

PUBLISHED FROM Delhi, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Chandigarh, Himachal and Jammu

The Sikh Times National Daily

VISIT: www.thesikhtimes.in Email:sikhtimesindia@gmail.com

Vol. 17 No. 317 RNI NO. DELENG/2008/25465 New Delhi, Thursday, 2 April 2026 sikhtimesindia@gmail.com 9654077232 12 pages ₹ 3

1984 Widows Still in Distress, Questions Raised Over Role of High-Profile Sikh Advocate

Decades After the Tragedy, Justice Remains Elusive for Thousands of Victims

The Sikh Times Special story

New Delhi, 1 April :More than four decades after the tragic events of the 1984 Anti-Sikh Riots, thousands of innocent Sikh widows continue to live in extreme hardship...



allegations and questions have emerged regarding a Sikh advocate who was closely associated with the victims in the early years after 1984.

wife from rioters. Following the riots, the advocate prepared affidavits for thousands of Sikh widows and submitted them before the Ranganath Misra Commission.

Continued news page 2

Government puts foreign grants bill on hold amid massive Opposition protests

The government has paused the controversial FCRA amendment Bill after Opposition protests.

The proposed changes include tighter control over foreign funds and assets, raising concerns over how NGOs and institutions will operate.

New Delhi.(Agency)

The government has put on hold the Foreign Contribution Regulation Amendment Bill, 2026 amid Opposition protests...

At the heart of the controversy is a key provision that enables the government to assume control over foreign funds and assets of organisations found in violation of FCRA rules...



The government may also transfer such assets to its departments or sell them, with proceeds deposited in the Consolidated Fund of India...

WIDER CHANGES TO FUNDING AND COMPLIANCE

The Bill proposes that FCRA registration would automatically lapse if renewal is not sought or is rejected...

It also empowers the government to set timelines for utilisation of foreign contributions, preventing funds from being held indefinitely.

Another provision requires prior clearance from the central government before any investigation into FCRA violations can begin...

The amendments also expand accountability to key functionaries, including directors, trustees and office bearers.

If an organisation shuts down or becomes inactive, its foreign-funded assets would be permanently taken over by the designated authority.

POLITICAL FLASHPOINT

The sweeping nature of these provisions has sparked protests from Opposition parties, particularly with concerns over control of NGO assets...

'Where was PM?': Rajya Sabha Leader of Opposition Kharge and Minister Rijiju spar over demand for discussion on West Asia crisis

Kiren Rijiju said the government was not running away from any discussion and ministers have made statements in the House on the West Asia issue.

New Delhi.(Agency)

Leader of Opposition in Rajya Sabha Mallikarjun Kharge Wednesday attacked the government over Prime Minister Narendra Modi's absence from the all-party meeting on the West Asia conflict...



to take up pending government business. The Congress president said the government is ready for a discussion whenever they want...

that they don't have time. The whole world is affected by LPG. Why are they not agreeing on that? The prices are going up.

In response, Kiren Rijiju said the government was not running away from any discussion and ministers have made statements in the House on the West Asia issue.

The finance minister has outlined in detail the steps taken by the government to deal with the crisis, including controlling prices despite global trends.

Previous Congress regime neglected rural development in Punjab: CM Mann

The Sikh Times

CHANDIGARH, 1 April : Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann on Wednesday presented a comprehensive four-year report card of the Rural Development and Panchayat Department as part of the Punjab Government's ongoing 'Shandaar Char Saal Bhagwant Mann de naal' series...

confidentiality. He noted that the rural development report card is part of a wider governance framework under which the AAP government is presenting sector-wise performance across education, healthcare, irrigation, agriculture, and other key areas...

number of Panchayats elected unanimously. In 2018, around 1,870 Panchayats were elected...



ed unanimously but in 2024, as many as 2,970 Panchayats were elected unanimously. CM Bhagwant Singh Mann said, "This is an increase of 1,100 Panchayats thereby strengthening communal harmony in villages and ensuring their holistic development."

said, "The Punjab government has enhanced the honorarium of Sarpanchs from ₹1,200 to ₹2,000 per month." CM Bhagwant Singh Mann said, "Under the 15th Finance Commission for Rural Development ₹2,367.64 crore was spent on rural development in 2025-26 which was double as compared to 2024-25."

IRGC now Iran's de facto ruler, sidelines president amid power struggle

With the whereabouts of Supreme Leader Mojtaba Khamenei not clear, the powerful IRGC has further consolidated its grip over Iran. It has even sidelined the Iranian president, taking vital and sensitive leadership calls.

New Delhi.(Agency)

Earlier this week, US President Donald Trump asserted that negotiations to end the Iran war were on with leaders who are "more moderate" and "more reasonable". However, Iran has denied it.



Iran International. In fact, such is the situation that Pezeshkian, known as a moderate leader, has been pushed into a "complete political deadlock".

WHERE IS MOJTABA KHAMENEI?

Much of it is due to the absence of a Supreme Leader after US-Israeli strikes killed Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and most of the top leadership on the first day of the conflict.

From files to frontline: PM Modi puts Deesa at heart of western defence

Strategically located about 130 km from the Pakistan border, Deesa air base plugs a critical gap in India's western air defence grid. Once operational, it will bolster security over Kutch and act as a protective shield for critical assets.

New Delhi.(Agency) During his visit to Gujarat on Tuesday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi spotlighted the strategic importance of the Deesa air base, inaugurated in October 2022.

PM Modi said the project had been stuck in bureaucratic limbo for years despite its national security importance. He suggested earlier governments had ignored the need, adding that once in office, his government cleared the files and pushed the project to completion.

WHY DEESA MATTERS ON THE WESTERN FRONT

Deesa's importance isn't new. The need for an air base here was identified decades ago, but it never took off. Strategically located about 130 km from the Pakistan border, Deesa plugs a critical gap in India's western air defence grid.

Naliya and Bhuj. Defence Ministry sources say the gap had long been a concern. Deesa, they note, is being developed to serve as a key



operational base for the Indian Air Force. Since its inauguration, work to operationalise the base has gathered pace. It is expected to function as a Forward Base Support Unit (FBSU), hosting radars, helicopters and surveillance assets, while

also supporting fighter operations as needed. Once fully ready, Deesa will bolster security over Kutch and act as a protective shield for critical assets like the Jamnagar refinery.

CLOSING THE GAP, BOOSTING STRIKE CAPABILITY

The base also sharpens India's offensive edge. Deesa helps bridge the gap between forward bases at Naliya and Bhuj in Gujarat and Phalodi in Rajasthan. It gives the IAF faster response times and deeper strike reach.

From here, Indian fighter jets can quickly access key Pakistani cities such as Hyderabad, Karachi and Sukkur if required.

Located in Banaskantha district, Deesa is emerging as a key military hub, enabling rapid deployment along the western front. At high speeds, fighter aircraft can cross the border within minutes if needed.

Front continued news

984 Widows Still in Distress, Questions Raised Over Role of High-Profile Sikh Advocate Decades After the Tragedy, Justice Remains Elusive for Thousands of Victims

However, questions are now being raised: In which courts did he actually represent the victims? How many cases did he personally file or argue? Why is there no clear record of petitions filed by him on behalf of widows? According to available information, there is no verifiable evidence that he filed or argued individual cases for widows in courts. Another major point of concern is the dramatic rise in the advocate's financial status. From living in a modest rented room, he is today alleged to be the owner of assets worth hundreds of crores. Reports suggest ownership of luxurious properties in Delhi's elite Defence Colony and possession of multiple high-end vehicles.

This stark contrast between the suffering of widows and the alleged prosperity of someone associated with their cause has intensified public scrutiny. The advocate's political journey has also drawn attention. He reportedly joined the Aam Aadmi Party in 2014 and later became Leader of Opposition in the Punjab Assembly. Recently, he has joined the Bharatiya Janata Party.

This shift has further fueled debate within sections of the Sikh community regarding his intentions and role over the years.

Serious demands are now being raised for a high-level probe into:

The source of the advocate's wealth
The authenticity and handling of affidavits submitted to the Commission

The extent of his legal involvement in 1984-related cases

Possible misrepresentation of his role before victims and institutions

There are also calls for the Enforcement Directorate to act on complaints reportedly filed as far back as 2018 with top authorities, including the Prime Minister's Office and the Home Ministry.

At the heart of this issue lies a deeper concern: justice for thousands of widows who continue to live in poverty and despair.

Even today, many survivors feel they have been left behind—denied both justice and rehabilitation—while individuals associated with their cause may have moved ahead.

The contrast is stark and troubling: on one side, elderly widows living in distress, and on the other, allegations of immense wealth and influence surrounding a figure once seen as their representative.

As the nation reflects on the legacy of the 1984 tragedy, the demand is clear—truth, accountability, and justice must not be delayed any further.

Centre clears Rs 1.1k crore 4-lane Rishikesh bypass to ease Char Dham, weekend traffic

NOIDA.(Agency)

In a relief for residents and tourists who routinely face long traffic snarls in Rishikesh during long weekends and Char Dham yatra, the Union ministry of road transport and highways has approved a four-lane bypass project for the town at a cost of Rs 1,105 crore. The ministry has granted technical, administrative and financial approval for the project, which will be built on NH-7 from Tinpani flyover at km 529.750 to Kharasote bridge at km 542.5. The proposed bypass, about 12.7km long, will pass through Bhattowala and Dhalwala villages and will be executed in EPC mode.

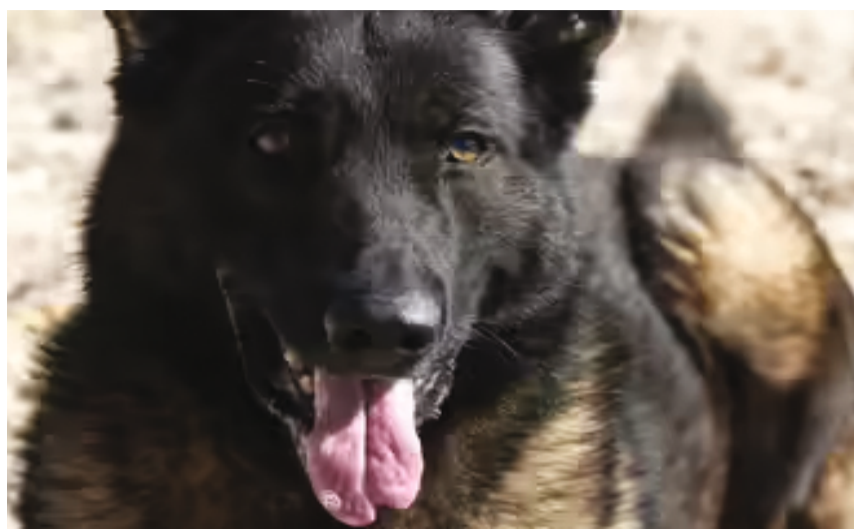


Rishikesh sees heavy traffic through much of the year, with visitors arriving for yoga, river-based and adventure activities, and large numbers of pilgrims and tourists passing through the town on their way to Garhwal districts and the Char Dham shrines. The resulting congestion often delays journeys by hours, especially during peak travel periods.

According to the ministry, the project was first estimated at Rs 1,151.2 crore, then revised to Rs 1,139.4 crore, before final approval was granted for Rs 1,105.8 crore. The bypass is to be completed within three years, and the approval makes clear that no cost or time overrun will be accepted. Tenders will be invited through the e-tendering process, and the work will be carried out under prescribed guidelines. The expenditure will be met under Govt of India's budget provision for the financial year 2025-26. The regional officer based in Dehradun has been designated as the drawing and disbursing officer for the project.

Chief minister Pushkar Singh Dhami said the state was continuing to strengthen road connectivity. "Upon completion of the Rishikesh Bypass project, traffic pressure in the area will reduce, there will be relief from the problem of traffic jams.

Couple asks for dog to be muzzled, assaulted in Noida



NOIDA.(Agency)
A couple was allegedly assaulted by four men following an argument over walking a dog unleashed in Jaypee Greens Kosmos in Sector 134 on Monday evening. Two of the accused were arrested, while police are scanning CCTV footage from the society to ascertain the chain of events.

According to police, the couple was sitting in a park within the society around 8pm when another resident was walking a pet German Shepherd that was allegedly not on a leash or muzzle. As the dog approached the couple, they allegedly asked the owner to follow safety norms and put the dog on a leash. The owner, however, took offence and allegedly began arguing with the couple, using abusive language. The situation escalated when he called three friends to the spot, after which the four allegedly assaulted the couple. The couple claimed

they were kicked and punched in front of other residents. The woman alleged that the accused shoved and tried to molest her during the assault.

They submitted a complaint at Expressway police station, and an FIR was subsequently lodged under BNS sections 74 (assault or criminal force on a woman

with intent to outrage her modesty), 115(2) (voluntarily causing hurt) and 352 (intentional insult). Two of the accused were taken into preventive custody.

A senior police official said statements of witnesses were being recorded and CCTV footage from the society was being examined to establish the sequence of events. The allegations under BNS Section 74 are being probed, police said. Noida Authority's pet policy requires owners to put animals on a leash in common areas.

As per the Animal Welfare Board of India guidelines, pet dogs should, as far as possible, use the service lift of the society for movement. The owner must ensure careful handling of the dog in the lift, preferably using a muzzle where necessary, so that no risk is posed to other people or animals. If a pet dog defecates in a public place, it is the responsibility of the owner to clean it up.

Circle rates set for major revision in Gurgaon, increase up to 75%; flat 10% hike for housing societies

Gurgaon.(Agency)

Property circle rates in the city are set to rise sharply, with the district administration preparing to roll out a revised structure that proposes hikes ranging from 10% to 75% from next week. A uniform 10% rise has been proposed for group housing societies, commercial retail spaces and IT parks. An official said the revision is intended to bring circle rates closer to prevailing market prices, which have climbed across several localities over the past year. The revised rates were proposed after analysing property registrations carried out in different areas during the last 12 months. Explaining the move, the official said the increase is aimed at narrowing the gap between market values and official circle rates, while ensuring greater transparency and more realistic property valuations during registration. The revised rates are expected to come into effect next week after final approvals. The administration said the move will rationalise property valuations and help curb undervaluation in transactions. In

Old Gurgaon, Sector 15 is likely to see a 60% increase, with the circle rate rising from Rs 93,500 per square yard to Rs 1.5 lakh per square yard. Sector 5 is expected



to record a 45% increase, from Rs 66,360 per square yard to Rs 96,222 per square yard. Private developer colonies are also set for higher circle rates. In Vipul World and Vatika City, the rate is proposed to rise 25%, from Rs 90,000 per square yard to Rs 1.12 lakh. In Tatvam Villa, it is expected to increase 45%, from Rs 88,000 per square yard to Rs 1.3 lakh. Several other colonies are also likely to witness hikes ranging from 25% to 60%. Sectors 38, 41, 48, 49, 33, 47, and 62 to 78 are expected to

witness increases of 30% to 45%. DLF phases 1 to 5 and South City 1 and 2 are likely to see a flat 45% rise in circle rates. Developers said the proposed revision reflects current market conditions. Rajan Yadav, director, Roots Developers, said, "The proposed circle rate revision is a timely step toward aligning official valuations with market realities. It will enhance transparency, help streamline transactions, reduce speculative practices and create a more balanced and credible ecosystem for both developers and homebuyers." Robin Mangla, president, M3M India, said the move is necessary to bring notified values closer to actual market levels. "This calibration will eventually contribute towards fortifying the market with transparency, while also reducing the scope of undervalued registrations. Buyers and investors would do well to factor in these revised rates into their transaction planning. Since the fundamentals driving demand in Gurgaon remain robust, the market is capable of absorbing these adjustments steadily.

Govt adds 39 new classrooms to Noida schools as new academic year begins

Noida.(Agency)

Govt schools across the city will begin the new academic session on Wednesday with upgraded infrastructure, as authorities have rolled out Rs 7 crore in improvements following reports of students sitting on the floor due to space crunch and multiple classes being conducted in a single room. At least 39 new classrooms have been built across 35 schools in four blocks of the city to accommodate more students because of rising enrolment. Officials said each grade will now have a dedicated teaching space, reducing overcrowding and improving learning conditions. Education department officials said the new rooms will support smart classrooms, ICT labs and other technology-enabled learning initiatives planned for the new session.



Some of the spaces will be used for digital learning modules. "Due to the continuous increase in enrolment, many schools were running two classes in one room, which affected teaching. The new classrooms will allow proper scheduling and better learning outcomes," Rahul Panwar, basic education officer, Noida, said. Textbooks for the upcoming session have been distributed. A govt school teacher said, "It

is good that books are being given in advance this year. Otherwise, every year, students face academic loss in the first few weeks while waiting for textbooks." Officials said schools are also being equipped with furniture, teaching aids and ICT infrastructure as part of efforts to develop model govt schools and improve academic standards. There has been a steady rise in admissions, particularly in blocks such as Bisrah and Dadri, where thousands of new students have enrolled in recent sessions. The officials added that proposals have also been sent to repair or rebuild ageing school buildings in the upcoming financial year, with further infrastructure work expected once the funds are approved. Dilapidated buildings in certain schools have been vacated.

Escape from Iran: How 8 Indians survived captivity & war to return home

NOIDA.(Agency)

The night sky over Bandar Abbas lit up without a warning — streaks of fire cutting through the darkness, followed by thunderous explosions that shook walls and nerves alike. Inside a near-empty hotel, eight Indian sailors stood frozen, watching missiles slam into an Iranian naval base barely 800 metres away.

Just days earlier, they had been freed after months in captivity in their vessel. Now, they were trapped again — this time in the middle of a war. Their journey home had only just begun.

It was on Dec 8 that their ordeal began, when MT Valiant Roar, carrying 18 crew members — 16 Indians, one Sri Lankan and one Bangladeshi — was intercepted in international waters while heading to Khor Fakkan in the UAE. Armed Iranian personnel boarded the vessel after heavy firing, detaining the crew on suspicion of smuggling oil despite valid documentation. Among those on board were captain Vijay Kumar (45) from Meerut, and third

engineer Ketan Mehta (27), whose parents live in Ghaziabad.

"Our ship was moving at barely two to three knots when the Iranian Navy began firing at us. They fired at least 500 rounds before boarding the vessel," Kumar, now back with his family, said. Minutes earlier, he had sent a voice note to his cousin, also a merchant navy officer, saying they were being chased and could be captured by the Iranian Navy soon. Some of the sailors were moved to a prison in Bandar Abbas, while others were kept confined aboard the ship. Communication was scarce, and movements restricted. "We were treated like hostages without any explanation whatsoever. Even basic movement needed permission," Kumar told TOI.

After weeks of diplomatic intervention, the crew began to be released in phases through Feb. By Feb 27, all 18 had officially been freed. They were preparing to leave the country the next day.

Then, the war broke out.

The sailors — some moved to a hotel by Indian embassy officials, others still stuck on the vessel — suddenly found themselves in a live conflict zone. The ship, docked beside Iranian naval assets, became a potential target. "It was a complete war zone. Even after the release order, we couldn't leave the vessel. There was no way to reach us," Kumar recalled. On March 3, help arrived in an unexpected form. An Iranian man lent a boat, allowing officials to evacuate those stranded on Valiant Roar. The group reunited at the same hotel in Bandar Abbas where the other sailors had been kept. But safety remained elusive. Within a day, the war had come to their doorstep. "Just a day after we had checked in, we saw a missile strike the naval base at Bandar Abbas. Everything turned to ashes in front of us. The visuals were traumatising," Mehta said. Each day brought more strikes. The walls shook. The men would run down from the sixth floor to the lobby, fearing the next missile might hit the hotel. "Apart from the staff,

there was nobody else there. There were attacks every day. Whenever it started, we would run downstairs. Some would lie flat, others would break down. We didn't know if the next one would hit us," Mehta said. Sleep was rare. "There were no sirens, no clear warnings, only sudden explosions. The locals seemed used to it. But for us, every moment felt uncertain," Kumar recalled. Cut off and with limited phone access, the sailors rationed communication with their families. "We had just one phone with us, that too with minimal balance. So, one of us would make a call to our family, and ask them to pass on the message to others that we were still in the hotel and safe," Kumar said. The sailors followed fragmented news on Iranian TV channels, trying to make sense of the conflict in local language. Days stretched on, but there was no clear exit. Kumar said the embassy initially asked them to wait about 10 days in the hope the fighting would ease. It did not.

By March 20, the embassy had come out with an advice. With no safe house available and no certainty that the hotel would remain untouched.

