

Raised samosa issue in Parliament

AAP fires back after Raghav Chadha's attack

India to get 3rd nuclear submarine? Rajnath Singh teases INS Aridhaman

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh hinted at the launch of INS Aridhaman, India's third indigenously built nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine, in a social media post.

New Delhi.(Agency)

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Friday hinted at the launch of INS Aridhaman, India's third indigenously built nuclear-powered submarine. In a cryptic post on X, Rajnath Singh said, "It's not just a word, it's a symbol of power. 'Aridhaman'! Soon after Singh's post, sources confirmed that the Defence Minister would indeed commission INS Aridhaman today. Equipped with the ability to fire nuclear-tipped ballistic missiles, INS Aridhaman is expected to bolster India's sea-based nuclear deterrence, enhancing both strike potential and survivability in line with the country's nuclear doctrine.

Aridhaman is the third of India's highly classified project to build and operate nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarines (SSBNs). Its formal commission will follow in the footsteps of its predecessors, INS Arihant (commissioned in 2016) and INS Arighaat (commissioned in August 2024). Rajnath Singh's post today coincides with his visit to Visakhapatnam, headquarters of the Indian Navy's Eastern Command, where he is scheduled to commission the indigenously built advanced stealth frigate



Taragiri today. Visakhapatnam also serves as both the construction hub and current home port for India's nuclear submarine fleet.

ALL ABOUT INS ARIDHAMAN'S CAPABILITIES

Displacing around 7,000 tonnes, Aridhaman is slightly larger than its predecessors and features a more streamlined hull for improved stealth and acoustic performance. The submarine is powered by an upgraded 83 MW pressurised water reactor (PWR) developed by the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC).

Unlike its predecessors, Aridhaman is equipped with eight vertical launch tubes, double the capacity of INS Arihant, enabling it to carry either eight K-4 long-range missiles with a 3,500 km range or up to 24 K-15 missiles with a 750 km range. The induction of INS Aridhaman will allow India to maintain "continuous at-sea deterrence," ensuring that at least one nuclear-armed submarine is on patrol at all times. SSBNs (Ship, Submersible, Ballistic, Nuclear vessels) provide India with assured second-strike capability: even in the event of a devastating first strike on land-based silos and airbases, an SSBN lurking deep underwater can deliver a retaliatory nuclear strike, making any first strike against India suicidal for an aggressor.

Currently, India operates two SSBNs, INS Arihant and INS Arighaat, with Aridhaman poised to be the third. A fourth, still unnamed SSBN, is planned to follow soon after. With a fleet of four, the Indian Navy would achieve true second-strike capability, allowing one submarine to remain on patrol at all times while others undergo maintenance, transit, or serve as reserve vessels.

The rift within Aam Aadmi Party is now out in the open, with party MPs openly lashing out at Raghav Chadha for not speaking out against PM Modi. This comes a day after the party dropped Chadha as Rajya Sabha deputy leader.

New Delhi.(Agency) A day after Raghav Chadha's demotion in the Rajya Sabha fuelled speculation of internal discord, the rift within the Aam Aadmi Party has now come into the open. Matters escalated when Chadha, 37, released a video accusing AAP of trying to silence him. The party reacted swiftly, alleging the MP was afraid to speak against Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and had wasted his parliamentary time discussing samosas instead of pressing national issues. "For the past few years, you have become afraid, Raghav. You are afraid to speak against Modi. You are afraid to raise the real issues of the country," AAP national media chief Anurag Dhanda said, signalling a

deepening rift. On Thursday, AAP dropped Raghav Chadha, MP from Punjab, as Rajya Sabha deputy leader and replaced him with Ashok Mittal.

"In that time, we can either fight to save the country or talk about making samosas cheaper at airport canteens," he remarked.



Criticising Chadha's conduct in Parliament, he said the party gets limited time to speak and must use it to raise critical national issues.

He also listed out the number of times Chadha refused to stand with the party and took a different stand. Dhanda said when AAP workers were arrested in Gujarat, Chadha did not raise the issue in the House. Dhanda said Chadha refused to sign a resolution against Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar and remained seated for PM's Parliament address even when other party members walked out.

"When the party walked out of the House, he remained seated to mark his attendance to Modi," Dhanda added.

YSRCP opposes single-capital model after Andhra Bill becomes law, pushes three-capital plan and 'Plan B'

The YSRCP argued that this model would ensure more balanced regional growth across Andhra Pradesh rather than concentrating investment and power in a single location.

Hyderabad.(Agency)

A day after the Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation (Amendment) Bill, 2026, became law, the YSRCP, led by former Chief Minister and party president Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy, reiterated its stand that there should be an alternative to Amaravati as the capital and strongly opposed the single-capital model.



already has the infrastructure and with little investment, it would serve the purpose," he said. For regional balance, he said, his government had kept Amaravati as the Legislative capital and Kurnool as the Law capital.

"We have also given a Plan B to develop the Machilipatnam-Vijayawada-Guntur corridor as the capital region, but it was also not considered. We are not against Amaravati or any other region; we are only opposing the rampant corruption in the name of Amaravati, how other regions are being neglected, how welfare and development is coming to a grinding halt with the single-mindedness and high focus only on Amaravati," he added.

Senior YSRCP leader and former MLA Kasu Mahesh Reddy said the party bats for an alternative capital. "Considering the cost and connectivity, Amaravati is not feasible.

India flags 'unimpeded transit', 60-nation meet calls for reopening Hormuz

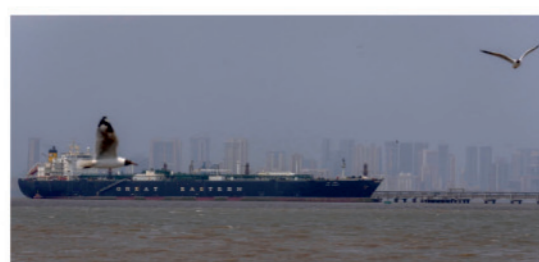
The statement said "Iran's closure of the Strait of Hormuz is a direct threat to global prosperity" and "Iran is trying to hold the global economy hostage" and "must not prevail".

New Delhi.(Agency)

With the shipping disruption in the Strait of Hormuz impacting energy supplies to India, Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri

The statement issued by the British government said the partners called for the "immediate and unconditional reopening" of the Strait and respect for the "fundamental principles of freedom of navigation and the law of the sea".

The statement said "Iran's closure of the Strait of Hormuz is a direct threat to global prosperity" and "Iran is trying to hold the global economy hostage" and "must not prevail". Ahead of the meeting, British Prime Minister Keir Starmer said the virtual meeting,



joined a meeting of more than 60 countries, convened Thursday by the UK, on reopening the crucial waterway where he underlined the principles of "freedom of navigation" and "unimpeded transit". Misri's remarks found an echo in the Chair's statement following the meeting.

chaired by British Foreign Secretary Yvette Cooper, would "assess all viable diplomatic and political measures we can take to restore freedom of navigation, guarantee the safety of trapped ships and seafarers and to resume the movement of vital commodities".

Singapore seeks bigger stake in UP: 'Investment roadmap being made'

The official also said that a comprehensive investment roadmap is being prepared for regions including Noida, Greater Noida, Jhansi, and Varanasi, among others, to boost balanced development in Uttar Pradesh.

New Delhi.(Agency)

The High Commissioner of Singapore to India, Simon Wong, met Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Thursday, exploring ways to boost ties between Uttar Pradesh and Singapore, an official said.

boost balanced development in Uttar Pradesh. Wong praised CM Adityanath's February visit to Singapore, saying it showcased UP's potential to global industrialists, the official added.



The meeting, which was held at the chief minister's residence in Lucknow, centred on investment, skill development, infrastructure, and cultural collaboration. The official also said that a comprehensive investment roadmap is being prepared for regions including Noida, Greater Noida, Jhansi, and Varanasi, among others, to

possibilities, which will play an important role in taking India-Singapore relations to greater heights," Wong said, adding that Singapore companies are keen to invest more.

Iran releases hit-list of 8 Gulf bridges after US attacks its biggest B1 bridge

Iranian media listed key regional bridges as potential targets after US-Israeli strikes destroyed Karaj's B1 bridge, escalating tensions amid ongoing retaliatory drone and missile attacks across West Asia.

New Delhi.(Agency)

Iranian media on Friday published a list of major bridges across the Middle East region, in what appeared to be a warning of possible "tit-for-tat" retaliation after a US-Israeli strike destroyed a key bridge in Karaj a day before.

The semi-official Fars News Agency indicated that several prominent bridges in neighbouring countries could be potential targets, after two strikes hit the B1 bridge in the northern Iranian city.

The government has also listed a statutory resolution for levying Special Additional Excise Duty on Aviation Turbine Fuel (ATF) with a prescribed rate of Rs 50 per litre on ATF.

Rijiju said the BJP is ready to sacrifice some of the allotted time remaining with it on the CAPP Bill. "I will not tell other members to sacrifice their time, but we will sacrifice our time as some of our members will speak but for a lesser time. If it is required, we can sit a little after 6 PM," he said.

Among the structures named were one each in Kuwait and Bahrain, two in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and three in Jordan.

The list included:

- > Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah Sea Bridge in Kuwait
-> King Fahd Causeway linking Saudi Arabia to Bahrain
-> Sheikh Zayed Bridge and Sheikh Khalifa Bridge in the United Arab Emirates
-> King Hussein Bridge, Dania Bridge, and Abdoum Bridge in Jordan

US and Israeli forces carried out two strikes on the B1 bridge in Karaj, located in Alborz province, a day before. The attack killed two people and left the structure destroyed.

Videos circulating on social media showed large portions of the bridge collapsing following the strikes. The B1 bridge, stretching roughly 1,000 metres, is considered one of Iran's significant modern infrastructure projects, built to ease congestion between Tehran and Karaj and to improve connectivity to the country's northern regions.

Digital governance, skill development and anti-corruption drive transforming Punjab's future: CM Mann

The Sikh Times

CHANDIGARH, 3 April:

As part of Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government's 'Shandaar Chaar Saal Bhagwant Mann De Naal' series, Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann presented a comprehensive report card highlighting his government's performance across key sectors, positioning it as a decisive shift towards transparent, accountable and people-centric governance. Setting a new benchmark in public employment and governance, the Bhagwant Mann's government has delivered a record 65,264 government jobs in just four years, the highest ever in Punjab's history, while extending a 5-year age relaxation to compensate for the lost opportunities caused by previous regimes. Backed by transparent recruitment across key sectors including education, police, power, health and local bodies, the Bhagwant Mann government has positioned itself as a clean break from past practices of favouritism, asserting that jobs are now being given to common citizens without bribes or recommendations. At the same time, the rapid expansion of Digital Punjab, with 30 lakh monthly footfall at Sewa Kendras and over 8.20 crore services delivered, underscores a broader push towards transparent governance, skill development and systemic reform aimed at reshaping Punjab's future. Presenting the report card of various departments, CM Bhagwant Singh Mann said,

"Punjab is emerging as a new digital hub which has brought transparency in its functioning thereby opening new vistas of government jobs and opportunities for the youth." The Chief Minister highlighted that for the first time in Punjab's history, 65,264 government jobs have been provided within four years, adding, "In Education departments 6,308 jobs have been given, in Punjab Police 12,966 jobs, in Power Department 8,765 jobs, in Health & Family Welfare and Medical Education 6,320 jobs, 5,771 in Local Government



Department and others." He added, "This has checked the brain drain from the state and youth from every village, town, and city in Punjab have benefited by getting jobs." Emphasising transparency in recruitment, CM Bhagwant Singh Mann said, "All jobs were given purely on merit and eligibility, without any bribery or favoritism. No paper leaks occurred, and no recruitment was challenged in court." He further stated, "Several candidates secured jobs multiple times across departments and many of

News box

Delhi youth stabbed to death in Faridabad, minor among 5 held

GURGAON.(Agency)

A 26-year-old man from Delhi was stabbed to death in Faridabad late on Tuesday after a dispute with his girlfriend's family at their residence escalated into a violent assault.

Police have arrested five persons in the case, including a minor, within 24 hours of the incident.

The deceased, Manas Rai, a resident of Jaitpur, worked as a computer operator in Chandigarh. He had gone to meet his girlfriend in Roshan Nagar on Wednesday when the incident took place. His friend Harsh accompanied him.

Police said the altercation began when the girlfriend's younger sister objected to Rai's visit. "As tensions rose, she called some acquaintances to the spot. Soon after, five youths, Aman, Prince, Roshan, Rahul and the minor, reached the location and confronted Rai," an officer said.

The argument quickly turned violent. The accused first assaulted Rai with punches and kicks. During the scuffle, Aman pulled out a knife and stabbed Rai multiple times. Harsh sustained injuries on his hand while trying to intervene. Hearing the commotion, neighbours gathered around the house, prompting the attackers to flee. Police arrived at the spot and rushed Rai to a nearby private hospital. He was later referred to Safdarjung Hospital in Delhi, where he succumbed to his injuries during treatment. Rai's family was informed and his father subsequently filed a complaint with police. The body was handed over to the family after a post-mortem examination. The officer said, "Rai's family was previously acquainted with the girl's family as they lived in the same neighbourhood. Police also indicated that the main accused, Aman, had prior

Man dies as truck rams into bike in Gurgaon, family alleges police action delayed

GURGAON.(Agency)

A 26-year-old man died on Wednesday night, days after a truck rammed into his motorcycle near M3M Mall in Sector 77.

The victim, Sumit, was a resident of Shikohpur village. According to a complaint filed by Sumit's brother Ravinder, the incident took place around 11 pm on March 30. Sumit was riding his motorcycle when a truck, allegedly being driven rashly and at high speed, hit the bike from behind and fled the spot.

"Bystanders chased the truck and intercepted it near Banwari Chowk, but the driver escaped, leaving the vehicle behind," the complainant said.

Sumit was thrown off the motorcycle due to the impact. He was taken to a private hospital in Manesar and later shifted to SGT Hospital in Budhera, where he died during treatment. In his complaint, Ravinder alleged that the truck was not taken into custody by the police even after several days and alleged that the owner of the vehicle took it from the spot.

Police, however, maintained that information about the accident was received on March 30, but when a team reached the spot, neither the vehicle nor the injured person was found. The next day, police traced him to a hospital in Manesar and collected medico-legal records. He was later shifted to another hospital, where he was declared unfit to give a statement. A case was registered at Kherki Daula police station on April 1 under sections 281 (rash driving) and 125(b) (causing hurt by act endangering life or personal safety). After his death, Section 106 (causing death by negligence) was added. Police said they are examining CCTV footage from the area and efforts are underway to identify the owner and the driver of the truck.

Paper checks done, UP Board results likely this month

NOIDA.(Agency)

The Uttar Pradesh Madhyamik Shiksha Parishad Class X and XII results are likely to be declared in the last week of April with evaluation process having been largely completed across Noida and Ghaziabad.

The evaluation process began on March 18 with around 2,000 teachers deployed across evaluation centres in the two districts. They said Ghaziabad has completed checking all 2.3 lakh answer sheets assigned to it, while Noida has evaluated almost all of its 1.7 lakh copies, leaving about 1,000 to be assessed along with documentation formalities. The deadline for Noida has been extended till April 4. "Once the process concludes, the evaluated answer sheets will be dispatched to the



board headquarters," said a senior education official. Teachers involved in the exercise said there has been an overall improvement in student performance this year. They attributed it to mock tests and pre-board examinations conducted on a pattern similar to the final board papers. "The students seemed more familiar with the question format," said a teacher at a Ghaziabad evaluation centre.

However, the evaluators also flagged unusual messages written by some students on answer sheets, allegedly seeking lenient marking. Teachers said several copies had special requests with some students mentioning their mobile numbers and asking examiners to call them, promising to transfer money digitally as "guru dakshina" if they were helped to pass. Such messages were reportedly most common in mathematics, science and English papers.

3 monkeys found dead in Nuh medical college water tanks, contaminated supply suspected

GURGAON.(Agency)

Three monkeys were found dead inside water tanks at a medical college in Nuh, triggering a health scare. The decomposed carcasses were discovered inside the tanks — at Shaheed Hasan Khan Mewati Govt Medical College — that supply water to residential quarters.

The administration termed the incident a "serious lapse" and ordered a probe to fix accountability. Officials estimate that the animals died four to five days ago, raising fears that residents may have unknowingly used contaminated water for drinking, bathing and cooking during that period. The incident came to light after residents of EWS blocks 1, 2 and 3 complained of a strong foul smell in the water on Tuesday, initially dismissing it as routine contamination. However, a formal complaint with the college director prompted an inspection, during which one decomposed monkey was found inside a tank, followed by the recovery of two more carcasses during

cleaning operations on Wednesday. Staff members alleged that water tanks are not cleaned regularly and pointed to a persistent monkey menace on campus, claiming that animals frequently damage tank lids and gain access to stored water.

The situation is particularly worrying in EWS-3, which houses contractual workers, Haryana Kaushal Rozgar Nigam staffers and some regular employees. While drinking water is largely sourced from designated coolers, many residents depend on tank water for daily use or filter it through personal RO systems. The issue escalated after a video showing monkeys inside a tank circulated on staff WhatsApp groups, prompting urgent complaints to authorities. Following the intervention of the estate in-charge and engineers, immediate action was initiated. Under the directions of director Dr Mukesh Kumar, the tanks were cleaned and instructions were issued to replace damaged units and install strong iron lids

and protective mesh to prevent recurrence. The episode has raised broader concerns given that the college is



the only govt medical college in Nuh district, a region already grappling with limited healthcare infrastructure and historically poor health indicators in the Mewat belt. Established to strengthen public healthcare access in one of Haryana's most underserved districts, the institution caters not only to local patients but also to nearby rural populations. In the past, the college has faced criticism over infrastructure gaps,

staff shortages and maintenance issues, although efforts have been made by the state govt in recent years to upgrade facilities. Against this backdrop, the latest incident has once again spotlighted systemic lapses, raising questions about sanitation standards within a key public health institution and the safety of both staff and patients. Reacting to the incident, Nuh MLA Aftab Ahmed said, "It is very unfortunate that such a thing happened in the drinking water tank of a medical college. For such a huge negligence, strict action must be taken against whoever is responsible." He demanded that the govt constitute a high-level committee to investigate the matter, stressing that the panel must not only probe how such a serious lapse occurred but also fix accountability and recommend strict action against those found guilty, along with concrete measures to improve facilities for public relief.

1,269 private schools delay disclosure of fee structure, most in Faridabad and Gurgaon

Gurgaon.(Agency)

The state govt has served an ultimatum to private schools — 14% of the total numbers — that have yet to comply with the mandatory disclosure norms through Form-VI. Form VI is a self-declaration of fee structure, teacher salaries and compliance with regulations for 2026-27 academic session.

The director general of secondary education (DGSE) has ordered all district education officers (DEOs) and district elementary education officers (DEEOs) to issue immediate notices to 1,269 private schools. While Faridabad tops the list of defaulters with 303 non-compliant schools — including 20 primary, 147 middle, 63 high and 73 senior secondary institutions — Gurgaon follows with the second-highest tally of 119 schools, comprising 12 primary, 59 middle, 22 high and 26 senior secondary schools.

These institutions are now under direct orders to review, update and finally

submit their fee information on the Form-VI portal before the final extended deadline of April 5. The department of school education has made the



consequences of further delay crystal clear: any school that fails to declare its fee structure on the portal for the 2026-27 session will be strictly barred from any fee hike. With the clock ticking toward the cutoff date, the state has signalled that its patience has run out, placing the financial future of these schools at stake while prioritising the interests of students and parents across Haryana. These defaulting

schools will be legally bound to charge fees only as per the rates of the previous academic year. This move is aimed at protecting parents from arbitrary price hikes, ensuring that if a school cannot meet the transparency deadline, it loses its right to increase its revenue for the upcoming year. Despite an overall statewide progress rate of over 86%, the department is taking no chances and has tasked district officials with ensuring every single school falls in line. Administrators have been told to utilise the "edit and unlock" facility to rectify any errors, but the final submission must be stamped on the portal by 11.59 pm this Sunday to avoid severe administrative repercussions.

To facilitate a smooth transition, the govt has provided an MIS helpdesk to resolve technical hurdles. However, the DGSE has emphasised that the onus lies entirely on the school managements to ensure their status is marked as "Final Submitted."

1 L Ghaziabad's property owners yet to pay tax, revenue collection dips

Ghaziabad.(Agency)

The Ghaziabad Municipal Corporation collected Rs 305 crore in property tax in 2025-26, falling Rs 35 crore short of the previous year's tally, as a row over a rate hike left more than one lakh residents confused about what they owed.

