



TERROR RETURNS TO KASHMIR, TOURISTS MASSACRED

AFTER NEARLY FOUR DECADES, PAHALGAM CARNAGE RIPS APART SEMBLANCE OF NORMALCY

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ Srinagar

At least 26 tourists, holidaying in the famous tourist hotspot of Pahalgam in the Kashmir valley, were killed and several others were injured when a group of heavily armed terrorists, dressed in combat uniform, opened indiscriminate fire on them after verifying their religious identities on Tuesday afternoon.

After the February 14, 2019, Pulwama attack on a CRPF convoy, in which 40 jawans were martyred, Tuesday afternoon's attack is the most provocative strike on Indian soil by the terrorists sheltered by their Pakistan-based handlers operating from across the Line of Control.

The tensions between India and Pakistan may further escalate as the attack comes close on the heels of recent posturing by the Pakistan Army Chief, Asim Munir, on Kashmir. Last week, India rubbished Munir's remarks describing Kashmir as the "jugular vein" of Pakistan and said Islamabad's only link with Jammu and Kashmir is the vacation of illegally occupied parts of the union territory.

Condemning the terror attack on tourists in Jammu and Kashmir's Pahalgam, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday said that those behind the heinous act will be brought to justice. PM Modi also directed Home Minister Amit Shah to visit the attack site in Pahalgam.

In a post on X, the prime minister said, "They (terrorists) will not be spared! Their evil agenda will never succeed. Our resolve to fight terrorism is unshakable, and it will get even stronger."

The attack also coincided with the first official visit of US Vice President JD Vance to India.

According to eyewitness reports, the 'gruesome' attack took place around 1430hrs when a large number of tourists, after taking horse rides and absorbing themselves in the pristine beauty of Kashmir valley, were relaxing and breaking bread with their loved ones in the picturesque Baisaran meadow, half-an-hour trek from Pahalgam.



Security personnel rushing to the spot after terrorists attacked a group of tourists at Pahalgam, in Anantnag district of Jammu and Kashmir on Tuesday, April 22 (left); Injured being shifted to a hospital in Anantnag district (right)



PTI

of the attack survivors claimed that while they were having snacks, an armed man, dressed in a combat uniform, arrived and sprayed bullets at them after verifying the religious identities of the tourists present. Tourists, with their heads punctured with bullets, were also seen writhing in pain in the picturesque meadow of Baisaran.

As gunshots rang out, there was panic, and tourists ran for cover, but there was no place to hide in the wide, open space, said another woman tourist.

It appears the terror attack was broadly aimed at shattering the peace prevailing in the Valley at a time when tourist footfall was skyrocketing and common Kashmiris were reaping rich dividends of peace after the abrogation of Articles 370 and 35-A. In 2023, 2,11,80,011 tourists visited J and K, and in 2024, the number increased to 2,35,90,081.

Since March 26, over 8.25 lakh tourists

CHRONOLOGY OF RECENT TERROR ATTACKS

- **August 14, 2024:** Doda encounter (one officer, one terrorist killed)
- **August 10, 2024:** Anantnag encounter (four jawans killed and four injured)
- **July 27, 2024:** Kupwara encounter (one security personnel killed)
- **July 22 2024:** Rajouri encounter (one security personnel injured)
- **July 15, 2024:** Doda encounter (four soldiers, one policeman killed)
- **July 9, 2024:** Kathua encounter (five jawans killed)
- **June 13, 2024:** Gandoh encounter (one policeman injured)
- **June 12 2024:** Chattergala encounter (one terrorist killed)
- **June 9, 2024:** Reasi terror attack (nine pilgrims killed)

have visited Asia's largest tulip garden in Srinagar to see the blooming flower carpet of 17 lakh tulips of 74 varieties.

Tourists camping in Pahalgam vacated their hotel rooms in the aftermath of the gruesome terror attack. The local authorities facilitated their safe travels to instill confidence among them.

The terror attack ahead of the beginning of the Amarnath yatra is bound to affect the tourist season in the coming weeks.

The entire district administration and police force were mobilised and ambulances pressed into service. A chopper also helped evacuate those injured.

Till late Tuesday evening, the exact number of tourists killed in the terror attack was not confirmed by the police. The toll is still being ascertained, Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah said while describing the terror attack as "much larger than anything we have seen directed at civilians in recent years".

"I'm shocked beyond belief. This attack on our visitors is an abomination. The per-

petrators of this attack are animals, inhuman and worthy of contempt. No words of condemnation are enough. I send my sympathies to the families of the deceased," he said.