THE SIKH TIMES

Edited, Printed, Published
Owned by Simmi Babbar
N-31, Dr. Mukherjee Nagar
Delhi-110009
Printed at Qaumi Patrika Printing
Press, A-4/A-144, Tronica City
(Loni), Ghaziabad (Uttar Pradesh)
Corporate Office:
5, Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg,
Press Area, TITO, New Delhi
Editor-in-Chief
Gurcharan Singh Babbar
Mob : 9654077232, 9971359517
Website : www.thesikhimes.in
Email : sikhimesindia@gmail.com

RNI No. DELENG/2008/25465

Previous Congress regime neglected rural development in Punjab: CM Mann

Contd.....Front page

He added, "The Punjab government has increased income from leasing Shamlat Land in the villages. Illegal encroachments on Panchayat lands were removed thereby increasing the revenue of the state. Over four years the state government has generated ₹1,842.78 crore by leasing Shamlat land," CM Bhagwant Singh Mann noted, "In 2025-26, revenue increased by ₹50.75 crore as compared to the previous year. Around 1.35 lakh acres were given on lease which generated ₹520.54 crore, as compared to ₹469.79 crore in 2024-25." CM Bhagwant Singh Mann stated, "In order to channelize the unbounded energy of the youth in a positive direction around 3,000 rural playgrounds are being developed and ₹1,166 crore is being spent on it. These grounds will be spread over 6,500 acres for which 3,148 locations have been identified." He stated, "Work has already started on 2,400 grounds and most of them will be completed by June this year with facilities like vol-

leyball courts, football fields, children's play equipment, and seating arrangements." He stated, "For the first time in the history of the state construction of Panchayat Buildings has been undertaken. 500 modern Panchayat buildings are being constructed in the second phase with a ₹125 crore budget." CM Bhagwant Singh Mann said, "₹25 lakh has been allocated per building and 373 buildings have been already completed in the first phase." CM Bhagwant Singh Mann said, "The Punjab government has also started the process to construct 251 libraries in the villages out of which 231 have been already completed. The aim is to connect villagers with literature and help youth prepare for competitive exams." CM Bhagwant Singh Mann said, "Talking about the MGNREGA Scheme, from 2017-2022, only ₹4,708 crore was spent whereas from 2022 till now, ₹5,146 crore has been spent. 8.96 lakh people have received employment and 2.40 crore man days of employment has

been generated." The Chief Minister noted, "In 2025-26, around 63,357 new job cards were issued, which included 2,480 for persons with disabilities." CM Bhagwant Singh Mann said, "Punjab vehemently opposes the arbitrary and illogical amendments in the MGNREGA scheme. The Punjab Legislative Assembly had opposed changes made by the central government that could reduce rural employment. Such restriction based schemes are unwarranted and undesirable as they pose a serious question mark on the intent of such schemes." CM Bhagwant Singh Mann said, "The Punjab government has taken path breaking initiatives for providing housing facilities for rural families. This year approval was granted for 76,000 houses, including 30,000 flood-affected families." CM Bhagwant Singh Mann said, "From 2016-2022, only 39,000 houses were built in the state whereas this year the state government has set a target to construct one lakh houses for the poor strata of society." He stat-

ed, "The Punjab government has embarked a major scheme for cleaning of 17,080 village ponds. 13,414 ponds have been de-watered and desilting has been completed in 4,706 ponds for which ₹235 crore is being spent." CM Bhagwant Singh Mann said, "The Caste and Socio-Economic Survey is being conducted for the first time in Punjab's history. The aim is to assess living standards of all castes and sub-castes to frame policies for their well being accordingly. A budget of ₹250 crore has been kept for this purpose in which 28,000 enumerators will be deployed and each will receive ₹62,500 honorarium." He stated, "In the war against drugs the entire villages of the state have extended their support in this crusade. I profusely thank the Panchayats and volunteers for actively supporting anti-drug efforts as already 1.25 lakh members have joined the campaign." CM Bhagwant Singh Mann said, "12,000 Village Defence Committees have been formed and the volunteers are acting as 'village guardians'. Many

drug traffickers are arrested based on their inputs." The Chief Minister asserted, "Under Punjab State Rural Livelihood Mission 100 top women entrepreneurs from 23 districts have been awarded ₹25,000 each along with certificates and mementos." He said, "11,700 women have been honored across 117 constituencies and 2,300 women have been felicitated at district-level events. Under the mission, 58,303 Self-Help Groups have been formed and 5.89 lakh families have been connected, with ₹147 crore financial support provided to them." The Chief Minister noted, "As a part of Women Empowerment Initiatives a new scheme has been launched to connect women with dairy farming. Under the scheme 1,100 milk cooperative societies have been registered and ₹18 crore interest-free loans have been provided to women." CM Bhagwant Singh Mann said, "These societies are supplying 1 lakh litres of milk daily to Milkfed. Sakhi Shakti Melas were organized

across Punjab in which more than 1,500 women participated and products worth ₹9 crore produced by them were sold." He said, "For the first time in history state blocks were reorganized as per Assembly constituencies to improve coordination. Village Development Officers and Panchayat Secretaries have been merged into state cadre. State cadres for 3,327 Panchayat Development Secretaries have been created in the state to improve efficiency." Replying to a query, CM Bhagwant Singh Mann said, "The Union government is meeting out step motherly treatment with Punjab. Grants under RDF, GST, NHM and others for the state have been unduly stopped by the centre as they are envious of the state. The sole reason is that Punjab does not vote for BJP due to which the Union government indulges in this grave injustice with Punjab." The Chief Minister stated, "The Disaster Management Fund allotted by the centre is too meager and needs to be revised in the larger

interest of the masses. The state will oppose this discrimination tooth and nail and no stone will be left unturned for getting the legitimate share of the state. This issue will be taken both legally and administratively at every platform." Replying to another query, CM Bhagwant Singh Mann said, "It is surprising that Punjab Congress leaders are maintaining stoic silence over the imposition of entry tax by the Himachal government led by their party, which concerns a large section of Punjabis." CM Bhagwant Singh Mann said, "On one hand the state government is abolishing the toll tax and giving reprieve to the common man whereas on the other hand these people are levying undue taxes on people." CM Bhagwant Singh Mann said, "The state government is committed to smooth and hassle free procurement and lifting of the wheat crop and elaborate arrangements have already been made. Any arm twisting or blackmailing tactics aimed at jeopardizing the

smooth procurement will not be tolerated and exemplary action will be taken against such forces." CM Bhagwant Singh Mann said, "For the first time in the history of Punjab an intelligent and smart government is functioning unlike the earlier ones which looted the people." He said, "The Punjab government is exploring the feasibility of putting high tension wires passing through farmers' land underground and the strategy is being chalked out. This will be a reprieve to the farmers as these wires pose a huge risk to them and their crops." On the occasion, Rural Development and Panchayat Minister Tarunpreet Singh Sond and others were also present.

NAME CHANGE
I Harinder Kumar Mehta S/o Dhulu Ram Mehta R/o flat no 1501, Tower 4, Takshila Heights, Sector 37 C, Gurugram, Haryana - 122001 have changed my name to Harinder Mehta

NAME CHANGE
I Anju Tomar W/o David, House No. E-81 Second Floor, BPSGMC, Residential Campus, Khanpur Kalan (56), Sonapat, Haryana, 131305 have changed my name to Anju Raj for all future purposes.

NAME CHANGE
I Anjana Kumari W/O Ganesh Kumar R/O House no -44, Salapur khera bijwasan, South West delhi, delhi-110061 I have changed my name to Anjana Singh

NAME CHANGE
I Sharad Maheshwary S/O Rajendra Kumar Maheshwary R/O K4/27 UG/F Gali No 26 West Ghonda Bhajanpura North East Delhi 110053 Delhi have changed my name to Sharad Maheshwari for all future purposes.

NAME CHANGE
I kala vati W/O Rama Shankar Singh R/O House no -44/4 G-4/5 Salapur khera bijwasan, South West delhi, delhi-110061 I have changed my name to Kalawati devi.

Court pulls up CBI for using 'South Group' tag

New Delhi: A Delhi court on Friday censured the Central Bureau of Investigation for repeatedly using the term "South Group" to describe certain accused in the excise policy case, calling the label arbitrary, legally unsustainable and capable of causing prejudice. The court, in the same order, discharged all accused, including former chief minister Arvind Kejriwal, former deputy chief minister Manish Sisodia and Telangana Jagruthi president K Kavitha. The prosecution's case was that the AAP government manipulated the 2021-22 excise policy to enable cartelisation and favour a lobby of liquor businessmen described as the "South Group". The court, however, found this terminology itself to be deeply problematic. In a strongly worded section of the judgment, Special Judge

Jitendra Singh of the Rouse Avenue Court said the expression had no



foundation in law and did not correspond to any legally cognisable classification under criminal jurisprudence. It termed the label wholly alien to the statutory framework governing criminal liability. The court questioned the selective nature of the description, noting that no similar term such as "North Group" had been used for other accused. "It is equally significant that no comparable regional

descriptor has been employed for the remaining accused persons; this

prosecution narrative does not speak of any 'North Group' or similar categorisation. The selective adoption of a geographically defined label is, therefore, plainly arbitrary and unwarranted," the court said. Clarifying that the issue went beyond mere semantics, the court warned that such region-based labelling carries an undertone capable of shaping perception and creating bias. "It detracts

from the settled requirement that criminal proceedings must remain dispassionate, evidence-centric and insulated from extraneous considerations. In a constitutional order founded upon equality before law and the unity and integrity of the nation, descriptors rooted in regional identity serve no legitimate investigative or prosecutorial purpose and are manifestly inappropriate," the judge observed. The court noted that the term had been used repeatedly across charge sheets, compelling it to refer to the expression in the judgment. It clarified, however, that such reference must not

NAME CHANGE
I. ALKA RAY Wife of JC-672510P Rank-SUB MAJ Name-SATYA JEET RAY Presently residing at VILL-JUDAIPUR, PO-JUDAIPUR, TEHLALGAN AGHARA, DIST-PRATAPGARH, UTTAR PRADESH-230125, have changed my name from ALKA RAY to ALKA SHRIVASTAVA for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 01/04/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE
I. VARSHA W/o Ranju Kumar R/o 1/10369, Gali No.1, Opp. Ganesh Dairy, West Gorakhpur, Shahdara, Delhi-110032, have changed my name from VARSHA SOOD to VARSHA for all future purposes.

NAME CHANGE
I. MANISH KUMAR S/O Ram Avtar R/O K/20, Phase-2, Sector-6, RBI Colony, R.K. Puram, Delhi-110022, have changed my name to MANISH permanently.

NAME CHANGE
I. DEEPAK S/O Daya Ram R/O B-37A, Shivangi Kunj, Opposite BG-1, Paschim Vihar, Delhi-110063, have changed my name to DEEPAK KHAZOTIA permanently.

NAME CHANGE
I. Rukhya Shekh W/o Musa Shekh R/O 324-A, First Floor, Hari Nagar, Ashram, PO Jungpura, Distt. South Delhi, Delhi-110014 declare that the real and correct name of my father is Romjan Mandal and my correct date of birth is 01.01.1973.

NAME CHANGE
I. NO-6503580Y, Rank-SEP/ASH, Name- ANJU KUMAR AWASTHI residing at VILL-BAKEWAR, PO-BAKEWAR, TEH-BINDKI, DIST-FATEHPUR, UTTAR PRADESH-212657 have changed my father's name from SURESH KUMAR AWASTHI to SURESH AWASTHI for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 01/04/2026 before Notary Public Delhi.

NAME CHANGE
I. Anil Kumar Pihal S/O Om Prakash R/O R-261 The Ultima DLF Garden City Sector-81 Gurgaon 122004 I have Changed My Name To Anil Kumar

NAME CHANGE
I Dinesh Kumar S/O Raghuvhar Dyal R/O E-135, THIRD FLOOR, NARAINA VIHAR, NARAINA, Naraina Village, PO:Naraina Industrial Estate, DIST:South West Delhi, Delhi, 110028 have changed my name to Dinesh Kumar Agarwal for all future purposes.

be read as approval of the terminology. "The continued use of this label, despite the absence of any legally sustainable basis, carries a real risk of colouring perception, causing unintended prejudice and diverting focus from the evidentiary material, which alone must guide adjudication," the court underscored. Drawing from comparative jurisprudence, the court cited United States v. Cabrera to emphasise that identity-based labelling can strike at the root of a fair trial, noting

PUBLIC NOTICE
BE IT KNOWN TO PUBLIC IN GENERAL: my client Sh. Babu Ram S/o Sh. Ram Singh R/o House No. 481, Pana Udyan, Naraina, North West Delhi, Delhi-110040, have severed his all relation to his son Amit Kumar and Daughter-in-law Ms. Soniya and have disowned them from all his movable and immovable properties because of their disobedience. My client will not be responsible for any act done by them in any manner.

Harish Chaudhary(Advocate)
OFFICE: CH NO. 931, ROHINI COURT COMPLEX, FLOOR, ROHINI DISTRICT COURT, NEW DELHI.

NAME CHANGE
I. NO-14939453N Rank-NK Name-RAJU YADAV residing at VILL-DHAVA BANGRA, PO-SHAKTI BHAIRON, TEHSIL-NIWARI, DIST-NIWARI, MADHYA PRADESH-472446, have changed my minor son's name from ABHAY SINGH to ABHAY YADAV for all future purposes vide affidavit dated 01/04/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

Public Notice
I. Rukhya Shekh W/o Musa Shekh R/O 324-A, First Floor, Hari Nagar, Ashram, PO Jungpura, Distt. South Delhi, Delhi-110014 declare that the real and correct name of my father is Romjan Mandal and my correct date of birth is 01.01.1973.

NAME CHANGE
I. NO-6503580Y, Rank-SEP/ASH, Name- ANJU KUMAR AWASTHI residing at VILL-BAKEWAR, PO-BAKEWAR, TEH-BINDKI, DIST-FATEHPUR, UTTAR PRADESH-212657 have changed my father's name from SURESH KUMAR AWASTHI to SURESH AWASTHI for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 01/04/2026 before Notary Public Delhi.

NAME CHANGE
I. Rukhya Shekh W/o Musa Shekh R/O 324-A, First Floor, Hari Nagar, Ashram, PO Jungpura, Distt. South Delhi, Delhi-110014 declare that the real and correct name of my father is Romjan Mandal and my correct date of birth is 01.01.1973.

NAME CHANGE
I. SAMSHER SACHDEVIA S/O RAJ KUMAR, residing E-35, GANESH NAGAR, PANDAV NAGAR COMPLEX DELHI 110092, have changed my name to SHAMSHER SACHDEVIA for all future purpose.

NAME CHANGE
I. SUTOPA GHOSH, wife of JC-673795Y Rank-SUB/PA Name- SAMIRAN GHOSH presently residing at TANTRALA (PATAL PUKUR PAR), NISHANTARA, PO-KATWA, PS-KATWA, DISTT- PURBA BARDHAMAN, WEST BENGAL-713130, have changed my name from SUTOPA GHOSH to SUTAPA GHOSH for all future purposes, vide Affidavit dated 01/04/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

that even convictions have been set aside where such terminology was improperly used. The court cautioned the CBI to exercise restraint in drafting charge sheets and investigative narratives. It stressed that descriptions of accused persons must remain neutral and evidence-based, free from language carrying stig-

NAME CHANGE
I. OVAISE KARNI LONE S/o Mohammad Maqbool Lone R/o House No.F-28, 4th Floor, F-Block, Crips Hospital, Shaheen Bagh, Abul Fazal Enclave-1, Delhi-110025 have changed my name to OVAISE KARNI.

NAME CHANGE
I. KOUSAR YOUSUF W/O OVAISE KARNI R/o House No.F-28, 4th Floor, F-Block, Crips Hospital, Shaheen Bagh, Abul Fazal Enclave-1, Delhi-110025 have changed my name to QUASER YOUSUF.

NAME CHANGE
I. KRISHNA KUMARI PANDEY W/O HARISH KUMAR PANDEY R/O 16/391 First Floor, Block - 16, Kalyanpur, PO : Patparganj, Dist : East Delhi, Delhi - 110091 have changed the name of my minor son MAYANK PANDEY aged 14 years and he shall hereafter be known as LAKSHAY PANDEY.

NAME CHANGE
I. SATYENDRA KUMAR S/O PADAM SINGH R/O FLAT NO-104, GROUND FLOOR, PLOT NO-546, NITI KHAND-1, INDIRAPURAM, GHAZIABAD, UTTAR PRADESH-201014, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO SATYENDRA FOR ALL FUTURE PURPOSES

NAME CHANGE
I. JYOTI YADAV W/O DEEPAK YADAV R/O POST-KHAIRA, KHARKHARI NAHAR, SOUTH WEST DELHI, DELHI-110043, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO JYOTI FOR ALL FUTURE PURPOSE.

NAME CHANGE
I. hitherto known as PAWAN KUMAR S/O LACHU RAM R/O 34, SARPANCH GALI NO-3, CHILLA VILLAGE, MAYUR VIHAR PHASE-1, EAST DELHI, DELHI-110091 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as PAWAN CHAUDHARY.

NAME CHANGE
I. SHOBHA GHOSH, mother of JC-673795Y Rank-SUB/PA Name - SAMIRAN GHOSH presently residing at VILL-KHENAI BANDA, PO-KULAI, PS-KETUGRAM, DISTT- PURBA BARDHAMAN, WEST BENGAL-713143, have changed my name from SHOBHA GHOSH to SHOBHARANI GHOSH for all future purposes, vide Affidavit dated 01/04/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE
I. JINAT KHAN W/O AKIL KHAN R/O BB-105, BAGRINA BASTI NABI KARIM SWAMI RAM TIRTH NAGAR NEW DELHI 110055, CHANGED MY NAME TO ZEENAT KHAN

NAME CHANGE
I. PRAMOD GUPTA S/O OM PRAKASH GUPTA R/O HNO-B-3/11 STREET NO 5 B BLOCK BHAIJI PURA DELHI 110053, CHANGED MY NAME TO PARMOD KUMAR GUPTA.

NAME CHANGE
I. hitherto known as LAVKESH KUMAR JANMEDA S/O BIJENDRA KUMAR JANMEDA R/O House No - 693, Village - Chaurauli, Jewar, Gautam Buddha Nagar, Jewar, Uttar Pradesh - 203135 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as LAVKESH KUMARA.

NAME CHANGE
I. KRISHNA KUMARI PANDEY W/O HARISH KUMAR PANDEY R/O 16/391 First Floor, Block - 16, Kalyanpur, PO : Patparganj, Dist : East Delhi, Delhi - 110091 have changed the name of my minor son MAYANK PANDEY aged 14 years and he shall hereafter be known as LAKSHAY PANDEY.

NAME CHANGE
I. SIDDHI D/O VIVEK SINGH RESIDING PLOT NO-07, BABA HARIDAS ENCLAVE, GEETANALI ENCLAVE, JHARODA KALAN, DELHI-110072, have changed my name to SIDDHI SINGH for all future purpose.

NAME CHANGE
I. SHIKTA SIKKA W/O GAURAV SIKKA residing at 28 KALYAN VIHAR 1ST FLOOR NEAR SHANI MANDIR, G T B NAGAR, DELHI-110009 have changed my name to SHEETAL SIKKA for all future purpose.

NAME CHANGE
I. JYOTI MEHTA W/O JOGINDER NATH R/O B-24/599, GALI NO-2, GANESH NAGAR-2, SHAKARPUR, DELHI-110092, have changed my name to JOGINDER NATH for all future purpose.

NAME CHANGE
I. JOGINDER NATH MEHTA S/O ANANT RAM R/O B-24/599, GALI NO-2, GANESH NAGAR-2, SHAKARPUR, DELHI-110092, have changed my name to JOGINDER NATH for all future purpose.

NAME CHANGE
I. No-14839160N Rank-HAV Name-DURGAPRASADU ADHIKARI R/O VILL-SIVINI, PO-VIKRAMPURAM, TEH-KOMARADA, DIST-VIZIANAGARAM, ANDHRA PRADESH-535501, have changed my mother's name from SARASWATI to ADHIKARI SARASWATHI for all future purpose vide Affidavit dated 01/04/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE
I. No-14839160N Rank-HAV Name-DURGAPRASADU ADHIKARI R/O VILL-SIVINI, PO-VIKRAMPURAM, TEH-KOMARADA, DIST-VIZIANAGARAM, ANDHRA PRADESH-535501, have changed my father's name from SIMHACHALAM NAIDU to ADHIKARI SIMHACHALAM NAIDU for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 01/04/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE
I. No-14870150L Rank-SEP Name-NIRANJAN PRADHAN R/O VILL-HARIPUR, PO-DIMISAR, TEH-ODAGAON, DIST-NAYAGARH, ODISHA-752092, have changed my father's name from MADHAVA PRADHAN to MADHAB PRADHAN for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 01/04/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE
I. No-14870150L Rank-SEP Name-NIRANJAN PRADHAN R/O VILL-HARIPUR, PO-DIMISAR, TEH-ODAGAON, DIST-NAYAGARH, ODISHA-752092, have changed my father's name from MADHAVA PRADHAN to MADHAB PRADHAN for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 01/04/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE
I. MOHD SALMAN SON OF MR. SARFUDDIN RESIDENT OF E-212/6, SHAHEEN BAGH, ABUL FAZAL ENCLAVE PART-II, JAMIA NAGAR, OKHLA, NEW DELHI-110025 have changed my father's name from MOHD SHARFUDDIN to SARFUDDIN for all future purposes.