A revised tax structure was introduced on April 1 last year to align the property tax rates with the district magistrate's circle rate. Following the revision, the maximum property tax increased to Rs 4 per square foot, against Rs 2.4 per square foot previously. The minimum fell marginally to Rs 1.3 per sqft from Rs 1.6.

The corporation has around five lakh registered consumers. Officials say over one lakh have not paid, largely because the mayor and municipal administration have publicly contradicted each other on whether the hiked rate applies. While mayor Sunita Dayal last month urged

residents not to pay at the revised rate, municipal commissioner Vikramaditya Singh Malik maintained the hike stands. Both separately approached state govt officials in recent weeks in an effort to



have their position prevail. Ghaziabad Sadar MLA Sanjeev Sharma said the matter had reached the CMO. "A middle path is being worked out and a

clear direction from the state govt is expected within a fortnight," he said.

In the interim, the corporation's online payment portal will remain non-functional until April 15, as it undergoes its annual post-financial-year update. But GMC officials said they hoped to recover Rs 100 crore from defaulters once the portal was restored, with a 12% penalty to be imposed on unpaid dues calculated at the board-approved hiked rate.

Of the Rs 305 crore collected across five zones this fiscal year, Vasundhara led with Rs 133 crore. Mohan Nagar and Kavinagar zones contributed Rs 52 crore each, city zone added Rs 40 crore, and Vijay Nagar brought in Rs 16 crore. Indrapuram, which was a part of Vasundhara zone before GDA handover and now is now a separate zone, accounted for the remaining Rs 10.4

Why FIR against 'unknown persons': NGT questions mining probe

NOIDA.(Agency)

National Green Tribunal has questioned the fairness of a police probe into alleged illegal sand mining on the Yamuna floodplain in Ghaziabad, asking why an FIR was lodged against "unknown persons" even though the activity was reported from within a notified mining lease area. Pointing to "serious concerns" in the police response, the tribunal asked the Ghaziabad police commissioner to file a detailed affidavit explaining the investigation and identifying those involved at least a day before the next hearing on April 9. It also asked the district task force to carry out a detailed site inspection. The principal bench, comprising judicial member Arun Tyagi and expert member A Senthil Vel, passed the order while hearing a batch of pleas in the long-running case on illegal mining on the Yamuna floodplain, linked to the matter titled Bittu vs State of UP and others, pending since 2023.

The case takes off from the tribunal's Jan 29 order



restraining all mining by project proponent M/s New Panther Security Guard Services in view of GRAP-3 restrictions issued by the Commission for Air Quality Management. The company challenged that order in Supreme Court, but its appeal was dismissed on Feb 26.

During the hearing on March 19, the bench noted that, in purported compliance with its Jan 29 order, police had registered an FIR against "unknown persons" and the

unknown owner of an excavator. The tribunal said the reply filed by the Ghaziabad police commissioner and the FIR itself raised "serious questions" about the fairness of the action and investigation.

It said the key issue was how the FIR could name unknown persons when the site fell within a mining lease area. The bench also questioned the police explanation about mining from a pit inside the lease, saying the investigation had failed to

examine why and how such a pit was created in the riverbed, who created it, and whether mining from any waterlogged pit in the riverbed was permissible at all.

The tribunal said all persons involved in the alleged illegal mining, along with the driver and owner of the excavator, would be implicated. It directed the police commissioner to file an additional report, through his own affidavit, on the progress of the investigation from Jan 2 onwards, including "details of the persons involved and the owner and driver of the JCB".

On the lease holder's plea seeking removal of the stay on mining, the tribunal ordered the district task force to verify whether illegal mining was carried out by the project proponent within the lease area, or by anyone else in nearby areas of Ghaziabad district.

It also took note of a video clip recorded by Mohsin, a resident of Badarpur village, and produced before the tribunal by applicant Bittu of Panchayara

village. To verify the authenticity of the video and related statements, the tribunal ordered both men to appear before it for recording.

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Sevadar Trust organised a grand feast on the occasion of Hanuman Janmotsav in Rajendra Nagar, devotees took prasad, huge crowd of devotees gathered on Hanuman Janmotsav

The Sikh Times New Delhi. On the auspicious occasion of Hanuman Jayanti, the residents of New Rajendra Nagar, Pamposh Road, Delhi witnessed a grand feast organized by the Sevadar organization this year, organized by Delhi State BJP Business Cell Co-ordinator, prominent social worker and BJP leader Ramdas Malik, and National President of Sevadar Trust Rahul Malik. A devotional atmosphere prevailed throughout the area, with thousands of devotees arriving to have darshan of Lord Hanuman and receive prasad. The venue was decorated attractively, creating a festive atmosphere everywhere. The temple rituals began in the morning. Devotees worshipped Lord Hanuman with due rituals, offered chola (clothes), and prayed for happiness and prosperity. A bhajan-kirtan (song recitation) was also organized in the temple premises, which devotees participated in with great enthusiasm. The entire atmosphere reverberated with chants of "Jai Bajrangbali." On this occasion, Delhi State BJP Business Cell Co-ordinator, prominent social worker and BJP leader Ramdas Malik said that arrangements for puris, vegetables, halwa, and other prasad were made in the massive bhandara. Despite the large crowd of devotees, the arrangements were well-organized. Teams of volun-

teers remained engaged in continuous service, and prasad was lovingly distrib-

Rahul Malik, a regional BJP youth leader and national president of the

ties. R.D. Malik concluded by saying that the grand Hanuman Janmotsav



uted to every attendee. BJP regional youth leader Rahul Malik said that, like every year, the feast was held with great devotion. He added that such religious events promote unity and brotherhood in society. He also noted that the participation of young people in this program was particularly commendable, as they actively participated in the service. Devotees also praised the event. Finally,

Sevadar Trust, said, "Events like these give us spiritual energy and help unite society." Many people described it as an important part of their lives and expressed their desire to attend it every year. A large number of women and children were also seen at the event. Women participated in bhajans and kirtans, while children also assisted in the distribution of prasad and service activi-

event held in Rajendra Nagar became a symbol of faith, devotion, and social unity. The enthusiasm of the devotees and the hard work of the organizers made this event memorable. Such religious events not only provide spiritual peace but also strengthen the spirit of cooperation, service, and dedication in society. This event in Rajendra Nagar provides a beautiful example of this.

9 of a family among 10 fall ill after eating momos in Noida

Noida: At least 10 persons, nine of them from one family, fell ill after allegedly consuming momos from a nearby shop in Dadri area of Gautam Buddha Nagar district, officials said on Thursday. The affected persons complained of stomach ache, fever and vomiting and were admitted to the Community Health Centre (CHC) in Dadri on Wednesday evening. Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Narendra Kumar said all the patients were discharged after treatment and showed symptoms consistent with food poisoning. "There were 10 persons admitted at CHC, Dadri. They were discharged after treatment. They had symptoms of food poisoning after eating momos," he said. According to officials, nine of the affected persons belonged to one family. A local resident, Mohammad Arif, said his family members had purchased momos from a nearby shop after which they started feeling unwell. "After eating the momos, they developed fever, stomach ache and vomiting," he said, adding that nine members of his family were hospitalised. Food Safety Department official Sarvesh Mishra said samples from the shop owner's premises have been collected and sent for laboratory testing. "Further action will be taken based on the test reports," he said.

Minor boy killed, another injured in stabbing at Delhi wedding

New Delhi: A 17-year-old boy died while another minor was injured after they were stabbed during a dispute over food arrangements at a wedding in outer Delhi, police said on Saturday. According to police, an argument broke out between two groups over food arrangements at the wedding, which quickly turned violent. Eyewitness accounts indicated that Nikhil and Sunny tried to intervene and pacify the disputing groups when they were stabbed with a knife by another minor boy. Both the boys sustained serious injuries and were rushed to a hospital nearby, where doctors declared Nikhil dead.

Digital governance, skill development and anti-corruption drive transforming Punjab's future: CM Mann

Contd...Front page Detailing employment initiatives, CM Bhagwant Singh Mann said, "1,799 self-employment camps helped 1,99,000 youth get loans for starting businesses and 6,724 placement camps and job fairs helped lakhs of youth to secure employment." He added, "Modernisation of 11 training centers and establishment of three new ones has taken place," and further stated, "36,342 youth have been trained for Army, Navy, Air Force, and paramilitary forces, out of which 5,509 have been recruited." Highlighting defence training institutes, he said, "Maharaja Ranjit Singh Armed Forces Preparatory Institute has trained 218 boys, out of which 106 joined NDA and academics and 85 became commissioned officers, while Mai Bhago Armed Forces Preparatory Institute trained 199 girls, of whom 24 became commissioned officers. A new institute in Hoshiarpur will be started soon." Underscoring digital governance, CM Bhagwant Singh Mann said, "Punjab is moving towards becoming a Digital Punjab as 544 Sewa Kendras are providing over 465 services." He added, "Around 30 lakh people benefit monthly from these centres, meaning one lakh people are getting benefits daily, and 82 million digital services have been delivered so far." He further stated, "Certificates such as birth, death and marriage are sent via SMS and WhatsApp and over one crore certificates have been delivered digitally." He noted that the pendency rate has been drastically reduced, adding, "It has come down from 14% to just 0.52%." Highlighting

citizen-centric initiatives, CM Bhagwant Singh Mann said, "The Bhagwant Mann Tuhade Dwar Scheme was launched in December 2023 from Ludhiana, under which citizens can avail 437 services from home via 1076 helpline." He added, "This scheme is especially helpful for elderly and those unable to visit offices and 2.66 lakh people have benefited so far." On disaster relief reforms, CM Bhagwant Singh Mann said, "Punjab has introduced the first-of-its-kind Digital Flood Compensation System in the country." He added, "Compensation has been distributed digitally in 3,700 villages, ensuring transparency and eliminating wrongful claims." Talking about land reforms, CM Bhagwant Singh Mann said, "Easy Registry has eliminated corruption in Tehsil offices and over six lakh documents have been registered since July 2025." He added, "The middlemen system has been removed and registration can now be done online with a single click." He further stated, "Sub-Registrar can raise objections within 48 hours and higher authorities can review them, while people can register property from any Sub-Registrar office in the district and receive real-time updates via WhatsApp." He added, "Complaint options for bribery and 'Draft My Deed' feature have also been provided." Highlighting transport reforms, CM Bhagwant Singh Mann said, "Faceless RTO Services have been introduced for the first time in Punjab, marking a major digital transformation." He added, "Now there is no need to visit RTO offices

as 56 services including license and RC have been made fully faceless and are available via 1076 and Sewa Kendras, benefiting 25,236 people so far." Reiterating the government's anti-corruption stance, CM Bhagwant Singh Mann said, "The state government has adopted a zero tolerance policy against corruption and Anti-Corruption Action Line was launched on March 23, 2022." He added, "12,218 complaints were received, of which 10,820 were sent to departments and 1,398 to the Vigilance Bureau." He further stated, "275 FIRs have been registered and 341 accused arrested, including 16 gazetted officers, 161 government employees, 88 police personnel

and 77 civilians." He added, "The Vigilance Bureau has conducted 487 raids and registered 534 cases against 1,215 accused." Giving further details, CM Bhagwant Singh Mann said, "Investigations are underway against 357 individuals including 112 gazetted officers, 162 government employees and 83 private individuals." He added, "143 cases have resulted in convictions and several officials have been dismissed from service." He asserted, "This is only a report card of four years and work for public welfare will continue in the coming time too." Responding to a query, CM Bhagwant Singh Mann said, "It is a paradoxical situation that

Nehru is responsible for everything bad that has taken place in the country, Arvind Kejriwal for Delhi and I for Punjab and Chandigarh." He added, "BJP is running away from its responsibility by shifting this onus to political rivals, whereas from 75 lakh promise to MSP, nothing has been delivered." He asserted, "BJP should not evade responsibility by playing word games and using stooges to target opponents." On farmer welfare, CM Bhagwant Singh Mann said, "The government is exploring the feasibility of putting high tension wires passing through farmers' land underground." He added, "This ambitious scheme will be implemented soon to benefit farmers

and reduce risks to crops." He further stated, "The project will begin from my native village where 413 tube wells and 1,100 electricity poles exist across 2,000 acres, and work to shift them underground will start soon." On the upcoming legislative agenda, CM Bhagwant Singh Mann said, "A special Assembly session has been convened on the occasion of Vaisakhi to amend the Jagat Sri Guru Granth Sahib Satkar Act, 2008." He added, "Anyone attempting sacrilege will face strict punishment ranging from a minimum of 10 years to life imprisonment." He noted that consultations are underway with Sant Samaj and legal experts regarding the proposed amend-

ments. Addressing concerns of Aarthiyas, CM Bhagwant Singh Mann said, "Aarthiyas are welcome to do business in Haryana but their issues can only be resolved by the Centre." He added, "I have raised their genuine demands multiple times before the Government of

India but no attention has been paid." He reiterated, "The state government is fully committed to ensuring smooth and hassle-free wheat procurement with all arrangements already in place." Cabinet Minister Aman Arora and others were also present on the occasion.

3 of family killed in hit-and-run by speeding Thar in Gurugram's Pataudi

Gurugram: A speeding Thar struck a grandfather and his two grandsons walking in Khod village in Pataudi area on Friday night. Both children died on the spot, while the man died during treatment in hospital. The Pataudi police sent the bodies to the mortuary. The police have taken the vehicle into custody and registered an FIR against the unidentified driver. According to the police, the deceased were identified as Subhash (53), a resident of Khod village, and his grandsons, Zayed Khan (8) and Ishant (10), sons of Subhash's daughter and both residents of Milkpur village in Bhiwadi, Rajasthan.

NAME CHANGE

I, KAKARLA NAVEENA wife of No-14661532K, Rank-HAV, Name-GUMMADI DHILLESWARA RAO residing at 6-44, PRAGADA PUT, SOUTH, KAVITI, SRIKAKULAM, ANDHRA PRADESH-532322, have changed my name from KAKARLA NAVEENA to GUMMADI NAVEENA for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 03/04/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE

I, CHANDAN PANDAY S/O RAMDEV PANDAY R/O B-85, GALI NO-2 HARDEV NAGAR, JHARODA MAJRA, BURARI, DELHI-110085, have changed my name to CHANDAN PANDEY for all future purposes.

NAME CHANGE

I, NITU PANDEY / NEETU PANDEY W/O CHANDAN PANDEY R/O B-85, GALI NO-2 HARDEV NAGAR, JHARODA MAJRA, BURARI, DELHI-110085, have changed my name to NEETU PANDEY for all future purposes.

NAME CHANGE

It is for general information that I HAYAT SINGH S/O BHIM SINGH BHANDARI R/O G-114, Plot No. 34, Galaxy Apartment, Street No. 5, Near Dda Park, Palam Colony, Raj Nagar Part-2, Raj Nagar Part-2, South West Delhi, Delhi-110077 declare that name of mine and my wife has been wrongly written as HAYAT SINGH BHANDARI and DHANESHWARI in my minor son namely MILAN SINGH BHANDARI aged 15 years in his Birth Certificate No-MCDOLLR-0110-004548295 and name of mine and my wife has been wrongly written as HS BHANDARI and DHANESHWARI DEVI in his School Records. The actual name of mine and my wife are HAYAT SINGH and DHANESHWARI BHANDARI respectively which may be amended accordingly.

NAME CHANGE

I, J.C-779662N Rank-NB SUB Name-JANI KRUNAL KUMAR CHIMAN LAL FATHER OF DHRUV JANI Presently residing at 44 PANCHVATI PARK, NEAR ANUPAM VIDYALAY, NARODA, SAJJPUR BOGHA, AHMEDABAD, GUJARAT-382345, have changed my minor son's name from DHRUV JANI to DHRUV KRUNALKUMAR JANI for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 03/04/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE

I, J.C-779662N Rank-NB SUB Name-JANI KRUNAL KUMAR CHIMAN LAL FATHER OF JANI KRUPALI Presently residing at 44 PANCHVATI PARK, NEAR ANUPAM VIDYALAY, NARODA, SAJJPUR BOGHA, AHMEDABAD, GUJARAT-382345, have changed my minor daughter's name from JANI KRUPALI to KRUPALI KRUNALKUMAR JANI for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 03/04/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE

I, J.C-779662N Rank-NB SUB Name-JANI KRUNAL KUMAR CHIMAN LAL Presently residing at 44 PANCHVATI PARK, NEAR ANUPAM VIDYALAY, NARODA, SAJJPUR BOGHA, AHMEDABAD, GUJARAT-382345, have changed my wife's name from JANI DEVAL to DEVALBEN KRUNALKUMAR JANI for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 03/04/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE

I, J.C-779662N Rank-NB SUB Name-JANI KRUNAL KUMAR CHIMAN LAL Presently residing at 44 PANCHVATI PARK, NEAR ANUPAM VIDYALAY, NARODA, SAJJPUR BOGHA, AHMEDABAD, GUJARAT-382345, have changed my wife's name from JANI DEVAL to DEVALBEN KRUNALKUMAR JANI for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 03/04/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE

I, J.C-779662N Rank-NB SUB Name-JANI KRUNAL KUMAR CHIMAN LAL Presently residing at 44 PANCHVATI PARK, NEAR ANUPAM VIDYALAY, NARODA, SAJJPUR BOGHA, AHMEDABAD, GUJARAT-382345, have changed my wife's name from JANI DEVAL to DEVALBEN KRUNALKUMAR JANI for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 03/04/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

It's publically informed that Shreya Eye Centre, D-163, Surajmal Vihar, Delhi-110092 is destroying medical records both IPD & OPD till 31st March 2021. Any person interested may contact within 7 days after publishing the notice advertisement.

Authority (Dr Ruby Gupta) Medical Superintendent (MS) Shreya Eye Center

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, AMAN KHAN S/O TASLIM R/O H.No. 245, GALI NO-6, SHYAM COLONY, SEHATPUR, AMARNAR, PO: AMARNAR, DIST: FARIDABAD, HARYANA-121003, hereby undertake that I AMAN KHAN want to change my name to SANA KHAN and gender as FEMALE I AMAN KHAN henceforth be known as SANA KHAN D/O TASLIM. The above statement made by me is true & correct to the best of my knowledge and belief. If any arises in this regard at any stage, I will be personally responsible for the same and, the of Publication will not be liable for any consequences arising therefrom. I hitherto known as AMAN KHAN S/O TASLIM R/O H.No. 245, GALI NO-6, SHYAM COLONY, SEHATPUR, AMARNAR, PO: AMARNAR, DIST: FARIDABAD, HARYANA-121003, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as SANA KHAN. It is certified that I have complied with other legal requirements in this connection.

NAME CHANGE

I, Mangay Khan S/o Nazir Khan R/O H.No.B-14/34, Gali No.14, Subhash Vihar, North Ghonda, Garhi Mendu, Delhi-110053 have changed my name to Mangey Khan.

NAME CHANGE

I, Dinesh Jain S/o Girja Prasad Jain R/o Dayanand Gali, 9/5685, Main Road Old Seelampur, Gandhi Nagar, Delhi-110031 have changed my name to Dinesh Kumar Jain.

NAME CHANGE

I, ABDUL JABBAR QURESHI S/O ABDUL SHAKOOR R/O Kh.No-115, 100 futa road, Near fazle Karim Masjid Prem Nagar Loni Ghaziabad Uttar Pradesh 201102 HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO ABDUL JABBAR

NAME CHANGE

I, ISHRAAT JAHAN W/O ABDUL JABBAR R/O Kh -115, 100 Futa Road, Near Fazle Karim Masjid, Prem Nagar Loni Ghaziabad Uttar Pradesh 201102 HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO ISHRAAT

NAME CHANGE

I, Mohammad Smile S/o Sharafat Khan R/o S/O Sharafat Khan, H No C 39 A, Gali no 2 kh. no. 350, guru nank dev colony, Bhalwa dairy, Libas Pur, PO: Libas Pur, DIST: North West Delhi, Delhi-110042 have changed my name to Md Smile Khan for all future purposes.

