

Slip of tongue in translating political speeches highlights messenger matters as much as message

Interpreting political speeches is far more than a linguistic exercise; it demands split-second judgement, an ear tuned to tone and cadence, and the ability to adapt meaning without distorting intent.

TIRUCHY.(Agency)

What is said on a political stage does not always reach the crowd in the same form. The recent Sholinghur episode involving Rahul Gandhi and K Selvaperunthagai has once again brought the matter under the spotlight...

For those on the job, interpreting political speeches is far more than a linguistic exercise. It demands split-second judgement, an ear tuned to tone and cadence, and the ability to adapt meaning without distorting intent.

Those who have worked the microphone say such slips are often shaped by circumstance. Alim Alubhari, Tamil Nadu Youth Congress state general secretary who translated Rahul Gandhi's speeches in Ponneri ahead of Sholinghur, said the

task is very demanding. "Rahul Gandhi often speaks extempore. You have to anticipate and process instantly," he said. Sources said a different translator had initially been planned for the Sholinghur rally, but K



Selvaperunthagai eventually stepped in, underlining how on-ground realities often override preparation.

Veteran academic P Vijayakumar, former general secretary of MUTA, who has translated for CPM leaders including Sitaram Yechury and Brinda

Karat, said familiarity with a leader's style is crucial. "Some leaders break sentences clearly, making it easier. Others require more preparation," he said.

He recalled the difficulty of translating speeches by former diplomat K M Panikkar. "They were dense and filled with jargon. We often had to prepare in advance," he noted, adding that audibility remains a major challenge in large rallies. Ramaswamy Sudarsan, head of programmes at the All India Radio, Chennai, who has translated for Prime Minister Narendra Modi in over 20 programmes...

Andhra CM Chandrababu Naidu to lead NDA's two-day poll campaign push in Tamil Nadu

VIJAYAWADA.(Agency)

In a significant push ahead of the Tamil Nadu Assembly elections, Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh and TDP supremo N Chandrababu Naidu will undertake a two-day campaign across TN as part of the NDA's intensified outreach tomorrow.

Naidu's programme is designed to cover multiple regions in quick succession, reflecting the NDA's intent to combine mass mobilisation with targeted stakeholder engagement.



On April 20, Naidu will leave Amaravati in the morning and reach Coimbatore, where he is scheduled to address a public meeting at 1 pm. He will then travel to Hosur and proceed to Thalli, joining an election rally at 4:45 pm.

Later, Naidu will reach Chennai and participate in a roadshow at Avadi, canvassing for NDA candidates. He will stay overnight in Chennai before resuming his campaign the next day.

Naidu to push NDA vision in Tamil Nadu

On April 21, Naidu will depart Chennai in the morning and reach Madurai. At 1 pm, he will hold a meeting with leaders of various social groups in Sattur near Madurai. At 3 pm, he will take part in an event in support of the NDA candidate in Sattur.

Short news

CJI flags surge in 'digital arrest' scams, says even educated falling prey

New Delhi.(Agency)

Chief Justice of India Surya Kant on Monday expressed concern over the rising number of "digital arrest" scams, noting that even well-educated individuals are falling victim to such fraud.

Hearing a suo motu case on the issue, a bench led by the CJI and also comprising Justice Joymalya Bagchi highlighted a recent incident involving an elderly woman who lost her entire retirement savings to fraudsters. The CJI said he was aware of the case in his official capacity and described it as deeply unfortunate.

The matter was mentioned by Attorney General R. Venkataramani, who informed the court that discussions were underway and progress was being made swiftly. He requested that the case be listed for further hearing on May 12, which the bench agreed to.

During the proceedings, concerns were raised about the continued occurrence of such scams despite the Supreme Court's ongoing scrutiny. The CJI remarked that it was "shocking" that educated individuals were still being deceived in this manner.

Digital arrest scams involve fraudsters impersonating law enforcement officials, court authorities, or government personnel.

Governor Shiv Pratap Shukla to launch anti-drug awareness programme

Hyderabad.(Agency)

Governor Shiv Pratap Shukla will lead a massive anti-drug awareness programme to be held at the LB Stadium here on June 12. The governor discussed the issue at length with Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy when the latter called on him at Lok Bhavan on Sunday. He also discussed



various issues related to the education sector with the chief minister.

The governor suggested creating awareness to curb drug abuse in educational institutions and emphasised the need to administer a pledge to students in this regard. He gave details of the awareness programme to be conducted under his guidance on June 12.

Shukla further suggested that students should submit a declaration at the time of admission in schools and colleges, stating that they will stay away from drugs. The chief minister assured the governor that all the suggestions made by him would be taken into consideration and necessary steps would be initiated to curb the drugs menace.

Sanskrit is the soul of India, reflects its oldest traditions and culture: RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat

New Delhi.(Agency)

Highlighting the need for wider outreach, Bhagwat urged Sanskrit Bharati to expand its conversational Sanskrit programmes, calling them the most effective and simple way to learn the language.

Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh chief Mohan Bhagwat inaugurated the new office "Pranav" of Sanskrit Bharati, an affiliate of the RSS, at a formal ceremony attended by several prominent leaders and dignitaries. Among those present were RSS executive member Suresh Soni, BJP national general secretary (organisation) B. L. Santhosh, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, former Union Minister Anurag Thakur, and Delhi minister Parvesh Sahib Singh Verma. Prior to the inauguration, an introductory session was held with the RSS chief, where individuals from various fields associated with the organisation were present. The event also saw participation from notable



figures from the voluntary and corporate sectors. During the session, J. Ranjit Rao, Managing Director of My Home Group, was introduced and later felicitated on stage by Bhagwat.

Sanskrit Bharati stated that the "Pranav" office would not function merely as an administrative

space but as an international training centre. It will host global seminars, training programmes, and initiatives aimed at promoting various aspects of India's traditional knowledge systems.

Bhagwat's Address

Speaking on the occasion, Mohan Bhagwat described the inauguration on the auspicious festival of Akshaya Tritiya as significant, noting that undertakings begun on this day are believed to be enduring—an idea he linked to the timeless nature of the Sanskrit language. He emphasised that while infrastructure has been created, clarity of purpose is essential for sustained work. Bhagwat remarked that interest-driven efforts must evolve into purpose-driven commitments to achieve lasting impact.

Mahayuti to collect signatures from women to expose Oppn's 'anti-women' stance: Maharashtra CM Fadnavis

Mumbai.(Agency)

Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis on Monday said the ruling Mahayuti alliance will launch an outreach campaign to collect one crore signatures from women across the state, to build a "people's mandate" and expose the Opposition's "anti-women" stance. Addressing a press conference, Fadnavis slammed the Opposition for blocking the women's quota Bill in the Parliament, alleging that their "regressive mindset" had dashed hopes of a historic moment for women's representation in India.

He said that April 17 was expected to mark a watershed moment in the country's political and social journey, with the 'Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam, providing 33 per cent reservation to women in assemblies and Lok Sabha, set to be passed in Parliament.



Fadnavis accused the Opposition parties of affecting the "foeticide" of women's rights in elected bodies. "The Opposition murdered the women's quota Bill due to their regressive mindset," he said.

He noted that if the BJP had had a two-thirds majority, the Opposition would have supported the Bill now, but they saw an opportunity as the ruling front fell short of numbers.

A Constitution Amendment Bill to implement reservation for women in legislatures in 2029 and increase the number of Lok Sabha seats was defeated on April 17 in the Lower House.

While 298 members voted in support of the Bill, 230 MPs voted against it. Out of 528 members who voted, the Bill required 352 votes for a two-thirds majority. The chief minister alleged that the Congress's "urban Naxal mindset" was such that it opposes anything that goes against its political interests.

AIMIM chief Owaisi says Congress 'among those responsible' for Partition, denies BJP's 'Bengal B-team' charge

Earlier, at a rally in Asansol, Owaisi targeted the TMC and West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, holding them responsible for the BJP's rise in the state.

New Delhi.(Agency)

The Congress was among those responsible for the 1947 Partition, AIMIM chief Asaduddin Owaisi said on Sunday, adding that it was wrong to hold Muslims responsible for the split. Addressing a rally in Gujarat's Limbayat, Owaisi cited Maulana Abul Kalam (country's first Education Minister) Azad's book India Wins Freedom, saying Azad had appealed to Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru to prevent the division of the country. "Muslims were not responsible for the partition. Is the Congress party not among those responsible for the partition? In his book India Wins Freedom, Maulana Azad writes that he went to Gandhi and Nehru and appealed to them not to let India be divided," he



said. Owaisi also criticised the Congress and the All India Trinamool Congress for calling the All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM) the BJP's "B team" in West Bengal and objected to criticism over his party contesting 11 seats.

"Some allege that when Owaisi contests elections, the BJP benefits. In West Bengal, Congress is contesting 294 seats, TMC is contesting 294 seats, the Left Front is contesting 250 seats, and Owaisi's party is contesting 11 seats. BJP is also contesting 294 seats. They have a problem with me contesting the elections... Forget 11, win 270 seats and defeat the BJP... How long will you keep this society from forming its own leadership?" he said.

'Monumental setback' for Modi's foreign policy: Congress slams Centre over Pakistan's part in US-Iran talks

Jairam Ramesh said that India's diplomatic efforts under Prime Minister Narendra Modi had failed to isolate Pakistan internationally.

New Delhi.(Agency)

The Congress on Monday slammed the Narendra Modi government over Pakistan's role in facilitating US-Iran talks, calling it a "monumental setback" for India's foreign policy and urging a comprehensive overhaul of diplomatic strategy.

In a post on X, Congress general secretary (communications) Jairam Ramesh said, "The 'dalal' country, as the erudite and always nattily dressed External Affairs Minister described it, is reportedly hosting the second round of US-Iran peace talks today."

Ramesh noted that after the first round of talks on April 12, the country had borrowed \$6 billion from Saudi Arabia and Qatar to repay existing liabilities. "Pakistan's economy is clearly in dire straits and it depends on largesse given to it by friendly countries," he said.

He added, "But it is for now playing a pivotal diplomatic role after having given sanctuary to Osama Bin Laden and other terrorists, bombing drug rehabilitation centres in Afghanistan, and most recently orchestrating the Pahalgam terror attack a year ago."

The Congress leader argued that India's diplomatic efforts under Prime Minister Narendra Modi had failed to isolate Pakistan internationally.

He contrasted this with what he described as gains made under the previous government following the 2008 Mumbai terror attacks. "It is abundantly clear that the substance and style of Prime Minister Modi's regional and global engagement and narrative management have failed to isolate Pakistan which has received a whole new branding -- different from what Dr. Manmohan Singh had been able to achieve after the terror attacks in Mumbai in November 2008," he said.

News box

School principal arrested for CBSE affiliation fraud

Gurgaon.(Agency)

The principal of a private school in Sector 9B has been arrested for allegedly cheating students by falsely claiming CBSE affiliation and admitting them to Class 10. Riddhima Kataria was arrested by the crime branch from Ahmedabad on April 18. The school's chairman, Vinay Kataria, had already been arrested in the case.

An FIR was registered at Sector 9A police station under BNS Sections 318(4) (cheating), 316(2) (criminal breach of trust), and 3(5) (common intention) against the management and staff of Educres International School. Police said the matter surfaced after a parent filed a complaint on Feb 18. She alleged her daughter, a Class 10 student, was prompted to take admission after being told that the school was affiliated with CBSE.

According to the complaint, the school showed a recognition certificate and affiliation number during admission and collected fees under several heads, including tuition, building fund, examination, and computer charges. But when the board examinations neared, the student did not receive an admit card.

"Subsequent verification revealed that the school didn't have CBSE affiliation for Class 10 and the registration number provided was invalid. The student lost an academic year," a police officer said.

Besides the chairman and principal, vice-principal Simar Batra, coordinator Sonia, and other staff members were also named in the FIR. During questioning, Kataria told police that the school had CBSE recognition only up to Class 8, but admitted students to classes 9 and 10 using fake affiliation documents. "Around 25 students were enrolled in these classes, putting their academic future at risk," the officer said. Investigators said an action would be taken in accordance with the law, and efforts were underway to determine the role of other staff members. Police also urged parents to verify a school's affiliation status before seeking admission.

Haryana cabinet to meet in city for first time on April 22

Gurgaon.(Agency)

In a break from convention, Haryana govt will hold its cabinet meeting in the city for the first time on April 22.

An official notification issued by the general administration department's cabinet wing said the meeting will begin at 9am at the PWD (B&R) rest house. The April 18 notice, signed by Anurag Rastogi, secretary to the Haryana cabinet, was circulated to the chief minister, council of ministers and secretary to the governor. The move is notable because cabinet meetings have traditionally been held in the state capital Chandigarh, with only a handful convened at Haryana Bhavan in New Delhi. Bringing the meeting to Gurgaon signals the city's rising administrative weight alongside its established economic clout, officials claimed.

For Gurgaon, the decision carries clear significance. The NCR city is home to major multinational companies, industries and corporate offices, and contributes nearly



70% of Haryana's revenue. Officials said holding the meeting there could help place local concerns more directly before the state's top leadership. Though the official agenda has not been made public, sources said urban development, industry and infrastructure issues linked to the city and nearby areas are likely to figure in the discussions. The timing is also important. The meeting comes close on the heels of labour unrest in Manesar, part of the state's manufacturing belt, where contractual workers recently protested for higher wages. The govt responded by announcing a 35% rise in minimum wages, but industry bodies have urged it to review the decision and consider a phased rollout, citing economic pressure. Chief secretary Rastogi told TOI the cabinet meeting was scheduled for the same day because the chief minister will anyway be in the city for an industry top leadership meeting. "He has a few other meetings lined up for the day," he added.

Major fire at auto warehouse in Gurgaon, two other incidents reported

NOIDA.(Agency)

Three fire incidents were reported across the city on Sunday, including a major blaze at a Tata Motors warehouse near Hero Honda Chowk that took over three hours and multiple fire tenders to control. The warehouse fire broke out around 11am in a section storing cardboard boxes and quickly escalated due to highly combustible material. Employees initially tried to contain the flames, while nearby units deployed water jets, but the fire spread rapidly. Three workers inside managed to escape unharmed.

Fire officials said a call was received around 11.30am at Sector 37 fire station, following which teams were rushed to the spot. A total of 18 fire tenders were deployed to douse the blaze. Though the fire has been brought under control, a tin shed collapsed at the site. One fire tender remains stationed at the warehouse as a precaution. Officials said the warehouse, spread over nearly an acre, is located close to a workshop. Preliminary findings suggest a short circuit as a possible cause, though welding work underway at the premises may also have triggered the blaze. A detailed probe is underway. In a separate incident, a fire broke out at a house and an adjoining fan-and-cooler shop on Khandas Road, sending plumes of smoke into the sky. Residents and workers evacuated in time, and no injuries were reported. Another blaze was reported in an open area near Delhi Public School along Dwarka Expressway, where accumulated scrap and debris caught fire. Officials suspect a lit cigarette or deliberate ignition may have caused the incident. The flames spread quickly in the heat before being contained. Fire department officials said rising temperatures are aiding the rapid spread of fires and urged residents and businesses to exercise caution.

Hundreds of illegal house extensions gone in massive operation in Gurgaon

Gurgaon.(Agency)

Enforcement teams intensified the anti-encroachment drive on Sunday as bulldozers moved through DLF phases, Golf Course Road, South City, Sushant Lok, Suncity and other upscale colonies to clear illegal extensions of houses that affect right of way. Hundreds of illegal structures were demolished by the authorities. The action comes after Punjab and Haryana high court stayed the stilt+four-floor (S+4) policy, prompting the govt to shift into strict enforcement mode. The operation was led by district town planner (enforcement) Amit Madholia. All eight teams worked simultaneously across the city, removing encroachments on internal roads. Officials said Sunday's action was far more extensive and faster than the first day of the drive.

A major operation was carried out along Golf Course Road service lanes, where illegal extensions of commercial establishments had extended onto roads. Authorities demolished structures that

had occupied road space under the cover of business activity. In DLF-1, especially A Block Extension, the administration conducted one of its largest sweeps. Nearly 30 lanes covering around 378 houses were inspected, and action was taken on more than 300 properties. Officials also removed over 125 encroachments in green areas, including illegal parks, planters and landscaping.

Guard rooms, fencing, ramps and other structures within the ROW were demolished. Officials said more than 30 guard rooms and several ramps were removed, helping restore the full width of roads in the area. The drive drew strong protests in parts of DLF-1. In A Block Extension, several residents objected as bulldozers removed structures outside their homes. Some accused the administration of harassment and threatened legal action, while others argued with officials. Police stepped in to control the situation as tensions briefly rose. Officials defended the action as necessary. "In many stretches, roads had

effectively disappeared due to encroachments on both sides. Vehicles could barely pass. This situation cannot continue," an official said. In South City-1, teams removed illegal constructions,



guard rooms, lawn grilles and 12 advertisement boards. Notices were issued after the teams found 11 DG sets placed on public land, and two were removed immediately. In Palam Vihar, encroachments, including fencing and structures extending onto roads, were cleared from more than 70 houses in H and E blocks. In Sushant Lok-3, teams

demolished guard rooms, gates, ramps and boundary walls, and cleared green area encroachments at around 70 locations. Rosewood City saw removal of guard rooms, ramps, steps and fencing. In Ardee City, teams cleared guard rooms, parking sheds, ramps, more than 40 fences and several hoardings.

In Vipul World, Sector 48, authorities removed illegal barricading in green areas along with ramps, steps, walls and guard rooms. In Suncity, Sector 54, parking sheds, ramps, steps and guard rooms were also demolished. Madholia said the drive would continue at full intensity over the next three days. "We already urged residents to remove encroachments voluntarily. Now, strict action is being taken against violators. This is a court-driven exercise, and there will be no let-up until every inch of encroached public land is reclaimed," he said. He added that the campaign would cover all licensed colonies in phases, with teams operating simultaneously to meet the April 22 deadline.

SIM box probe in Gurgaon leads police to handler linked to overseas cyber frauds

Gurgaon.(Agency)

Police probing a SIM box cyber fraud racket that operated from rented accommodations in the city have identified an India-based handler linked to operators in Cambodia and the Philippines, pointing to a cross-border network. The development follows a crackdown over the past couple of weeks, during which police dismantled multiple SIM box (GSM gateways) setups operating from rented accommodations in Chakkarpur and U-Block. These were used for routing and diverting calls over the internet, masking the origin of calls and enabling cyber fraud. Five people have been arrested so far from locations in Gurgaon, Haryana; Jalgaon, Maharashtra; Ahmedabad, Gujarat; and Kasganj, Uttar Pradesh. During the raids, police recovered 15 SIM boxes, seven Wi-Fi TAPO cameras, seven routers, seven inverters, 42 batteries, 29 TAPO Wi-Fi

switches, 28 ethernet cables and 504 SIM cards. Investigators said the setups were deliberately located near IT hubs to avoid suspicion and enable uninterrupted operations. In several cases, landlords had limited involvement beyond renting out the premises and were later made part of the probe as complainants. However, even as cyber police continue to crack down on SIM box rackets, investigations are revealing a critical gap — while local operators are being arrested, the handlers controlling these networks from abroad remain shielded behind coded identities. According to a senior officer, foreign handlers linked to countries such as Cambodia and the Philippines operate using aliases, making it difficult for investigators to establish their real identities. "They don't disclose who they are. They operate through code names, which becomes a major limitation in taking the probe forward." The probe has

also revealed that those arrested in such cases are very well aware of the fraud. Police said the accused were fully conscious of their role. "They know the kind of scams these systems are used for, but they continue because of the money involved," the officer said.

Recruitment into these cyber networks is often routed through Telegram and personal contacts. "They look for targets who are looking for easy money or may not have jobs," police said. The accused, mostly young men, were paid around Rs 20,000 to Rs 30,000 per month to operate the devices, which route international calls through local SIM cards to make them appear as domestic numbers — a key element in such frauds. While Gurgaon police have been able to dismantle multiple such setups, the financial scale of fraud linked to SIM box operations is still being assessed as part of the ongoing investigation.