NAME CHANGE
I. MONIKA D/O ARJUN SINGH RESIDING KHA-115/9, BABA HARIDAS GITANALI ENCLAVE, NAJAFGARH, JHARODA KALAN, DELHI-110072, have changed my name to MONIKA KUMARI for all future purpose.

NAME CHANGE
I. SIDDHI D/O VIVEK SINGH RESIDING PLOT NO-07, BABA HARIDAS ENCLAVE, GEETANALI ENCLAVE, JHARODA KALAN, DELHI-110072, have changed my name to SIDDHI SINGH for all future purpose.

NAME CHANGE
I. SHIKTA SIKKA W/O GAURAV SIKKA residing at 28 KALYAN VIHAR 1ST FLOOR NEAR SHANI MANDIR, G T B NAGAR, DELHI-110009 have changed my name to SHEETAL SIKKA for all future purpose.

NAME CHANGE
I. JYOTI MEHTA W/O JOGINDER NATH R/O B-24/599, GALI NO-2, GANESH NAGAR-2, SHAKARPUR, DELHI-110092, have changed my name to JOGINDER NATH for all future purpose.

NAME CHANGE
I. JOGINDER NATH MEHTA S/O ANANT RAM R/O B-24/599, GALI NO-2, GANESH NAGAR-2, SHAKARPUR, DELHI-110092, have changed my name to JOGINDER NATH for all future purpose.

NAME CHANGE
I. No-14839160N Rank-HAV Name-DURGAPRASADU ADHIKARI R/O VILL-SIVINI, PO-VIKRAMPURAM, TEH-KOMARADA, DIST-VIZIANAGARAM, ANDHRA PRADESH-535501, have changed my mother's name from SARASWATI to ADHIKARI SARASWATHI for all future purpose vide Affidavit dated 01/04/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE
I. No-14839160N Rank-HAV Name-DURGAPRASADU ADHIKARI R/O VILL-SIVINI, PO-VIKRAMPURAM, TEH-KOMARADA, DIST-VIZIANAGARAM, ANDHRA PRADESH-535501, have changed my father's name from SIMHACHALAM NAIDU to ADHIKARI SIMHACHALAM NAIDU for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 01/04/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE
I. No-14870150L Rank-SEP Name-NIRANJAN PRADHAN R/O VILL-HARIPUR, PO-DIMISAR, TEH-ODAGAON, DIST-NAYAGARH, ODISHA-752092, have changed my father's name from MADHAVA PRADHAN to MADHAB PRADHAN for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 01/04/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE
I. No-14870150L Rank-SEP Name-NIRANJAN PRADHAN R/O VILL-HARIPUR, PO-DIMISAR, TEH-ODAGAON, DIST-NAYAGARH, ODISHA-752092, have changed my father's name from MADHAVA PRADHAN to MADHAB PRADHAN for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 01/04/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

MHA amends rules to hire ex-Agniveers as constables

New Delhi: In a move that directly impacts thousands of young job aspirants, the Ministry of Home Affairs has notified revised recruitment rules for the post of Constable (Executive) (Male) in Delhi Police. The new rules aim to streamline the recruitment process and make eligibility conditions clearer for candidates preparing for government jobs. The amendment primarily opens the doors for recruitment of ex-Agniveers as Delhi police constables. Under the updated rules, recruitment to the post will continue to be conducted through 100% direct recruitment, offering a major opportunity for youth across the country. The age limit for applicants in general has been fixed at 18 to 25 years, with relaxations for reserved categories, ex-servicemen, and special groups as per existing government norms. Rs 1,000 fine for dog owner if pet found without leash on street under proposed DMC Act revision! Notably, ex-Agniveers will get age relaxation of up to

3 years, and up to 5 years for the first batch, making the scheme more inclusive for defence-trained youth. In terms of educational qualification, candidates must have passed 10+2 (Senior Secondary) from a recognized board. Additionally, a valid driving licence for a motor car or motorcycle is mandatory at the time of the physical test, which is a key requirement for selection. The job comes under Pay Level-3 (₹21,700-69,100), making it an attractive option for young candidates seeking stable government employment. The post is classified as Group 'C', non-gazetted and non-ministerial. Physical standards remain an important part of the selection process. Male candidates must have a minimum height of 170 cm and chest measurement of 81 cm (with 5 cm expansion), with relaxations for certain categories. Medical fitness standards are strict, including good vision and overall physical health. The rules also clearly mention disqualification criteria, including restric-

tions related to marriage under certain conditions, unless exempted by the government. At the same time, provisions for reservation for SC, ST, OBC, EWS and other categories remain unchanged.

NAME CHANGE
I hitherto known as SURILA DEVI D/O JEET RAM W/O SANJEEV KUMAR R/O DG - 26, Block - 13, Kalyanpur Dhovi Ghat, Shamas Pur, East Delhi, Delhi - 110091 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as SUSHILA DEVI.

PUBLIC NOTICE
I hitherto known as Bhagnwati W/O Ashok Kumar R/O VTC: Azmapungah, PO: Geralei Slindrabad, Sub District: Gautam Buddha Nagar, District: Gautam Buddha Nagar, State: Uttar Pradesh, 203202, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as MAGAN DEVI.

NAME CHANGE
I hitherto known as Geeta Devi W/O: Ajab Singh, R/O 43, 1, Jagat Pur ilaga Delhi, PO: Burari, DIST: North Delhi, Delhi - 110084, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Geeta.

Public Notice
I hitherto known as RAJEEV KUMAR BHATNAGAR alias RAJEEV KUMAR son of RAVINDRA NATH BHATNAGAR, residing at A-14, PATEL GARDEN KAKROLA MOR, D.K MOHAN GARDEN WEST DELHI, DELHI-110059, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as RAJEEV KUMAR BHATNAGAR.

NAME CHANGE
I. Anil Kumar Pihal S/O Om Prakash R/O R-261 The Ultima DLF Garden City Sector-81 Gurgaon 122004 I have Changed My Name To Anil Kumar

NAME CHANGE
I Dinesh Kumar S/O Raghuvhar Dyal R/O E-135, THIRD FLOOR, NARAINA VIHAR, NARAINA, Naraina Village, PO:Naraina Industrial Estate, DIST:South West Delhi, Delhi, 110028 have changed my name to Dinesh Kumar Agarwal for all future purposes.

Kite string causes blast-like sound at Metro station

New Delhi: A brief scare gripped commuters at the Jafrabad Metro station on Thursday evening after a blast-like sound was reported on a Metro line heading towards Burari. The authorities later clarified that the incident was caused by a kite-string getting entangled in overhead power cables. The police said they received information about the incident around 6:05 pm, following which CISF personnel and the police rushed to the spot.

tion related to marriage under certain conditions, unless exempted by the government. At the same time, provisions for reservation for SC, ST, OBC, EWS and other categories remain unchanged.

NAME CHANGE
I hitherto known as SURILA DEVI D/O JEET RAM W/O SANJEEV KUMAR R/O DG - 26, Block - 13, Kalyanpur Dhovi Ghat, Shamas Pur, East Delhi, Delhi - 110091 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as SUSHILA DEVI.

PUBLIC NOTICE
I hitherto known as Bhagnwati W/O Ashok Kumar R/O VTC: Azmapungah, PO: Geralei Slindrabad, Sub District: Gautam Buddha Nagar, District: Gautam Buddha Nagar, State: Uttar Pradesh, 203202, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as MAGAN DEVI.

NAME CHANGE
I. VARSHA W/o Ranju Kumar R/o 1/10369, Gali No.1, Opp. Ganesh Dairy, West Gorakhpur, Shahdara, Delhi-110032, have changed my name from VARSHA SOOD to VARSHA for all future purposes.

NAME CHANGE
I. MANISH KUMAR S/O Ram Avtar R/O K/20, Phase-2, Sector-6, RBI Colony, R.K. Puram, Delhi-110022, have changed my name to MANISH permanently.

NAME CHANGE
I. DEEPAK S/O Daya Ram R/O B-37A, Shivangi Kunj, Opposite BG-1, Paschim Vihar, Delhi-110063, have changed my name to DEEPAK KHAZOTIA permanently.

Public Notice
I. Rukhya Shekh W/o Musa Shekh R/O 324-A, First Floor, Hari Nagar, Ashram, PO Jungpura, Distt. South Delhi, Delhi-110014 declare that the real and correct name of my father is Romjan Mandal and my correct date of birth is 01.01.1973.

NAME CHANGE
I. SAMSHER SACHDEVIA S/O RAJ KUMAR, residing E-35, GANESH NAGAR, PANDAV NAGAR COMPLEX DELHI 110092, have changed my name to SHAMSHER SACHDEVIA for all future purpose.

NAME CHANGE
I. SHOBHA GHOSH, mother of JC-673795Y Rank-SUB/PA Name - SAMIRAN GHOSH presently residing at TANTRALA (PATAL PUKUR PAR), NISHANTARA, PO-KATWA, PS-KATWA, DISTT- PURBA BARDHAMAN, WEST BENGAL-713130, have changed my name from SHOBHA GHOSH to SHOBHARANI GHOSH for all future purposes, vide Affidavit dated 01/04/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE
I. SUTOPA GHOSH, wife of JC-673795Y Rank-SUB/PA Name- SAMIRAN GHOSH presently residing at TANTRALA (PATAL PUKUR PAR), NISHANTARA, PO-KATWA, PS-KATWA, DISTT- PURBA BARDHAMAN, WEST BENGAL-713130, have changed my name from SUTOPA GHOSH to SUTAPA GHOSH for all future purposes, vide Affidavit dated 01/04/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE
I. JINAT KHAN W/O AKIL KHAN R/O BB-105, BAGRINA BASTI NABI KARIM SWAMI RAM TIRTH NAGAR NEW DELHI 110055, CHANGED MY NAME TO ZEENAT KHAN

NAME CHANGE
I. SHOBHA GHOSH, mother of JC-673795Y Rank-SUB/PA Name - SAMIRAN GHOSH presently residing at TANTRALA (PATAL PUKUR PAR), NISHANTARA, PO-KATWA, PS-KATWA,

NEWS BOX

UAE To Enter Iran War? Abu Dhabi Weighs Military Move To Break Hormuz Blockade: Report

Abu Dhabi (Agency)

As the Middle East conflict entered day 33 on Wednesday (April 1), reports surfaced that the United Arab Emirates could enter the Iran war. The UAE is preparing to help the US and other allies in the reopening of the Strait of Hormuz, reported the Wall Street Journal. The development could mark the entry of the first Persian Gulf country to enter the war against Iran. Notably, the UAE and other Gulf nations were hit by Iranian missiles and drones after the conflict began on February 28.

The Strait of Hormuz is a narrow waterway between Iran and Oman that connects the oil- and gas-producing Gulf countries to the rest of the world. Nearly one-fifth of the total energy trade happens through this route. The critical waterway is blocked by Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) after the US and Israeli strikes on February 28, triggering an energy crisis in the region. As per the report, the UAE is trying to push for a United Nations Security Council resolution that would authorise its action. Several Emirati diplomats have also reportedly urged the US and its European and Asian allies to form a coalition so that the strait could be open by force. As per a UAE official, the nation also reviewed its military capability amid the escalating conflict. The Gulf nation is also pressing the US for capturing islands in the strategic waterway including Abu Musa, reported W.A.J. Notably, Abu Musa has been under Iran's control for almost 50 years, but it is claimed by the US. Reports also surfaced that apart from the UAE, other Gulf nations, including Saudi Arabia, want the war to continue until the Islamic regime in Iran is toppled. After the US and Israeli airstrikes, Iran started targeting US military bases in the Gulf nations. Trump Hints At Ending Iran War Without Reopening Of Strait of Hormuz: The Wall Street Journal on Monday reported that US President Donald Trump wants to end the Iran war without the opening of the Strait of Hormuz.

US journalist kidnapped in Baghdad; search underway

BAGHDAD.(Agency)

An American journalist was kidnapped Tuesday in Baghdad and Iraqi security forces are pursuing her captors, Iraqi officials said. The journalist was identified as freelancer Shelly Kittleson by one of the outlets she worked for.

A U.S. official blamed the Iran-backed Iraqi militia Kataib Hezbollah. The Iraqi interior ministry confirmed a foreign journalist had been kidnapped but didn't give more details. Two Iraqi security officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak publicly about the case, said the kidnapped journalist is a woman and a U.S. citizen. They said that two cars were involved in the kidnapping, one of which crashed while being pursued near the town of Al-Haswa in Babil province southwest of Baghdad. The journalist was then transferred to a second car that fled the scene. The interior ministry said security forces had launched an operation to track down the kidnappers, and intercepted a vehicle belonging to the kidnappers that overturned as they tried to flee. One suspect was arrested and one of the vehicles used in the kidnapping was seized, but others remain on the loose, the statement said. The two Iraqi security officials said the journalist was abducted in central Baghdad's Saadoun Street, and that an alert was sent to all checkpoints, leading to the pursuit of the kidnappers as they headed toward Babil province.

AI-Monitor, a regional news site covering the Middle East, said it was "deeply alarmed" and identified the journalist as Kittleson, a freelancer who contributed to the publication.

Rubio says US will 'have to reexamine' NATO relationship

WASHINGTON.(Agency)

Secretary of State Marco Rubio said on Tuesday that the United States "is going to have to reexamine" its relationship with NATO once the war against Iran has concluded. "I think there's no doubt, unfortunately, after this conflict is concluded, we are going to have to reexamine that relationship. We're going to have to reexamine the value of NATO in that alliance for our country," Rubio said to host Sean Hannity on Fox News. He added that "ultimately" it would be a decision for President Donald Trump to make.



The top US diplomat said he had been "one of the strongest defenders of NATO" while he was in the US Senate because he "found great value in it." Much of that value was in having military bases in Europe that allowed the US military "to project power into different parts of the world," Rubio said. "If now we have reached a point where the NATO alliance means that we can't use those bases, that in fact we can no longer use those bases to defend America's interests, then NATO is a one-way street," he added. Rubio went further, saying that while Washington was not asking NATO allies to conduct airstrikes as part of the war against Iran, "when we need them to allow us to use their military bases, their answer is 'No'.

Iran hits tanker off coast of Qatar, Kuwait airport and Israel kills five in Beirut attack

DUBAI. (Agency)

Iran hit a tanker off the coast of Qatar and Kuwait International Airport early on Wednesday as Tehran remained unrelenting in its attacks on its Gulf Arab neighbors, while acknowledging for the first time that Washington had been in direct contact about a possible ceasefire.

Israel sounded warnings of incoming fire from both Yemen and Iran, while launching its own attacks in Lebanon that killed at least five people. An airstrike on Tehran appeared to have hit the former US Embassy compound, which has been controlled by Iran's Revolutionary Guard since the 1979 hostage crisis. Witnesses said buildings outside the massive compound had their windows blown out and that it appears the strike happened inside the walled facility. With no sign of the war abating and more than 3,000 lives already lost, US President Donald Trump suggested it could be over within two weeks even as he moved to bring thousands more troops to the region. No signs of Iran relinquishing grip on Hormuz. Trump has been under growing pressure to end the war

as Iran's grip on shipping through the Strait of Hormuz and its attacks on regional energy infrastructure have sent gas prices skyrocketing to their highest level since 2022 and caused broad stock market fluctuations. Iran throttled ship traffic through the strait, which leads from the Persian Gulf to the open ocean, after it was attacked by the US and Israel on Feb. 28. In peacetime, a fifth of the world's oil transits the strait and the spot price of Brent crude, the international standard, is up more than 40% since the start of the war, trading at more than \$104 a barrel. The US has presented Iran with a 15-point plan aimed at bringing about a ceasefire, which includes a demand for the strait to be reopened. Iran's own five-point response includes it retaining sovereignty over the waterway, and Trump on Tuesday suggested that the war could be brought to an end even with Iran still controlling the strait. The US "will not have anything to do with" what happens in the Strait of Hormuz, instead telling reporters that the responsibility for keeping the vital waterway open would belong with

countries that rely on it. "That's not for us. That'll be for France. That'll be for whoever's using the strait," Trump said. It was not clear why Trump brought up France, since Europe receives



very little oil shipped through the strait, with most going to Asian countries. The president plans a prime-time address on Wednesday. Push for diplomatic solution showing little signs of progress

Trump, who has vacillated between insisting there is progress in diplomatic talks with Iran and threatening to widen the war, added that the US is "finishing the job" in

Iran and predicted it will be "maybe two weeks, maybe a couple of days longer to do the job." Trump has warned that if a ceasefire is not reached "shortly," and if the strait is not reopened, the US would

broaden its offensive, including by attacking the Kharg Island oil export hub and possibly desalination plants. Thousands of Marines and paratroopers have been ordered to the region in possible preparation for an assault in Kharg, though to reach the island by ship would mean transiting the Strait of Hormuz and the Persian Gulf, which Iran has threatened to mine. In an interview with Al Jazeera, Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi acknowledged receiving direct messages from US Mideast envoy Steve Witkoff. He insisted, however, that there were no direct negotiations and said Iran has no faith that talks with the US could yield any results, saying "the trust level is at zero."

He warned against any attempt to launch a ground offensive, saying "we are waiting for them."

Australia says Meta, Snapchat, TikTok and YouTube aren't fully complying with child account ban

MELBOURNE.(Agency)

Australia's online safety watchdog said on Tuesday it was considering court action against Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok and YouTube alleging they are not doing enough to keep Australian children younger than 16 off their platforms. Experts say the Australian courts could decide what steps the platforms can reasonably be expected to take under the laws that took effect on Dec. 10 banning young children from holding accounts.

Julie Inman Grant, who is Australia's eSafety Commissioner, on Tuesday released her first compliance report since those laws took effect demanding 10 platforms remove all Australian account-holders younger than 16. While 5 million Australian accounts had been deactivated, a substantial number of Australian children continued to retain accounts, create new accounts and pass platforms' age assurance systems, the report said. Inman Grant said in a statement her office had "significant

concerns about the compliance" of half of those 10 platforms. Her office was gathering evidence against the five that they had not taken "reasonable steps" to prevent young children holding accounts.



Courts could order fines of up to 49.5 million Australian dollars (\$33 million) for systemic failures to comply. eSafety would decide on whether to initiate court action against any platform by midyear. Age-restricted platforms that aren't under investigation are Reddit, X, Kick, Threads and Twitch. Communications Minister Anika Wells said the five criticized platforms were deliberately

not complying with Australian law. "Social media platforms are choosing to do the absolute bare minimum because they want these laws to fail," Wells told reporters. "This is the world-leading law. We're the first in the world to do it. Of course they don't want these laws to work because they want that to be a chilling effect on the dozen countries that have come out since Dec. 10 to follow Australia's step," she added.

eSafety had identified "poor practices" such as platforms allowing unlimited attempts for a user to pass their age assurance methods and prompting the user to try to pass the age assurance method even after they declared themselves underage.

Meta, which owns Facebook and Instagram, told The Associated Press it was committed to complying with Australia's social media ban. "We've also been clear that accurately determining age online is a challenge for the whole industry," the statement said.

Protests erupt in West Bank as Israel approves death penalty for Palestinians convicted of murder

JERUSALEM.(Agency)

Hundreds of protesters took to the streets across the embattled Palestinian territories on Tuesday, a day after Israel's parliament passed a measure establishing the death penalty by hanging for Palestinians convicted of murdering Israelis. Palestinians young and old held sit-ins and marches in the Israeli-occupied West Bank, the territory where the new law is most sweeping. The Fatah political party has called a general strike in the northern part of the West Bank for Wednesday. The legislation orders West Bank military courts — which try only Palestinians — to make the death penalty the default sentence for those convicted, except in special circumstances. "Time is running out and silence is deadly," read the signs carried by protesters in the central West Bank city of Nablus, which showed an

animation of a prisoner wearing the Palestinian keffiyeh scarf next to a noose. "Stop the law to execute prisoners, before it's too late."

