official. As a result, many property owners were unable to secure NOCs, delaying building approvals and redevelopment projects. Properties up to 200 square

meters remain exempt from IFC while larger plots will benefit from the revised, rationalised framework. The overall IFC liability could be reduced by 50% to 70% in many cases, dramatically easing costs for citizens, said officials.

Officials also said that the policy will also have a larger impact and is expected to boost construction and redevelopment activity, generate employment and economic momentum, improve compliance and trust in the public system and promote ease of doing construction in Delhi. Highlighting the broader vision, the Water Minister said, "Our effort is to simplify processes, remove bottlenecks, and empower citizens and developers to move forward without delays. Delhi must become a model of efficient, citizen-friendly governance."

NEWS BOX

Toxic work culture in Pak cricket Ex-coach Gary Kirsten slams Naqvi-led PCB

New Delhi. (Agency)

Former Pakistan white-ball head coach Gary Kirsten has delivered a blistering critique of the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB), describing a toxic work culture marked by systemic interference and a lack of professional respect. Speaking months after his abrupt resignation, the World Cup-winning coach suggested that the environment under chairman Mohsin Naqvi made it virtually impossible to achieve sustained success.

Kirsten opened up about his difficult stint with Pakistan days after taking over as head coach of Sri Lanka. In a candid interview with talkSPORT Cricket, he detailed the frustrations that led him to step down in October 2024, just six months into his tenure and without overseeing a single ODI. The thing that surprised me probably more than anything was the level of interference. I don't think I have ever seen it at that level before. Did it surprise me? I don't know, but it was significant," Kirsten said. The former South



African opener highlighted how the coaching staff were often treated as convenient scapegoats for broader administrative failures, pointing to the board's tendency to respond to losses with restrictions rather than support. "It is quite difficult for a coach to come in and formulate a way to work with the players when there is just this constant noise from the outside. It was tough and there were a lot of punitive actions around poor performance and things like that," he added. As a coach, you are the lowest-hanging fruit when the team isn't going well, so 'let us get rid of the coach' or 'let us put a restriction on the coach', because that is the easiest thing to do when the team isn't performing—and that is counterproductive in my view. Then why recruit the coach?"

WHY KIRSTEN QUIT AS PAK COACH

Kirsten's departure was the culmination of a power struggle that intensified following Pakistan's early exit from the 2024 T20 World Cup. While he initially attempted to overhaul the team's fitness and mental approach, he quickly found his authority eroded.

India to play T20Is against Ireland on June 26 and June 28: BCCI

NEW DELHI. (Agency)

Reigning world champions India will play two T20 Internationals in Ireland on June 26 and June 28 respectively, the BCCI said on Saturday about the games that will precede their white-ball assignment in England.

Both matches will be held at Belfast, where the Indian team will play for the first time since 2007. "Team India (Senior Men) will travel to Ireland for a two-match T20I series in June 2026. Having toured Ireland three times in the past eight years (2018, 2022 and 2023). This tour will mark India's return to Belfast for the first time since 2007," BCCI secretary Jay Shah said in a statement.

The BCCI statement comes two days after Ireland's director of high performance Graham West confirmed the series while



announcing Paul Stirling's decision to step down as their T20I captain. India, who host Afghanistan for a one-off Test and a three-match ODI series ending on June 20, will travel to England for five T20Is and three ODIs from July 1-19. India have toured Ireland three times in the past seven years, drawing strong crowds at Malahide on the outskirts of Dublin. West had said on Thursday the India series is part of their plans for the upcoming summer.

"With qualification secured for the T20 World Cup in 2028, Paul's (Stirling) decision to stand down as T20 captain provides the opportunity for the new captain to begin implementing their style and methodology, starting with the India series in June," West had said.

Delhi's quiet football comeback: 6,732 reasons for the capital to believe again

Delhi waited seven years for football to come home, and when it finally did, the response was not loud or overwhelming. But it was present, it was honest, and it quietly suggested something had begun again.

New Delhi. (Agency)

The kind that usually gives Delhi an easy excuse to stay in, order food, and scroll through a Champions League reel instead. The kind that slows everything down, clogs up roads, and makes a weekday evening feel heavier than it already is. But on this Thursday, that excuse did not quite hold. Seven years after Delhi last had a team to call its own in top-tier Indian football, the game returned to the capital. Not with noise, not with hype, not with the kind of buzz that once surrounded it, but with Sporting Club Delhi walking out quietly at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium. And Delhi, in its own way,

responded. There was a time when Delhi Dynamos games felt like an event. When names like Alessandro Del Piero and Roberto Carlos were enough to pull people in, to make a match feel like something you didn't want to miss, even if you didn't fully follow the league. Back then, there was curiosity, novelty, and a sense that Indian football might actually be building towards something. Since then, Indian football has undergone many phases, and not all of them have been favourable.

Cut to 2026, and Delhi is no longer a regular stop in that conversation. Attention has shifted, the energy has faded, and the city has returned to what it knows best. But on this night, even with rain, traffic and a weekday crowd juggling office and life, people showed up. At first glance, 6,732 in a 60,000-seater stadium does not look like much. It feels small, it feels underwhelming, and it is easy to dismiss it if you are used to watching packed European stadiums every weekend.

Now compare that to some of the bigger clubs in India. Mohun Bagan against Kerala Blasters this season drew over 29,000. East Bengal against NorthEast United had close

to 18,000. These are clubs built on history, identity and fanbases that didn't appear overnight.

Sporting Club Delhi is none of that yet.

A newly rebranded side, playing its first home game in a city that hasn't seen its own team in seven years. In that context, 6,732 starts to



feel less like a disappointment and more like something Indian football fans understand all too well—a slow start that might actually mean something. And if you stayed there long enough, if you watched closely, it did

not feel like a small crowd. It felt like a starting point. Outside the stadium, it did not feel like a big event. No long queues hours before kickoff, no rush of people trying to get in early. But there was movement. Groups of teenagers clicking photos in jerseys, kids kicking balls around like they had seen it on Instagram reels, families walking in together trying to figure out where to go. It felt like people were figuring football out again.