Rainwater harvesting systems defunct in Gurgaon's Sector 40, residents flag flood threat

NOIDA.(Agency)

With monsoon round the corner, residents of Sector 40 have raised concerns over defunct rainwater harvesting systems and lack of stormwater drainage network, flagging the risk of waterlogging. Residents said most rainwater harvesting structures across the sector remained non-functional for years due to neglect and lack of maintenance. Around 10 rainwater harvesting systems were installed in parks and community centre, and many are now clogged or abandoned. Abhimanyu Yadav, RWA president of Sector 40, said complaints to the civic body yielded little response. "The monsoon is just a few months away, but there has been no effort to revive the rainwater harvesting systems. Most of them are either blocked or completely defunct as they were never maintained," he

said. "Some repairs were taken up last year, but the work was left incomplete. For harvesting to be effective, the recharge



pits need to be deep, around 190-200 feet, but it is not functional," he said. Residents said a large rainwater harvesting

setup near the community centre is also lying unused. Even light rainfall leads to waterlogging in internal lanes, residents said, adding that unless rainwater harvesting systems and drainage infrastructure are repaired, the sector could face waterlogging during monsoon.

"There is no proper stormwater drainage in the sector. Water accumulates quickly during rains and takes hours to recede," said Virender Yadav, RWA joint secretary.

An MCG official said repair work has now been planned. "We have allotted the work for restoration of the rainwater harvesting system across the city. The work, including increasing the depth of borewells and repairs wherever required, will be taken up. We are targeting completion by the end of May," the official said.

Ambedkar statue damaged, posters torn, hundreds hit the street in Loni

Ghaziabad.(Agency)

A damaged statue of Bhimrao Ambedkar and torn posters triggered hours of tension in Loni Border area on Sunday, with more than 500 people taking to the streets and blocking Delhi-Saharanpur Road as they demanded swift arrests.

The protest began after residents learnt that Ambedkar posters put up at Mangal Bazar had been torn late on Saturday night. Soon after, they were told that an Ambedkar statue near Shani Mandir on the service road in Indrapuri had also been damaged. As word spread, a large crowd gathered at the spot, causing traffic on the key road to remain disrupted for hours. Satyaveer Singh, who lodged a complaint, said they were told that people who tore the posters had arrived in a vehicle bearing the registration number UP14HA-8328. "By tearing the posters, they hurt our sentiments. It was an attempt to disturb peace and order. Later, we learnt that the Ambedkar statue installed near Shani Mandir had also been damaged during the night. We informed police and demanded immediate action," he added.

Loni MLA Nand Kishore Gujjar, municipal chairperson Ranjita Dhama and senior police officers reached the site as the protest intensified. Gujjar said someone had deliberately tried to disturb



communal harmony in Loni and demanded strict action, including under NSA provisions, against those responsible. When the blockade continued till past 4pm, police used batons to clear the road and also detained some protesters. With heavy deployment at the site, one carriageway was cleared first and traffic later resumed on the other

side as well. An FIR was registered at Loni Border police station against unknown persons under Section 298 of the BNS, which deals with injuring or defiling a place of worship with intent to insult the religion of any class, and Section 299, which covers deliberate and malicious acts intended to outrage religious feelings by insulting religion or religious beliefs.

"We have detained two persons so far and are checking CCTV footage from nearby areas," a police officer said. The DCP added, "A new statue is being brought from Baghpat and will be installed soon."

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Punjab brings down farm fires, gets national recognition

The Sikh Times Patiala: Punjab's efforts to tackle air pollution and sustained campaign to bring down farm fires has got national recognition. Even as Delhi blames Punjab for air pollution, at the end of the farm fire season, only 5,085 stubble-burning cases were reported compared to 10,443 in 2024. The Punjab Pollution Control Board (PPCB) has been conferred the SKOCH Silver Award 2025 in the Environment category for its project titled "From Crisis to Breakthrough - Punjab's Clean Air Transformation," recognising the state's sustained efforts in effective stubble burning management and achieving a 92 per cent reduction in

farm fire incidents. This has involved a combination of real-time monitor-

deployment of crop residue management machinery,

straw - from 8.8 lakh tonnes per annum to over 40 lakh tonnes annually -

government ensured the optimum usage of 1,48,000 crop residue management (CRM) machines that were distributed from 2018-19 till date and large-scale custom hiring centres have been provided for small and marginal farmers. "In the annual action plan, a target of 1,500 custom hiring centres (CHCs) were fixed for the year 2025-26 in comparison to the target of only 500 CHCs in 2024. Also, 22 paddy supply chain centres were established in 2025 in the state to strengthen the supply chain of paddy," he added. Further, the mapping of the CRM machines, real-time booking by farmers, daily reporting of machine utilisation by officials and

single platform for machine rental ensured that the in-situ management in the state of paddy straw had steadily increased from 6.45 million tonnes in 2020-21 to an estimated 11.4 million tonnes in 2025. Reena Gupta, Chairperson, PPCB, stated, "We are honoured to receive this national recognition. This achievement is the result of sustained, collective action across multiple stakeholders." While the progress has been substantial, the state continues to build on this momentum with targeted action plans aimed at eliminating stubble burning in the coming years, positioning Punjab as a model for replication across other states.



ing and enforcement, along with long-term structural interventions such as large-scale

strengthening of Custom Hiring Centres, and a substantial increase in ex-situ utilisation of paddy

facilitated significantly by PPCB. A senior Punjab Pollution Control Board official stated that the

Man held for killing coworker using air compressor in Gurugram

New Delhi: A fight between two coworkers resulted in the death of one of them. It is alleged that a young man, in a fit of rage, used an air compressor to blow air into his colleague's private parts. The intense pressure caused the victim's intestines to rupture, resulting in his painful death. An FIR of murder was registered at the Kherki Daula police station. According to the police, the incident took place at the workshop near Rampura village in Sector 82 on Tuesday night. The deceased was identified as Harvinder (38), a native of Shahgarh village in Aligarh, Uttar Pradesh. He worked at an auto workshop in Sector 82. Naresh Kumar (40), a resident of Deeg, Rajasthan, also worked with him. It was when Harvinder and the accused Naresh worked together. A dispute arose between them over some issue. During this, the accused Naresh allegedly placed the nozzle of an air compressor on Harvinder's private parts and turned it on. The air pressure was so intense that within seconds, Harvinder's stomach was filled with excessive air, causing his condition to deteriorate. He was immediately rushed to the hospital in critical condition, where doctors declared him dead. According to doctors, the victim's intestines ruptured. Naresh Kumar (40), a resident of Deeg, Rajasthan, also worked with him. It was when Harvinder and due to the excessive pressure. After getting information, a police team reached the spot and took the body into custody. The police handed over the body to kin after the postmortem and arrested the accused Naresh, who confessed to the crime. "The accused has been arrested. Preliminary investigation revealed that the two men had an altercation during a playful exchange, after which the accused committed the crime. We are questioning the accused," said ASI Jitender Kumar, the investigating officer.

Woman's body found in bed box in outer Delhi; three arrested

The Sikh Times New Delhi: A 35-year-old woman with strangulation marks was found stuffed inside a double-

bed storage box at a paying guest (PG) accommodation in outer Delhi's Mangolpuri area, police said on Wednesday, adding three persons have been arrested in connection with the case. The police said the accused

located in Patthar Market. On receiving the information, a police team rushed to the spot and found the body, bearing strangulation marks and a forehead injury, stuffed inside a bed storage compartment in the room, an official said. The crime scene was inspected by the Crime Team and the Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL) team and exhibits were collected. A case was registered under Sections 103(I) (murder), 238(A) (causing disappearance of evidence or giving false information) and 3(5) (acts done by several persons in furtherance of common intention) at Mangolpuri police station, the officer added. According to investigators, the deceased woman, a married resident of the

same locality, was allegedly in a relationship with the accused Deepak, who is also married. On Tuesday at around 4.30 pm, she reportedly came to the PG to meet him and they stayed there for about an hour, the officer said. After the accused left the premises, the PG owner grew suspicious and alerted the police. Investigators revealed Deepak's two associates were also present at the scene when the incident occurred. Police said the accused are being interrogated, and the sequence of events leading to the

woman's death is being reconstructed. All possible angles are being examined, including the nature of the relationship between the victim and the accused, any potential dispute or altercation and other surrounding circumstances. Further investigation is underway.



bed storage box at a paying guest (PG) accommodation in outer Delhi's Mangolpuri area, police said on Wednesday, adding three persons have been arrested in connection with the case. The police said the accused

police, a PCR call was received at the Mangolpuri police station on April 7 regarding a woman found lying under suspicious circumstances inside a room in a building

located in Patthar Market. On receiving the information, a police team rushed to the spot and found the body, bearing strangulation marks and a forehead injury, stuffed inside a bed storage compartment in the room, an official said. The crime scene was inspected by the Crime Team and the Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL) team and exhibits were collected. A case was registered under Sections 103(I) (murder), 238(A) (causing disappearance of evidence or giving false information) and 3(5) (acts done by several persons in furtherance of common intention) at Mangolpuri police station, the officer added. According to investigators, the deceased woman, a married resident of the

same locality, was allegedly in a relationship with the accused Deepak, who is also married. On Tuesday at around 4.30 pm, she reportedly came to the PG to meet him and they stayed there for about an hour, the officer said. After the accused left the premises, the PG owner grew suspicious and alerted the police. Investigators revealed Deepak's two associates were also present at the scene when the incident occurred. Police said the accused are being interrogated, and the sequence of events leading to the

woman's death is being reconstructed. All possible angles are being examined, including the nature of the relationship between the victim and the accused, any potential dispute or altercation and other surrounding circumstances. Further investigation is underway.

single platform for machine rental ensured that the in-situ management in the state of paddy straw had steadily increased from 6.45 million tonnes in 2020-21 to an estimated 11.4 million tonnes in 2025. Reena Gupta, Chairperson, PPCB, stated, "We are honoured to receive this national recognition. This achievement is the result of sustained, collective action across multiple stakeholders." While the progress has been substantial, the state continues to build on this momentum with targeted action plans aimed at eliminating stubble burning in the coming years, positioning Punjab as a model for replication across other states.

NAME CHANGE
It is for general information that I, NADEEM AHMED S/O ALMA R/O C-233, Gali No-7, Nehru Vihar, Karawal Nagar, North East Delhi, Delhi-110094 declare that name of my father has been wrongly written as ALIMUDDIN in my Voter card No. XCN0885749. The actual name of my father is ALMA which may be amended accordingly.

NAME CHANGE
I, M LAKSAMU mother of No-545665L, Rank-HAV, Name-C MURUGESAN Residing at VILL-PALEPALLE, PO-KANDIKUPPAM, TEH & DISTT-KRISHNAGIRI, TAMIL NADU-635108 have changed my name from M LAKSAMU to LAKSHMI CHINNASAMY for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 20/04/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE
I, V CHINNASAMY Father of No-545665L, Rank-HAV, Name-C MURUGESAN Residing at VILL-PALEPALLE, PO-KANDIKUPPAM, TEH & DISTT-KRISHNAGIRI, TAMIL NADU-635108 have changed my name from V CHINNASAMY to CHINNASAMI UTHAGIRI for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 20/04/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE
I, No-2619268W LHAV HANAMANT SADASHIV BULLI S/O SADASHIV BULLI Residing at VILL-GOSABAL, TEH-GOKAK, DIST-BELAGAVI, KARNATAKA-591227, have changed my minor son's name from ROHIT to ROHIT HANAMANT BULLI for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 20/04/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE
I, No-2619268W LHAV HANAMANT SADASHIV BULLI S/O SADASHIV BULLI Residing at VILL-GOSABAL, TEH-GOKAK, DIST-BELAGAVI, KARNATAKA-591227, have changed my minor daughter's name from VAISHNAVI to VAISHNAVI HANAMANT BULLI for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 20/04/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE
I, SUSHIL KUMAR VASHISTH S/O KAILASH NATH SHARMA R/O H NO-1432, NEAR GURDWARA, SEC-15, FARIDABAD, HARYANA-121007 have changed my name to SUSHIL KUMAR SHARMA.

NAME CHANGE
I, hitherto known as FAREEDUZ ZAMA S/O SAIED AHMED R/O 102/63, T-Huts, Shazada Bagh, Indokri, Onkar Nagar, Saraswati Vihar, North West Delhi, Delhi-110035 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as FAREED AHMED.

NAME CHANGE
I, V CHINNASAMY Father of No-545665L, Rank-HAV, Name-C MURUGESAN Residing at VILL-PALEPALLE, PO-KANDIKUPPAM, TEH & DISTT-KRISHNAGIRI, TAMIL NADU-635108 have changed my name from V CHINNASAMY to CHINNASAMI UTHAGIRI for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 20/04/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE
I, No-2619268W LHAV HANAMANT SADASHIV BULLI S/O SADASHIV BULLI Residing at VILL-GOSABAL, TEH-GOKAK, DIST-BELAGAVI, KARNATAKA-591227, have changed my minor daughter's name from VAISHNAVI to VAISHNAVI HANAMANT BULLI for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 20/04/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE
I, SULOCHENA Mother of NO - 545665K, Rank - HAV, Name - G SOUNDRAMAJAN residing at VTC-ODAYAMUTHUR, PO-UDAYAMUTHUR, SUB DISTT-TIRUPATHUR, DISTT-VELLORE, TAMIL NADU-635652 have changed my name from SULOCHENA to SULOCHANA for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 20/04/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE
I, hitherto known as BIJENDIR SHAW S/O NANDU SHAW R/O 1942-B, Village Pillanji, Kotla Mubarakpur, Lodhi Road, Central Delhi, Delhi-110003 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as BIJENDIR KUMAR.

NAME CHANGE
I, RENU VASHISTH W/O SUSHIL KUMAR SHARMA R/O H NO-1432, NEAR GURDWARA, SEC-15, FARIDABAD, HARYANA-121007 have changed my name to RENU SHARMA.

NAME CHANGE
I, hitherto known as NAMGEL SHERPA S/O PEMA SHERPA R/O 33 A, Block No-12, New Aruna Nagar, Majnu Ka Tilla, Civil Lines, North Delhi, Delhi-110054 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as NAMGYAL.

NAME CHANGE
I, SADHANA SHAW W/O DHORUB CHAND SHAW GUPTA residing at C-218A HARI NAGAR CLOCK TOWER DELHI-110064 have changed my name to SADHANA SHAW GUPTA for all future purposes.

NAME CHANGE
I, No-2619268W LHAV HANAMANT SADASHIV BULLI S/O SADASHIV BULLI Residing at VILL-GOSABAL, TEH-GOKAK, DIST-BELAGAVI, KARNATAKA-591227, have changed my minor daughter's name from VAISHNAVI to VAISHNAVI HANAMANT BULLI for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 20/04/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE
I, SULOCHENA Mother of NO - 545665K, Rank - HAV, Name - G SOUNDRAMAJAN residing at VTC-ODAYAMUTHUR, PO-UDAYAMUTHUR, SUB DISTT-TIRUPATHUR, DISTT-VELLORE, TAMIL NADU-635652 have changed my name from SULOCHENA to SULOCHANA for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 20/04/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE
I, SINGUPURAM NANDINI wife of SINGUPURAM SRINIVASA RAO residing at H.NO-2-126/2, ENGINEERS ENCLAVE, GANGARAM, RANGAREDDY, TELANGANA-500050, have changed my name from SINGUPURAM NANDINI to BUYAYALA NANDINI for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 14/04/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE
I, BIRENDRA PRASHAD SHUKLA S/O RAJ NARAYAN SHUKLA R/O B-140 Gali No-4, Jalpur Extn Part-2, Badarpur New Delhi-110044, have changed my name to BIRENDRA PRASHAD SHUKLA for all purposes.

NAME CHANGE
I, SHAKUNTALA DEVI Wife of No-3193641N Rank-LNK, Name-DHARAMVIR SINGH residing at VILL-NAGLA BAISLA, PO-JAVARA, MATHURA, UTTAR PRADESH-281202, have changed my name from SHAKUNTALA DEVI to SHAKUNTALA for all future purposes, in my husband's name record my date of birth wrongly mentioned as 01/07/1981 instead of my correct date of birth as 01/07/1980 vide Affidavit dated 20/04/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE
I, SHUBEENA PARVEEN W/O MOHD IMRAN residing at H.NO-757, Sector-56, Noida, District Gautam Budh Nagar, U.P. Mr. Balraj Singh and Mr. Tejpal Singh have lost Original Allotment letter dated 21.11.1987 issued by NOIDA in favour of M/s Keshni Printers Pvt. Ltd. And Original GPA executed by M/s Keshni Printers Pvt. Ltd through Mr. Vinod Kapoor in favour of Smt. Jasbir Kaur duly regd. vide doc no 21914, vol no 922-954, page no 159/277-282 dated 13.09.1988 and Original ATS executed by M/s Keshni Printers Pvt. Ltd through Mr. Vinod Kapoor in favour of Smt. Jasbir Kaur duly regd. vide doc no 4159, vol no 578, page no 300-301 dated 23.09.1988 of said property, for which complaint lodged to the police. Therefore, by way of this Public Notice it is hereby notified that any person, Attorney and/or entity, firm/company, society and/or member of the Society, Bank, HUF/member of HUF, Financial Institution having any claim, charge, interest, or lien whatsoever with respect to the said house/plot or otherwise, may notify to undersigned only on his rahulkumar Gupta 281401@gmail.com with documentary proof within 15 days from the date of this publication of notice, failing which any such claim etc. shall be deemed to be null and void, whereas title shall be deemed to be clear, and marketable without any defect or encumbrance and free to create equitable mortgage.

NAME CHANGE
I, No. 15504016X Rank-SWR Name-CHOUDHARI SANDIPKUMAR JAYLAL legal father of PARTH CHOUDHARI R/O VPO-HIR-DAMALI, TEH- GOREGOAN, DIST-GONDIA, MAHARASHTRA-441801, have changed my minor son's name from PARTH CHOUDHARI to PARTH SANDIPKUMAR CHOUDHARI for all future purposes vide affidavit dated 20/04/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE
I, No-2619268W LHAV HANAMANT SADASHIV BULLI S/O SADASHIV BULLI Residing at VILL-GOSABAL, TEH-GOKAK, DIST-BELAGAVI, KARNATAKA-591227, have changed my minor daughter's name from VAISHNAVI to VAISHNAVI HANAMANT BULLI for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 20/04/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE
I, SINGUPURAM NANDINI wife of SINGUPURAM SRINIVASA RAO residing at H.NO-2-126/2, ENGINEERS ENCLAVE, GANGARAM, RANGAREDDY, TELANGANA-500050, have changed my name from SINGUPURAM NANDINI to BUYAYALA NANDINI for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 14/04/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE
I, BIRENDRA PRASHAD SHUKLA S/O RAJ NARAYAN SHUKLA R/O B-140 Gali No-4, Jalpur Extn Part-2, Badarpur New Delhi-110044, have changed my name to BIRENDRA PRASHAD SHUKLA for all purposes.

NAME CHANGE
I, SUSHMA KADYAN W/o Pawan Kumar Kadyan R/O Room No.17, Trishul Officers Mess, Subroto Park, New Delhi-110010, have changed my name from SUSHMA KADYAN to SUSHMA DHULL permanently.