The bill passed its final vote in the Israeli parliament late Monday to cheers and applause. Itamar Ben-Gvir, the Israeli firebrand minister of national security who spearheaded the push for the legislation, described the law as long overdue and a sign of strength and national pride. The law is set to take effect in 30 days but its implementation could be delayed by pending court proceedings at Israel's highest tribunal. The measure is not retroactive and won't apply to current prisoners. Still, it signaled an extreme hardening of Israeli penal policy that elicited fear from the protesters for all Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails — emblems of national resistance. "You are the symbol of struggle, You are the symbol

of steadfastness," the protesters in Nablus chanted, some holding up signs with the faces of friends and family currently in Israeli prisons. Palestinian officials released statements saying the death penalty measure violated international law and asking other countries to intervene. Amnesty International has said that the use of the death penalty under the new measure could violate the right to life and the prohibition of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, as enshrined in international law. The Palestinian Foreign Ministry called for sanctions on Israel's parliament and its suspension from international bodies.

"The law represents a critical turning point in the formalization of extrajudicial killings under a legal guise," the statement said, adding that the ministry.

'Peace versus war': Orban fuels anti-Ukraine mood ahead of Hungary's elections

BUDAPEST.(Agency)

Hungary's Viktor Orban has used disinformation to make Ukraine the scapegoat of his election campaign, analysts said, with some suggesting he is receiving covert help from Russia against an unprecedented challenge to his 16-year rule. The nationalist premier -- Moscow's closest ally in the European Union -- has used AI-generated images to help whip up sentiment against Kyiv, which is fighting off a Russian invasion. Analysts argue Russia is aiding him in shifting the conversation away from the bread-and-butter issues that have propelled opposition leader Peter Magyar's party to the top of the polls ahead of the April 12 vote. "The campaign's rhetoric is deliberately binary -- peace versus war -- portraying Ukraine as a risk and the incumbent Hungarian government as seeking stability and rationality," Csilla Fedinec, a historian from ELTE University's Centre for Social Sciences, told AFP. The two neighbours have been at loggerheads after Orban accused Ukraine of stalling the reopening of a pipeline carrying Russian oil to the

landlocked EU state, with Kyiv saying the pipe was damaged by Russian airstrikes in January.

Hungary has also been holding up a 90-billion-euro EU loan to the war-torn country and a new round of sanctions on Russia over the issue. Russian disinformation Earlier this month, Hungarian counter-terror forces temporarily detained Ukrainian bank employees, seizing valuables passing through the country.

Tabloids affiliated with Orban's Fidesz party published AI-generated pictures exaggerating the amount of cash and gold involved. Posts involving the images garnered unusually high engagement on Facebook, with many accounts having non-Hungarian names, lacking public information or profile photos -- typical signs of fake profiles used in coordinated bot campaigns. Weeks earlier, fake images began circulating online purportedly showing a Hungarian memorial in Transcarpathia -- home to Ukraine's ethnic Hungarian minority -- defaced with anti-Hungarian and anti-Orban slogans, as well

as Ukrainian nationalist symbols and a swastika. While the monument has been vandalised several times in the past, the images were found to have been made by artificial intelligence. Even so, their



publication prompted some social media users to demand retaliation.

Experts argue that there is also evidence of ongoing Russian attempts to influence Hungarian voters in the run-up to the election, including through the use of deepfakes and disinformation couched as genuine news reports. "There is constantly detectable

disinformation campaign to influence the Hungarian election, much like it was during the Moldovan and Romanian elections," Ferenc Fesz, the former head of Hungary's Cyber Defence Service, told AFP.

The messages Russian groups convey are "mostly identical with Hungarian pro-government propaganda, so they reinforce each other", Fesz said, adding that he finds the lack of declassified official communication on the matter "problematic." Foreign Minister Peter Szijjarto and other ruling party officials however have called claims of Russian interference "fake news." "False flag operation" For his part, Orban has sought to portray his chief rival Magyar as the "puppet" of the EU and Ukraine. "We have to choose who will form the government -- me or (Ukrainian President Volodymyr) Zelensky," he told a mid-March rally in Budapest. Hours later, at an opposition march, a large Ukrainian flag was unfurled, with photos of the incidents swiftly shared by government politicians and pro-Fidesz outlets on social media.

NEWS BOX

The other iftar arrests in UP: Out on bail, 8 leave home fearing more police action

Shravasti.(Agency)
 Located inside the Sohailwa Wildlife Division, just 250 m from the India-Nepal border, the Sonpathri Mai Sidhinath Ashram is popular across the region — with people of all faiths. Now, the unassuming ashram is at the centre of a row involving an iftar, similar to the Varanasi incident.
 Eight people stand accused of eating non-veg food and disposing of leftovers in a stream whose water is used at the ashram, on March 17, during Ramzan. Released on bail since, none of them is staying at home, for fear of further police action.
 The eight include five people from Shravasti, located nearly 60 km from the ashram, and three from Bahraich, around 90 km away. All in their 20s, barring one, they are facing two separate cases, one filed by the ashram head and the other for allegedly violating the forest conservation law. Police claim all the accused know or are related to each other.
 The families deny this, with some also questioning police claims of their presence at the iftar, particularly given the distance of their homes from the location.
 The arrests in Varanasi coincided with the Shravasti incident. In Varanasi, 14 stand accused of breaking their Ramzan fast with non-veg food on a boat in the Ganga, and disposing of leftovers in the river. All 14 remain in jail. Among those arrested from Shravasti were Jamal Ahmed and his sons Imran (26) and Irfan (22), of village Mehroom Murthiya. Only Jamal's wife Noorul Nisha and daughter Safia, 20, and Imran's wife Sabeena, 24, now remain at home, with the children.
 Jamal, 57, the owner of an electrical equipment shop, is president of the local traders' association. While Imran assists his father in the family business, Irfan, who is unmarried, works as an electrician.

How to deal with 'digital arrest'? Mumbai cyber cops are knocking on doors of senior citizens

Mumbai.(Agency)
 Mumbai's cyber police are knocking on their doors, before the fraudsters can. Across the city, thousands of senior citizens live alone and for scammers running "digital arrest" rackets, they are the preferred target. Last year alone, Mumbai registered 191 such cases with losses exceeding Rs 100 crore; in 2024, 193 cases were recorded, and 27 have already been reported through February this year. Most victims were elderly residents living alone, coerced into silence by strangers posing as CBI and ED officials on video calls.
 Over the past four months, the city's Cyber Police have personally reached out to almost 3,500 such senior citizens across more than half of Mumbai, visiting them at home, warning them about the scam, and making sure they know who to call if it happens.
 About 40 police personnel, divided into 20 teams of two, conduct visits on Saturdays to increase the chances of finding residents at home. Teams go out between 10 am and 1:30 pm, and again between 5 pm and 7 pm, avoiding the afternoon rest hours.

Mumbai Metro network hits 90 km, set to cross 120 km by year-end — A guide to what opens next, what's delayed

Mumbai.(Agency)
 Mumbai's metro network is set to cross a new milestone this week, with around 10 km of new lines opening on April 3 — partial stations on Line 9, the first metro line in Mira Bhayandar, and partial stations on Line 2B in the eastern suburbs. The city now has about 80 km of operational metro lines across seven corridors, including the Aqua Line (Line 3), the city's first underground metro, which opened in phases between 2024 and 2025.
 The next two years are expected to significantly accelerate that growth. In 2026, around 40-50 km of metro lines are expected to become operational, mostly in phases — the full opening of Line 9 (Dahisar East to Mira Bhayandar), along with partial stretches of Line 4 and 4A (Wadala to Thane), Line 2B (towards Chembur), Line 5 (Thane to Bhiwandi), and possibly parts of Line 6 (Lokhandwala to Vikhroli). Mumbai's operational network could cross 120 km.
 The following year, 2027, is when the network is expected to become far more usable. An additional 45-50 km of metro lines are likely to be completed, including full operations on Line 2B and Line 6, along with Line 7A — a 3.4-km extension of the operational Line 7 (Dahisar East-Andheri East), of which 2.5 km is underground, connecting Andheri East to Mumbai International Airport's Terminal 2. This phase will enable end-to-end travel across several corridors and improve interchange connectivity across the suburbs.
 "Much of the planned metro network for Mumbai will be complete and running by 2027," said an official from the Urban Development department, which oversees progress, aids the MMRDA and makes policy decisions. "With it, all corners of the city will be covered."

Bihar cleric who made 'objectionable remarks' against UP CM Adityanath's mother arrested

Police said a video of the accused's alleged remarks, made in Bihar in 2024, recently surfaced on social media.

Lucknow.(Agency)
 Uttar Pradesh Police Tuesday arrested a 38-year-old cleric from Bihar for allegedly making objectionable remarks about Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's mother during a public meeting in Bihar in 2024. Police said the matter came to light after a video of the accused's remarks recently surfaced on social media.
 Two separate cases, in Balrampur and Bahraich, have been registered against the accused, Mohammad Salim Qasmi, a resident of Bihar's Araria district, said Amit Pathak, Inspector General of Police, Devipatan Range. The accused is a cleric at a local mosque in the district.
 Police said the case was lodged on charges of promoting enmity between two groups, deliberate and malicious acts intended to outrage religious feelings of any class by

insulting its religion or religious beliefs, and statements conducing to public mischief. Police said they arrested Salim during



questioning in connection with the Bahraich case registered at Kotwali police station. "We arrested him on charges related to breach of peace and produced him before the court, which remanded him to judicial custody,"

said Pradeep Kumar Singh, Station House Officer of Kotwali police station, adding that the case had been registered against Salim on March 8. Police said protests were held in different parts of the state after the accused's objectionable remarks came to light.

In another video doing the rounds on social media, the accused is purportedly heard admitting to his mistake and apologising. He said on May 5, 2024, while attending a social reform and educational awareness conference in Miran Chak, Bhagalpur district, he delivered a speech where he made certain inappropriate and objectionable remarks about the UP CM's mother, which he regrets. He then seeks forgiveness and said he has especially apologised to the CM, assuring that he will not repeat such an error in the future.

Roundtable series looks to bridge academia, industry gap

Senior academic leaders, placement heads, HR and talent acquisition leaders, and sectoral experts from leading universities and institutions came together to discuss aligning academic outcomes with evolving industry requirements.

Ahmedabad.(Agency)
 WITH discussions focused on bridging the gap between academic learning and industry requirements, particularly in sectors such as financial services, fintech, and technology, leading universities and institutions of Ahmedabad and Gandhinagar, along with technology and global companies from Gujarat International Finance Tec-City (GIFT City), Gandhinagar organised a roundtable session recently.
 The first among the Industry-Academia Roundtable series launched by GIFT City brought together academic institutions and industry stakeholders to strengthen collaboration and align talent development with the needs of India's International Financial Services Centre (IFSC), as per a note.
 Senior academic leaders, placement heads, HR and talent acquisition leaders, and sectoral experts from leading universities and

institutions came together to discuss aligning academic outcomes with evolving industry requirements. The institutes who participated



included Ahmedabad University, Gujarat Technological University, Nirma University, Pandit Deendayal Energy University, KS School of Business Management and Research, LJ Institute of Management Studies, L D College of Engineering and the three

international universities at GIFT City-Queen's University Belfast, Deakin University and University of Wollongong.

Industry participants were 9 Links, TCS, Capgemini, IBM, KPMG, Infibeam, Cygnat Infotech among others. Shefali Gaur, Leader - Americas Service Engineering at IBM, said, "Future workforce will be defined not just by degrees, but by adaptability, digital fluency, and a problem-solving mindset. Platforms like this are important to align academic outcomes with industry needs and build employable talent."

While the participants highlighted the importance of moving towards a more integrated approach, where academic programmes are closely linked with real-world industry exposure to enhance employability outcomes, the key areas of focus included curriculum alignment, structured internships, live industry projects, research collaboration, and the development of talent pipelines aligned with evolving industry needs.

In Surat, police complaints filed against AAP leaders for 'defaming BJP'

Ahmedabad.(Agency)
 As a municipal poll approaches, the city's political arena has begun to heat up. On Tuesday, leaders of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) lodged five police complaints against their Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) counterparts for allegedly putting up posters and banners criticising the ruling party on issues such as corruption, liquor/drugs, and education, officials said.
 Criminal cases have been registered against AAP leaders Kirit Pansurya, Devsinh Dobariyam, Vishal Chavda, and others, under BNS Sections 336(4) (whoever makes any false document or false electronic record or part of a document or electronic record, with intent to cause damage or injury, to the public or to any person...) and 54 (abettor present at the spot), the and Press and Registration Books Act., 1867's Sections 3 and 12.

Such posters were removed on Monday. Dharmendra Kakadiya (31), BJP ward president of Punagam, had lodged a complaint against AAP leaders Vishal Chavda and others with Punagam police station on Tuesday. Kakadiya, in his complaint,



alleged that the accused had hung posters and banners over the flyover bridge pillar at Sitanagar Cross Road, Punagam Mandli Circle. "The posters written in the Gujarati language raised totally false issues, and they have defamed the BJP party. The posters do not include the name of

the printing press. Such an act has damaged the image of the BJP in the public's eyes. Some of the banners hung and pasted outside the main wall of the gardens contain the BJP party logo with a cross printed on it," he added

Surat deputy commissioner of police (Zone 1) Alok Kumar said, "We have registered police complaints after some aggrieved citizens contacted us and told us that their political party's image was damaged and their sentiments were hurt.

The posters also contain the BJP party logo and a cross. There is no name of the printing press firm on such posters, which should be there legally. We will issue a notice to the accused who had been named and get their statements registered. We will also try to identify others involved in such an act and take legal actions against them."

No More Parking Headaches in Mumbai? BMCs 'Book-Your-Parking Spot' Plan Could Change Your Daily Drive

Mumbai.(Agency)
 After nearly six years since its conceptualisation the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) has finally had a breakthrough of implementing a smart parking project for Mumbai. The civic authorities are now in the final stage for finalising a consultant that will be integrating all the existing parking spaces in Mumbai into a digital dashboard which will be accessible to the common citizens through a mobile application or web portal.
 The BMC had mooted this idea of creating a digitised parking system for the first time back in 2020, however the plan never came to fruition. Today, the administration will table a proposal on the civic standing committee to finalise a contractor for developing the interface. The BMC has earmarked an initial budget of Rs 3 crore for this project. Mumbai faces a crisis of land

availability and with the increasing vehicular density every year, the issue of parking has come out to be one of the key civic issues of Mumbai with a dearth of parking spaces.

At present, BMC operates 26 — off street parking lots — which includes parking facilities in public and



private institutions that are run by the authorities. In addition to this the civic body has more than 350 on-street parking lots in Mumbai which means vehicles are allowed to park in and around the periphery of traffic islands, lanes and bylanes in Mumbai.

He grew a beard, offered namaz: How a UP history-sheeter led a double life as 'Sultan' for two decades

Police said the accused, 58-year-old Naresh, had been living in Sambhal. A routine verification drive using the Yaksh app finally ended his run.

Lucknow.(Agency)
 For nearly two decades, a history-sheeter from Moradabad named Naresh lived a quiet life in neighbouring Sambhal, assuming a new name — and religious identity. Police said he went by the name Sultan, grew out his beard, took a house on rent near a mosque, and offered namaz. He also obtained forged documents, including an Aadhaar card, voter ID and PAN card, to bolster his fake identity.

It was during a routine verification drive last week to check the whereabouts of listed history-sheeters in the district that uncovered his carefully constructed double life, and led to the arrest of the 58-year-old. "Naresh, a listed history-sheeter who had been missing for nearly two decades, was found living in Sambhal under the assumed identity of Sultan," said Ran Vijay Singh, Additional



Superintendent of Police, Moradabad. "We are now gathering details regarding the current status of cases registered against him."

The op According to Station House Officer of Pakwarha police station, Yogesh Kumar, a

team was on routine patrol on Saturday, checking suspicious persons and vehicles and verifying accused persons and history-sheeters through the Yaksh app.

At the Hashampur crossing, the team received a tip-off — the informant said Naresh had gone to Pakwarha to meet

someone and was at Dingarpur Road, preparing to leave. Acting swiftly, the police team caught the suspect. When questioned, police said he initially identified himself as Sultan, son of Jamaluddin, a resident of Naharthur village in Sambhal.

During a search of his personal belongings, officers said they found an Aadhaar card, a PAN card and an e-Shram card with the same name and address. They also recovered a small handbook written in Urdu from his kurta pocket. A purported letterhead of a right-wing group in the name of Sultan was also recovered, police said. However, police said, a further search led to the recovery of a voter ID card in the name of Naresh, son of Shankar, as well as an Aadhaar card bearing the same name and an address in Moradabad's Hashampur Gopal village.

Throwing away medicines? Maharashtra's new plan says that habit could be deadly

Mumbai.(Agency)
 In a bid to tackle rising antimicrobial resistance AMR, the Maharashtra government will pilot a structured antibiotic disposal system across eight blocks in Satara and Pune districts, targeting the unsafe dumping of unused and expired medicines.
 The initiative led by the state Public Health Department along with partners including PATH, Centre for Health Research and Innovation, and GSK Cares aims to create scalable models for safe collection and disposal of antibiotics, an under addressed contributor to drug resistance.
 The move comes as AMR is linked to an estimated 2.67 lakh deaths in India, with experts warning that environmental exposure from improperly discarded medicines is accelerating resistance. Antibiotic residues entering soil and water systems can re enter the food chain, fostering drug resistant bacteria.
 As part of the plan, the state has initiated a baseline assessment to map household level practices around antibiotic use and disposal. Officials have also conducted sensitisation programmes for district level AMR nodal officers, microbiologists, and medical officers to strengthen stewardship.
 Public health experts have long flagged overuse and misuse of antibiotics as key drivers of AMR, but growing evidence now points to pharmaceutical waste as an equally critical concern. Expired or unused medicines, when discarded in garbage, drains, or by burning, release active compounds into the environment.
 A study in India found that 87 per cent of people store unused medicines at home, while 93 per cent eventually discard them improperly with little awareness of the risks.

Looking back at justice in Sonam Wangchuk's case

Sonam Wangchuk's detention under the National Security Act (NSA) and the manner in which the Supreme Court dealt with the petition filed by his wife, Gitanjali Angmo, leave several unanswered questions. The order of detention was passed on September 26, 2025, alleging that Wangchuk was indulging in activities prejudicial to the security of the State, maintenance of public order and services essential to the community.

While in normal circumstances, given the record of the court prior to 2014, the petition would have been dealt with forthwith, keeping aside all other matters, the manner in which the court dealt with this issue made me think that the cause of liberty is perhaps not as dear to the court as it should be. Such matters brook no delay and require immediate adjudication. Upon detention, the detenu has certain procedural rights, entitling him to make representations to the state government and an advisory board. At the hearing before the advisory board, the detenu requested certain documents that had not been supplied to him within the statutory timeframe. He, thereafter, presented his case. The advisory board rendered its opinion on November 7, 2025 rejecting his petition for release, and the state government confirmed the order on November 11, 2025. All this happened while the detention was challenged in court. The manner in which the proceedings were adjourned from time to time is evident from the fact that, after Wangchuk's detention, a petition for his release was filed on October 2, 2025 and notice was issued on October 6. The progress thereafter was abysmally slow: October and early November were largely taken up with adjournments, procedural directions and amendments to the petition. By late November, pleadings were still underway, with the State seeking time to respond.

The matter then saw little movement through December and early January due to repeated non-listing or paucity of time. Substantive hearings only commenced from January 8, 2026 and proceeded intermittently with further adjournments sought by the State. Even after extensive arguments from both sides through January and February, the State repeatedly sought additional time in late February and early March. Ultimately, before the court could render a decision, the detention was revoked on March 14, 2026 and the petition was disposed of on March 23 without adjudication. Human freedoms are precious. They need to be protected through a court system that cherishes such freedoms. Surely, there is a sense of immediacy that must be reflected in the orders of the court, even when the matter is adjourned. Delay in adjudication in a petition challenging detention under the NSA is anathema to the cause of liberty. This is not the first time that the Supreme Court has dealt with preventive detention in a somewhat casual manner. After the abrogation of Article 370, Omar Abdullah, Farooq Abdullah and Mehbooba Mufti were detained under the Jammu and Kashmir Public Safety Act (PSA), 1978, again on unjustified grounds of disturbing public order and security. Unfortunately, even then, the court did not display any urgency, but gave the government time to respond. The State claimed that the sensitive security situation did not warrant their immediate release. The court sought a status report from the government. Omar's detention continued for months without adjudication. Under the PSA, detention can be extended without trial for up to two years. Judicial scrutiny was deferred. Article 21 is the heart and soul of the freedoms enshrined in the Constitution. They cannot be casually dealt with, and legal challenges must be swiftly remedied either way. A cautious, deferential approach that prioritises the State's claims to security over concerns about liberty now appears to be part of our jurisprudence.

