



I'm used to bowling with someone who is better than me: Moeen Ali

CRICKET

PAGE-10 WORLD

Israel's parliament approves key part of Netanyahu's divisive judicial overhaul

PAGE-9 FILM

South films work here but their audience don't watch our movies: Salman Khan



PAGE-12

3 DELHI

AAP gave aid to only 97 families of Covid victims but spent Rs 17 crore on publicity: Delhi CM Gupta



7 NATIONAL

Oppn flags 'denial of speaking opportunity' to LoP 'politicisation' of speaker's remarks

8 STATE

Faith-driven economic growth to power Mirzapur's rapid progress: CM Yogi

9 BUSINESS

Finance Bill 2025 Approved: India Completes Budget FY26

11 SPORTS

Reetika Hooda in line for first senior Asian Ch'ship gold, three others in bronze contention

MARKET

SENSEX	NIFTY
7706.43	23591.95
317.93	105.10
GOLD	SILVER
88,355.00	101,130.00
717.00	1,644.00

WEATHER

Sunrise	6:17 AM
Sunset	6:37 PM
Moonrise	5:27 AM
Moonset	5:32 PM
Today's Prediction	
Maximum	Minimum
32°C	15°C
Tomorrow's Prediction	
32°C	16°C

Bar leaders meet SC Collegium for withdrawal of Justice Varma's transfer

The CJJ said in any case, Justice Varma, who was de-rostered by the Delhi High Court following a directive from him, wouldn't be discharging any judicial function at the Allahabad High Court as well, he said.

New Delhi: Leaders of six high court bar associations on Thursday met Chief Justice of India Sanjiv Khanna and sought withdrawal of the recommendation to transfer Delhi high court judge Yashwant Varma to the Allahabad high court.

Soon after the meeting, Allahabad High Court Bar Association president Anil Tiwari said the CJJ had assured them of considering the demands.

However, the CJJ did not promise anything, said sources privy to the development.

The representatives of six high court bar associations met the CJJ and four collegium members, Justices B R Gavai, Surya Kant, Abhay S Oka and Vikram Nath.

They raised several demands, including setting in motion criminal action over the cash discovery from the judge's official home.

"The five members of the collegium" listened to us very carefully and told us in a positive way each and every point raised by you in writing



will be considered by us strictly within the premises of law. Don't worry at all. This is a very big statement by five senior judges," Tiwari told media persons soon after the meeting.

He said the bar body would reconsider whether or not to continue with the indefinite strike.

"I do not know what decision will be taken," he said.

The CJJ referred to the reasons behind collegium's recommendation to transfer Justice Varma to his parent high court at Allahabad, Ti-

wari added. The CJJ said in any case, Justice Varma, who was de-rostered by the Delhi High Court following a directive from him, wouldn't be discharging any judicial function at the Allahabad High Court as well, he said.

The bar body would discuss about the strike in its general body meeting for a 'collective decision'.

"All high courts in India are standing in support of the president of AHCBA and advocates of the Allahabad High Court Bar Association.

They are really sacrificing their profession for the cause of the nation, for the cause of ensuring a transparent judiciary, the safe judiciary campaign, which we, have all launched," another bar leader said.

He said the bar leaders have brought to the notice of the CJJ the larger issue of corruption in the judiciary.

"One thing we pointed out to the chief justice and his collegium is our concern is not Justice Yashwant Varma per se, because he is just one of the symptoms. We are

looking at the disease itself, and we have pointed out that when the courts or in the collegium is unable to pull out the bad apples. It affects the entire judiciary," said advocate Yeshwant Shenoy, president of the Kerala High Court Bar Association.

Shenoy said in the meeting the need to create a system through which the bad apples could be picked out upon identification was stressed upon.

Not only the CJJ, but the entire collegium members understood the concern, and assured they also want a 'clean judiciary', he added.

Another bar leader joined in, "It is not that the judges alone can be corrupt, so it is a entire aspect the bar has put its support behind the judiciary, and things will definitely change from here onward."

The Allahabad High Court Bar Association has been on an indefinite strike from March 25 onward to protest the proposed repatriation of Justice Varma to his parent high court.

CONTO ON PAGE-2

Putin to visit India, dates being worked out

Moscow: Russian President Vladimir Putin has accepted Prime Minister Narendra Modi's invitation to visit India and preparations are underway for it, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said on Thursday.

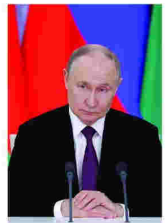
In a video address to a conference titled 'Russia and India: Toward a New Bilateral Agenda' hosted by the Russian International Affairs Council (RIAC), Lavrov said, "Arrangements are currently being made for Putin to visit India."

"President Vladimir Putin has accepted an invitation to visit from the Indian head of government. A visit by the Russian head of state to the Republic of India is currently being prepared," the Russian foreign minister was quoted as saying by the state-run TASS news agency.

Lavrov noted that Prime Minister Modi's first foreign visit after his re-election last year was to Russia.

"Now it's our turn," he said. However, the dates of the visit have not been revealed yet.

Prime Minister Modi visited Russia in July 2024, his first trip to the country in nearly five years.



Earlier, he visited the far eastern city of Vladivostok in 2019 to attend an economic conclave. During the last visit, Modi invited Putin to visit India.

On March 24, Lavrov said Russia is developing a 'privileged strategic partnership' with India.

Lavrov said at an event that Russia is actively expanding ties with countries like China, India, Iran, North Korea and Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) countries.

"The relations of comprehensive partnership and strategic cooperation with the People's Republic of China boast an unprecedented level of mutual trust. Particularly privileged strategic partnership is developing with India," the top Russian diplomat said. Agency

Two terrorists killed, 5 security personnel hurt in Kathua encounter

Kathua: A fierce gun battle in a remote forested area of Kathua district has left two terrorists dead and five security personnel injured as the security forces intensified their operation to neutralise an infiltrating group of about five militants, officials said on Thursday.

It was not immediately clear whether it was the same group that had been evading an earlier cordon in Sanyal forest of Kathua region or another batch of freshly infiltrated terrorists.

The encounter triggered intense firing and explosions, the officials said.

The gunfight, centred near Jakhole village in the Ghati Juthana area of Rajbagh, involved a group of approximately five terrorists and an initial exchange of gunfire resulted in injuries to Special Police Officer Bharat Chalotra, who



sustained facial wounds. He was treated at a Kathua hospital before being transferred to Government Medical College Hospital in Jammu, where his condition was stated to be stable.

The officials said that two terrorists were killed in the onslaught led by the Special Operations Group of the Jammu and Kashmir Police and assisted by the Army, the BSF and CRPF.

Adding to the tension, three security person-

nel, including a sub-divisional police officer, were reportedly trapped near the gunfight's location, adjacent to a rivulet concealed by dense foliage.

The officials said a clear picture would emerge only after the ongoing encounter ended.

It may be mentioned that a group of terrorists were intercepted by the SOG in the Hiranagar sector of Kathua district on Sunday evening.

Agency

Lok Sabha passes Immigration and Foreigners Bill, 2025

New Delhi: Lok Sabha passed the Immigration and Foreigners Bill, 2025 on Thursday, with Home Minister Amit Shah asserting that those who come to India for business, education and investment are welcome, but those who pose a threat to security will face stringent action.

Various amendments moved by Opposition members were negated and the bill was passed by a voice vote.

Shah said the bill is necessary to strengthen the country's security and economy, promote manufacturing and trade, get global recognition for the education system and help universities earn international repute.

Replying to a debate on the bill, he said the proposed legislation will strengthen the country's



security, boost economy and business, besides encouraging the health and education sectors. Shah also said the bill will ensure the country gets up-to-date information about every foreigner visiting India.

"This is very important. The main issue is

HIGHLIGHT

Home minister says bill will strengthen security, boost economy, and ensure strict monitoring of foreign visitors

know the details of every foreigner visiting India," he said after over the three-hour-long debate.

Opposition MPs claimed that certain provisions of a Bill that seeks to streamline various services related to immigration and foreigners give "arbitrary powers" to immigration authorities and demanded that it be sent to a joint parliamentary committee for a detailed scrutiny.

The Immigration and Foreigners Bill, 2025 was moved in the Lok Sabha earlier this month.

CONTO ON PAGE-2

Willing to work with India on border issue, says Chinese military

Beijing: The Chinese military on Thursday said it is willing to work with its Indian counterpart to implement a fair and just solution to the border issue besides sound and stable defence ties.

A spokesman for China's National Defence, Sr. Col Wu Qian, made the remarks at a media briefing in Beijing while replying to a question about the disengagement and the follow-up process at the eastern Ladakh part of the Line of Actual Control.

"The Chinese military



is willing to work together with our Indian counterparts to implement a fair and just solution

on the border issue, Wu told reporters. Wu said the Chinese military would also like

to "contribute our wisdom and strength to the beautiful vision of a shared dance between the dragon and elephant and a sound and stable military-to-military relationship."

The dragon elephant dance has become a constant theme of China of late as the two countries ended the over four-year freeze of relations after reaching agreement over the disengagement process in eastern Ladakh in October last.

This was followed by a meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Xi Jinping

on the sidelines of the BRICS summit in Russia last year and a number of high-level meetings to normalise relations.

Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi, in his annual press conference on March 7, said cooperative pas de deux, a ballet between the dragon and the elephant is the only right choice for both sides.

On March 17, the Chinese foreign ministry reiterated the same while welcoming Modi's remarks on the Sino-Indian ties favouring dialogue over discord. Agency

Trump plans 25% tariff on automobiles, parts

New Delhi: US President Donald Trump's decision to slap a 25 per cent tariff on all auto imports has cast uncertainty over India's nearly USD 7 billion of exports to America, which industry fears could squeeze margins.

Automobiles and car parts imported to the US would face a 25 per cent tariff starting April 2. While India is not a big exporter of cars to the US, Tata Motors' luxury car subsidiary Jaguar Land Rover (JLR) is deeply entrenched in the American market. About



23 per cent of JLR's over 4,00,000 units sold in FY24 were all exported from its UK plants.

JLR's profitability is likely to be impacted as passing on added costs to consumers may dent

its market share, analysts said.

The options before it are to pass the cost to consumers, cut expenses, or absorb the hit. A fourth option is to set up a US manufacturing facility to mitigate the damage.

India auto ancillary firms will see the biggest hit as they export a lot of components to the US. Sona BLW Precision Forgings, Bharat Forge, and Samvardhana Motherthon International Limited (SAMIL) will be vulnerable to the tariff blow. Agency

Bar leaders meet SC Collegium for withdrawal of Justice Varma's transfer

CONT FROM PAGE-1
Earlier in the day, representatives of the bar associations of high courts of Allahabad, Gujarat, Kerala, Jabalpur, Karnataka and Lucknow submitted a memorandum to the CJT's office and sought an appointment to meet Justice Khanna.

While pointing out an alleged tampering of the evidence at Justice Varma's official residence where burnt wads of cash were purportedly discovered on March 14 during a fire incident, the members questioned non-registration of an FIR in the incident.

In a memorandum, the bar bodies appreciated the steps taken by the CJT to embrace transparency and to make public the report of the chief justice of the Delhi High Court and other materials on the apex court website.

"The bar associations request the chief justice to withdraw the collegium to withdraw transfer of Justice Yashwant Varma and to withdraw all administrative work in addition to the judicial work which is already withdrawn," the memorandum said.

The memorandum claimed as per a report of the chief justice of the Delhi high court, somebody had removed the articles from Justice Varma's residence a day after the fire incident.

"In these kinds of crimes, there would be involvement of others and non-registration of an FIR would adversely affect their prosecution," it said.

The alleged cash discovery happened following a fire at Justice Varma's Lutyens Delhi residence at around 11.35 pm on March 14, prompting the fire officers to rush to the spot.

In the wake of the controversy, the apex court collegium recommended the repatriation of Justice Varma, from whom work was withdrawn by the Delhi High Court following a directive from the CJT, to his parent Allahabad high court.

The high court's chief justice was urged to examine the matter and take such steps as he deemed proper.

Lok Sabha passes Immigration and Foreigners Bill, 2025

CONT FROM PAGE-1
Initiating a debate on the Bill, Congress MP Manish Tewari said its provisions give "arbitrary powers" to the government for exempting certain categories of foreigners from the law.

He also criticised a provision that makes the immigration officer's decision final and binding in case of a dispute.

"This essentially means that there is no appeal, no argument and no lawyer. Whatever the immigration officer decides will be absolute," Tewari said.

Comparing the Bill with immigration laws in other countries, he pointed out that the United States has immigration judges and Canada has an Immigration and Refugee Board, which provides avenues for appeals.

LS passes Immigration and Foreigners bill 'India not a dharamshala' says Shah targets TMC

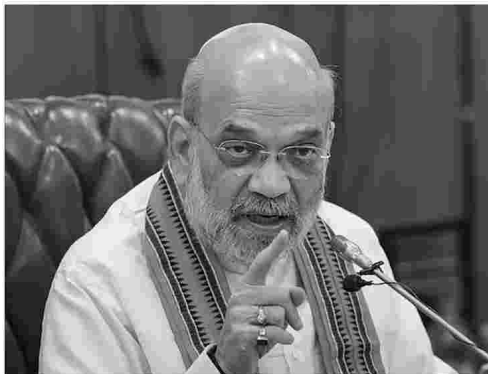
New Delhi Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Thursday said those who come to India for business, education and investment are welcome, but those who pose a threat to security will face stringent action while declaring that the country is not a "dharamshala".

"India is not a dharamshala (resthouse)," Shah asserted while replying to the debate on the Immigration and Foreigners Bill, 2025, in the Lok Sabha. The bill was later passed by a voice vote after various amendments moved by Opposition members were negated.

One of the key provisions in the bill is that anyone found to be using a forged passport or visa for entering India or staying in or exiting from the country will be punishable with a jail term of up to seven years and a fine which could extend to Rs 10 lakh. The bill also seeks to ensure a close monitoring of everyone who visits India, Shah said.

Shah said the bill is necessary to strengthen the country's security and economy, promote manufacturing and trade, get global recognition for the education system and help universities earn international repute. It will ensure that the country gets up-to-date information about every foreigner visiting India, he added.

He also hit out at the Trinamool Congress (TMC) and previous Congress government at the Centre for allowing Rohingyas and Bangladeshis enter India on the basis of Aadhaar cards



and voter cards earlier from Assam and now West Bengal. He said while security forces are blamed, the real culprits are the TMC government in West Bengal and the earlier Congress government in Assam.

"India's border with Bangladesh is 2,216 km long, out of which fencing work has been completed on 1,653 km. Out of the remaining 563 km, fencing is not possible on 112 KM due to geographical conditions.

"But fencing in 412 km is incomplete because Bengal government is not giving land," the minister told the House. Shah alleged that when attempts are made for fencing, cadres of the ruling party in West Bengal come and create a ruckus.

"Border fencing is incomplete because of Bengal government's leniency towards infiltrators," Shah then asked

"When Bangladeshis or Rohingyas infiltrate, who gives them Aadhaar cards?"

"Most of the Bangladeshis who have been caught have Aadhaar cards and voter cards of 24 Parganas (in West Bengal)," he said hitting out at the TMC.

"This is very important. The main issue is that the immigration is not an isolated subject but it is directly or indirectly linked to various issues. The bill will ensure a close monitoring of everyone who visits India, why do they visit India, and how long they want to stay in India. It is absolutely necessary to know the details of every foreigner visiting India," he said after the over three-hour-long debate.

"I welcome everyone who wants to visit India as a tourist, for education, for health care, for R&D, for business. But those who come as a threat to the country, we will keep a close look at

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them and take strong action against them."

Opposition MPs claimed that some provisions of the bill seeking to streamline various services related to immigration and foreigners give "arbitrary powers" to immigration authorities and demanded it should be sent to a joint parliamentary committee for detailed scrutiny.

Initiating a debate on the Bill, Congress MP Manish Tewari said its provisions give "arbitrary powers" to the government for exempting certain categories of foreigners from the law.

The proposed legislation also provides for mandatory reporting of information about foreigners by hotels, universities, other educational institutions, hospitals and nursing homes to enable tracking of overstaying foreigners.

"Whoever knowingly uses or supplies a forged or fraudulently obtained passport or other travel document or visa for entering into India or staying in or exiting from India, shall be punishable with an imprisonment for a term which

shall not be less than two years, but may extend to seven years and shall also be liable to fine which shall not be less than one lakh rupees, but may extend to 10 lakh rupees," according to the bill.

It also says that any foreigner who enters any area in India without a valid passport or other travel document, including a visa, in contravention of provisions of the law or of any rule or order given in pursuance thereof, shall be punishable with an imprisonment for a term which may extend to five years or with fine which may extend up to Rs 5 lakh rupees or with both.

The legislation empowers the central government to exert control over places that are "frequented by any foreigner" and require the owner to close the premises, permit its use under specified conditions, or refuse admission to all or a "specified class" of foreigners.

Matters relating to foreigners and immigration are presently administered through four legislations: Passport (Entry into India) Act, 1920; the Registration of Foreigners Act, 1939; the Foreigners Act, 1946; and the Immigration (Carriers' Liability) Act, 2000. All these laws are now proposed to be repealed.

While the Immigration and Foreigners Bill, 2025 consists of several exemption provisions in the four Acts proposed to be repealed after simplification and harmonisation, it also has certain new provisions to meet the present-day requirements.

KEI Industries and RCB Unveil Green Jersey & Launch ConFlame Green+ in Kolkata

Kolkata In a grand event celebrating cricket and sustainability, KEI Industries Limited, a leading player in the wires and cables industry, reinforced its commitment to innovation and environmental responsibility by unveiling Royal Challengers Bengaluru's (RCB) Green Jersey. The occasion also marked the launch of ConFlame Green+, an innovative flame-retardant wire designed with environmentally friendly materials.