Inside, the emptiness was visible. Large sections of seats untouched, gaps that reminded you of how far the sport still has to go in the city. But the people who did come made sure they were not just filling space. Before kickoff, the sound was already there.

Not loud, not overwhelming, but steady.

Dhol beats cutting through the air, chants starting from one side and slowly spreading. It did not feel organised, it did not feel choreographed like European ultras. It felt raw, a bit messy, but very real.

KKR back Varun Chakravarthy to bounce back in IPL 2026: Ajinkya Rahane

New Delhi. (Agency)

KKR captain Ajinkya Rahane said that the team is confident of a return to form for Varun Chakravarthy during the upcoming IPL 2026 season. Varun endured a torrid time during the second half of the T20 World Cup 2026, despite ending the tournament as the joint-highest wicket-taker alongside Jasprit Bumrah.

The spinner leaked runs from the start of the Super 8 stage, and went for 64 runs in the semi-final against England. He finished with 14 wickets, but his economy-rate of 9.25 was worrying. He went on to lose his spot at the top of the ICC T20I bowlers rankings in the process. However, Rahane said that Varun wasn't doing anything wrong and said that he was trying to pick wickets at crucial points in the game. The KKR

skipper also feels that the break after the T20 World Cup came at the right time for Varun, allowing him to recalibrate ahead of the new season. When you have a long career in T20



cricket, firstly, you tend to have such things. It's almost like a batter sometimes not getting runs. And that's how cricket is. "I

think with Varun, that's one of the things, he's played so much T20 cricket over the past year... So a lot of teams obviously will try things (against him). Sometimes the conditions are not conducive to their style of bowling. You also need to understand he's always bowling the tough overs for the team. He's bowling in the Powerplay," Rahane said during the team's first news conference this season at Eden Gardens.

"He's bowling in phases of the game where two batters are set. He's coming in and trying to pick wickets. So I wouldn't say there's anything necessarily wrong with him. He's had a good 10-day break after the World Cup. I think that break is sometimes what a cricketer requires. And the beauty of team sport is that sometimes if Varun doesn't turn up, someone else does."

Angkrish Raghuvanshi hits statement hundred in KKR intra-squad match, Rahane flops

New Delhi. (Agency)

Ahead of the IPL 2026 season, Angkrish Raghuvanshi remained coy about his preferred role with KKR in the upcoming campaign. The Mumbai batter told India Today in February that he was ready to bat anywhere for the team. However, during the KKR intra-squad game on Friday, March 20, he gave a clear indication of his preferred batting position at Eden Gardens. Batting at number three, he scored a match-winning century while chasing 200 runs.

Raghuvanshi came in early in the innings for the Purple Knights and started cautiously, maintaining a steady scoring rate. He then accelerated fluently in the middle overs, reaching his hundred off 55 balls and leading



his team to victory. Finn Allen provided early momentum with a quick 23 runs, setting a solid platform for the chase. Later in the innings, Anukul Roy supported Raghuvanshi's effort with an unbeaten 28 from 17 balls to finish the game. On the bowling front, Kartik Tyagi was the standout performer, taking three wickets for 30 runs in his four overs. Vaibhav Arora and Varun Chakravarthy took two wickets each, while Blessing Muzarabani claimed one wicket during the first innings. Earlier, Tim Seifert and Rinku Singh were the top scorers in the first innings, scoring 47 and 40 runs respectively. Sarthak Ranjan impressed with a quickfire 37 off just 16 balls, showing promise for the season ahead.

RAHANE AND UMRAN MALIK FLOP

While there was a lot for the KKR faithful to be happy about, the early form of captain Ajinkya Rahane and pacer Umransh Malik maybe a cause for concern. Rahane managed to score just two runs from the four balls he faced while Umransh leaked runs in the 3.2 overs he bowled.

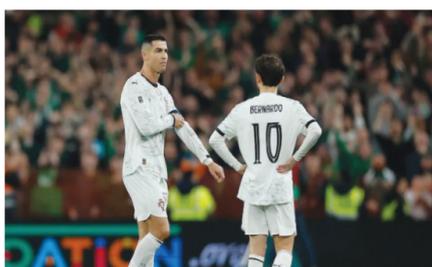
Cristiano Ronaldo set to miss Portugal friendlies as World Cup injury concerns grow

Cristiano Ronaldo misses Portugal's March friendlies with a hamstring issue, but the bigger focus remains his fitness for the FIFA World Cup 2026 as Portugal manage their captain's workload carefully.

NEW DELHI. (Agency)

Cristiano Ronaldo will miss Portugal's upcoming friendlies against Mexico and the United States due to a hamstring injury, raising fresh concerns ahead of the FIFA World Cup 2026. The Portugal captain picked up the injury while playing for Al

Nassr in late February and has since been undergoing treatment. Speaking during the squad announcement, Portugal head coach Roberto Martinez confirmed that the decision was precautionary as the team looks to manage Ronaldo's fitness carefully ahead of the World Cup. "It's a



minor muscle injury, and we think he can be back in a week or two," Martinez said. "Everything Cristiano has done physically this season shows that he's in great shape." Portugal are set to face Mexico on March 28 at the Azteca Stadium, followed by a clash against the United States in

Atlanta on March 31. The fixtures serve as key preparation matches ahead of the World Cup, and Martinez has opted to rest key players rather than risk further injury. The absence of Ronaldo also comes as part of a broader approach by the coaching staff to manage workload following a long domestic season. Bernardo Silva is another notable name missing from the squad, with the focus firmly on keeping senior players fresh for the bigger challenge ahead. Despite Ronaldo's absence, Portugal have named a strong squad featuring the likes of Bruno Fernandes and Joo Flix, while West Ham midfielder Mateus Fernandes earned his first senior call-up. Gonalo Guedes has also returned to the national

setup after a gap of nearly two years. Ronaldo remains Portugal's most important figure heading into the tournament. The 41-year-old is the all-time leading scorer in men's international football with 143 goals and is expected to lead the side once fully fit.