NAME CHANGE

I, SITA RAM SWAMI Father of Jc-393712L Rank-NB SUB Name-GANESH MAL SWAMI Presently residing at PANI PLANT AREA, BUDHWALL, PO-BHOJASAR, DIST-CHURU, RAJASTHAN-331505, have changed my name from SITA RAM SWAMI to SITA RAM for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 03/04/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE

I, SANTOSH SWAMI Mother of Jc-393712L Rank-NB SUB Name-GANESH MAL SWAMI Presently residing at PANI PLANT AREA, BUDHWALL, PO-BHOJASAR, DIST-CHURU, RAJASTHAN-331505, have changed my name from SANTOSH SWAMI to SANTOSH DEVI for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 03/04/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE

I, No-6501176L Rank-NK/CHIEF Name-BHADRAURIYA AJIT SINGH Presently residing at HOUSE NO 1, RAVI ROW HOUSE SOCIETY KUBER NAGAR, AHMEDABAD, GUJARAT, have changed my son's name from KAVYA to KAVYA AJIT SINGH BHADRAURIYA for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 03/04/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE

I, No-14858767P Rank-SEP/MT Name-MARIMUTHU P Presently residing at VPO-A AMMAPATTI, TEH-TIRUMANGALAM, DIST-MADURAI, TAMIL NADU-625706, have changed my mother's name from P PANDI YAMMAL to PANDIYAMMAL PRAMASIVAM for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 03/04/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE

I, ARMA SASTIYA Wife of No-14859369A Rank-SEP/MT Name-NILESHBHAI NALLURBHAI Presently residing at VILL-SIMALKUVA, PO-BHORDA, TEH+DIST-CHHOTAUDI, GUJARAT-391165, have changed my name from ARMA SASTIYA to RATHVA ARMABEN NILESHBHAI for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 03/04/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE

I, ARMA SASTIYA Wife of No-14859369A Rank-SEP/MT Name-NILESHBHAI NALLURBHAI Presently residing at VILL-SIMALKUVA, PO-BHORDA, TEH+DIST-CHHOTAUDI, GUJARAT-391165, have changed my name from ARMA SASTIYA to RATHVA ARMABEN NILESHBHAI for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 03/04/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE

I, No-14855983X Rank-SEP/MT Name-DEEPAK S KAMIRE Presently residing at VPO-MANGUR, TEH-CHIKKODI, DIST-BELAGAVI, KARNATAKA-591215, have changed my father's name from SHASHIKANT to SHASHIKANT APPA KAMIRE for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 03/04/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE

I, No-14855983X Rank-SEP/MT Name-DEEPAK S KAMIRE Presently residing at VPO-MANGUR, TEH-CHIKKODI, DIST-BELAGAVI, KARNATAKA-591215, have changed my mother's name from KUSHALI to KUSHALI SHASHIKANT KAMIRE for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 03/04/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE

I, Sunita Devi W/o Dinesh Prajapati R/o 142JUGF US Pt. No. B-2, Gautam Nagar, Andrewsganj, South Delhi, Delhi-110049 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Sunita.

NAME CHANGE

I Herambji Soren W/o Nirmal Hembrom R/o Satwora, Vill-Tudyu PS-Bano, VTC-Turyu, PO-Langgarh, District-Simdega, Jharkhand - 835201, have changed my name to Hiramani Hembrom

NAME CHANGE

I, No-14831075W Rank-HAV/MT, Name-VINOD KUMAR YOGI Presently residing VILL-LANGER BAS, TEH-KISHANGHER BAS, DIST-ALWAR, RAJASTHAN-301405, have changed my father's name from SHRI RAMJULAL to RAMJI LAL for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 03/04/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE

I, No-14877011P Rank-SEP/MT Name-CHANDRA BADAN Presently residing at VILL-BARAYABHAR URF NAKHA, PO-BIGHI, TEH-KHAJUNI, DIST-GORAKHPUR, UTTAR PRADESH-273212, have changed my mother's name from MEWATI DEVI to MEVATI for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 03/04/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE

I, BHUMIKA SACHIN SARVE Wife of No-14852524N Rank-LNK Name-SARVE SACHIN TUKARAM Presently residing at VPO-PIPRI, TEH+DIST-BHANDARA, MAHARASHTRA-441906, have changed my name from BHUMIKA SACHIN SARVE to BHUMIKADEVI SACHIN SARVE for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 03/04/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE

I, ARMA SASTIYA Wife of No-14859369A Rank-SEP/MT Name-NILESHBHAI NALLURBHAI Presently residing at VILL-SIMALKUVA, PO-BHORDA, TEH+DIST-CHHOTAUDI, GUJARAT-391165, have changed my name from ARMA SASTIYA to RATHVA ARMABEN NILESHBHAI for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 03/04/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE

I, No-14852524N Rank-LNK Name-SARVE SACHIN TUKARAM Presently residing at VPO-PIPRI, TEH+DIST-BHANDARA, MAHARASHTRA-441906, have changed my father's name from TUKARAM to TUKARAM LAXMAN SARVE for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 03/04/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE

I, hitherto known as Indu Rani D/o Prakash Chand W/o Mohd Javed R/o D-52, Gali No-18, Chauhan Bangar, Brahmपुरi-110053 have Changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Zainab.

NAME CHANGE

I, K ANDAMAL Mother of No-2615127K Rank-LHAV Name-BHARATI RAJA, Presently residing at VILL-AYAPATI, PO-OTTAKOLI PATI, TEH-MELUR, DIST-MADURAI, TAMIL NADU-625101, have changed my name from K ANDAMAL to ANDAMMA for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 03/04/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE

I, YALLAVVA Mother of No-2615882X Rank-HAV Name-BASAPPA VITTAL DIDAGANNAVAR Presently residing at VPO+TEH-YARAGATTI, DIST-BELAGAVI, KARNATAKA-591129, have changed my name from YALLAVVA to YALLAVVA VITTALA DIDAGANNAVARA for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 03/04/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE

I, VITTAL DIDAGANNAVAR Father of No-2615882X Rank-HAV Name-BASAPPA VITTAL DIDAGANNAVAR Presently residing at VPO+TEH-YARAGATTI, DIST-BELAGAVI, KARNATAKA-591129, have changed my name from VITAL DIDAGANNAVAR to VITTAL BASAPPA DIDAGANNAVAR for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 03/04/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE

I, M ANJAMMAL Wife of Jc-442002A Rank-SUB Name-S MANIKANNAN Presently residing at VPO-ERAVANGUDI, TEH-UDAYARPALAYAM, DIST-ARIYALUR, TAMIL NADU-621803, have changed my name from M ANJAMMAL to ANJAMMAL M for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 03/04/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE

I, ESWARAMMA Mother of No-2607390A Rank-CHM Name-B CHANDRA PRABHAKAR Presently residing at VILL-KRISTAM PALLI, PO-NARASIMHUNI PALLI, TAL-GIDDALUR, DIST-PRAKASAM, ANDHRA PRADESH-523369, have changed my name from ESWARAMMA to BANALA ESWARAMMA for all future purposes and in my son's service records as 22/09/1959 instead of my correct date of birth as 01/01/1971 vide Affidavit dated 17/03/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE

I, BRAHMAIAH Father of No-2607390A Rank-CHM Name-B CHANDRA PRABHAKAR Presently residing at VILL-KRISTAM PALLI, PO-NARASIMHUNI PALLI, TAL-GIDDALUR, DIST-PRAKASAM, ANDHRA PRADESH-523369, have changed my name from BRAHMAIAH to BANALA BRAHMAIAH for all future purposes and in my son's service records my date of birth wrongly mentioned as 22/12/1956 instead of my correct date of birth as 28/02/1959 vide Affidavit dated 17/03/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE

I, SOHON PANIKA S/O DAU PANIKA R/O H NO-628, FLAT NO-D-2, BANK COLONY, VILLAGE DEVLII, DELHI-110062, have changed my name to SOHAN PANIKA for all future purposes.

NAME CHANGE

I Mohd. Ashraf, s/o Mohd. Sami. R/o H No. D-25, 3rd floor Lane No. 7, Noor Nagar Extn, Johri Farm, sukhdew vinar South Delhi.

NAME CHANGE

Declared that my father name mentioned on various documents—as Mohammad Sami Mohd. Sami, and Mohd. Shami however, these all refer to one and the same person

NAME CHANGE

I, PURUSHAUTAM VERMA S/O KANHAIYA LAL R/O H NO-1188 NEAR BY DURGA MANDIR GALI NO -8 SAURABH VIHAR JATPUR BADARPUR NEW DELHI 110044, have changed my name to PURUSOTTAM VERMA for all future purposes.

NAME CHANGE

I, DINESH CHAUHARY S/O DEVENDER KUMAR R/O H NO 110 GALI NO 57A NEAR SABJI MANDI MOLARBAND EXTN BADARPUR SOUTH DELHI - 110044, have changed my name to DINESH CHAUDHARY for all future purposes.

NAME CHANGE

I, SANJEEV MATHUR S/O ITWARI LAL R/O H NO-141, FIRST FLOOR, GAUTAM PURI, PHASE -1, BADARPUR, SOUTH DELHI-110044, have changed my name to SANJEEV KUMAR for all future purposes.

NAME CHANGE

I, PUSHPANULI D/O SANTOSH KUMAR R/O 27 SHEETLA COLONY BLOCK-D 5 MAIN ROAD GURGAON-122001 HARYANA HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO PUSHPANJALI FOR ALL PURPOSE.

NOTICE

Public at large is hereby informed that Sh. Rajender Kumar Rathore S/o Late Sh. Sukh Lal Rathore is the owner of Property Bearing No. 2385, admeasuring 65 Sq. Yds., Situated at Basti Punjabian, Subzi Mandi, Delhi-110007 vide Relinquishment Deed dated 24.09.2025 executed by (1) Smt. Manju Rathore W/o Sh. Rajesh Rathore, (2) Sh. Ravinder Kumar Rathore S/o Late Sh. Sukh Lal Rathore, (3) Sh. Mahender Kumar Rathore S/o Late Sh. Sukh Lal Rathore and (4) Sh. Vijay Kumar Rathore S/o Late Sh. Sukh Lal Rathore in respect of undivided 4/5th Share Property Bearing No. 2385, admeasuring 65 Sq. Yds., as Doc No. 2025/19/II/12140, Book No. I, Volume No. 12774, on Page No. 47-58, SRO-I, Kashmere Gate, That (1) Original Conveyance Deed dated 07.09.1981 executed by POI through Department of Rehabilitation in favour of Sh. Jogender Singh S/o Sh. Latha Singh in respect of Plot No. XII/2385, as Doc No. 4852, Book No. I, Volume No. 4053, SRO-Delhi, was listed 03/01/2026 duly reported to police as per police complaint dated 02/04/2026 in the police station North District/Crime Branch, Delhi, L.R.No: 205978/2026. If anyone found the same may return to undersigned and if the same is misused shall be at his/her own risk. That my client intends to mortgage the said immovable property for her bonafide requirements to Cholamandalam Investment and Finance Company Ltd. Whosoever is having any objection to the said mortgage or anyone has claim or right or interest in the property shall contact the undersigned with the objection within 07 days falling which it shall be presumed that there stands no objections. NEW DELHI DATE: 3/4/2025

PRAGYA BHUSHAN ADVOCATE

Enrl. No. D/72/102 Office: L-27,GF, Kailash Colony, New Delhi-48 Mob.: 9968006418

NEWS BOX

Pak's Khawaja Asif's "Calibrated" Response Warning Before Pahalgam Anniversary

Islamabad. (Agency)

Pakistan's Defence Minister Khawaja Asif has threatened India with future aggression, days before the first anniversary of the horrific 2025 Pahalgam attack. In a post on X, Asif said, "The illusion of space for war between two nuclear states is inconceivable", and warned of a "swift" and "calibrated" response to India's military actions. The Pakistani minister's remarks came in response to Defence Minister Rajnath Singh's comments, who earlier said that any "misadventure" from India's neighbour in the prevailing situation would invite an "unprecedented and decisive" action.

What Khawaja Asif Said

Responding to Singh, Asif wrote on X, "The next time our response will be even more forceful and decisive." He claimed India's rhetoric reflects "visible strategic anxiety as the anniversary of the Pahalgam". "Let there be no ambiguity: Pakistan remains committed to peace and regional stability, but its resolve to defend sovereignty is absolute, its preparedness complete, and its response will be swift, calibrated, and decisive." He further said, "Let me remind Rajnath Singh that the illusion of space for war between two nuclear states is inconceivable and has drastic consequences." What Rajnath Singh Said

Speaking at an event in poll-bound Kerala, Singh on Thursday said that following the April 2025 Pahalgam terror attack that claimed 26 lives, India had destroyed the terrorist hideouts and infrastructure in Pakistan. He said that during Operation Sindoor, Indian forces brought Pakistan to its knees within 22 minutes. The tensions escalated between India and Pakistan after the Pahalgam attack, leading to a four-day military confrontation between the two nuclear-armed neighbours. The Indian military had destroyed at least nine terror camps inside Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir and also struck some major military bases in the country during Operation Sindoor. Some of these infrastructures are still under repair. The hostilities ended after Pakistan sought a ceasefire on May 10, and both nations took a series of retaliatory steps.

3 Ships Escape Hormuz Chokehold Through New Route Along Oman Coast

Tehran. (Agency)

Three tankers broadcasting Omani ownership appeared to enter the Strait of Hormuz by hugging their home country's coastline, indicating a different route to a northerly path through Iranian waters.

Two oil supertankers and a liquefied natural gas vessel headed east into the strait on Thursday, based on the satellite signals they were broadcasting.

All three vessels are managed by Oman Ship Management Company, according to the Equasis marine database. The company couldn't be reached for comment. The Strait of Hormuz has been largely blocked since the start of the conflict, Iran has begun to negotiate transit for a handful of vessels tied to friendly nations, which have followed an agreed northerly route through its own waters.

On Thursday, Iran's state-run IRNA cited Iran Deputy Foreign Minister Kazem Gharibabadi as saying that Tehran is drafting a protocol with Oman to monitor traffic through the Strait of Hormuz. Muscat's position on the comments was unclear.

The effective closure of the crucial waterway has upended global energy markets, sending prices surging and putting growing international pressure on US President Donald Trump. Iran is also trying to set up a tolling system, seeking payments of as much as \$2 million per voyage through the waterway. The three ships transiting are particularly interesting because they are the largest type of oil tankers and would be the first LNG carrier to escape the gulf since the war began.

Oracle Office In Dubai Hit In Iran Strikes? What UAE Said

World. (Agency)

Amid Iran's continued attacks on US and Israeli targets in the Middle East, the authorities in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) have denied reports claiming that the Iranian Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) have targeted a data centre belonging to American tech firm Oracle in Dubai. Talking to X, the Dubai Government's Media Office said that media reports alleging the IRGC has launched or attempted an attack in Dubai were "fake news" and had no basis in fact. Posting a screengrab of one such report, the official account of the Dubai Media Office wrote, "Fake News Alert". The clarification came after Iranian media reported that the data centres of two US firms -- Oracle in Dubai and Amazon in Bahrain -- were targeted by the IRGC in a new wave of attacks on US firms on Thursday.

Authorities in Dubai have repeatedly cautioned against spreading misinformation -- especially during periods of heightened regional tensions -- urging the public to obtain updates only from official government sources. Iran's Attack on Gulf Allies

The Iranian attacks followed a warning from state media that the IRGC would target American companies, including Microsoft, Google, Apple, Meta, Oracle, Intel, HP, IBM, Cisco, Dell, Palantir and Nvidia in relation to US-Israeli aggression. Tehran on Thursday said it had targeted the UAE, Bahrain and Israel after US-Israeli strikes hit the country's two largest steel plants.

Iran has also been on the receiving end of such attacks. A data centre in Tehran, operated by Iran's state-run Bank Sepah, was struck by a missile -- apparently fired by US or Israeli forces -- on March 11, according to a report in The Jerusalem Post.

Artemis II astronauts rocket toward the moon after spending a day around Earth

Now committed to the moon, the Artemis II test flight is the opening act for NASA's grand plans for a moon base and sustained lunar living.

CAPE CANAVERAL. (Agency)

NASA's Artemis II astronauts fired their engines and blazed toward the moon Thursday night, breaking free of the chains that have trapped humanity in shallow laps around Earth in the decades since Apollo. The so-called translunar ignition came 25 hours after liftoff, putting the three Americans and a Canadian on course for a lunar fly-around early next week. Their Orion capsule bolted out of orbit around Earth right on cue and chased after the moon to nearly 250,000 miles (400,000 kilometers) away. "Ladies and gentlemen, I am so, so excited to be able to tell you that for the first time since 1972 during Apollo

17, human beings have left Earth orbit," NASA's Lori Glaze announced at a news conference. The engine firing was flawless, she noted. Canadian astronaut Jeremy Hansen said he and his crewmates were glued to the capsule's windows as they left Earth in the rearview mirror, taking in the "phenomenal" views. "Humanity has once again shown what we are capable of, and it's your hopes for the future that carry us now on this journey around the moon," he said. NASA had the Artemis II crew stick close to home for a day to test their capsule's life-support systems before clearing them for lunar departure.

Now committed to the moon, the Artemis II test flight is the opening act for NASA's grand plans for a moon base and sustained lunar living. Commander Reid Wiseman, pilot Victor Glover, Christina Koch and Hansen will dash past the moon then hang a U-turn and zip straight home without stopping on land. In the process, they will become the farthest humans have ever traveled from Earth, breaking the Apollo 13 distance record set in 1970. They also may become the fastest during their reentry

at flight's end on April 10.

Glover, Koch and Hansen already have made history as the first Black, the first woman and the first non-U.S. citizen to launch to the moon. Apollo's 24 lunar travelers were all white men. To set the mood for the day's main event, Mission Control woke up the crew with John Legend's "Green Light" featuring Andre 3000 and a medley of NASA teams cheering them. Mission Control gave the final go-ahead minutes before the critical engine firing, telling the astronauts that they were embarking on "humanity's lunar homecoming arc" to bring them back to Earth. The capsule is relying on the gravity of Earth and the moon -- termed a free-return lunar trajectory -- to complete the round-trip figure-eight loop. The engine accelerated their capsule to 24,000 mph (38,000 kph) to shove them out of Earth's orbit.

"With this burn to the moon, we do not leave Earth. We choose it," Koch said.

The next major milestone will be Monday's lunar flyby. Orion will zoom 4,000 miles (6,400 kilometers) beyond the moon before turning back, providing unprecedented and

illuminated views of the lunar far side, at least for human eyes. The cosmos will even treat the Artemis II astronauts to a total solar eclipse as the moon temporarily blocks to sun from their perspective.

While awaiting their orbital departure earlier Thursday, the astronauts savored the views of Earth from tens of thousands of miles high. Koch told Mission Control that they can make out the entire coastlines of continents and even the South Pole, her old stomping ground. NASA is counting on the test flight to kickstart the entire Artemis program and lead to a moon landing by two astronauts in 2028. Orion's toilet may need some design tweaks before that happens.

The so-called lunar loo malfunctioned as soon as the Artemis crew reached orbit Wednesday evening. Mission Control guided astronaut Koch through some plumbing tricks and she finally got it going, but not before having to resort to using contingency urine storage bags.

Controllers also managed to bump up the cabin temperature. It was so cold earlier in the flight that the astronauts had to dig into their suitcases for long-sleeved clothes.

Cuba pardons 2,010 people as the US pressures the island's government

HAVANA. (Agency)

The Cuban government said Thursday it had pardoned 2,010 people at the same time the Trump administration has placed extreme pressure on the government and suffocated the island with an oil blockade. Cuba's government said the pardons were a "humanitarian gesture" in connection with Holy Week and didn't mention mounting pressures with the U.S.

The government said it had "released" foreigners and Cubans, including women, the elderly and young people. Cuban authorities didn't name who was released or under what conditions, nor did it mention the

crimes they were accused of committing. Authorities also provided no details on whether any of those pardoned were



protesters convicted and sentenced for terrorism, contempt or public disorder. Cuba's government does not recognize political prisoners, but the activist

group Prisoners Defended registered 1,214 people imprisoned for political reasons in Cuba. Cuban authorities said the pardon decision "was based on a careful analysis of the characteristics of the crimes committed by those sanctioned, their good behavior in prison, having served a significant portion of their sentence, and their health status," according to a statement published in state media. The release comes as the Trump administration has placed extreme pressure on Cuba's government, imposing an oil blockade for months that has fueled blackouts and left many civilians suffering.

UN set to vote on a watered-down proposal to open Strait of Hormuz

UNITED NATIONS. (Agency)

The U.N. Security Council is scheduled to vote Friday on a proposal to secure the Strait of Hormuz after it was significantly watered down in the face of opposition from China and Russia about allowing force to reopen the critical waterway that Iran has largely cut off to global shipping.

The final draft of Bahrain's resolution, obtained Thursday by The Associated Press, authorizes the use of defensive -- but not offensive -- action to ensure vessels can safely transit the strait. One-fifth of the world's oil typically passes through the waterway where Iran's stranglehold during the war has sent energy prices soaring.