As the Principal Partner of RCB for the 18th season of the Men's T20 League, KEI's branding will be prominently featured on the back of the official match jerseys worn by RCB players and team members. The launch event saw key RCB cricketers, including Rajat Patidar, Phil Salt, Krunal Pandya, Devdutt Padikkal, Jitesh Sharma, and cricketing icon Virat Kohli, don the

Green Jersey, reinforcing the franchise's ongoing commitment to environmental awareness.

The unveiling event, held in Kolkata, was attended by KEI's leadership, including Mr. Akshat Divyaji Gupta, Director; Mr. Manoj Kakkar, Executive Director; Mr. Ravi Sharma, VP - Sales & Marketing; Mr. Jashobant Singh Ray, AVP - Sales & Marketing; and Mr. Govind Sharma, MarCom Head. The event highlighted KEI's strides toward integrating sustainable practices within its operations and product offerings.

Speaking at the event, Mr. Akshat Divyaji Gupta expressed his enthusiasm for the partnership, stating, "We are thrilled to collaborate with Royal Challengers Bengaluru. Our association not only strengthens our commitment to promoting sports in India but also enhances KEI's brand presence across

the nation. RCB's immense popularity will help us engage with a broader audience and drive awareness about sustainable electrical solutions."

A key highlight of the event was the introduction of ConFlame Green+, an innovative flame-retardant wire designed with environmentally friendly materials. This next-generation product underscores KEI's mission to develop safer, greener electrical solutions, aligning with global sustainability standards.

The Green Jersey initiative, a hallmark of RCB's dedication to environmental conservation, aligns seamlessly with KEI's eco-conscious endeavors. As the Men's T20 League 2025 unfolds, the collaboration between KEI Industries and RCB is set to drive greater awareness about sustainability while delivering top-tier cricketing action.

CID begins probe into 'honeytrap' attempt on Minister Rajanna MLC Rajendra

Bengaluru Karnataka Cooperation Minister K N Rajanna's son and Congress MLC K N Rajendra on Thursday said officials from the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) of the state police have begun a preliminary investigation into the alleged attempts to "honeytrap" his father and had visited his official residence.

He stated that he had met Karnataka DGP and IGP Alok Mohan today to share information regarding an alleged attempt to "murder" him.

"I believe the 'honeytrap' attempts case has been handed over to the CID. The CID visited the government house (allotted to Rajanna) on Jayamahal Road here and questioned the staff. They have initiated a preliminary inquiry—this is the information I have," Rajendra said.

Speaking to reporters, he said since the DGP had assigned the case to the CID, they began

He stated that he had met Karnataka DGP and IGP Alok Mohan today to share information regarding an alleged attempt to "murder" him.

their investigation today. "It is based on the petition submitted to the Home Minister."

On Tuesday, Rajanna had submitted a petition to State Home Minister G Parameshwara, seeking a probe and necessary action regarding the alleged attempts to "honeytrap" him.

Parameshwara stated that the government would examine Rajanna's petition judiciously within the framework of the law and take necessary action after consulting legal experts and discussing it with the Chief Minister.

Last Thursday, Rajanna informed the Assembly that "honeytrap"

attempts had been made on him and that at least 40 politicians across parties had fallen victim to such schemes.

Asked whether he had filed a complaint regarding the "honeytrap" case with the DGP, Rajendra clarified that there was no such attempt against him.

He said he had only informed the media about certain phone calls.

"November 16 was my daughter's birthday. A day before, some individuals arrived to set up a 'shamiana'. Allegedly, they had come intending to assault or murder me on a supari (contract). Their attempt was unsuccessful. I learned about it in January after receiving a voice recording from my source," he claimed.

He mentioned that two names—Soma and Bharath—surfaced in the recording, which captured a conversation between two individuals discussing a Rs 5 lakh payment made to their account.

PM Modi holds talks with Japanese business delegation

New Delhi Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday held talks with a high-powered delegation from the Japan Association of Corporate Executives over strengthening bilateral trade, enhancing investment opportunities, and fostering collaboration in key sectors.

Modi received the delegation from Keizai Doiyukai (Japan Association of Corporate Executives) led by its chairperson Takeshi Niinami, and 20 other business delegates to hear their views and ideas to deepen economic cooperation

between India and Japan, an official statement said.

The discussion covered strengthening bilateral trade, enhancing investment opportunities, and fostering collaboration in key sectors such as agriculture, marine products, space, defence, insurance, technology, infrastructure, civil aviation, clean energy, nuclear energy and MSME partnership.

The statement said that during the meeting, Modi highlighted India-Japan Special Strategic and Global Partnership and reaffirmed India's de-



termination to provide a business-friendly environment.

He also highlighted the Japan Plus system developed in India to facilitate and fast-track Japanese investments in India.

Modi said that im-

mense scale of growth of aviation sector exists in the country, noting that India is working to building significant infrastructure, including the construction of new airports and the expansion of logistics capabilities, according to the

statement.

The prime minister said that given India's vast diversity, the country will play a major role in the artificial intelligence (AI) landscape. He stressed the importance of collaboration with those involved in AI, encouraging them to partner with India.

Noting that India is making significant strides in the field of green energy, having launched a mission focused on biofuels, he said that the agricultural sector, in particular, stands to benefit from biofuels as an important value addition.

ED attaches fresh Rs 44-crore worth assets of ex-Haryana Cong MLA Chhoker sons

New Delhi The Enforcement Directorate Thursday said it has attached fresh assets worth Rs 44 crore of "absconding" former Haryana Congress MLA Dharan Singh Chhoker and his businessmen sons as part of a money laundering investigation linked to a "fraud" with 1,500 homebuyers in Gurugram.

A provisional order was issued on Wednesday under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) to attach about 3 acres of agricultural land, 2,487 sq m of commercial plots and 8 residential flats located in Delhi, Gurugram, Faridabad and Panipat; the federal agency said in a statement.

Fixed bank deposits worth Rs 96 lakh have also been attached as part of the same order. These assets, worth a total Rs 44.55 crore, relate to Chhoker, his sons Vikas Chhoker (also absconding) and Sikandar Chhoker who is out on bail, and their company Sai Aaina Farms Pvt. Ltd. among others, it said.

Assets worth over Rs 36 crore were attached by the agency in this case last year.

Dharan Singh Chhoker is a former MLA from the Samalkha assembly seat in Panipat district. He, however, lost the assembly polls last year from the same seat.

The Chhokers face charges of "cheating" more than 1,500 homebuyers and siphoning over Rs 500 crore funds from them.

The ED said after multiple non-bailable warrants, a special PMLA court in Gurugram issued a prohibition against Dharan Singh Chhoker and Vikas Chhoker and directed them to appear before the court on May 19.

"The money laundering case stems from a Gurugram Police FIR filed against Sai Aaina Farms and associated companies."

The allegations against the accused include submission of "forged" documents, including fake bank guarantees, to obtain licenses for external area internal development works.

"This fraudulent activity was carried out in connection with promised affordable housing projects at Sector 68, 103 and 104 in Gurugram and the company collected around Rs 616 crore from 3,700 home buyers."

"However, the company failed to deliver the houses within the promised timelines and misappropriated the funds," the ED said.

Probe found, it said, that funds collected from homebuyers were "diverted" for personal gains by the company's directors and promoters even as some of the money was "transferred" to other group entities as loans which remained "outstanding" for years.

Advt Contact:
9818-799941

It is for general information that I (Kishan) was wrongly written as Shiv Narayan in my Secondary and Sr. Secondary educational documents and in the other documents. The actual name of my father is Shiv Narayan which may be amended accordingly.

NEWS IN BRIEF

De-addiction campaign in Luksar jail launched

Noida
A de-addiction campaign was launched in district jail Luksar. The Hugs Life Holistic De-addiction Centre organised the said programme in Gautam Budha Nagar's district jail Luksar.

This programme was held under the chairmanship of secretary of the Legal Services Authority and additional district judge Richa Upadhyay.

The institute's president Lavail Peer started the de-addiction programme for the first time in the jail. District magistrate Manish Verma, jail superintendent Brijesh Kumar and many other senior officials were present at this occasion.

All took an oath against drug abuse. In the programme, psychiatrist Dr. Satish Kumar discussed in detail the problems related to drug addiction. He gave information from withdrawal symptoms to ways to quit drug addiction. Motivational speakers Rakesh Massi and Rajiv Kumar motivated the prisoners. The programme was all the officials of the jail administration participated in this programme which lasted for two and a half hours. Everyone appreciated this effort of conducting this de-addiction campaign.

This initiative can prove to be a new direction for prisoners suffering from drug addiction.

Delhi Congress slams BJP govt's decision to raise MLAs' salary

**Staff Reporter
New Delhi**
Delhi Congress president Devender Yadav strongly condemned the BJP government's decision to increase the salary of MLAs, saying it was a betrayal on the people of Delhi who elected BJP to power hoping for a good and transparent government.

He said that at a time when Delhi's economic condition is continuously deteriorating and the general public is suffering from inflation and unemployment, increasing the salary of MLAs so quickly was unjustified. He said that it is a desecration of the public as in 2023, the salary of Delhi MLAs was increased by 66 percent. Yadav said that the BJP government has reduced the budget allocation of public welfare schemes to

AAP gave aid to only 97 families of Covid victims but spent Rs 17 crore on publicity: Delhi CM Gupta

New Delhi
Auching a vitriolic attack on the previous AAP government, Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta on Thursday alleged that while only 97 families of Covid victims received financial aid, the administration spent Rs 17 crore on publicity.

Gupta, who also holds the finance portfolio, defended her government's one lakh crore budget in the Delhi Assembly and accused the AAP of wasting public money on advertisements instead of welfare initiatives.

"When people were dying during COVID, the AAP government spent Rs 3 crore on a Diwali celebration event and Rs 11 crore on its publicity. They also spent Rs 7 crore on promoting a sports university that only exists on paper," she said.

The chief minister argued that her administration would curb such financial "leakages" to ensure Delhi's funds were utilized effectively.



tively, making the budget target achievable without relying on the Centre.

Meanwhile, Leader of Opposition Atishi strongly criticized the budget, calling it a "hollow projection" due to absence of an economic survey.

She claimed that Delhi's fiscal deficit will reach a record of more than Rs

13,000 crore and accused the BJP government of exaggerating revenue estimates.

"The actual budget is of Rs 78,000 crore, not Rs one lakh crore because the government will not be able to take loans under the Small Savings Scheme or receive expected funds from the Centre," she said during a

discussion on the budget.

The Delhi Assembly witnessed heated exchanges as the BJP and AAP legislators sparred over governance and budget priorities.

BJP MLA OP Sharma took a dig at the previous government, saying, "Many people used to come from Sheesh Mahal after smoking weed and declare they were the

owners of Delhi."

His remarks triggered reactions from the opposition benches.

Delhi Minister Ashish Sood defended the budget and said "this is not a budget to make Delhi like London or Paris, but to restore Delhi to its true identity as a city of large-hearted people".

AAP MLA Gopal Rai criticized the government for presenting a budget without an economic survey, arguing that it allowed arbitrary financial projections.

Rai also accused the administration of neglecting elected representatives.

"The Speaker has to write a letter to the chief secretary regarding officers of the city, as Delhi's MLAs have to beg them to get work done," he said.

Rai urged all members to raise their concerns while maintaining the dignity of the House.

Gupta also accused the AAP of seizing control of the official social media handle of

the Chief Minister's Office (CMO), forcing the BJP government to take legal action for its recovery.

"They not only stole the money of Delhiites but also stole the official social media account of the CMO. We have to go to the court to get it back," she said.

Concluding the debate, the chief minister dismissed the opposition's criticism and asserted that the BJP-led government would ensure funds were spent on genuine development.

"Unlike the AAP, we are not the ones who keep money allocated under schemes but never use it. We will do justice to the people of Delhi and complete all necessary work," she said.

The discussion on the budget remained tense as the BJP and AAP clashed over financial priorities and governance, with Gupta describing the Rs one lakh crore budget as "historic" and a step towards making Delhi self-reliant.

PUBLIC NOTICE

General public is hereby informed that Mr. Varun Kumar S/o. Mr. Ravi Kumar is the owner of Flat No. 303, Third Floor, Back LHS Flat, Area Measuring 70 Sq. Yds., Plot Area 350 Sq. Yds., G-25, Kharsa No. 317, Stated Vishwakarma Colony, Pul Pehladpur, Delhi vide GPA, Will (Notary) Dated 16.11.2024 executed by Mohd. Mufid S/o. Mr. Mustak Ahmad (30 Pct. Share) and Mr. Zubair Kasim S/o. Mr. Zafar Mahmood (70 Pct. Share holder), in the property chain Original ATS Notary Dated 16.11.2024 executed by Mohd. Mufid S/o. Mr. Mustak Ahmad (30 Pct. Share) and Mr. Zubair Kasim S/o. Mr. Zafar Mahmood (70 Pct. Share holder) was lost / misplaced from customer and same to be sold to Mr. Dilip Kumar S/o. Mr. Ram Nagina and same to be financed by AAOHAR HOUSING FINANCE LTD. Branch Rajinder Place Delhi if anybody has any change/interests/title in the said property or any kind of dispute kindly inform the undersigned in writing on the below mentioned address within 07 days of the present, failing which I am aware that in case default with the mortgage property that borrower (Mr. Dilip Kumar) is responsible.

**Krishan Kumar Goswami
Advocate**
Office Resi. B-1/307-308,
Nand Nagri Delhi-110093

PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE is hereby given that my client Hritik Rawat s/o Trilok Singh is purchasing a property bearing no. Second floor, without roof rights, BHS/Southern portion unit B, area measuring 70 square yards, plot no. 40, and 40A, measuring 200 square yards, out of kharsa no. 944, Village Dintarpur, Sai Enclave, Shyam Vihar Phase 1, Block D, New Delhi 110043. The ownership of the said property is in the name of Mr. Ranjeet Singh s/o Shri Hari Ram and the same was transferred by Sh Suresh Chand Jain s/o Sh Phool Chand Jain through Notarized GPA, Notarized ATS and will dated 27/02/2025. If anybody has any objection/s upon said property/s ownership and title/s sale and Mortgage Litigation, kindly inform the undersigned in writing within 7 days of publication of the Notice, failing which the property would be considered as unencumbered and no objection will be entertained thereafter.

**YASHPAL JOLLY
Advocate**
Chamber No. 267, Western Wing Tis Hazari Courts, Delhi-110054

Delhi Assembly to organize a Cultural Evening Program to celebrate the Hindu New Year

**Staff Reporter
New Delhi**
The Delhi Legislative Assembly will hold a Cultural Evening Program on March 30 to celebrate the Hindu New Year, which starts with Chaitra Shukla Pratipada, marking the beginning of the Vikram Samvat 2082 lunar calendar.

This event is significant as it is the first cultural celebration for the Hindu New Year organized in any state assembly in India.

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Honorable Speaker Vijendra Gupta highlighted the importance of this celebration, emphasizing that the Hindu New Year symbolizes renewed energy and vitality. He noted the deep social and economic significance of the festival, particularly in honoring the agricultural community, which is vital for the nation's sustenance.

He called it a joyful opportunity to celebrate India's culture and traditions.

Chief Minister Rekha Gupta will be the chief guest, joined by Deputy Chairman Mohan Singh Bisht and Minister of Art and Culture Kapil Mishra as special guests.

The event aims to display India's rich cultural heritage and promote the values embedded in its traditions.

Delhi man missing for over a month killed by his friends 2 held

New Delhi
A 23-year old youth from Delhi's Uttam Nagar who was missing for over a month is now believed to have been allegedly killed by two friends, an officials said on Thursday.

Police said Raja Kumar Mehto (31) and Praveen Kumar (40) allegedly killed Vishal Kumar over an old dispute, he said. He was allegedly stabbed to death in a scheduled spot in Nawada on February 21.

Vishal's mother lodged a missing complaint at the

Dwarka South Police Station on February 28, seven days after he went missing.

"During the investigation, police collected information from locals. On March 19, a case was registered and further investigation was taken up," Deputy Commissioner of Police (Dwarka) Ankit Singh said in a statement.

The officer further said that multiple teams were formed and CCTV footage was scrutinized which eventually led to the identification and apprehension of the two suspects.

Delhi Govt inks MoU with BIG to provide free coaching for NEET and CUET exams to students

**Abhishek Byahat
New Delhi**
The Delhi Government has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with BIG to provide free coaching for NEET and CUET exams to students from government schools.

This significant move, witnessed by Chief Minister Rekha Gupta and Education Minister Ashish Sood, aims to support approximately 163,000 students by offering them 30 days of free online coaching.

The coaching will total 180 hours, with students receiving six hours of instruction each day from April 2 to May 2, 2025. Subjects covered include Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Mathematics, General



Aptitude, and English. The program also comprises organized PDF notes for revision, regular tests to

monitor progress, and support for resolving doubts.

Chief Minister Rekha Gupta emphasized that this initiative is designed to help students prepare effectively for NEET-2025

and CUET (UG)-2025, increasing their chances of gaining admission to medical colleges and central universities.

Education Minister Ashish Sood highlighted the government's commitment to providing equal opportunities for students, ensuring that financial barriers do not prevent them from achieving their academic goals.

This coaching program represents a crucial step towards empowering students from underserved communities and enhancing their prospects for higher education and professional success. The Delhi Government remains dedicated to strengthening educational opportunities for all students.

Ram Navami, Hanuman Janmotsav, & Ambedkar Jayanti will be celebrated widely: Kapil Mishra

**Abhishek Byahat
New Delhi**
The Delhi Government's Art and Culture Department has planned to celebrate several significant cultural events with great enthusiasm.

This includes the Hindu New Year, Chaitra Shukla Pratipada, which will be celebrated on March 30, and will kick off with a grand event at the Delhi Assembly, where the building will be illuminated with lamps similar to Diwali.

In addition, the government will celebrate Ram Navami, Hanuman Janmotsav, and Ambedkar Jayanti on a large scale.