NAME CHANGE
I, No. 15504016X Rank-SWR Name-CHOUDHARI SANDIPKUMAR JAYLAL legal father of PARTH CHOUDHARI R/O VPO-HIR-DAMALI, TEH- GOREGOAN, DIST-GONDIA, MAHARASHTRA-441801, have changed my minor son's name from PARTH CHOUDHARI to PARTH SANDIPKUMAR CHOUDHARI for all future purposes vide affidavit dated 20/04/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE
I, No-2619268W LHAV HANAMANT SADASHIV BULLI S/O SADASHIV BULLI Residing at VILL-GOSABAL, TEH-GOKAK, DIST-BELAGAVI, KARNATAKA-591227, have changed my minor daughter's name from VAISHNAVI to VAISHNAVI HANAMANT BULLI for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 20/04/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE
I, SINGUPURAM NANDINI wife of SINGUPURAM SRINIVASA RAO residing at H.NO-2-126/2, ENGINEERS ENCLAVE, GANGARAM, RANGAREDDY, TELANGANA-500050, have changed my name from SINGUPURAM NANDINI to BUYAYALA NANDINI for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 14/04/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE
I, BIRENDRA PRASHAD SHUKLA S/O RAJ NARAYAN SHUKLA R/O B-140 Gali No-4, Jalpur Extn Part-2, Badarpur New Delhi-110044, have changed my name to BIRENDRA PRASHAD SHUKLA for all purposes.

NAME CHANGE
I, BIRENDRA PRASHAD SHUKLA S/O RAJ NARAYAN SHUKLA R/O B-140 Gali No-4, Jalpur Extn Part-2, Badarpur New Delhi-110044, have changed my name to BIRENDRA PRASHAD SHUKLA for all purposes.

NAME CHANGE
I, Naved S/o Kalam R/O RC-143, Hayat Nagar, Khora colony, Ghaziabad, Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh - 201001 have changed the name of my minor daughter Aaira aged 9 years and she shall hereafter be known as Alisbaa

NAME CHANGE
I, No. 15504016X Rank-SWR Name-CHOUDHARI SANDIPKUMAR JAYLAL legal father of PARTH CHOUDHARI R/O VPO-HIR-DAMALI, TEH- GOREGOAN, DIST-GONDIA, MAHARASHTRA-441801, have changed my minor son's name from PARTH CHOUDHARI to PARTH SANDIPKUMAR CHOUDHARI for all future purposes vide affidavit dated 20/04/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE
I, No-2619268W LHAV HANAMANT SADASHIV BULLI S/O SADASHIV BULLI Residing at VILL-GOSABAL, TEH-GOKAK, DIST-BELAGAVI, KARNATAKA-591227, have changed my minor daughter's name from VAISHNAVI to VAISHNAVI HANAMANT BULLI for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 20/04/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE
I, SINGUPURAM NANDINI wife of SINGUPURAM SRINIVASA RAO residing at H.NO-2-126/2, ENGINEERS ENCLAVE, GANGARAM, RANGAREDDY, TELANGANA-500050, have changed my name from SINGUPURAM NANDINI to BUYAYALA NANDINI for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 14/04/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE
I, BIRENDRA PRASHAD SHUKLA S/O RAJ NARAYAN SHUKLA R/O B-140 Gali No-4, Jalpur Extn Part-2, Badarpur New Delhi-110044, have changed my name to BIRENDRA PRASHAD SHUKLA for all purposes.

NAME CHANGE
I, BIRENDRA PRASHAD SHUKLA S/O RAJ NARAYAN SHUKLA R/O B-140 Gali No-4, Jalpur Extn Part-2, Badarpur New Delhi-110044, have changed my name to BIRENDRA PRASHAD SHUKLA for all purposes.

NAME CHANGE
I, Naved S/o Kalam R/O RC-143, Hayat Nagar, Khora colony, Ghaziabad, Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh - 201001 have changed the name of my minor daughter Aaira aged 9 years and she shall hereafter be known as Alisbaa

NAME CHANGE
I, No. 15504016X Rank-SWR Name-CHOUDHARI SANDIPKUMAR JAYLAL legal father of PARTH CHOUDHARI R/O VPO-HIR-DAMALI, TEH- GOREGOAN, DIST-GONDIA, MAHARASHTRA-441801, have changed my minor son's name from PARTH CHOUDHARI to PARTH SANDIPKUMAR CHOUDHARI for all future purposes vide affidavit dated 20/04/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE
I, No-2619268W LHAV HANAMANT SADASHIV BULLI S/O SADASHIV BULLI Residing at VILL-GOSABAL, TEH-GOKAK, DIST-BELAGAVI, KARNATAKA-591227, have changed my minor daughter's name from VAISHNAVI to VAISHNAVI HANAMANT BULLI for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 20/04/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE
I, SINGUPURAM NANDINI wife of SINGUPURAM SRINIVASA RAO residing at H.NO-2-126/2, ENGINEERS ENCLAVE, GANGARAM, RANGAREDDY, TELANGANA-500050, have changed my name from SINGUPURAM NANDINI to BUYAYALA NANDINI for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 14/04/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE
I, BIRENDRA PRASHAD SHUKLA S/O RAJ NARAYAN SHUKLA R/O B-140 Gali No-4, Jalpur Extn Part-2, Badarpur New Delhi-110044, have changed my name to BIRENDRA PRASHAD SHUKLA for all purposes.

NAME CHANGE
I, BIRENDRA PRASHAD SHUKLA S/O RAJ NARAYAN SHUKLA R/O B-140 Gali No-4, Jalpur Extn Part-2, Badarpur New Delhi-110044, have changed my name to BIRENDRA PRASHAD SHUKLA for all purposes.

NAME CHANGE
I, Naved S/o Kalam R/O RC-143, Hayat Nagar, Khora colony, Ghaziabad, Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh - 201001 have changed the name of my minor daughter Aaira aged 9 years and she shall hereafter be known as Alisbaa

NAME CHANGE
I, No. 15504016X Rank-SWR Name-CHOUDHARI SANDIPKUMAR JAYLAL legal father of PARTH CHOUDHARI R/O VPO-HIR-DAMALI, TEH- GOREGOAN, DIST-GONDIA, MAHARASHTRA-441801, have changed my minor son's name from PARTH CHOUDHARI to PARTH SANDIPKUMAR CHOUDHARI for all future purposes vide affidavit dated 20/04/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE
I, No-2619268W LHAV HANAMANT SADASHIV BULLI S/O SADASHIV BULLI Residing at VILL-GOSABAL, TEH-GOKAK, DIST-BELAGAVI, KARNATAKA-591227, have changed my minor daughter's name from VAISHNAVI to VAISHNAVI HANAMANT BULLI for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 20/04/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE
I, SINGUPURAM NANDINI wife of SINGUPURAM SRINIVASA RAO residing at H.NO-2-126/2, ENGINEERS ENCLAVE, GANGARAM, RANGAREDDY, TELANGANA-500050, have changed my name from SINGUPURAM NANDINI to BUYAYALA NANDINI for all future purposes vide Affidavit dated 14/04/2026 before Notary Public, Delhi.

NAME CHANGE
I, BIRENDRA PRASHAD SHUKLA S/O RAJ NARAYAN SHUKLA R/O B-140 Gali No-4, Jalpur Extn Part-2, Badarpur New Delhi-110044, have changed my name to BIRENDRA PRASHAD SHUKLA for all purposes.

NAME CHANGE
I, BIRENDRA PRASHAD SHUKLA S/O RAJ NARAYAN SHUKLA R/O B-140 Gali No-4, Jalpur Extn Part-2, Badarpur New Delhi-110044, have changed my name to BIRENDRA PRASHAD SHUKLA for all purposes.

NAME CHANGE
I, Mukesh Kumar S/O LALA RAM R/O H.No-141/1, Pocket No-A-3, Sector-7, Rohini, Rohini Sector-7, North West Delhi, Delhi-110085 have changed the name of my minor son DINESH KUMAR aged 13 years and he shall hereafter be known as YUVRAJ.

PUBLIC NOTICE
This is to inform you that Mrs. Tara intends to purchase Residential House No. 1227, measuring 38.018 sq. mtrs., situated in the colony known as Vivekanand Nagar, Sector 4, Tehsil and District Ghaziabad, U.P., from Mr. Rupesh Garg. Mr. Rupesh Garg purchased the said property from Mr. Sukhpal Singh and Mrs. Pushpa Devi through a Sale Deed dated 26.04.1977 in the name of Mr. Deen Dayal Gupta relating to the said property. These documents are not traceable despite best efforts. An online FIR (LR No. 246919/2026) has been registered on 20.04.2026 regarding the loss of the aforesaid documents. Please also note that the said property is proposed to be financed by Can Fin Homes Ltd., Noida Extension Branch, U.P. If any person(s) objection & regarding subject property, then kindly may submit his/her objection within 07 days from the date of the Notice in writing. The said objection may be kindly sent to the undersigned by way of the Registered Post on the address given below and by E-mail, failing which, the claim as per aforesaid shall be treated as null and void in respect of the subject property. [ASHWANI KUMAR] Advocate Chamber No. 122, Tehsil Compound, Ghaziabad, U.P. kumar2021ashwani@gmail.com

NAME CHANGE
I, Jagriti D/o Deepak Nambiar R/O 205/7, Lotus Panache, Sector 110, Noida, Gautam Vidya Nagar, UP 201304 have changed my name to Jagriti Nambiar for all future purposes.

PUBLIC NOTICE
This is to inform you that Mrs. Tara intends to purchase Residential House No. 1227, measuring 38.018 sq. mtrs., situated in the colony known as Vivekanand Nagar, Sector 4, Tehsil and District Ghaziabad, U.P., from Mr. Rupesh Garg. Mr. Rupesh Garg purchased the said property from Mr. Sukhpal Singh and Mrs. Pushpa Devi through a Sale Deed dated 26.04.1977 in the name of Mr. Deen Dayal Gupta relating to the said property. These documents are not traceable despite best efforts. An online FIR (LR No. 246919/2026) has been registered on 20.04.2026 regarding the loss of the aforesaid documents. Please also note that the said property is proposed to be financed by Can Fin Homes Ltd., Noida Extension Branch, U.P. If any person(s) objection & regarding subject property, then kindly may submit his/her objection within 07 days from the date of the Notice in writing. The said objection may be kindly sent to the undersigned by way of the Registered Post on the address given below and by E-mail, failing which, the claim as per aforesaid shall be treated as null and void in respect of the subject property. [ASHWANI KUMAR] Advocate Chamber No. 122, Tehsil Compound, Ghaziabad, U.P. kumar2021ashwani@gmail.com

NAME CHANGE
I, NADEEM AHMED S/O HABIB AHMED R/O HOUSE NO. 296, KUCHA MIR ASHIQ, CHAWRI BAZAR, JAMA MASJID, DELHI - 110006, HAVE CHANGED MY NAME FROM NADEEM AHMED TO MUJEEB AHMED FOR ALL PURPOSES.

PUBLIC NOTICE
This is to inform you that Mrs. Tara intends to purchase Residential House No. 1227, measuring 38.018 sq. mtrs., situated in the colony known as Vivekanand Nagar, Sector 4, Tehsil and District Ghaziabad, U.P., from Mr. Rupesh Garg. Mr. Rupesh Garg purchased the said property from Mr. Sukhpal Singh and Mrs. Pushpa Devi through a Sale Deed dated 26.04.1977 in the name of Mr. Deen Dayal Gupta relating to the said property. These documents are not traceable despite best efforts. An online FIR (LR No. 246919/2026) has been registered on 20.04.2026 regarding the loss of the aforesaid documents. Please also note that the said property is proposed to be financed by Can Fin Homes Ltd., Noida Extension Branch, U.P. If any person(s) objection & regarding subject property, then kindly may submit his/her objection within 07 days from the date of the Notice in writing. The said objection may be kindly sent to the undersigned by way of the Registered Post on the address given below and by E-mail, failing which, the claim as per aforesaid shall be treated as null and void in respect of the subject property. [ASHWANI KUMAR] Advocate Chamber No. 122, Tehsil Compound, Ghaziabad, U.P. kumar2021ashwani@gmail.com

NAME CHANGE
I, Vaishali W/o Gurudev Singh, House No-B-4, Chander Vihar, Nilothi, PO: Nilothi, DIST: West Delhi, Delhi 110041 have changed my name to Vaishali Sahni for all future purposes.

PUBLIC NOTICE
This is to inform you that Mrs. Tara intends to purchase Residential House No. 1227, measuring 38.018 sq. mtrs., situated in the colony known as Vivekanand Nagar, Sector 4, Tehsil and District Ghaziabad, U.P., from Mr. Rupesh Garg. Mr. Rupesh Garg purchased the said property from Mr. Sukhpal Singh and Mrs. Pushpa Devi through a Sale Deed dated 26.04.1977 in the name of Mr. Deen Dayal Gupta relating to the said property. These documents are not traceable despite best efforts. An online FIR (LR No. 246919/2026) has been registered on 20.04.2026 regarding the loss of the aforesaid documents. Please also note that the said property is proposed to be financed by Can Fin Homes Ltd., Noida Extension Branch, U.P. If any person(s) objection & regarding subject property, then kindly may submit his/her objection within 07 days from the date of the Notice in writing. The said objection may be kindly sent to the undersigned by way of the Registered Post on the address given below and by E-mail, failing which, the claim as per aforesaid shall be treated as null and void in respect of the subject property. [ASHWANI KUMAR] Advocate Chamber No. 122, Tehsil Compound, Ghaziabad, U.P. kumar2021ashwani@gmail.com

NAME CHANGE
I, MAKHMOOR SAEED S/O SAEEDUDDIN MALIK R/O House No 1998 1st floor, kucha chand, Darya Ganj, Central Delhi, Delhi - 110002 have changed my name to MAKHMOOR MALIK

PUBLIC NOTICE
This is to inform you that Mrs. Tara intends to purchase Residential House No. 1227, measuring 38.018 sq. mtrs., situated in the colony known as Vivekanand Nagar, Sector 4, Tehsil and District Ghaziabad, U.P., from

NEWS BOX

Baby food brand HiPP recalls jars in Austria after samples test positive for rat poison

VIENNA. (Agency)

Baby food brand HiPP is recalling some of its baby food jars after samples in Austria, Slovakia and the Czech Republic tested positive for rat poison, officials said Sunday. Authorities believe the tampering occurred in 190-gram (6.7-ounce) jars of baby food made with carrots and potatoes for 5-month-olds that were sold from SPAR supermarkets in Austria. The first sample tested positive on Saturday. "This recall is not due to any product or quality defect on our part. The jars left our HiPP facility in perfect condition," HiPP said in a statement. "The recall is related to a criminal act currently under investigation by the authorities." Burgenland Police in Austria said the suspicious products likely have a white sticker with a red circle on the bottom of the jar. Other warning signs include a damaged or opened lid and an unusual or spoiled smell. There also might not be a popping noise when the jar is first opened.

HiPP said it is recalling all of its baby food jars sold at SPAR supermarkets — which include SPAR, EUROSPAR, INTERSPAR and Maximarkt stores — in Austria as a precaution. Customers can get full refunds even without a receipt. Vendors in Slovakia and the Czech Republic have removed all of the brand's baby jars from sale. A customer reported that a jar appeared to have been tampered with, police said, though no one had consumed the baby food.

Rat poison typically includes bromadiolone, an anticoagulant that prevents the blood from clotting, according to the Austrian Agency for Health and Food Safety. Ingesting rat poison could lead to bleeding like bleeding gums and nosebleeds, as well as bruising and blood in the stool.

Iran executes two men convicted of links to Israel's spy agency

TEHRAN. (Agency)

Iran executed two men on Monday convicted of having links to Israel's spy agency, the judiciary said, the latest in a string of executions since the outbreak of war with Israel and the United States.

"The death sentences of Mohammad Masoom-shahi and Hamed Validi were carried out at dawn today," the judiciary's Mizan Online website reported. It said the two men were "members of a spy network linked to Mossad", Israel's intelligence agency, but did not say when they were arrested. They were convicted of the capital offence of "moharebeh", meaning waging war against God, as well as "collaboration with hostile groups and the Zionist regime", Mizan said.

Iran has carried out multiple executions since the start of war with the United States and Israel on February 28. A fragile two-week ceasefire has been in place since April 8. Iran is the world's second most prolific executioner after China, according to rights groups based outside the country.

US military strike on alleged drug boat kills three in Caribbean Sea

WASHINGTON. (Agency)

The U.S. military said it launched another strike on a boat accused of ferrying drugs in the Caribbean Sea, killing three people Sunday. The Trump administration's campaign of blowing up alleged drug-trafficking vessels in Latin American waters has persisted since early September and killed at least 181 people in total.

Other strikes have taken place in the eastern Pacific Ocean. Despite the Iran war, the series of strikes have ramped up again in the past week or so, showing that the administration's aggressive measures to stop what it calls "narcoterrorism" in the Western Hemisphere are not letting up. The military has not provided evidence that any of the vessels were carrying drugs.

The attacks began as the U.S. built up its largest military presence in the region in generations and came months ahead of the raid in January that captured then-Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro. He was brought to New York to face drug trafficking charges and has pleaded not guilty. In the latest attack Sunday, U.S. Southern Command repeated previous statements by saying it had targeted the alleged drug traffickers along known smuggling routes. It posted a video on X showing a boat moving along the water before a massive explosion engulfed the vessel in flames.

PM Carney says Canada's economic ties with US are a weakness that must be corrected

VANCOUVER. (Agency)

Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney said in a video address released Sunday that Canada's strong economic ties to the United States were once a strength but are now a weakness that must be corrected. In the 10-minute address, Carney spoke about his government's efforts to strengthen the Canadian economy by attracting new investments and signing trade deals with other countries.

"The world is more dangerous and divided," Carney said. "The U.S. has fundamentally changed its approach to trade, raising its tariffs to levels last seen during the Great Depression." Many of our former strengths, based on our close ties to America, have become weaknesses. Weaknesses that we must correct. Carney said tariffs imposed by U.S. President Donald Trump have affected workers in the auto and steel industries. He added that businesses are holding back investments "restrained by the pall of uncertainty that's hanging over all of us."

Man kills 7 of his children plus another child in US domestic shooting

Gunman opens fire across two homes, killing seven of his children and one more child before dying in police pursuit; authorities

SHREVEPORT. (Agency)

A Louisiana father fatally shot eight children, including seven of his own, in an attack on his family Sunday morning that stretched across two houses in a Shreveport neighborhood left shaken by one of the nation's deadliest mass shootings in recent years, police said. Two women, including the gunman's wife who was the mother of their children, were also shot and critically wounded, according to Shreveport Police Department spokesperson Chris Bordelon. Officials said the children — who were all killed in the same house — ranged in age

from 3 to 11 years old. The gunman, identified as 31-year-old Shamar Elkins, died after a police pursuit that ended with officers firing on him, according to Bordelon. Authorities did not say what may have set off the violence but Bordelon said detectives were confident the shooting was "entirely a domestic incident." The attack was the deadliest mass shooting in the U.S. in more than two years. "I just don't know what to say, my heart is just taken aback," Shreveport Police Chief Wayne Smith said. "I cannot begin to imagine how such an event could occur." Bordelon said police were familiar with Elkins, who had been arrested in a 2019 firearms case, but he said officials were not aware of any other domestic violence issues. Police said the attacks began before sunrise in a neighborhood south of downtown Shreveport when the suspect shot a woman at one home and then drove to the other location "where this heinous act was carried out." Seven



children were killed inside the second house, and one was found dead on the roof after apparently trying to escape, Bordelon said. Another child jumped off the roof and was expected to survive after being taken to a hospital. State Rep. Tammy Phelps said some children tried to get away through the back door. "I can't even imagine what the police officers, first responders actually dealt with when they got here today," she said at a news conference. Family member says suspect was separating from his

wife victims were three boys and five girls, according to the Caddo Parish Coroner's office. Shamar Elkins and his wife were in the middle of separating and were due in court Monday, said Crystal Brown, who is a cousin of one of the wounded women. Brown said the couple had been arguing about the separation before the shooting. He murdered his children," Brown said. "He shot his wife." Elkins shared four children with his wife and three children with another woman who lived close by and who was also shot, according to Brown. All the children were together at one house, she said. A neighbor wakes up to a mass shooting Liza Demming, who lives two houses down from where most of the victims were shot, said her security camera captured video of the suspect running away along with the sound of two shots. "That's pretty much all I saw, was him running out of the house and the cars leaving," she said. Demming later went outside and saw the covered body of a child on the home's roof.