Bahrain's initial draft resolution would have allowed countries "to use all necessary means" -- U.N. language that would include possible military action -- "in the Strait of Hormuz, the Gulf and the Gulf of Oman" to secure passage and deter attempts to interfere with navigation. Russia, China and France, all veto-wielding countries of the 15-member Security Council, had expressed opposition to approving the use of force. The final draft eliminates any reference to allowing offensive

military action, but the three countries' views on the changes are not known, so Friday's vote will be closely watched.

The proposal now authorizes countries "to use all defensive means necessary and commensurate with the



circumstances in the Strait of Hormuz and adjacent waters" to secure passage and deter attempts to interfere with international navigation "for a period of at least six months." It says countries acting alone on in "multinational naval partnerships" can take defensive means provided advance notification is given to the Security Council. It comes after U.S. President Donald Trump said in an address Wednesday that America and Israel will continue to bomb Iran "extremely hard" over the

next two to three weeks but gave no definitive end date for the conflict. Iran has kept up retaliatory attacks in the region and its chokehold on the strait has been a pain point for Trump and the world as rising energy prices roil the

global economy. Before Bahrain released its final draft, Russia's U.N. Ambassador Vassily Nebenzia said the proposal "does not solve the puzzle." He said what would do so is ending the hostilities. China's U.N. Ambassador Fu Cong opposed the original draft's authorization for the use of force, calling it "unlawful and indiscriminate."

Speaking to the council earlier Thursday, he warned that it "would inevitably lead to further escalation of the situation and lead to serious consequences." He urged the council "to proceed with caution" and actively work for de-escalation and dialogue. France's U.N. Ambassador Jérôme Bonnafont also called for de-escalation, telling the council that "defensive measures that avoid any broad use of force need to be promoted.

Hegseth asks Army Chief of Staff to step down while US wages war against Iran

WASHINGTON. (Agency)

Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth has ousted the Army's top uniformed officer and two other generals, the Pentagon said Thursday without giving a reason for the departures while the United States is waging a war against Iran. Gen. Randy George "will be retiring from his position as the 41st Chief of Staff of the Army effective immediately," said Sean Parnell, the Pentagon's top spokesman. George has held the post of Army chief of staff, which typically runs for four years, since August 2023 under the Biden administration.

The ouster, reported earlier by CBS News, is just the latest of more than a dozen firings of top generals and admirals by Hegseth since he took office last year. Like many of those other firings, Pentagon officials are not offering a reason for George's departure, which comes nearly five weeks into U.S.-Israeli attacks on Iran and with no clear timeline from President Donald Trump on when the war may end.

Hegseth also has ousted Army Gen. David Hodne and Army Maj. Gen. William Green, according to a Pentagon official who spoke

on condition of anonymity to discuss sensitive leadership changes. A reason for their departures also was not given.

General who rose rapidly under Hegseth will fill in

Gen. Christopher LaNeve will be stepping in as acting Army chief of staff, the Pentagon official said. LaNeve was serving as Hegseth's top military aide when Trump suddenly nominated him to be the Army's vice chief of staff last October. It is a meteoric rise for an officer who was only a two-star general two years ago.

He would take over for George, who is a graduate of West Point Military Academy and an infantry officer who served in the first Gulf War as well as Iraq and Afghanistan. He also served as Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin's top military aide from 2021 to 2022 during the Biden administration before taking on top leadership roles in the Army. George made it through the initial round of firings under the Trump administration in February 2025, when Hegseth removed top military leaders, including Adm. Lisa Franchetti,

the Navy's top uniformed officer, and Gen. Jim Slife, the No. 2 leader at the Air Force. Trump also fired Gen. Charles "CQ"



Brown Jr. as chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Since then, more than a dozen other top military generals and admirals have either retired early or been removed from their posts. Among those departures was George's deputy, Gen. James Mings, who was vice chief of staff of the Army for less than two years. LaNeve was nominated to that post after earlier being plucked from commanding the Eighth

Army in South Korea after less than a year in the job to be Hegseth's top military aide. A spokesman for George could not be reached for comment.

Two other Army generals are fired

Of the other generals who were fired, Hodne had been head of the Army Transformation and Training Command, a unit that was only stood up in December as part of George's effort to modernize the Army and amid Hegseth's push to reduce the number of general officers in the military. Green had been the Army's chief of chaplains. Hegseth announced two major reforms to the military's chaplain corps a little over a week ago. In a video message last week, Hegseth said he wanted chaplains to focus more on God and less on therapeutic "self-help and self-care." In recent years, the military has become increasingly dependent on chaplains to help address the growing numbers of troops in mental health distress. Hegseth also said chaplains would no longer wear their rank on their uniform but instead would be identified by religious insignia.

Pete Hegseth Permits Troops To Carry Personal Firearms On Military Bases

JAKARTA. (Agency)

Defence Secretary Pete Hegseth said Thursday that he will allow service members to carry personal weapons onto military installations, citing the Second Amendment and recent shootings at bases across the country. In a video posted to X, Hegseth said he is signing a memo that will direct base commanders to allow requests for troops to carry privately owned firearms "with the presumption that it is necessary for personal protection." He said any denial of a service member's request must be explained in detail and in writing. "Effectively, our bases across the country were gun-free zones," Hegseth said. "Unless you're training or unless you are a military policeman, you couldn't carry, you couldn't bring your own firearm for your own personal protection onto post." Questions about why service members lacked access to weapons have often emerged following shootings on the nation's military bases. Such shootings have ranged from isolated events between service members to mass casualty events, such as the shootings by an Army psychiatrist at Texas' Fort Hood in 2009 that left 13 people dead. Hegseth cited some of the events in his video, including a shooting that injured five soldiers at Fort Stewart in Georgia last year. Officials said the shooter, an Army sergeant who worked at the base, used his personal handgun before he was tackled by fellow soldiers and arrested. "In these instances, minutes are a lifetime," Hegseth said. "And our service members have the courage and training to make those precious, short minutes count." Defence Department policy has prohibited military personnel from carrying personal weapons on base without permission from a senior commander, with strict protocol for how the firearms must be stored. Typically, military personnel must officially check their guns out of secure storage to go to on-base hunting areas or shooting ranges, then check all firearms back in promptly after their sanctioned use. Military police are often the only armed personnel on base, outside of shooting ranges, hunting areas or in training, where soldiers can wield their service weapons without ammunition. Tanya Schardt, senior counsel at the Brady gun violence prevention organisation, said in a statement that Defence Department leaders and the military's top brass have opposed relaxing the current policy, which was originally enacted under President George HW Bush. Schardt noted that most active duty service members who die by suicide do so with a weapon they own personally, not one military-issued, and argued that there will "undoubtedly be an increase in gun suicide and other gun violence."

NEWS BOX

Man arrested for tying ex-wife to motorcycle and dragging her along the road in Uttar Pradesh

BAHRAICH.(Agency)

A man was arrested for allegedly attempting to kill his ex-wife by tying her to a motorcycle and dragging her along a road in Uttar Pradesh's Bahraich district, police said on Friday. The incident took place in the Nanpara Kotwali area and left both the woman and the accused seriously injured, officials said.

Police identified the accused as Rahees, a resident of Musallampur village in the Ramgaon area. He had married Reshma, a resident of Nanpara, about a year ago.

The couple separated following disputes, and their divorce was finalised in January. Since then, the woman has been living at her parental home.

Eyewitnesses said the accused had come to Nanpara on Wednesday and encountered his former wife near Laxmanpur Matehi village while she was returning home. An argument broke out between the two, which soon turned violent.

Rahees allegedly hit the woman with his motorcycle, after which he tied her to the vehicle and dragged her along the road, police said. Locals rushed to the spot on hearing her cries and managed to rescue her. The accused was also beaten up by an angry crowd, leaving him injured, they said.

Police reached the spot and took the accused into custody. Both the injured were admitted to a hospital for treatment. Circle Officer Pahup Singh said a case has been registered against the accused under relevant provisions of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, including attempt to murder, causing hurt, criminal intimidation and insult. "He has been arrested, and further investigation is underway," the officer said.

AIMIM releases first list of candidates for Bengal Assembly polls

Hyderabad.(Agency)

The All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen on Friday released its first list of 12 candidates for the upcoming West Bengal Assembly elections.

The party, led by Asaduddin Owaisi, has decided not to field candidates in Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, Kerala, and Assam.

According to the list released here, Imran Soanki has been fielded from Raghunathganj, Danish Aziz from Asansol Uttar, and Misbahul Islam Khan from Kandi. Rejaul Karim will contest from Sujapur, while Advocate Mohammed Mostahid Haque has been nominated from Mothabari. Haji Ansar Sk Sab will contest from Nalhathi, and Tasir Sk Sahab from Morari.

Among others, Monam Sardar has been fielded from Barasat, Mehboob Alam from Karandighi, and Asadul Sk from Suti. Shabana Parvin will contest from Basirhat South, while Asik Raj Mondal has been nominated from Habra.

The announcement marks AIMIM's initial push to expand its presence in West Bengal ahead of the Assembly elections.

Meanwhile, the party has extended its support to the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam-led alliance in Tamil Nadu and Puducherry, headed by M. K. Stalin. In Assam, AIMIM is backing Badruddin.

Telangana aims to become textile hub of South Asia: CM Reddy

Hyderabad.(Agency)

Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy on Friday said the state is poised to emerge as a major textile hub of South South Asia, outlining an ambitious vision to transform the sector as a key driver of economic growth.

Addressing the two-day 13th Asian Textile Conference 2026 (ATEXCON 2026) at the Hyderabad International Convention Centre (HICC), the Chief Minister extended a warm welcome to delegates from across the globe, describing them as partners in development who share a common vision.

Highlighting India's rich textile heritage, he said the country has a long-standing tradition of producing world-class fabrics, with art and culture playing a vital role in shaping its textile legacy.

He noted that Telangana takes pride in its deep-rooted connection with textiles, from the renowned Pochampally ikat to Gadwal and other traditional weaves.

"Textiles are not just an industry but a lifeline for our weaving communities," he said, adding that Telangana's historical prominence in textiles dates back to the era when traders from across the world visited Hyderabad for its famed cloth and pearls.

The Chief Minister pointed out that Telangana is among the largest producers of high-quality cotton in India, which has gained global recognition. He also highlighted the establishment of the Kakatiya Mega Textile Park in Warangal as a world-class textile destination.

Emphasising the state's strengths, he said Telangana combines both "skill and will" and has emerged as a leader across multiple sectors, including technology, pharmaceuticals, aerospace, defence, manufacturing, and energy.

Allahabad HC seeks 'thorough' investigation into 'honeytrap' gangs

A division bench of the Allahabad High Court observed that if offences like these are permitted to continue, it would become difficult to live in a decent world.

LUCKNOW.(Agency)

The Allahabad High Court has sought a thorough investigation to trace gangs allegedly using women to honeytrap men and extort money through blackmail. A division bench of the Allahabad High Court, comprising Justice JJ Munir and Justice Tarun Saxena, on March 30 observed that if offences like these are permitted to continue, it would become difficult to live in a decent world.

The bench also directed the government of Uttar Pradesh, Additional Chief Secretary, Home Department, Director General of Police, and Inspector General of Meerut Zone, to trace such gangs.

The bench issued the directives while hearing a writ petition filed in one such incident in Bijnor district, involving a woman and three others, including two police constables and a local politician. The four were allegedly part of a honeytrap gang that targeted a local businessman through the

woman. All four had approached the court seeking relief in the case lodged against them. The counsel for the petitioner also requested that the petition be withdrawn, and the bench allowed



it. But the division bench observed, "... This is a matter which discloses a very pernicious state of affairs in society. The first petitioner [the woman accused] reached the third respondent

[the alleged victim of honeytrap] over his WhatsApp and honey-trapped him, doing sweet talk. She called him over to a certain place in Bijnor, took him to a hotel, where she had carnal relations with him." The bench added, "During the escapade, she captured some video clips of the informant and resorted to blackmail. The other petitioners, who are said to be in connivance with the first petitioner, all men, are policemen. They are petitioners nos. 4 and 5, Lalu Yadav and Punit Tyagi. Petitioner no. 3 in this case, Shahbej alias Shanu, is a ward member (local politician), who was also involved with the first petitioner in the crime." "After the video was captured, it was passed on to the third petitioner [politician], who called the informant [the victim] to his place, where the two policemen were also there. They inquired if the informant... knew the first petitioner and showed him the video clip that had been deceitfully.

Temperature likely to touch 43 degrees Celsius across Andhra Pradesh in coming days

On Saturday, severe heatwaves may affect 41 mandals, and 21 mandals could witness heatwave conditions.

VIJAYAWADA.(Agency)

Andhra Pradesh is set to witness an intense heatwave over the next two days, with maximum temperatures likely to reach 42-43°C, according to the AP State Disaster Management Authority (APSDMA) managing director Prakhar Jain.

He urged people to take adequate precautions to protect themselves from extreme heat conditions. In an official release on Thursday, the MD said severe heatwave conditions are expected in 54 mandals on Friday, while 16 mandals are likely to experience moderate heatwave conditions.

On Saturday, severe heatwaves may affect 41 mandals, and 21 mandals could witness



heatwave conditions. On Friday, severe heatwave conditions are likely in 13 mandals of Srikakulam district, 19 in Vizianagaram, 11 in Parvathipuram Manyam, two each in ASR, Vizag and Anakapalle districts, and three in

Polavaram, along with two mandals each in Kakinada.

Meanwhile, moderate heatwave conditions are expected in select mandals of Srikakulam, Vizianagaram, Manyam, Polavaram, Anakapalle, Kakinada, East Godavari, Eluru and NTR districts. Temperature data on Thursday indicated rising heat levels across AP.

Rajam in Vizianagaram district reported 40.6°C, while Makkuva in Manyam and Nindra in Chittoor recorded 40°C each. Several other locations, including Dharmajigudem (39.8°C), Renigunta (39.6°C), Poduru (39.6°C),

and Kankipadu and Brahmanagudem (39.4°C), experienced high temperatures. Jain advised women, children and the elderly to remain cautious.

Anti-conversion law and Middle East conflict will reflect in Good Friday themes

Mumbai.(Agency)

The 40-day penance of Lent will peak at Good Friday April 3. The Christian community will lead live tableaux depicting the final hours of Jesus Christ followed by his crucifixion. Concern over the new anti-conversion law enacted in Maharashtra, and the conflict in the Middle East, will resonate in the themes.

Around 600-800 parishioners of Our Lady of the Forsaken Church in Malwani will arrive for Good Friday service, said parish priest Fr Wilfred Vaz. "There is no mass since Jesus is absent [crucified], but we distribute communion which has been blessed on Holy Thursday. At the end of the service youngsters enact Christ's crucifixion. In fact people ask why do you call it Good Friday, what is good about it if Christ died this day. However,

the term derives from the fact that Christ died for the good of humanity," Fr Wilfred said.

Fr Nigel Barrett, spokesperson for the archdiocese of Bombay, is also parish priest of St Andrew's Church, Bandra. He said, "Lenten



observances culminate on Maundy Thursday with a life-size Last Supper display and on Good Friday with the Crucified Christ solemnly being brought down from the cross and entombed. Though seemingly defeated, the king of the universe was crowned with thorns, enthroned on the

cross, and used his divine power to forgive his executioners, as he bore the sins of humanity."

Around 10.00 am Friday at Sacred Heart Church in Santacruz, hundreds of Christians will attend the live Stations of the Cross enacted in Broadway musical style organised by the Christi Sevak Federation. Organiser Joseph Dias said the parade started 37 years ago when many non-Christians believed that Good Friday was a feast, rather than mourning.

This year CSF will pray for "persecuted Christians and innocent people who may be affected by the anti-conversion law" passed by the Maharashtra state assembly. Taking a cue from Pope Leo, the gathering will also pray for peace in the Middle East. A 23-year-old marketing professional Del Jacinto will enact the part of Jesus. He says carrying the actual wooden cross for six hours.

Andhra Pradesh HC questions government over appointing special officers to panchayats

The HC sought clarity on how these officers would effectively administer local bodies.

VIJAYAWADA.(Agency)

The High Court on Thursday questioned the State government over its decision to appoint special officers to manage the gram panchayats following the expiry of their elected bodies' tenure.

The HC sought clarity on how these officers would effectively administer local bodies.

A division bench comprising Chief Justice Dheeraj Singh Thakur and Justice R Raghunandan Rao observed that officials drawn from various departments would be burdened with additional responsibilities if appointed as special officers. It noted that such officers, typically stationed at mandal headquarters, may find it difficult to understand and address grassroots issues in individual panchayats. The bench asked why committees comprising two or three existing local officials could not be constituted instead to assist in administration.

The HC directed the government to place complete details before it and clarified that



any appointments of special officers would be subject to its final verdict. The matter was adjourned to April 7. A public interest litigation filed by AP BC Welfare

Association president Kesana Shankara Rao sought directions to halt elections until a backward classes (BC) census is conducted. Another PIL by advocate

Telangana CM welcomes Apex Court verdict on group-I recruitment

Hyderabad.(Agency)

Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy on Friday welcomed the judgement delivered by the Supreme Court of India on the Telangana Group-I recruitment process.

The apex court on Thursday cleared the way for the appointment of 563 successful candidates as Group-I officers, bringing an end to the prolonged legal deadlock surrounding the selection process.

In a post on X, the Chief Minister said he viewed the verdict as a strong endorsement of the government's transparency and integrity in public recruitment.

He noted that for Group-I aspirants who had waited for years with hope and perseverance often amid financial hardship and prolonged uncertainty the judgement comes as a major relief.

Reddy said that soon after the people's government assumed office, it issued the notification, conducted the examinations, and ensured that appointment letters were delivered within a short span of time.

"Despite conspiracies and attempts to derail the process, we remained committed and successfully enabled this first batch of Group-I officers to become partners in the state's reconstruction," he said, extending his heartfelt congratulations to the selected candidates.

He further stated that, guided by its vision and resolve, the government undertook key reforms in the Telangana State Public Service Commission, restored the confidence of unemployed youth in the system, and completed the recruitment process with the highest standards of transparency.

"I also extend my appreciation to the TGPSC Chairman, officials, and staff for their dedicated efforts," he added.

BMC clears 3-tier alternative reservoir plan at Malabar Hill

Mumbai.(Agency)

Among the first civic projects reviewed by municipal commissioner Ashwini Bhide is the long-pending alternative reservoir at Malabar Hill, with officials zeroing in on a three-tier design of 52 MLD capacity.

The water supply projects (WSP) department presented multiple options. The selected plan will comprise an underground tank, a ground-level tank and an upper-level tank.

Water will be routed through the ground-level tank and pumped upwards to ensure uninterrupted supply when sections of the existing reservoir are shut for repairs. The push for an alternative facility stems from the need to repair the ageing Malabar Hill reservoir.

Earlier plans to demolish and rebuild the reservoir were shelved following strong public opposition in Sept 2023, as the move would

have impacted the Hanging Gardens situated above it.

Authorities have since opted for phased repairs, contingent on the alternative reservoir becoming operational. Bhide has directed officials to examine whether the proposed three-tier structure could affect the protected "funnel of vision" -- a designated view corridor preserving uninterrupted vistas of Marine Drive and Backbay.

Civic officials said that identified view-sensitive stretches include the eastern flank from Priyadarshini Park to Nepeansea Road (Sector 49), and the southern edge from the wooded limits of Raj Bhavan along Walkeshwar Road to Walkeshwar Circle.

While preliminary assessments suggest the new structure is unlikely to obstruct these sightlines, officials said a detailed review is underway as part of due diligence.

Tandava Yogesh urged the court to direct the State to conduct elections immediately, arguing that polls should have been held before the expiry of the panchayat term.

Petitions were also filed by several sarpanches from Prakasam district challenging the move to appoint special officers, claiming it would hamper local development.

Senior counsel A Satya Prasad, appearing for the BC association, argued that the government was ignoring earlier HC rulings mandating a BC population count before elections. He contended that the dedicated commission set up by the State was meant to finalise reservations, not conduct census.

Advocate General Dammalapati Srinivas stated that it has the authority to appoint special officers and that the commission has begun its work. He informed the HC that the file related to the appointment of the Election Commissioner is pending with the Governor.

Going beyond the brief on conversion

The Supreme Court's recent verdict on conversion and reservation will have far-reaching consequences. According to the judgement in Chinthada Anand, on conversion to another religion except Buddhism and Sikhism, a Scheduled Caste member would stand to lose her entitlements in that capacity. The court also clarified that for Scheduled Tribes members, there is no automatic loss of status on conversion.