Minister Kapil Mishra highlighted that this marks the first time the Hindu New Year will be celebrated so extravagantly. He also announced that dur-



ing Navratri, a 'Falaha Party' will be organized to honor those observing fasting, featuring fruit-based meals.

Further plans include multiple Falaha programs held on the seventh, eighth, and ninth days of Navratri, which will in-

volve Kanya Pujan ceremonies where underprivileged girls will be served food and special prayers will be held for Goddess Durga, the minister said.

Mishra emphasized the importance of these initiatives in preserving Indian culture and urged all

citizens of Delhi to participate to make these celebrations a success.

The government will continue to support such cultural programs, as art and culture are vital to the city's budget and identity.

Delhi govt to act against infiltrators those who provided them overground support: Minister Sood

New Delhi
The BJP government will not allow infiltrators to stay in Delhi and also act against those who helped them settle here illegally by providing overground support, Delhi Home Minister Ashish Sood said on Thursday.

Speaking in the Assembly, the minister also said the resources of Delhi are for its people and not for those living in the city illegally.

During its aggressive election campaign in Delhi, which helped the party come to power last month, the BJP repeatedly accused the AAP of helping illegal Bangladeshi and Rohingya settle in the city.

"We will not let any illegal infiltrator stay in Delhi," he asserted, adding the Del-

hi government will take over the detention Centre in Lamapur where illegal immigrants are kept before deportation.

"Those who provided overground support to illegal infiltrators by helping them get an Aadhaar card, ration card and rented accommodation will not be spared and the government will come up with suitable provisions for it," he said.

Addressing the House on the budget 2025-26 tabled in the Assembly on Tuesday, Sood said the BJP government has announced to build a high security jail

complex in Narela.

He also slammed the previous AAP government in Delhi, alleging it spent three-fourths of the funds for different projects on publicity.

He said the BJP government has already started working to implement its budget announcements to realise the dream of 'Viksit Delhi'.

EASTERN RAILWAY

Tender No. - W-2, 623, 1, GFL, ASN, 2024-25. Dated: 26.03.2025. (M/E)Engineering, 17, Netaji Subhas Road, 2nd Floor, Badli Park, Kolkata-700001. Eastern Railway invites Open Tender No. W-2, 623, 1, GFL, ASN, 2024-25 for the following work. Bidders will be able to view the original tender and its annexes on the date and time only. Manual offers are not allowed against this tender and any such manual offer received shall be ignored. Name of Work: Supply, Installation, Commissioning & Operation of Track Based Rail Lubricator (Electronic) Type of 1 KM Category) along with Supply of Lubricant for Rail Lubricator as per site requirement with a minimum of 18kg per month per Lubricator. Complete system should be as per RDSO's Technical Specifications RRS T-48 for 5 years over Asansol Division (Total 119 Nos.).
Approx Cost (Rs.) : 3,38,83,344.45 (Three crore thirty eight lakh eighty three thousand three hundred forty four and forty five paise only).
Earnest Money (Rs.) : 3,44,90,000/-
Date of closing of Tender: 28.04.2025 at 15:00 hrs.
Date of Completion/period from issue acceptance letter: 12 Months
For full details and submission of bid please see the Indian Railways website www.irps.gov.in
Follow us at: @EasternRailway @easternrailwayheadquarter

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY

No. Dy/CE-JHSW-74 E-Tender Notice Date: 26.03.2025
By: Chief Engineer/Workshop/Hans for and behalf of President of India invite 'Open Tender' through On Line (E-Tendering) for the following work:
E-Tender No.: DY/CE-JHSW-72. Description of Work: RSKS/TLU: (1) Extension of existing shed & repairs to roof leakage & canten. (2) Provision of road and floor at RSKS TL.
Approx Cost (Rs.) : 3,38,83,344.45 (Three crore thirty eight lakh eighty three thousand three hundred forty four and forty five paise only).
Earnest Money (Rs.) : 3,44,90,000/-
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For full details and submission of bid please see the Indian Railways website www.irps.gov.in
Follow us at: @CPRONCA @www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in

NDMC launches fresh academic session with focus on AI holistic learning

New Delhi
The NDMC has introduced new initiatives for the fresh academic session for its 28,000 students across 45 schools under the theme 'Vikas Bhi, Virasat Bhi'.



New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC) Vice Chairman Kuljeet Singh Chahal said the civic body's education initiatives are designed to promote holistic learning, artificial intelligence (AI) education and experiential learning while instilling cultural values among students, an official statement of the NDMC on Thursday said.

In a major step towards technological education, the NDMC has launched AI in motion graphics, photos, videos and music," Chahal said.

"Inspired by the prime minister's vision of 'Double AI' (Artificial Intelligence and Aspirational India), these workshops aim to educate students on AI fundamentals, the functioning and significance of AI in daily life, applications of Virtual Reality (VR) and

simulators, and creative uses of generative AI in motion graphics, photos, videos and music."

Ethical considerations in AI will also be covered to ensure responsible use of technology. Students will be assessed, certified and encouraged to exhibit their AI projects, he added.

To enhance academic tracking, the NDMC has developed a Management Information System (MIS), which will allow real-time

tracking of student performance, attendance, health records and direct benefit schemes.

The teachers will have individual logins to monitor class-wise data, while each student's subject-wise marks, attendance, health records and personal information will be recorded.

According to the statement, the complete implementation of the system will begin in April 2025, with all student entries fi-

nalized by March 31, 2025.

The NDMC is also placing a strong emphasis on experiential learning through collaborations with institutions like the National Gallery of Modern Art (NGMA) where students will get opportunities to engage with eminent artists, while teachers will receive training to enhance their skills, it reads.

The educational visits to premier institutions such as ISRO units, botanical parks and Air Force museums will be organized to foster curiosity-driven learning, it added.

To bridge the gap between public and private education, the NDMC will establish learning hubs in collaboration with leading private schools like Sardar Patel School and Modern School which will facilitate the exchange of best teaching practices, student-teacher mentorship programs, shared academic resources and infrastructure, and the promotion of innovative teaching methods.

Furthermore, the NDMC's Career Guidance and Counselling Program will continue to help students make informed career choices.

The NDMC's Career Helpline, launched in December 2024, has already benefited over 5,000 students and will remain operational this year as well, the statement said.

Scholarship initiatives will also be strengthened with the NDMC Schools' Annual Talent Search Examination set to take place in April 2025. Under this program, 250 top-performing students will receive a Rs 1,000 monthly scholarship for one year.

Additionally, the NDMC has successfully enrolled 98 per cent of its girl students — 5,281 out of 5,371 — under the Sukanya Samridhi Yojana, ensuring financial security and educational support for young girls.

The NDMC reaffirms its commitment to providing a world-class education system that blends technology, tradition and innovation to equip students with the skills needed for a bright future, it added.

Delhi Police deploys 'Shishtachar' squads to curb eve-teasing ensure women safety

New Delhi
Delhi Police has introduced the 'Shishtachar' squads to curb eve-teasing and ensure women safety and security, an official said on Thursday.

The official said these strict vigil in areas around malls, schools and markets to curb crimes, including eve-teasing, molestation and other forms of harassment, against women with the objective of fostering a safer public environment.

The 'Shishtachar' squads during patrolling detained people acting suspiciously as a preventive measure and asked women if they had any complaints.

"In Rohini district, these anti-eve-teasing squads are checking for people who are looking suspicious or are creating hoistmism, making the environment unsafe for women to move freely in public spaces," said Additional Deputy Commissioner of Police, Rohini, Vishnu Kumar.

The senior police officer said that such people were detained and taken to police stations.

"If their record was clean, they were dropped back with a warning. The parents of the

minors, who indulged in any such activity, were also called and they were left after proper counselling," he added.

A weekly record of the actions taken by the squad will be prepared every week on Monday, said another police officer, adding each district will form at least two squads, which will be supervised by the ACP, Crime Against Women Cell, of the concerned district.

Each squad will comprise an inspector, a sub-inspector, four female officers, five male officers and one personnel from special staff from the anti-auto theft squad for technical assistance, said a circular issued by the police commissioner.

They will be provided with one four-wheeler and adequate two-wheelers to ensure effective patrolling and quick response. The squad will also routinely move around in vulnerable areas and conduct drives in at least two vulnerable points every day.

Plain-clothed female officers will be deployed to identify offenders and surprise checks will be conducted in public transport with outreach to the DTC staff and passengers to encourage reporting.

Criminal wanted in multiple cases arrested after gunfight in UP's Ghaziabad



Ghaziabad
A notorious criminal wanted in over a dozen cases, including a jewellery shop robbery here, was arrested after a gunfight near the Hindon river barrage in the early hours of Thursday, police said.

A police team conducting routine checks signalled a speeding car to stop. However, the driver took a U-turn instead of halting and tried to escape. As the police chased and cornered him, his vehicle collided with a divider. Finding himself trapped, the suspect opened fire on the police team, said Assistant Commissioner of Police (ACP), Indirapuram, Abhishek Srivastav.

The officers retaliated in self-defense and the suspect was shot in the right leg below the knee before being overpowered and arrested, he added.

The ACP said the accused has been identified as Anil Saxena (47).

He confessed during interrogation that he and three accomplices had on the night of March 21-22 burgled a jewellery shop in Vasundhara, breaking open the shutter, said Srivastav. A search of his vehicle led to the recovery of gold and silver ornaments hidden in the dashboard along with a country-made pistol, police said.

Saxena also admitted that he and his gang had been conducting search to identify soft targets for robbery and that he had been looking for a jewellery store to loot the previous night, they said.

The ACP further said Saxena has a criminal history with over a dozen cases, including charges of robbery, dacoity and attempted murder, registered against him across multiple police stations.

560-Gram Miracle: Baby Overcomes 2-Month NICU Battle in Motherhood Hospital

Noida
Motherhood Hospital, Noida, recently witnessed a miraculous medical achievement where a preterm baby born at just 28 weeks, weighing a mere 560 grams, overcame life-threatening complications and was discharged healthy after two months in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU).

The baby's parents, Vaishnavi (30) and Saurabh (34) from Banaras faced a challenging pregnancy journey. Vaishnavi's ordeal began with mild bleeding during the initial five weeks, which persisted until the 14th week.

At 35 weeks of pregnancy, during routine antenatal tests, she was diagnosed with gestational diabetes mellitus (GDM) with alarm-

ingly high HbA1c levels of 11.

To stabilize the pregnancy, Dr. Prerna Sharma, Consultant-Obstetrician and Gynecologist at Motherhood Hospital, Noida initiated treatment that included medications, dietary adjustments, and regular monitoring. Around 20 weeks pregnancy was going fine, all blood tests and ultrasounds were routine but the mother started having raised blood pressure which was managed with medication.

The situation became more complicated when a 26-week ultrasound revealed impaired fetal growth, mild oligohydramnios (low amniotic fluid levels), and slight abnormalities in the Doppler flow study. This prompted the

administration of medications to enhance blood flow and support the baby's development. However, after treatment, the Doppler growth showed little improvement.

A team of experts led by Dr. Amit Gupta, Dr. Nishant Bansal and Dr. Navina Desai provided advanced NICU care to address complications arising from extreme prematurity. The baby was placed on a ventilator and given surfactant therapy to support lung maturity. Gradual improvements allowed her to transition to CPAP support and later to independent breathing. During her NICU stay, she battled sepsis and jaundice, which were successfully managed with antibiotics and phototherapy.

The DRM praised the awarders for their dedication and hard work in their roles, acknowledging their commitment to serving around the clock.

College Student Fatally Stabbed in Faridabad: Police Investigate Murder Case

Faridabad
A tragic and shocking incident unfolded in Faridabad on Thursday, where an 18-year-old college student, identified as Nitesh, was fatally stabbed following an altercation with another student from Aggarwal College.

The unfortunate incident has sent shockwaves across the community, raising serious concerns about student safety.

According to police officials, the violent attack took place after a heated dispute between the two students over a personal matter. Eyewitnesses reported that the situation quickly escalated, culminating in the brutal stabbing of Nitesh.

Upon receiving information about the incident, police officials immediately arrived at the scene and rushed the severely injured Nitesh to the Civil Hospital in Ballabhgarh. However, despite their efforts, doctors at the hospital pronounced him dead on arrival.

Following the tragic incident, Nitesh's body was sent for a postmortem examination to ascertain further details regarding the nature of injuries sustained during the attack. Meanwhile, his grief-stricken family has lodged a formal complaint, demanding strict legal action against the accused.

Speaking to the media, Nitesh's father, Santosh Kumar, expressed his devastation and called for justice. "My son was brutally at-

tacked in the midst of a dispute. We want justice, and the culprit should not be spared," he stated, urging authorities to take swift and stringent action.

Shamsher Singh, the officer in charge of the local police station, assured the public that a thorough investigation is underway. "A case of murder has been registered, and we are working diligently to apprehend the accused. The matter is being handled with urgency to ensure swift legal action against the offender," he affirmed. As part of the investigation, authorities are currently collecting evidence, examining CCTV footage, and questioning potential witnesses to reconstruct the sequence of events that led

to the fatal altercation.

The shocking killing of the young student has triggered outrage in the local community, with residents and student organizations calling for enhanced security measures on college campuses to prevent such incidents in the future. Many have urged the administration to take stringent steps to safeguard students from violence within educational institutions.

The police have assured that further updates will be provided as the investigation progresses. Meanwhile, the incident serves as a grim reminder of the urgent need for conflict resolution mechanisms and enhanced security to ensure student safety in educational spaces.

Delhi Division organized "69th Rail Seva Puraskar" event; Awarded 93 Railway employees

New Delhi
Every year, Indian Railways celebrate Railway Week to mark the first train's journey between Borj-Bunder and Thane.

This year, the Delhi Division organized the "69th Rail Seva Puraskar" event at the National Rail Museum in New Delhi.

Pushpesh Raman Tripathi, the Divisional Railway Manager, led the Awards Distribution Ceremony, attended by senior officials and union members.

During the event, 93 Railway employees were recognized for their outstanding work.



The DRM praised the awarders for their dedication and hard work in their roles, acknowledging their commitment to serving around the clock.

The DRM praised the awarders for their dedication and hard work in their roles, acknowledging their commitment to serving around the clock.

Delhi Police Honored for Consecutive Victory in Republic Day Parade 2025

New Delhi
Delhi Police was honored for their successful performance in the Republic Day Parade 2025 during a special event hosted by the Commissioner of Police in Delhi on March 27, 2025.

They won the "Best Marching Contingent Trophy" for the second year in a row, having also won in 2024.

This achievement was made possible through the guidance of key officers including Sh. Neeraj Thakur, Sh. M. N. Tiwari, Dr.



Rakesh Bansal and Sh. Krishan Kumar.

The Republic Day Parade is an important national event that showcases discipline and excellence in marching.

Under the leadership of Main Parade Commander Rishi Kumar, the Delhi Police made an impressive display.

During the gathering, the Delhi police Commissioner Sanjay Arora expressed his gratitude to the contingent and the Delhi Police Band for their hard work, emphasizing their role in national celebrations.

The event, called "Bara Khana," served to motivate and recognize the hard work of all officers involved in this achievement. The event was organized successfully under the guidance of Vijay Kumar and other senior officers.

Delhi Police sub-inspector dismissed for alleged role in drug syndicate

New Delhi
A Delhi Police sub-inspector has been dismissed from service for his alleged involvement in a drug syndicate, sources said on Thursday.

The accused, identified as Naresh Kumar, was posted with the Anti-Extortion and Kidnapping Cell of the Delhi Police Crime Branch, they said.

A police source said that he had been evading arrest for over a year and his termination order was issued on March 20.

This comes after he was accused of running a narcotics syndicate, with one of the arrested gang members, identified as Surjojit,



revealing that Kumar was the mastermind behind the operation, added another source.

Kumar was named as the main conspirator of this drug syndicate, said an officer. During interrogation, Surjojit revealed that Kumar used to procure marijuana from Odisha and the northeastern states.

The accused revealed that he would store them in two houses in Delhi and later sell it to customers, he added.

The source further said that he was suspended on February 22 last year and the period till the issue of the dismissal order will be considered as period not spent on duty.

Burglary attempt at elderly woman's house done by former house help Delhi Police

New Delhi
A man accused of attacking a 79-year-old woman during a burglary attempt in Delhi's Vasant Vihar was arrested from Uttar Pradesh's Muzaffarnagar, police said on Thursday.

Suresh Paswan (30) attempted to rob the elderly woman's house on February 1, three months after he stopped working at her house as a domestic help, they said.

Paswan entered the woman's house when she was alone in her second-floor flat around 3:30 pm and assaulted her with the intention of robbery, an official said.



But the victim's family returned home unexpectedly and Paswan was forced to escape using a plastic rope. The woman, who couldn't see the attacker's face clearly, was rushed to a nearby hospital for treatment.

An FIR of an attempt to

murder was registered and further investigation was taken up.

Over 50 CCTV cameras were analysed multiple house helps were interrogated. The investigation revealed Paswan stopped working at the house three

Paswan entered the woman's house when she was alone in her second-floor flat around 3.30 pm and assaulted her with the intention of robbery, an official said.

months before.

Though he had been changing his phone number frequently, police teams tracked him down and arrested him, the police officer said.

Second accused in Nanakmatta Gurudwara chief murder case held

Haryana CM slams Congress over misleading debt claims

Dehradun: Sarabjit Singh, the second accused in the killing of Nanakmatta Gurudwara...

Sarabjit had been on the run ever since the murder took place in the gurudwara precincts in broad daylight in March last year...

Taking advantage of the situation, Sarabjit snatched the pistol of an official and tried to escape. He fired when the police personnel ran after him...

In retaliatory firing by the police, Sarabjit was shot in both his legs and captured. He is being treated at a hospital in Kashipur and will soon be produced in the court...