Drones 'sent' toward US warships as Tehran rules out talks after ship seizure: Report

WASHINGTON. (Agency)

Iran is not currently planning to attend talks with the United States, state media said, after President Donald Trump ordered US negotiators to travel to Pakistan on Monday, just days before a ceasefire in the Middle East expires. The ongoing US blockade of Iranian ports has been a significant sticking point, an issue further complicated by an American destroyer on Sunday firing on and seizing an Iranian ship that tried to evade it.

Tehran said it would retaliate with Tasnim news agency reporting that Iran had sent drones in the direction of US military ships after its vessel was seized. State broadcaster IRIB on Sunday cited Iranian sources as saying "there are currently no plans to participate in the next round of Iran-US talks". The Fars and Tasnim news agencies had earlier cited anonymous sources as saying "the overall atmosphere cannot be assessed as very positive", adding that lifting the US

blockade was a precondition for negotiations. State-run IRNA meanwhile pointed to the blockade and Washington's "unreasonable and unrealistic demands", saying that "in



these circumstances, there is no clear prospect of fruitful negotiations".

Iran and the United States, along with Israel, are just days away from the end of the two-week ceasefire that halted the Middle East war, ignited by surprise US-Israeli strikes on Iran on February 28. There has so far been only a single, 21-hour negotiating session held in Islamabad on April 11 that ended inconclusively, though groundwork for fresh talks continued

afterwards. "We're offering a very fair and reasonable DEAL, and I hope they take it," Trump said in a post on Sunday, while also renewing his threats against Iran's infrastructure if a deal is not made. US fires on Iranian ship

Trump has been under pressure to find an off-ramp since Tehran moved early in the war to choke off the Strait of Hormuz. The vital waterway is a conduit for a fifth of the world's oil and liquefied natural gas in peacetime, and its closure has hammered the global economy and roiled markets. Having failed to force it open again, Trump countered with a US naval blockade on Iranian ports in an attempt to cut off Tehran's oil revenues. On Sunday, he announced that a massive Iranian-flagged cargo ship "tried to get past our Naval Blockade, and it did not go well for them." A US destroyer warned the ship to stop and then forced it to "by blowing a hole in the engine room", Trump said, adding: "Right now, U.S. Marines have custody of the vessel."

Israeli soldier seen damaging Jesus statue in south Lebanon, IDF confirms authenticity

JERUSALEM. (Agency)

The Israeli army said Monday that it had determined an image circulating on social media that shows a soldier in south Lebanon hitting a statue of Jesus Christ is authentic and depicts one of its troops. The image appears to show an Israeli soldier using a sledgehammer to strike the head of a statue of a crucified Jesus that had fallen off of a cross. Arab media reports indicated that the statue was in the Christian village of Debl in south Lebanon, near the border with Israel.

The Debl municipality told AFP that the statue was located in the village, but could not confirm whether it had been damaged. The Israel army said it viewed the incident with "great severity", adding that the "soldier's conduct is wholly inconsistent with the values expected

of its troops", in a post to its official X account on Monday. "Following the completion of an initial examination regarding a photograph published



earlier today of an IDF soldier harming a Christian symbol, it was determined that the photograph depicts an IDF soldier operating in southern Lebanon," it said in the post. The

incident is being investigated by the Northern Command and is currently being "addressed through the chain of command", the military added. It said that "appropriate measures will be taken against those involved" but did not go into further detail. The Israel army said that it is working with the community to "restore the statue to its place". Lebanon was drawn into the Middle East war in early March when Tehran-backed Hezbollah launched rockets towards Israel in support of Iran. Israel responded with massive strikes across the country and an invasion of the south.

Israeli troops have remained in the area despite a ceasefire between the two countries that entered into force on Friday.

Fewer candidates for UN secretary-general audition this week as US' veto power chills the race

Former Chilean President Michelle Bachelet faces a potential Washington veto as the field of candidates narrows to just four, with the US' hardening political stance and Republican-led pressure over "radical" agendas threatening to block top contenders.

UNITED NATIONS. (Agency)

Four candidates to be the next secretary-general of the United Nations will audition for the job this week, far fewer than there were 10 years ago when António Guterres was selected as U.N. chief. Chile's former President Michelle Bachelet — one of two women and one of three from Latin America — will be the first to face ambassadors from the U.N.'s 193 member nations during a three-hour question-and-answer session on Tuesday. Bachelet will be followed by U.N. nuclear chief Rafael Mariano Grossi of Argentina. On Wednesday, U.N. trade chief Rebeca Grynspan will take center stage in the General Assembly hall, and finally, Senegal's former President Macky Sall.

In 2016, a hotly contested race drew 13 candidates. What has changed?

For starters, the deeply polarized and conflict-racked world of 2026 is far different from the more peaceful global

climate in 2016, the year Donald Trump was elected president for the first time.

Add to that the diminished stature of the United Nations. A decade ago, the world organization was basking in its success in helping achieve the Paris climate agreement to curb global warming and an agreement by world leaders on 17 goals to promote global economic growth, preserve the environment and close the growing gap between rich and poor nations.

Today, the divisions among world powers are so deep that the U.N. has been unable to fulfill its primary role in ensuring global peace and security. The once powerful Security Council has been blocked from acting to halt wars in Ukraine, Gaza and Iran, among other conflicts, leaving the U.N. on the sidelines of major global crises. The International Crisis Group's Richard Gowan, a U.N. watcher and program director, said the current geopolitical scene has affected the race to



succeed Guterres, whose second five-year term ends on Dec. 31. He said 10 years ago, many candidates entered the race knowing they had little chance of winning, but used it to raise their profiles. "There was no real cost associated with losing," Gowan said. (asterisk) This time around, potential candidates and the governments who sponsor them are much more cautious. There is a feeling that if a candidate puts a foot wrong and offends Washington or Beijing, it could cause real diplomatic damage. "How the selection worked in

2016 In 2016, there was intense pressure to choose the first woman to lead the United Nations. Seven of the 13 candidates were women. But there was widespread agreement that Guterres performed best in what the U.N. calls the "interactive dialogue" with General Assembly members. The U.N. Charter says little about choosing the secretary-general except that the General Assembly, which includes all members, should do so upon the recommendation of the Security Council. That gives the five permanent members of the U.N.'s most powerful body — the United States, Russia, China, Britain and France — the decision-making role and veto power over the selection. By tradition, the secretary-general rotates by region. Guterres, a former Portuguese prime minister and U.N. refugee chief representing Europe, succeeded former South Korean Foreign Minister Ban Ki-moon, who represented Asia.

Oil jumps over 5% as Iran-US tensions rattle markets; Asian equities edge higher

YANGON. (Agency)

Oil prices climbed more than 5% while Asian shares also advanced Monday as a standoff between Iran and the U.S. prevented tankers from using the Strait of Hormuz. The Persian Gulf waterway was closed again after Iran reversed a decision to reopen the strait and President Donald Trump said a U.S. Navy blockade of Iranian ports remains in effect. U.S. benchmark crude gained 5.6% to \$87.20 a barrel, while Brent crude, the international standard, was up 5.3% at \$95.16 a barrel.

Despite renewed doubts about how soon ships will again transport the vast amounts oil the world gets from the Middle East, share prices were mostly higher in Asia. In Tokyo, the Nikkei 225 gained 1% to 59,045.45, while South Korea's Kospi was up 1.1% at 6,260.92. Hong Kong's Hang Seng added 0.8% to 26,373.71 and the Shanghai Composite index advanced 0.6% to 4,075.08.

Australia's S&P/ASX 200 was nearly unchanged at 8,943.90.

In Taiwan, the Taiex jumped 1.4%.

"The problem for markets is not the absence of hope; it is the overpricing of it," Stephen Innes of SPI Asset Management said in a commentary. "The latest move higher in equities has started to feel less like conviction and more like momentum feeding on itself." On Friday, oil prices had dropped back to where they were in the early days of the Iran war, and U.S. stocks raced to a fresh record after Iran said the strait was open again for commercial tankers carrying crude from the Persian Gulf to customers worldwide.

A freer flow of oil could relieve pressure on prices for gasoline and all kinds of other products that get moved by vehicles. It could even ultimately help people pay less on credit-card interest and mortgage bills. The S&P 500 leaped 1.2% to an all-time high of 7,126.06, closing out a third straight week of big gains, its longest streak since Halloween. The Dow Jones Industrial Average surged 1.8% to 49,447.43. The Nasdaq composite climbed 1.5% to 24,468.48.

The U.S. stock market has jumped more than 12% since hitting a bottom in late March on hopes the United States and Iran can avoid a worst-case scenario for the global economy despite their war. The price for a barrel of benchmark U.S. crude had plunged 9.4% after Iran's foreign minister, Abbas Araghchi, posted on X that passage for all commercial vessels through the strait "is declared completely open" as a ceasefire appears to be holding in Lebanon. After Araghchi's announcement, Trump said in his social media network that the U.S. Navy's blockade of Iranian ports remained "in full force" pending a deal on the war, though he also suggested that "should go very quickly in that most of the points are already negotiated."

Short news

To keep heat on Opposition, PM to address women's convention in Varanasi on Bengal poll eve

Lucknow.(Agency)

To continue his attack on the Opposition over the defeat of the Constitutional 131st Amendment Bill that sought to advance reservation of 33 per cent seats for women in an expanded Lok Sabha and state Assemblies, Prime Minister Narendra Modi will address a women's convention in his parliamentary constituency of Varanasi on April 28.

The Prime Minister will be on a two-day tour of Varanasi from April 28. At a meeting of the Kashi regional unit of the BJP on Sunday for the preparations for the Mahila Sammelan, it was decided to ensure the presence of over 50,000 women at the convention.

BJP sources said that in order to send a message of women empowerment, the party has decided to give key responsibilities related to the event preparations to women leaders of the party.

Taking note that the event will be held on the eve of the first phase of polling for the West Bengal Assembly elections, a senior BJP leader told The Indian Express, "Certainly, the West Bengal elections will be at the core of the PM's address on April 28. The subject of the Mahila Sammelan is likely to be women reservation Bill. Women from Varanasi city, zila unit and adjoining districts will be present in the audience." On Sunday, in his first public appearance in West Bengal after the Bill could not muster enough numbers in Parliament last Friday, the PM attacked the Trinamool Congress, claiming that it 'betrayed' women.

Heatwave grips parts of Andhra Pradesh as thunderstorms loom



VIJAYAWADA.(Agency)

The Andhra Pradesh State Disaster Management Authority (APSDMA) has cautioned that varied weather conditions will prevail across the State on Monday, with intense heat in several districts and thunderstorms accompanied by lightning in some regions. APSDMA Managing Director Prakhar Jain urged people to remain alert and take all precautions.

On Sunday, the highest temperature of 45.4°C was recorded at Nagaradone in Kurnool district. Across 279 mandals, temperatures crossed 40°C, highlighting the severity of the heatwave. Palnadu, Prakasam, Markapuram and Rayalaseema are likely to record maximum temperatures on April 20.

Heatwave conditions are expected in 32 mandals in the State. In addition, 17 mandals across Srikakulam, Vizianagaram, Manyam, Polavaram, Anakapalli, East Godavari and Eluru are likely to experience hot winds. Due to tough conditions, light rains are expected in parts of Srikakulam, Vizianagaram, Manyam, ASR, Polavaram, Kurnool and Nandyal.

ED raids Karnataka MLA N A Haris' sons in Bengaluru over crypto-linked PMLA money laundering case

BENGALURU.(Agency)

The Directorate of Enforcement (ED) in Bengaluru has conducted searches in connection with a cryptocurrency-linked money laundering case involving the sons of Congress MLA N A Haris, Srikrishna Ramesh alias Sriki and others.

The ED in an official press release issued on Monday said, "It is conducting search action against Srikrishna Ramesh alias Sriki and other accused persons at 12 premises spread across Karnataka including the residence of Mohammed Haris Nalpad and Omar Farook Nalpad - sons of Congress sitting MLA from Shantinagar constituency in Bengaluru, N A Haris."

"The searches are being conducted under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002. The investigation so far has revealed that Mohammed Haris and Omar Farook are close associates of Srikrishna Ramesh and are main beneficiaries of Proceeds of Crime," the ED added.

The investigation is based on multiple FIRs and chargesheets filed by Karnataka Police in a 2017 case involving hacking of national and international websites, theft of bitcoins, extortion, and violations of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act, 1985 by Srikrishna and others.

"Investigation under PMLA has revealed the modus operandi by the accused persons, which includes hacking of websites/wallets to steal virtual digital assets (VDAs), data/money (Proceeds of crime); sale of stolen VDAs were routed through crypto trading platforms etc.," the ED stated.

Maharashtra has a law against black magic. Twelve years on, the rules to enforce it are still not written

As the Kharat case rocks Maharashtra, anti-superstition activists say a 12-year gap in framing rules for the black magic law has left police unsure and enforcement toothless.

Mumbai.(Agency)

Long before Nashik-based godman Ashok Kharat came under the scanner, the Maharashtra Andhashraddha Nirmlan Samiti was among the first to flag concerns against him, even protesting a visit by then Chief Minister Eknath Shinde to his temple in 2022, warning that such endorsement could legitimise superstition. Founded by rationalist Narendra Dabholkar, the organisation has since remained at the forefront of Maharashtra's fight against black magic and exploitative practices, combining grassroots interventions with sustained advocacy for scientific temper.

Since the Kharat scandal broke in Maharashtra, the organisation claims that its helpline is flooded with cases, activists however say support from the state in strengthening enforcement of the anti-superstition law remains lacking. The organisation is now seeking state intervention

in expediting the framing of detailed rules under the Maharashtra Prevention and Eradication of Human Sacrifice and other Inhuman, Evil and Aghori Practices and Black

absence of operational guidelines on procedures and implementation has left police personnel unsure of how to proceed in many cases, affecting on-ground enforcement.

Maharashtra was one of the first states to bring in the Anti-Black Magic Act in 2013, which was passed by the state government four days after Narendra Dabholkar was gunned down in broad daylight by alleged right wing activists.

Over the decades, organisations like the Maharashtra Andhashraddha Nirmlan Samiti and the Akhil Bharatiya Andhashraddha Nirmoolan Samiti (ANiS) have carried forward Maharashtra's legacy of rationalist thought and scientific temper. The tradition traces back to reformist voices ranging from the abhanga of 17th century saint Tukaram to thinkers like Jyotirao Phule, Gopal Ganesh Agarkar and Prabodhankar Thackeray.



Magic Act, 2013, which has been pending since its enactment in 2013. Activists point out that while the law broadly criminalises practices related to black magic and exploitation of superstitious beliefs, the

IMD issues 5-day heatwave alert for over 30 UP districts; list of affected areas

Eight cities in UP ranked among the top 30 hottest places in the country, with Prayagraj topping the state charts at 44.6°C.

Vadodara.(Agency)

As Uttar Pradesh continued to experience intense summer conditions, the India Meteorological Department (IMD), Lucknow, Sunday issued a five-day heatwave warning for the state. Experts said temperatures are expected to remain above normal, with both daytime heat and warm nights adding to discomfort, driven by persistent dry westerly winds and stable atmospheric conditions.

On Sunday, eight cities in the state ranked among the top 30 hottest places in the country, with Prayagraj topping the state charts at a blistering 44.6°C, nearly 5°C above the seasonal normal. It was followed by Varanasi (44.2°C), Sultanpur (43.8°C), and Banda, Agra and Jhansi (43.6°C each). Hamirpur (43.2°C) and Fursatganj (43.1°C) also made it to the list of the country's hottest places. The state capital Lucknow recorded 41.9°C, about 3.4°C above normal.

As per IMD, Lucknow, heatwave conditions are likely to continue in parts of Uttar Pradesh, indicating a gradual intensification and wider spread across the state.

IMD has indicated that no significant relief is expected during this period, with dry weather prevailing across the state. Authorities have



advised people to avoid prolonged exposure to heat, stay hydrated, and take necessary precautions, especially during peak afternoon hours.

Five-day district-wise alert

April 21

The heatwave zone expands to include Banda, Chitrakoot, Kaushambi, Prayagraj, Fatehpur,

Pratapgarh, Sonbhadra, Mirzapur, Chandauli, Varanasi, Sant Ravidas Nagar, Jaunpur, Ghazipur, Etah, Agra, Firozabad, Mainpuri, Etawah, Auraiya, Shahjahanpur, Badaun, Jalaun, Hamirpur, Mahoba, Jhansi, and Lalitpur.

Warm night conditions are likely in Saharanpur, Shamli, Muzaffarnagar, Bijnor, Moradabad, Rampur, and nearby areas.

April 22

Heatwave conditions likely over a larger swathe including Banda, Chitrakoot, Kaushambi, Prayagraj, Fatehpur, Pratapgarh, Sonbhadra, Mirzapur, Chandauli, Varanasi, Sant Ravidas Nagar, Jaunpur, Ghazipur, Kanpur Dehat, Kanpur Nagar, Raebareilly, Kasganj, Etah, Agra, Firozabad, Mainpuri, Etawah, Auraiya, Shahjahanpur, Badaun, Jalaun, Hamirpur, Mahoba, Jhansi, and Lalitpur.

Warm night conditions to persist in western UP districts, including Saharanpur, Shamli, Muzaffarnagar, Bijnor, Moradabad, and Rampur.

From abandoned govt buildings to open books: How Nagpur's villages are getting their own libraries

A routine cleanup of old govt documents during a 100-day programme revealed abandoned buildings and gave Nagpur's Zilla Parishad an unexpected idea, one that has since put 100 libraries in villages that never had one

Mumbai.(Agency)

Every day, 42-year-old Kirti Bhandarkar makes an unexpected detour on her way home. After a full day as an Anganwadi Sevika, and a 20-kilometre commute from Mahurzari village to Nagpur city, she doesn't head back. Instead, she rides out to Fetri, a village on the outskirts of Nagpur, to spend a few quiet hours at the library.

What she studies in was, until recently, a near abandoned dilapidated library, which was one of dozens that officials stumbled upon while doing something far more mundane — cleaning up old files.

"The idea of making these libraries emerged during the government's 100-day programme. One of the tasks was to organise old documents and ensure office cleanliness. During field visits, we noticed many unused structures, locked, abandoned buildings," Nagpur Zilla Parishad CEO Vinayak Mahamuni told The Sunday Express.

That chance discovery has since turned into 100 libraries across the Zilla Parishad jurisdiction. Each one a former Gram Panchayat office, community hall, Anganwadi centre or school building, now converted into a



modern, equipped study space under the DREAM (Dedicated Room for Empowerment, Awareness and Motivation) Library project.

Kirti is preparing for her internal examinations, a step towards becoming an Anganwadi supervisor. "I study here for around 3-4 hours after work and head back home in the evening.

Studying at home is nearly impossible. We live in a joint family set up. Plus this library is equipped with basic facilities, books for all competitive examinations, wi-fi, computers, even coolers in this harsh summer. Studying here is pleasant," she said.

"We conducted a survey to identify how many such government properties existed. Buildings that were constructed but remained unused for various reasons. While government construction is usually quality-driven, older buildings often remain neglected. That's when we started thinking about how to utilise these old structures. This idea began around April 2025," Mahamuni said.

In some cases, the renovation was straightforward. In others, it required more. "In Ramtek and Parseoni, the structures were in very poor condition, requiring repair costs of up to Rs 2.5 lakh and considerable time. But once repairs are completed, a library can be set up within 20 days," he said.

Six, including three children, drown in Cauvery near Mysuru during urus gathering

MYSURU.(Agency)

Six people, including three children, who had gathered for an urus, drowned in the Cauvery river near Arkeshwara Temple in KR Nagar taluk of Mysuru district on Sunday.

All the deceased had come to a nearby dargah. As they were playing in the river, one of them slipped away, while others, trying to rescue the person, entered the water.