Before heading to Srinagar, Union Home Minister Amit Shah briefed the prime minister, who is on a visit to Saudi Arabia, said he was leaving for Srinagar to hold an urgent security review meeting with all agencies.

"Anguished by the terror attack on tourists in Pahalgam, Jammu and Kashmir. My thoughts are with the family members of the deceased. Those involved in this dastardly act of terror will not be spared, and we will come down heavily on the perpetrators with the harshest consequences," Shah said in a post on X.

Amit Shah also chaired a meeting at his home in Delhi, which was attended by Intelligence Bureau Chief Tapan Deka and Union Home Secretary Govind Mohan, the sources said. CRPF chief Gyanendra Pratap Singh, J and K Director General of

Police Nalin Prabhatand some Army officials also joined the meeting through video conferencing. Mr Shah also spoke to Chief Minister Omar Abdullah and Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, they added.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh in a post on X said Deeply anguished by the news of terrorist attack in Pahalgam (Jammu and Kashmir). This dastardly attack on innocent civilians is an act of cowardice and highly reprehensible. My thoughts and prayers are with the innocent victims and their families.

Meanwhile, a massive anti-terrorist operation has been launched to hunt down the assailants, and security forces have fanned out in all directions.

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, who accompanied the Home Minister in a special flight from New Delhi Tuesday, said, "I strongly condemn the cowardly terror attack on tourists in Pahalgam. I assure the people that those behind this despicable attack will not go unpunished."

The ByStander



ECI objects to Rahul's swipe on poll body in US

RAJESH KUMAR ■ New Delhi

Taking exception to Leader of Opposition and Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's recent remarks about poll process in the country, the Election Commission of India (ECI) on Tuesday rejected his allegations, saying any misinformation being spread, by anyone, is not only a sign of disrespect towards law, but also brings disrepute to the thousands of representatives appointed by their own political party and demotivates lakhs of election staff who work untiringly and transparently during elections.

"After any unfavourable verdict by the voters, trying to defame the Election Commission by saying that it is compromised is completely absurd. The entire nation is aware that each election process

including the preparation of electoral rolls, polling and counting etc. are all held by Government staff and that too in the presence of authorised representatives formally appointed by Political Parties/ Candidates from polling station upto constituency level," the ECI said.

On Monday, Rahul alleged in Boston, US, that, in simple terms, more people voted in the Maharashtra Assembly election than there were adults in the state. "The Election Commission gave us a voting figure for 1730hrs, and between 1730hrs and 1930 hrs, 65 lakh voters voted. This is physically impossible. For a voter to vote, it takes approximately three minutes and, if you do the math, it would mean that there were lines of voters till 0200hrs but this did not happen," he had said.

VP escalates attack on SC after BJP

DEEPAK KUMAR JHA ■ New Delhi

Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar on Tuesday hit out at his critics for questioning his remarks on a recent Supreme Court order, asserting that every word spoken by a Constitutional functionary is guided by supreme national interest. He also asserted that Parliament is supreme.

This is the third of his kind remarks in recent times questioning the role and supremacy of judiciary and legislative which includes twice by the Presiding officer of Rajya Sabha and certain BJP leaders including vocal Lok Sabha MP Nishikant Dubey. All faced severe criticism by the Opposition parties while BJP chief J P Nadda distancing itself over the controversial remarks by party members which also led slamming by the legal experts. In a related development, Rajya Sabha MP Kapil Sibal on Tuesday said



everything the Supreme court said was consistent with the country's constitutional values and guided by national interest.

Sibal's remarks in a social media post came soon after Dhankhar asserted that every word spoken by a constitutional functionary was guided by supreme national interest.

Addressing a Delhi University event, Dhankhar also said efforts of forces working against the country to tarnish and run down institutions should be neutralised, "be it that of the presidency".

Asserting that Parliament is supreme, Dhankhar said, "There is no visualisation in the Constitution of any authority above Parliament. Parliament is supreme... Let me tell you, it is as supreme as every individual in the country".

He also underscored that there should be "no doubt" that the Constitution is for the people and its repository of safeguarding is that of the elected representatives. "They are the ultimate masters as to what the Constitution's content will be," he said.

DDA notice to Signature Apartment residents

RAJESH KUMAR ■ New Delhi

The Delhi Development Authority (DDA) has served a notice asking residents of Signature View Apartments in Mukherjee Nagar to vacate their flats at the earliest, as the deadline for evacuation, March 23, has passed.