Some of the policemen who sustained injuries in the car accident are also being treated at the same hospital, Mishra said. The other accused in Baba Tarseem Singh's murder Amarjit Singh alias Bittu was killed in an encounter with the Uttarakhand Police's Special Task Force in the Bhagwanpur area of Haridwar in April last year.

Sarabjit and Amarjeet had come on a motorcycle to the Nanakmatta Gurudwara on March 28 last year and shot at Baba Tarseem Singh from a close range, killing him on the spot.

Chandigarh: Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann on Thursday criticized Congress leaders, particularly the Leader of Opposition, for making irresponsible and irrelevant statements. He accused them of engaging in theatrics solely to garner media attention.

Addressing the gathering during the Vidhan Sabha session, the Chief Minister pointed out that opposition members, who often obstruct proceedings, tend to stage walkouts on trivial issues for publicity. He noted that it was a moment of pride that the 1975 World Cup Hockey-winning team was present in the Vidhan Sabha gallery. Training his guns at the opposition, Mann condemned their questioning of

Komal Ramola Chandigarh: Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini has strongly refuted the opposition's claims regarding rising debt on citizens, accusing them of misleading the public with false statements. He asserted that the opposition first misguides citizens, creates unnecessary worry, and then pretends to care about them. The Chief Minister urged the opposition to refrain from spreading baseless concerns aimed at confusing and scaring people.

The Chief Minister made these remarks while responding to questions raised by the opposition during the budget discussion in the Haryana Vidhan Sabha today.

Clarifying the debt situation, Nayab Singh Saini stated that personal loans, agricultural loans, and industrial loans mentioned by the opposition are not included in the government's debt. As per



the 2025-26 budget estimates, the total debt liability is projected to be Rs. 3,52,819 crore, which constitutes 26.18 percent of the Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP), well within the 15th Finance Commission's prescribed limit of 32.5 percent.

Addressing the opposition's repeated claim that every citizen of the state bears a debt of Rs. 2 lakh, the Chief Minister challenged opposition leaders to present even five to ten individuals who have received

bank calls asking them to repay loans taken by the Haryana government. He emphasized that any debt taken by the government will be repaid by the government itself.

Nayab Singh Saini highlighted that the present state government is working at triple the speed and making significant efforts to reduce the revenue deficit. By the end of 2025-26, the revenue deficit is expected to be below one percent. He compared this with

for 2025-26, it is expected to be 2.67 percent, the Chief Minister informed.

Responding to claims that loans taken by State Public Enterprises are included in the government's debt figures, he clarified that such loans are not counted as part of the government's debt. However, he accused the opposition of misleading the public regarding debt figures.

The Chief Minister pointed out that in 2014-15, the loan burden on State Public Enterprises stood at Rs. 69,922 crore. Through consistent efforts over the past decade, the present government has reduced it to Rs. 68,295 crore by 2023-24. He credited the government's strict control over the borrowing tendencies of Public Enterprises for this reduction.

The debt of Public Enterprises, which was 16 percent of the GDP in 2014-15, has now decreased to just 5.6 percent in 2023-24.

'Mafia raj' in Himachal BJP holds mega protest against govt

Shimla: Protesting against the 'mafia raj' in Himachal Pradesh, the BJP leaders and workers on Thursday staged a demonstration against the state government near Vidhan Sabha.

Hundreds of BJP workers, including women, gathered near Chaura Maidan here against the Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu-led government and shouted anti-government slogans during the protest named 'Maha Pradarshan'.

The protest caused inconvenience to commuters as traffic jams were witnessed and movement was restricted on several roads. A large number of police personnel were deployed to avoid any untoward incident. However, a minor scuffle was witnessed.

Addressing the gathering, state BJP chief Rajeev Bindal said that mafia raj is prevailing in the state, development has come to a standstill, and the state government has taken loans worth Rs. 32,000 crore in 28 months. The state of gods and goddesses has been turned into a state of mafias, he added.

He accused the Congress government of protecting all kinds of corrupt elements such as traders, land mafias, liquor, scrap and drug mafias and lashed out at the ruling party for not fulfilling their poll guarantees and closing 1,500 institutions in education, revenue, health, PWD and other departments.

The state government has become synonymous with corruption, and Mandi, Bilaspur, Una, Hamirpur and other districts are bearing the brunt of shootouts and gang wars, with mafia flourishing in the state, said state BJP in-charge Shrikant Sharma.

Leader of Opposition and former chief minister Jai Ram Thakur said that due to anarchy and rampant corruption, honest and hardworking officers like Vimal Negi are not among us today. Negi, a civil engineer of Himachal Pradesh Power Corporation Limited, went missing on March 10, and his body was recovered in Bilaspur district on March 18. The family members of the late officer have alleged that seniors had been harassing Negi and demanded an inquiry into the case.

Man kills his 4 children by slitting throats hangs self in UP village

Shahjahanpur (UP): A 36-year-old man allegedly killed his four children by slitting their throats before hanging himself in a village under Roza police station here, an officer said on Thursday.

Rajiv Kumar, a native of Manpur Chachari village, killed his three daughters - Pragati, 7 - and five-year-old son Rishabh, Superintendent of Police Rajesh Dwivedi said.

Family members said that Rajiv was undergoing treatment for his mental illness.

Rajiv slit his children's throats with a sharp weapon and hanged himself in another room of his house Wednesday night, the SP said. The carnage was discovered Thursday morning by Rajiv's father who lives in an adjacent house.

"When Rajiv did not open the doors in the morning, his father climbed the roof and went inside the house through the staircase. This is how he came to know about the incident," the officer said.

Prithviraj, Rajiv's father, told reporters, "The children were lying in a pool of blood in a



room while in the other room Rajiv was hanging from the ceiling."

Family members said that Rajiv had suffered a severe head injury in an accident a year ago and was undergoing treatment. The injury had caused him to become easily agitated, they said, adding the injury significantly affected his mental state.

"After this he would often ask his wife when will you get the children slaughtered," Prithviraj said.

According to police, Rajiv's wife, Kranti, had left for her maternal home the previous day.

Kranti confirmed her husband's deteriorating mental health. "After the accident, my husband's jaw was broken and he also had a head injury. He often used

to say that 'Now we will not survive, so first we will kill the children and then we will die,'" she said. Kranti also alleged that Rajiv was abusive, and had beaten her six days prior to the incident, leading her to leave for her mother's house.

Preliminary investigation has revealed that Rajiv used a sandpaper to sharpen the weapon before killing his children. The weapon and sandpaper were recovered from the crime scene, police said.

The village is in shock after the incident. Village head Ashok Kumar said that neighbours are arranging for the deceased's last rites.

Senior police officials, including SP Dwivedi, also visited the spot.

Punjab All Set to Host Several National and International Sporting Events: CM

Chandigarh: Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann on Thursday announced that the state will soon host several national and international sporting events, aiming to foster a vibrant sports culture in Punjab.

Addressing a gathering at a function organized to felicitate the 1975 World Cup-winning hockey squad and award cash prizes to winners of the National Games, Khedan Watan Punjab Dian, and Para Kheda Watan Punjab Dian, the Chief Minister emphasized the government's commitment to sports. He revealed that Punjab is set to host the Four-Nation Hockey League along with other prestigious sporting events.

Highlighting efforts to curb drug abuse, Bhagwant Singh Mann stated that playgrounds and gyms will be established in every village to engage the youth in constructive activities. He underscored the state's aggressive campaign to nurture talented sports persons and increase the representation of Punjab players in the Indian contingent for international events.

"Punjab has immense sports talent, and our government is committed to providing world-class infrastructure and training facilities to ensure our players bring laurels to the nation," he said. Notably, Punjab has become the first state in India to allocate funds for the preparation of players participating in international events.

Mann further emphasized the deep-rooted connection between Punjab and sports, stating that despite an abundance of talent, previous governments failed to provide necessary infrastructure. He reassured that his administration is making dedicated ef-



orts to revive Punjab's sports legacy by equipping players with the best resources available.

Reflecting on the historic 1975 Hockey World Cup victory, the Chief Minister expressed pride that eight players from the Indian squad, along with the team's coach and manager, hailed from Punjab. He criticized past administrations for neglecting sports but reaffirmed his government's resolve to recognize and support athletes.

"The 1975 World Cup remains a golden chapter in Indian sports history. Unfortunately, past governments ignored players' contributions, but our administration is committed to giving

them the recognition they deserve," Mann remarked.

The Chief Minister highlighted ongoing initiatives to promote sports, including setting up sports nurseries to harness the potential of Punjab's youth. He asserted that sports could play a crucial role in the state's fight against drug addiction, as engaged athletes do not indulge in substance abuse.

Mann also mentioned the annual organization of Khedan Watan Punjab Dian by the state government, which serves as a platform for athletes to showcase their skills. He stressed that these events help identify and nurture young talent for national and international competitions.

Reiterating the government's commitment to sports development, the Chief Minister affirmed that promoting athletics will contribute significantly to Punjab's progress and prosperity. He concluded by expressing his pride in the presence of renowned sports persons at the event, calling it a historic moment for Punjab's sporting community.

CM Mann raps Congress leaders for irresponsible statements & Gimmicks to hog Media limelight

Chandigarh: Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann on Thursday criticized Congress leaders, particularly the Leader of Opposition, for making irresponsible and irrelevant statements. He accused them of engaging in theatrics solely to garner media attention.



Addressing the gathering during the Vidhan Sabha session, the Chief Minister pointed out that opposition members, who often obstruct proceedings, tend to stage walkouts on trivial issues for publicity. He noted that it was a moment of pride that the 1975 World Cup Hockey-winning team was present in the Vidhan Sabha gallery. Training his guns at the opposition, Mann condemned their questioning of

eminent environmentalist Sant Baba Balbir Singh Seechewal's credentials, emphasizing that Seechewal had been dedicated to environmental work since 1999.

Mann remarked that while some demand academic credentials from Baba Seechewal, they overlook the fact that their own leader, Rahul Gandhi, despite having a degree from Cambridge, has contributed little to the nation. He further added

that those who studied at prestigious institutions like Doon and Sanawar have done little for Punjab or the country. Highlighting that a lack of professional degrees does not impede public service, Mann held Baba Seechewal as a shining example.

Taking a jibe at the opposition, the Chief Minister asserted that while Baba Seechewal could purify polluted water bodies, he could not cleanse the "filthy

and myopic mindset" of certain leaders. He accused the Leader of Opposition of losing his mental balance in his desperation to become the Chief Minister. Mann reminded the house that Baba Seechewal's work was recognized by former President Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam.

Drawing a parallel, the Chief Minister stated that even Facebook's owner is a college dropout, yet Congress leaders utilize his platform to criticize him. He observed that the Congress party was internally divided, with some members walking out of sessions while others remained.

Mann further accused the Congress of disrespecting Punjabis, citing their animosity towards Sant Seechewal as evidence. He called the opposition's outburst against Padma Shri awardee Sant Seechewal unfortunate and baseless, emphasizing that world leaders seek Seechewal's guidance while Congress administrations irrationally criticize him.

J K PHE daily wagers defer strike over festivals CM's appeal



Jaunpur: The Public Health Engineering (PHE) daily wagers have deferred their ongoing strike for 10 days following an appeal by Chief Minister Omar Abdullah and considering the upcoming Eid and Navratri festivals.

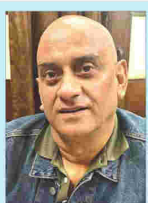
Chief Minister Omar Abdullah had appealed in the Assembly for the employees to end the strike as it is causing inconvenience to the people. Keeping in mind the upcoming Eid and Navratri, we have decided to defer our strike for 10 days," said Ravi Hans, leader of PHE Employees United Front, which has been spear-

heading the protest for the last seven days.

However, he clarified, "If our demands are not met, we will be back on the streets on April 7."

This decision to defer the strike also follows a meeting between PHE Minister Javed Rana and protesters. In the meeting, the minister agreed to release the pending wages, one of the demands of the daily wagers, in a phased manner.

सामन/नोटिस (Notice/Order) regarding a public hearing or meeting. It includes details about the location, time, and the purpose of the gathering, along with contact information for the organizing body.



By Dr. Anil Singh, Editor, STAR Views

The Prime Minister: Discourses in Indian Polity — A Timely Reflection on the Evolution of India's Highest Executive Office

decades focusing on the institutional evolution of the Prime Minister's Office in India. While biographies and political commentaries have discussed individual leaders, few works have analyzed the PMO as a constitutional and political entity shaped by history, ideology, party dynamics, and public expectations. This book seeks to fill that void.

Beginning with the constitutional roots of the PMO—from the Government of India Act of 1858 through to the Indian Constitution of 1950—the book traces how the role of the Prime Minister was envisioned within the Westminster-style parliamentary framework. It contextualizes the foundational principles with which the office was endowed, designed to balance executive authority with democratic accountability.

From Nehru to Modi: A Shifting Power Center

One of the core strengths of the book is its chapter-wise exploration of the PMO's transformation—from Jawaharlal Nehru to Atmanirbhar Bharat, while marked by immense authority, was still checked by in-party deliberation within the Congress. Indira Gandhi's era, in contrast, saw a sharp centralization of power and the weakening of institutional counterbalances—a phase the book critiques not merely for its concentration of authority but for its long-term impact on Indian federalism and democratic norms.

Addressing a Gap in Indian Political Literature

As veteran scholar Prof. M.P. Singh rightly observes, there has been a surprising scarcity of comprehensive academic work in recent

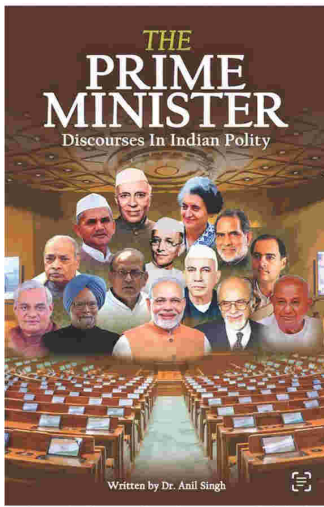
sai and extended into the Vajpayee and Manmohan Singh governments is examined in detail, exposing the fragmented and often unstable nature of executive authority during these years. Yet, these periods also underscored the resilience of Indian democracy, adapting to coalition politics and shifting mandates.

The Modi Era: Assertive Nationalism and Global Leadership

The chapter dedicated to Narendra Modi's tenure (2014–2024) is particularly significant for understanding the current phase of Indian polity. Unlike most political analyses that fall into the binary of adulation or condemnation, this book provides a balanced yet appreciative account of Modi's impact on nation-building and governance.

Prime Minister Modi has undeniably brought assertive nationalism and a clear ideological coherence to the functioning of the PMO. His ability to translate electoral mandates into policy initiatives, whether through schemes like Swachh Bharat, Digital India, or Atmanirbhar Bharat, signals a reinvention of statecraft that is both top-down and mass-oriented. The PMO under Modi has also emphasized direct communication with the public, digital governance, and centralized accountability—all of which have changed how the common citizen interacts with the state.

On the global stage, Modi has elevated India's status through strategic diplomacy, participation in key multilateral forums,



Written by Dr. Anil Singh

and projecting India as a responsible global power. His emphasis on building strong bilateral relations with both traditional allies and emerging partners has added to India's international stature. The book rightly places this within the larger discourse of India's aspirations to be not just a regional leader but a global influencer.

A Space for Democratic Reflection

While acknowledging the centralization of power in recent years, the book does not issue blanket critiques. Instead, it raises thoughtful questions about how extra-constitutional bodies—be it the Planning Commission, the PMO itself, or advisory councils—have sometimes bypassed collective Cabinet responsibility.

A Celebration of Democratic Continuity

Beyond individual leaders, The Prime Minister: Discourses in Indian Polity is a tribute to

the office itself and its role in sustaining India's democratic architecture. In a world where democratic backsliding is increasingly visible, the Indian PMO remains a powerful symbol of elected authority that is accountable to the people.

The upcoming book release is not merely a ceremonial occasion; it is an intellectual initiative to encourage dialogue about leadership, accountability, and institutional reform. The presence of such eminent figures from politics and academia signals a collective desire to reinvigorate scholarly and public interest in the Prime Minister's role—not just as a personality but as a constitutional entity.

As India moves forward in the 21st century, facing internal challenges and global expectations, understanding the PMO's past and present becomes imperative. This book, with its scholarly yet accessible style, performs that function with integrity and depth.

It is a welcome addition to the literature on Indian governance and will be of great value to scholars, students, policymakers, and citizens who care about the future of Indian democracy.

About the Author
(The writer is an Editor STAR Views & Author of The Prime Minister: Discourses in Indian Polity)

Breaking Time Sudoku

What to do

Fill in the grid so that every row, every column, and every 3x3 box contains the digit 1 to 9. Every puzzle has only correct solution.

	2							
			8			4	1	
9				7		8		6
			2					8
	5		3			8		6
2		9		5				
6		8		3				7
	4	7				9		
								9

Solution, Sudoku

6	3	2	1	7	8	9	4	5
5	4	9	2	6	3	7	1	8
7	1	8	5	4	9	3	6	2
9	8	6	3	5	1	4	2	7
1	7	3	4	8	2	6	5	9
2	5	4	6	9	7	8	3	1
3	9	1	7	2	4	5	8	6
8	2	5	9	3	6	1	7	4
4	6	7	8	1	5	2	9	3

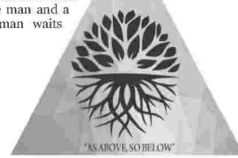
THE WISDOM TREE BY SUVEEN KUMAR

Most of us have experienced true love at some point of time in our life yet we say and support that it doesn't exist, most of us have lived a time when love is nothing but life and life is nothing but love, most of us have felt that longing with them it's life else it's death. Everyone who has been in love, has been in true love but not everyone who has been in true love, has died in true love. A true love can only exist with truth and purity, as long as you remain truthful and pure in love, it lives with you. A true love needs a true heart to live in, a heart full of lies, fakes, cheats, tricks, dramas, bad-intents, impure feelings, beating for multiple people at the same time, waiting for someone better, fighting for a little more can do nothing but question if true love ever exists. True love exists just as false love does.

for a true love, neither a true love is an opportunity nor a true man, neither a true girl is opportunistic nor a true feeling so the one who finds a true love has all the reasons to find, the one who loses a true love has all the reasons to lose and the one who keeps the true love has all the reasons to keep. Finding a true love and keeping a true love is not the same thing. Sometimes it is you who changes the love and sometimes it's love that changes you, sometimes it's others who help you find it and sometimes it's just you who loses it, sometimes it's fate that brings it to you and sometimes it's time that keeps you from it. If you are not true forever, you won't be able to keep true love forever.