The deceased were identified as Fatima (42), wife of Ismail from Udayagiri in Mysuru; Mohammed Yasin (23), son of

Mohammed Babu, an autorickshaw driver from SBR Layout, Bengaluru; Neha Kausar (19), wife of Mohammed Yasin, from SBR Layout, Bengaluru; Uzeir (5), son of Sadiq, from Udayagiri, Mysuru; Emma Aiman (13), daughter of Arif, from Kadugondanahalli, Bengaluru; and Afif Ahmed (13), child of Riyaz Pasha from Muslim Block, KR Nagar.

Expressing grief, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah posted on X that he was deeply saddened by the deaths. He announced a compensation of Rs 5 lakh to the relatives of each deceased. Mysuru SP Mallikarjun Baladangi and KR Nagar police have visited the spot and are investigating the circumstances that led to the tragedy.



Summer vacations, industrial slowdown: Massive rush at Surat's Udhna Railway station, police resort to lathi-charge

Western Railway denies reports of stampede, says 'no disruption to overall operations', over 23,000 were facilitated to travel from station in a day

Surat.(Agency)

Udhna railway station in Gujarat's Surat witnessed heavy crowding on Sunday morning as thousands of passengers, mostly migrant workers, gathered to board outstation trains at the start of summer vacations and amid a slowdown in industrial activity in the textile and diamond hub.

Security personnel resorted to lathi-charge to control the situation after passengers breached barricades and broke queues in a bid to board trains to their home states such as Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Odisha.

In a statement, the Western Railway denied reports of a stampede at the railway station. "During the course of passenger movement for special train services, a brief disturbance occurred when a few unruly boys attempted to breach barricading arrangements. The situation was promptly

brought under control by on-ground railway staff and police, ensuring no disruption to overall operations," the statement said.

At least six trains were scheduled to run to these states with stoppages in Udhna on Sunday morning. The passenger holding area and the platform had over 22,000 people who had spent Saturday night on the station premises to board trains, said Western Railway officials.

An official at Udhna Railway station said on condition of anonymity, "Udhna Railway station witnessed an unexpected crowd starting Saturday afternoon. The situation worsened on Sunday around 11.35 am, when a train from Udhna to Hasanpur (Bihar) was about to leave. The crowd went out of control, climbed on barricades, and in

some places breached them as passengers did not want to miss the train. The security staff tried to control the situation, but the passengers were out of control. After great



effort, more security staff from Surat city police were called in and the crowd was brought under control." The official said they contacted the higher

authorities in Mumbai and two long distance trains from Mumbai to UP were halted at Udhna station.

"The Bandra Gorakhpur train reached Udhna Station at 1 pm and a large number of passengers boarded the train. Another train, from Valsad to Mau in UP, was halted at Udhna Railway station at 4.05 pm facilitating more passengers. Some passengers are waiting at the passenger holding area in Udhna. They will board trains by Monday morning," an official said. A train to Jaynagar (Bihar) left the station at 1.30 am on Sunday, followed by another train to Madhubani (Bihar) at 5.30 am, one to Brahmapur (Odisha) at 1.10 am, another for Jaynagar (Bihar) at 8:35 a.m., one to Thane at 10.20 am and train to Hasanpur (UP) at 11.35 am.

UP government suspends smart meter rollout, offers relief to consumers

The move comes amid wide scale opposition against the installation of prepaid smart electricity meters across the state.



Nagpur.(Agency)

The Uttar Pradesh government has temporarily halted the ongoing rollout of smart meters until a technical committee submits its report, and announced relief measures to ensure uninterrupted power supply for consumers with low or zero balance, officials said on Sunday.

The move comes amid wide scale opposition against the installation of prepaid smart meters across the state.

Energy Minister A K Sharma on Sunday, during a review meeting at Shakti Bhawan in Lucknow, said existing consumers of smart meters will continue to receive power supply for up to three days or until dues reach Rs 200 for loads up to 2 KW, even if their prepaid balance is exhausted.

According to officials, the decision aims to address complaints and ease consumer concerns around the smart metering system.

Officials informed that a four-member technical committee comprising experts from IIT Kanpur, ERDA Vadodara and UP Power Corporation has been tasked with examining the technical quality and performance of smart meters. It is likely to submit its findings within 10 days.

The government has also introduced a transition cushion for newly installed smart meters.

More hard yards to cross before peace

US President Donald Trump's interest to end the war in Iran is not in doubt. His predicament is that it may inexorably turn into an attritional conflict and wreck his presidential legacy—for this was not a war of necessity. Meanwhile, Iran's nuclear issue has been negotiated threadbare. Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi was spot-on when he disclosed at Islamabad that the two delegations were only "inches away" from clinching a deal.

The usually pro-Trump conservative magazine Washington Examiner featured an article on Wednesday titled 'Pressure builds on Trump to find off-ramp on Iran war', which held a mirror at the deepening unpopularity of the war. Yet, Trump's flag carrier and social-media platform Truth Social promptly reproduced the article authored by the magazine's White House reporter Mabinty Quarshie, calling attention to it because a defining moment has come. Democrats have zeroed in on the war as Trump's Achilles' heel as he mobilises for the crucial midterm elections in November, which will decide the fate of his presidency in ways more than one. Former President Bill Clinton has launched a daily podcast leading the charge of the light brigade.

A perilous period lies ahead. Most analysts are of the opinion that even if a second round of talks is held in Islamabad, it may not necessarily mean a conclusive farewell to arms. Trump himself implicitly acknowledged the quagmire when he disclosed that the US's "armada" will stay put in the Persian Gulf for the foreseeable future. It is entirely conceivable that Trump may order some ground operation, as the continuing deployment of infantry and special forces with amphibious ships and helicopters suggest. In such an event, there will be dire need for basing facilities nearby in the Indian Ocean hinterland, preferably in the Arabian Sea region. All the US bases in the Persian Gulf region have been rendered dysfunctional following attacks by Iran and will be out of reach for any large ground operations in Iran. The regional states themselves will not want to get entangled in a US operation given Tehran's advance notice that it will retaliate. In the prevailing geopolitical alignments, Pakistan is also unlikely to be seen rendering help to the American war effort. Not only is Pakistan a mediator, but anti-American sentiments are widespread in that country. Pakistan's ties with Iran have become exceptionally warm and fraternal, and carry the imprimatur of Field Marshal Asim Munir. In the event of a confrontation with Iran over the status of Strait of Hormuz, Trump's armada will be hard-pressed, as the nearest American naval base will be Diego Garcia. Pentagon may come under compulsion to invoke basing facility in India under the Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement, the foundational military agreement between India and the US (which the Congress-led UPA government had dithered from signing) that allows their armed forces to access each other's bases for refuelling, supplies and repairs. The pact facilitates reciprocal logistical support, including food, water, medical services, and transport, boosting operational reach without requiring automatic commitments or establishing permanent American bases in India. Suffice to say, the motivations behind Trump's ever-frequent telephone calls to Prime Minister Narendra Modi lately—the last one professing his "love" for India—need to be understood properly. Trump is tough as nails and without batting an eyelid, put British Prime Minister Keir Starmer on the mat for initially saying 'nyet' to a demand for basing facilities. Indeed, Iran is effectively acting like the winning side already, insisting on conditions that include the lifting of sanctions, possible compensation from the US, expanded control over the Strait of Hormuz, and the preservation of the right to enrich uranium like any other Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty signatory. On the other hand, Trump is called upon to show that the war was purposive and resulted in a significantly better deal than the Iran nuclear deal that Barack Obama had negotiated. Backdrop of memory mixing with desire, there are some major considerations to be factored in.

Women's seats, men's mindsets need change

Modi government has squandered an opportunity to build national consensus on an important issue. For women's quota to be successful, men will have to change their approach

As we watched the debate in Parliament regarding the 33% quota for women, it is pertinent to discuss the role of political parties as institutions. More often than not, they play spoilsport. A report of the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA), Stockholm, mentions in the context of women's quota, "in almost all political systems, no matter what electoral regime, it is the political parties, not the voters that constitute the real gatekeeper (for women) to elected offices." Take the example of several dynasty-driven political parties in India. Not just in the Congress, the GOP (grand old party) of India, but even in parties that swear by progressivism, like the NCP(SP) or DMK, male members have been chosen by their presidents as the 'heir apparent', disregarding the relative merit of female options. No wonder, all the three parties are opposing the women's quota Bill of 2026 under one pretext or the other. It is a universally accepted fact that women are subordinated and that this subordination has to end. How to do that is the moot question. Because, it is men who have subordinated women and it depends upon them as to how women subordination can be stopped. No wonder, people make it a debatable issue when legal and constitutional action is taken to end this subordination.

This type of affirmative action or protective discrimination aims at empowering the underprivileged. Prime Minister Modi has always prioritised empowerment over entitlement. This is because the process of empowerment has the potential of changing the direction of systemic forces which marginalise these groups. It is a deliberately initiated and externally induced process. In the context of empowerment of women, this process compels one raise questions about the structures of power and gender subordination therein. Globally, women remain vastly underrepresented in local and national politics. By 2018, as per the data compiled by the Inter Parliamentary Union, only 24% of the parliamentarians were women. However, thankfully, the number of countries around the world, introducing some sort of affirmative action for women in public office is fast increasing. Yet another study, gathering insights into the provisions for women quota in countries like Rwanda, Sweden, Norway, France, Mexico and Tunisia, has found out that while gender quotas have contributed to increasing female representation, their effectiveness largely depends on factors like legal frameworks,

cultural contexts, political will and enforcement mechanisms. Many studies also mention that tokenism, societal resistance and limited impact on broader gender norms continue to hamper real gender justice. While measures like intense leadership training, capacity-building, etc, do work, changing the traditional male-mindset continues to be the most daunting challenge. It is educative to understand as to how mandatory quotas in candidate selection at the political party level have impacted in other countries. Argentina became the first country to introduce women's quota at the candidate-selection level in the 1990s. Argentina, Mexico and



Costa Rica have legislated party quotas and have over 36% female representation in their national legislatures. Interestingly, almost similar levels of women representation have been achieved by countries like South Africa, Sweden and Germany through voluntary (non-legislated) quotas by political parties. South Africa serves an example worth emulating, with women comprising 44.8% of its current National Assembly. In South Africa, the country's biggest political party, the African National Congress (ANC), has adopted a policy of giving tickets to women for 50% of the seats of the National Assembly. The success of the ANC had a cascading effect on other political parties as well.

Men in general and their traditional male mindset in particular have been the reason for the denial of due representation to women. In Spain, research reports point out that political parties there manipulated quotas

and reduced women's political representation in part by using the trick of nominating them to seats from where they can't get popular mandate. In France, they had a quota policy, with the provision of penalty on political parties refusing a certain number of candidatures to women. Sadly, as pointed out by the reports, there were parties that preferred paying a hefty penalty to giving more candidatures to women. While trying to understand as to how men must prepare themselves to welcome greater women representation, it is pertinent to see how women tend to great value to the cause of democratic public representation, in multiple ways. Studies

pertaining to the impact of women quota at the level of local self-governments in India clearly show that gram panchayats with gender quota have spent remarkably high on the creation of more public utilities as compared to non-quota gram panchayats. Also noteworthy is the fact that thanks to the women quota, police responsiveness to crimes against women has increased remarkably. Also, it has been pointed out by researchers, when women become representatives, issues like children's nutrition and educational outcomes as well as women's entrepreneurship receive greater attention. In India, after the introduction of women's quota in the Panchayati Raj institutions, initially, people used to point out emerging phenomena like sarpanch-pati or mayor-pati, mocking at the fact that behind the woman office-bearer, it is the

husband who pulled the strings. But over the years, that situation has been changing significantly. Now, women are coming forward to make independent choices on and confidently deciding on governance issues. Interestingly, even in pre-Taliban Afghanistan, studies have pointed out that gender quotas in village development councils led to an increase in women's participation in village governance, community life and economic activities. Even in India, compared to their male counterparts, women are more vocal and participative. Some local election-related research reports have pointed out that the percentage of women getting re-elected is significantly more than men, demolishing the thesis that on electability count, women are more likely to falter.

All this points out to the fact that for women quota to be successful, men will have to change their approach drastically.

Beyond rankings: Real challenge is jobs, incomes & productivity

India, despite remaining among the fastest-growing major economies, has slipped behind the UK and Japan

INDIA's slide from the fourth spot to the sixth one in the latest IMF ranking of the world's largest economies has triggered predictable alarm and partisan point-scoring. But this needs perspective. It is less a story of economic decline than of currency exchange rates, statistical revisions and the limitations of rankings. When the rupee weakens, India's economy appears smaller in dollar terms even if domestic production remains strong. A country can therefore post robust real growth and still lose rank. That is precisely why India, despite remaining among the fastest-growing major economies, has slipped behind the UK and Japan. This should caution against treating rankings as badges of success or failure. Governments often celebrate a rise in position as proof of policy triumph, while critics weaponise a fall as evidence of mismanagement. Neither reaction captures economic reality. A nation's true progress is measured by the quality and distribution of growth.



India's strengths remain substantial. The domestic demand remains resilient. The demographic potential

is strong, infrastructure is expanding and digital economy growing. But these advantages will matter only if they translate into productive jobs, stronger manufacturing capacity, higher private investment and rising household incomes. A large economy with weak employment generation or stagnant wages cannot draw comfort from rankings alone.

Policymakers must recognise that currency stability and macroeconomic credibility influence global perceptions. Persistent rupee weakness raises import costs and erodes GDP standing. Sound fiscal management, export competitiveness and productivity gains are therefore essential. If incomes rise, opportunities expand and inequality narrows, rankings will eventually take care of themselves. If not, even a higher place on the global table will ring hollow.

India must ensure that it does not lose sight of what truly matters.

A confrontation over women

A consensus on the new Bill was neither sought nor won because there was no conversation

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi's remarkable project at creating a "women constituency" in Indian politics, that hopes to override both caste and class, has been breathtaking in its imagination these past 12 years. Modi has done more to listen to the grievances of women — beginning with pushing for the replacement of smoke-filled chulhas still being used in tiny village homes with gas cylinders under the 'Ujjwala' scheme, to putting sums of money into their bank accounts, especially in the run-up to polls in their states — than any other male politician in recent times. Why, then, has the Women's Reservation Bill the PM piloted in the Lok Sabha, even called for a special session of Parliament in the middle of the ongoing Assembly election cycle, fallen apart? Don't India's women want to be part of a national 'Nari Shakti'? The answer is a complex one, of course, beginning with the fact that despite our deep devotion to our goddesses — from Durga to Kali, Saraswati and Lakshmi and several score more — you could ask why patriarchy has such deep roots in India. Certainly, we, women, are responsible for watering those roots and cutting the ground beneath our own feet. Why else would the female-male ratio in Haryana (879/1,000) and Punjab (895/1,000) and Delhi (868/1,000) — believe it or not, Chandigarh has the worst figures in the country, 818 women per 1,000 men — be at the absolute bottom of the national chart? (Haryana claims its figure has gone up to 914 per 1,000 men in the last year.)

Ask the question. Why is Punjab, with a population equivalent to Kerala, both 3 crore each, the second-worst performing state on the gender ratio scale in the country? Why do southern states led by Kerala (1,084), Tamil Nadu (996), Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka (both 993) do so well, compared to northern states, on this and several other socio-economic parameters?

Ask the second question. Why are Opposition parties

against the Women's Reservation Bill? Why didn't they support PM Modi on what promises to be a fundamentally altering legislation that is bound to shake up Indian politics? Is the Opposition anti-women? The Women's Bill has had a long journey over the last few decades, as my colleague Surya Pillai so eloquently wrote some days ago. Fact is, that it was the Congress-led UPA in 2008, which introduced the Bill in the Rajya Sabha, and then ensured it passed in 2010, also in the Rajya Sabha, to prevent it from lapsing (when a Bill is passed in the Rajya Sabha, the House of Elders, it doesn't lapse). The Congress realised that its own UPA was so badly divided over the Bill (RJD leader Sharad Yadav's phrase 'par kati mahilayein' and Samajwadi Party leader Mulayam Singh Yadav's comment saying that if Parliament passed the Women's Bill, it would open the doors to women "who invited catcalls and whistles" were manifestations of this divide), which meant that it would never have the numbers to pass in the Lok Sabhas of its time, so it did the next best thing.

That Congress push enabled the Modi government to pick up the baton in 2023 and pass an updated Bill. That's why in 2023, the Congress and the rest of the Opposition supported the BJP in unanimously passing the Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam. And that should have been the message of the 2026 Bill as well — consensus. Just as Parliament came together in 2023 — only 2 MPs voted against the Bill — to support a 33 per cent women's quota in Parliament, Prime Minister Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju and the rest of the senior BJP leadership should have called Opposition leaders and sought their support on the Women's Bill this time

around. Perhaps a joint parliamentary committee or a select committee in which all parties were represented could have debated all its clauses threadbare — should there be quotas within quotas for OBC and Dalits, for example? — and once a consensus was arrived at, the



new Bill and its roadmap for implementation could have been put to the House. Unfortunately, a consensus was neither sought nor won because there was no conversation. Parliament is so fractured these days, with MPs hurling insults at each other, that it takes a leader

with a large heart and a small ego to be able to overcome both slights and underhand stratagems and reach out and talk to the other side. Clearly, the Women's Bill has met the same fate as the three farm laws promulgated in 2020. Just like the Centre was forced to take back the three laws, because there was little discussion or debate with farmer unions as well as political parties before they were promulgated — perhaps a pilot project in one corner of Punjab could have been devoted to that experiment, that may have led both sides to find a way — the Women's Bill has failed to pass muster. Let's both of us write history, the PM could have told the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha. The time has come for women to touch at least one-third of the sky. Women comprise 48-49 per cent of the country's population, but let's, as a start, give them 33 per cent. Yes, let's, the Leader of Opposition could have answered.

Unfortunately, Modi and Amit Shah and Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi and K Kanimozhi said their set pieces. The extent to which Parliament has changed was clear when one or two Priyanka Gandhi-Amit Shah remarks — that in the old days would be considered the normal cut and thrust of parliamentary repartee — provoked the MPs into some laughter, some even nervously. The lack of conversation between the Treasury and the Opposition benches led to a confrontation in Parliament — over women.

One last thing. Less than 24 hours before the constitutional amendment failed on Friday evening, the government had notified the 2023 Nari Shakti Adhiniyam on late Thursday evening. This means that the Act is alive and can be implemented any time.

Immigration agent gets 3 years of rigorous imprisonment in Rs 19-L visa fraud case

Mohali court imposes a Rs 1.02 lakh fine on the accused to be paid as compensation to the complainant.



Shimla. (Agency)
A local court in Mohali has convicted an immigration agent in a visa fraud case and sentenced her to three years of rigorous imprisonment and imposed a fine of Rs 1.02 lakh to be paid as compensation to the complainant. Additional Chief Judicial Magistrate Anish Goyal held Chandigarh's Sector 48, guilty under Section 420 (cheating and dishonestly inducing delivery of property) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) and Section 24 of the Immigration Act. According to the order, "The convict has been awarded three years of rigorous imprisonment and a fine of Rs 1 lakh under IPC Section 420, along with one year of imprisonment and a fine of Rs 2,000

under the Immigration Act." According to the prosecution, a case was registered at the Mataur police station on January 18, 2024, in connection with an alleged fraud of Rs 19 lakh. In November 2022, the complainant approached Star Future Education and Immigration Services in Mohali's Sector 70 to secure an Australian study visa for his daughter. The accused promised to arrange the visa within 90 days and collected nearly Rs 19 lakh in instalments. However, the visa process was neither completed within the stipulated time nor was the money refunded. After waiting for over a year, the complainant found the university's offer letter provided by the accused to be fake, prompting him to approach

the police. During the trial, the court observed that financial transactions and elements of cheating were clearly established through bank records and witness testimonies. "The evidence on record sufficiently proves the offence of cheating and unauthorised immigration activity," the court noted. However, the court also remarked that the complainant failed to independently verify the authenticity of the offer letter from the concerned university. After evaluating the evidence and hearing both sides, the court acquitted the accused of charges related to forgery and criminal conspiracy, but held her guilty of cheating and operating without proper authorisation under the Immigration Act."