Mondo Duplantis in India Bhubaneswar set to host World Indoor Champs' 2028

India are all set to make a return to Belfast as the schedule for their upcoming T20I series against Ireland was confirmed by the BCCI on Saturday, March 21. India will be returning to the city after a gap of 19 years.

NEW DELHI. (Agency)

The Indian team are all set to return to Belfast after a gap of 19 years as the schedule for the T20I series against Ireland was released by the BCCI on Saturday, March 21. India will be taking on Ireland in two T20Is ahead of their white-ball tour of England in July, with both matches happening in Belfast.



This will be India's first T20I assignment after their T20 World Cup 2026 win and comes right after the conclusion of the ODI series against Afghanistan. India are set to take on Afghanistan in a one-off Test followed by a three-match ODI series after the IPL 2026 concludes. The ODI leg wraps up on June 20, before India begin their tour against England with the first T20I on July 1. "Team India

(Senior Men) will travel to Ireland for a two-match T20I series in June 2026. Having toured Ireland three times in the past eight years (2018, 2022 and 2023). This tour will mark India's return to Belfast for the first time since 2007," read the statement.

INDIA'S TOUR OF IRELAND 2026: FULL SCHEDULE
1st T20I – Friday, June 26

Time: 3:00 PM Local (7:30 PM IST)
Venue: Belfast
2nd T20I – Sunday, June 28
Time: 3:00 PM Local (7:30 PM IST)
Venue: Belfast

IRELAND'S PACKED INTERNATIONAL SCHEDULE

Ireland's men's team is set for a busy home summer, headlined by a landmark Test against New Zealand. That will be followed by the marquee series against India with two matches now set for late June. In August, Afghanistan will tour Ireland for a five-match ODI series. Beyond home fixtures, Ireland will travel to Nepal for a white-ball assignment under a newly formed five-year strategic partnership. Their overseas schedule also features a tour of the United Arab Emirates, before culminating in a historic multi-format visit to Pakistan in early 2027—marking their first-ever tour of the country.

Sahara refunds restarted: How to claim your stuck money step by step

New Delhi.(Agency)

The government has restarted the refund process for investors of Sahara Group's cooperative societies, offering long-awaited relief to depositors whose funds have been stuck for years. The refunds are being processed through an online system set up under Supreme Court directions, aimed at ensuring transparency and faster disbursement. Only investors who had deposits in four Sahara cooperative societies—Sahara Credit Cooperative Society Ltd., Saharayan Universal Multipurpose Society Ltd., Humara India Credit Cooperative Society Ltd., and Stars Multipurpose Cooperative Society Ltd.—are eligible to apply for refunds. The process is being handled through the CRCS-Sahara Refund Portal, which allows users to complete the entire claim digitally. To file a claim, investors must register on the portal using an Aadhaar-linked mobile number. After logging in, they need to enter claim details, upload supporting documents, and submit the application online. Required documents typically include Aadhaar, bank account details, and proof of investment such as deposit certificates or passbooks. PAN details may also be needed for higher claim amounts. Once submitted, claims go through a verification process. If approved, the refund is credited directly to the investor's bank account, usually within a few weeks. In cases where claims are rejected or found incomplete, applicants have the option to correct errors and resubmit their applications through the same portal.

The resumption of the refund process marks a significant step for Sahara investors, but successful claims depend on accurate information and proper documentation.

Raymond Group chairman Gautam Singhania rescued after speedboat capsizes in Maldives; two Indians missing

MALE.(Agency)

Raymond Group Chairman & Managing Director Gautam Hari Singhania has sustained injuries, while two Indian nationals are reported missing after a speedboat capsized near Felidhoo island in the Maldives, according to local media reports.

There were seven people on board at the time of the incident near Vaavu atoll early Friday morning. Two women — a British national and a Russian national — and five Indian men were on board, the Edition.mv reported. Police said five people fell into the sea when the vessel overturned, including the Russian woman and four Indian men. Singhania, 60, who was among the tourists, has been rescued.

Citing police, news portal Adhadhu reported that he sustained minor injuries in the accident. He was discharged from the hospital after treatment, it added. "The two missing persons are Indian nationals," police said, adding that search operations are on. "The speedboat belongs to his yacht, TT Ashena. The Maldivian Coast Guard is still looking for two people who went missing in the accident," Adhadhu reported. Citing sources, it said that the vessel involved in the accident was a Cigarette racing boat designed to be driven at high speeds.

Maldives National Defence Force's Male Area Command Coast Guard Second Squadron is searching for the missing individuals. The incident occurred about two nautical miles southwest of Keyodhoo, MNDF said.

Jury finds Elon Musk misled investors during Twitter purchase, absolves him of some fraud claims

SAN FRANCISCO.(Agency)

A jury has found Elon Musk liable for defrauding investors by deliberately driving down Twitter's stock price in the tumultuous months leading up to his 2022 acquisition of the social media company for \$44 billion. But it absolved him of some fraud allegations, finding that he did not "scheme" to mislead investors. The civil trial in San Francisco centered on a class-action lawsuit filed just before Musk took control of Twitter, which he later renamed X. Jurors were asked to decide if two tweets and comments Musk made on a podcast in May 2022 amounted to him intentionally defrauding Twitter shareholders, who sold their shares based on Musk's statements. The nine-person jury returned the verdict after nearly four days of deliberation, nearly three weeks after the trial began on March 2. They said that while Musk was liable for misleading investors with two tweets — including one said the Twitter deal was "temporarily on hold," he did not do so with a statement he made on a podcast and that he did not intentionally "scheme" to defraud investors. The jury awarded shareholders between about \$3 and \$8 per stock per day as damages, which the plaintiffs' lawyers said amounts to about \$2.1 billion in stock and another \$500 million in options. Musk's fortune is currently estimated at about \$814 billion, much of it tied up in Tesla shares. "It's an important victory, not just for investors of Twitter, but for the public markets," said Mark Molumphy, an attorney for the plaintiffs. "I think the jury's verdict sends a strong message that just because you're a rich and powerful person, you still have to obey the law, and no man is above the law." Musk's legal team referenced other cases Musk won and said they will appeal.