Himanta Sarma's masterstroke in Assam

The sharpening divide between Hindus and Muslims is another factor dominating Assam's political arena.

THREE years ago, Himanta Biswa Sarma, then just two years into his first term as a BJP Chief Minister of Assam, had ensured a crucial strategic win that would stand him in good stead in the future. A key number of the state's 126 constituencies were redrawn, using demography and religious markers to strengthen the BJP's position and diminish that of his political foes. As a result, his principal adversary, Gaurav Gogoi, the Congress MP and now state Congress party president, was forced to shift base. It was a masterstroke whose significance was missed by many political leaders as well as media commentators at the time. Today, as state elections loom in Assam, Sarma's sleight of hand is now evident. Seats where Muslim electors were either a majority or had crucial votes and which were seen as pro-Congress became Hindu-dominant or were reserved for Scheduled Castes or Scheduled Tribes, depriving the Congress of safe constituencies.

At the time, the CM told journalists: "The NRC was unsuccessful and the Assam Accord did not live up to expectations. Delimitation for redrawing Assembly constituencies can be one exercise through which we can safeguard the future of Assam for two decades by at least ensuring the state Assembly is less affected by demographic changes."

Political analyst Yogendra Yadav recently described the process as one of gerrymandering, but acknowledged that few had paid attention to it over the years. Politically, Sarma has been a step ahead of his opponents much of the time. The reference to the NRC was to the National Register of Citizens, which was held in Assam (the only state in the country to have it) to establish who were bona fide Indian nationals and, conversely, who were not. As is well known, Assam has been at the vortex of a bitter and occasionally bloody campaign to identify and drive away "illegal immigrants" said to have come from Bangladesh — a process that has consumed time, energy and harmed goodwill among religious groups since the 1970s.

The NRC turned up, to everyone's surprise, some 19 lakh

people, who enumerators said, could not prove their genuineness — the process was through legacy documentation of ancestors — but the largest group excluded was Hindus and not Muslims, as is widely assumed. Even this was not conclusive and those left out of the picture have not been given a chance to prove their status. Also, the Assam Accord of 1985 between student agitators and the state and Central governments laid down a cut-off date for immigrants — those who came after 1972 could not qualify for citizenship, thus, virtually creating two levels of citizenship for Indians in Assam. Thus, while these tortuous issues remain unresolved across Assam, the election tempo is yet to pick up. The BJP says that it is expecting to win its third

realm about switching allegiances.

A burst of memes featuring washing machines and Bordoloi did the rounds, although it is unclear whether the public irritation on this issue will affect the outcome in a BJP stronghold. Among others, Bordoloi is facing Mira Borthakur Goswami, a former BJP leader who switched to the Congress several years ago.

What will have an impact is that the Opposition, under the leadership of Gogoi, state Congress chief, and local regional parties have stitched together an alliance that will ensure that the Opposition vote is not divided.

Thus, they are fielding candidates who will be supported by the entire alliance. But the Opposition suffers from limited budgets, unlike the BJP juggernaut, which has hired buses, organised extensive rallies and a social media blitz and pushed door-to-door visits.

However, there is much public interest in contests involving some newcomers, including 26-year-old Kunki Chowdhury, the youngest candidate in the state polls. She holds a masters degree in educational leadership from London. Her father started a private university in Guwahati. She has been campaigning door-to-door on issues that have long affected Guwahati — floods, drainage, garbage disposal and parking, creating a mess in the city despite infrastructure development.

Her BJP opponent Vijay Kumar Gupta is 72 and a long-time party worker. The media is positioning her as a Gen Z candidate. Gupta's statement about converting Guwahati, one of the country's messiest cities, into something akin to "Switzerland, Shimla and Shillong" has drawn tart reactions

on the Internet. Some of them note that the city is often swamped by waterlogging even after a brisk shower. The sharpening divide between Hindus and Muslims, pushed by rhetoric over the years from the CM and other state leaders, is another factor dominating Assam's political arena. The state government has made efforts to clear government land of illegal settlers. In a majority of these evictions, Muslims of Bengali origin have been targeted. During the drives, occasional clashes have broken out with wailing families, angry men and grieving children whose studies have been shattered.



consecutive victory. Home Minister Amit Shah, whose road show in Guwahati created traffic snarls, said the party would get 90 seats. However, the party has been stung by rebellions by local leaders who were denied tickets and who have come out sharply against the Chief Minister and his allies.

Others have remained silent, like a former state BJP president. The defection of long-time Congress leader Pradyut Bordoloi to the BJP (a two-time Congress MP, he was given the prized Assembly seat of Dispur, where the state's capital complex is located) stunned the Congress but also caused angry ripples in the public

SC intervenes to shield rape survivors

he apex court's directive to circulate its judgment among all high courts is a necessary corrective, but it must be accompanied by institutional accountability

THE Supreme Court's indignation at the disclosure of a minor rape survivor's identity is wholly justified. It's unfortunate that a stern reminder had to be given, decades after clear legal safeguards were put in place. This reflects a deeper malaise within the justice delivery system: a disconnect between law and its consistent application. Back in 1983, the insertion of Section 228A into the Indian Penal Code sought to shield survivors of sexual offences from the devastating consequences of public identification. This protection was reinforced in the landmark Nipun Saxena v. Union of India ruling (2018), which categorically barred any form of disclosure — direct or indirect — that could reveal a victim's identity. Yet, despite this unambiguous mandate, lapses continue to occur, even within judicial orders. The Court's observation that such failures stem from "general indifference" and possibly a lack of awareness is a serious indictment.



Courts are not merely arbiters of disputes; they are custodians of constitutional morality and human dignity.

When judicial records themselves expose survivors to stigma, the system risks worsening their ordeal. In a society where victims of sexual violence often face ostracism and lifelong trauma, anonymity is a lifeline of sorts. The disclosure of identity can lead to social exclusion, harassment and psychological distress, punishing the victim rather than the perpetrator.

The normalisation of such lapses shows an abysmal failure to recognise the unique vulnerabilities exposed by sexual offences. The apex court's directive to circulate its judgment among all high courts is a necessary corrective, but it must be accompanied by institutional accountability. Judicial training, sensitisation and stricter compliance mechanisms are a must. Ultimately, safeguarding a survivor's identity is about preserving dignity, strengthening trust in the judicial system and affirming that the law stands firmly on the side of the vulnerable.

India's Shia, BJP & Iran

The saffron party courted the community on realising that 'Muslim brotherhood' was a myth

AMID the gloom and doom enveloping the world as Iran holds out against the US and Israel — and Lebanon as well as the West Bank are being flattened like Gaza — comes a flake of news that should be cheered for the sake of humanity and sanity. Thousands of miles from Iran, the Shias of Kashmir, Ladakh, Lucknow, Hyderabad and Bengaluru have risen in spontaneous solidarity for their community in the Middle East. Iran, like Iraq and Azerbaijan, is a Shia-majority country surrounded by Sunni-dominated nations. The support was not confined to protests — there was an initial spurt in Kashmir and Lucknow — but included donations that were sent to the Iranian embassy in New Delhi to be routed to Tehran. The Shias regard the late Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, the first major casualty of the US-Israel assault, as a spiritual mentor on a par with the Pope. Kashmir's spiritual affinity with Khamenei is even stronger because he had visited the Valley and Karnataka in 1981, long before he became the Supreme Leader. His trip was part of Iran's religious and ideological outreach to India after the 1979 Islamic Revolution. It seemed as though the Shias, based in cities where their population is sizeable, needed no prompting to open their hearts — and coffers. Women sold their jewels to raise cash and gave copper vessels, including the cherished traem, the traditional wazwan platter meant for a diners' quartet. Children chipped in by breaking open their piggy banks; a report said an 18-year-old girl gave away a two-gram gold biscuit gifted on her birthday by her parents. Lucknow's Sunnis — remember that Uttar Pradesh's capital has occasionally been wracked by Shia-Sunni conflicts — offered "quiet support", according to a Shia cleric. This implied that they didn't block the pro-Iran gestures. The Iranian embassy acknowledged the outpouring of help.

No political party — not even the BJP — opposed these acts, even though they seem to have disconcerted active proponents of an India-Israel axis. Indeed, in UP, Shias have had a good relationship with the BJP; this might surprise those propagating the theory of a "Muslim brotherhood" at work during an election. The BJP and its earlier avatar, the Bharatiya Jana Sangh (BJS),



assiduously courted the Shias on realising that the "brotherhood" notion was a myth — Sunni voters mattered more to the Congress and the "secular" versions of the Socialists because they vastly outnumbered the Shias. The Shias were bereft of a political leadership. As per the 2011 Census, Muslims account for about 14.2 per cent of India's population. Although no separate count of Islamic sects is officially available, a ballpark estimate from academics like Ali Khan Mahmudabad, who heads the political science department at Ashoka University, puts the Shia share at 15-20 per cent of India's Muslim population. Lucknow has 20 per cent Shia population,

which influences election outcomes. In the 1967 Assembly elections, the Lucknow (West) seat, with a large Shia electorate, was won by the BJS candidate, Lalu Sharma, who trounced Congress' Ali Zahir, a Shia.

Former PM Atal Bihari Vajpayee, who was an MP from Lucknow, and Lalji Tandon, Vajpayee's constituency minder who was a three-time MLA from an Old Lucknow seat, never missed a soiree hosted by the Shia elite and engaged with the clerics politically. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, who represents Lucknow, is popular with the Shias despite the community's misgivings about the BJP. On the other hand, Shia clerics' grouse is that CM Yogi Adityanath rarely meets them. Does the Shia-BJP bonhomie, in whatever measure it exists now, mean that the issues that bother Muslims at large are of little concern to the sect? Part of the reason is that in UP, the Sunni-Shia divide is deep-rooted. It often erupts during Muharram in the form of skirmishes; the joke is that Shias cannot decide who is the bigger adversary: the pro-RSS-BJP Hindus or the Sunnis. There were spells of unity between the sects, visible after the Babri Masjid demolition and the anti-CAA protests, but the camaraderie was short-lived. Those on the periphery or unfamiliar with the heartland's Muslim politics cannot comprehend that it never works on a simple communal binary. Paushali Lassi, the Germany-based author of Tasting Faith: Jews of India — Unveiling Stories, Sharing Recipes and Preserving their Vibrant Legacy, articulated the fear that Delhi's deeper engagement with Tel Aviv might be foiled by Muslims here. In a piece in The Times of Israel (March 11), she said the mourning processions in Kashmir and elsewhere depicted Khamenei as a "spiritual guide whose death demands public response". "This is not just a symbolic matter. Rather, it

is deeply rooted theological loyalty that now finds expression in political activism directed against Israel and the US... Women in chadors vowing martyrdom... anti-Israel chants... signal a form of radicalisation that goes beyond political disagreement to ideological commitment shaped by religious identity and global alliances," Lassi added.

Such comments on the current developments in the Gulf and Iran overlook a vital factor: India's civilisational links with Iran go back a long way. The connect, celebrated in lore and validated by history, was jeopardised by the growing proximity of the Modi regime to Israel. However, considering the ramifications, the Union government quickly reset the equation. Pragmatism was spurred by India's realisation that unless it reached out significantly to Iran and not merely put out anodyne statements or offered token aid, the country was in for a grave fuel shortage. Neither could the political subtext framed by the unrest among Shias be ignored. UP goes to the polls in 2027. The last thing the BJP would wish for is a polarisation of Muslim votes towards its principal opponent, the Samajwadi Party. These circumstances overrode the temptation to put all the eggs in the US-Israel basket, if only to appease the BJP's hardcore, Hindutva-wedded voters.

A high point in the Delhi-Tehran relationship was the visit of then Iranian President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani to Delhi and Lucknow in 1995, the first by an Iranian head of state after the 1979 Islamic Revolution. Then PM PV Narasimha Rao broke protocol to receive the guest at the airport. Rafsanjani later addressed a joint session of Parliament with an ovation which former Foreign Minister and PM IK Gujral described as "unprecedented". The Iranian President made it clear that he meant well for India on every score.

Crime branch files chargesheet in overseas job fraud case in Srinagar

Srinagar.(Agency)

The Special Crime Wing of Crime Branch Jammu and Kashmir has filed a chargesheet against a Doda resident in an alleged job fraud case involving false promises of overseas employment, officials said on Wednesday.

The chargesheet was filed in a case registered in 2025 under Sections 420 and 201 IPC against Farhat Abbas Malik, a resident of Tendala, Chirpingal in District Doda, before the Chief Judicial Magistrate Srinagar.

Officials said the case surfaced after a complaint was lodged by a person who had been searching for a job abroad after losing employment during the COVID-19 period. During his search, he came into contact with an office operating under the name "Fly High Business Consultant," allegedly run by the accused.

The accused reportedly promised to arrange a well-paying overseas job and, on this pretext, persuaded the complainant to pay a substantial amount of money and submit his original documents.

Investigation revealed that the accused had cheated the complainant by making false promises of overseas employment. He neither arranged the job nor returned the money. Evidence collected during the probe showed that the accused had deliberately misled the complainant for wrongful financial gain.

Officials said during questioning, the accused admitted to receiving money from the complainant on the promise of arranging a job abroad but failed to fulfil the commitment. He also disclosed that the complainant's original passport had been lost. Consequently, Section 201 IPC, related to disappearance of evidence, was added to the case.

Terrorist killed in overnight encounter in J&K's Ganderbal

Srinagar.(Agency)

Security forces shot dead an unidentified terrorist in an overnight encounter in Jammu and Kashmir's Ganderbal district, the Army said on Wednesday.

According to the Army, the terrorist was killed in the Arahama area of Ganderbal during an operation that was launched on Tuesday evening. "During the night of 31 March 26, the cordon was tactically reorganised amidst the intermittent firing underway. Own troops effectively retaliated with calibrated response resulting in one terrorist eliminated. Operation is in progress," Army's Srinagar-based Chinara Corps said on X.

The identity and group affiliation of the slain was not known immediately. The Army and Jammu and Kashmir Police had launched a joint operation in the Arahama area on Tuesday evening following specific intelligence inputs.

During the search operation, vigilant troops noticed suspicious movement. When challenged, the suspects opened fire, triggering an encounter.

Sources said that soon after the exchange of fire, the entire area was immediately cordoned off to prevent any escape. Additional reinforcements were rushed to the spot, and senior security officials also reached the area to oversee and monitor the operation.

Kangra to intensify anti-drug awareness drive in schools, colleges: ADC

Dharamshala.(Agency)

The district administration of Kangra will place special focus on raising awareness among youth about the harmful effects of drug abuse in government educational institutions. This was stated by Additional Deputy Commissioner Vinay Kumar while chairing a meeting of the district-level coordination committee under the National Narcotics Coordination Portal (NCORD) today. He said that a comprehensive awareness campaign would be carried out across schools, colleges, and technical institutions to curb drug abuse in the district.

The ADC informed that anti-drug awareness programmes would be organized at multiple levels through Praharl Clubs formed in senior secondary schools. In colleges, Red Ribbon Clubs will be actively involved in the campaign, while a special plan will also be prepared for technical institutions to sensitize youth.

He emphasized that these efforts aim to make Kangra a drug-free district by engaging young people and educating them about the adverse consequences of substance abuse.

Vinay Kumar further directed that all schools in the district must immediately inform the police if any drug-related activity is noticed within or around their premises. He instructed the Education Department to conduct regular workshops to educate students about the ill effects of drugs.

He also called for regular inspections of all de-addiction and rehabilitation centres operating in the district, with strict action to be taken against those failing to comply with prescribed norms.

Additionally, he directed that awareness hoardings on drug de-addiction be installed in all the Panchayats to spread awareness at the grassroots level, especially in rural areas.

HS Phoolka set to join BJP, entry adds to Panthic churn ahead of 2027 Punjab Assembly polls

Phoolka is the latest in a long line of Sikh leaders to join the BJP in Punjab. This calibrated push aims to fill the vacuum left by a weakened Akali Dal.

Patiala.(Agency)

Senior Supreme Court Advocate and human rights activist Harvinder Singh Phoolka is set to join the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in Delhi Wednesday afternoon, a move seen as politically significant amid the BJP's ongoing outreach to Sikh and Panthic faces in Punjab ahead of the 2027 Assembly elections.

Punjab BJP chief Sunil Jakhar is likely to be present during the induction. Phoolka, 70, began his political journey with the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) in 2013 and quickly rose to prominence within the party. After unsuccessfully contesting the 2014 Lok Sabha polls from Ludhiana, he won the 2017 Assembly election from Dakha,



defeating Manpreet Singh Ayali of the Shiromani Akali Dal. He was subsequently appointed Leader of Opposition in the Punjab Assembly, emerging as one of AAP's most prominent faces in the state. However, in October 2018, he resigned as

MLA and quit the party, citing dissatisfaction over the pace of justice in sacrilege cases despite the Justice Ranjit Singh Commission set up under then chief minister Amarinder Singh.

In December 2024, Phoolka announced a fresh political move by publicly joining the Shiromani Akali Dal. The announcement came on December 7, 2024, shortly after the December 2 directive issued by former Akal Takht Jathedar Giani Raghbir Singh to reorganise the party through a new membership drive.

He had then stated that he would join the party on the very first day of the drive to strengthen the regional outfit. However, factionalism within the Akali Dal —

marked by parallel membership drives by the Shiromani Akali Dal led by Sukhbir Singh Badal and a five-member committee formed by the then Akal Takht Jathedar — and the emergence of splinter formations such as Akali Dal Punarsurjit meant that he never formally joined the party.

Beyond politics, Phoolka has long been recognised for spearheading one of the most sustained legal battles linked to the 1984 anti-Sikh riots. He represented numerous victims' families over the course of decades, often fighting cases at no cost, and played a crucial role in reopening cases and securing convictions, establishing himself as a key legal figure in the pursuit of justice for riot victims.

Sanjay Arora reappointed as MC Chief Engineer; additional charge withdrawn from C B Ojha

Sanjay Arora has been reappointed as the Chief Engineer of the Municipal Corporation (MC), Chandigarh.

Chandigarh.(Agency)

The decision was communicated on Tuesday, nearly six months after he was removed from the post on October 24, 2025, following controversies and complaints against him.

The UT Administration had earlier invited applications for a regular appointment to the post, with around 12 officers from different states applying. However, no consensus could be reached on any candidate. Eventually, the administration decided to repose faith in Arora and handed him the charge once again. With this move, the additional charge of MC Chief Engineer held by UT Chief Engineer C B Ojha has been withdrawn. Ojha's availability had been a point of concern, with councillors frequently raising questions during House meetings, as



he was handling dual responsibilities. A schedule had also been fixed to ensure his presence in MC matters.

Arora's earlier removal had come after several allegations were levelled against him. Councillors from the ruling side had lodged complaints with UT Administrator Gulab Chand Kataria, following which his extension was denied and he was relieved from the post. Sources said there had also been dissatisfaction over delays in execution of certain projects. Some BJP councillors, considered close to the then Mayor, had reportedly raised

complaints against him. The Mani Majra housing project was another flashpoint during his previous tenure. There were concerns within the civic body over alleged leakage of project-related

information to opposition members. The Architecture Department had also flagged issues, and Arora reportedly had differences with then Mayor Harpreet Kaur Babla over several projects.

The Mani Majra project, considered a "dream project" of the former Mayor, could not be passed in the House amid strong opposition. After Arora's removal, opposition councillors had strongly objected to the decision. His reappointment has now sparked fresh discussions in administrative and political circles, especially since he was denied extension just months ago.

Meanwhile, Congress councillor Gurpreet Singh Gabi welcomed the move, stating that the long-pending demand for a regular Chief Engineer has finally been fulfilled. He said he had met the Home Secretary on March 25 to press for the appointment and expressed hope that having a full-time Chief Engineer would expedite civic works in the city.