Short news

Leopard kills 4-yr-old child in Lakhimpur Kheri village

Lakhimpur. (Agency)

A tragic incident has been reported from Nayapurwa village under Umar Gram Panchayat in Lakhimpur Kheri district, where a leopard killed a four-year-old boy. The partially eaten body of the child was recovered near a railway track after he went missing from a field, police informed on Monday.

According to information, Dilshad, the son of Umeed Ali, had gone to the fields with his parents and two sisters on Saturday evening. While the parents were harvesting wheat, the child disappeared around 6 PM. When the family prepared to return home, they found him missing. His sisters were sitting frightened under a tree nearby but could not explain what had happened.

The family immediately began searching for the child and later informed the police. A joint search operation by the police and forest department was launched.

The child's mutilated body was eventually found about 1.5 kilometers away near the Mailani-Nanapara railway track, close to Puraina pond. Eyewitnesses stated that the leopard had eaten one of the child's hands and a leg. The incident has created panic in the area, which has already been witnessing leopard movement. On the same night, a woman named Hidayatunna, wife of Mushtaq Ali, was also attacked by a leopard but managed to escape. Forest Ranger Bhupendra Singh confirmed that the body has been sent for post-mortem and legal procedures are underway.

He added that a cage will soon be installed in the area to capture the leopard. Villagers have demanded immediate action to ensure their safety.

Mumbai AQI reaches to Good Category of 38 °C



Mumbai. (Agency)

Air quality levels showed improvement in Mumbai, as it was recorded in the 'good' category across several parts of the city.

However, several areas across the city reported air quality levels ranging from 'good' to 'poor'. The worst air quality was recorded in Sunder Nagar near Malad West of city suburb, with an AQI of 127 in the 'poor' category, while the best was recorded at Mulgaon Station 2 in Andheri East with, west an AQI of 5.

According to the Regional Meteorological Department, Mumbai is expected to experience partly cloudy skies in the city and suburbs today, with temperatures likely to range between 25°C and 35°C.

Data from the weather department showed a temperature of 29°C at 8.30 am, while the 'feels-like' temperature was recorded at 30°C. Although no heatwave warning has been issued, dry conditions are expected on Monday in Mumbai.

However, Thane and Palghar are likely to see light rain and thundershowers on Monday.

Moreover, light rain and lightning have also been predicted for Mumbai for two days, i.e. April 21 and 22. The IMD has also issued Yellow Alerts for the Konkan, Marathwada, Madhya Maharashtra, North Maharashtra and Vidharbha regions for 'thunderstorms accompanied with lightning, moderate rainfall and gusty winds' for the next five days.

'Reel stunt' turns fatal: Three brothers killed after bike hits truck in Madhya Pradesh

MP reel stunt accident: The deceased have been identified as Upalakh Kol, Amrish Kol and Hemraj Kol, residents of Bela village. The two youths on the second motorcycle sustained serious injuries.

Madhya Pradesh. (Agency)

Three brothers were killed on the spot after their bike rammed into a stationary truck on National Highway 135 in Mauganj area of Madhya Pradesh. The youths were allegedly shooting a reel for social media at the time of the accident.

Video of incident goes viral

A video of the incident has been widely circulated on social media. The footage shows three boys on a bike with one of the pillion rider waving a country-made pistol. The bike which was allegedly speeding, was moving in a zig-zag manner.

The rider, whose face was covered, overtook several vehicles but it rammed into the truck while performing a stunt allegedly for social media fame. The incident was recorded by their friends riding behind them on another bike.

Deceased identified as brothers

The deceased have been identified as Upalakh Kol, Amrish Kol and Hemraj Kol, residents of Bela village. The two youths on the



second motorcycle sustained serious injuries. Police blamed over speeding and negligence for the accident. They also recovered the gun from the accident site. Police said further investigation into the incident is underway.

'NFR Achieves Historic Milestones in Infrastructure and Track Modernisation

The Sikh Times

Maligaon, 20th April: The Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) has registered remarkable achievements in track modernisation, maintenance and safety during the financial year 2025-26, setting multiple new benchmarks in its history. These accomplishments reflect NFR's continued commitment to enhancing operational efficiency, passenger safety and infrastructure reliability. A major technological milestone was achieved with the introduction of Phased Array Ultrasonic Testing (PAUT) for testing Flash Butt Welds during the third quarter of 2024-25. Building on this initiative, a total of 53,544 welds were tested during 2025-26, significantly strengthening track safety and reliability through advanced inspection techniques. NFR recorded its highest-ever track renewal progress, complet-

ing 457 CTR (Complete Track Renewal) units during 2025-26. This marks a 33.07% increase

Sleeper renewals reached 465.02 TKM, showcasing substantial progress towards the annual target of 502 TKM. To further strengthen track structure, a record 9.57 lakh cubic meters of ballast was supplied and inserted during the year—6% higher than the previous year's 9.01 lakh cubic meters. This improvement has contributed significantly to enhanced riding quality and overall track stability. Track fittings renewal also surpassed expectations, achieving a cumulative progress of 299.61 km against a target of 205 km—exceeding the target by an impressive 46.15%. Meanwhile, 4,312 points were tamped, surpassing the annual target of 4,150 by 3.9%, ensuring smoother train operations and reduced maintenance requirements. Operational efficiency saw further improvements with the increase in loop line speeds at 39 stations, upgraded from 15 kmph to 30 kmph, exceeding the previous year's progress of 21 stations. Additionally,

deep screening of 258 turnouts was completed, surpassing the annual target by 47.43%, enhancing track resilience and longevity. In the area of track safety monitoring, Ultrasonic Flaw Detection (USFD) testing covered an extensive 20,212.61 km, exceeding the annual target of 19,217 km. NFR also successfully rectified 23 track layouts, surpassing its target and improving operational safety and flexibility. Safety infrastructure received a major boost with the erection of 154.53 km of safety fencing, exceeding the annual target of 100 km by 54.53%. This initiative plays a crucial role in preventing trespassing and ensuring safer railway operations. These record-breaking accomplishments underline Northeast Frontier Railway's dedication to adopting advanced technologies, strengthening infrastructure, and ensuring safer and more efficient railway services for passengers and freight movement across the region.



over the previous year's achievement of 343.08 CTR units. In addition, rail renewals of 449.42 track kilometres (TKM) were completed—another record in the zone's history.

Madrasa Board abolished in Uttarakhand; state curriculum made compulsory from July

Uttarakhand CM Dhami said non-compliant institutions would face closure. Hailed by Hindu leaders as a historic step towards national integration and broader learning, Muslim leaders deem the move unlawful and questioned its necessity.

Uttarakhand. (Agency)

In a significant move, Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami has said that the Madrasa Board in the state will be abolished, adding that all madrasas will have to embrace the Uttarakhand Board curriculum from July this year.

He made this announcement while speaking at an event in Haridwar. Dhami said the step was being taken to ensure uniform, modern education for all students. The CM also warned that madrasas which fail to adopt the state board syllabus would face shutdown.

'Another historic decision'

Dhami called it "another historic decision". He pointed out that the government has decided to dissolve the Madrasa Board, which has been functioning in the state for many years. The CM said: "From July 2026, all madrasas in Uttarakhand will teach the syllabus prescribed by the

Uttarakhand Education Board. Institutions that fail to implement this will be closed." Several Hindu religious leaders attending the event lauded the announcement.

Voices of support

Hailing the move, Swami Chidanand Muni of Parmarth Ashram said that the measure would help integrate students into the national mainstream. He underlined that integrating modern education with spiritual values would go a long way in helping students develop a broader understanding of the country and the world, rather than being confined to only a few subjects.

He pointed out the students will not get religious education but also study science, mathematics, geography and national issues. Such education will make sure that they gain knowledge not just about a narrow subject, but about the entire nation and the world, he reportedly said.

Mahant Ravindra Puri, another seer who is also the president of the Akhil Bharatiya Akhara Parishad, linked madrasas to various forms of "jihad". He demanded the closure of madrasas across the country.



The saints also advocated restrictions on the presence of people from other religions in "Devbhoomi" states like Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh. Acharya Mahamandaleshwar Swami

Kailashanand Giri contended that madrasas were required this "land of the gods". "Uttarakhand and Himachal are Devbhoomi, protected by divine forces. People of other religions should not be allowed here," he said.

'Decision is unlawful in itself'

Earlier, Muslim community leaders had sharply reacted to the move when the BJP government had floated the idea of dissolving the board.

Maulana Khalid Rashid Firangi Mahali, a member of the All India Muslim Personal Law Board, had pointed out that the Uttarakhand government's decision to abolish the Madrasa Board "is unlawful in itself". All India Muslim Jamaat National President Maulana Mufti Shahabuddin Razvi Bareilly had raised questions over the need for such a change, and noted that any reforms could have been implemented via the Madrasa Board itself.

Emotional stress or financial strain? Police probe what drove Kanpur man to kill his twin daughters

Even though police are suspecting mental health issues as a possible factor, the exact motive remains under investigation. It is believed that the accused had been under psychological distress. Police are probing multiple angles, including his mental state and recent circumstances.

New Delhi.(Agency)

In a shocking incident, a man in Uttar Pradesh's Kanpur allegedly killed his 11-year-old twin daughters by slitting their throats. Police have arrested the father. The ghastly incident took place at Trimoori Apartment in Kidwai Nagar's Naubasta area on Sunday. The details of the incident are now emerging as police are trying to ascertain the reason behind the horrific crime. Commissioner of Police Raghuraj Lal was quoted by PTI as saying that on reaching the flat, the police personnel found both girls lying dead in a pool of blood, while the accused was present inside.

The 48-year-old accused, Shashi Ranjan Mishra, is a former medical representative who had left his job a few years ago and had been out of work recently.

What was the motive of the murders

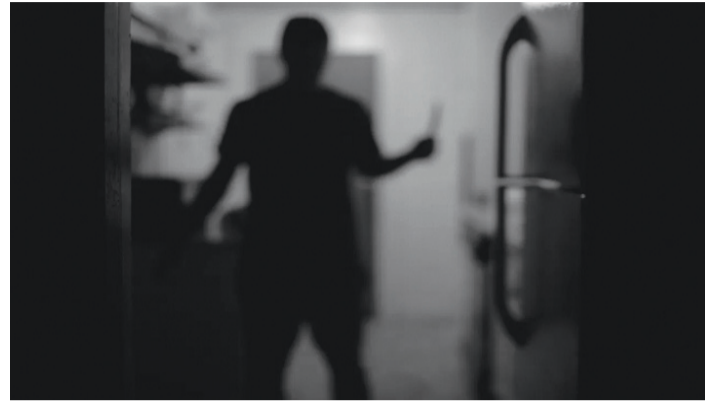
The exact motive of the killings is still to be established. However, police said, primary

investigation points to possible mental health issues that the man was facing. Investigators are linking the incident to depression or a psychiatric condition, stating that the accused seemed to be mentally disturbed, HT reported.

"Prima facie, the father appears to be mentally disturbed. Further investigation is underway," Commissioner Raghuraj Lal pointed out.

Police carried out a search of the house and reportedly found a large bottle of medicines. Officials said initial probe found no sign to suggest there was any financial strain in the family. However, they are still finding out how the man was running the house without any earning of late, and if financial stress played a role.

As per the police, the man also cited anxiety



about the future of his daughters during questioning, though the motive remains under probe.

What the CCTV showed

Mishra, his wife Reshma, their twin daughters, and a six-year-old son lived in an apartment. The mother and the younger son were in a separate room at the time of the incident,

police said.

Speaking to police, Reshma said the family had dinner and then Mishra took the daughters to his room. Around 2.30am, CCTV footage from inside the house showed that Mishra took one of the girls to the washroom and later returned. The lights were switched off after this.

Confession by the father

Mishra admitted to mixing sleeping pills into the children's food, after which they were attacked while asleep, police said. The cops then twins were strangled, and later their throats were slit with a cleaver that had been bought a day before the crime was committed. Deputy Commissioner of Police (South) Deependra Nath Chaudhary said initial findings indicate that the girls were attacked with the cleaver while they were sleeping.

NGT issues notice to Delhi govt, agencies over alleged illegal groundwater extraction in Najafgarh

New Delhi.(Agency)

The National Green Tribunal has issued notice to the Delhi government and other authorities over alleged large-scale illegal extraction of groundwater in Najafgarh.

A bench headed by NGT Chairperson Justice Prakash Shrivastava, along with expert members A. Senthil Vel and Afroz Ahmad, sought responses from the Delhi government, Delhi Jal Board, the concerned Sub-Divisional Magistrate and District Magistrate, Delhi Police, and the Delhi Pollution Control Committee



(DPCC), among others. The direction came on a plea alleging unauthorised groundwater extraction by "private tanker mafia" operators at a plot in the area.

The plea also alleged "collusion and inaction on the part of the authorities," including the DJB. "Issue notice to the respondents," the bench said in its order dated April 13. It directed all respondents to file their replies by July 10, the next date of hearing. Earlier, in February, while hearing a separate matter concerning illegal groundwater extraction in the national capital, the tribunal had directed the DPCC to prepare an action plan for rejuvenating water bodies.

Delhi to set up 'Karmik Sewa Kendras' for construction workers

New Delhi.(Agency)

The Delhi government will set up "Karmik Sewa Kendras" (KSKs), on the lines of the Passport Seva Kendra model, to facilitate registration of construction workers and delivery of welfare services.

According to officials, the Delhi Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Board (DBOCWWB) has initiated the process of engaging an agency to design and develop 13 static and 13 mobile KSKs to cater to migrant and local labour populations in the city.

The initiative aims to support nearly 30 lakh people, especially those from vulnerable sections such as migrant workers and those employed in the unorganised sector. The selected agency will also develop 39 Labour Chowks—3 in each of Delhi's 13 districts—to facilitate welfare schemes across the city.

The need for KSKs has been identified due to persistent challenges faced by workers in accessing essential services, an official document stated. "By creating a network of service centres modelled on the Passport Seva Kendra (PSK) framework, the project aims to significantly mitigate these issues," it said.

The plan draws inspiration from the "highly successful" PSK model, which transformed passport service delivery in the country, a senior Delhi government official said.

By improving accessibility, efficiency, and worker satisfaction through time-bound registrations and proper record maintenance of eligible beneficiaries, the KSK project seeks to replicate the success of PSKs.

The initiative also aims to reduce wait times, enhance service delivery standards, and ensure high levels of worker satisfaction through streamlined and user-friendly services. Self-service kiosks will also be installed to assist workers.

Centres will track details

The KSK facilitation centres will track details such as medical check-ups, distribution of kits, welfare schemes, and Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) records from registration until the end of membership.

No disconnection, power even at zero balance: UP halts smart meter rollout

New Delhi.(Agency)

Providing a major relief to the consumers, the Uttar Pradesh government on Sunday announced that electricity would not be disrupted for three days even after smart meters, which are soon to be installed, run out of balance. In addition to this, the government also decided to put a temporary pause on the installation of the meters across the state, citing a pending four-member technical committee report, which will be evaluated by the state government.

Energy Minister AK Sharma, while briefing the government's decision after a departmental review meeting, also mentioned that the people are not expected to witness any power disruption for 45 days once the smart metres are installed across the state.

He also said that to improve transparency and keep citizens informed, a robust five-level SMS alert system would be implemented



to notify consumers about their billing status and balance updates.

Furthermore, Sharma asked the authorities to ensure seamless connection of power lines during the night, on Sundays, or on public holidays, urging UPPCL (Uttar Pradesh Power Corporation Limited) officials to adopt a more

humanitarian approach towards the public.

Amid the rising temperatures, he put a special emphasis on ensuring an uninterrupted power supply, with instructions to expedite all pending maintenance and maintenance-related works to prevent local breakdowns.

Greater Noida: School van hits tree after driver loses control, several children injured

New Delhi.(Agency)

A school van was involved in an accident in Greater Noida on Monday. The van was reportedly transporting children to school early in the morning, when the driver lost control of the steering wheel and hit a tree. The incident was reported from Beta-2 area of Greater Noida.

Second incident in weeks in Greater Noida

The school van initially skidded off the road and then went on to hit a tree, said eyewitnesses. The vehicle has been completely damaged. The van belonged to Auspicious Academy school. So far there are no reports of any deaths in this accident. The injured children have been moved to nearby hospitals and are undergoing treatment.

A video of the damaged school van is rapidly being shared on social media.

This is however, the second such accident, involving school

vehicles, being reported from the area. Just last week, 2 school buses were involved in an accident in Dadri area of Greater Noida.



In the previous incident, 2 private school buses collided at Dadri Bypass. While one school bus was standing on the road, the other being driven at a high speed and coming from the opposite direction hit it head on. The 2 buses involved in the Dadri accident were of Jesus and Mary Convent school and Ramagya School. In this case also, the buses were

completely damaged. At least 12 students, seated in the school bus of Jesus and Mary Convent school, suffered injuries in the accident.

Repeated cases of bus accidents from Greater Noida, have raised serious concerns among parents, regarding safety of their children.

Jammu and Kashmir: Major accident kills 19 people after bus overturns in Udhampur district

New Delhi.(Agency)

The incident happened in the Khagot area of Ramnagar in the district. After receiving information, the authorities sent several ambulances to the spot to help in rescue operations.

The region of Jammu and Kashmir has been rocked by a gruesome accident on Monday after a bus overturned, killing 19 people and injuring several others in the Udhampur district. The incident happened in the Khagot area of Ramnagar in the district. After receiving information, the authorities sent several ambulances to the spot to help in rescue operations.

How did the accident take place?

The incident happened in the Khagot area of Ramnagar in the district. After receiving information, the authorities sent several ambulances to the spot to help in rescue operations. Those who are injured have been taken to a local hospital. According to reports, the bus was reportedly going to Udhampur from a remote village, and it was taking a sharp curve on a hilly road when the driver lost control. The vehicle plunged into a steep,



rocky slope of around 100 feet before hitting a lower road.

The sub-divisional magistrate (SDM) has taken cognizance of the incident, and the authorities have been ordered to provide maximum treatment and help to those injured. Union Minister Jitendra Singh has spoken with Udhampur District Commissioner (DC) Minga Sherpa about the accident, and has

expressed his grief over the incident. The Lok Sabha MP from Udhampur took to X and said, "The rescue operation has been immediately undertaken. Heavy casualties are expected. All possible assistance is being provided. The injured will be shifted for medical aid. Arrangements being made to airlift the seriously injured."

J&K LG Manoj Sinha said, "Tragic road accident in Udhampur is heartbreaking. My deepest condolences to bereaved families. May God grant them strength.

Praying for speedy recovery of injured. I have directed district admin, Police, SDRF & Health Dept to provide every possible assistance to those affected." JK PDP President Mehbooba Mufti took to X and wrote, "Deeply saddened by the tragic Udhampur - Ramnagar bus accident in which twelve people lost their lives. Condolences to the bereaved families & pray for the swift recovery of those injured."

NSA Ajit Doval Holds High-Level Talks In Riyadh To Strengthen Bilateral Ties

Ajit Doval visits Riyadh for talks with Saudi leadership to enhance bilateral ties and energy cooperation

New Delhi.(Agency)

India's National Security Advisor Ajit Doval paid an official visit to Riyadh on Sunday, engaging in a series of high-level meetings with senior Saudi leadership to strengthen bilateral relations, enhance energy cooperation, and discuss key regional developments. The visit underscores the growing strategic partnership between India and Saudi Arabia amid evolving geopolitical dynamics.

In a statement, the Embassy of India in Riyadh highlighted that the discussions covered a broad spectrum of issues, including bilateral cooperation, regional security concerns, and matters of mutual interest.

During his visit, Doval met prominent Saudi leaders, including Energy Minister Prince Abdulaziz bin Salman, Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan, and National Security Advisor Musaed Al-Aiban.