"Last month, Elon won the largest appellate victory in this country's history after getting an unfair shake at the trial level. Earlier today, in a Texas court he won another appellate victory in which the trial judge was reversed," the legal team at Quinn Emanuel Urquhart & Sullivan said in a statement. "We view today's verdict, where the jury found both for and against the plaintiffs and found no fraud scheme, as a bump in the road. And we look forward to vindication on appeal."

Why bank lockers are hard to get and what you can do instead

A new government directive on free seat allocation has triggered sharp opposition from airlines, who warn it could push up fares, hurt affordability and reshape how tickets are priced across India's aviation sector.

New Delhi.(Agency)

Getting a bank locker is no longer a routine banking request. Customers are often told there is a waiting list, with no clear timeline for when a locker might become available. This growing shortage is forcing many to ask a basic question: if bank lockers are getting harder to access, where should people keep their valuables? This is the third part of Lock & Key, a series that looks at how India's bank locker system works,

the risks involved, and what customers need to know. After examining safety and insurance in the first two parts, this story focusses on a new problem — access.

WHY BANK LOCKERS ARE HARD TO GET IN INDIA

The shortage of lockers is not accidental. It is the result of demand rising sharply while supply remains limited. "Due to gap between demand and supply the availability of bank lockers has declined dramatically," said Abhishek Kumar, SEBI Registered Investment Adviser and founder of Sahaj Money. "In metros due to limited physical space in bank branches and high real estate costs the problem is more acute."

India's growing wealth and strong preference for holding gold are key drivers of this demand.

"We feel it's a mix of both," Kumar said. "While demand has gone up due to increased purchasing power and gold ownership among affluent Indians, banks are also actively restricting issue

of new lockers to manage liability risks, compliance burdens, and the unprofitable nature of locker services." WHY BANKS ARE NOT



EXPANDING LOCKERS

Unlike loans or deposits, lockers are not a profitable business for banks.

"The main problem is that lockers are not a high profit business for banks, leading them to limit vault expansion in favor of more lucrative financial services," Kumar said. At the same time, setting up and maintaining locker facilities is expensive. Banks need secure vault

infrastructure, surveillance systems, physical space in branches.

In cities where real estate is expensive, expanding locker capacity becomes even more difficult.

RBI RULES HAVE MADE LOCKERS SAFER AND COSTLIER

Recent RBI regulations have improved security but also added to operational costs. "Between 2023 and 2025 RBI has implemented major changes including mandatory biometric access, continuous CCTV recording, SMS/email alerts for every locker access, and new written agreements," Kumar said. Banks are also required to:

maintain transparent waitlists show locker availability upgrade systems regularly

While these rules protect customers, they have made locker services more complex and expensive to run.

ARE LOCKERS BEING PRIORITISED FOR SELECT CUSTOMERS?

Many customers believe lockers are easier to get if they have strong banking relationships. Kumar pointed out that such practices do exist informally.

May lead to spike in fares: Airlines oppose 60% free seat rule

New Delhi.(Agency)

A fresh directive mandating 60 per cent free seat allocation on flights has triggered a sharp pushback from airlines, who warn the move could lead to higher airfares for passengers.

The Federation of Indian Airlines, which represents IndiGo, Air India and SpiceJet, has written to Civil Aviation Secretary Sameer Sinha, raising concerns over the financial impact of the order. Airlines say the directive will cut into a key revenue stream, forcing them to recover losses from passengers. The financial impact of this directive on airlines will be significant, compelling airlines to recover the lost revenues through increases in fares," the FIA said in its letter. It added that the move, though intended to benefit passengers, could end up being "counterproductive".

The industry body has also questioned the role of regulators in commercial decisions. FIA flagged what it called "regulatory overreach into commercial aspects of airline

operations", arguing that pricing and seat allocation are core business decisions. It also raised concerns over the authority of the Directorate General of Civil Aviation to regulate



airfare components and unbundled services. "DGCA does not have the authority to fix or cap charges for unbundled services," the FIA said, referring to previous court orders.

Airlines said that while free seat selection may appear beneficial at first, the broader impact could be negative. "Higher fares will reduce consumer choice and affordability, particularly for frequent flyers,

families, and budget travellers," the FIA said. It added that standardising seat allocation across airlines would limit service differentiation, reducing the ability of passengers to choose carriers based on preferences.

The aviation body also disputed claims that airlines were consulted before the directive was issued.

"The mandate was not clearly communicated to member airlines prior to the press release dated March 18, 2026," it said, adding that no prior stakeholder consultation had taken place. Airlines have urged the Ministry of Civil Aviation to withdraw the directive under the current rules.

FIA cautioned that implementing the rule could set a precedent for deeper intervention in airline pricing.

"If applied, this measure will create uncertainty for airlines regarding future regulatory constraints," it said, urging the government to reconsider the move "in the overall interest of the sector".