Moral: No matter how great a true love is, but it is a truth that not everyone longs for it.

A true love waits for a true man and a true man waits



THE WISDOM TREE - BY SUVEEN KUMAR

Early arrival of summer in India and increase in heatwaves



By Dr. Satyawan Saurabh

Heat wave events in India are increasing rapidly due to climate change. According to the India Meteorological Department, a heat wave is defined as a heat wave when the temperature in the plains exceeds 40 degrees Celsius and this condition persists for a long time. India experienced 554 heat wave days in 2024, while the number was 230 in 2023. This increase is affecting agriculture, water availability, and public health, necessitating urgent mitigation measures.

February, which is usually a winter month, is now experiencing extreme heat. Odisha, Telangana, and Maharashtra recorded temperatures above 40°C in February 2025, pointing to climate change. Example: Mumbai recorded a temperature of 38.7°C in February 2025, the hottest February day in five years. This disrupted daily life and led to a rise in heat-related illnesses. Global warming is leading to more frequent and intense heatwaves in urban and rural areas, putting a huge strain on the population. Night temperatures are also increasing unexpectedly. 31 states and union territories recorded a minimum temperature 1°C above normal, while 22 states saw an increase of 3°C-5°C.

Delhi recorded its hottest February night in 74 years in 2024, shortening the recovery time for vulnerable sections. Marine heatwaves increase inland temperatures and affect monsoon patterns. In 2023, marine heatwaves in the Bay of Bengal delayed the monsoon in eastern India and increased pre-monsoon heat. Concrete structures, less greenery, and the presence of pollutants make urban areas hotter. In April 2023, temperatures in urban areas of Ahmedabad were 3-4°C higher than the surrounding rural areas.

It is necessary to incorporate heatwave mitigation in the national adaptation plan while ensuring coordination among states. Ahmedabad's Heat Action Plan (2013) helps prevent 190 deaths every year. Urban planning should increase the use of green buildings, passive cooling, and heat-resistant materials. Telangana's Cool Roof Policy (2021) promotes heat-reflecting roofs, which reduce indoor temperatures. Tree plantation, rooftop gardening, and conservation of water bodies can reduce temperatures. Delhi's Urban Forest Initiative reduces local temperature by 2-3°C in several hotspots. Local weather monitoring, heatwave

forecasting, and urban heat island mapping should be expanded. Heat insurance, adjusted working hours, and cooling shelters need to be ensured for vulnerable workers. Rajasthan's Heat Insurance Pilot (2023) provided financial compensation to daily wage workers on extreme heat days.

Extreme heat can lead to longer summer holidays in schools, making it difficult to complete the syllabus. Many schools do not have adequate cooling facilities, which affects the health of students. Heat waves during exam time can affect student performance. Extreme heat reduces the productivity of workers, especially in construction, farming, and other outdoor jobs. Increased electricity consumption can lead to energy crises, which in turn increase power cuts. Heatwaves lead to health problems, which puts pressure on hospitals and increases healthcare costs. Water levels in lakes, ponds, and rivers fall rapidly, worsening the drinking water problem. Groundwater levels decline, affecting irrigation and drinking water supply. Incidents of forest fires increase, which causes loss of biodiversity. Heat affects the ecosystem of many plants and animals. Yields of wheat, paddy,

and other major crops decline, affecting food security. Animal husbandry is also affected due to extreme heat and the water crisis.

Develop and use crops that are more heat tolerant and require less water. Encourage farmers to adopt micro-irrigation technology (drip irrigation). Promote green roofs, reservoirs, and open green areas. Install shade trees and water spray systems in public spaces. Adopt temperature adaptation technologies in smart cities. Promote heat-resistant building materials and energy-efficient design. Strengthen global and regional efforts to control sea temperature. Regenerate mangrove forests in coastal areas, which naturally help balance temperatures. Europe's Heat Action Plan: France and Spain have implemented cooling centers and public alert systems during heatwaves. Australia's Water Management: Effective policies have been implemented for water harvesting and conservation in drought-affected areas. America's 'Green Infrastructure' program: Various schemes are being run to promote greenery and shade areas in urban areas.

A multi-pronged strategy is needed to miti-

gate the effects of rising heat and heat waves in India. For this, the government, society, and the scientific community will have to work together to develop long-term solutions. Climate adaptation, smart urban planning, agricultural innovation, and global cooperation can tackle this challenge. The increasing threat of heat waves has made it necessary to implement climate-adaptation plans. It is important to strengthen early warning systems, heat action plans, and resilient infrastructure. Urban greenery, reflective roofs, and sustainable water management should be prioritized. Also, expanding schemes like Mahatma Gandhi NREGA and implementing cooling-focused urban policies will help ensure public health, livelihoods, and future sustainability.

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About the Author
(Dr. Satyawan Saurabh, Poet, freelance journalist and columnist, radio and TV panelist)

Oppn flags 'denial of speaking opportunity' to LoP 'politicisation' of speaker's remarks

US Tariffs: Opposition Grills Govt in RS

New Delhi
An opposition parties' delegation met Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla on Thursday to flag the 'denial of opportunity' to Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi to speak in the House, as well as the 'politicisation' of his asking the Congress leader to follow the rules of procedure.



Congress's deputy leader in the Lok Sabha Gaurav Gogoi said the INDIA bloc delegation, comprising the Congress, SP, TMC, DMK, Kerala Congress, RJD, IUMI, RLP and MDMK, met the speaker during the Zero Hour.

Sources said Gogoi, Congress general secretary and organisation K C Venugopal, Congress whip Manickam Tagore, DMK's A Raja, SP's Dharmendra Yadav, TMC's Kalyan Banerjee, and NCP (SP) leader Supriya Sule were among the MPs who met the speaker.

"We have given a letter, which was signed by many parties, including the RSP and Shiv Sena (UBT). We conveyed our collective concern and disappointment to the speaker on how the ruling side is violating the traditions, rules and culture of the House," Gogoi told reporters after the meeting.

He said the main matter was the context and issue over which Birla made a

statement on the LoP on Wednesday.

"He made a reference to Rule 249 and said the members and the LoP must follow this. What specific incident he was referring to was not clear. There was politicisation and propaganda over the speaker's remarks. We apprised the speaker of how his remarks had been politicised outside," Gogoi said.

"When the LoP stood up, the House was adjourned. He was not allowed to speak, despite his name being taken in the House. The whole country saw it. LoP is a constitutional post. Remarks were made about him but he was not allowed to speak. There was no clarity on what incident the speaker was referring to but the BJP IT cell was politicising the issue," he said, terming the incident

saddening.

The convention of allowing the LoP to speak when they stand up has been disregarded repeatedly. This breaks from past parliamentary practices and diminishes the space for a healthy debate in the House," the opposition letters were quoted as saying in their letter.

"They also raised the issue of 'non-appointment' of a deputy speaker in the Lok Sabha. A well-functioning democracy requires the smooth operation of Parliament, where all members, irrespective of party affiliation, are given an equal opportunity to debate, deliberate and discharge their constitutional duties. However, certain disturbing trends have emerged, which undermine the sanctity of Parliament," the sources quoted the opposition leaders as saying in the letter.

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The opposition leaders also said while the business advisory committee's decisions have traditionally not been binding, the government unilaterally introduces business in the House, without prior consultation or information.

"For instance, the prime minister's statement in the House last week was made without prior scheduling or intimation," the leaders conveyed to the speaker.

Alleging a neglect of adjournment motions, they said these motions, which were traditionally read out and allowed discussions during the Zero Hour, are now either ignored or summarily rejected, curtailing the MPs' right to raise urgent national issues.

They also claimed that private members' bills and resolutions, which provide non-ministerial MPs an opportunity to propose laws, are not given sufficient time for discussions.

The delegation raised the issue of exclusion of key ministries from the Budget and Demand for Grants discussions and a lack of deliberations under Rule 192.

In the letter, the sources said the opposition MPs also flagged the issue of their microphones being switched off.

They claimed that it has become a pattern that whenever opposition floor leaders

and MPs speak, the Sansad TV camera changes its angle and does not show them.

They also alleged that opposition parties are not being consulted on the composition and chairmanship of committees.

These developments are deeply concerning and warrant immediate corrective measures to uphold the integrity of India's parliamentary democracy, they said.

"We urge you to take appropriate steps to restore fairness, transparency and adherence to established parliamentary norms," the opposition leaders were quoted as saying by the sources.

Birla on Wednesday asked Gandhi to conduct himself in line with the rules of procedure but the members are expected to observe to uphold the dignity of the House. The LoP claimed that the remarks against him were "unsubstantiated".

Birla did not specify the trigger behind censuring Gandhi, who was present in the House and wanted to speak on some issue. He adjourned the proceedings after making his point.

In a post on X, BJP's IT department head Anil Malviya suggested that the speaker's remarks were prompted by Gandhi affectionately cupping the cheeks of his sister and MP, Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, during the proceedings a few days ago.

Cash Found at Judge's House: TMC MP Slams Demonetization



New Delhi

TMC Rajya Sabha member Sagarika Ghose on Thursday said the alleged recovery of 'piles of cash' from the residence of a high court judge is an example of the failed policy of demonetisation and asked if Prime Minister Narendra Modi is ready to face punishment to be decided by people for its failure.

During a discussion on the Finance Bill 2025, she said that at the time of demonetisation, the Prime Minister had said if his policy was wrong, people could give him any punishment they wished.

"What is more revealing of this failed policy of demonetisation than the piles of cash allegedly found and burnt in the home of a jurist?" Ghose asked.

"Is the prime minister ready to face the punishment of the people? ...because these piles of cash are a stark example that the policy of demonetisation is a failed government," she said.

Ghose was referring to the alleged cash discovery after a fire broke out at Justice Yashwant Varma's residence at around 11.35 pm on March 14.

kind of punishment you want."

Stating that sometimes even the Members of Parliament make some mistakes, Ghose said, "Some mistakes creep into what we say but there is one man who never makes a mistake -- the Prime Minister."

Participating in the discussion, M Mohamed Abdulla (DMK) said, "This Union government refuses to learn anything even from its mistakes in the past. Instead of adopting successful governance models, it continues to impose flawed policies, suppress states' rights and push its regressive agenda."

He accused the BJP-led NDA government of 'destroying the beautiful principle of unity in diversity' of India with its 'ongoing authoritarian initiatives such as one nation, one election' and 'one nation one language'.

Alleging that the government is surviving on 'fake promises and deception', Abdulla said, "The people of India trusted it to bring economic growth, job creation and financial stability. Instead, they have been met with unemployment, financial mismanagement and policies that burden the common people while favouring their corporate paymasters who are funding them through electoral bonds".

Rail Vikas Nigam wins a project to upgrade Electric Traction System in Itarsi-Amla Nagpur section

Staff Reporter
New Delhi

Rail Vikas Nigam Limited (RVNL) has won a project to upgrade the Electric Traction System in the Itarsi - Amla section of the Nagpur Division, Central Railway zone.

The project, valued at ₹115.79 Crore, aims to improve freight capacity and is expected to be completed within 24 months. RVNL was chosen for this project as the lowest bidder for modifying the existing 1x25 KV Electric Traction System to a more efficient 2x25 KV AT Feeding System.

The work will cover a distance of 390 TKM within the Nagpur Division and includes survey, design, infrastructure mod-



ifications, testing, and commissioning. This upgrade is important for helping the Indian Railways reach its target of 3,000 MT in freight loading, which will enhance the overall efficiency of the railway network.

The project has several

across longer distances and enhancing performance.

Lastly, the upgraded system will improve energy efficiency by reducing transmission losses, resulting in better electrical energy use.

Chairman and Managing Director of RVNL, Pradeep Gaur, emphasized the importance of this development, noting that it will help meet the growing demand for freight transportation and support Indian Railways in becoming more efficient and capable. RVNL is committed to executing infrastructure projects that modernize India's railways with a focus on sustainability, quality, and innovation.

669 Asiatic lions died in past 5 years maximum in 2024: Govt data

New Delhi

A total of 669 Asiatic lions have died in the last five years but no deaths were recorded due to poaching, the government said on Thursday.

The Gir forest in Gujarat is the only natural habitat of the Asiatic lions.

Replying to a question in the Rajya Sabha, Union Minister of State for Environment Kirti Vardhan Singh said 142 lions died in 2020, 124 in 2021, 117

in 2022, 121 in 2023 and 165 lions died in 2024.

"As reported by the (Gujarat) state government, the reported causes of lion deaths include old age, illness, injuries from fights, cub mortality, falling into open wells, electrocution, accidents etc," he said.

The minister also said there were no incidents of poaching leading to death of lions during these years.

Outstanding employees of Northern Railway Commercial Department honored at Baroda House

Staff Reporter
New Delhi

A ceremony was held at Baroda House to honor outstanding employees in the Commercial Department of Northern Railway on Thursday, March 27, 2025.

The Principal Chief Commercial Manager, Nar Singh Ji, recognized their excellent work and highlighted the importance of service improvement.

He instructed ticket checking, parcel, and booking staff to perform



their duties with dedication, promptness, and

honesty to avoid inconvenience to passengers.

Special emphasis was placed on ensuring effective ticket checking to combat ticketless travel.

Additionally, he urged staff to manage crowds better at railway stations and insisted that all tasks must be completed on time.

Himanshu Shekhar Upadhyay, Chief Public Relations Officer, Northern Railway said, "Northern Railway aims to motivate its employees and enhance services for railway passengers."

SC judges B R Gavai Ujjal Bhuyan to attend legal awareness event in Arunachal Pradesh

New Delhi

Supreme Court judges B R Gavai and Ujjal Bhuyan will be attending a legal awareness event for a couple of days this month in Arunachal Pradesh, the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) on Thursday said.

In a press release, the authority said the "mega legal awareness programme camp-cum-sewa apke dvar" aims to strengthen legal outreach and awareness among tribal commu-



nities in Dirang and Bomdila in West Kameng District and in Tangang. Justice Gavai is the ex-

tending the event on March 29 and 30, would also visit a jail aside from a children's home in Tangang, engaging with vulnerable groups to assess their legal needs and ensure access to justice.

"These camps are being organised for dissemination of information to the tribal communities for their legal empowerment under various key laws such as the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers

(Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006, the Assam Frontier (Administration of Justice) Regulation, 1945, and the Arunachal Pradesh Civil Court Act, 2021," the release said.

The focus would also be on the NALSA (Protection and Enforcement of Tribal Rights) Scheme, 2015, the schemes of Arunachal Pradesh State Legal Services Authority and other central and state welfare schemes, it added.

"In Arunachal Pradesh, as per the 2011 Census, over 68 per cent of the population belongs to tribal communities, highlighting the pressing need for targeted legal initiatives to safeguard their rights and ensure their welfare," NALSA said.

Participants would receive on-the-spot legal assistance, enabling immediate access to legal aid, grievance redressal and welfare benefits, the release added.

Judge transfer
Allahabad
lawyers' strike
to continue
on March 28

Prayagraj: Allahabad High Court lawyers, protesting against the transfer of Delhi High Court judge Yashwant Verma to Allahabad High Court, continued their strike on Thursday.

Justice Verma is in the middle of a row involving discovery of wads of cash at his official Lutyn's Delhi residence after a fire.

"The lawyers' strike has brought the judicial proceedings in Allahabad High Court to a complete stop.

The Allahabad High Court Bar Association (AHCA) issued a statement that the strike would continue on March 28.

During an executive meeting held at around 2 pm on Thursday, it was suggested that office bearers of all bar associations would be invited to join the protest.

AHCA secretary Vikram Pandey told PTI Video, "We are determined to continue our strike until the Supreme Court collegium takes a firm decision on this matter and halts the transfer of Justice Yashwant Verma."

He added, "I spoke to our association president last evening, and he informed me that the government has assured us that no decision will be made on the collegium's transfer recommendation at this time."

On March 26, AHCA president Anil Tiwari met with the union law minister and members of the Supreme Court collegium, urging them to reconsider Justice Verma's transfer.

Meanwhile, advocates' association general secretary Ishan Dev Giri, who is also associated with the Allahabad High Court, issued a separate statement, saying the association had requested the Supreme Court to maintain a status quo on the transfer until the conclusion of the investigation involving the judge.

"Additionally, we have urged the chief justice of India, the chief justice of Allahabad High Court, and other judges to restore normalcy in the court in the best interests of the institution and litigants," Giri added.

In a related development, leaders of six high court bar associations, including Tiwari, on Thursday met Chief Justice of India Sanjay Khanna and sought withdrawal of the transfer recommendation.

Faith-driven economic growth to power Mirzapur's rapid progress: CM Yogi

Mirzapur: Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has emphasised connecting Mirzapur to the path of development through the core principles of faith and economy.

The CM was attending a programme at BJJ Ground in Mirzapur on Thursday in the presence of Union Minister Anupriya Patel and UP Jal Shakti Minister Swatantra Dev Singh.

In his address, the Chief Minister stated, "With the blessings of Maa Vindhyavasi and the double-engine government, Mirzapur's development has accelerated significantly."

He highlighted the progress achieved in Mirzapur over the past eight years and inaugurated as well as laid the foundation stones for new projects. Additionally, he visited an exhibition and honoured the beneficiaries of various government schemes.