The Indian Embassy also shared details of the visit on the social media platform X:

"Hon'ble NSA Shri Ajit Doval paid an official visit to Riyadh on April 19. He was received at the Airport by Ambassador Dr Suhel Khan and Deputy Minister for Political Affairs @KSAmofaEN Ambassador Dr. Saud Al-Sati. Later, he had meetings with Energy Minister H.R.H. Prince Abdulaziz bin Salman, Foreign Minister H.H. Prince Faisal bin Farhan and National Security Advisor Dr. Musaed Al-Aiban. During the meetings they discussed bilateral relations, regional situation and other issues of mutual interests."

The visit comes amid a series of active diplomatic engagements by India on global security issues. Just days earlier, on April 17, Doval held extensive talks with Rustem Umerov, Secretary of Ukraine's National Security and Defence Council.

The meeting highlighted continued strategic dialogue between New Delhi and Kyiv during the ongoing conflict in Eastern Europe.

According to Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal, the discussions with Ukraine focused on bilateral relations and the Russia-Ukraine conflict. India reiterated its consistent position advocating a peaceful resolution through dialogue and diplomacy. Together, these engagements reflect India's proactive diplomatic approach in addressing both regional and global security challenges while strengthening ties with key international partners.

NEWS BOX

Connolly credits positive intent after 87 in high-scoring win over LSG

New Delhi. (Agency)

A bizarre "black magic" controversy during Indian Premier League (IPL) 2026 took another twist after a viral letter, allegedly from Chennai Super Kings, was dismissed as fake by former IPL chairman Lalit Modi. While rubbishing the claim, Modi also suggested that such incidents may not be entirely unheard of in the league's past.

The controversy stemmed from a viral video during the Sunrisers Hyderabad vs Chennai Super Kings clash on April 19, followed by an unverified complaint letter doing the rounds online. Speaking on the matter via social media, Modi termed the letter suspicious while hinting at similar past occurrences. "Seems fake this time. But one team owner did indulge in this type of practice," Modi wrote in his post.

"I remember I posted some team owner doing this to the opposing team. By doing exactly this themselves in opposing team dressing room. I even alerted the opposing team owners about this way back in 2011 season - when it happened and I got an alert with concrete proof. I will reveal all these type of



activities conducted by whom in the movie / TV series as decided by my team to disclose," he added. The claims added another layer to what was already a bizarre episode, though there has been no official confirmation from either the IPL authorities or the franchises involved regarding the authenticity of the letter or the alleged act.

WHAT WAS THE SRH vs CSK BLACK MAGIC INCIDENT?

The controversy began during the clash between Sunrisers Hyderabad and Chennai Super Kings at the Rajiv Gandhi International Stadium in Hyderabad, in a match that ebbed and flowed till the very end. Chasing 195, CSK got off to a flying start, racing to 76 in the powerplay and looking firmly in control. However, SRH clawed their way back through a disciplined bowling effort, gradually slowing things down and dragging the contest deep by removing key batters, including Shivam Dube.

Roman Reigns beats CM Punk as WrestleMania 42 Night 2 delivers chaos

NEW DELHI. (Agency)

WrestleMania 42 Night 2 brought the curtain down on a blockbuster weekend in Las Vegas with a mix of title changes, breakout performances and a headline clash that delivered on expectations. The second night leaned heavily into in-ring storytelling, with several bouts producing decisive outcomes. The biggest talking point of the night came in the main event, where Roman Reigns defeated CM Punk to capture the World Heavyweight Championship. Unlike many recent marquee matches, this one unfolded without outside interference, allowing both stars to settle their rivalry purely inside the ring. Earlier in the night, the show got off to a strong start as Oba Femi stunned Brock Lesnar in the opening bout. The result not only set the tone but also hinted at a possible end to Lesnar's run, making it one of the most talked-about moments of the



evening. Title changes added further intrigue, with Trick Williams winning the United States Championship and Rhea Ripley dethroning Jade Cargill in a physically intense contest.

The card also featured a chaotic ladder match for the Intercontinental Championship, won by Penta, along with a brutal street fight where Finn Blor, in his Demon persona, overcame Dominik Mysterio. Roman Reigns beats CM Punk to win World Heavyweight title

The main event between Roman Reigns and CM Punk was built around high stakes and lived up to the billing. Both men traded control through long sequences, focusing on endurance and precision rather than shortcuts. With no outside interference, the finish felt clean and decisive. Reigns capitalised in the closing stages to secure the win, marking another major addition to his already decorated legacy. Oba Femi stuns Brock Lesnar in opening bout

Forged in Chennai, unleashed in Hyderabad: Inside Praful Hinge and Sakib's rise

IPL 2026: The MRF Pace Foundation in Chennai continues to shape India's fast-bowling future, with its rigorous system producing talents like Praful Hinge and Sakib Hussain, now making their mark for SunRisers Hyderabad.

New Delhi. (Agency)

For nearly four decades, the nets at the MRF Pace Foundation in Chennai have hosted a quiet parade of the world's most lethal fast bowlers. From Glenn McGrath and Chaminda Vaas to India's own Zaheer Khan and Jasprit Bumrah, generations have been forged on this hallowed ground. It is a patch of dirt and grass that has arguably done more for India's pace revolution than any other single acre of land in the country. So, when 15-year-old batting sensation Vaibhav Suryavanshi began toying with the IPL's most renowned names, it was perhaps inevitable that the bowler with the perfect

execution plan would hail from that same Chennai foundry. "I had told people that I would bowl a bouncer to him and get him out first ball," said Prufful Hinge, the 24-year-old Sunrisers Hyderabad breakout star, after his Player of the Match performance against Rajasthan Royals on April 13. But Prufful's ability to execute that plan didn't begin in the SRH dugout. While the strategy may have been refined there, the roots of those necessary tools trace back to those same nets in Chennai. Varun Aaron, his bowling coach at SRH, himself once trained there on his way to the Indian team. The MRF Pace Foundation, now in its 38th year, remains the "unbreakable" force for the nation's fast-bowling battery.

In this regard, Chief coach at the MRF pace foundation and former India U-19 World Cup captain, M Senthilnathan, speaking to India Today.in, offered a window into the system that shaped them. From the gruelling physical rehabilitation that rebuilt Praful's

career to the technical refinement that unlocked Sakib Hussain's raw 140-click pace, Senthilnathan's insights reveal the meticulous engineering behind the IPL's latest bowling sensations.



REHABILITATING AND REFINING: THE CASE OF PRAFUL HINGE

When Praful arrived at the academy in 2023, he wasn't a finished product. He was, in many ways, a broken one. "When he came, he had some back injury," Senthilnathan recalls. At

that point, the foundation didn't put a ball in his hand immediately. Instead, they put him through a rigorous rehab program. The goal wasn't just to fix the back, but to find out why it broke. The diagnosis led to a deep-dive technical overhaul. Praful's recovery then evolved him into a bowler capable of executing at state level immediately. So, the following year, the aim was to quench the roots, to let the potential blossom. This is where former Australian bowler and current director of the MRF academy, Glenn McGrath played a big role. He took Praful with him to Australia as part of an exchange program. "He came back in 2024," Senthilnathan continued. "We started to work on him with the new ball. That's where Glenn comes into it and plays a big part."

He revealed that the Australian gave every bit of the knowledge he had acquired from his playing days. "How to use the new ball, how to bowl with the red ball, and then after that, we worked on his white ball skills both with the new ball as well as the old ball," he adds.

Arteta pulls off another 'I believe' as Arsenal's loss to City tightens title race

Gunners manager Mikel Arteta stuck to his "I believe" message despite Arsenal's loss to Manchester City tightening the title race. With just five games left, the pressure is now firmly on both sides.

Manchester. (Agency)

Mikel Arteta reached for his familiar "I believe" line once again after Arsenal's loss to Manchester City tightened the Premier League title race. City's 2-1 win has cut the gap to just three points, with a game in hand swinging the momentum firmly in their favour. The defeat for the Gunners at the Etihad has turned what looked like a comfortable run-in into a proper title scrap. With only five games left, every moment now carries weight, and the margin for error has almost vanished. Despite the setback, Arteta stuck to his script. Speaking after the match, he doubled down on belief and insisted Arsenal are still very much in the race. "I believe today, I believed a week ago because I see them every day and I know the level that we have. If they needed more conviction, I think they have it now. They were talking about it in the dressing room. It's a new league now. They have a

game in hand, we have a three-point advantage and five games to play. Everything is still to play for," Arteta said. "Obviously, they were very disappointed not to get a result in the manner that it happened. That was the feeling



immediately. But they were also saying we lost an opportunity today, and now we have the biggest one in the next five games. So let's go for it," he added.

THE PREMIER LEAGUE RACE

TIGHTENS

The match itself saw City take control at key moments, with Erling Haaland scoring the decisive goal in the 65th minute. Arsenal had responded earlier through Kai Havertz after Rayan Cherki's opener, but ultimately could not find a way back. Arsenal had their moments. Havertz had chances at 1-1 and again late on, the kind that can define a title race. However, the missed opportunities proved costly as City held on for a crucial victory. Now comes the twist. City have still have a game in hand against Burnley. Win that, and they could go top on goal difference or goals scored. For Arsenal, this is where the title race stops being about belief and starts being about execution. Five games, three points, and zero room for slip-ups. The "I believe" line still holds, but from here on, it needs results to match it.

Saw KKR dressing room in tears, many made baseless judgements about us: Chakravarthy

BEIJING. (Agency)

Kolkata Knight Riders spinner Varun Chakravarthy revealed that emotions ran high in the dressing room after securing their first IPL 2026 win against Rajasthan Royals in a thrilling run chase at Eden Gardens on Sunday, April 19. Speaking to the press following his match-winning performance, Varun compared the emotional moment to their Indian Premier League title victory in 2024. The Kolkata Knight Riders faced immense pressure as they hosted the formidable batting line-up of Rajasthan Royals, led by the young Vaibhav Sooryavanshi. KKR had been winless in their first six matches, managing only a solitary point from a rain-affected game. However, on Sunday, they maintained composure to chase down a target of 156 on a slow and sluggish pitch in Kolkata. At one point, KKR found themselves struggling at 85 for 6 in the 15th over. Nevertheless, Rinku Singh, who had

been battling form issues, and Anukul Roy formed an unbeaten 76-run partnership to secure the win. Rinku's half-century was crucial, while Varun, overcoming a slow



start to the season, took three wickets for just 14 runs in his four overs. His performance included dismissing the threatening Vaibhav Sooryavanshi, who had scored 46 off 28 balls. Varun emphasised the importance of the victory in boosting morale within the team, crediting the Abhishek Nayar-led coaching staff for

maintaining belief despite external criticism. "Very, very significant. I can tell you I saw many tears in the dressing room today, which we didn't even see in the year we won the IPL in 2024," Varun said during the press conference in Kolkata.

He added, "The main credit goes to the coaching staff because they didn't let the outside noise affect us. There were too many people making judgments which were totally baseless. At such times, you need a strong core, and we have that."

I WASN'T MAKING MISTAKES: VARUN

Varun, who rushed onto the field, was among the first to congratulate Rinku Singh after he hit the winning runs. Questions had been raised about the leadership of Ajinkya Rahane and Rinku Singh, especially during their lean patches with the bat. Varun himself faced pressure, having gone wicketless in his first three matches before being benched.

IPL 2026: Rajasthan Royals' teenage superstar Vaibhav Sooryavanshi was spotted in tears near the boundary rope after their loss to Kolkata Knight Riders at Eden Gardens. The youngster's 28-ball 46 went in vain as KKR restricted Rajasthan to 155 before successfully chasing the target.

Mumbai. (Agency)

After the adrenaline of the final over subsided, the cameras captured a poignant moment at the Eden Gardens. While the Kolkata Knight Riders celebrated their first victory of the season, 15-year-old Vaibhav Sooryavanshi remained on the field, sitting alone by the boundary rope. Despite the Rajasthan Royals maintaining a strong position in the top four with only their second loss of the tournament, the young opener was visibly overcome with emotion, appearing to feel the

weight of the narrow defeat personally. The teenager's distress did not go unnoticed by the opposition. In a quiet display of sportsmanship that transcended rivalry, a member of the KKR support staff approached the young cricketer. The staff member sat beside Sooryavanshi on the grass, offering a comforting hand and steady words as the youngster tried to compose himself. It was a grounded reminder of the human element in a high-stakes league. For a boy who should be worrying about school exams, the burden of a professional loss proved too heavy to bear. The tears were perhaps fuelled by the "what-ifs" of his own brilliant performance. Earlier in the evening, Sooryavanshi had batted impressively on a pitch that was not conducive to natural stroke-makers. He took on the KKR attack with a fearlessness that belied his age, smashing 46 runs off a mere 28 balls. While the rest of the batting unit struggled against the spin of Varun Chakravarthy and

Sunil Narine, Vaibhav gave the team a bright start.

However, his dismissal just four runs short of a milestone triggered a collapse that saw RR stumble to 155. Watching from the dugout as



KKR's middle order chipped away at the target, the youngster's anxiety grew until it finally overflowed when the winning runs

were struck.

Electing to bat, the Royals posted 155/9, powered by a blistering start from 15-year-old Vaibhav Sooryavanshi, who smashed 46 off 28 balls. Alongside Yashasvi Jaiswal (39), Sooryavanshi propelled RR to a commanding 81/0 by the ninth over. However, the momentum shifted dramatically as KKR's spin duo, Varun Chakravarthy (3/14) and Sunil Narine (2/26), choked the scoring, triggering a middle-order collapse. Chasing 156, KKR's innings began disastrously, crumbling to 5/2 in the second over and later 85/6 as Ravindra Jadeja (2/8) applied immense pressure. The rescue act came from vice-captain Rinku Singh, who anchored the chase with a composed, unbeaten 53 off 34 balls. He was ably supported by Anukul Roy (29)* in a match-defining 76-run partnership. Despite Kartik Tyagi's late three-wicket burst for RR, KKR crossed the line with two balls to spare.

IPL 2026, GT vs MI: Struggling Mumbai seek breathing space at bogey Ahmedabad

Bengaluru. (Agency)

Mumbai Indians have been all over the place in IPL 2026, with skipper Hardik Pandya under immense pressure. With four defeats already, they are languishing at the bottom of the table. Known to be slow starters, MI still have everything to play for when they take on the Gujarat Titans on Monday, April 20 at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad. The Titans, meanwhile, are on a roll, having won three matches on the trot. In fact, ever since Shubman Gill unveiled his new beard look, the team seems to have found its rhythm. Historically strong against MI, the Titans will look to capitalise on their opponent's struggles, aiming to secure another win and reclaim a place in the top four.

WILL ROHIT SHARMA PLAY AGAINST GT?



Rohit Sharma missed the clash against Punjab Kings due to a hamstring injury, but Mumbai Indians barely felt his absence as Quinton de Kock, stepping in as Ryan Rickelton's opening partner, smashed a brilliant century. The big question now is whether Rohit will return for the upcoming game against the Titans, though there remains some uncertainty. As per the latest update, Rohit has resumed batting in the nets in Ahmedabad and is being closely monitored by the medical team along with head coach Mahela Jayawardene. A final call on his availability is yet to be made.

If Rohit does return, Rickelton could be the one to make way, especially after de Kock's match-winning performance the other night. Meanwhile, Will Jacks is also expected to link up with the squad soon, adding further options to the lineup.

CAN BUMRAH ARREST HIS SLUMP?

While MI are sweating over Rohit's fitness, they have other pressing concerns. Jasprit Bumrah is enduring a rare rough patch, yet to claim a single wicket in IPL 2026. Having bowled 114 deliveries, the speedster has looked well below his best for the five-time champions this season. MI's bowling unit has struggled throughout the tournament, with the likes of Shardul Thakur and Deepak Chahar conceding at over 13 runs per over. Only Mitchell Santner has maintained an economy rate under 10 (9.28), underlining how difficult it has been for MI in the bowling department.

Rupee rises 13 paise to 92.78 against US dollar in early trade

New Delhi, (Agency)

The rupee appreciated 13 paise to 92.78 against the US dollar in early trade on Monday, following a sharp drop in crude oil prices amid hopes of easing geopolitical tension and the impact of the Reserve Bank's measures. Forex traders, however, said the currency is likely to stay range-bound with the situation in West Asia remaining volatile after Iran closed the Strait of Hormuz for shipping. At the interbank foreign exchange market, the rupee opened at 92.73 and moved up to 92.70 level before trading at 92.78 against the greenback in early deals, up 13 paise from the previous closing level.

The rupee strengthened 28 paise to settle at 92.91 against the US dollar on Friday, a day after gaining 19 paise in the preceding session on Thursday.

Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, rose by 0.22 per cent at 98.11.

Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, was trading 5.34 per cent down at USD 95.21 per barrel in futures trade. Analysts said the crude price bounced back from below the USD 90-a-barrel level reached on Friday, as the geopolitical situation turned volatile after a fresh standoff between the US and Iran prevented ships from crossing the Strait of Hormuz. Domestic equity markets remained choppy in morning trade, with the 30-share Sensex trading 63.11 points or 0.08 per cent up at 78,556.65 in early trade, while the Nifty slipped 3.10 points or 0.01 per cent to 24,367.55. Foreign Institutional Investors bought equities worth Rs 683.20 crore on Friday, according to exchange data.

All Indian citizens must obtain Income-tax Clearance Certificate before leaving the country? Govt says...

New Delhi, (Agency)

A viral social media post has claimed that all Indian citizens must obtain an income-tax clearance certificate (ITCC) every time before leaving the country. Debunking the viral video, government's fact-checking arm PIB Fact Check has said that this claim is Fake. "An Instagram video by the account (casarthakahuja) is claiming that all Indian citizens must obtain an income-tax clearance certificate (ITCC) every time before leaving the country. This claim is FAKE," PIB Fact Check wrote on X. It added, under Section 230, tax clearance certificates are not mandatory for everyone; they are only required for specific individuals under certain legal circumstances. This rule has remained unchanged since 2003, even after the amendments vide Finance (No. 2) Act, 2024.

CBDT clarification on Income-tax clearance certificate As per section 230 of the Act, every person is not required to obtain a tax clearance certificate. Only certain persons, in respect of whom circumstances exist which make it necessary to obtain a tax clearance certificate, are required to obtain the said certificate. This position has been in the statute since 2003 and remains unchanged even with the amendments vide Finance (No. 2) Act, 2024. In this context, the CBDT, vide its Instruction No. 1/2004, dated 05.02.2004, has specified that the tax clearance certificate under Section 230(1A) of the Act, may be required to be obtained by persons domiciled in India only in the following circumstances: where the person is involved in serious financial irregularities and his presence is necessary in investigation of cases under the Income-tax Act or the Wealth-tax Act and it is likely that a tax demand will be raised against him, or Chief Commissioner of Income-tax or Chief Commissioner of Income-tax.

Why 71% of consumers believe loyalty rewards don't actually foster loyalty

New Delhi, (Agency)

For decades, loyalty programs have rested on a simple premise: reward customers with points in exchange for repeat business. Airlines perfected the model, retailers adopted it, and before long every coffee shop had a punch card. But in today's data-rich economy, that paradigm is showing its age. The future of loyalty will be defined not by how many points a customer accumulates but by how intelligently a brand understands and responds to individual needs and then leverages that in their loyalty programs. Nine out of ten consumers are enrolled in at least one loyalty programme, yet the average person juggles roughly eight memberships. That is not loyalty, it is clutter. Points measure purchase frequency, not depth of engagement. The result is brittle loyalty – the kind a competitor can disrupt overnight with a marginally better offer.

INTELLIGENCE AS THE NEW CURRENCY If points were the currency of loyalty yesterday, data intelligence is the currency today. What sets leading brands apart is how effectively they harness data science and behavioural insights to make loyalty personal and adaptive. A business traveller values convenience and upgrades; a family on holiday prioritises perks for children. When programs treat every customer identically, they forfeit the chance to build deeper connections. Consider that 72% of consumers expect brands to recognise them as individuals, and to understand their interests; however, 71% believe that loyalty rewards don't foster loyalty primarily due to irrelevant offers and communication.