Indian stock market under sustained selling pressure over West Asia tensions

New Delhi.(Agency)

The Indian equity benchmarks closed in the red for the fourth consecutive week, showing sustained selling pressure amid escalating geopolitical tensions in West Asia. Nifty dipped 0.16 per cent during the week, and gained 0.49 per cent on the last trading day to reach 23,114. At close, Sensex was up 324 points or 0.44 per cent at 74,532. It declined 0.04 per cent during the week. Both indices began the week on a flat note but soon gained momentum, mainly due to buyer interest for metal stocks. Elevated crude oil prices, holding above \$100 per barrel, continued to raise concerns around inflation and India's trade deficit. Sector-wise, Nifty IT and PSU Banks emerged as the top performers. Metal stocks also saw strong buying interest, with the Nifty Metal index rising over 2 per cent, supported by

positive brokerage commentary and an improved demand outlook.



Broader indices showed divergence with the benchmark indices during the week, as the Nifty Midcap100 gained 0.06 per cent, while Nifty Smallcap100 dipped 1.11 per cent. Indian rupee breached the 93 mark to hit a record low of Rs 93.49 against the US dollar due to high dollar demand, sustained FII outflows and broader global currency pressures. "The near-term

outlook remains cautious, with pressure from elevated crude oil prices and ongoing geopolitical tensions in West Asia. Sentiment continues to be weighed down by persistent foreign investor selling, with FIIs recording cumulative outflows of Rs 81,263 crore over the past 13 sessions," said Siddhartha Khemka, Head of Research, Wealth Management, Motilal Oswal Financial Services. Analysts said that 23,850 remains the immediate resistance for Nifty, followed by 24,000 and 24,150. On the downside, 22,950 and 22,700 serve as crucial support levels. The index has declined nearly 13 per cent from its all-time high, underscoring a significant corrective phase in the broader market. For Bank Nifty, 53,000-52,000 is viewed as the immediate support levels, market participants said.

World economy in serious trouble, India vulnerable: Raghuram Rajan on oil crisis

New Delhi.(Agency)

Former RBI Governor Raghuram Rajan has issued a stark warning on the global economic fallout of the ongoing US-Israeli war against Iran, cautioning that a prolonged conflict could trigger an unprecedented oil shock, destabilise financial systems, and leave oil-dependent economies like India particularly exposed. As the war enters its third week, Rajan underlined that the trajectory of the global economy now hinges critically on how long the conflict persists. Speaking to India Today's Rajdeep Sardesai, Rajan said, "I think the important question is how long it lasts", warning that even a short conflict has already caused disrupted energy for about 20% of the total production of energy sources across the world.

While some countries have temporarily cushioned the blow using reserves, he stressed that "the longer this goes on the more impact it will have." Rajan flagged a worst-case scenario where supply disruptions force a sharp correction in demand. "If you're trying to adjust to the fact that 15 to 20% of world energy sources are shut in, you have to have tremendous demand destruction," he said, adding that "oil prices will be in the \$150,

\$200 a barrel range."

Such levels, he noted, are largely uncharted territory and could trigger widespread economic stress. "The world economy is in serious trouble" if the war extends for another month, he cautioned. The crisis is being exacerbated by vulnerabilities around the Strait of Hormuz, a critical chokepoint through which a significant share of global oil and gas flows.

Asian economies—including India, China, Japan and South Korea—face the highest exposure. Rajan explained that disruptions here would not remain regional. "What happens in Asia doesn't stay in Asia prices will show up everywhere," he said, including in relatively insulated economies like the US. Beyond energy markets, Rajan warned of broader macroeconomic consequences. High oil prices could fuel inflation at a time when many economies are already struggling with elevated price pressures. "With high energy prices, interest rates have to stay higher to combat inflation, and economies aren't positioned for that," he argued, adding that rising borrowing costs and existing fiscal deficits could trigger "risks from the financial sector if this lasts much longer." INDIA PARTICULARLY

VULNERABLE'

India, he emphasised, is particularly vulnerable due to its heavy reliance on imported crude. "Every government is vulnerable, because oil prices affect so much of the economy," Rajan said, while acknowledging that India's inflation-targeting framework has so far helped



anchor expectations. However, sustained price shocks would make it increasingly difficult to contain inflation within acceptable bounds. "India simply cannot subsidise oil on a semi-permanent basis," Rajan warned, arguing that if high prices persist, "the consumer will have to adjust,

the farmer will have to adjust, producers will have to adjust."

He added that excessive subsidies would strain fiscal balances, making them unsustainable over time. Highlighting the external sector risks, Rajan noted that rising oil prices could sharply widen India's current account deficit. Even a moderate increase in crude prices has significant implications, and a sustained surge could compound pressures on the rupee and overall macroeconomic stability. Looking ahead, Rajan called for a strategic rethink. He advocated expanding strategic petroleum reserves, diversifying energy sources, and building resilience across critical supply chains. "We need a strategic resilience plan across the country across many inputs," he said, pointing to vulnerabilities in sectors like pharmaceuticals and semiconductors.

Conclusively, Rajan described the conflict as a "wake-up call" for policymakers worldwide. While short-term buffers may help, he stressed that one simply cannot subsidise their way out of this crisis. If the war drags on, economies will have to make hard adjustments, with oil prices, inflation, and global growth all hanging in the balance.



ensure expansion of CGD network and expedite issuance of connections to domestic and commercial/industrial PNG consumers in their areas. In the meantime, over 13,700 new PNG connections have been issued in recent days and more than 7,300 consumers have shifted from LPG to PNG, helping reduce pressure on LPG demand. While supply of LPG is still a concern in view of prevailing geopolitical situation, no dry-outs have been reported at distributorships. Notably, panic bookings have declined significantly — from 89 lakh on March 13 to around 55 lakh on March 20 — while domestic LPG deliveries continue as normal.

Around 18 states and UTs have issued orders for allocation of non-domestic LPG, with supply being made available across all States and UTs. Educational institutions and hospitals are being prioritised, receiving around 50 per cent of commercial LPG allocation.