An e-tender for its demolition was issued on March 17, shortly after the authority released standard operating procedures for the residents and the

Interestingly, residents of Signature View Apartments in Mukherjee Nagar are caught in a financial bind as they await rent compensation from the Delhi Development Authority

Resident Welfare Association (RWA) to coordinate the evacuation. In the notice dated April 15, the DDA stated, "The high court had mandated that all occupants vacate their flats between December 23, 2024 and March 23, 2025. That period has now lapsed." The DDA urged residents to vacate their flats at the earliest for their safety and to allow for the demolition and reconstruction of the building. It has asked the RWA to coordinate with all residents for a timely evacuation. It has claimed that information on the reconstruction schedule and process for compensation will be shared in due course.

The authority also stated that it is committed to complying with the court's

directive regarding rent assistance, although it plans to appeal certain aspects of the ruling. The DDA had classified the 336-flat residential complex as a "dangerous building" due to structural safety concerns. The apartment complex, declared unfit for habitation by an IIT Delhi report in 2022, was ordered in January 2023 by the lieutenant governor to be vacated and rebuilt. However, residents claim that despite months of waiting, no concrete action has been taken. Many have already vacated, while others remain trapped in deteriorating buildings.

Many families are struggling to relocate without the promised financial aid, deepening their uncertainty. Interestingly, residents of Signature View Apartments in Mukherjee Nagar are caught in a financial bind as they await rent compensation from the Delhi Development Authority (DDA), even as the agency moves ahead with demolition plans for their structurally unsafe homes.

RWA president Amrendra Singh Rakesh said 111 residents have already vacated their flats but have not received the promised rent compensation.

"Residents were assured of financial aid once they moved out. But even after 111 families vacated, no payments have been made," Rakesh said. He added that the delay has left residents uncertain about whether they will receive the promised compensation. For many, the uncertainty surrounding the payments is preventing them from moving out. One of the resident, who still resides in the complex, is reluctant to vacate without a clear guarantee of financial support.

A Royal wedding: British MP ties knot in desi style

BISWAJEET BANERJEE ■ Lucknow

In an age when many couples opt for picturesque weddings in the Alps or the Amalfi Coast, a British MP returned to his roots with an emotional, culturally rich celebration that unfolded in the heart of Uttar Pradesh.

Navendu Prabhat Mishra, 36, a two-time elected Labour Party Member of Parliament from Stockport in the United Kingdom, tied the knot with Garima Tiwari of Bhopal in a spectacular Sanatan-style wedding in Lucknow on Sunday.

From the earthy fragrance of turmeric during the haldi ceremony to the soulful beats of dhol echoing through a five-star hotel in Ansal Golf City, everything about the wedding exuded the charm of a quintessential Indian celebration.

But what made it even more special was the groom himself—a rising British politician, clad in a cream-colored sherwani, touching the feet of elders, offering folded-hand greetings to guests, and joining the pheras with a sincerity that moved many to tears.

"This is not just a wedding. It is a celebration of heritage. It is rare to see someone who has achieved so much internationally come back and honour his roots in such a heartfelt way," said Arvind Tiwari, a relative of the bride.

Navendu Mishra, who moved to the UK from Mumbai in 2003 and has since become a prominent voice for the Indian diaspora in British politics, insisted on celebrating his marriage in India, not just

for nostalgia, but to reconnect with family, tradition, and home.

"Weddings are deeply personal. My parents always wanted to celebrate it here, amidst family, culture, and tradition. Lucknow felt right—it is close to where we belong. We had guests from our village, family members I had not seen in years. If we had done this in London or Stockport, it would have lacked that soul. What happened here was beyond my imagination," Mishra said, visibly emotional after the wedding rituals.

The bride, Garima Tiwari, hailing from Bhopal but originally from Deoria district in Uttar Pradesh, looked radiant in lehenga, complimenting the traditional grandeur of the ceremony. A banker by training and an alumna of a Glasgow university, Garima met Navendu through family connections, and their bond grew stronger over shared values and cultural sensibilities.

"Despite being born and raised miles apart, they both have strong emotional ties to their roots. This wedding is proof that no matter how far you go, the pull of home is eternal," said Nilendra Pandey, Navendu's maternal uncle.

Garima's father, Harendra Tiwari, a retired officer from the Horticulture Department in Madhya Pradesh, called the wedding "a moment of pride for both families and a message to younger generations about the timelessness of our traditions."