NFR hosts Annual National Medical Conference successfully

The Sikh Times

Maligaon, 01st April: The Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) successfully hosted and concluded the 31st Annual National Conference of the Railway Association of India (RAISA), along with the NFR Zonal Medical Conference, on 28th March 2026 at Luitgarh Railway Officers Club, Nambari. The two-day event brought together eminent medical professionals from across Indian Railways, centred on the theme "Evidence Based Practice." The conference was inaugurated by Director General of Railway Health Services, Dr. Jagdish Chandra, who emphasized the importance of standardized, data-driven medical protocols in improving healthcare delivery for railway employees and passengers. The event was also graced by the General Manager of N. F. Railway, Shri Chetan Kumar Shrivastava and the Principal Chief Medical Director of N. F. Railway, Dr. Swapna Boro Daimari, underscoring NFR's commitment to advancing medical excellence. Approximately 150 doctors from various railway zones and leading medical institutions participated actively in the conference. The sessions, coordinated by Scientific Secretary Dr. Somnath Saha,

focused on translating clinical research into practical healthcare applications. The event also featured notable contributions from the

exchange and collaboration among medical professionals. Concluding the conference, Dr. Pijush Sarkar, of Central Hospital,



Railway Society of Anaesthesiologists, setting new benchmarks in perioperative care and pain management. The event was efficiently organized under the leadership of the Medical Director of Central Hospital, Maligaon, Dr. B.P. Deka, along with a dedicated team from the hospital. Their efforts provided a seamless platform for knowledge

Maligaon expressed gratitude to all participants and emphasized that the insights and knowledge shared during the event will significantly contribute to improving healthcare services across Indian Railways. The event concluded with a formal vote of thanks, marking the successful completion of this significant national medical conference.

Koraon MLA focus on development, education and farmers issues

Prayagraj.(Agency)

BJP MLA from the Koraon assembly constituency in Prayagraj, Rajmani Kol described his four-year tenure focused on development, education, and farmers' issues.

In an exclusive interview with UNI, he mentioned projects like the Atal Residential School, built at a cost of Rs 73 crore, housing for the poor, and health assistance in the area.

He also said that the opening of a sugar mill in Koraon will greatly benefit farmers and create employment opportunities for the youth.

"The extent to which the people of the area are satisfied with your work is up to the public to assess. Those who evaluate our work and achievements will determine

the marks they will give. I wish to achieve 100 percent marks, but I will be satisfied with the marks I receive," he said.

When asked about the most significant work accomplished by him in his constituency, the BJP MLA said, "I have accomplished two major areas. First, I have done a lot of work in the field of education."

"As the saying goes, 'Education is everything.' I have ensured that children of laborers are provided with education from grades 6 to 12. Under the Atal Housing Scheme, a school was established in the Koraon Assembly constituency at a cost of Rs 73 crore, where children from labor families are currently studying. Koraon Assembly constituency is a coal-rich area. By requesting the Chief Minister,

assistance was secured for the poor here under the Housing Scheme," he said.

He said, "Now, the public is hoping for a third term for the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government. What work is there that you have failed to accomplish? I have presented a proposal to the Chief Minister and also raised this issue in the Assembly session: unemployment is high here. Our farmers are limited to producing only paddy and wheat. In this situation, I have demanded a sugarcane mill (sugar mill) here. I am striving to establish a sugar mill here in the future," he added. The MLA said "Apart from this, a proposal has also been made to build a large bridge over the Belan River, and it is hoped that this too will be successful soon".

On the question whether he will contest again in 2027 election, Kol said, "I consider myself a strong contender. However, decision-making is the responsibility of the top leadership. I have worked to disseminate the party and government's plans to the last person. Therefore, I would like the top leadership to give me a ticket again so that I can win a third term and reach the Assembly".

He said the opposition has no issues. It has become completely issueless. False allegations are being spread among the people to defame the government. The people are happy. Opposition leaders are merely spreading rumors. With Yogi Adityanath as the state's chief minister, every problem will surely be resolved.

Kol explained that he worked in the area on education and health. Previously, he secured funds from the Chief Minister's Discretionary Fund for treatment for poor families who couldn't afford treatment. A boy from the tribal community was suffering from a serious illness.

A letter was written to the government and an estimate of Rs 9 lakh was made available. The money reached the hospital within 12 days, and the patient is now healthy and thankful.

"Since 2017, I have consistently stood with the people of the area, which is why I was re-elected as an MLA in the 2022 assembly elections. That's why I address every problem of the people of my constituency promptly, ensuring they don't face any inconvenience," he added.

'Jinxed, haunted': No takers for Bungalow No. 33 on Shamnath Marg as rumours swirl, Delhi govt decides alternative use

The Delhi government is planning to demolish the bungalow and develop a government office building, officials said.

New Delhi.(Agency)
For over two decades, Bungalow No. 33 on Shamnath Marg near Delhi's Civil Lines, which once served as the Chief Minister's residence, has had no takers. Politicians and bureaucrats alike have avoided it reportedly over rumours of "bad luck", and it being "jinxed" and even "haunted". To utilise the abandoned property, the Delhi government is planning to demolish the bungalow and develop a government office building, officials told The Indian Express. "Due to the rumours surrounding the house over the years, no senior politician, minister or even top bureaucrat is willing to take it up... the perception that it is jinxed or haunted have made many consider it bad luck. As no one is willing to move in, the government is now planning to redevelop the property into an official building for governance

purposes," said a senior official. Officials said the government is also considering constructing a state office for the Delhi Disaster Management Authority (DDMA) at the site. "Delhi does not have a dedicated building for this office. The government may consider developing a state DDMA office on this property," another senior official said.

Officials added that last year, a team from Social Welfare Minister Ravinder Indraj Singh's office visited the bungalow, but the minister did not opt for it. Century-old history The two-storey bungalow sits on a large plot and includes four bedrooms, multiple halls and drawing rooms, fountains, a large living area, a front lawn, and seven staff quarters.



Unlike most government bungalows, 33 Shamnath Marg has a long history dating back to the pre-Partition era. According to officials, it was built in the 1920s, when the British developed Civil Lines to house senior officials. After Independence, the bungalow was considered an ideal choice

for the Chief Minister's residence due to its proximity to the Delhi Legislative Assembly, officials said. The bungalow has housed Chief Ministers, including Chaudhary Brahm Prakash, Delhi's first Chief Minister in 1952, and Madan Lal Khurana in 1993. However, over time, the house came to be labelled as "inauspicious". Officials said at least five allottees vacated the bungalow before completing their tenures, often after facing political or career setbacks. Brahm Prakash stepped down in 1955 following the alleged "jaggery scam". In 1993, Madan Lal Khurana, who became Chief Minister under the newly created National Capital Territory framework,

was allotted the same bungalow, but his term was cut short in 1996 amid allegations linked to a hawala scandal. "Since then, rumours began that the house is cursed. Many in political circles started believing that staying here could impact their careers," an official said. Later, when Sahib Singh Verma and Sheila Dixit were allotted the bungalow, they declined to move in, though Verma used it as a camp office. Verma himself was later replaced by Sushma Swaraj before completing his term. "There are several rumours about the house. Jo bhi aata hai yahan, woh tikta nahi hai (whoever comes here does not last long)," said an official. When the AAP government came to power, the bungalow was used as the office of the Delhi Dialogue and Development Commission (DDC), a policy think tank.

Delhi Traffic Advisory for Hanuman Janmotsav: Check Affected Roads and Alternative Routes Here

Traffic disruptions in North and Central Delhi are anticipated on April 1 and 2 due to Hanuman Janmotsav celebrations near the Hanuman Mandir. The Delhi Traffic Police issued an advisory indicating that significant gatherings and processions will lead to diversions and restrictions, especially from 2 pm to 11 pm on April 1 and all day on April 2.

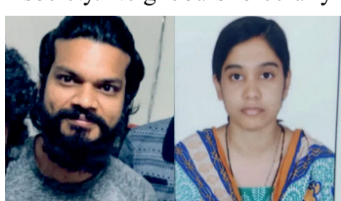
New Delhi.(Agency)
Traffic movement in parts of North and Central Delhi will remain affected on April 1 and 2 due to celebrations of Hanuman Janmotsav near Marghat Wale Baba Hanuman Mandir, the Delhi Traffic Police said in an advisory. Large gatherings, processions and religious functions are expected in and around the



temple area on Ring Road, leading to diversions and restrictions during peak hours.
Roads To Be Affected
According to the advisory, traffic will be impacted from 2 pm to 11 pm on April 1 and throughout the day on April 2 on the following stretches:
Ring Road (both carriageways) from Shanti Van to ISBT Kashmere Gate
Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Marg (Hanuman Mandir to Pul Mithai)
Lothian Road (Chhata Rail Chowk to Kashmere Gate Metro)
Netaji Subhash Marg (Chhata Rail Chowk to Delhi Gate)
Nishad Raj Marg (Shanti Van to Subhash Cut)
Boulevard Road (ISBT to Barafkhana Chowk)

Husband found hanging, wife jumps from 17th floor moments later in Bengaluru tragedy

New Delhi.(Agency)
In a tragic sequence of events, a young tech professional couple was found dead at their residence in Bengaluru on Monday, March 30. The deceased couple is identified as Bhanu Chander Reddy Kunta (32) and his wife, Bibi Shaziya Siraj (31). The couple worked with different IT companies and hailed from neighbouring Telangana. Shaziya became suspicious after repeated knocking on the door; her husband didn't respond, and the room remained locked. She went for help from the neighbours and alerted the security staff of the society. Neighbours forcefully opened the door and found



Bhanu hanging inside the room. Moments later, Shazia allegedly jumped from the 17th floor of the building and lost her life. The preliminary investigation reported that the ongoing marital discord was behind the couple's decision to take their own lives. However, officials are investigating Bhanu's health issues. The couple had been living together for more than nine years. Sources told police that frequent disputes occurred between the couple after the marriage. Bengaluru police have filed two separate cases of unnatural death based on the family members' complaints. All the angles and aspects were examined by the officials to find out the cause of the death, including relationship issues, health-related problems, and emotional distress. The post-mortem report is awaited as authorities will receive clarity on the circumstances surrounding the suicide.

Nigerian man's death in 'police detention' in Delhi: Magisterial probe initiated

Christian Eze Promise (32) who was in India on a student visa, died on Sunday in Rajouri Garden. According to a police officer, Promise was riding on the wrong side of the road when he was signalled to stop by a team of five police officers.

New Delhi.(Agency)
Two days after a Nigerian man died after being detained by the police during an anti-drug crackdown under 'Operation Kavach' in West Delhi's Rajouri Garden, a magisterial inquiry has been initiated into the matter. The police have also identified the owner of the scooter the man was riding when he collided with a Delhi Police motorcycle and sustained injuries. Christian Eze Promise (32) who was in India on a student visa, died on Sunday in Rajouri Garden. According to a police officer, Promise was riding on the wrong side of the road when he was signalled to stop by a team of five police officers. The officer said it is suspected that

Promise intentionally rammed his scooter into the police motorcycle, after which he fell to the ground. "Although he sustained visible injuries to



his legs and hands, he got up and attempted to flee on foot. During the attempt, he fell again and was apprehended. The personnel present over there managed to restrain him.

While being taken to the Special Staff office, located a few kilometres away, he complained of uneasiness. He was then taken to Guru Gobind Singh Hospital, where doctors declared him dead," the officer also said. The officer further said the scooter was registered in the name of a woman from a Northeastern state. During the investigation, a team from Rajouri Garden police station visited the address in South Delhi's Munirka where the scooter owner was registered, but found out that the woman had moved to another location. Police have contacted the Nigerian embassy and community groups to trace people known to Promise.

'Prime target were HCs across the country': What probe reveals after arrest of Karnataka man who sent hoax bomb threats

During questioning, he claimed he wanted to improve security in courts, but the police said they did not rely on this explanation.

New Delhi.(Agency)
"His primary targets were allegedly the high courts across the country... he aimed to disrupt the court proceedings". "In several emails, he tagged the police commissioners to ensure that they were aware of his threats... at times, he sent multiple emails in a single day." This is what the investigators have found after Shrinivas Luis (47) was arrested by the Delhi Police from Karnataka's Mysuru on March 27 for allegedly sending hoax bomb threats via emails to courts and other institutions, The Indian Express has learnt. Following the arrest, police had said that Luis is a law school dropout and currently unemployed. "Frustration over not obtaining his law degree and subsequent unemployment appears to be the reason behind these hoax threats," an officer had earlier said. Sources have now said that Luis sent around 1,500 bomb threat emails to several high courts across the country, including those in Delhi, Mumbai, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, and Chandigarh. On some days, the Delhi High Court reportedly received such emails twice a day. He also allegedly sent such emails to courts abroad. In Delhi alone,



he allegedly sent more than 50 fake emails to the High Court over several months, tagging the Delhi Police Commissioner's office, sources added. Last September, the Delhi High Court had received bomb threat emails that were later declared a hoax. One message claimed that three bombs had been planted on the premises and that the building should be vacated by 2 pm. The emails also alleged links with the ISI in Coimbatore and threatened to recreate the 1998 blasts. Following repeated emails, the Delhi High Court directed Delhi Police to identify and apprehend the sender. The cyber cell of the New Delhi district police was assigned the investigation, which eventually led to his arrest after several months. After the arrest by a team from the Cyber Police of in Mysuru, he was brought to Delhi on March 29 on transit remand. On Monday, he was produced before a city court, which granted six days of police custody for questioning. On Tuesday, a Delhi Police team left with him for Karnataka to verify the locations from where the emails were sent. He has been booked under Section 351 (criminal intimidation) of the BNS and the IT Act.

Police complaint, Rs 10k tickets, unauthorised stalls at 'Jahan-e-khusrau' event: Why ASI wants action against Purana Qila's 'Monument Mitra'

Naming 20 stalls that were allegedly set up, the ASI said it amounted to "unauthorised use of a protected monument", and posed a threat to its sanctity and protection.

New Delhi.(Agency)
The Archaeological Survey of India has complained to the Delhi police against the Government-designated "Monument Mitra" of Purana Qila for allegedly engaging in commercial activity during a sufi music festival organised there over the weekend — in violation of conditions stipulated by the ASI, a senior official told. Monument Mitras are private entities that partner with the Government in the upkeep of Centrally protected sites as part of an initiative launched by the Union Culture Ministry in 2024. According to the ASI complaint sent to the Station House Officer of Tilak Marg police station on March 27, Delhi-based Sabhyata Foundation was granted

permission, as organising partners, to hold the annual Jahan-e-Khusrau World Sufi Music Festival 2026 at Purana Qila from March 27-29. When contacted by The Indian Express, R K Patel, Superintending Archaeologist, ASI, Delhi Circle, said, "It was brought to our notice by staff on the site that sale kiosks were set up as part of the three-day event inside the monument complex, for which permission wasn't given. We had a word with the organisers but it didn't help. So, our staff on the ground wrote to the police seeking help in the situation." ASI officials at the site told this newspaper that the situation allegedly

led to an altercation between security guards and event staff who were asked to remove the stalls to the moat area outside. When contacted, a senior police officer



confirmed the complaint. "We are verifying all the allegations after going through the contract documents," the officer said. Sabhyata Foundation did not respond to requests from The Indian Express for comment. The ASI has requested the police to "lodge a complaint against violations observed during Jahan-e-Khusrau event at Purana Qila, New Delhi". Naming "Sabhyata Foundation Group", the complaint said, "It has been observed by the competent authorities of ASI, Purana Qila, that some violations against the permission given are being committed by the organisers of this event."

CBI caught 2 MCD officers red-handed after taking Rs 4 lakh as bribe from suspended employees, Delhi court told

New Delhi.(Agency)
A trap laid by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) following a complaint by two suspended employees of the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) over an alleged demand of a bribe of Rs 4 lakh for a favourable inquiry report led to the arrest of two senior officers of the civic body — Deputy Commissioner Lt Col Abhishek Kumar Mishra and Administrative Officer Devanshu Gautam, both posted at MCD's Shahdara North Zone — on Monday. While giving the details of the case and the arrests, the CBI told a special court on Tuesday that Mishra allegedly demanded the bribe from the suspended employees on behalf of Mishra and both were caught with the bribe. The court took note of an alleged transcript of the conversation between the two officers produced by the CBI after the bribe was received. Special Judge Dig Vinay Singh then sent the arrested



officers to one-day CBI custody. "In the considered opinion of this court, one day police custody of both the accused seems justified," the Judge said in his order. As per the CBI's submissions in the court, which are recorded in the order, MCD employees Mukesh Kumar Sharma and his colleague Gajender Kumar were under suspension and their departmental inquiry was being conducted by Lt Mishra. Gautam acted as a "conduit" of Mishra and demanded the bribe to extend favour to the suspended officers in the departmental proceedings. After Mukesh, the suspended officer, lodged a complaint with the CBI on March 27, the agency laid a trap to catch the accused red-handed. Gautam, the CBI told the court, was apprehended red-handed by the agency after he allegedly accepted the bribe from Mukesh inside his car. Gautam, the court was told, called Mishra at 2:39 pm on Monday. This call, however, remained unanswered. The second call, which was just 11 minutes later, was allegedly hung up.

NEWS BOX

Not enough money: Adam Zampa dissatisfied with IPL pay, explains move to PSL

New Delhi. (Agency)

Adam Zampa explained why he chose not to participate in the Indian Premier League 2026. The leg-spinner was absent from last year's mini-auction after being released by Sunrisers Hyderabad. Zampa said that, considering his skills and the IPL's two-month schedule, he was not satisfied with the remuneration on offer.

Zampa has played five IPL seasons, with his highest earnings coming last year when Sunrisers Hyderabad bought him for Rs 2.40 crore in the mega auction. Having represented four teams since 2016, he has appeared in only 22 matches and has never been a regular member of any IPL side. "I pulled out of the IPL this year. To be brutally honest, for someone with my skill set, I just don't get the money that is there for other skill sets. And for the amount of time that the IPL takes, it just didn't seem like a reasonable choice for me to keep playing it," Zampa said on the ARY Podcast. 'I AM ENJOYING PSL' While Zampa is not featuring in the IPL, the



Australian leg-spinner is currently playing in the Pakistan Super League 2026, representing Karachi Kings under David Warner's leadership. In the PSL auction, Karachi Kings signed him for PKR 4.5 crore, which is approximately Rs 1.51 crore.

"I was going to have a break, but PSL was on the radar about a month ago. It all happened pretty quickly, but I'm enjoying it," Zampa added. Although Zampa is not part of the IPL this season, he still holds the record for the best figures by a spinner in IPL history and is the only spinner to have taken a six-wicket haul in the tournament. He set the record in his debut season in 2016, finishing with figures of 4-0-19-6 for Rising Pune Supergiants against Sunrisers Hyderabad in Visakhapatnam. In PSL 2026, Zampa has claimed three wickets from two games at an economy rate of 4.62. He is also Australia's leading wicket-taker in T20Is, with 147 wickets from 115 matches.

End of Glenn Maxwell's Australia career? All-rounder snubbed from central contract

MUMBAI. (Agency)

Veteran all-rounder Glenn Maxwell has been omitted from Cricket Australia's central contracts list, raising fresh questions over whether the 37-year-old still fits into the team's long-term plans in international cricket. Cricket Australia announced a 21-player list with a clear focus on Test regulars. Maxwell has been left out of Australia's 2026-27 central contracts list.



Maxwell last played a Test match in 2017 and has not been in red-ball plans. Australia all-rounder Maxwell has been left out of Cricket Australia's central contract list for the 2026-27 season, as the board opted for a group largely built around its Test core ahead of a packed red-ball calendar. Cricket Australia on Wednesday, April 1, announced a 21-player list, with the selections reflecting the team's priorities over the next 12 months, which include multiple Test series against Bangladesh, New Zealand, India and England. Maxwell's omission was among the more notable decisions. The 37-year-old retired from ODI cricket last year and has not featured in Tests since 2017, having gradually moved out of contention in the longer formats. His absence from the contracts list suggests that Australia have continued in that direction. While he remains available for T20Is, his position there is also not entirely secure. Maxwell did not have a significant impact in Australia's T20 World Cup 2026 campaign, where the team failed to progress beyond the group stage, and with the next edition scheduled for 2028, selectors may look at longer-term options. This perhaps marks the end of a turbulent few years for Glenn Maxwell, who has not only suffered freak injuries away from the field but has also been pulled up by Cricket Australia over issues related to discipline and professionalism.

Candidates: Praggnanandhaa's aggression backfires, suffers major setback in R3

Candidates Tournament: Indian Grand Master R Praggnanandhaa slipped to third place at the FIDE Candidates tournament after a loss to Javokhir Sindarov. Pragg faltered while trying to be aggressive against the 20-year-old Uzbekistani.