Ayesha Khan

Krystle D'Souza Light Up Dhurandhar: The Revenge Screening In Glittery Looks

The much-anticipated action thriller Dhurandhar: The Revenge hit theatres on March 19. On the same day, a grand screening was held in Mumbai. Leading man Ranveer Singh was joined by co-stars Arjun Rampal, Sanjay Dutt, Sara Arjun and Saumya Tandon. The star-studded affair also saw several prominent names from the film fraternity. Among the highlights of the evening were actors Ayesha Khan and Krystle D'Souza, who grabbed attention with their glamorous appearances. The duo, who were part of the first installment, arrived in sparkling outfits. Ayesha opted for a black skirt paired with a matching top adorned with golden floral detailing, while Krystle dazzled in an off-shoulder red co-ord set with black embellishments.

The two actresses posed cheerfully for the paparazzi before heading inside. But a candid moment caught everyone's attention. While moving towards the screening, Ayesha paused and waited for Krystle as she interacted with fans, reflecting their camaraderie.

What To Expect From Dhurandhar: The Revenge?

Made under the direction of Aditya Dhar, Dhurandhar: The Revenge continues the journey of Ranveer Singh's Hamza Ali Mazari. The film traces his rise as Sher-e-Baloch and the undisputed king of Lyari. The sequel also shows his journey from becoming Jaskirat Singh Rangji to Hamz, the man who intrudes into Pakistan as a spy to avenge the terrorist attacks in the nation.

The spy-action thriller also brings back the talented supporting cast, including Arjun Rampal as Major Iqbal of the ISI, R Madhavan as Ajay Sanyal, the Director of the IB (a character inspired by Ajit Doval), Sanjay Dutt as SP Chaudhary Aslam of Sindh Police's Lyari Task Force, Rakesh Bedi, Danish Pandor, Sara Arjun, and Yami Gautam.

Released in five languages, Hindi, Telugu, Tamil, Malayalam, and Kannada, the 235-minute film delivers a never-seen-before gripping cinematic experience that audiences are definitely loving.

Dhurandhar: The Revenge: Box office collection

According to industry tracker Sacnilk, Dhurandhar: The Revenge earned Rs 44 crore net in India from its early preview shows. The Aditya Dhar directorial added Rs 102.55 crore on the opening day, with Hindi contributing Rs 99.10 crore alone. With this number, the sequel has comfortably surpassed the opening of Dhurandhar, which earned Rs 28 crore.



Celina Jaitley Thinks Ranveer Singh Is 'Phenomenal' In Dhurandhar 2: 'Blown Away'



Celina Jaitley is the latest to join the ever-growing list of celebrities praising Ranveer Singh starrer Dhurandhar: The Revenge, which hit the theatres on March 19. Taking to her Instagram account, she posted a picture with actress Preity Zinta, casting director Mukesh Chhabra, and actor Arjun Rampal, who portrays the menacing Major Iqbal in the film, from the Dhurandhar 2 screening in Mumbai. In the caption, Celina said, "When your date for the night is the stunning, gorgeous, amazing, darling.. Zara from Veer-Zaara @realpz and the host is the fascinating, formidable Major from Dhurandhar 2: The Revenge himself, @rampal72, you know it is going to be a phenomenal evening." She then went on to praise Dhurandhar 2, calling it, "Four fascinating hours of gripping edge of the seat storytelling that felt like the most enthralling cinematic immersion I have experienced in a long time."

Celina Jaitley Praises Dhurandhar's Crew

The 44-year-old actress then hailed Aditya Dhar for "steering this monumental vision with such authority and finesse." She praised Dhurandhar 2's cinematographer, Vikash Nowlakra. Calling his work "breathtaking," Celina mentioned, "Every frame meticulously crafted to heighten emotion and intensity." She then complimented the film's editor, saying, "Seamlessly held together by the brilliant editing of Shivkumar V. Panicker, the narrative never loses momentum for a single second."

Celina Jaitley Calls Ranveer Singh "Phenomenal", Compliments Other Actors

Following this, she also heaped praise on the star cast. Celina said Arjun's appearance on the screen became "unforgettable" with his intense and powerful portrayal. For her, Ranveer was "phenomenal". "Some of your scenes really hit deep. Phew, run out of words to praise you," she mentioned. The actress further praised the performances by Sara Arjun, R. Madhavan and Sanjay Dutt, among others.

Celina Jaitley Applauds Mukesh Chhabra And Shashwat Sachdev

Last but not least, Celina concluded her post by applauding Mukesh Chhabra's work on casting and Shashwat Sachdev's on music. She said, "Of course, sharing the evening with the real star behind the magic, casting director @castingchhabra, whose extraordinary casting brought together one of the most powerful ensembles seen on the Indian screen. The MUSIC primarily composed and arranged by @shashwatology. Oh my God !!! Still ringing n blown away !!!"

Saiee M Manjrekar Debuts Chic Bangs With Fresh Summer Look, Embraces Effortless Style



Saiee M Manjrekar is stepping into the summer season with a refreshed sense of style, unveiling a new look that blends playfulness with understated elegance. Known for her evolving fashion choices, the actor's latest transformation signals a shift towards a lighter, more effortless aesthetic.

Saiee M Manjrekar Debuts Fresh Summer Look

Taking to social media, Saiee shared a series of images revealing her new hairstyle, featuring shorter hair paired with soft, face-framing bangs. The look immediately stood out for its contemporary appeal, adding a fresh dimension to her overall appearance.

Criticism Over Senegal's Conduct

Nora also did not hold back while addressing the controversial events of the final. "I have never ever seen in any sport a team leaving in the game like nothing happened. So I've never seen that. So good on CAF for making this decision," she said.

Along with the visuals, the actor's fun and breezy caption offered a glimpse into her playful mood, aligning perfectly with the easygoing vibe of her transformation.