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath visited Maa Vindhyavasi Dham in Mirzapur on the final day of a three-day programme, marking the completion of eight years of the state government.

Nation not built by slogans but by performing duties Adityanath

Lucknow: Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Thursday said the nation is not served by slogans or speeches but by performing duties honestly and he asserted that the state has been made into a "growth engine" in the eight years of his stewardship.

Addressing an appointment letter distribution programme for medical officers of Ayush Department here, the chief minister said, "Eight years ago, Uttar Pradesh was known as a 'Bimaru' (sick) state. It wasn't the state but the system that was sick. The working methods of the past governments were sick and this led to a state incapable of making decisions and delivering results."

"Today, we see a new Uttar Pradesh, one that takes decisions with care, transparency and honesty. These are the same values that have brought about significant changes in the state," he said, according to a statement.

Adityanath claimed that UP has experienced remarkable progress, particularly in adminis-



tration. Upon arrival, he first toured an exhibition showcasing ODO products and various development initiatives in the district. He then inaugurated several new projects aimed at furthering the district's progress.

Sharing the stage with Union Minister Anupriya Patel and State Jal Shakti Minister Swatantra Dev Singh, the Chief Minister distributed certificates and honour letters to beneficiaries of government schemes. He also handed appointment letters to Anganwadi workers, house keys to benefici-

ciaries of the PM and Mukhyamantri Awas Yojana, and a Rs 5 lakh cheque to a recipient of the Mukhyamantri Yuva Udayam Yojana.

Additionally, laptops and tablets were distributed under the Chief Minister Bal Seva Yojana, while Divyang children received Braille kits and hearing aids.

The programme began with a welcome address by Union Minister Anupriya Patel, who expressed gratitude to the Chief Minister for Mirzapur's development over the past eight years and requested the establishment of a ceram-

ic park and a Kendriya Vidyalaya in the district.

The Chief Minister stated, "Blessed by Maa Vindhyavasi and powered by the double-engine government, Mirzapur's development is unstoppable. Once overlooked before 2017, this land of immense potential will now be seamlessly connected through the Vindhya Expressway, unlocking new avenues for rapid growth."

He further highlighted the state's efforts, mentioning that a medical college has already been established in the district and that a university for undergraduate

Jhansi: Uttar Pradesh Police has busted a gang that allegedly lured unmarried men with fake promises of marriage and extorted money from them, officials said Thursday.

Four members of the gang, including a woman, were arrested on Wednesday while attempting to take back a bride after receiving Rs 1 lakh for the wedding.

Police said the gang had duped several people to promote Chunar's stone carving alongside the district's renowned brass artistry.

Additionally, he stressed the importance of creating employment opportunities by supporting small industries. Under the Mukhyamantri Yuva Udayam Yojana, the government is facilitating loans of up to Rs 5 lakh for youth and women to establish their own businesses.

Gang duping unmarried men with fake marriage promises busted in UP's Jhansi 4 held

assuring Dalchand that he would return in a few days to complete the court marriage process. However, on Wednesday, two men, identified as Jai Kushwaha and Aditya, arrived and tried to forcibly take Rozi Khan away, threatening Dalchand with legal trouble if he resisted. This led to a confrontation, and local police were alerted, the officer said.

"During our investigation, we found that all four suspects were part of a fraud gang based in Jabalpur that had been duping people by arranging fake marriages in exchange for money," Sahu said.

The arrested individuals have been identified as Rozi Khan (wife of Sagar Khan), Jai Kushwaha (son of Ratan Kushwaha), Aditya (son of Ajay Srivas), and Sagar Khan, all residents of Jabalpur, he said.

Sahu added that the gang had carried out similar frauds across Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh.

"A detailed investigation is underway to identify more victims and trace other members of the gang," he added.

The gang members took Rs 1 lakh and left,

UP govt set to bring Ramayan Park to life in Ghaziabad

Lucknow: The Yogi government, committed to transforming Uttar Pradesh into Uttar Pradesh, is focusing on the development of Ghaziabad and enhancing its infrastructure. In line with Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's vision, the Ghaziabad Development Authority (GDA) is set to commence work on Ramayan Park, Sanskriti Darshan Park, and Greenwood Park from April.

The master plan for the Ramayan Park has already been finalized. The park will feature a 5D motion chair theater and a mirror house, while installations such as holographic projections, a light and sound show, and artistic representations of Ramayan-era characters will be developed at a cost of over Rs 26.26 crore.

Similarly, Sanskriti Darshan Park and Greenwood Park will see construction and development projects worth Rs 16.57 crore, with work set to begin in April.

As per the master plan, the park will feature 45 artistic installations, including 15 sculptures of Ramayan-era characters. It will also include multimedia entertainment elements such as a mirror maze, holographic projections, a 5D motion chair theater, and a kids' activity zone.



The designated land for the park is located at Koyal Enclave, Loni Bhopura Road, covering an area of 22,700 square meters (5.61 acres). Revenue generation for GDA will come from entry tickets, parking fees, advertisements, the mirror maze, and the 5D auditorium. The entire project is set to be completed within

a year. According to the master plan, Sanskriti Darshan Park will be developed on a 10.3-acre site located at Hathai Park/Rani Avanti Bai Park. The park will feature a kids' activity area along with various public amenities. A special highlight of this park will be art installations made from recycled materials, promoting environmental conservation values.

Similarly, Greenwood Park will be developed at Nimbu Park, covering 3.95 acres. This park will include food kiosks, allowing visitors to enjoy a variety of cuisines. Both parks will feature 22 unique art installations.

The development work for both parks is expected to be completed within six months. Additionally, Ramayan Park, Sanskriti Darshan Park, and Greenwood Park will be equipped with CCTV surveillance, toilet blocks, and walking lanes, ensuring a well-maintained and visitor-friendly environment.

SANKALP transforms UP's Skill development under Yogi's Leadership

Lucknow: Uttar Pradesh has witnessed remarkable strides in youth skill development and employment generation under the leadership of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath. The Skill Acquisition and Knowledge Awareness for Livelihood Promotion (SANKALP) programme has played a crucial role in empowering youth and connecting them with employment opportunities, setting new benchmarks in the state's skill development landscape.

Supported by the Government of India and the World Bank, the initiative has modernized and expanded skill training, ensuring inclusivity and enabling marginalized communities to enter the mainstream workforce. Aligned with CM Yogi's vision of



service-driven governance, SANKALP has established Uttar Pradesh as a front-runner in skill development, creating pathways to self-reliance for thousands of youth.

A significant milestone in the initiative was the approval of a

Rs 74.48 crore project in 2019-20, aimed at enhancing the state's skill development ecosystem and expanding employment avenues. Several key interventions followed, including:

SANKALP has also embraced digital education, integrating

skill training with formal learning. A key initiative under this was Project Praveen, which benefited 63,000 students in government secondary schools and Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas by equipping them with essential skills along

side their regular education.

Additionally, engineering colleges were engaged as training providers, leveraging their infrastructure and faculty to ensure high-quality instruction. To keep pace with technological advancements, 100 students, 50 ITI instructors, and 50 science teachers were trained in Artificial Intelligence, Robotics, and Advanced Computing at IIT Mandi, Himachal Pradesh.

In line with the Uttar Pradesh IT-ITES Policy 2022, guidelines were formulated to collaborate with industrial establishments and Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs) to address the growing demand for IT-skilled professionals. These efforts have significantly boosted the

state's IT ecosystem, preparing youth for future job markets.

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath hailed SANKALP as a game-changer in youth empowerment, stating that the government's goal is not just to secure jobs but also to transform youth into job creators. By bridging the skill gap, promoting self-employment, and integrating cutting-edge technology in training, the initiative has strengthened Uttar Pradesh's position as a leader in skill development and economic empowerment.

With continuous efforts and strategic initiatives, the SANKALP programme is shaping a brighter future for Uttar Pradesh's youth, equipping them with skills that meet the demands of the ever-evolving job market.

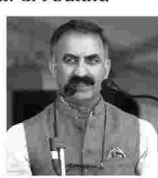
Zero tolerance policy against drug abuse in Himachal: CM Sukhu

Shimla: Zero tolerance policy against drug abuse would be adopted in the state, Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Sukhinder Singh Sukhu announced in Vidhan Sabha on Thursday.

Responding to a discussion brought by Congress MLA Kewal Singh Pathania regarding the elimination of drugs and making a permanent policy against it, Sukhu said that strict action within a month will be taken against government officials and employees found involved in drug smuggling.

The state government is serious about the problem of increasing drug abuse and action would also be initiated against government employees providing secret information to the drug smugglers, he told the house.

Two bills have been introduced by the gov-



ernment in the current session on Wednesday to put a tab on drugs and a drug de-addiction center would come up in an area of 150 bighas in Kotla near Solan district for which a provision of Rs 5 crore has been made in the budget, he said.

Mapping of drug consumers is being done in 3,605 panchayats which aims to reveal the drug abuser and his sources of drugs (Chitta-adulterated heroin), he said.

He added that strict instructions have been given to SPs that there should be no interference of any officer or politician regarding the drugs.

South Korea struggles to contain wildfires that have killed 28

Cheongsong (South Korea):

Helicopters dumped water over a burning forest in South Korea on Thursday as fire crews struggled to contain the country's worst-ever wildfires, which have killed 28 people, forced at least 37,800 to flee their homes and destroyed thousands of structures and vehicles.

Multiple wildfires fuelled by strong winds and dry weather have been raging across South Korea's southeastern regions since last Friday. The government has mobilized thousands of personnel, dozens of helicopters and other equipment to extinguish the blazes, but gusty winds are hampering their efforts.

Rain was expected later Thursday. But Korea Forest Service chief Lim Sang-seop said the amount — less than 5 millimetres — is forecast — likely won't help much in extinguishing the wildfires.

The fatalities include a pilot whose helicopter crashed during efforts to contain a fire Wednesday and four firefighters and other workers who died earlier after being trapped by fast-moving flames.

Authorities haven't disclosed details of the civilian dead, except that they are mostly in their 60s or older who found it difficult to escape quickly or who even refused orders to evacuate.

Israel's parliament approves key part of Netanyahu's divisive judicial overhaul

Jerusalem: Israel's parliament on Thursday passed a key part of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's plan to overhaul the judiciary, angering critics who view it as a power grab by his far-right government.

The planned overhaul sparked mass demonstrations in 2023, leaving the country deeply divided before Hamas' October 7 attack that year which triggered the war in the Gaza Strip.

The revival of the plans in recent weeks has added fuel to protests over Netanyahu's handling of the Gaza hostage crisis and his recent moves to fire or sideline top officials.

The law passed Thursday gives the government a larger role in appointing judges. It would give another two of the nine seats on the Judicial Selection Committee to lawyers chosen by the government and the



opposition. Those seats are currently held by the Israeli Bar Association. The political appointees would have the power to veto nominations to the Supreme Court and lower courts.

Supporters of the measure say it gives more power to elected officials. Netanyahu, who is on trial over corruption allegations, has long portrayed himself as the victim of a "deep

state" made up of unelected officials, as well law enforcement and hostile media.

Critics say the changes would undermine an independent body that provides essential checks and balances. The law wouldn't take effect until the next Knesset, and the opposition has vowed to repeal it if it regains power.

Debate ran through the night before the bill

was passed early Thursday. Most of Israel's opposition boycotted the final vote, where the measure passed 67-1.

They vowed immediately to repeal it, saying in a statement that the law "had one goal — to ensure that judges become subject to the will of politicians."

Justice Minister Yariv Levin, the architect of the judicial overhaul, called it a "historic and

The revival of the plans in recent weeks has added fuel to protests over Netanyahu's handling of the Gaza hostage crisis and his recent moves to fire or sideline top officials.

necessary change" that would open the judicial system to "everyone, including those with a different agenda, including those from a different background."

Petitions against the law have already been filed with the Supreme Court.

The law constitutes a dramatic change in the "basic structure" of parliamentary democracy in Israel, the Movement for Quality of Government said in its petition. Eliad Shraga, chair of the group, accused the government of "exploiting a time of war as a smokescreen to advance a political agenda."

South Sudan opposition says peace deal collapsed after arrest of its leader

Juba (South Sudan): South Sudan's main opposition party said Thursday a peace agreement that ended a five-year civil war has collapsed, following the arrest of its leader Riek Machar a day earlier.

The party's deputy chairperson, Oyot Nathaniel Pierino, said in a statement that the agreement "has been abrogated" and that Machar's arrest shows a lack of political goodwill to achieve peace and stability.

The UN warned on Monday that the country was teetering on the edge of a renewed civil war following fighting in the north between an armed group allied to Machar and government forces.

South Sudan's five-year civil war, in which 400,000 people were killed, ended in a 2018 peace agreement that brought President Salva Kiir and Machar together in a unity government. Machar

is one of the five vice presidents in the country.

Machar was "in confinement by the government" and his life was "at risk," opposition spokesperson Pal Mai Deng said in a video address to the media Wednesday night.

The head of the UN mission in South Sudan, Nicholas Haysom, said following reports of the detention of Machar all parties should "exercise restraint and uphold the Revitalized Peace Agreement."

Tensions have been increasing between Kiir and Machar's parties and escalated in March when the White Army, an armed group loyal to Machar, overran an army base in Upper Nile state and attacked a UN helicopter.

The government responded with airstrikes, warning any civilian in the area where the army group is based to vacate or "face consequences."

Baloch insurgents target bus passengers from Punjab kill 6 abduct 3

Karachi:

Insurgents shot dead six people and abducted three after stopping a bus in Balochistan, and offloading passengers from Pakistan's Punjab. In another terror attack in the province, three people were killed and 17 injured after a bomb exploded near a police vehicle, officials said.

The two attacks come a fortnight after the banned separatist outfit Balochistan Liberation Army laid siege to a train



in the Bolan district and killed 26 hostages, including 18 security personnel. The bus attack occurred in the Gwadar district when armed men stopped a Kara-

chi-bound passenger bus near the Kalmat area on the Ormara highway late on Wednesday, said Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Hafeez Baloch.

The gunmen offloaded some passengers and shot six people, five of whom were killed instantly while one survivor passed away later in the hospital Thursday morning.

"Armed men killed six passengers after checking their ID cards and

took away three others," he said, adding that all victims belonged to the country's Punjab province.

No group claimed responsibility for the attack, but in the past, ethnic Baloch terrorist groups carried out such targeted attacks against the people of Punjab.

In a separate terror incident, a bomb exploded near a police vehicle in the Barech Market area of Quetta on Thursday, killing three people and

injuring 17 others.

Balochistan government spokesperson Shahid Kinn said that an Improvised Explosive Device (IED) was hidden in a motorcycle which detonated near a parked police vehicle.

Police surgeon Dr Ayesha Faiz said that three people were killed and another 21 injured, including four policemen.

"Four injured persons are in a critical condition," he said. However, the interior

ministry confirmed only two deaths in a statement.

Video footage showed people gathered at the scene of the blast, with the flaming wreckage of the motorcycle next to the charred police pickup truck.

No group has so far claimed responsibility for the blast but the Balochistan Liberation Army has been involved in several attacks on the security forces in the province.

BUSINESS

India Offers USD 3.73 Billion Loans to 6 Countries

New Delhi:

India has offered new loans of USD 3.73 billion, under the Lines of Credit and Concessional Financing Scheme, through a lending bank to six partner countries during January 2022-January 2025, the Parliament was informed on Thursday.

Minister of State for External Affairs Kirti Vardhan Singh said this in a written response to a query in Rajya Sabha.

The Ministry of External Affairs was asked the details of foreign aid, developmental assistance, and loans provided by India to other countries between January 2022 and January 2025.

"Government of India has offered new loans, under the Lines of Credit (LOCs) and Concessional Financing Scheme (CFS), through a lending bank to six partner countries during January 2022-January 2025.

"The total amount of loans offered to these partner countries during

the above-mentioned period stands at over USD 3.73 billion. This excludes disbursements for ongoing projects under earlier LOCs," the minister said.

"The MEA was also asked the details of foreign aid, developmental assistance, and loans received by India from other countries between January 2022 and January 2025.

"Government of India receives external assistance from multilateral and bilateral sources. Multilateral sources include World Bank Group (International Bank For Reconstruction And Development & International Development Association), Asian Development Bank, European Investment Bank, New Development Bank (NDB), Asia Infrastructure Investment Bank, International Fund for Agricultural Development and Global Fund Organisation," Singh said.

Finance Bill 2025 Approved: India Completes Budget FY26

New Delhi:

The Rajya Sabha on Thursday returned the Finance Bill 2025 to the Lok Sabha, along with 35 government amendments, including one that abolishes a 6 per cent digital tax on online advertisements, thus completing the 2025-26 budgetary exercise that started on February 1.

The House also returned the Appropriation Bill (3) with a voice vote.

Earlier in the day, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman had moved the two bills in the House.

The Lok Sabha had passed the Finance Bill on March 25 and passed the Appropriation Bill on March 21.

Replying to the debate later in the evening, she said the tendency of the



finance ministry would be to exercise caution and not let go of revenues.

"But, here we wanted to use this opportunity to show our respect for Indian taxpayer. We have moved towards setting Rs 12 lakh as threshold up to which no

one will have to pay any tax," Sitharaman said.

The Union Budget 2025-26 envisages a total expenditure of Rs 50.65 lakh crore, an increase of 7.4 per cent over the current fiscal.

The total capital expenditure proposed for the next fiscal is Rs

11.22 lakh crore and an effective capital expenditure of Rs 15.48 lakh crore.

It proposes a gross tax revenue collection of Rs 42.70 lakh crore and a gross borrowing of Rs 14.01 lakh crore.

According to Budget documents, Rs

5,41,850.21 crore has been earmarked for Centrally Sponsored Schemes for the financial year starting April 1, 2025. This compares with Rs 4,15,356.25 crore for the current financial year.