Research by Accenture found that 91% of consumers prefer brands that provide relevant offers. Streaming platforms capitalise on this expectation by deploying recommendation engines to predict what a subscriber will enjoy next, and not by awarding points per hour. For brands, the implications are clear: stop rewarding the past and start predicting the future.

Gold falls Rs 1,700, silver down nearly Rs 5,000: Should you buy now or wait?

New Delhi, (Agency)

Gold and silver prices dropped sharply on Monday, giving buyers some relief after the recent rally that pushed rates close to record highs. The fall was visible in both domestic futures and retail markets, with many investors booking profits after last week's surge. The correction also comes just after Akshaya Tritiya, when high prices had kept many jewellery buyers cautious. On the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX), gold futures for the May contract were trading at Rs 1,51,410 per 10 grams at around 9:20 am, down Rs 1,766 or 1.15%. Silver May futures were at Rs 2,52,304 per kg, lower by Rs 4,838 or nearly Rs 5,000, down 1.88%. In the retail market, prices also eased but remained elevated. Gold was quoted at around Rs 1,55,790 per 10 grams for 24-carat purity, while silver was near Rs 2,74,900 per kg in major cities. Fresh city-wise updates also showed 24-carat gold in Mumbai at around Rs 1,52,960 per 10



grams. The main reason for the fall is profit-booking after the recent spike in prices. Gold and silver had rallied strongly in recent sessions, and traders often sell after a sharp rise to lock in gains. Global cues also added pressure. Reuters reported that gold prices fell internationally as the US dollar strengthened, making gold more

expensive for overseas buyers. Rising bond yields and inflation concerns linked to fresh tensions in West Asia also hurt sentiment. Silver saw a steeper decline because it tends to be more volatile than gold and often reacts faster when traders cut risky positions. The timing is important for Indian buyers. Just a day after Akshaya Tritiya, Reuters reported

that festival demand was subdued in many regions because record-high prices discouraged jewellery purchases. Many buyers preferred coins and lightweight jewellery instead. So, should you buy now?

Analysts say this looks more like a temporary correction than a full reversal. Prices are still high compared with earlier months, and global uncertainty continues to support demand for safe-haven assets such as gold. For jewellery buyers, small dips like this can be an opportunity to buy gradually instead of waiting for a major crash.

For investors, staggered buying may be smarter than making one large purchase at current levels. The key takeaway is simple: gold has become cheaper today, but prices are still expensive overall. Whether you buy now or wait depends on your need and time horizon.

DA hiked by 2%: How much extra will you get and how to calculate?

New Delhi, (Agency)

The Central government has announced a 2% increase in Dearness Allowance (DA) for its employees, offering a small but timely boost to salaries. The revised rate will come into effect from January 1, 2026. ARREARS TO BE CREDITED FOR PAST MONTHS

Since the hike is applicable from January, both employees and pensioners will receive arrears for the months already passed. Pensioners will also see a similar rise in Dearness Relief (DR), bringing some extra income in the coming payout. A FORMULA-BASED INCREASE

Experts say the increase was expected and follows a fixed method linked to inflation. Adhil Shetty, CEO of BankBazaar, explained, "The 2% increase in dearness allowance, taking the rate to around 60% of basic pay, is a formula-driven adjustment linked to the 12-month average of CPI-IW inflation rather than a discretionary revision."

He added that the numbers had already

hinted at such a rise. "The underlying data already pointed to a 2-3% increase, so the final outcome is consistent with the established indexation mechanism."



WHAT IT MEANS FOR SALARIES

The increase may look small, but it still adds to monthly income.

Sharing an example, Shetty said, "At a basic pay of Rs 56,100, the shift from 58% to 60% increases DA approximately from Rs 32,538 to Rs 33,660, resulting in a monthly gain of around Rs 1,122." He also said that

arrears for the first three months could be around Rs 3,300-Rs 3,400 once payments are processed.

The benefit grows with higher basic pay.

"The impact scales with income levels. At a basic pay of Rs 30,000, a 2% hike adds about Rs 600 per month, while at Rs 1 lakh basic, the increase is about Rs 2,000 per month," Shetty explained. However, the percentage increase remains the same for everyone.

A RELIEF, BUT NOT A MAJOR JUMP

While the revision helps in managing rising expenses, it does not lead to a big jump in take-home salary.

Shetty pointed out, "From a broader standpoint, this revision is designed to preserve purchasing power in line with inflation. It supports household budgets at the margin, but the increase in take-home pay remains incremental rather than significant."

ICICI Bank vs HDFC Bank after Q4: Which stock looks like a better buy now?

New Delhi, (Agency)

India's two biggest private sector banks have reported their March quarter results, but the market reaction has been very different. ICICI Bank shares rose after earnings, while HDFC Bank slipped. That has left many investors asking a simple question: after Q4 results, which bank stock looks like the better buy now? Both lenders reported healthy profits in the January-March quarter. HDFC Bank posted a net profit of Rs 19,221 crore, up around 9% from a year ago. ICICI Bank reported a net profit of Rs 13,702 crore, up 8.5%. On the surface, both delivered steady earnings growth. That is where ICICI Bank appears to have an edge right now. Its loan book grew 15.8% year-on-year, faster than HDFC Bank's 12.1%. Stronger lending growth is important because it can support future earnings expansion. ICICI Bank also reported healthy deposit growth and improving

asset quality, which reassured investors. HDFC BANK vs ICICI BANK IN Q4

Brokerages were upbeat on ICICI Bank's quarter. JM Financial called it a "picture-perfect quarter" and retained the stock as its top pick in the sector, citing strong loan growth, better margin management and healthy asset quality.

Motilal Oswal described ICICI Bank's performance as "strong all-round", saying the lender remains well placed because of steady growth, resilient profitability and controlled bad-loan costs. HDFC Bank's quarter, by contrast, was seen more as stable than aggressive. Deposits grew 14.4%, faster than loans, helping improve balance-sheet comfort after the HDFC merger. Asset quality also improved, with lower bad loans and contained provisions. However, some brokerages pointed to slower core income growth and a cautious lending outlook. JM

Financial said HDFC Bank's operating trends were mixed, even though asset quality remained robust. Equirus said HDFC Bank has moved "from constraint to comfort", meaning earlier balance-sheet pressures are easing. But it also noted that future earnings may depend more on improving efficiency than rapid loan growth.

Dividends add another important angle for retail investors.

HDFC Bank announced a final dividend of Rs 13 per share for FY26. Along with an earlier special dividend of Rs 5.50 per share, its total payout for FY26 stands at Rs 18.50 per share. ICICI Bank announced a dividend of Rs 12 per share, up from Rs 11 last year.

That means HDFC Bank currently offers the stronger shareholder payout story, while ICICI Bank offers stronger growth momentum. For investors who value regular income, HDFC Bank may stand out more.



electricity tariffs if required. The matter is sensitive in Delhi because electricity tariffs had been reduced for consumers in recent years, while unpaid dues continued to build up in the system.

Delhi also differs from some other states because its discoms are privately run. In states such as Tamil Nadu, governments have indicated they may absorb the burden instead of passing it directly to consumers. In Delhi, however, the final recovery may have to come through higher electricity bills, government subsidy support, or a combination of both. For households and businesses, the key takeaway is clear: unless an alternative funding solution is worked out, electricity bills in Delhi could come under upward pressure in the months ahead.

What is Bharat Maritime Insurance Pool? Rs 13,000 crore plan explained

Why has the government launched the Bharat Maritime Insurance Pool with Rs 13,000 crore? The answer lies in rising war risks, costly shipping routes and protecting trade from global shocks.

New Delhi, (Agency)

The government has approved the Bharat Maritime Insurance Pool, a new domestic shipping insurance mechanism backed by a sovereign guarantee of nearly Rs 13,000 crore. The move comes after months of rising tensions across key global trade routes, where conflict risk has pushed insurance costs sharply higher. For most readers, marine insurance may sound like a technical subject that has no impact on their lives. But when conflict pushes up shipping costs, the effect can quietly travel into fuel prices, imported goods, raw materials and everyday household expenses. And for a country like India,

which depends heavily on sea routes for trade, that risk cannot be ignored.

Government estimates show more than 70% of India's trade by volume and nearly 95% by value moves through maritime routes. Crude oil, gas, fertilisers, machinery, electronics and everyday goods all travel through these channels. India Today had earlier reported that tensions in West Asia have already pushed up marine insurance premiums, especially for vessels moving through the Strait of Hormuz. That helps explain why the government has moved now. WHAT IS BHARAT MARITIME INSURANCE POOL? The new pool is essentially a domestic safety net for Indian shipping.

Instead of depending largely on foreign insurers and reinsurers during global disruptions, Indian insurers will jointly provide cover for key maritime risks.

This includes damage to ships, cargo losses, liabilities such as pollution or crew injury, and war-risk cover for

vessels operating in conflict-prone waters. According to Balasundaram R, Head of Marine Insurance at Policybazaar for Business, the pool is designed to cover vessels that are Indian-owned, controlled by Indians, or carrying cargo to and from

carrying cargo linked to India. In simple terms, if overseas insurers become too expensive or too cautious during a crisis, India wants a backup system in place.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

India's maritime sector has long relied on foreign insurance markets. That works when the world is stable. It becomes a weakness when wars, sanctions or attacks disrupt shipping routes. Premiums can jump overnight. Cover can tighten. Trade costs can rise. The Bharat Maritime Insurance Pool is meant to reduce that dependence and give Indian trade a degree of protection from external shocks.

Shipping Minister Sarbananda

Sonowal described the decision as a "transformational step", saying Indian shipping had remained exposed to uncertainties dictated by foreign insurance markets. He said the mechanism would give India the sovereign capacity to safeguard maritime trade even in difficult global conditions.



Karan Anshuman Reveals He Didn't Know About

Jannat Zubair's

Massive Following Before Glory

In an industry where popularity is often measured in numbers, casting decisions don't always follow the obvious path. Sometimes, it's not about followers or fame but about what an actor brings to the screen when it truly matters.

That seems to be the case with *Glory*, the upcoming Netflix sports drama that features Jannat Zubair Rahmani in a key role. The actor, who began her career as a child star, is returning to long-format storytelling after a gap of seven years. While her massive fanbase has been buzzing ever since the teaser dropped, the show's creator had a very different starting point when it came to casting her.

Speaking to Hindustan Times ahead of the trailer launch, showrunner Karan Anshuman shared that social media numbers played no role in the decision. "We don't cast because of social media numbers. That's not a thing. For us, it's always an audition. Can you do it? And the most deserving person who has the best audition wins the part. That's something we should be clear about."

Interestingly, Anshuman revealed that he had no idea about Jannat's massive online following—over 50 million on Instagram—when he first saw her audition. Known for her earlier work in projects like *Hichki* and TV shows such as *Phulwa* and *Bharat Ka Veer Putra – Maharana Pratap*, Jannat impressed him purely on performance. Recalling that moment, he said, "So, I saw (her audition), and I was like, 'Wow, this is great.' And then I was informed that she has an army of followers, and I thought, 'Okay, that's great. It's going to help the show'. But again, for me, that was not the important part."



Who Is Taniya Chatterjee? Actress At Centre Of Yuzvendra Chahal Viral Video Row



In the age of viral clips and instant headlines, it doesn't take much for a casual moment to spiral into a full-blown online conversation. Taniya Chatterjee has been trending across social media after a video of her interacting with photographers began circulating widely. The clip, which shows her casually chatting while posing for pictures, soon grabbed attention for what appeared to be a personal revelation involving Indian cricketer Yuzvendra Chahal.

During the interaction, Chatterjee was seen referring to Instagram replies she allegedly received from the cricketer. "But main kisi aur cricketer ko cute lagti hoon [Some other cricketer finds me cute.]," she said. When prompted further, she added, "Unka naam hai Yuzi Chahal [His name is Yuzi Chahal]," claiming that he had responded to her stories by calling her "cute." The moment quickly spread online, sparking debate and drawing significant public attention.

As the video gained traction, reports suggested that efforts were made to have it taken down. Screenshots circulating on social media allegedly showed a person reaching out to Chatterjee on Instagram, asking her to "remove the video." When questioned, the individual reportedly identified themselves as the head of Chahal's PR team. Chatterjee, however, is said to have responded that she would first consult her manager before making any decision. Amid the growing chatter, Chatterjee addressed the situation in a conversation with India Forums, explaining that the interaction was informal and unplanned. She said the discussion with paparazzi revolved around cricket, particularly the ongoing IPL season, and felt more like a friendly exchange than a formal interview.

She further shared that her interest in the sport goes back years, adding that her father introduced her to cricket at a very young age. According to her, while speaking to the photographers, she was asked about her favourite cricketer. She mentioned that Shreyas Iyer was her favourite and that she found him "cute," before the conversation shifted in another direction.

LizLaz Reacts To Virat Kohli Liking Her Photos; Rajkumar Rao-Sanya Malhotra Call Out 'Kanjoos' Producers



In a recent interaction, German influencer LizLaz revealed that she had not noticed Virat liking her pictures unless she read it in the news. "It was crazy because I woke up and then I was all over the news. I don't even know when he liked the picture, I learnt through the news. So many people found the articles done on me on many different platforms and sent them to me in my DMs. I got so many messages today, people were super excited about it," she told Hindustan Times.

Speaking exclusively to News18, Sanya Malhotra revealed that she has worked on films where lunch breaks weren't given to not just save money but also time. "Some production houses don't even give us lunch breaks. Not just actors but crew members also bear the brunt of it. But none of that happened on the sets of *Toaster*. Both Patra and Raj are really good. It's a plus when a producer is also an actor," she said. Rajkumar Rao questioned such producers.

Akshay Kumar is one of the most loved actors and has been for decades now. Kumar has seen the industry grow and evolve, and in a recent conversation, the actor opened up about how much he was paid at a time when lump sum payments weren't the norm in Bollywood. Sharing how he used to get paid on a per-day basis and praising those times, he revealed that he used to take home about Rs 8-9 lakh per day. "Uss time mujhe achhe khaase mil jaate thay, din ka mil jata tha 8 se 9 lakh rupee."

Inshallah, one of Sanjay Leela Bhansali's dream projects, has always grabbed attention. The film, in which Alia Bhatt and Salman Khan were supposed to be seen as the lead stars, faced a setback when it was shelved due to creative differences between Sanjay Leela Bhansali and Salman Khan. Now, new reports claim that the film is being revived with Shah Rukh Khan replacing Salman Khan. As per a report by Deccan Chronicle, Bhansali has roped in SRK for the lead role opposite Alia.

Deepika Padukone

Ranveer Singh Announce 2nd Pregnancy: Kiara Advani To Ananya Panday, Celebs Send Congratulations



It's one of those moments that just makes you smile instantly. In the middle of all the buzz around big box office wins and busy schedules, Deepika Padukone and Ranveer Singh have quietly shared a piece of news that feels warm, personal, and straight from the heart. The couple is expecting their second child, and the announcement couldn't have been more adorable.

Deepika took to Instagram to share the update in her signature understated style, but with a twist that melted hearts online. The post featured their little daughter, Dua Singh Padukone, holding a pregAs soon as the news dropped, wishes started pouring in from all corners of Bollywood. Celebrities including Kiara Advani and Ananya Panday were among the many who sent their congratulations, turning the comment section into a full-blown celebration. Samantha, Parineeti Chopra, Neil Nitish Mukesh and others also sent wishes.

Deepika and Ranveer's love story, of course, has always had that dreamy, filmy vibe. The two began dating back in 2012 after meeting on the sets of *Goliyon Ki Raasleela Ram-Leela*. By October 2018, they had announced their wedding, and just a month later, tied the knot in a stunning ceremony at Lake Como, blending Konkani and Sikh traditions.

Their journey into parenthood began in 2024, when they surprised fans with their first pregnancy announcement on February 29. Later that year, in September, they welcomed their daughter Dua. The couple introduced her to the world during Diwali, revealing her name—"Dua," meaning "prayer"—a name that beautifully captured what she meant to them.

Since then, the couple has kept their family life largely private, sharing only rare glimpses. Which is exactly why this new announcement feels even more special—it's personal, heartfelt, and shared on their own terms.

Interestingly, this happy news comes at a time when Ranveer is riding a massive professional high. His film *Dhurandhar* crossed ₹1,000 crore globally on December 26, 2025, eventually going beyond ₹1,300 crore to become the biggest Indian film of the year.





6 thoughts

we all have on the day

Our salary gets

Credited

to be rich in a few hours.

Whoa!

Enquire, enquire and enquire

In case, the salary hasn't arrived on time, we all put on our interrogation hat. We ask our co-workers whether they have received the salary or not, and can actually feel each other's pain. Many of us do not think twice before marching up to the HR's desk and enquiring about it. It becomes difficult to concentrate on work and finally, our cell beeps! For the next few hours, we have no complaints from life and the world seems a better place.

Oh, the bills

Now starts the calculation game. We think about all the pending bills, EMIs and rent to be paid. We make a rough calculation of the ballpark amount and estimate how much we can manage to save and splurge this month.

Now, it is the time

Some of us have been eyeing that designer bag or smartphone since months and now, it is the time to buy it. This purchase is the real reason why we actually slogged for the entire month and it takes just microseconds to rush to the cart of your online dating app and place the order.

The deductions

The moment we spot there have been any unnecessary deductions in our salary, we feel a whole new set of emotions. We feel duped, furious, angry, manipulated, annoyed at the same time and the entire universe looms to be conspiring against our happiness. We calculate innumerable times to confirm our doubt and secretly curse our workplace, right?

The wait begins

Fast forward to 15 days—we have made the big purchase, paid the bills and are done with other expenditures. We have no idea where half (or even more than that) of the salary has disappeared from our account, and we still have the weekend plans to go shopping, partying and travel. Life becomes no less than a battle and all we can do is to wait for that day. The monthly cycle continues...

The important day

Let's be honest—the day we receive our salary is different from all the other days of the month. Whether we are feeling gloomy, irritated or dejected for no reason, this day has the surreal power to lift our mood and make us hopeful about life. Reading the text message of the salary being credited in our account brings a smug smile on our face, isn't it? Here are the thoughts we have on this special and the most anticipated day of the month.

How the day starts

Most of us wake up with thought of receiving our salary and that gives us the motivation to go to office. During the office hours, we keep checking our phone for that text message and thinking about our plans for the evening. After all, we are going



Women prefer

Jobs

that have fewer applicants

Women prefer smaller competitions, whereas men seek larger competitions, which are typically associated with higher monetary rewards, the study said.

When applying for a job, women seek positions with fewer applicants than men - a factor that could partly explain why we see fewer of them in the corporate boardrooms, new research suggests.

The size of a competition - such as the number of applicants to a particular job or the number of people vying for a monetary reward - shapes who enters the competition.

Women prefer smaller competitions, whereas men seek larger competitions, which are typically associated with higher monetary rewards, the study said.

"These patterns of findings can contribute to a better understanding of gender inequality in the workforce," said Kathrin Hanek, the study's lead



The difference between the genders can be partially attributed to women feeling more comfortable in smaller competitions.

The researchers found consistent gender differences in the preference for smaller versus larger competitions across a variety of different competition contexts.

For instance, one study examined women's and men's real decisions to enter a small (10 competitors) or large (100 competitors) word-formation task competition.

The results indicated that 53 percent of women but only 41 percent of men preferred the small competition.

"This research by no means blames women for gender inequality but rather uncovers a novel environmental factor that might contribute to inequality, beyond the well-documented effects of gender biases and discrimination," Stephen Garcia, associate professor University of Michigan.



author from University of Michigan in the US.

"The gender difference in preferences may in part explain pay gaps and the underrepresentation of women in particular fields or at the helm of large organisations," Hanek noted.

The findings appeared in the Journal of Applied Psychology.