Caste is a constant that's always decided by birth. The discrimination meted out to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in India is a historical reality that the Constitution tried to tackle. In such a society, any rhetoric on equality could turn futile in the absence of positive efforts to compensate for the agonies of long-term injustice. This is the rationale behind beneficial measures like reservation. The facts of Chinthada Anand are curious. The appellant, a pastor for about 15 years, alleged that prior to his conversion he belonged to the Madiga community, a Scheduled Caste in Andhra Pradesh. He admittedly professed and propagated Christianity ever since his conversion. The main question in the case was whether the offences allegedly committed on him would attract provisions of the 1989 statute for prevention of atrocities against SC/ST individuals. The Andhra Pradesh High Court rightly answered it in the negative and quashed the case. The Supreme Court confirmed the high court judgement. The offences alleged under the Indian Penal Code were also found untenable. Thus, the accused were exonerated. The apex court was correct in holding that a converted person cannot prosecute a case on the premise that despite the conversion, he can invoke the penal statute meant to deal with crimes against people belonging to SC or ST communities. Such a prosecution would be clearly illegitimate, and the liberty of others cannot depend upon such a fiction. Individual liberty always requires an interpretation that favours it.

But in Chinthada Anand, the court clearly exceeded the brief and travelled much beyond what it was called upon to decide. It said, "The loss of [Scheduled caste] status carries with it the automatic and immediate termination of all eligibility for statutory benefits, protections, reservations, preferences and entitlements that are predicated upon or flow from such membership regardless of birth." In a case pertaining to the quashing of criminal proceedings, the parties are not supposed to deal with the issues relating to reservation or other benefits for Scheduled Caste members. Such benefits also were not in issue in the case. The considerations for quashing a criminal case and deciding on compensatory discrimination are different and distinct. The former pertains to the nature of allegations in each case, while the latter needs a constitutional scrutiny of the aspects placed before the court in a more comprehensive way. When no issues of reservation or other similar entitlements arose in the case, the court ought not to have decided the question of reservation in abstractum. But it did so, wrongly. The basis of the court's pronouncement over the entitlements is the Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order, 1950. Clause 3 of the order, as amended twice, says, "No person who possesses a religion different from the Hindu, the Sikh or the Buddhist religion shall be deemed a Scheduled Caste." Though this clause might appear categorical, as held by the court, constitutional adjudication, unlike in a criminal appeal, would call for a deeper examination of the impact of conversion on Scheduled Caste members. The interpretive process in constitutional adjudication happens on a wider canvas that can go beyond the plain meaning of the words in the 1950 order. American Judge Learned Hand famously said, "There is no surer way to misread any document than to read it literally." Researchers Pallavi Radhakrishnan and Sandra Sajeev recently published a paper, 'Beyond Caste: A Review on the Psychological and Social Dimensions of Dalit Conversions to other Religions and the Formation of New Social Identities in Modern India' (2025).

Short Service Commission: brief service, long neglect

The treatment of SSC officers post-release raises uncomfortable questions of policy, equity and national foresight.

INDIA'S armed forces are one of the most respected institutions in the nation, built on discipline, sacrifice and honour. Yet, within this proud structure exists a silent contradiction — one that affects thousands who once wore the uniform under the Short Service Commission (SSC). Their contribution is unquestionable, but their treatment post-release raises uncomfortable questions of policy, equity and national foresight. If the country is to optimise both its military strength and socio-economic potential, Short Service must be reimagined — not as a temporary arrangement, but as a strategic national asset. The issue is neither new nor unknown. Since the promulgation of Army Instruction AI 11/S/64, which ambiguously stated that "pension under consideration orders will be issued separately", a policy vacuum has persisted. For over six decades, this assurance has remained largely unfulfilled, leaving SSC personnel in a state of uncertainty.

This gap has not gone unnoticed. Courts, including the Supreme Court and various high courts, have increasingly been called upon to intervene. Recent judicial pronouncements — particularly those granting relief by notionally treating certain categories as deemed to have completed 20 years of service — have exposed the deeper malaise. These judgments reflect prolonged executive inaction.

The core issue is not limited to gender or specific cases. It is a systemic neglect of the SSC cadre itself.

Short Service entrants volunteer in the prime of their youth. They undergo the same rigorous training, carry the same responsibilities and face the same operational risks as their permanent commission counterparts. For five, 10, or 14 years, they serve with unwavering commitment. Yet, upon release, they step into an uncertain civilian landscape — often without pension, without full healthcare benefits and without a structured resettlement pathway. The absence of these basic assurances creates financial insecurity as well as a sense of institutional indifference. One of the starkest manifestations of this disparity is in the access to the Ex-Servicemen Contributory Health Scheme (ECHS). While regular retirees enjoy comprehensive healthcare coverage, SSC veterans often face restrictions or exclusion. This has led to ongoing litigation, including writ petitions in high courts. Healthcare cannot be

selectively granted. It is an extension of the nation's obligation to those who have served. Any deviation from this principle undermines both constitutional values and institutional credibility. A common argument against extending pensionary benefits to SSC personnel is fiscal burden. However, a closer examination reveals the opposite. Regular commission personnel typically serve 20 years or more and draw pension for life. In contrast, SSC personnel serve for shorter durations and then transition into civilian careers, where they continue to contribute economically through taxes, enterprise and professional engagement. Granting pro-rata one rank one pension (OROP) to SSC personnel would involve a lower per capita pension outgo while generating long-term economic gains. It creates a dual-benefit model — reduced pension liability and increased national productivity. In essence, the SSC becomes not a cost

Existing schemes are fragmented and lack enforceability. An armed forces resettlement and welfare Act is needed — one that provides statutory backing to key provisions, such as:

- Pro-rata OROP for all SSC personnel
- Universal and non-discriminatory access to ECHS
- Structured resettlement programmes aligned with national employment policies
- Lateral entry into government and public sector roles
- Recognition of military rank and experience in civilian hierarchies
- Such a framework would ensure fairness and enhance institutional efficiency.

Beyond policy and economics lies a more fundamental issue — the moral contract between the nation and those who serve it. When a young individual joins the armed forces, there is an implicit assurance of dignity, fairness and respect — not just during service, but also beyond it. Any perception of neglect erodes this trust and, by extension, affects morale and motivation.

The growing discontent among SSC veterans calls for introspection and corrective action. The transformation of Short Service into a national asset requires a shift in perspective. It demands that policymakers move beyond incremental adjustments and adopt a holistic approach.

- Key steps in this direction include:
- Addressing the long-pending ambiguities of AI 11/S/64
 - Extending pro-rata pensionary benefits
 - Ensuring parity in healthcare and welfare schemes
 - Institutionalising resettlement through legislation
 - Recognising SSC personnel as equal stakeholders in national defence

These measures are not radical — they are rational. The need for a youthful, agile military force is matched by the need for skilled human capital in the civilian domain. The SSC model, if properly structured, can serve both objectives. It can provide the armed forces with flexibility and vitality while simultaneously enriching the civilian workforce.

Military rank and honour earned during Short Service should be a lifelong asset, not a post-service liability. Those who have worn the uniform, even for a limited tenure, carry with them values that the nation cannot afford to overlook. It is time to move from ad hoc measures to institutional reform and from ambiguity to assurance.



centre, but a force multiplier.

Perhaps the greatest strength of the SSC model lies in its potential to produce disciplined, skilled and motivated individuals at a relatively young age. Released in their 30s or early 40s, they are ideally positioned to contribute meaningfully in civilian sectors. From corporate leadership to public administration, from entrepreneurship to internal security, their training and experience are invaluable. Yet, in the absence of structured support, much of this potential remains underutilised. A well-designed resettlement framework can transform this transition into a national advantage.

India lacks a comprehensive legal structure to address the resettlement and welfare of Short Service personnel.

Liberty vs marriage: Law must recognise evolving relationships

Marriage in India remains both a contract and a deeply embedded social norm.

TWO recent rulings of the Allahabad High Court have exposed the uneasy fault line between personal liberty and the institution of marriage. In one case, the court observed that a consensual live-in relationship between adults, even if one partner is married, is not a criminal offence. In another, it refused protection to such a couple, holding that the legal rights of a spouse cannot be undermined in the name of individual freedom. The apparent contradiction is, in fact, a reflection of a deeper legal vacuum. Indian law has moved, albeit cautiously, towards recognising live-in relationships as part of the right to life and personal liberty under Article 21 of the Constitution. Yet, it continues to accord primacy to marriage as a legally enforceable institution, carrying rights and obligations that cannot be casually set aside. The result is a patchwork jurisprudence where



courts decriminalise relationships but hesitate to legitimise their consequences. This tension is not merely

legal; it is social and moral. Marriage in India remains both a contract and a deeply embedded social norm. But the reality of modern relationships is far more fluid. Individuals do move on — sometimes without formal closure — and the law cannot remain blind to this lived reality. Denying protection or recognition does not dissolve such relationships; it merely pushes them into vulnerability and legal uncertainty. What is needed is not judicial inconsistency but legislative clarity. A framework that balances marital rights with individual autonomy is long overdue. It must acknowledge that while marriage deserves protection, personal liberty cannot be held hostage to it indefinitely.

Ultimately, the law must reflect a simple truth: when relationships break down, allowing individuals the dignity to move on is not a threat to social order. It's a necessary adaptation to it.

Job crisis: Life in India's great waiting room

Why 11 million educated young Indians are squandering their most productive years

IMAGINE spending the best years of your life — from the age of 22 to 29 — in a waiting room. You are educated, ambitious and capable. But the job that you are waiting for has odds worse than a lottery. So, you study harder, make an attempt once more, and wait again. Meanwhile, your peers elsewhere are earning, saving, climbing career ladders, getting married, starting families. You are doing none of that. You are preparing for the next exam.

This is the lived reality for an estimated 1.1 crore young graduates in India today. The fifth edition of the 'State of Working India' report, published last month by Azim Premji University, reveals a startling statistic: 67% of all unemployed youth aged 20-29 are graduates.

In 2004, graduates constituted just 32% of the unemployed youth cohort. Their share in the youth population has itself risen from 10% to 28% over these two decades. But employment has not kept pace. Between 2004 and 2023, India produced roughly 50 lakh graduates every year. Only 28 lakh graduates found any employment annually, and a mere 17 lakh entered salaried work. The arithmetic of national waste is stark.

The overall unemployment rate among all graduates aged 22 to 29 is as high as 33%. Yet this rate drops to below 4% after the age of 30. Something happens around 30 to dissolve what had been an acute crisis just years earlier. What happens is not success. It is resignation. Young men eventually succumb to economic pressure, marriage obligations, or parental urgency and accept whatever work is available, however dead-end. Young women, by contrast, often exit the labour force altogether, retreating into unpaid domestic care work. The data shows this starkly: male unemployment falls because men find some job; female unemployment falls because women stop looking for it.

Why do millions of graduates spend the prime years of

their lives in this limbo? The answer lies in a rational calculation, which is ultimately socially ruinous. The private sector offers starting salaries that have barely moved in two decades. In 2011, a young male graduate earned about Rs 21,800 a month. By 2023, this figure had fallen to Rs 19,573. That is a drastic drop, and when adjusted for inflation, it is disastrous.

No wonder those educated youth don't miss out on joining the private sector treadmill of entry-level jobs. A government job is a different story. A government driver,



by comparison, may earn four times his private sector counterpart. A government clerk enjoys health cover, a pension, iron-clad job security, and social prestige. No wonder the aspiring graduate chooses to wait.

This wait takes a specific and peculiar form: the endless preparation for competitive government examinations. A study by Kunal Mangal of Tamil Nadu Public Service Commission (TNPSC) data found that a single Group-4 recruitment in 2018-19 drew 13.7 million applicants, nearly four times the next largest recruiter in the state.

About 80% of all unemployed individuals in Tamil Nadu were simultaneously preparing for a TNPSC exam.

When the state imposed a partial hiring freeze between 2001 and 2006, vacancies fell by 86%, but exam applications actually rose by 7%. Preparation for a government job was crowding out private sector employment. This pattern is not peculiar to Tamil Nadu. It is seen across states. The government exam has become India's great waiting room. The private sector, meanwhile, offers a treadmill at the entry level, not a career. The Economic Survey 2024-25 noted that only 8.25% of graduates work in roles aligned with their qualifications. Nearly half are in elementary or semi-skilled work — jobs that require a degree for eligibility but deliver no skill development, no learning by doing, no career progression. Between 2012 and 2019, India's GDP grew at 6.7% annually while employment grew at 0.1%. Of 83 million jobs added between 2021-22 and 2023-24, nearly half were in agriculture. Labour laws, rather than protecting workers, encouraged employers to substitute casual and contract labour for permanent employment. The gender dimension of this crisis deserves special attention. For young women, the problem is not just unemployment but erasure. Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) data confirms that educated women in their early 20s report high unemployment, signaling a genuine desire to work. But by their late 20s, instead of finding employment, they exit the labour force. Marriage expectations and the assumption that domestic care falls entirely on women extinguish participation. The waste is particularly stark in medicine: women constitute 51% of each incoming medical batch, yet only 17% of practising doctors are women. In rural areas, just 6%. Half the talent, trained at the taxpayer's expense, simply disappears. These non-

practising women doctors represent a big loss to society.

Now consider the perverse policy feedback loop. Governments, sympathetic to the plight of unemployed graduates, respond with cash transfer schemes and subsidised coaching for competitive exams. This fiscal expenditure, though well-intentioned, tightens the budget constraint — which, ironically, leaves the government with less room to hire. Vacant Central government posts more than doubled between 2014-15 and 2021-22, from 4.21 lakh to 9.64 lakh. The subsidy deepens the exam-lottery culture; the hiring freeze defeats the purpose. State governments that subsidise UPSC coaching are, in a sense, funding the lottery queue while letting the prize shrink. The consequences for India's reservation policy are painful. Affirmative action can only function if the government is actually hiring. When recruitment slows, reserved posts go unfilled. Scheduled Caste employees in the Central government fell by 47% in absolute numbers between 2003 and 2021. The very communities that reservation was designed to lift — Dalits, Adivasis, OBCs — see their representation erode. When one generation gains a government post, the next climbs higher; that intergenerational ladder breaks when the post is never filled. It is no coincidence that the scarcity of government posts has intensified demands for reservation from communities not traditionally covered, such as Marathas in Maharashtra or Gujjars in Rajasthan. Conflict over the reservation share is, at its root, a symptom of an economy failing to create enough good jobs. The policy prescription follows from the diagnosis. Reduce search friction through better labour market information, job portals and portable apprenticeship schemes that benefit both employers and workers. Fix skills mismatch through employer-driven, not certificate-driven, training.

INS Taragiri set to join ENC fleet in Visakhapatnam with 'Rise Above' motto

VISAKHAPATNAM.(Agency)

On April 3, the Eastern Naval Command (ENC) formally inducts INS Taragiri (F41) into its fleet.

The 6,670-tonne Project 17A frigate arrived in Visakhapatnam following a construction timeline that began with its keel laying in September 2020 and its delivery by Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited in 2025. While the ship is a significant engineering achievement, built with over 75% indigenous content and the contribution of 200 MSMEs, the focus for its crew is the transition from a technical project to a functional home. For the 300 crew on board, the commissioning marks the point where a structure of steel plates becomes a living vessel.

Captain Hemant Gopal, Commanding Officer, views the event as a rare professional responsibility. "Building a ship is the task of the shipbuilders, but bringing life to it is ours," he noted, adding, "My team must ensure that hundreds of individual systems function together seamlessly. It is about taking a structure of steel and making it a functioning warship, all while upholding the respected legacy of the previous Taragiri."

IPMS acts as centralised computer for INS Taragiri

The vessel carries a name with historical weight in the Indian Navy. Commander Siddhartha Gupta (Executive Officer), Commander G Siva Venkatesh (Engineering Officer), Commander Akhilesh Sharma (Electrical Officer), and Commander Abhishek Bali (Logistics Officer) operate under the ship's motto, Rise Above.

Sabarimala controversies reveal NSS's evolving role in Kerala politics

KOTTAYAM.(Agency)

Two episodes concerning the Sabarimala hill shrine have stirred Kerala politics in recent times: the controversy over the entry of women of all ages, and the gold loot case.

In both instances, the Pinarayi Vijayan-led LDF government was at the receiving end. The position taken by the Nair Service Society (NSS) proved pivotal in both cases, though seemingly paradoxical.

Despite representing only 11.9% of Kerala's population, the NSS's stance significantly shaped the political discourse around both incidents. In the women's entry issue, the NSS was the first to call for peaceful protests — 'Namajapa Ghoshayatra' (prayer processions) — across the state.

As Sangh Parivar organisations took up protests, the subsequent Sabarimala pilgrimage season turned turbulent, marked by frequent confrontations between the 'Acharya Samrakshana Samithi' (ritual protection council) and the police.

The political fallout proved costly for the LDF, which received a drubbing in 19 out of 20 constituencies in the 2019 Lok Sabha elections. By 2025, the second Pinarayi government sought to recalibrate its approach by organising the Global Ayyappa Sangamam, bringing together around 3,000 delegates from across India and abroad. It was widely seen as an attempt to mend ties with Hindu community organisations.

UDF manifesto promises Rs 1,000 stipend for girl students, Rs 25 lakh health cover

KOCHI.(Agency)

The UDF on Thursday unveiled its manifesto for the April 9 assembly elections, promising a monthly stipend of Rs 1,000 for college-going girl students and a Rs 25 lakh 'Oommen Chandy Health Insurance' cover for every family. The 89-page document outlines a mix of welfare measures, infrastructure projects and economic revival plans.

Leader of the Opposition V D Satheesan released the manifesto in the presence of Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy and other UDF leaders, highlighting the front's focus on social security, employment and inclusive growth.

The UDF has promised to hike welfare pensions to Rs 3,000 per month and provide free travel for women on KSRTC buses.

It also proposes to construct 5 lakh houses over the next five years and time-bound solution for issues faced by settler farmers.

As per the manifesto, the daily wage of ASHA workers will be increased to Rs 700. The manifesto assured a procurement price of Rs 35 per kg for paddy and a minimum support price of Rs 300 per kg for rubber. Interest-free loans of up to Rs 5 lakh have been promised for young entrepreneurs, along with financial and technological support for MSMEs with turnover up to Rs 100 crore.

UDF's 'Job Watch Tower' to track global trends

It has proposed to set up a 'Job Watch Tower' to track global employment trends and align higher education accordingly. The front has also pledged curriculum reforms, integrating AI and industry skills, appointment of ombudsmen in colleges, and implementation of the 'Sidharthan Anti-ragging and Student Welfare Act' along with a student distress app.

After HC nudge, Patra Chawl residents agree to take possession of rehab flats

Court asks CO of MHADA to decide other disputes



Mumbai.(Agency)

A week after the Bombay High Court granted a "last chance" and reiterated stopping transit rent payment from April 1, residents of Patra Chawl in suburban Goregaon (East) on Thursday informed the court that they were ready and willing to take possession of tenements in the rehab building.

The court directed the Chief Officer (CO) of Maharashtra Housing and Area Development Authority (MHADA) to hear all the parties and decide on the disputes related to the commencement of the defect liability period for the contractor, term of the lease period, lease rent and area of the land to be leased to the petitioner society Goregaon Siddharth Nagar Sahakari Griha Nirman Sanstha Limited (known as Patra

Chawl). The society had raised concerns over the rehab building's quality, alleging falling plaster and lift malfunctions.

A bench of Justices Girish S Kulkarni and Aarti A Sathe was also informed that third-party structural audit report confirmed the structural stability of rehab tenements. The interim report had found each of the eight buildings, which have 16 wings, to be "sound, stable and fit for habitation". Siddharth Nagar, which houses nearly 672 families, was vacated, and members of the society were entitled to permanent rehusing in rehab tenements. After defunct developer Guru Ashish Constructions (which later faced an Enforcement Directorate case) had defaulted, MHADA took over the



responsibility of completing the project in 2018. On March 11, HC flagged a burden of nearly Rs 18 crore on the state exchequer from delayed Permanent Alternate Accommodation Agreements (PAAA) by Patra Chawl tenants and also ordered stopping transit rent payments from April 1. On March 27, the HC had granted Patra

Chawl members a "last chance" to enter into an agreement with MHADA to take possession of the rehab building within a week and said if disputes were not resolved, the authority could use flats for other public premises. On Thursday, senior advocate Pradeep Sancheti for the petitioner society, told HC about willingness to take possession and said there were some loose ends or issues to be resolved. On the issue of the defect liability period, the court accepted a submission by advocates Mahesh Londhe and Manisha Jagtap for the contractor and MHADA respectively, that it was required to be considered as per the terms of agreement entered between the contractor and the authority and the same "cannot be altered by any judicial order."