New Delhi. (Agency)

Indian Grandmaster R Praggnanandhaa suffered a setback in his campaign at the FIDE Candidates Tournament, going down to Javokhir Sindarov in the third round on Tuesday. The defeat, which came with the white pieces, saw Praggnanandhaa slip to third place in the standings after having shared the lead at the end of Round 2. He now has 1.5 points from three games, with momentum briefly shifting away after a strong start to the tournament. Praggnanandhaa had begun his

campaign in impressive fashion, defeating Anish Giri in the opening round to immediately put himself among the frontrunners. He followed that up with a composed draw with black against Wei Yi in Round 2, where he applied steady pressure out of a French Defence before the game transitioned into an opposite-coloured bishops endgame. Despite holding a slight edge with an extra pawn, Praggnanandhaa could not make further inroads as the players agreed to a draw after 46 moves. That result had kept him in joint lead after two rounds, underlining both his control and consistency early in the tournament. The loss to Sindarov, however, marks the first significant dent in that progress.

PRAGG'S AGGRESSION BACKFIRES

Facing a Queen's Gambit Declined, Praggnanandhaa appeared on course for a balanced position early on. The game could have drifted towards a draw, but he chose to



press, a decision that introduced complications into the position. Sindarov, who has emerged as one of the more aggressive players on the circuit, responded by sacrificing material in the middle game to break open the position. The initiative soon shifted, and Praggnanandhaa found himself on the back foot. A series of inaccuracies in the later stages of the middle game compounded the pressure, eventually

leading to a loss that could prove costly in a tightly contested field. At the top, Fabiano Caruana joined Sindarov on 2.5 points after defeating Wei Yi in a sharply played game that ended in just 19 moves. The American capitalised on an early slip in preparation to seize control and close out the contest quickly. Behind the joint leaders, players including Hikaru Nakamura, Matthias Bluebaum, Andrey Esipenko and Giri are grouped on one point, while Wei Yi remains at the bottom with half a point. The tournament, an eight-player double round-robin, still has 11 rounds to go, leaving ample time for shifts in momentum. For Praggnanandhaa, the immediate task will be to recover quickly and regain footing in a field where consistency tends to matter as much as individual wins.

The winner of the Candidates will earn the right to challenge reigning world champion D Gukesh later this year.

Tiger Woods steps away from golf after DUI accident controversy, to seek help

New Delhi. (Agency)

American golf legend Tiger Woods on Tuesday said that he will be stepping away from the sport for a period of time to focus on his health, days after being arrested on suspicion of driving under the influence following a car crash in Florida. Woods, a 15-time major champion, was involved in a rollover crash near his home in Jupiter Island last week. The 50-year-old was taken into custody and later released on bail. No injuries were reported in the incident. In a statement posted on social media, Woods said that he understood the seriousness of the situation and would take time away to address it. "I know and understand the seriousness of the situation I find myself in today. I am stepping away for a period of time to seek treatment and focus on my health," Woods said. "This is necessary in order for me to prioritise my well-being and work toward lasting recovery."

Court documents filed on Tuesday showed

that Woods has pleaded not guilty to the DUI charges and has requested a jury trial. His next court appearance is scheduled for May 5, although he is not required to be present



for proceedings before the trial. Details from the investigation report suggest that Woods had told authorities he was looking at his phone and adjusting the radio at the time of the crash, failing to notice a vehicle slowing down ahead of him. Officers at the scene observed signs of impairment, with the

report noting that Woods appeared lethargic and unsteady. Authorities also said that prescription medication was found on him, and that he admitted to taking medication earlier in the day. The development comes at a time when Woods had only recently returned to competitive golf after a prolonged injury layoff. He had featured in the TGL Finals last week, a format that requires significantly less physical strain compared to regular tour events.

Woods had been targeting a return at the upcoming Masters Tournament, scheduled to begin next week at Augusta National Golf Club. However, following his announcement, the club confirmed that the five-time champion will not be present at the event in any capacity. "Augusta National Golf Club and the Masters Tournament fully support Tiger Woods as he focuses on his well-being," chairman Fred Ridley said in a statement.

Spain coach Luis de la Fuente condemns xenophobia after fans' anti-Muslim chants against Egypt

Luis de la Fuente was speaking after fans made chants mocking Muslims during Tuesday's friendly game, part of Spain's preparations for the World Cup.

BARCELONA. (Agency)

The coach of Spain's national soccer team has condemned "xenophobic or racist attitudes" after fans repeatedly made anti-Muslim chants during a game against Egypt. Luis de la Fuente was speaking after fans made chants mocking Muslims during Tuesday's friendly game, part of Spain's preparations for the World Cup. "I feel total and absolute repulsion towards any xenophobic or racist attitudes. They are intolerable," de la Fuente said after the



game, which was a 0-0 draw.

Egypt is a majority-Muslim country and Spain's star player Lamine Yamal is also Muslim. Spain is due to play Saudi Arabia at the World Cup, and also faces Cape Verde and Uruguay in Group H of the 48-team tournament. Egypt has games against Belgium, New Zealand and Iran in Group

G. Spain was hosting Egypt for the game, which had originally been expected to be played in Qatar before the region was affected by the Iran war. A "Finalissima" game there between South American champion Argentina and European champion Spain was canceled after they couldn't agree to reschedule.

Shreyas Iyer penalised in Punjab Kings' handsome IPL 2026 start

IPL 2026, PBKS vs GT: Punjab Kings captain Shreyas Iyer has been fined Rs 12 lakh for a slow over-rate offence during PBKS' first match against Gujarat Titans. Iyer scored 18 off 11 as Punjab beat Gujarat by three wickets in Mullanpur.

NEW DELHI. (Agency)

Punjab Kings (PBKS) captain Shreyas Iyer has been fined Rs 12 lakh after his team maintained a slow over-rate during their Indian Premier League (IPL) 2026 opener

against Gujarat Titans (GT) on Tuesday, March 31, at the Maharaja Yadavindra Singh International Cricket Stadium in Mullanpur, New Chandigarh. PBKS, who finished runners-up last season, made a decent start to their IPL 2026 campaign with a three-wicket win over the Titans. In a media release issued on Wednesday, the IPL said PBKS were found to be in breach of Article 2.22 of the league's Code of Conduct. Since it was the team's first offence of the season, Iyer was fined Rs 12 lakh. "Punjab Kings (PBKS) Captain Shreyas Iyer has been fined after his team maintained a slow over-rate," the media advisory said. "As this was his team's first offence of the season under Article 2.22 of the IPL's Code of Conduct, which pertains to minimum over-rate offences, Iyer was fined INR 12 lakhs."

WHAT IF IYER COMMITS A SECOND

AND THIRD OFFENCE? As per the IPL Code of Conduct, teams are required to complete their bowling innings within 90 minutes. For a first offence, only



the captain is fined, which in this case is Rs 12 lakh. If the team commits a second over-rate offence, the captain is fined Rs 24 lakh,

while the rest of the playing XI are penalised Rs 6 lakh or 25 per cent of their match fee, whichever is lower. For the third and every subsequent offence in a season, the captain is fined Rs 30 lakh, regardless of whether the designated captain was part of the playing XI, which includes the playing XI and the Impact Player. Meanwhile, each member of the playing XI, excluding the designated captain, is fined the lesser of Rs 12 lakh or 50 per cent of his match fee.

During the match, Shreyas Iyer experienced discomfort in his hand after being struck at the non-striker's end during Punjab Kings' successful run chase. Despite the pain, he continued to bat before being dismissed for 18 by Prasidh Krishna. In the post-match press conference, Punjab's lead spinner Yuzvendra Chahal reassured fans that Iyer is absolutely fine.

Italy's latest World Cup failure labeled 'third apocalypse.' It's the new norm for the 4-time champion

ROME. (Agency)

The first time was considered a fluke. The second was treated as a crisis. Now, with Italy failing to qualify for a third consecutive World Cup, it has become almost expected for the once-proud football nation. The four-time champion's penalty shootout loss to 66th-ranked Bosnia and Herzegovina in the qualifying playoffs comes after the Azzurri were eliminated at the same stage by Sweden ahead of the 2018 World Cup and by North Macedonia in 2022. A front-page editorial in the Gazzetta dello Sport on Wednesday labeled



the latest ouster "The third apocalypse," noting "there's no longer a feeling of shock or an unexpected catastrophe. It's becoming the norm." The issues in Italian football extend beyond the national team.

The last Italian club to win the Champions League was Inter Milan in 2010; while in this season's continental competition, all four Italian clubs were eliminated before the quarterfinals. "It's like we're not ready for the big match. We're not ready when it matters... when you need to give that extra... when you have the pressure on," Salvatore Corso, a 34-year-old Italian who works in a tech startup, said after watching the Italy defeat at a pub in Rome on Tuesday. National team neglect Between the every-four-year failures, the national team gets neglected. One Italy coach after another has lobbied unsuccessfully for more training camps outside the pre-set FIFA international breaks. Under pressure from TV rights holders, Serie A consistently refuses to move up matches to give national team players more time to rest before Italy games — as evidenced when a Fiorentina-Inter Milan game featuring multiple Azzurri was held on the Sunday night before the training camp opened for these playoffs hours later on a Monday. Coaches don't want the Italy job. With the failures piling up, Italy's revered coaches don't appear to want the national team job.

We're suffering a lot': West Asia war energy crunch hits Indian tile makers

MORBI.(Agency)

Blazing-hot kilns in India's \$6.5 billion ceramics manufacturing hub employing hundreds of thousands of people have gone cold, shut down in an energy crunch caused by the West Asia war.

At a cavernous facility in Morbi, in India's western Gujarat state, a 200-metre-long propane-powered kiln that normally fires clay nonstop is silent. It is one of hundreds of plants supplying homeware tiles across the world that have been forced to suspend operations. Thick layers of dust smother giant grinding and pressing machines, while only a tiny crew of workers transfer the last batch made three weeks ago off snaking assembly lines and into trucks. "We are suffering a lot," said Kishor Dulera, who closed this factory and two others in early March, sending hundreds of workers home.

India, the world's fourth-largest economy, depends on imports for 60 percent of its liquefied petroleum gas (LPG). The overwhelming majority comes through the Strait of Hormuz waterway, which has been effectively blocked by Iran after US-Israeli strikes on the Islamic republic late last month sparked a broader regional conflict, disrupting global energy supplies. New Delhi has prioritised supply for households, shielding Indians who use it to cook food. That has squeezed the amount available for industrial use. Factories in sectors including stainless steel and plastic have cut back on production as a result.

Stock markets surge in early trade on hopes of potential de-escalation in West Asia war

New Delhi.(Agency)

Equity benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty surged in early trade on Wednesday, tracking a sharp rally in global markets on hopes of a potential de-escalation in the ongoing West Asia conflict. The 30-share BSE Sensex jumped 1,899.53 points to 73,847.08 in early trade. The 50-share NSE Nifty surged 572.55 points to 22,903.95. All the 30-Sensex firms were trading higher, with Trent, Bharat Electronics, Adani Ports, Bajaj Finance, InterGlobe Aviation and Larsen & Toubro emerging as the major gainers.

In Asian markets, South Korea's benchmark Kospi, Japan's Nikkei 225 index, Shanghai's SSE Composite index and Hong Kong's Hang Seng index were quoting sharply higher. Kospi jumped nearly 7 per cent, while Nikkei 225 index climbed over 4 per cent. "There are indications of de-escalation of the war from the statements issued by the Iranian authorities. Iranian president's 'openness to ending the war' and confirmation from the Iranian foreign minister that 'messages were exchanged with the US' indicate that the war might end soon."

This view is getting reflected in declines in crude prices and US bond yields. "V K Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist, Geojit Investments Limited, said. The US market ended significantly higher on Tuesday. The Nasdaq Composite index surged 3.83 per cent, S&P 500 jumped 2.91 per cent and Dow Jones Industrial Average climbed 2.49 per cent. "The momentum is largely being driven by a decisive improvement in global risk sentiment, following encouraging signals around potential de-escalation in the ongoing West Asia conflict," Hariprasad K, Research Analyst and Founder, Livelong Wealth, said.

Asian stocks rally as Trump says war to end 'very soon'

Kolkata.(Agency)

Asian stocks rallied Wednesday after US President Donald Trump said the Middle East war would be over in up to three weeks and his Iranian counterpart said Tehran had "the necessary will" to bring it to an end. But while the remarks from the two leaders provided hope for an end to the month-long crisis, crude prices jumped on lingering worries about the closure of the strategic Strait of Hormuz.

They also come as the economic impact of the conflict worsens, with average US gasoline prices topping \$4 a gallon for the first time in four years, European inflation spiking, and governments unveiling a range of support measures. Trump told reporters in the Oval Office the United States would be leaving Iran "very soon", perhaps within "two weeks, maybe three". "But we're finishing the job," he insisted.

"We want to knock out every single thing they have," Trump said, before adding that "it's possible that we'll make a deal before that." The White House also said he would address the nation at 0100 GMT Thursday "to provide an important update on Iran".

Earlier, Iranian leader Masoud Pezeshkian told the head of the European Council the country had "the necessary will to end this conflict, provided that essential conditions are met -- especially the guarantees required to prevent repetition of the aggression". Wall Street surged, with the Nasdaq up 3.8 percent and the S&P 500 adding almost three percent. In Asia, Seoul -- the standout before the war but among the worst-hit since it started -- was up more than six percent, while Tokyo and Taipei gained at least four percent. Hong Kong, Shanghai, Sydney, Singapore, Manila and Jakarta were also sharply higher. Traders appeared to brush off Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's comments that Israel would press ahead with its campaign and that "we will continue to crush the terror regime". However, Trump also said US forces would not work to unblock the Strait of Hormuz, through which a fifth of global oil and gas passes, and said it was up to other countries to do so. "What happens with the strait we're not going to have anything to do with," he said. In a Truth Social post earlier Tuesday, Trump lashed out at NATO allies and other countries that have refused to help the United States secure the waterway.

Oracle's layoffs explained: Why the IT giant suddenly fired 30,000 employees

New Delhi.(Agency)

Oracle has laid off thousands of employees globally, with reports suggesting that job cuts could be as high as 30,000, even as the company posted strong revenue growth. While there is no official confirmation on the total number, the layoffs are being seen as part of a larger shift in the company's strategy, especially its growing focus on artificial intelligence and data centres. The layoffs have impacted multiple regions, including India and Mexico. India appears to be among the worst-hit markets, with reports indicating that nearly 12,000 employees may have been laid off out of a workforce of around 30,000, according to ANI.

WHY ORACLE LAID OFF EMPLOYEES?

One of the key reasons behind the layoffs is Oracle's aggressive push into artificial intelligence infrastructure. The company has reportedly signed a \$156 billion deal to build AI data centres over five years,

largely for OpenAI. This expansion requires massive spending. Oracle is expected to buy around 3 million specialised chips to support these data centres. Its spending on such infrastructure has increased sharply, from about \$6.9 billion annually two years ago to nearly \$50 billion this year. To support this scale of investment, the company appears to be cutting costs in other areas, including its workforce.

DEBT PRESSURE AND CASH FLOW NEEDS

Oracle is also carrying significant debt, estimated at over \$108 billion. This has added pressure on the company to manage its finances carefully. According to estimates by investment bank TD Cowen, the layoffs could help Oracle free up between \$8 billion and \$10 billion in cash flow. This money is expected to be redirected towards funding its AI and data centre expansion. The company had also filed a restructuring plan worth \$2.1

billion in March, with nearly \$1 billion already spent before the layoffs were carried out. Another factor behind the layoffs is growing concern among



lenders. The cost of insuring Oracle's debt has risen sharply, reaching levels last seen during the 2009 financial crisis. Barclays had earlier downgraded Oracle's debt, warning that the company was close to "junk" status, which indicates a higher risk of default. Some banks have reportedly stopped lending to Oracle for these projects, adding to the

financial strain. UNCERTAINTY AROUND KEY CUSTOMER

There are also concerns around demand for Oracle's new infrastructure. OpenAI, one of the key customers for these data centre projects, is reportedly exploring newer and faster chips from Nvidia.

This creates a risk that Oracle's large investments in current-generation infrastructure may not be fully utilised. The company has already spent billions on building facilities, including a major project in Texas. Rapid changes in technology

mean that chips can become outdated quickly, even before data centres are fully operational.

Despite the layoffs, Oracle's stock rose about 6% on the day the news emerged. The company had reported quarterly revenue of \$17.2 billion, its highest in 15 years.

India's tobacco trap: Can jobs and public health be balanced

New Delhi.(Agency)

India's tobacco sector is a double-edged sword: it sustains 45.7 million livelihoods while fueling a public health crisis that kills prematurely and burdens the economy. Our Civitas white paper identifies a "development trap"—a self-reinforcing cycle in which economic dependence on informal production of tobacco thwarts effective control, leaving 266.8 million users, primarily SLT (Smokeless Tobacco) and beedi consumers, without adequate cessation support while exposing workers to precarious conditions. To escape, India must transform the sector by investing in cessation, prioritising formalisation, fostering innovation, and creating alternative livelihoods that align growth with health.

THE SCALE OF INDIA'S TOBACCO DEPENDENCE

The trap is evident in the informal economy. Beedi rolling employs millions, often women and children, in exploitative conditions, which is documented in the US Department of Labour's list of goods produced by children and forced labour.

Workers earn meagre wages (Rs 100/day for 700 beedis) and are exposed to tobacco dust without protection.

Workers face significant health implications, with death rates among beedi smokers 64% higher than those of non-tobacco users (Pulitzer Centre).

Informality also characterises much of SLT production, which has historically evaded tax and regulatory oversight, undermining public revenues and



control measures. Policy provisions, such as the "cottage industry" tax exemption for unbranded beedis, have facilitated tax leakage and kept cheaper, more harmful products widely accessible, particularly among low-income populations. This informality sustains poverty, with the lowest-wealth households 2.54 times more likely to use tobacco, facing higher risks and lower quit success.

INFORMAL SECTOR, LOW WAGES AND HEALTH RISKS

Politically, the trap deepens. In beedi-

dependent regions like West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh, industry influence sways elections, blocking reforms.

Tobacco's economic significance to states (0.45 million hectares cultivated, US\$1.45 billion in exports) has made meaningful reforms difficult to achieve.

Although India has committed internationally through the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) to reduce tobacco-related harm, policy decisions sometimes contradict this. For instance, production limits on Flue-cured Virginia (FCV) tobacco are eased to boost exports, signalling that revenue is being prioritised over health.

POLICY GAPS AND REGULATORY CHALLENGES

Addressing this public health issue needs reforms that must simultaneously improve public health outcomes, preserve employment opportunities, and maintain or increase government revenue. Tobacco sector transformation must therefore prioritise formalisation, modernisation, and alternative economic pathways. Formalise by shifting beedi/SLT from cottage industries to regulated factories and adopting Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP).

Commercial LPG price hiked by Rs 195.5, mini cylinder rates up by Rs 51 amid Iran war

SYDNEY.(Agency)

In a major development in India amid the war in West Asia, the state-owned oil companies announced a significant hike in the price of 19-kg commercial cylinders and 5-kg mini cylinders on Wednesday. Prices for 5-kg mini cylinders have risen by Rs 51, while 19-kg commercial cylinders saw a steeper hike, ranging from Rs 195 to Rs 218.

After the revision of rates, the price of a 19-kg commercial LPG cylinder now stands at Rs 2,078.50 and Rs 2,031 in Delhi and Mumbai, respectively. Both cities witnessed a surge of Rs 195.5. In Kolkata and Chennai, the prices witnessed a steeper rise of Rs 218 and

203, respectively, bringing the new



rates to Rs 2,208 and 2,246. The surge is directly linked to the widening conflict in West Asia, which has severely destabilised international energy supply chains. Since the outbreak of the

war, global oil prices have climbed by 50%, largely driven by the closure of the Strait of Hormuz—a critical, conflict-torn energy corridor.

This disruption in the supply chain, coupled with the hike in oil prices, compelled the state-owned companies to revise the rates of commercial LPG cylinders in India.

Major oil companies, including Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), Bharat Petroleum (BPCL), and Hindustan Petroleum (HPCL), revise these rates on the first of every month, factoring in international benchmarks and currency exchange rates.

Jet fuel price up 8.5%; government says partial, staggered hike to shield domestic fares

ATF prices have been revised upwards, but government intervention has capped the impact on domestic airlines, even as uncertainty persists for international fares.