For central sector schemes, Rs 16.29 lakh crore have been earmarked for FY26 compared to Rs 15.13 lakh crore for 2024-25.

Budget estimates of expenditure for 2025-26 have increased due to several reasons, including a rise in payments of interest on market loans, treasury bills, external loans, small savings and provident funds; higher requirements of Armed Forces, including capital expenditure; and more provisions for employment generation scheme.

Delhi gears up for Eid long weekend: redBus projects 104% surge in intercity Bus Travel

New Delhi:

As the Eid long weekend approaches, intercity bus travel from the capital is set to witness an unprecedented surge. Leading online bus ticketing platform redBus has projected a 104% year-on-year increase in bookings, compared to travel in the previous week. Popular destinations such as Dehradun, Jaipur, Manali, Rishikesh, and Lucknow are expected to see the highest footfall as travelers make the most of the extended break.

According to redBus data, the demand for air-conditioned buses has skyrocketed, with over 97% of passengers opting for AC travel, reflecting a growing preference for comfort and convenience. The majority of bookings—46%—come from the 21-35 age group, while the gender split remains nearly even, with 52% male and 48% female passengers. Key boarding hubs such as ISBT Kashmere Gate, Dhania Kuan, and Anand Vihar are experiencing the highest demand.

Hill stations in Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh are emerging as top travel choices, with routes from Delhi to Dehradun, Jaipur, Manali, Rishikesh, and Lucknow ranking among the most popular.

RBI Repo Rate Cut: 25 bps in April, 75 bps in FY26 - Ind-Ra

New Delhi:

The RBI's monetary policy committee is expected to cut benchmark interest rate by 25 basis points in its policy review meeting next month to push growth, India Ratings and Research (Ind-Ra) said on Thursday.

"We expect the headline inflation in FY25 to cool off to 4.7 per cent. Monetary easing may be limited to 75 bps in FY26," Ind-Ra Chief Economist and Head Public Finance, Devendra Kumar Pant said.

However, if the impact of US reciprocal tariff turns out to be higher than expected,



there may be higher easing by RBI, Ind-Ra

said in a statement. The RBI's monetary

policy committee is scheduled to meet 6

"We expect the headline inflation in FY25 to cool off to 4.7 per cent. Monetary easing may be limited to 75 bps in FY26," Ind-Ra Chief Economist and Head Public Finance, Devendra Kumar Pant said.

times in the next fiscal 2025-26 beginning April 1. The first meeting is slated for April 7-9.

"Ind-Ra expects the monetary policy committee (MPC) to opt in for a 25bps cut in policy rates in its forthcoming April 2025 meeting," the rating agency said.

Higher and stubborn inflation had prompted the RBI to tighten the monetary policy, and it raised the policy rate by 250 bps between May 2022 and February 2023, reaching 6.5 per cent.

In February 2025, the repo rate was cut by 25 bps to 6.25 per cent.

Ind-Ra expects the headline retail inflation in March quarter of FY25 to fall below 4 per cent, after a gap of 21 quarters.

It expects RBI to go in for maximum three rate cuts in FY26, aggregating to 75 bps. "These along with one rate cut in Febru-

ary 2025 would translate in a 100bps cut in the current policy easing with the terminal repo rate at 5.5 per cent and average inflation at around 4 per cent, which would translate in a real repo rate of 1.5 per cent in FY26," Ind-Ra said.

The February 2025 MPC minutes suggest that the RBI is cognizant of slowing growth momentum. This suggests that while the low and stable inflation is the prime target of the RBI, the growth support through monetary policy will increasingly be a focus area of monetary policy, Ind-Ra added.

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RCB look up to batters to end 17-year Chennai jinx; Bhuvneshwar, Pathirana fitness in focus

Chennai
Royal Challengers Bengaluru's hopes of exorcising a 17-year jinx hinge on their experienced batting unit finding its range when they face familiar foes Chennai Super Kings in their IPL match here on Friday.

The Royal Challengers have beaten the Super Kings only once at Chepauk — in the inaugural edition of the tournament in 2008. In the current RCB squad, only star batter Virat Kohli was part of that moment and now he will look to breach the CSK's fortress for a second time.

But that's easy to dream. As ever, the Chennai outfit is constructed to win their home matches on a pitch that offers considerable help to spinners.

They have the ever-familiar Ravindra Jadeja and have brought back 'old boy' Ravichandran Ashwin through last year's players' auction.

The Chennai side has also added Afghanistan left-arm wrist spinner Noor Ahmad too to the squad, and the troika did well against fellow five-time champions Mumbai Indians a few days back.

The triumvirate bowled 11 overs against Mumbai, conceding an appreciable 70 runs for five wickets.

The pitch is expected to retain its character for this match as well, and the RCB batters, led by Kohli, will have to lift their game several notches to outwit an experienced bowling unit.

Outwit is the key word here. The Royal Challengers' batting unit should be clever more than downright ag-



gressive to score off CSK's three-pronged spin unit, and Kohli should lead that charge.

Negating spin has not always been a strong point of Kohli's batting but in the last two years or so he has showed massive improvement in that department.

Central to that change is his willingness to play more sweep/slog

sweeps against spinners, and Kohli will have to bring all those expertise to the table on a blockbuster Friday evening.

But then Kohli alone won't be able to tackle a competent bowling machine, and he will require full-hearted support from Phil Salt, skipper Rajat Patidar, Liam Livingstone, Jitesh Sharma etc.

Looking at the Chepauk pitch, RCB

might even consider bringing in Jacob Bethell, possibly for Tim David, who also provides a left-arm spin option.

They will also keep an eye on the fitness of pacer Bhuvneshwar Kumar, who missed the first match against KKR due to a niggle, and if the veteran is fit then he will come in for Raskh Salam.

On the other hand, the Super Kings

will be eager for their middle-order to find its groove as Shivam Dube, Deepak Hooda and Sam Curran faltered against MI in the last match.

They should lend more support to Rachin Ravindra and captain Ruturaj Gaikwad, while hoping for another strong cameo from MS Dhoni if it comes to that.

The CSK will also closely monitor the fitness of ace pacer Matheesha Pathirana, who missed the game against Mumbai.

Nathan Ellis may sit out if the Sri Lankan regains his fitness in time.

Teams (from): Chennai Super Kings: Ruturaj Gaikwad (c), MS Dhoni, Ravindra Jadeja, Shivam Dube, Matheesha Pathirana, Noor Ahmad, Ravichandran Ashwin, Devon Conway, Syed Khaleel Ahmed, Rachin Ravindra, Rahul Tripathi, Vijay Shankar, Sam Curran, Shaik Rashid, Anshul Kamboj, Mukesh Choudhary, Deepak Hooda, Gurjanpreet Singh, Nathan Ellis, Jamie Overton, Kamlesh Nagarkoti, Ramakrishnan Ghosh, Shreyas Gopal, Vansh Bedi, Andre Siddarth.

Royal Challengers Bengaluru: Rajat Patidar (c), Virat Kohli, Yash Dayal, Josh Hazlewood, Phil Salt, Jitesh Sharma, Liam Livingstone, Raskh Salam, Suyash Sharma, Krupal Pandya, Bhuvneshwar Kumar, Swapnil Singh, Tim David, Romario Shepherd, Nuwan Thushara, Manoj Bhandage, Jacob Bethell, Devdutt Padikkal, Swastik Chikara, Lungi Ngidi, Abhinandan Singh, Mohit Rathee. Match starts at 7:30 PM.



“Poor death bowling and lack of support for Root cost England, says Jos Buttler

I'm used to bowling with someone who is better than me: Moeen Ali

Guwahati

A candid Moeen Ali, who temporarily but successfully filled the void of Sunil Narine during Kolkata Knight Riders' IPL match against Rajasthan Royals, says he is "used to bowling with someone who is better than me." Part of a KKR attack that also has Varun Chakravarthy in its ranks, Moeen worked well in tandem with the Indian mystery spinner and choked RR in the middle overs to restrict them to 151 for nine in their contest here on Wednesday.

"My job was to keep it tight, so that he can build the pressure and maybe get wickets. I'm used to bowling with someone who is better than me and has more mystery than me. My job is to bowl as tight as I can and hopefully that builds pressure for that person to then get wickets," Moeen said at the post-match press conference.

"Varun is bowling outstandingly well as we know and he is a brilliant bowler. He has improved so much over the last two-three years. It is amazing to bowl with somebody like that," he added.

While the 37-year-old Moeen rose to the challenge to return impressive figures of 2/29 from four overs, his younger spin colleague Chakravarthy finished with 2/23 in his full quota of four overs.

RR enjoyed a fruitful Power Play, scoring 54 runs in the first six overs but the introduction of spin changed the complexion of their innings.

Moeen dismissed Yashasvi Jaiswal in his second over but his best moment of the game came when he sent back Nitish Rana with a classic off-spinner that turned away sharply from the left-handed batter to hit the middle stump.

"That ball was a nice one. I was just trying to spin it as much as I could. I knew that there was a bit of pressure being built and I just tried to bowl in a good area, spin it as much as I could."

"I don't have the skill as other bowlers but my job is to contain as much as I can, not get hit for six over my head. If they play good shots and hit me for fours and sixes, then I'm pleased with that. My skill is that I think like a batter, so I think what they think and it works in my favour." Narine was unavailable for the match in Guwahati due to illness, forcing KKR skipper Ajinkya Rahane to turn to the former England international hours before the game.

"T20 is an unforgiving format and Moeen admitted that bowlers need to evolve to keep challenging the batters."

"India is a great place to bat. But on wickets like this, you aren't going to get 300, you probably aren't even going to get 200. It's great to have these games in between those (high scoring) games."

"Big scoring games are great to see but it also gives a false sense of security, which is a bit too much. The game is developing fast and people are just fearless at the moment."

Very happy with how Moeen bowled: Rahane

Guwahati

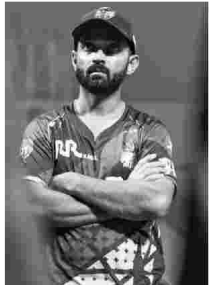
Moeen Ali was an eleventh hour inclusion in KKR's playing eleven due to Sunil Narine's injury and skipper Ajinkya Rahane couldn't be more chuffed about England off-spinner's game-changing spell against the Rajasthan Royals in an IPL match here on Wednesday.

On a tacky track where the ball was gripping and turning, Ali picked up two for 23 and got able support from Varun Chakravarthy (2/17) in restricting RR to 151 for nine which was chased down in 17.3 overs.

"Moeen got his opportunity and he bowled really well. Credit goes to our bowling unit too who were always looking to pick wickets, especially Moeen," skipper Rahane said at the post-match presentation ceremony.

Asked if Moeen was given any strategic instruction from the team management, Rahane replied in the negative.

"Not much, complete freedom from our side. Moeen is a quality player who has opened in the past. He couldn't get going with the bat, but very happy



with what he did with the ball.

"The challenge is to stay in the moment, and every game is an opportunity to learn," the KKR skipper added.

Moeen, who has already quit international cricket, said that he didn't let up his intensity in training despite knowing that he would have to wait for his turn with Chakravarthy and Narine being a settled spin bowling pair.

A huge challenge for RCB to go to Chepauk, they need to adjust team composition: Shane Watson

Chennai

Watson, who played for both CSK and RCB in his IPL career, cited the presence of quality spinners in Chennai's ranks as primary reason for their dominance at their home venue.

"CSK's entire setup is built around excelling in Chennai. Just look at the three spinners who bowled brilliantly in their opening game against MI — Ashwin, Jadeja, and Noor Ahmad. They are going to be a real handful on that surface."

"Seeing Noor Ahmad make such an impact in his first game for CSK will only boost the team's confidence, knowing they have another wicket-taking option," he added.

Watson, who was a part of Rajasthan Royals' title run in 2008, said his former club is thin on spin resources and it was revealed in the match against the Knight Riders.

"The KKR scored an eight-wicket win over RR in Guwahati on Wednesday. "The Rajasthan Royals batters struggled to find their timing and made a few execution errors, which prevented them from putting up a big total."



"A major difference was the calibre and quality of KKR's spin attack. Varun Chakravarthy and Moeen Ali bowled exceptionally well, whereas Rajasthan's bowlers, particularly in the middle overs, lacked the potency we've seen from them in the past."

The lack of bite in RR bowling, Watson said, made things easier for Quinton de Kock, who slammed an unbeaten 97 off 61 balls.

"This (lack of depth in bowling) made things a lot easier for Quinton de Kock — he was patient, waiting for loose deliveries, and didn't take unnecessary risks. With his wide range of shots, he can accelerate quickly when he's at his best," Watson noted.

It's fine for now but all-rounders could lose at out at some stage: Phillips on Impact Player

New Delhi

The Impact Player rule in the IPL is working at the moment but it could pose issues for the development of all-rounders at some stage, reckons New Zealand and Gujarat Titans all-rounder Glenn Phillips.

The rule has divided opinions but the BCCI has extended it to at least the 2027 edition.

It essentially gives teams the license to go hard from ball one with the cushion of an extra batter in the form of an Impact Player. Similarly, teams can also bring in a specialist bowler instead of an all-rounder.

"I'm neither here nor there for it. It definitely allows a lineup to do different things. But I do feel like there could be an issue at some stage with all-rounders losing out and not being so prevalent, which then obviously has an impact on international game, international T20s, international one days," the Blackcaps cricketer told PTI.

"So for now, it's a great entertaining brand of cricket. But I think what the IPL has done really well is changed the rules to what the environment is going through."

"So, obviously, the impact player rule



is working at the moment, but then they could very well have another rule that comes in and go off with the impact player rule and bring another entertainment element into the game," said Phillips, arguably the best fielder in the modern game.

Last season, Rohit Sharma said he was not a fan of the impact player as it hinders the growth of Indian all-rounders. Ahead of the 2025 edition, Hardik Pandya said it is difficult to

draft a developing all-rounder in the starting eleven unless one is a pure all-rounder like him.

Phillips also backed the lifting of saliva ban ahead of the IPL 2025.

"You know, we've brought saliva back this year, which obviously will potentially enhance reverse swing as well. The bowlers need to be able to have something going for them if there's an extra batter going around."

"So I think that's what the IPL has done really well. So not necessarily the impact player per se, but the rules that they changed to keep it fresh and new," he added.

Now, the bowlers can use saliva to polish the ball in the league, to try and get some reverse swing going at least in the business end of an innings.

On the two-year ban imposed by the BCCI for last minute pullouts of foreign players from the IPL, Phillips said it was fine enough.

"At the end of the day, they warned people, if you come in and you decide to go, that they knew about the rules to start. If the rules weren't there, I think it would be a bit harsh, but the rule is there." Harry Brook was banned from the IPL for the current and next season following his late withdrawal.

It would be unfortunate if I don't use Shubman's knowledge Phillips surprisingly did not make Gujarat Titans debut in the team's opening game against Punjab Kings but considering the form he is in, he might get to play against Mumbai Indians on Saturday.

Injured Latham out of Pakistan ODIs, Bracewell continues as NZ captain



Wellington

New Zealand stumper-batsman Tom Latham was ruled out of the one-day series against Pakistan with a hand injury on Thursday leaving Michael Bracewell to continue as the side's captain.

With regular white-ball captain Mitchell Santner busy in the Indian Premier League, Bracewell led New Zealand to a 4-1 victory in a T20 series against Pakistan.

Latham was due to lead New Zealand in the three-match ODI series beginning in Napier on Saturday, but he fractured his hand while batting in the nets and will require at least four weeks to recover, the New Zealand Cricket (NZC) said in a statement.

Opener Will Young, meanwhile, will

miss the last two ODIs to be with his wife as they await the birth of their first child.

"It's obviously disappointing to lose Tom as captain on the eve of the series and we wish him a speedy recovery," New Zealand head coach Gary Stead said.

"The side is in safe hands with Michael, who's done a great job through the T20 series."

Nichols will return from a calf strain to replace Latham, while Mitch Hay will keep wickets. Canterbury batsman Rhyss Mariu earned his maiden call-up as a batting cover.

"We've had to be flexible this tour with numerous players unavailable for different reasons," Stead said.



Reetika Hooda in line for first senior Asian "Ch" ship gold, three others in bronze contention

Amman (Jordan)
 Putting up an expected dominating show, Olympian Reetika Hooda reached the final of the women's 76kg category at the Asian Championship without losing a point, while three of her compatriots advanced to the bronze medal contention, here on Thursday.

The 22-year-old Reetika, who became first Indian female wrestler to be crowned U23 World Champion and youngest to qualify for Olympics, outclassed Japan's Nodok Yamamoto and Korea's Seoyeon Jeong on her way to the gold medal bout.

First up for her was Jeong, who she beat by technical superiority. She began the scoring with a take-down move and followed that up with a single-leg attack to add two more to her kitty. Reetika ended the bout in a jiffy when she got hold of the Korean's legs and employed the 'fitley' move. Against Yamamoto, the U23 World



bronze medallist, Reetika followed the same pattern and in the second period found a way to pin her rival when she had a 6-0 lead. Reetika had won a bronze at the

2023 Asian Championships in Astana. In 55kg, Nishu lost her qualification bout to Yuxuan Li but the Chinese reached the final, opening the

repechage route for the Indian. Capitalising on the chance, Nishu beat Vietnam's My Trang Nguyen to set up a bronze medal clash against Mongolia's Otgonkhaya Bayanmunkh. Anuksh (50kg) also made it to the repechage round after losing the opening bout by technical superiority to Japan's Remina Yoshimoto but conceded the match against Korea's Miran Cheon due an injury.

In 68kg Mansi Lather made a strong start, winning her opening bout against Korea's Sheng Feng Cai by technical superiority and got a walk-over from Japanese Ami Ishii. She lost her semifinal 1-10 to China's Zhen Li and will now fight for bronze with Kazakhstan's Irina Kazulina. Also reaching the bronze medal clash was Miskan (59kg), who easily beat Philippines' Arián G Carpio but lost her quarterfinal to Japan's Sakurra Onishi. She will now fight it out with Mongolia's Aljin Togtokh.