Case of alleged custodial torture: HC dismisses plea seeking contempt action against ex-Rajkot DCP

The respondents included then Rajkot DCP Sarvaiya, police inspectors Hitesh Gadhvi and Vikram Vanzara, Commissioner of Police Manoj Agarwal and the state of Gujarat.

Ahmedabad.(Agency)

Stating that there was "no prima facie violation" of the Supreme Court's DK Basu guidelines to initiate proceedings under the provisions of the Contempt of Courts Act, 1971, against then Rajkot Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) Jaydeepsinh Sarvaiya and other police officers in an alleged case of custodial torture in 2020, the Gujarat High Court on Thursday dismissed an application seeking the same.

A division bench of Justice BD Karia and Justice LS Pirzada of the Gujarat High Court was hearing the application filed by filed by Palbhai Ambalia, (then) President of Farmers Wing of Gujarat Congress Pradesh Samiti, in 2021 seeking civil contempt proceedings against the five respondents for "alleged conscious, willful and repeated defiance" of an SC order dated December 12, 1996, which



put in place the DK Basu guidelines to prevent custodial torture and ensure transparency during arrests and detention. The respondents included then Rajkot DCP Sarvaiya, police inspectors Hitesh Gadhvi and Vikram Vanzara, Commissioner of Police Manoj Agarwal and the state of Gujarat.

Ambalia's case was that pursuant to an FIR

against him, he was called to the Pradyumanagr police station on May 20, 2020, to be released on bail. After being granted bail, he was allegedly called back to give his thumb impression and then taken to the office of the Commissioner of Police, Rajkot city, where he was allegedly "held against his wish... against a tree by two police officers (Sarvaiya and Gadhvi), who brutally thrashed [Ambalia] due to which the applicant received substantial blows on the lower portion of his body".

He was booked in other cases and produced before the Magistrate, who directed the police to take him to the Rajkot civil hospital for treatment. Ambalia also contended that he had moved an application intimating the Magistrate that he had been beaten and tortured in custody, but "no action was taken by the executive magistrate against the said application".

Vetlapalem blast: Andhra Pradesh plans stricter norms to ensure safety of workers

High-level committee is expected to submit report shortly, outlining corrective measures

VIJAYAWADA.(Agency)

In the wake of the devastating explosion at a firecracker manufacturing unit in Vetlapalem village last month that left around 28 people dead and several others injured, the Andhra Pradesh government is moving towards a comprehensive overhaul of safety norms in the sector.

A high-level committee constituted by the State government has completed its field study and is expected to submit a detailed report shortly, outlining a series of corrective and preventive measures.

The committee comprising Fire Service department DG Venkata Ramana, EAGLE chief Ake Ravi Krishna and other officials from Revenue, labour, police, Petroleum and Explosives Safety Organisation (PESO) and Factories was tasked with examining the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) followed in firecracker manufacturing units, both within the State and in other parts of the country.

As part of its assessment, the panel visited



Sivakasi in Tamil Nadu, India's largest firecracker manufacturing hub, where it documented production processes, safety protocols, worker handling practices and regulatory enforcement mechanisms. Officials conducted an in-depth review of factory layouts, storage systems for explosive materials and emergency response preparedness.

Preliminary findings of the committee have raised serious concerns. Of the approximately 97 firecracker manufacturing units operating in AP, a

significant number were found to be violating licence conditions and operating without adequate safety measures mandated under the Explosives Act and related guidelines.

Instances of poor infrastructure, overcrowded workspaces, lack of fire safety equipment and improper handling of raw materials were observed. In some cases, units were allegedly functioning with expired or improperly granted licences, pointing to regulatory lapses.

The committee is expected to recommend stringent action against erring officials who issued licences without proper verification or inspections. It is also likely to call for periodic licence reviews to ensure continued compliance. Among key structural reforms proposed are the appointment of a dedicated nodal officer to monitor the sector, the creation of flying squad teams for surprise inspections, and enhanced coordination between the Labour department, Factories department and local administration.

Gujarat HC upholds BJP MLA election: 'Voter's mandate cannot be nullified over minor issues in affidavit'

Gujarat HC rejects plea challenging Tankara BJP MLA's candidature

Ahmedabad.(Agency)

Holding that "to nullify the choice" of voters over "minor technicality and insignificant non-disclosure" in election affidavits would have "serious repercussions on the democratic process", the Gujarat High Court on Thursday rejected an election petition filed by former Congress MLA Lalit Kagathara, challenging the candidature of BJP MLA Durlabhjibhai Detharia elected from the Tankara Assembly constituency in Morbi district in 2022.

Kagathara, who secured 73,018 votes in the 2022 elections, had lost to Detharia (83,274 votes). He then moved a petition on January 21, 2023, challenging the validity of Detharia's

candidature, stating that he had objected to Detharia's Form 26 affidavit during the scrutiny of the nominations.

Kagathara contended that Detharia's affidavit had incomplete details such as social media, income years, criminal proceedings, assets/liabilities, education), and suppression of material information, but the returning officer (RO) had overruled and accepted the affidavit. Detharia's application seeking dismissal of Kagathara's petition was filed in July 2024.

Kagathara had filed an election petition in the High Court under the relevant Sections of the

Representation of the People Act, 1951 (RP Act), claiming that Detharia's candidature was a result of corrupt practice by



undue influence, improper acceptance of nomination, and non-compliance with Sections of the RP Act and ECI guidelines. Detharia then filed an application seeking dismissal of the petition

for lacking the cause of action and non-compliance RP Act.

Among Kagathara's contentions was that the details of Detharia's social media accounts were not disclosed, and his income of five preceding years was mentioned as per the ITR, but the affidavit did not specify incomes by the financial year. Kagathara's contentions, as recorded in the judgment of the HC, also included the details of criminal proceedings and past convictions or pendency of criminal cases in Detharia's affidavit having been "not ticked and left blank", among other declarations of financial assets. The petition contended that Detharia

"deliberately suppressed mandatory facts about properties and made a false declaration regarding assets..."

A single judge bench of Justice IJ Vora of the Gujarat HC, in its judgment, said on Thursday, "In order to prove allegation... of the Corrupt Practice, it is necessary to plead that what are the corrupt practices being committed by the return candidate and how the undue influence has directly or indirectly interfered with the pre-exercise of an electoral right. Upon meaningful reading of the plaint, it appears that, except legal provision and defects mentioned in the affidavit Form 26, nothing being alleged that the suppression of the information in the affidavit amounted to 'corrupt practices'."

Parliament 3-day special session from April 16 to pass women's quota bills

The Centre is to convene a three-day special Parliament session from April 16 to pass key Constitution amendment bills, including those to implement women's reservations and increase Lok Sabha seats.

New Delhi.(Agency)
A special session of Parliament will be convened for three days beginning April 16 to pass key Constitution amendment bills aimed at increasing the number of Lok Sabha seats from 543 to 816, enabling the implementation of the women's reservation law at the earliest.

According to sources, the two Houses will meet on April 16, 17 and 18, with three sittings planned during the period. The current Budget Session, which was scheduled to adjourn sine die on April 2, will not be adjourned indefinitely, allowing it to reconvene for the special legislative business. The government is keen on

moving forward with the proposed legislation, including amendments linked to the Nari Vandan Adhiniyam, 2023, to operationalise women's reservation. The bills are likely to be introduced first in the Lok Sabha.

Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju told the Rajya Sabha that the House would meet again soon to consider an important bill, adding that the government has already shared its plans with opposition parties.

The move, however, has triggered sharp political reactions. Leader of the House, JP Nadda, defended the government's prerogative to decide the timing of legislation, while Leader of Opposition

Mallikarjun Kharge accused the Centre of acting like a "bully" and attempting to derive political mileage from the issue.

Congress leader Jairam Ramesh alleged that the government is pushing the bill during the election season to gain electoral advantage, arguing that an all-party meeting should be held after April 29 when polling concludes in several states. He also questioned the shift in the government's stance on linking implementation to the Census and delimitation.

Rijiju rejected the allegations, stating that the government is fulfilling its commitment to women and urging parties not to politicise



the issue. Other opposition leaders also raised concerns. AAP's Sanjay Singh accused the government of politicising the matter, while NCP (SCP) MP Fauzia Khan sought clarity on reservation in the Rajya Sabha and state legislative councils. RJD

MP Manoj Jha questioned whether sub-quotas for SC, ST and OBC women would be ensured.

The Congress has also claimed that increasing Lok Sabha seats by nearly 50 per cent could disadvantage smaller states in the South, Northeast and West, though there has been no official confirmation from the government on these concerns.

The development comes amid ongoing elections in several states, including Puducherry, Assam, Kerala, West Bengal and Tamil Nadu, adding to the political significance of the proposed legislative push.

Double-deck road along the Munak Canal is stuck after Haryana Govt delays NOC

New Delhi.(Agency)

The Delhi Public Works Department's (PWD) ambitious project, seeking to construct a 16 km-long double-decker elevated road over and along Munak Canal – a waterway that falls under Haryana government's jurisdiction – is yet to take off as the Haryana's Irrigation Department, citing technical issues, has not granted it a No Objection Certificate (NOC) allegedly despite repeated requests, officials said.

The Haryana government has sought information mainly on two issues: desilting of the canal through heavy machinery should not be hampered by the corridor and details on pier specifications to ensure that the canal's embankments are not damaged.

"We are corresponding and pursuing the matter positively. As of now, we have received a preliminary report of the project (from the Delhi government), based on which we have submitted our technical observations," a senior official from Haryana Irrigation department said.

The official added, "We maintain the canal and undertake its desilting through heavy machinery. The movement of the machinery should not be hampered by the proposed corridor... We have also sought clarifications on the proposed pier specifications to ensure that the lining of the canal and its embankments are not damaged."

The official maintained that the Delhi PWD is yet to send a final Detailed Project Report (DPR). "Based on the final DPR, the NOC will be issued," the official added. A senior Delhi government official, meanwhile, said the DPR is almost ready. "It is a big project and will take time. We have prepared the DPR; it is almost ready... The government has decided to hand over the project to NHA for execution."

Delhi govt cracks down on unauthorised LPG refilling in Alipur, FIR filed

New Delhi.(Agency)

The government on Thursday carried out an enforcement operation in North Delhi's Alipur against alleged unlawful refilling of LPG cylinders. An FIR was also against those involved, officials said. The action was carried out by a joint team comprising officials from the Food Supplies department and representatives of oil marketing companies. "The operation was carried out based on inputs from a sting operation aired on a national news channel on April 1 (Wednesday)," said officials.

During the inspection, authorities found that three consumer passbooks were allegedly being misused to procure subsidised cylinders for unauthorised refilling and resale



of LPG in smaller units. "All incriminating materials found at the site have been seized and an FIR has been registered against the accused," officials also said. Chief Minister Rekha Gupta said that any attempt to exploit consumers or manipulate LPG distribution will invite the strictest possible action.

"The government has adopted a zero-tolerance policy towards black marketing and hoarding and will continue to act decisively against offenders, while assuring that there is no shortage of LPG supply in the national capital," she said. Gupta also informed that to strengthen enforcement, the government has approved the formation of 13 district-level teams, each headed by sub-divisional magistrate (headquarters), to ensure swift action on violations. "These teams will coordinate closely with relevant departments and conduct targeted operations based on intelligence inputs and public complaints," she said.

Delhi govt to set up animal welfare committees in all districts



Gupta said that with DMs leading these committees, cases of animal cruelty can be addressed more swiftly, with better monitoring and coordination on the ground.

New Delhi.(Agency)

With an aim to strengthen animal welfare at the grassroots level, the Delhi Government is going to constitute animal welfare committees in all 13 districts to prevent cruelty against animals, officials said.

The committees — Societies for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCAs) — will be set up in all 13 revenue districts in the city with each of them headed by the district magistrate (DM), officials added.

Highlighting that protecting animals is a mark of a sensitive and responsible society, Chief Minister Rekha Gupta said the decision follows the recent reorganisation of revenue

districts and aims to ensure more effective implementation of animal protection laws at the district level.



These SPCAs will function under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960, and will include experts and

members associated with animal welfare.

Gupta said that with DMs leading these committees, cases of animal cruelty can be addressed more swiftly, with better monitoring and coordination on the ground. "This will make the overall system more responsive and effective," Gupta said.

She said that at the state level, the Animal Welfare Board will serve as the apex body overseeing the entire framework. It will monitor the implementation of laws and provide technical and financial support to district SPCAs, significantly enhancing their capacity, Gupta added.

'Prevalent problem': RWAs in Gurgaon welcome HC order staying stilt+4 constructions

"Things like lack of parking and construction of PGs on narrow roads should not happen. However, norms should not be weaponised against builders", Abhishek added.

New Delhi.(Agency)

Resident Welfare Associations (RWAs) across Gurgaon have welcomed the Punjab and Haryana High Court's decision on Thursday to stay the Haryana government's stilt-plus-four (S+4) construction policy on residential plots in the Millennium City.

RWA office bearers say they have faced a multitude of issues stemming from the alleged misuse of the policy, ranging from PG facilities being offered on narrow 10-metre residential roads and 100-yard plots being converted into stilt+4 floors, to stilt areas being turned into commercial spaces instead of being used for parking. Explaining why they are welcoming the HC order, Kundan Lal Sharma, General Secretary of the RWA at Sector 21, which is 4-km away from the popular DLF Cyberhub, said, "It is a very prevalent problem in our area. There is a plot that, after building S+4, now has 60 IRK flats on it, clearly for a commercial purpose, but without the necessary utility conversions." Without civic infrastructure being improved first, such constructions should not be allowed, as they only add to an already



burdened system, Kundan Lal said. "As an RWA, however, we cannot compel anyone against constructing an S+4 floors, even if it exceeds our capacity. We welcome the HC order and the regulation of S+4," he added. Another RWA General Secretary echoed a similar view. "What makes it worse is people build S+4 and subsequently PGs and commercial units on roads that are only 10-m wide, and then do not even use the stilt or basement for parking. As a result, cars block the road and it becomes impossible to walk, leading to traffic woes in residential areas. We have faced difficulty as an RWA in handling this, so the order is a welcome one", said Bhawani Shankar Tripathy,

general secretary of Sector 23A RWA. The problem is not limited to older neighbourhoods and is prevalent in newly built societies in Gurgaon as well. Weighing in, Kusum Sharma, Chairperson of Suncity Township's RWA, located near Golf Course Road, said the government's policy allowing stilt+4 floor constructions on residential plots had placed an unsustainable burden on the city's civic infrastructure.

Police stop burial of girl in West Delhi: Family says died of typhoid; post-mortem says 'smothered'

The family members of the girl, including the parents, are now being questioned, police said, adding that they are yet to verify the girl's age. "The family initially claimed that the girl died of typhoid," an officer said.

New Delhi.(Agency)

A day after a girl's burial was stopped following police intervention in West Delhi, officers on Thursday said she was allegedly smothered over a "friendship" she developed with a boy.

The family members of the girl, including the parents, are now being questioned, police said, adding that they are yet to verify the girl's age. "The family initially claimed that the girl died of typhoid," an officer said.

As per police sources, the girl developed a bond with the boy in their native village. Around two years ago, she, along with her family, had shifted to Delhi. She however, kept in touch with the boy.

"The family got to know about their friendship a few months ago that led to frequent fights," the officer said.

Another officer said that the girl had threatened to leave home and told her parents that she would elope with the boy. In the three to four days leading up to her death, heated exchanges between the girl and her parents had become common, the officer added.

Police said the matter came to light after the police control room on Wednesday received a call. The caller said that a girl was being buried after



allegedly being killed. It was later found that the call was made by a cousin of the deceased's 'friend'.

"The PCR call was received around 2 pm and the caller alleged that a girl had been killed by her family and her body was being taken for burial.

The caller also told the deceased's friend that the family might have done something wrong to the girl," an officer said.

The body was taken into custody and sent for a post-mortem examination. On Thursday, police received the report, which mentioned that she died after being smothered.

Centre rolls back 60% free seats on flights order, weeks after announcement

The Centre has asked DGCA to put in abeyance its order regarding 60% free seats in airlines. The move came after several airlines, raised concerns regarding the move saying that this would push up prices as the airlines are already strained due to fuel shortage, amidst the ongoing West Asia conflict.

New Delhi.(Agency)

The Civil Aviation Ministry has put on hold its order asking airlines to provide 60% free seats to passengers, just weeks after the announcement. The move had been announced by the Central government as part of a passenger rights push, but as of Thursday, it has been "put on hold."

Airlines warning on fare hike
According to a report in the Times of India, the airlines had warned that amid the ongoing fuel crisis, due to the Iran war, the move of the government to cut ancillary revenue would result in more fare hikes, thus increasing the burden on passengers.

The Civil Aviation Ministry had on March 17



ordered the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) to enact rules mandating airlines give 60% free seats to passengers. The aviation regulator was all set to implement the changes from April 20, 2026, after making amendments to the existing rules.

However on Thursday the Ministry once again wrote to the DGCA to keep its "order in abeyance". They wrote, "The matter has been reviewed in light of representations received from the Federation of Indian Airlines (IndiGo, Air India group and SpiceJet) and Akasa Air, highlighting operational and commercial implications of the above provisions, including its potential impact on fare structures and consistency with the prevailing deregulated tariff regime." The order said that it had been decided that the provisions regarding providing 60% seats free of charges will be kept in abeyance till further orders.

NEWS BOX

MS Dhoni returns to CSK training: Will he play Chepauk clash vs PBKS

New Delhi. (Agency)

MS Dhoni has returned to training with Chennai Super Kings, sparking fresh speculation over a possible early comeback in IPL 2026. The 44-year-old, who missed the season opener due to a calf strain, was seen batting in the nets ahead of CSK's home clash against Punjab Kings.

IPL-2026-esk-vs-pbks-training-session-video-viral-2890415-2026-04-02?utm_source=global-search&utm_medium=global-search&utm_campaign=global-search" target="_blank">Dhoni's return to training comes sooner than expected after an injury that was initially set to keep him out for around two weeks. However, speaking through his actions in training rather than any official update, the veteran appeared to be easing his way back into match fitness. At the CSK training session on the eve of the Chepauk clash, Dhoni was seen focusing on range hitting and light fitness drills, but notably did not participate fully with the squad. While he spent time batting in the nets, he stayed away from wicketkeeping drills,



with Sanju Samson continuing behind the stumps in practice. That detail has added a layer of uncertainty around his availability, suggesting that while Dhoni is close, he may not yet be ready to return to full match duties.

Apart from Dhoni, another injured CSK player, Dewald Brevis, also took part in the team's training session ahead of Friday's clash. However, Brevis was limited to short-run drills during practice before the Royals game, working closely with the team physios.

WILL DHONI PLAY CSK vs PBKS?

Despite returning to training, Dhoni's participation in the clash against Punjab Kings remains unclear. The absence of wicketkeeping practice points towards a cautious approach, with CSK likely to prioritise long-term fitness over a rushed comeback.

Abhishek Sharma handed hefty fine by IPL for breach of conduct in KKR vs SRH

MUMBAI. (Agency)

SRH opener Abhishek Sharma was handed a demerit point and a hefty fine by the IPL following the win over KKR at the Eden Gardens on Thursday, April 2. Abhishek was charged 25 percent of his match fee as a penalty for using obscene language during the contest.

KKR vs SRH, IPL 2026: HIGHLIGHTS | SCORECARD

The match referee deemed the SRH opener to have breached Article 2.3 of IPL Code of Conduct, which covers the use of language that is widely recognised as offensive, obscene or profane (in any language), and is audible to spectators or the viewing audience—whether picked up by stump microphones or otherwise. This may include, for instance, expressions of



frustration directed at one's own performance or circumstances. Abhishek has accepted the punishment from the IPL.

"Abhishek Sharma, All-rounder, Sunrisers Hyderabad, has been fined 25 per cent of his match fees and has also accumulated one demerit point for breaching the IPL Code of Conduct during his team's match against Kolkata Knight Riders at Eden Gardens, Kolkata, on Thursday. He admitted to the Level 1 offence under Article 2.3 and accepted the Match Referee's sanction. For Level 1 breaches of the Code of Conduct, the Match Referee's decision is final and binding," read the statement from the IPL.

While the exact incident hasn't been mentioned in the statement, many believe it to be the moment when Abhishek was left frustrated after his controversial dismissal where Varun Chakravarthy was able to catch him in the deep. Despite the third umpire review, which showed some doubts in the completion of the catch, Abhishek was given his marching orders.

Wake up KKR! Make those tough calls early before the season slips away

IPL 2026: KKR have already got their backs to the wall after just two games, with the combination still being a major issue. Can they find some inspiration from their 2012 season and get back on track with some big calls?