A Style Shift Towards Effortless Fashion

Complementing her new haircut, Saiee opted for relaxed, summer-ready outfits that leaned into comfort without compromising on style. Her wardrobe choices featured easy silhouettes, minimal styling and subtle textures, allowing the haircut to remain the focal point. The soft bangs enhance her features while adding a youthful charm, creating a look that feels modern yet accessible. The overall styling reflects a conscious move towards simplicity, where fashion feels organic rather than over-curated.

A Personal And Evolving Style Identity

According to a source close to the actor, "Saiee has always enjoyed experimenting with her style, and this transformation is a reflection of her current mood easy, fresh, and expressive."

Shweta Tiwari

Surprised As She Gets Clicked During Casual Outing: 'Yaha Kya Kar Rahe'

Shweta Tiwari had an unexpected moment with the paparazzi during a casual outing and the candid interaction quickly caught attention online. The actress was spotted walking towards a venue in Mumbai, seemingly unaware that photographers were stationed nearby and what happened next left her surprised.

Dressed in a relaxed yet stylish outfit, Shweta appeared completely at ease until she suddenly noticed the paparazzi capturing her. Clearly



taken by surprise, Shweta paused mid-step and reacted out of instinct. She asked them, "Aap yaha kya kar rahe ho?"

The paparazzi, in a light-hearted response, replied, "Hum yahi baithte hain roz, yaha sab aate hain naa," explaining that the spot is a regular for celebrity sightings. For her outing, Shweta kept her look simple and effortless. She wore a fitted top paired with black casual trousers, striking a balance between comfort and style. With minimal accessories and neatly styled hair, she kept her overall appearance polished.

Shweta Tiwari's Career Journey

Shweta Tiwari's acting career began in 2000 with the show Aane Wala Pal but it was her role in the iconic television series Kasautii Zindagii Kay that made her a household name. In the show, she portrayed Purna Sharma opposite actors Cezanne Khan, Hiten Tejwani and Ronit Roy. Over the years, Shweta expanded her career by appearing in several Hindi, Bhojpuri and regional films.

Her popularity reached a notch higher after she appeared in the fourth season of Bigg Boss where she emerged as the winner. Later, Shweta also impressed fans with her impressive roles in shows like Parvarish - Kuchh Khattee Kuchh Meethi, Ek Thhi Naayka, Begusarai, Mere Dad Ki Dulhan and Main Hoon Aparajita. Shweta made her web series debut in Indian Police Force and was also seen in Singham Again, directed by Rohit Shetty.

Shweta Tiwari's Do You Wanna Partner

Her last appearance was in Prime Video's series Do You Wanna Partner. Her role of a gangster left many surprised as she delivered an impactful performance. Do You Wanna Partner features Tamannaah Bhatia and Diana Penty in the key roles. Vikrant Massey also played a key role in the show that follows two ambitious women navigating



Fitness professional Nawaz Modi Singhania of Body Art Fitness Studio, talks to us about the hottest fitness trends of this year. She says, "I'm often asked what's new, hot and buzzing on the fitness scene these days. Well, hot fads such as exercise apps, body weight training, high intensity strength training, fitness menu, cardio dance, and more are taking centre stage currently in 2016." Let's take a closer look at the top ten trends...

1 Wearable Technology

These include smart watches, heart rate monitors and fitness trackers of sorts, smart glasses and even smart fabrics are amongst the most popular trends. These wearable devices give the user immediate feedback which makes them more aware and conscious of their level of activity, motivating the user to strive to achieve their fitness target. Having a sort of fitness buddy / buddies via your techie device, forms a community of like-minded people and lends support & motivation to users to stick to the path.

2 Body Weight Training

This uses one's own body weight as resistance during a workout, like in exercises such as push-ups, planks, squats & sit-ups also continues to be high up on the most popular list, as it was in 2015. It's a quick, effective and minimalistic approach to fitness.

3 High Intensity Strength Training

This is an all-time, sacrosanct, evergreen favourite which continues in popularity, all the more so with the male population.

4 Cardio Dance

If you like to dance, or have secretly always wanted to learn but felt they had two left feet, you'll love cardio dance routines of various sorts. There's Bollywood, Latin American, Pop, Zumba, Clubbercise, Ballet, Scottish, Country Line, Pole Dancing and there's plenty more where that came from. Exciting, fun, high energy routines where you learn to be a great dancer is a no-brainer win-win situation. If you're one of those that love a little bit of everything, some cardio dance classes give you a great mix of everything from Bollywood to disco.

5 Personal Training

If you prefer one-on-one setting rather than large groups, Personal Training is for you. Especially, if you need a highly customised programme (for instance as in Pregnancy) for any special needs or health conditions (like Arthritis, Scoliosis, knee or back problems), with individual, focussed attention from a Trainer, then here is an ideal option.

6 Functional Fitness and beyond

To be functionally fit means you can easily perform your daily activities without discomfort or injury. Like

for instance you can sit down & get up off the floor with ease, you can sleep without getting a crick in the neck and you are able to climb up a flight of stairs without your legs really hurting. The next step lending from and moving beyond Functional Fitness though, is "loaded

Top 10 hottest Fitness

movement training" where the body trains to moves in three dimensions using loads such as weights, kettlebells and sandbells.

7 Exercise For Seniors

Fitness Programmes for Senior Citizens is also gaining increasing popularity. Everyone wants to live long, but no one wants to grow old. Like it or not, we grow old anyway! However everyone wants to be as healthy and fit as they possibly can be. Therefore these highly customised fitness programmes which consider the senior's age, health conditions, fitness level, goals, lifestyle, likes and dislikes are on the rise.

8 Pilates -

Studio-based Pilates involves the use of different types of Reformers, various types of Pilates Chairs, Spinal Correctors of sorts, Cadillac and far more. One can expect a perfectly sculpted, petite, flexible, small body, with long, lean musculature & a strong, flat mid-section. Pilates is also great for rehabilitative purposes.