ITF settles legal dispute with former Davis Cup partner Kosmos

London
 The International Tennis Federation has settled its dispute with investment group Kosmos after their Davis Cup partnership was abruptly terminated in 2023. "Kosmos and the International Tennis Federation (ITF) have reached an amicable resolution regarding their previous contractual disagreements related to the organisation of the Davis Cup," the ITF said in a statement on Thursday.



Owned by former Barcelona soccer player Gerard Pique, Kosmos signed a 25-year deal worth \$3 billion to co-run the men's Davis Cup team competition in 2018. At the time the ITF said the deal would safeguard the historic Davis Cup competition and allow them to invest in all levels of the sport and "deliver long-term benefits for players, nations, fans, sponsors and broadcasters". The controversial revamp of the Davis Cup, including the ditching of the traditional 'home and away' knockout

rounds, was launched in 2019 to much fanfare with 18 nations competing in "The Finals" in Madrid, dubbed the World Cup of tennis. After the 2020 edition was cancelled because of the pandemic, it returned in 2021 with three cities hosting the finals and the format was changed again in 2022. In January 2023, the ITF announced it had ended the deal saying that "financial contingencies" were in place for its team event that began in 1900.

New Juventus manager Tudor outlines tactical revamp

Italy
 Newly-appointed Juventus manager Igor Tudor at his first press conference on Thursday emphasised the urgent need for swift tactical changes to rejuvenate the team's performances. The former Croatia centre-back was appointed Juve manager just after Thiago Motta was sacked on Sunday following two consecutive heavy defeats in a disappointing season, with the Turin club fifth in Serie A — one point off the top four.

Tudor, 46, knows he is under pressure to turn things around, starting with the home game against mid-table Genoa on Saturday. "We've started down a path of change with many new players, and this may have slowed the growth of the team. But when you're at Juve, you have to win and grow quickly," he told reporters.

"We need to work on everything and bring a sense of lightness. At the same time, we need to give something from a tactical perspective. But we need to go fast."

The former Juve player added that he wanted an attacking team, but with balance. "We must not give up on anything. I want people to have fun. I always want to score one more goal. Like attacking with many (players), but I also don't want to concede goals," Tudor said.

"The work must be complete. Football must go in a direction that makes it even more interesting, but we must not neglect balance. He added that his vision for the club would require some time to implement.

"I can't compare my Juve to others. I do my job. On Saturday, I hope to show the spirit that should never be missing. From a tactical point of view, it will take two to three weeks," he said.

"Everyone needs to take responsibility. The captain will remain (Manuel) Locatelli. He has the right qualities to be the captain."



Barca squad depth set to be tested with busy run of games



Brazil
 LaLiga leaders Barcelona will not have a moment to catch their breath as they play Osasuna and Girona in the space of three days after a punishing international break left their players either fatigued or unavailable and manager Hansi Flick fuming.

Barcelona and Osasuna were forced to reschedule their March 8 fixture following the death of the Catalan club's doctor and, with a busy schedule in other competitions, March 27 was the only date available straight after the international break. As 13 Barcelona players return from national team duty, Brazil's Raphinha has no time to fly back and recover for Thursday's game while several others participated in Nations League quarter-finals that went to extra time and penalties.

Barca play every three days until April 15, a run of seven games in three competitions. After playing Osasuna, they host Girona on Sunday and Atletico Madrid in the Copa del Rey semi-finals three days later following a 4-4 draw in the first leg.

Barcelona and Osasuna had appeals to postpone the game rejected and Flick's side must now fulfil the fixture without key forward Raphinha, who has played every LaLiga game this season and has 27 goals and 20 assists in all competitions.

Raphinha's leadership and his form have put him in the conversation for the Ballon d'Or but Flick did not mince his words when he bemoaned the fact he will not have the Brazil winger on Thursday when his side will be tested by Osasuna.

Midfielder Pedri said: "We're a little tired, but we can't forget that we're Barça. If it's decided we have to play on Thursday, we'll do it and give everything we have to win La Liga."

Barcelona are on a seven-match winning streak in LaLiga but Osasuna were the first team to beat them this season with a stunning 4-2 victory in September.

Back then Flick took the blame when his decision to rest key starters backfired but this time he has no choice but to rotate his squad with defender Pau Cubarsi also injured on Spain duty.

Struggling Napoli face Milan in pivotal clash for both sides

Georgia
 Second-placed Napoli are feeling the heat in the Serie A title race as they host AC Milan on Sunday with Antonio Conte's side having struggled since the departure of Klavich Kvaratskhelia in January after only one win in their last seven league matches.

Conte has more than once expressed his frustration over the Georgia international's departure, having viewed Kvaratskhelia as a key figure in Napoli's future. The demanding coach has struggled to find a player capable of filling the winger's role.

Without the speedy playmaker Napoli have lost top spot to Inter Milan, who are three points clear with nine rounds left.

The Naples side face a Milan team on Sunday whose coach Sergio Conceicao is under pressure in a match that could help determine the trajectory of the final stretch for both clubs.

While Napoli remain in contention for the Scudetto, Milan's campaign is on the verge of being defined as a failure.

Conceicao's side sit ninth in the table, six points behind Bologna, who currently occupy the fourth and final Champions League place. The bright spot for the Portuguese manager is that he again has a full squad to choose from for the clash.

TUDOR'S JUVE
 Inter can strengthen their position atop Serie A when they host Udinese earlier on Sunday. After a season spent chasing Napoli, they have opened up a gap with a total of 64 points.

Udinese should present a manageable challenge, with Inter having four straight league wins over them, but the Nerazzurri may lack their usual attacking firepower as Lautaro Martinez and Marcus Thuram are likely to be sidelined due to injuries.



With key defenders Denzel Dumfries and Stefan de Vrij also unavailable, manager Simone Inzaghi will be left to test whether they have the squad depth to carry them through the final stretch of the season, as they aim to win another Scudetto.

Juve start their new era under manager Igor Tudor with a home match against Genoa on Saturday. The Turin club sacked Thiago Motta following two consecutive heavy defeats in a disappointing season, with the side fifth in the standings.

Former Juve player Tudor will have until the end of season to prove he can lead the "Old Lady" next term.

The challenges are mounting for the Croatian, who remains without key defensive players Gleson Bremer, Juan Cabal and Andrea Cambiaso, as he looks to bring stability to a side that has rotated personnel and positions throughout the season.

GASPERINI ERA
 For Atalanta, who visit Fiorentina on Sunday, the mood suggests a bitter-sweet ending to a successful era under Gian Piero Gasperini, who has said he will not renew his deal beyond next sea-

son after a nine-year spell at the club. Speculation in Italian media has linked the 67-year-old with a move to either AS Roma or Juve next term if things do not work out with Tudor. Meanwhile, Thiago Motta and Maurizio Sarri are reportedly being considered as successors in Bergamo.

Atalanta remain outside contenders in the Scudetto race, sitting third with 58 points, but the media focus has been on Gasperini's future more than the club's ambitions this term.

"There's always a beginning and an end. What lies in between is the journey, which is often the most beautiful part," Gasperini said recently, adding that he was focused on ending the season at Atalanta on a high note.

He has already taken the club to several top-three finishes and delivered a Europa League title in May.

"Am I looking for a house in Rome or Turin? For now, my home is in Bergamo. The present is what matters, and there are still nine league matches to play," he said.

Serie A top scorer Mateo Retegui is doubtful for the Fiorentina clash after struggling with a muscle injury.

Joydeep Karmakar suspension will be discussed, says NRAI

New Delhi
 The suspension of Arjuna award recipient Joydeep Karmakar from all shooting activities in West Bengal by the state body will be "discussed at the 'appropriate level'", the National Rifle Association of India (NRAI) said on Thursday.

The West Bengal Rifle Association's (WBRA) move to bar Karmakar, currently a rifle coach, from activities related to shooting in the state came after the Olympian questioned selections for the 2025 National Games held in Uttarakhand early this year.

"That will be discussed at appropriate level. It (Karmakar's letter) came yesterday. It will go the NRAI president," said NRAI secretary Raviv Bhatia.

Karmakar represented India in rifle prone events in various international tournaments and narrowly missed a medal at the Rio Olympics in 2016.

The WBRA said, before going ahead with its decision to suspend him, it had shown cause Karmakar for an objectionable post on social networking site Facebook.

Karmakar alleged that some WBRA officials were involved in corrupt practices and the selection

The West Bengal Rifle Association's (WBRA) move to bar Karmakar, currently a rifle coach, from activities related to shooting in the state came after the Olympian questioned selections for the 2025 National Games held in Uttarakhand early this year.

of the state team for the National Games was not fair.

"National Games Shooting Team is rigged! onus goes to West Bengal Rifle Association - WBRA! They are even bogged down to a few!" he had posted on January 18.

"Corruption in a different level! West Bengal selecting Shooters who

are 250th ranking or more neglecting 20th National Ranked shooter!"

"There's no pride in selecting 200+ ranking athlete in National Games by West Bengal Rifle Association - WBRA neglecting a National Ranked 20th." The WBRA, in an official communication, issued him a show cause notice and suspended him from all shooting activities on February 12.

Now, Karmakar has requested the National Rifle Association of India (NRAI) to step in the matter in the hope of a resolution.

"We have shown cause him (on February 12) for the objectionable post on Facebook and based on the showcause he has been barred from any activity in the state till he gives a reply to it.

"He (Karmakar) has asked for some time and we are waiting for his reply. I cannot comment further on this," said Deb Kumar Samanta, the secretary general at WBRA.

"This is a standard legal procedure that's followed so that there is no injustice to anybody," he added.

In 2015, the rifleman started an academy named JKSA (Joydeep Karmakar Shooting Academy) in Kolkata, in which hundreds of shooters receive training.





Salman's emotional scenes are outstanding, he is better actor: Aamir

Mumbai — Aamir Khan has said that Salman Khan is a better actor than him and performs his emotional scenes very well. In a promotional video for *Sikandar*, Aamir sat down for a conversation with Salman and AR Murugadoss. The two actors asked the director to judge them based on different parameters like acting and dancing.

Salman Khan asked AR Murugadoss, "Who's the better actor? Who's more hardworking? Who's more sincere?" Aamir interjected, "All the boring things." As the filmmaker hesitated, Aamir said, "Sir, actor also, he is better. Have you seen *Dabangg*?"

The director mentioned that Salman Khan acts well in crying scenes and can cry "without glycerin". Aamir quipped, "I also do without glycerin." Salman joked, "It's because of you, sir. I used to

see you and was like, look at this guy, whole *Sikandar's* *bhij* (weight) is on his head. He has to go back to his wife and child and then come back in the day again and tolerate me on set."

Aamir Khan said, "No, but I've seen, his emotional scenes are outstanding. AR Murugadoss then praised Salman was performing well in close-up scenes. He said that while it is easier to show emotions when you're acting with someone, it becomes hard to show emotions well in a close-up shot with a voice over.

Interestingly, Salman, Aamir and AR Murugadoss are tied by a common thread. While *Sikandar* marks Salman and the filmmaker's first collaboration, Aamir and AR Murugadoss worked together in the 2008 blockbuster film, *Ghajini*. Meanwhile, Salman Khan's *Sikandar* will be released on March 30 on the occasion of Eid.

South films work here but their audience don't watch our movies: Salman Khan

Mumbai — Superstar Salman Khan says while films of stars like Rajinikanth, Chiranjeevi, Suriya, and Ram Charan perform well in the Hindi belt, the audiences in the south region don't watch Bollywood movies and its stars in theatres.

The actor said he has a fan-following in south where the fans call him by his nickname of "Bhai" on the streets but the admiration does not translate into theatrical footfalls for Hindi movies.

"When my film is released there, it will not get the numbers because their fan following is very strong. I'll be on the street, and they will say, 'Bhai, Bhai', but they will not go to the theatres. We've accepted them (south stars) here, and their films do well because we go and see them, like those of Rajinikanth garu or Chiranjeevi garu or Suriya or Ram Charan. But their fans do not go and see our films," Khan said during a media interaction.

The 59-year-old actor, who in the past has worked with south directors like Prabhu Deva and has collaborated with A R Murugadoss on his upcoming Eid release *"Sikandar"*, will next work with Atlee, who made his Hindi cinema debut with Shah Rukh

Khan's *"Jawan"*. The film, however, is delayed due to budget issues. "He has written a very big-budget action film... I'm doing another big action film after *'Sikandar'* with my elder brother in the industry, Sanju, Sanjay Dutt. That's rustic action,"

The 59-year-old actor, who in the past has worked with south directors like Prabhu Deva and has collaborated with A R Murugadoss on his upcoming Eid release *"Sikandar"*, will next work with Atlee, who made his Hindi cinema debut with Shah Rukh Khan's *"Jawan"*.

Khan said in response to a said. Asked whether pan-Indian films, with stars from both sides, were the way forward, Khan said it would be an expensive endeavour and requires "the right script".

"The thing is money... They also charge and we also charge, it is a big responsibility. For instance, in a film like *'Ramayana'*, they can cast everyone from here and there (south). I've worked with directors, actors and technicians from the south in many films... If we had 20,000 to 30,000 theatres, we would have killed Hollywood," Khan said.

The superstar blamed the lacklustre run of many recent Bollywood releases on the intention of the makers.

"My father (noted scriptwriter Salim Khan) says we are making films for the wrong reasons. Like if

emotional depth in their stories.



RC16: Janhvi Kapoor teases fans with new poster featuring Ram Charan

Mumbai — Actors Ram Charan and Janhvi Kapoor are all set to share the screen in their upcoming film, tentatively titled 'RC16', the actress shared a news poster giving fans a sneak peek into the 'Game Changer' actor's intense look.

Taking to her Instagram Story on Wednesday, the Dhadak actress dropped the poster showing Ram Charan from the back, holding a cigarette, with a rugged and powerful appearance. His

messy hair, beard, and serious expression add to the mystery.

The caption on the post read, "First look out 27.03.25"

RC16 is directed by Baehi Babu Sana and stars Janhvi Kapoor, Kannada superstar Shiva Rajkumar, and Jagapathi Babu in prominent roles.

The shooting of the film is set to start soon. RC16 is bankrolled by director Sukumar's home banner, Sukumar Writings, while the music is composed by Oscar-winning musician AR Rah-

man. Janhvi will also be seen in the film *Param Sundari* opposite actor Sidharth Malhotra. The duo will be teaming up for the first time in Dinesh Vijan's upcoming directorial.

The film will be a cross-cultural love story set in the scenic backwaters of Kerala. Directed by Tushar Jalota, *Param Sundari* will be released in theatres on July 25, 2025.

Ram Charan, on the other hand, was last seen in *Game Changer*, which

performed well at the box office.



Emraan Hashmi's fierce new look from 'Ground Zero' unveiled

Mumbai — Bollywood star Emraan Hashmi is leaving no chance to excite his fans with back-to-back updates regarding his upcoming acting projects.

On Thursday, he shared new character posters from his film *'Ground Zero'*.

The first poster shows Emraan Hashmi standing with a gun. While unveiling the poster, Emraan also shared that the film's teaser will be out on Friday.

Inspired by one of the Border Security Force's (BSF) most remarkable operations



in the last 50 years, *Ground Zero* sees Emraan Hashmi step into the role of BSF Deputy Commandant Narendra Nath Dubey, leading a high-stakes, two-year investigation into a critical national security threat, as per a press note. More details

regarding the project are yet to be disclosed.

Produced by Ritesh Sidhwani and Farhan Akhtar, the film is directed by Tejas Deoskar. It is co-produced by Kassim Jagmagia, Vishal Ramechandani, Sundeep C Sidhwani, Arhan Bagati, Talisman Films, Abhishek Kumar, and Nishikant Roy.

Kareena shares adorable, candid picture with hubby Saif from their dating days

Mumbai — Nostalgia alert! Bollywood diva Kareena Kapoor on Thursday walked down memory lane and shared an adorable picture with husband Saif Ali Khan from the days when they were dating each other.

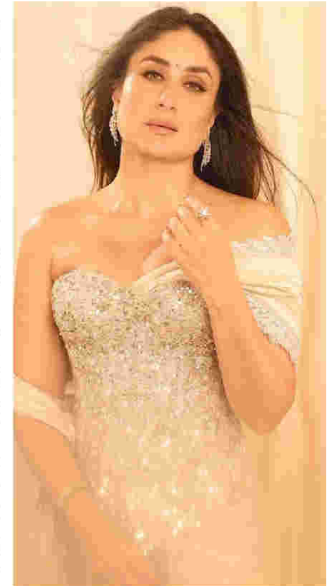
In the picture, both Saif and Kareena, who are fondly called 'Saifeena', can be seen sitting on a couch.

"Throwback thursday part 2," she captioned the picture, followed by a red heart emoji.

Kareena tied the knot with Saif Ali Khan in 2016. The two have worked together in *LOC Kargil* (2003) and *Omkara* (2006), but it was on the sets of the 2008 film *Tashan* that they fell in love with each other.

During their dating phase, Saif dished out major boyfriend goals by getting a tattoo of Kareena's name on his forearm. To date, the couple leaves does not leave any chance to make each other feel special with their gestures.

In 2016, the two became parents to son Taimur and in February 2021, they welcomed Jeh. Saif was married to Amrita Singh before Kareena and they have two children together, Sara Ali Khan and Ibrahim Ali Khan.



Meanwhile, on the work front, Kareena recently paid tribute to her grandfather and legendary actor and filmmaker Raj Kapoor with her stunning performance at the 25th Silver Jubilee edition of the International Indian

Film Academy Awards 2025 (IIFA) in Jaipur.

Kareena is yet to share details about her upcoming films. Saif has *Jewel Thief* in his kitty. The film also stars Jaideep Ahlawat and Kunal Kapoor.