New Delhi. (Agency)

There is a crazy stat if you're a Kolkata Knight Riders fan, especially after the loss to Sunrisers Hyderabad. Back in 2012, KKR started their season with two big defeats. That campaign began with an eight-wicket loss to Delhi, followed by a 22-run defeat to Rajasthan Royals. At that time, KKR had a strong batting line-up on paper with Brendon McCullum, Jacques Kallis, Brett Lee and an up-and-coming Sunil Narine in their side. Add to this the all-round presence of Shakib Al Hasan and Yusuf Pathan, and you

had a team that was just focused on cricket and not there for the vibes. But two losses meant they needed to act fast—and they did just that. In the games that followed, they made the bold call of dropping McCullum, one of T20 cricket's finest players, and brought in Manvinder Bisla. This was an era with no impact subs and no option to bring anyone back once dropped. Rest, as they say, is history. KKR went on a sensational run, winning six out of their next seven games during the middle phase, and then beat CSK to lift the IPL title. Now, the season is just two games old, but the Kolkata side finds itself at a crossroads. While Ankrish Raghuvansi and Finn Allen have impressed, the bowling looks weak, and Cameron Green being just a batter has disrupted their combination. The results have seen them lose momentum after an initial burst, with defeats to MI and SRH exposing their flaws. Ajinkya Rahane hinted at changes after the loss on April 2, but it seems like they will need to make some big calls.

AN EXTRABATTER BUT WHO?

With Cameron Green not bowling for KKR, Sunil Gavaskar said that they need to bring in an extra batter into the mix. While Green is the big-money buy, if he isn't bowling, then

KKR needs someone who can strengthen the lower order. "I think they have to somewhere down the line, think in terms of the fact that if Cameron Green is not going to be bowling for you, you



have to pick another batter there, because yes, I think we know that he's got 100 in the IPL. We know that he can bat well, but his form has not been great when he's come in there." "The last game that he played in Australia, he got 100 in a Shield game in a red-ball game, but this is where they've got to look at their numbers 6 and 7. Yes, Cameron Green at 4, but I think also 5 and 6 is the issue where I think they're struggling. Rinku is there, but apart from that, who do they have?" said Gavaskar to the broadcasters. After

Rinku, the presence of Andre Russell is sorely missed for KKR. While the onus has been put on Ramandeep Singh and Anukul Roy, there needs to be a power-hitting option. The obvious option is Rovman Powell, someone who enjoyed a sensational run in T20s, scoring 269 runs in 11 matches. But this would mean sacrificing one of their bowling options—Sunil Narine or Blessing Muzarabani—which would create another major issue. Another option could be to bring in Tim Seifert, who shares a strong bond with Finn Allen from their time with New Zealand, and slot him at the top of the order. But once again, the question remains—who makes way?

An exciting and probably risky option comes in the form of Delhi Premier League import, Tejasvi Singh. During the 2025 season of the DPL, he racked up 339 runs in just 10 innings, striking at over 190 and finishing as the tournament's second-highest six-hitter with 29 maximums. His standout moment came in a rain-curtailed chase, where he hammered 69 off just 21 balls, including a record-breaking 12-ball half-century—the fastest in DPL history. Now, if KKR can bring him in for Anukul or Ramandeep, things could improve in the No. 6 and 7 spots.

As fuel rates soar, Shahid Afridi urges Pakistanis to back govt, appeals for calm

BARCELONA. (Agency)

Shahid Afridi has supported Pakistan's decision to increase the price of petrol and diesel amid the ongoing oil crisis in the country caused by the aftermath of the West Asia war. The former Pakistan cricket team captain urged the citizens to back the government's call to overcome the situation in a video message.

Pakistan on Thursday announced a steep increase in fuel prices, marking the second hike in under a month, as rising global oil rates—driven by tensions in the Middle East—continue to impact markets. Diesel prices have increased by 54.9% to 520.35 Pakistani rupees (\$1.88) per litre, while petrol now costs 458.40 rupees per litre after a 42.7% jump. The new prices will come into effect from Friday. Petroleum Minister Ali Pervaiz Malik said the move was unavoidable, citing the surge in international crude oil prices. Afridi, in his message, said that backing the government at the moment is the most important thing to avoid any obstacle in the progress of the country. "Assalamualaikum



friends, I am Shahid Afridi. Because of the war, the global energy crisis that the world is facing right now—Pakistan, Alhamdulillah, is still in a much better position than many countries. Supporting the government and backing them is the most important thing. As Pakistanis, we should try to follow the steps that the government has taken so that there is no obstacle in the progress of the country," said Afridi. Just last month, Pakistan had increased petrol and diesel prices by nearly 20%, attributing the move to rising global oil costs linked to the US-Israel conflict involving Iran. The fresh hike is likely to fuel inflation further and add to the financial burden on the country's already struggling population. Pakistan remains heavily dependent on imported oil, with most supplies coming from Saudi Arabia and the UAE via the Strait of Hormuz.

You'll come from Virar? CSK's Ayush Mhatre relives emotional Rohit Sharma meet

New Delhi. (Agency)

It is no secret that Ayush Mhatre adores Rohit Sharma and considers the MI legend to be his idol. This was evident from the time he penned an emotional note to Rohit after losing spot to the former India captain during a Ranji Trophy game. Before going to a tour of England last year, Mhatre went to meet Rohit and was gifted a bat by the former Indian skipper. Mhatre, who plays for MI's arch-rivals CSK, has now recalled meeting Rohit at his home before the England tour. Speaking on CSK's YouTube channel, the India U19 skipper said how he sent a simple message to Rohit, asking for a meetup. Mhatre remembered how Rohit offered to meet him whenever he needed help after his first IPL outing for CSK last season against MI. The young batter decided to take the offer up and sent Rohit a message asking for a meetup. Mhatre said that Rohit called him and was even surprised to see the youngster ready to

make the trip from Virar to meet him before the England tour. "So I was about to go on the England tour, and I wanted to speak to him a



bit. I messaged him. Then I said I wanted to meet him, so he directly called me himself. He called me from his side and said, tell me what you want to say. I told him that I am going on this tour and wanted to meet. He asked me, where do you stay? I said Virar. He said, will you come from Virar to meet me? I said yes, I can come anywhere to meet

you, I just want to meet you," said Mhatre. "MY IDOL GAVE ME TIME" Mhatre recalled how he insisted to Rohit that he wanted to meet him and spent two hours at his residence. The youngster called it a dream day for him. "He said it's not like that, we can also talk on video. I said no, I want to meet you personally and talk. Then he gave me his home address and I went to his house the next day. I spoke to him for at least 2 hours. I mean, it was crazy that he gave me so much time, that's a big thing for me. My idol gave me time, so it was a dream for me, a dream day. I didn't even realise how time passed, 2 hours went by. It felt really good talking to him," said Mhatre. Mhatre went on to win the U-19 World Cup with India this year but made a lacklustre start to his IPL 2026 campaign. Rohit, on the other hand, roared back to form against KKR to start MI's campaign with a win.

Raider Ayan eager to continue red-hot form

CHENNAI. (Agency)

As the talent pool for Indian kabaddi came together to hone their skills during a training camp at the Inspire Institute of Sport in Ballari, Karnataka ahead of an important year, one cannot ignore the presence of 20-year-old raider Ayan Lohchab. Ayan comes fresh off the back of an record-breaking Pro Kabaddi League season, and is keen on continuing this form in the lead up to the Asian Games later this year. Organised by the Amateur Kabaddi Federation of India (AKFI), along with Mashal Sports, to identify and shortlist probable players for the Asian Games in Japan, Ayan was one of the names to watch for in the camp. As many as 45 men and the same number of women trained for a week during the camp that concluded on Thursday. "I got to improve my strength, mobility and agility. There were classes on agility. The knowledge (on Kabaddi) has gotten better, more than I knew already," Ayan told this daily. Dubbed as a one for

the future ahead of PKL 2025, the raider from Haryana put in performances that positioned him as a force to reckon with. He



helped Patna Pirates leap from 12th in the league table to the knockouts, scoring 316 raid points. There, they won the play-in tournament, but only travelled as far as eliminator 3 where they lost to Telugu Titans. For Ayan, who was awarded the New Young Player Award in PKL 2024, leading the team to the qualifier was a big

feat. He helped the team win eight games in a row - the longest streak in PKL. "The coach in Patna had said even if you lose, you give your best. And focus on your game. And the management and everything had supported us throughout our journey," he recollected. Hailing from Bupania near the industrial town of Bahadurgarh in Jhajjar district Haryana, Lohchab began playing Kabaddi on mud courts in his village. With the talent he possessed, his father Sandeep, enrolled him in the Sushil Shastri Academy in Sonipat, which is an hour away from the village. "As I played the game there, I started liking it. My father took me to the academy there, and I trained there," he said. With his performances last year, he quickly became a local hero there. Now, Ayan aims to be a part of the Indian team ahead of the Asian Games in Aichi-Nagoya, Japan. "I will give my best to get into the final squad for the Asian Games. The main goal for this year is to win a medal there," he said.

CSK will back youngsters: Captain Ruturaj Gaikwad wants less pressure on new faces

IPL 2026: Ruturaj Gaikwad has urged patience as CSK embrace a new, youthful core in IPL 2026. After a heavy loss to RR, the focus shifts from results to growth and freedom for young players.

NEW DELHI. (Agency)

Chennai Super Kings captain Ruturaj Gaikwad has called for patience with the franchise's new-look squad, urging fans and stakeholders to ease pressure on youngsters as CSK navigate a clear transition phase in IPL 2026. With a fresh core stepping in, Gaikwad made it clear that growth, not instant results, is the priority. That message comes on the back of a reality

check against Rajasthan Royals, where IPL-2026-rr-vs-esk-memes-chennai-super-kings-ms-dhoni-ruturaj-gaikwad-2889341-2026-03-30" target="_blank"> CSK's young batting unit was blown away in their season opener in Guwahati. Speaking ahead of their clash against Punjab Kings, Gaikwad stressed the need to allow young players time and freedom to settle into the demands of the league. Looking at this team now, it is a very young team. The excitement is there but at the same time, there's a lot of difference between experienced players and inexperienced players. So, you have to allow them to make mistakes. You have to allow them to express themselves. You have to make sure that they are in a good Headspace," Gaikwad said in the pre-match press conference. "I mean, [there's pressure to perform] from families,

from the media, from team members, everyone [in the IPL]," Gaikwad said. "So to



cope with that and to just get into that IPL performance mode, sometimes it takes time," he added. The challenge for CSK was laid bare in that opening game. Bowled out for just 127, they

were never in control after being reduced to 51 for 5 inside 7.2 overs, with Jofra Archer and Nandre Burger ripping through the top order. The chase was even more one-sided, as RR cruised home in just 12.1 overs, powered by a stunning 15-ball 52 from teenage sensation Vaibhav Sooryavanshi. For CSK, it was a reminder of the gap between promise and performance. Five debutants, including Kartik Sharma, were handed opportunities, but the step up proved challenging. The absence of icons like MS Dhoni and Suresh Raina only amplified the spotlight on the new faces.

HOW CSK HAVE SHIFTED TO YOUTH

This CSK side looks very different from the one that thrived on experience for over a decade. The franchise has gradually moved on from its old guard, including Ravindra Jadeja, Ravichandran Ashwin and Dwayne Bravo, and is now investing heavily in youth.

Rapido targets 50 lakh active drivers by FY27

New Delhi.(Agency)

Rapido is targeting 50 lakh active drivers or captains by FY27 as it doubles down on its zero-commission SaaS model, shifting revenue from per-ride commissions to fixed subscriptions paid by drivers nationwide, said Pavan Guntupalli, co-founder of the company, to TNIE.

Rapido currently has around 30 lakh active captains every month across the country and expects this to rise sharply over the next financial year.

“Now, as of today, we have around 3 million, which is 30 lakh captains active every single month. And we expect it to reach to 50 lakh captains by this financial year FY27,” he said. Speaking about the company’s business model, Guntupalli said Rapido has moved away from the traditional commission-based ride aggregation model and now operates as a software-as-a-service platform for driver partners, whom the company refers to as captains.

“At first, we were a ride sharing, ride aggregator platform. But in 2023, Rapido being one of the first companies to make a major move in changing our entire business model, from a commission ride aggregator platform to becoming a zero commission SaaS platform,” he said. He added that under the revised model, the company’s revenues are no longer linked to a percentage of drivers’ earnings or per-ride commissions. Instead, captains pay a fixed daily fee to access the platform and its technology tools. “Each captain pays a fixed amount of let’s say 19 rupees or 29 rupees per day. And that is how our income is generated for Rapido,” Guntupalli said. Guntupalli said the company now tracks the number of captains on its platform more closely than conventional revenue metrics.

“One of the major things that we keep focusing on is number of captains we have on our system,” he said. He said the shift to the zero-commission structure has also helped reduce costs for the company by lowering spending on incentives previously used to attract drivers.

Tech firms redirect resources to AI, cut jobs

New Delhi.(Agency)

Oracle laid off thousands of employees even as the company’s revenues rise in a bid to increase its investment in artificial intelligence and cloud infrastructure. The move is part of a broader pattern now visible across big technology firms.

More than 75 technology companies have cut nearly 41,500 jobs so far in 2026, according to Layoffs.fyi, as companies redirect resources towards AI, cloud capacity and automation. Meta last week laid off 700 employees across multiple teams. Amazon has removed roughly 16,000 corporate and technical roles, including jobs in its cloud division AWS, while Atlassian cut about 1,600 employees, or nearly 10% of its workforce, to focus more on AI products and enterprise growth. Oracle began layoffs this week, affecting at least 20,000-30,000 employees globally, including nearly 12,000 in India, as it sharply increases spending on AI infrastructure to compete with rivals such as Amazon, Microsoft and Alphabet.

In a filing for March, the company said restructuring costs for fiscal 2026 could reach as much as \$2.1 billion, driven largely by severance and related expenses. The layoffs come even as Oracle’s financial performance remains strong. The company recently beat quarterly earnings estimates, reporting \$17.19 billion in revenue, and said demand from the AI data-centre boom is expected to support growth through at least 2027. What links these layoffs is not weak demand but an industry-wide shift in spending. Oracle is reportedly planning to raise as much as \$50 billion through debt and equity to expand cloud and AI data centre capabilities for major customers, including Nvidia, Meta Platforms and OpenAI.

Bank employees association seeks Finance Ministry probe into HDFC Bank ethics row after chairman’s exit

New Delhi.(Agency)

The All India Bank Employees’ Association (AIBEA) has written to Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman seeking immediate regulatory intervention following the resignation of HDFC Bank’s part-time chairman and independent director.

The union has flagged deep concern over the exit, noting that the resignation letter explicitly referred to happenings and practices within the bank that were not in line with the director’s personal values and ethics. Highlighting that HDFC Bank is



classified as a Domestic Systemically Important Bank (D-SIB) by the Reserve Bank of India, AIBEA said the issues raised point to potential concerns around governance standards and systemic stability. The bank has a large footprint, serving over 120 million customers through more than 9,600 branches. With deposits of over Rs 27 lakh crore and total business exceeding Rs 53 lakh crore, the union underlined that the institution operates at a massive scale, largely handling public money. While the RBI has sought to reassure depositors on safety, AIBEA said the absence of clarity on the internal practices flagged by a senior-level executive could impact public confidence. The association has urged the government to initiate a detailed probe into the matter, review the bank’s risk management practices, and ensure transparency through public disclosure of findings.

Income tax filing 2026: Which 5 key links should every taxpayer check now?

New Delhi.(Agency)

If you’ve logged into the income tax portal recently and felt things look a bit different, you’re not imagining it. With new tax rules in place and the system getting an upgrade, the overall experience has changed. While the updates aim to make filing easier, they also mean taxpayers need to be a bit more careful this year. The good news is that a few simple tools, available under the ‘Quick Links’ section, can help you navigate this transition smoothly.

E-PAY TAX: A SINGLE WINDOW FOR ALL YOUR PAYMENTS

This has quickly become one of the most important features on the portal. The e-Pay Tax option allows you to pay taxes under both the old and new systems through one place. You can choose from multiple payment modes like net banking, debit card, NEFT/RTGS, payment gateway, or even over-the-counter options. The system also helps you pick the correct challan, reducing the

chances of errors during payment.

INSTANT E-PAN

If you or someone in your family doesn’t have a PAN yet, this feature is worth knowing. The Instant e-PAN facility allows you to get a PAN almost instantly using Aadhaar. It’s completely digital, free of cost, and issued in a PDF format. Since it is based on Aadhaar e-KYC, the process is quick and doesn’t require paperwork.

E-VERIFY RETURN

Many taxpayers think filing the return is enough, but that’s only half the job. Unless you verify it, your return isn’t complete. The e-Verify Return link lets you do this instantly using Aadhaar OTP, net banking, or other methods. A verified return gets processed faster, which also means quicker refunds.

KNOW TAX PAYMENT STATUS Ever paid tax and then wondered if it actually went through? This is where this

link helps.

Using Know Tax Payment Status, you can confirm whether your payment was successful. You’ll need your PAN or TAN and the challan reference number—a 14-

tasks. This section lets you check whether your PAN is already linked with Aadhaar and fix it if it isn’t. It’s a small step, but an essential one for staying compliant.

Why do these links matter now

With the old Income Tax Act, 1961 now replaced and new rules kicking in, the system is going through a transition phase. For a short period, both old and new frameworks may overlap, which can be confusing. That’s exactly where these quick links help. They simplify key tasks, reduce mistakes, and make the overall process smoother. In other words, the updated income tax portal is designed to make things easier—but only if you use the right tools. These five links are not just shortcuts; they are essential steps to help you file correctly, avoid delays, and stay on the right side of the new tax system.



digit code generated at the time of payment.

LINK AADHAAR / VIEW STATUS

PAN-Aadhaar linking remains compulsory.

Without it, you may not be able to file your return or complete other tax-related

Why buying diamonds is expensive but fails as an investment

New Delhi.(Agency)

Diamonds have long been seen as a symbol of wealth and luxury. Many buyers assume that, like gold, they will hold value over time. But in reality, diamonds often lose value sharply when sold, raising questions about whether they are worth the high price at purchase. Recent data shows that diamond prices have fallen to their lowest level this century. The diamond price index has dropped from around 8,500 levels to nearly 3,500, according to market data. This decline has come even without a major global recession or geopolitical shock, making the fall more striking. When consumers buy a diamond, they are not just paying for the stone. The price includes branding, marketing, retailer margins, and making charges. Unlike Gold, which has a clear daily rate, diamonds do not have a standard benchmark price that buyers can easily track. This makes pricing less transparent. Two similar diamonds can be sold at very different prices depending on where they are

bought from, which adds to the high cost at the retail level.

WHY DIAMONDS DON’T GIVE RETURNS

The biggest issue with diamonds is the resale value. Unlike gold, which can be sold easily at market-linked prices, diamonds do not have a strong resale market. When a buyer tries to sell a diamond, they often get a much lower price than what they paid. In many cases, jewellers either do not buy back diamonds or offer rates far below the purchase value. This gap between buying and selling price makes diamonds a poor investment option. LAB-GROWN DIAMONDS ARE CHANGING THE MARKET

One of the biggest reasons behind falling prices is the rise of lab-grown diamonds. These diamonds are chemically, physically and optically identical to natural diamonds. The key difference is in how they are made. While natural diamonds take millions of years to form, lab-grown diamonds can now be produced in about 14 hours.

The cost of producing these diamonds has fallen sharply, by nearly 90% since 2015. Today, a lab-grown diamond can be made for under \$300.

This has disrupted the market. Lab-grown diamonds now account for about 45% of engagement ring sales in the US, showing how quickly consumer preference is changing. As cheaper alternatives become widely available, the pricing power of natural diamonds has weakened. SUPPLY AND PRICING MODEL UNDER PRESSURE For decades, diamond prices were supported by controlled supply and strong marketing, which helped create a perception of rarity and long-term value. However, lab-grown diamonds have challenged this model. When a similar product is available at a much lower cost, it raises questions about the actual value of natural diamonds. Younger buyers are also becoming more price-conscious and are moving away from spending heavily on traditional diamond jewellery.

TVS Venu Group to acquire PGIM India’s asset management business

New Delhi.(Agency)

Chennai-based TVS Venu Group has decided to enter the lucrative asset management business. The company on Thursday said that it has entered into definitive agreements, through TVS Venu Management and Consultancy Services Private Limited and its affiliates, to acquire Prudential Financial Inc’s (PFI) 100% stake in PGIM India Asset Management (PGIM India) and PGIM India Trustees Private Limited.