9 Anti-Gravity Training

This is the new kid on the block but is fast-gaining popularity and quickly moving up the charts within a short period of time. This is a mind-body-soul workout. Working aerially in a hammock, one can look forward to a strong, lean, sculpted & flexible body, among many other mental, emotional and psychological benefits.

10 Yoga

Deeply rooted in our ancient Indian tradition and culture, Yoga continues to be evergreen. There are so many forms such as Power Yoga, Ashtanga, Bikram, Kundalini, Hatha yoga, and more, that one can embark on a wonderful journey in this realm.



Six experts spill the beans on exercise routines they consider to be the most effective and those that should be eliminated. The rapid growth of the fitness industry has resulted in several self-proclaimed experts fighting for a piece of the pie. Over the past few years, newer fitness trends have choked an already saturated market, and older methods too are doing a double-take. While those familiar with fitness jargon may seamlessly filter the good from the warped, spelling out the distinction between 'conditioning' and 'flexibility' may not be an easy task for many. So how does one select a fitness routine that is value for money? We get six fitness professionals to spill the beans on programs that, according to them, tick all the boxes, and also those that they will never practice themselves.

Praveen Nair, CrossFit Trainer

The hit
CrossFit has revived some significant fitness methodologies like Olympic lifting and gymnastics, and has brought them to the masses. The program's been crafted in a way that it is suitable for athletes and aged people alike. The program upholds the thought that everyone's fitness requirements are exactly the same. I completely relate to this ideology. Personally, I believe that the gymnastic component in CrossFit has helped people improve balance and stability, both of which are essential components of basic fundamental movement.

The miss
As much as I have heard about its ability to prevent and heal illnesses, I would not advocate yoga alone, as a form of all fitness due to its inability to reproduce the kind of muscle strength and cardiovascular workout that other activities do.

Kamna Prem Arora, Professional Dancer

The hit
As someone, who packs in a variety of fitness forms in my routine, it is easy for me to pinpoint the one that contributes most to my fitness - the spinning program by Les Mills, called RPM. It

Time to replace running for CrossFit

is my bible. Today's fitness trends are driven by philosophies that hail muscle development as the sole truth, while cardiovascular training has become the adopted second child. However, I believe that exercising your heart is the first step to true fitness. RPM packs in a good combination of cardio and HIIT, and if conducted diligently, is extremely helpful to tone one's legs.

The Miss

You'll never see me depending solely on a hoola hoop workout to get really fit. It's fun, it's interesting, it is also tiring, but it's definitely not a holistic workout.

Satish Suvarna, Calisthenics

The hit

I have always strongly advocated using one's own body as a gym. What is the point of loading the body with additional kilos when handling one's own weight can be such a task? Despite having been in this field for several years, I can still execute a full body workout using only my body-weight as resistance. Such a regimen makes one move efficiently. Also, the strength built in the process is slow to dissipate if a long holiday compels one to skip training.

The miss

The concept of running on the treadmill has never appealed to me, the conveyer belt that does all the

as it is work. There have been several studies to prove that people using the treadmill put in lesser effort when compared to those who hit the track. Fitness needs to be real to make it usable in daily life. A person running eight kilometres on a treadmill may not be able to clock five on a running track.

Azeen Rizvi, Strength training expert

The hit

While it may be difficult to burn too many calories during a weight training session, building muscles help in improving the basal metabolic rate. This implies that a person with a good muscle mass can shave off extra calories by simply sitting on the couch all day. Traditional weight training is my mantra. On days that I wish to play up my routine, I punctuate my sets with quick repetitions of functional exercises for burning off those extra calories.

The miss

Resistance training requires one to lift a specific amount of kilos to bring about an effective change. This however is missing when one trains in group classes. Individuals may either lift too little, which may render the program ineffective, or lift too much and compromise on the form. The latter might even be dangerous.

Piyush Yelwe, Functional training expert

The hit

Functional training addresses every single component of fitness, including muscle endurance, resistance training, cardiovascular training and agility. More importantly, it's functional, which implies that it's designed to help one perform 'daily life functions', more efficiently. To me, this is what fitness is all about.

The miss

Bollywood dance can help the masses de-stress. However, I do not consider it an ideal path to fitness. There is no development of muscular strength and it lacks a discernible structure to serve as a good cardiovascular workout.

Anjali Kakkar LES mills rpm instructor

The hit

At a certain age, I believe yoga suffices as a complete fitness routine since it combines cardiovascular training with flexibility and strength. I like to match it with RPM's spinning to complete my routine. THE MISS Running on the treadmill is an open invitation to knee injuries. I think people need to expose themselves to the open air and hit the streets instead of running within the closed environment of an air-conditioned room.

Fight age with these foods



Trying to hold back time? The secret lies in your plate, say experts and every day the evidence supporting this fact just gets bigger.

The first big must for those who are serious about anti ageing is to include protein in the diet. While this would mean chicken, eggs and seafood for non vegetarians, it would mean including foods like peanut butter, fat free milk, yoghurt, and low fat cheese for the vegans.

The next step is to look for purple foods. This would include fruit like plums and berries and vegetables like red cabbage (which is largely purple) and kidney beans (full of potassium and zinc) to improve your skin and keep age at bay.

Everyone knows that it is important to eat vegetables but what is also important is to know what each vegetable can do for you. Dark leafy greens can reduce bone loss and help you get better eyesight. Carrots and tomatoes are full of anti oxidants that fight age. Broccoli helps fight heart disease and offers Vitamin C, another great anti aging ingredient.

Another important food to include in your diet is nuts. Almonds and walnuts boost energy and improve the functioning of the brain.

And finally, as dessert, don't skip a few squares of dark chocolate. This is the perhaps the sweetest age buster of all.