New Delhi.(Agency)

Aviation turbine fuel (ATF), or jet fuel, saw a sharp revision in India amid a surge in global crude oil prices linked to the West Asia conflict, with initial data released by Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) indicating prices had more than doubled to over Rs 2.07 lakh per kilolitre. However, the rates were revised soon after, with the government clarifying that domestic airlines will not bear the full impact of the increase. According to the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, ATF prices in India are deregulated and revised monthly based on international benchmarks. Due to the closure of the Strait of Hormuz and the extraordinary situation in global



energy markets, a steep increase of over 100% was expected from April 1. The ministry said oil marketing companies, in consultation with the Ministry of Civil Aviation, have implemented only a partial and staggered increase of about 25% (around Rs 15 per litre) for domestic airlines. "Foreign routes will pay for the full increase in ATF prices consistent with what they pay in other parts of the world," the ministry said in a statement. According to revised rates

effective April 1, ATF prices for domestic airlines are around Rs 1.04 lakh per kilolitre in Delhi, with other metro cities such as Kolkata and Chennai seeing levels above Rs 1.09 lakh, while Mumbai is lower at around Rs 98,000 per kilolitre. Global crude oil prices remain elevated amid geopolitical tensions involving Iran, the United States and Israel. As of morning trade, Brent Crude was around \$105 per barrel, while WTI crude hovered above \$102 per barrel, both

rising over 1%. The sustained increase in crude prices has pushed up aviation fuel costs, which are linked to international benchmarks. Data from the International Air Transport Association shows global jet fuel prices have nearly doubled within a month, highlighting the scale of the increase. ATF is among the largest cost components for airlines, typically accounting for up to 40% of operating expenses. Any increase in fuel prices tends to raise operating costs for carriers. Airlines are also dealing with longer flight paths due to airspace restrictions in parts of West Asia, which increase fuel consumption. A weaker rupee has further added to the cost burden as fuel is priced in dollars. OMC sources said ATF prices could be hiked further in phases if required, depending on how the situation in West Asia evolves. Amid rising costs, Civil Aviation Minister Ram Mohan Naidu has urged state governments to consider reducing Value Added Tax (VAT) on ATF to ease the burden on airlines. Currently, VAT on jet fuel ranges between 18% and 29% across major states.

Will rupee slide to 100 against the US dollar as Iran war drags on

New Delhi.(Agency)

Rupee could weaken further and may even touch the 100 mark against the US dollar if the ongoing Iran war continues, according to a Bloomberg report citing global analysts and market data. The currency has already been under pressure and any prolonged rise in crude oil prices could add to the stress. Rupee has declined by around 10% over the past year and is among the worst-performing currencies in Asia this year. Analysts say that while authorities are trying to slow the fall, these steps may only provide short-term support. PRESSURE FROM OIL PRICES AND GLOBAL UNCERTAINTY

According to Bloomberg, analysts at Wells Fargo and VanEck have warned that higher oil prices could speed up the rupee's fall. India depends heavily on oil imports, and rising crude prices increase the country's import bill.

This leads to higher inflation and a wider current account deficit, both of which put pressure on the currency. Brent crude has already risen sharply since the conflict began, jumping about 44% and touching a high of \$119.50 per barrel. Some analysts believe prices could rise further to \$150 or even \$200 if supply disruptions continue, especially around key routes like the Strait of Hormuz.

RBI STEPS IN, BUT IMPACT LIMITED

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has taken steps to control volatility in the currency market. It recently capped banks' end-of-day positions in the onshore currency market at \$100 million. This move is aimed at reducing speculative bets against the rupee. However, market movements suggest that such steps may have limited impact. The rupee initially rose by as much as 1.4% after the new rules were announced but later reversed direction and hit a fresh low of 95.125 on the same day.

Analysts believe this shows that deeper economic factors are driving the currency's movement. "100 per dollar is no longer a tail risk — it is a credible stress scenario if current conditions persist," Ahmed Ezzam, head of financial market research at Equiti Group, was quoted as saying by Bloomberg. He added that the measures taken so far appear to be short-term tools rather than a long-term solution. MARKETS SEE FURTHER WEAKNESS

Market signals also point to expectations of further weakness in the rupee.

Parineeti Chopra

Pens Heartfelt Note For Raghav Chadha On Advocating Paternity Leave: 'Proud of You Always'



Parineeti Chopra and Raghav Chadha are one of the most loved couples in town. The duo often dishes out major goals with their cute antics on social media. Parineeti, who is currently embracing her journey as a new mom, never shies away from praising or cheering for Raghav online. On March 31, a "proud" wife penned an appreciation note for Raghav. He raised an important issue in Parliament, speaking about paternity leave, arguing that caregiving should be a shared responsibility, and demanded that it be made a legal right in India. A while ago, the actress shared the video and wrote a long note for him.

Parineeti Chopra hails husband Raghav Chadha's effort

Raghav and Parineeti welcomed their son, Neer, in October 2025. Since then, they have been sharing responsibilities to raise their munchkin. Taking to her Instagram handle, Parineeti heaped praise on him and expressed pride. Her note read, "My dearest husband, Watching you speak today not just as a Member of Parliament but as a new father to our baby, is a moment I will carry with me for a long time. Today you spoke as the dad, I see every single day." She continued, "We have discussed this so many times! How our baby deserves both parents to be present – to the best of their ability. So when you spoke about paternity leave, it wasn't just policy. It was built from the way you parent our child, the way you show up without being asked, the way you understand that PARENTING IS SHARED, not assigned. "Bacche ke paida hone par, keval ek maa ka janm nahi, ek pita ka bhi janm hota hai." There are so many mothers who carry this responsibility alone, often unheard, unseen. Homes where the fathers' and family support are missing. Today, you brought their loneliness into the Parliament – a room where it truly matters."



'Narratives For Women Are Shrinking In Mainstream Cinema,' Says Bhumi Pednekar



Actress Bhumi Pednekar, who recently attended the International Film Festival Delhi (IFFD) 2026, believes that while the space for women-led narratives may be shrinking in mainstream cinema, the rise of OTT platforms has opened up stronger and more meaningful opportunities for female actors. "I feel with OTT, especially for women, the narrative has become a lot stronger because a lot of those shows, a lot of those films are led by women, which is maybe shrinking in mainstream cinema," Bhumi, who started her film journey in an unconventional role in the 2015 film "Dum Laga Ke Haisha", said. "Unfortunately, it's really heartbreaking that that's happening," added the actress, who was then seen in meaningful cinema such as Toilet: Ek Prem Katha, Shubh Mangal Saavdhan, Bala and Saand Ki Aankh.

She acknowledged that digital platforms have emerged as a powerful alternative, offering rich and diverse roles driven by women. According to her, this shift has allowed actresses to explore more layered and courageous roles. "But at the same time, there's a rise of these platforms where we get great opportunities.

So absolutely, I think women have always been a lot more courageous, and they are a lot more brave while choosing their scripts." "And I think OTT just kind of gives them the right platform," concluded Bhumi, who did not shy away from playing characters with substance, such as a closeted lesbian in Badhaai Do, social dramas Bheed, Afwaah and Bhakshak. She was last seen in Daldal, a psychological crime thriller television series created by Suresh Triveni and directed by Amrit Raj Gupta.

The series is based on Vish Dhamija's bestselling novel Bhandi Bazaar. Daldal follows DCP Rita Ferreira, the youngest officer to head the Mumbai Crime Branch, as she is drawn into a tense, emotionally exhaustive investigation into a brutal serial killer terrorising the city.

Tiger Shroff And Suniel Shetty Team Up For An Action Entertainer: Report



In an exciting update, Tiger Shroff and Suniel Shetty are reportedly joining forces for a high-octane action entertainer. While an official announcement is still awaited, the news has already generated buzz among fans who are eager to see the two stars share screen space.

As reported by Variety India, Suniel Shetty has joined the cast of Tiger Shroff's next. Many details have not been shared till now. The report also suggests that the film will be an action entertainer and is likely to go on floors on April 10. The film is expected to be complete shooting by July. But an official information is still awaited.

Tiger Shroff: On The Work Front

Beyond acing social media trends and keeping fans hooked with his dance videos, Tiger also has some exciting projects lined up. On the work front, Tiger Shroff is set to appear in Lag Jaa Gale, where he will be sharing screen space with Lakshya and Janhvi Kapoor. There are also reports suggesting that he might collaborate with Vidyut Jammwal on an upcoming project, which is expected to be directed by Milap Zaveri.

Suniel Shetty's work front

He will be next seen in Welcome To Jungle. Directed by Ahmed Khan, Welcome to the Jungle boasts a massive ensemble cast of over 30 actors, each a benchmark of talent and known for their excellent comic timing—a combination that is a rare sight on the big screen. Apart from him, the film also stars Akshay Kumar, Jackie Shroff, Raveena Tandon, Disha Patani, Jacqueline Fernandez, Arshad Warsi, Paresh Rawal, Rajpal Yadav, Johnny Lever, Aftab Shivdasani, Lara Dutta, Shreyas Talpade, Tusshar Kapoor, Daler Mehndi, Farida Jalal, Krishna Abhishek, Kiku Sharda, Kiran Kumar, Mukesh Tiwari, Yashpal Sharma, Vinu Dara Singh, Nawab Shah, Urvashi Rautela, Puneet Issar, Arjun Firoz Khan, late Pankaj Dheer, Sudesh Berry, Hemant Pandey, Zakir Hussain, Sayaji Shinde, and many more all come together to deliver an epic entertainer.

Malaika Arora

Rents Out Premium Bandra West Property For Rs 3.10 Lakh

Malaika Arora seems to be quietly making smart real estate moves while keeping her ever-buzzing public life going. The actor and television personality has now leased out one of her Mumbai properties, adding another update to her already eventful year. According to property registration documents accessed by Square Yards via the Inspector General of Registration website, Malaika has rented out her apartment located in the Vida building in Bandra West. The agreement was officially registered in March 2026.

The apartment has been leased at a starting monthly rent of ₹3.10 lakh. The transaction also includes a stamp duty of ₹30,819 and registration charges of ₹1,000. A security deposit of ₹20 lakh has reportedly been paid as part of the deal.

Documents further reveal that the lease has been signed for a tenure of 36 months. The rent will see a gradual increase over time—rising by 5 per cent to ₹3.25 lakh per month in the second year, followed by another 5 per cent hike in the final year. Over the full term, the total rental value is estimated to be approximately ₹1.17 crore. Bandra West, often referred to as the "Queen of the Suburbs," remains one of Mumbai's most sought-after residential pockets. Known for its blend of luxury apartments, heritage homes and upscale lifestyle, the area continues to attract celebrities and high-net-worth individuals. Its strong connectivity via the Bandra-Worli Sea Link, Western Express Highway and suburban railway network, along

with proximity to key business hubs like Bandra Kurla Complex, Lower Parel and Andheri, adds to its appeal. Meanwhile, Malaika continues to be in the spotlight for her personal life. The actor has frequently been the subject of dating speculation, often linked to people she is seen with in public. Last year, rumours connected her with Harsh Mehta after the two were spotted together at a concert. More recently, her photos with Sorab Bedi once again sparked chatter online.

Addressing the constant speculation, Malaika shared her thoughts in a conversation with Curly Tales. "It's irritating now. I just treat it as a joke." She added that she and her son, Arhaan Khan,



often laugh off the rumours. "Arhaan and me have a good laugh about a lot of these things," she said. Malaika was previously married to Arbaaz Khan for 19 years before their divorce in 2017. She later dated Arjun Kapoor, with the two parting ways in 2024. Speaking about her current outlook, she said she is not actively seeking a relationship. "I can't plan these things. If it has to happen, it will happen. Right now, I'm so happy exploring all of this that's going on in my life, and I'm... [to] be able to build things from scratch [is] keeping me going. That's what's really motivating me, and I think yes, of course, companionship, a partner, all that is... it's wonderful," she said.



Madonna is over fifty, has delivered two kids and still continues to give every twenty-five year old model a run for her money. The secret lies in coconut which has been easily accessible to us but we never really learnt its multiple beauty benefits. Coconut is a nature's gift which is packed with the "Magical Laurites". Use it as a Foundation Primer: All you make up addicts will agree that a perfect make up is never complete without a primer. Did you know coconut oil works as the perfect primer for a foundation? Simply dab some on your face, let it soak in and then apply your tinted moisturizer or foundation. You will notice how much smoother and longer your makeup stays on. You can also dab some coconut oil on your cheekbone to highlight them and you are sure to sparkle!

Lovely locks that you can flaunt:

Using coconut oil regularly not only enhances the beauty of your hair, but also keeps them ultra- soft & smooth. It also constantly repairs damage and protects them from the polluted environment. The magical Laurites gives your hair everything it needs. It binds the hair proteins and holds them giving you stronger, shinier and healthier hair. It also helps reduce frizz and repairs split ends faster and works wonders for your hair.

Your skin will love it too:

If you love your skin, then you know that moisturizing is the key. Coconut Oil is a natural moisturizer which keeps your skin hydrated and protects from pollution and the changing weather. Use of coconut cleanses and neutralizes the toxins, which not only detoxifies but also builds the skin's natural immune system. Even Gwyneth Paltrow claims to regularly use coconut oil to moisturize her skin after a shower.

Oil Pulling for that clear and luminous skin:

Swishing coconut oil around in your mouth for 20 minutes a day will help to detoxify your body, cure headaches, avoid acidity and whiten the teeth. 'Oil pulling is an age-old tradition in India that cleanses your system from within. Hollywood diva, Angelina Jolie has been known to start her day with little more than a spoonful of coconut oil and a handful of cereal to keep that glowing and younger looking skin. Now you know why she still looks so fabulous with every passing year.

Apply for a Silky Smooth Shaving Cream:

Who said shaving cream has to lather? Use coconut oil as a base to get a closer shave that leaves your skin smooth and supple instead of leaving your skin dry, patchy and a lot of times with bruises too.

Make a Body Scrub:

If you are a DIY (Do It Yourself)



Beauty secrets of Coconut oil

experimentalist, then coconut oil is a vanity essential for your kit! Here's what you can do to get that luminous skin - Mix half a cup of coconut oil with granulated sugar and apply the concoction for exfoliation. You will notice the magical glow on your skin immediately and you are all set for a special evening with

Also doubles up as a Makeup Remover:

Even the most resistant waterproof mascara does not stand a chance against coconut oil. Apply it directly to the face as an oil cleanser or let it sit on

your skin with a cotton pad. Your makeup is sure to melt away. The 'Magical Laurites' lifts the dirt and bacteria from deep within the skin leaving it feeling fresh. This is a trick you can even share with your BFFs.

Rub some coconut oil for Softening Cuticles:

Have you ever wondered why your grandmother still continues to rub few drops of coconut oil on her palms and hands before she goes to bed. If you wash your hands often or your cuticles just need a little extra tender care, apply coconut oil to your fingers twice daily to keep them soft, supple and nourished. You can make out the difference in just a few days.

Dab it as Under-Eye Cream:

Don't want to spend and experiment with plethora of under eye creams and serums present in the market? Apply some coconut

oil enriched with vitamin E and packed with to cure the under-eye bags and fine lines. It's light enough for the most delicate skin on your face.

Coconut oil is packed with antioxidants that helps fade and reduce the appearance



Tips for soft and luscious Pink lips

Pollution, smoking, cosmetics and over-exposure to sun are some of the factors that cause darkening of lips. In fact, hormonal imbalances also make your lips look darker. Here are a few tips that will help you in regaining the luscious pink colour of your lips:

Scrub your lips: Exfoliating your lips is an absolute must. Use a mixture of one tablespoon each of honey and baking soda. Leave the mixture on your lips for 10 minutes before washing it off with warm water.

Use a lip pack: Take one tablespoon of sugar and mix it with half a tablespoon of water. Gently scrub your lips with this mix to remove dead cells and then leave it on for five minutes to brighten the natural colour of your lips.

Lip toner: Use lemon juice for this. Take five

drops of lemon juice and mix it with one drop of glycerine. As the last thing before going to bed, dab this mix on your lips, let it dry for 15 minutes, rinse with cold water. Your lips will become soft, supple and will get a healthy sheen.



Beauty tips to hide a hangover

If you've gone all-night partying mid-week and have to report to work the next day, here are a few tips that will conceal all the signs of a hangover!

-Since alcohol dehydrates the body, you need to keep drinking plenty of water to rehydrate yourself. Dehydration will cause your skin to look dry, so the first tip is to drink plenty of fluid, to get that glow back on your face.

-Before you apply any make-up on, use a thick moisturiser on your face. This will pamper your skin and keep it healthy.

-If your eyes have become puffy due to lack of sleep, apply cold teabags on it. You can also try cucumber pieces or wrap some ice in a cloth and use it on your eyes for ten to fifteen minutes. This will help reduce any swelling around the eyes and make you look fresher.

Don't let rain ruin your Beauty



Spas and salons are stress-busters, and act as our go-to destination to rejuvenate giving a refreshed look. Although home remedies are convenient, a visit to a salon has a lasting effect. From basic clean-ups to advanced skin therapeutic facials, salons offer a wider range of solutions for every type of skin. Particularly for the monsoon season, one can indulge in facials to refresh their mind, body and soul.

As the rain pours in, here's what you can do:

1. Get funky with your hair color this monsoon season, get the ombre look or highlight outstanding features of your hair with full head highlights or colour stripping treatments.
2. Gone are the days of manicure and pedicure, brighten up your gloomy day with vibrant nail art.
3. During monsoons the hair becomes limp and loses its sheen, a trip to the salon for a protein restore treatment will never leave

you disappointed! Tame your tresses with nature's gift of essential oils, and oil massages.

4. Keep your make-up to a minimum; we all know the monsoon season welcomes a very damp and humid atmosphere and frequent downpours accelerate oil-secretion, using non-greasy and light, make-up provides a clean matte finish, always opt for waterproof brands.

- You can also, catch up on some home remedies to get the last minute salon look!

Match the matte: Papaya works as a great de-tanner; curd clears blemishes; aloe vera soothes the skin; and lavender boosts rejuvenation.

Eliminate the roughness: Take some almond paste, mix this with some milk to make a smooth and thick paste. You can also mix almond oil with milk cream (malai) to make a winter face pack. Apply the pack to get a smooth and flawless skin.

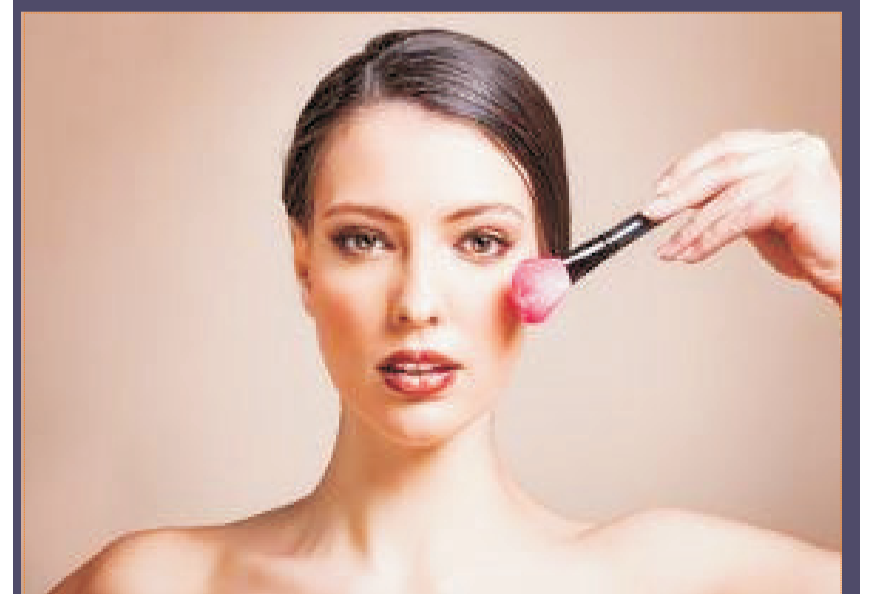
Strobing is the new contouring

Master the art of getting a glowing, sculpted face with one simple technique that is popular online.

sites have already come up with filters to support strobing.

Step 1: Start by applying a hydrating moisturiser and eye cream.

Step 2: You need to even out the skin first before you try to enhance it with a glow. So apply a generous layer of light foundation with a dual-fibre brush. Optionally, you can use BB cream.



Can't quite master the art of contouring makeup for sculpted cheekbones? It's time to ditch those pricey makeup palettes that come with too many colour options and instead pick up one simple highlighter that'll do all the work for you. Called strobing, this new technique is all about stripping down your skills to just focus on where the natural light hits you. Apply highlighter there to really amplify it, and you have a glowing, sculpted face. The technique borrows its name from actual strobe lights, because Kim Kardashian started using it to illuminate up her selfies on social media. Naturally, online photo-sharing

Step 3: Apply a concealer a shade lighter than your skin to accentuate your spotlight areas (undereyes, chin, forehead and nose). Dot the areas you want to highlight so it's not too heavy.

Step 4: Blend with a flat kabuki brush. Sponges or beauty blenders press things on and keep (makeup) on longer, but you should go for a luminous and natural look. Blend the concealer into the foundation so there's no demarcation.

Step 5: Apply a translucent powder to set the makeup. In areas that the concealer runs (like under the eyes), push the powder into the skin gently.