The completion of the transaction is subject to regulatory approvals and other customary closing conditions, TVS Venu Group said in a statement on Thursday. The company has not disclosed the amount it paid for the acquisition. The PGIM India is a wholly-owned business of PGIM, the global investment management business of US-based PFI. It is a full-service investment manager offering a broad range of equity, fixed income and multi-asset solutions to retail and institutional investors, managing over Rs 30,000 crore of assets as of December 31, 2025. Khaitan & Co acted as legal adviser to TVS Venu Group and Shardul Amarchand Mangaldas & Co acted as the legal adviser to PFI. Ernst & Young LLP acted as the exclusive M&A adviser to PFI. The PGIM India manages 25 open-ended mutual funds as of March 2026 and also offers alternative investment funds, portfolio management services, and offshore advisory. The acquisition will give TVS Venu Group access to a full-service investment management platform in India. Prudential Financial has been exploring a sale of its underperforming India unit—which manages around Rs 27,000 crore in mutual fund assets—for some time. Reports suggest the firm had attracted interest from several players, including fund houses such as Edelweiss MF and Groww. PGIM India Asset Management had reported a loss of Rs 23.5 crore. The TVS Venu Group is an Indian multinational conglomerate with operations in more than 80 countries, with interests across automotive, financial services and real estate. The new acquisition in the asset management sector happened days after company patriarch Venu returned as Chairman and MD of TVS Holdings (formerly Sundaram Clayton Ltd).

The Indian mutual fund industry has 51 asset management companies, and has grown rapidly over the past few years with total assets under management (AuM) at Rs 81.5 lakh crore.

Windfall tax on diesel, ATF exports not applicable to Reliance’s SEZ refinery

SYDNEY.(Agency)

The windfall tax on exported diesel and aviation turbine fuel (ATF) will not be applicable to Reliance Industries’ special economic zone (SEZ) refinery due to judicial rulings, a senior government official said.

According to Jainendra Singh Kandhari, joint secretary, Department of Revenue, the special additional excise duty and additional excise duty are not applicable to SEZ refineries.

Amid the ongoing conflict in West Asia between Iran and Israel, which has impacted India’s energy supply, the government announced export duties of ‘21.50 per litre on diesel and ‘29.50 per litre on ATF. However, initially it was not clear whether exports from Reliance’s special economic zone (SEZ) refinery—one of the largest contributors to India’s refined product exports—would be exempt. Reliance was exempted during the 2022 windfall tax regime. “As per judicial

pronouncements on this issue, the special additional excise duty and additional excise duty are not applicable on SEZ refineries,” said Kandhari.



The levy, first introduced in July 2022 following Russia’s invasion of Ukraine and withdrawn in December 2024, has been re-imposed in the form of a special additional excise duty (SAED) to encourage refiners to prioritise domestic sales over exports.

Reliance has two refineries at Jamnagar in Gujarat—a 33 million tonnes per

year unit catering to the domestic market and a 35.2 million tonnes per year export-oriented SEZ unit.

Meanwhile, the government on Thursday asked oil refineries to divert some feedstock —usually used to make cooking gas (LPG) — to industries facing a petrochemical shortage. According to petroleum ministry, refineries will now supply some propylene to the petrochemical sector, which was hit after most feedstock was earlier diverted for LPG production.

Earlier, to boost LPG production, the ministry had directed refineries to use C3 and C4 hydrocarbons—such as propane, butane, propylene and butenes—only for making LPG. This stopped the supply of propylene and disrupted the plastic industry, causing shortages in food packaging and condom manufacturing. To fix this, the government has now asked refiners to supply some propylene back to the petrochemical industry.

Layoffs everywhere, but this company says no job cuts

The company has said it will not cut jobs despite ongoing global uncertainty. It has committed to retaining its workforce and continuing salary payments without delay.

New Delhi.(Agency)

Layoffs have become a common theme across industries, especially in the technology sector. From global tech layoffs to recent Oracle layoffs and job cuts in India, companies have been reducing their workforce to manage costs and adjust to changing demand. Against this backdrop, one company has taken a different stance. UAE-based real estate firm BNW Developments has announced a zero layoff policy, even as layoffs in India and across global markets continue to make headlines. The company has said it will not cut jobs despite ongoing global uncertainty. It has committed to retaining its workforce and continuing salary payments without delay. BNW Developments said salaries are being paid in full and on time, and internal promotions and hiring for senior roles are

continuing. The company has around 650 employees and said its approach is focused on maintaining stability for its workforce during uncertain times. Dr. (CA) Ankur Aggarwal, Chairman and Founder of BNW Developments, said the company sees its employees as families it is responsible for. “I do not see 650 employees. I see 650 families trusting us with their careers,” he said. **NO LAYOFFS EVEN AS CUTS CONTINUE ELSEWHERE**

The announcement comes at a time when layoffs in India and globally have picked up pace again. Several companies, especially in the technology sector, have announced job cuts in recent months. Oracle layoffs have also drawn attention, raising concerns about whether companies are cutting jobs due to overhiring or shifting towards AI-led operations. Across the industry, companies are becoming more cautious about hiring and are focusing on cost control. This has led to both large layoffs and smaller, phased job cuts. In contrast, BNW Developments has said it will continue with its workforce without reductions.

OPERATIONS AND PROJECTS

CONTINUE

The company said its operations remain stable, with construction activity continuing across sites. It also said there has been no change in project timelines. Construction work resumed within two weeks of recent disruptions, and worker support, including accommodation and



basic needs, continues. This suggests that the company is relying on operational continuity rather than cost-cutting through layoffs. While the move stands out in the current environment of layoffs in India and global job cuts, it may not be a model that all companies can follow. Layoffs in sectors such as technology are often linked to changing business models,

automation, and slower demand growth. Tech layoffs, including Oracle layoffs, have been driven by a mix of cost pressures and a shift towards AI and efficiency. In comparison, real estate companies may operate differently depending on project pipelines, funding, and demand cycles. The contrast

highlights how companies are responding differently to the same environment. While many firms are cutting jobs, some are choosing to hold on to their workforce and absorb short-term pressure. For employees, especially in a time when layoffs in India are rising, such announcements offer some reassurance. However, the broader trend still points towards cautious hiring and continued focus on costs. As layoffs, including tech layoffs and Oracle layoffs, continue to shape the job market, the debate remains whether job cuts are driven by overhiring in the past or a deeper shift towards automation and AI. For now, the zero layoff policy stands out, but whether it becomes a wider trend will depend on how long the current uncertainty lasts.

Ridhi Dogra

Discovers Hong Kong's Cultural Depth In Nat Geo's New Travel Series

Not your usual travel diary... this one promises a lot more than postcard-perfect skylines. Ridhi Dogra is taking viewers on a journey that slows things down, looks closer, and finds stories you might otherwise miss.

The actor leads Postcards From Hong Kong, a two-part travel series produced by National Geographic India under its Creative Works division. The show offers a deeper look at Hong Kong, moving beyond its global image to spotlight lesser-known locations and cultural experiences. It premiered on March 28 on the National Geographic Channel and is currently streaming on JioHotstar. Rather than focusing only on popular landmarks, the series follows Dogra as she explores quieter, more immersive corners of the city. Through



interactions with local guides and influencers, the show captures everyday life and traditions, giving audiences a more grounded perspective.

The locations featured in the series include Sai Kung, Big Wave Bay, Dragon's Back, Tai O, Ngong Ping, Po Lin Monastery, and the Tian Tan Buddha. Each

destination adds a different layer to the narrative, from scenic hiking trails to culturally rich neighbourhoods.

Speaking about the project, Dogra shared: "Being part of Postcards from Hong Kong with Nat Geo was a deeply enriching experience. What I love about this journey is that it goes beyond the obvious; it's not just about the skyline or the speed of the city but about the stories that live in its quieter corners. From hiking through misty trails to understanding local traditions, I found myself connecting with Hong Kong in a way that felt real, immersive and meaningful."



Dhurandhar 2 Actor Vikram Bhambri Expresses Disappointment Over His Scenes Being Cut: 'I Felt Very Sad'



Aaditya Dhar's Dhurandhar: The Revenge hit theatres on March 19, and since its release, the film has been generating massive buzz, drawing audiences to cinemas. It has been enjoying a monstrous run at the box office, shattering records. Several celebs have also taken to social media to praise the film, lauding its gripping storyline, high-octane action, and standout performances. Amid the film's successful run, actor Vikram Bhambri, who is also part of the second installment, has expressed disappointment over his scenes being edited out.

Dhurandhar 2 actor reacts to his scenes being cut

In a recent interview with The Times of India, Vikram Bhambri, who plays Shakeel Commando in the Ranveer Singh film, spoke about the removal of his scenes. Addressing the situation, Bhambri shared that while he feels grateful to have been part of such a big production, the reduction in his screen time was disappointing. He explained that the edits, likely made to suit the film's final cut, resulted in a significant portion of his work not making it to the big screen.

Recalling his shortlisting process, the actor said, "At that time, I felt it sounded like a terrorist-type name. But then I told myself, at least I have a name, and I am not an extra. In theatre, we learn that if your character has a name, it means you have an important role. Later, when we started working, we were told we were gang members; we were with Ranveer. That felt really good."

Vikram shared that many of his scenes were chopped off in the final cut. He said, "But when the film was released, I didn't see as much presence and visibility as we had shot. When I watched Part 1 with my parents, I felt very sad. An actor wants visibility, so I felt unsettled for a couple of days as many of my scenes, which we shot, were chopped off, maybe due to some unavoidable reasons. But that was very disappointing for me. My parents kept telling me to be thankful, but the heart doesn't always listen." He further revealed that things took a turn after an unexpected interaction with a delivery person. Vikram recalled that on the second day, a delivery executive recognized him and mentioned seeing him in Dhurandhar, which instantly lifted his spirits.

'Awfully Difficult': Zeenat Aman Recalls Pushing Amitabh Bachchan In Wheelchair In Don



Zeenat Aman's portrayal of Roma in Don remains one of the most stylish and memorable performances in Hindi cinema. But behind one of the film's most gripping scenes lies a rather unexpected struggle that the actor has now opened up about.

'I Had To Keep My Poker Face...'

Taking to Instagram, Zeenat shared a throwback clip from the iconic hospital escape sequence, offering a glimpse into what went on behind the scenes.

"I presume there's such a thing as vintage video Wednesday? Yes, this is THAT scene from (the original 1978) Don - Roma, ever enterprising and daring, dupes the police and escapes with an unconscious Don from a hospital room," she wrote. While the sequence appeared smooth and effortless on screen, the reality was quite the opposite. "Now I had already worked with many of the cast and crew in previous productions, so I was at complete ease through the making of the film. I also relished Roma's character. She was smart, daring, and smooth. Who wouldn't want to embody such a woman! Unfortunately, being smooth on set that day wasn't easy! Why, you ask? Because that relic of a wheelchair, with Mr Bachchan's dead weight to boot, was awfully difficult to manoeuvre. I had to keep my poker face for the part, while actually pushing with all my might!"

A Role She Still Cherishes

Zeenat Aman also reflected on how much she enjoyed playing Roma, a character that stood out for her intelligence, courage and composure at a time when such roles were rare. She even expressed interest in revisiting the franchise, adding, "I would be quite keen to watch another reboot of Don, as I very much enjoyed the last one too. What do you think?"

About Don

Directed by Chandra Barot, Don featured Amitabh Bachchan in a dual role as Don and Vijay, alongside Zeenat Aman as Roma. The film also starred Pran, Iftikhar, Om Shivpuri, Satyen Kapru, P. Jairaj, Kamal Kapoor, Arpana Choudhary and Helen in key roles.

Fatima Sana Shaikh

On Her Bollywood Journey From Chachi 420 To Dangal: 'I Want To Develop New Skills'

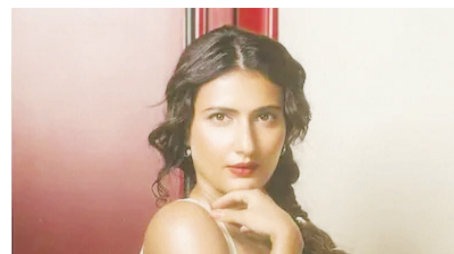


Fatima Sana Shaikh has carved an impressive journey that reflects her growth as a performer, right from her debut film as a child artist in Chachi 420 to her breakthrough, Dangal, to her latest release Gustaakh Ishq. Recently, the actress shared glimpses into her journey so far, choices and the growing perspective on the craft of acting. The actress opened up about navigating the film industry on her own terms and taking up unconventional roles.

"I am drawn to stories that make me uncomfortable in the best way," she says while drawing attention to her love towards layered storylines. In an industry that continues to evolve, the actress opened up about the importance of staying grounded. She revealed she had taken up photography as a hobby, and she often loves being behind the camera.

"I am known as Fatima Sana Shaikh, the actor - but I am also a daughter, I am an amazing friend, I learn new things, I want to develop new skills," she says while stating her learning of not attaching her self-worth to just her craft. "You have to find yourself also and not just be restricted by your job," she adds.

Fatima has built one of the most impressive filmographies in recent memory, and she intends to maintain that graph. She's now geared up for her next, Teen Kauwe, an upcoming spy thriller, where she steps into an intense space yet again. The first look from Teen Kauwe has already generated significant buzz, where she appears sharp and completely transformed once again. The Roy Kapur Films series, created by Abbas Tyrewala and directed by Priyanka Ghose, stars Sidhant Gupta, Fatima Sana Shaikh and Bobby Deol in a story set against the aftermath of the 1993 Bombay blasts. It will be released on Prime Video on March 19, 2026.





Perfect summer destinations in India

Perfect summer destinations in India

Planning a vacation in India is a challenging task with the country's incredible diversity throwing up a long list of names. From tropical islands and tea plantations to lush valleys overlooking the mighty Himalayas, there is no dearth of options when it comes to planning the perfect summer getaway in India.

Coorg (Kodagu), Karnataka

Spread out across the Western Ghats, the misty valley of Coorg offers the perfect getaway from the scorching summer heat. Fondly referred to as the 'Scotland of India' due to its verdant beauty and pleasant weather conditions, Coorg has a special place among all hill stations in India. A place where you can just sit around and watch the fog roll by.

Rishikesh, Uttarakhand

Styling itself as the 'Yoga Capital of the World', Rishikesh is a magnet for spiritual seekers. Surrounded by the fast-flowing Ganga and forested hills, the setting is definitely conducive for relaxing and meditation.

Rishikesh is also a popular white-water rafting centre and backpacking hang-out.

Tawang, Arunachal Pradesh

A heady mix of religion, history and nature, Tawang is one of the least discovered towns in Arunachal Pradesh. Dotted with Buddhist monasteries and mystical gompas on one end and a war memorial on another, the valley begins to work its magic on travellers the moment they start descending the hills.

Ooty, Tamil Nadu

Established as a retreat from the scorching heat of the summer by the British, Ooty is a visual delight filled with pretty cottages, fenced flower gardens, thatched-roof churches and terraced botanical gardens. Venture a few kilometres out and find yourself surrounded by greener, quieter areas dotted with an abundance of pine trees.

Darjeeling, West Bengal

Surrounded by emerald-green tea plantations and set against a backdrop of jagged white Himalayan peaks, Darjeeling is nestled away in the northern regions of West Bengal. A journey on the 'Toy train,' which meanders up the hills to

Darjeeling from New Jalpaiguri in the plains is a great way to explore and soak in the magnificent surroundings of this hill station.

Munnar, Kerala

Sprawling tea plantations, picture-perfect towns and winding lanes make Munnar a perfect destination for those looking for respite from the summer heat. Although the town itself is forever buzzing with activity, wander a few kilometres out and you'll be engulfed in a thousand shades of green.

Pahalgam, Kashmir

Known as the 'Valley of Shepherds,' Pahalgam is a low-rise town that stands at the confluence of Lidder River and Sheshnag Lake. The surrounding mountains contain many

hang around in the villages near the main town and adventure tourists come for trekking, paragliding, rafting and skiing. About 53 km away from Manali is the famous Rohtang Pass offering up breathtaking sights of glaciers, peaks and valleys.

Nainital, Uttarakhand

A welcome relief from the heat of Delhi, Nainital is a small town in Kumaon which encircles the picturesque Naini Lake. There's a busy town bazaar and a web of walking tracks around the forested hillsides, which have enticed travellers since pre-independence days to retreat to Nainital during the summer months.

Andaman and Nicobar Islands

The perfect summer getaway, Andaman and Nicobar



picturesque spots and over 20 lakes to which countless guides and horsemen and more than eager to take you to.

Manali, Himachal Pradesh

With mountain adventures beckoning from all directions, Manali is the perfect destination for those looking to unwind during the summer months. Backpackers come to

Islands offer tourists a relaxed tropical ambience and an array of thrilling adventure activities. Tourists from all over the world visit this tropical paradise for its rich and diverse marine life which is best seen while snorkelling and scuba diving around its many pristine beaches.



Milan

Known for fashion and design, Milan is located in northern Italy and is the country's second largest and most cosmopolitan city. Offering top-notch art, culture, history and food, Milan is the perfect spot for a weekend of urban exploration.

Navigli

After visiting the art gallery, make your way towards Milan's trendy Navigli neighborhood, noted for its charming canals and vibrant nightlife. The oldest canal, Naviglio Grande, is lined with restaurants and pubs, as well as old barges fitted out as bars. You'll be able to find dinner and drinks in the area, a great way to wrap up your first night in Milan.

Pinacoteca di Brera

Just a few blocks from the castle is Milan's largest art collection, Pinacoteca di Brera, which houses Giovanni

Bellini's 'Madonna and Child' and Francesco Hayez's 'The Kiss'. The gallery closes at 7:15 pm, so you'll have plenty of time to browse.

Parco Sempione

For an afternoon stroll, head over to Parco Sempione, a beautiful city park ornamented by the Porta Sempione (Arch of Peace) and the 14th-century Castello Sforzesco (Sforza Castle). The castle's fountain, nicknamed the 'Torta degli Sposi' (wedding cake) for its design, is a magnet for children in need of a quick splash in the summertime.

Galleria Vittorio Emanuele

Galleria Vittorio Emanuele II is home to a number of luxury shops, including Prada, Gucci and Louis Vuitton—and some of Milan's oldest bars and restaurants. Scope out a lunch spot in the Galleria and stop by Zucca in Galleria afterwards for a cup of coffee or an aperitif. Opened in 1867 along with the inauguration of the Galleria, Zucca was the first to offer Campari, a popular brand of Italian bitters.

Piazza del Duomo

No trip to Milan is complete without a visit to Piazza del

Duomo (Cathedral Square), the city's main square. There you'll find the city's Gothic cathedral, the Duomo—it is the largest cathedral in Italy and the fourth largest in the world. The architecture inside and out is worth a close look. Ladies, make sure you cover your shoulders and legs (above your knees), or you won't be permitted to enter the cathedral. If you happen to be wearing a sleeveless shirt, there are a number of vendors in the piazza taking advantage of the opportunity by selling scarves and shawls.

Ristorante Pizzeria

If you're staying in Navigli, end your day with dinner at Ristorante Pizzeria Sant'Eustorgio, a restaurant and pizzeria that features simple dishes, a wide wine selection and terrace seating overlooking Piazza Sant'Eustorgio.

Pasticceria Marchesi

While in the Magenta neighbourhood, stop by Pasticceria Marchesi for the best sugar-coated croissants (called brioche) in the city. Circa 1824, Pasticceria Marchesi is one of the oldest pastry shops in Milan. Don't forget to spend a few hours exploring on your own—after all, that's when the most exciting discoveries can take place.

Santa Maria delle Grazie

Make time to visit Santa Maria delle Grazie, a church and former monastery with a beautiful facade and interior. The church is home to Leonardo da Vinci's 15th-century masterpiece—The Last Supper. In order to see the painting, you will need to book a tour at least a few days in advance, as it is only shown to small guided tours for its protection.

Rinomata Gelateria

Stop by retro-styled Rinomata Gelateria (Ripa di Porta Ticinese, 1) for crepes or ice cream and continue your stroll along Naviglio Grande, as Gelateria doesn't offer seating. Navigli is worth a second look, as its beauty isn't limited to the night hours and it offers a completely different vibe during the daytime. Strolling along the canals in the afternoon, you'll encounter specialty boutiques and shops, rather than neon-lit bars.

Colonne di San Lorenzo

In front of the church stands the Colonne di San Lorenzo, Milan's best-known Roman ruin. Dating from the 2nd century, the columns were moved to their current location during the 4th century.