As celebrations unfolded, the venue saw an eclectic gathering of dignitaries and loved ones.

Women outshine men in UPSC examination results

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

Shakti Dubey has topped the civil services examination 2024, with Harshita Goyal and Dongre Archit Parag getting the second and third ranks, the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) announced on Tuesday.

Topper Dubey holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Biochemistry from the University of Allahabad. She qualified for the examination with political science and international relations as her optional subject, the commission said in a statement.

Goyal has a Bachelor of Commerce degree from the MS University of Baroda. She qualified for the exam with political science and international relations as her optional subject.

Parag, a Bachelor of Technology graduate in electrical and electronics engineering from Vellore Institute of Technology (VIT), Tamil Nadu, had philosophy as his optional subject, according to the civil services exam results declared by the UPSC.

Shah Margi Chirag, who has a Bachelor of Engineering degree in computer engineering from Gujarat Technological University, Ahmedabad, secured the fourth rank with sociology as her optional subject. Aakash Garg, who has a Bachelor of Technology degree in computer science from the Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University, Delhi, got the fifth rank with sociology as his optional subject.

The top five successful candidates comprise three women and two men.

The civil services examination is con-

ducted annually in three stages — preliminary, main and interview — by the UPSC to select officers of the Indian Administrative Service (IAS), Indian Foreign Service (IFS) and Indian Police Service (IPS) among others.

The civil services (preliminary) examination 2024 was conducted on June 16 last year. A total of 9,92,599 candidates applied for this examination, out of which 5,83,213 candidates actually

The civil services examination 2024 was conducted on June 16 last year. A total of 9,92,599 candidates applied for it, out of which 5,83,213 candidates actually appeared

appeared in the test.

A total of 14,627 candidates qualified for appearance in the written (main) examination, which was held in September 2024. Out of these, 2,845 candidates qualified for the personality test or interview, which were held between January 7 and April 17 this year.

Of them, 1,009 candidates — 725 men and 284 women — have been recommended by the UPSC for appointment to various services.

Out of the total successful candidates, 335 are from the general category, 109 from the economically weaker sections, 318 from other backward classes, 160 from scheduled castes and 87 from scheduled tribes, according to a statement issued by the commission.

Classifieds

LOST AND FOUND

I, RUCHIKA GUPTA D/o Purnima Agrawal, R/o Chandigarh Police Complex, Dhanas, Chandigarh hereby informs that I have lost my NFSU Masters Degree in Forensic Psychology, Course Year 2020-2022 somewhere in Dhanas, Chandigarh. If anybody finds it kindly return it to me, Contact: 8595506588,

BEDKHALI NOTICE

I, Mukesh Kumar S/o Kewal Singh R/o Village Hartari, district Panipat, declare that my brother-in-law Sonu Dahiya, is out of my and my wife's control, behaves badly with us. He can cause us physical and financial harm. Therefore, we sever our ties with him. In future, we will not have any relationship with him and the person who deals with him will be responsible himself. We will not have any responsibility.

I, Amrit Pal Kaur W/o Anokh Singh R/o Vill. Lakhmari, Teh. Ladwa, Kurukshetra declare that my Son Nirman Jit Sandhu, his wife Jaismin Sandhu and my grandsons Shehbaj and Alfaj are out of my control. So I disinherit them from my all moveable/immovable Properties. If anybody deals with them in any manner, they will deal on his own responsibility.

I Sham Son of Achru Ram R/o House No. 310, Kaimbwala Chandigarh inform that my son Balkar and his wife Gurpreet are out of my control. I Disown them from my all moveable and immovable properties. Anybody deal with them will do at their own Risk.

I, Reeta W/o Jamuna Parsad R/o 21927/A Pipliwala Town Manimajra, Chandigarh disown my son Rahul & his wife Anita from my moveable & Immovable Property. Anybody dealing with them at own risk.

I Shiv Kumari W/o Shyam Lal, R/o H.No. 208, Dadu Majra Colony Sector 38 West Chandigarh, declared that my son Vijay Chauhan and his wife Chauhan Seema Devi, @ Seema are out of my control, so I disown them from my moveable- immovable properties, anybody dealing with them at their own risk.

I, Chhinder Singh S/o Sh. Tara Singh r/o Village - Rampur Theri, Tehsil Rania, Distt. Sirsa declare that my Son Parvinder Singh and his wife Gagandeep Kaur are out of my control. I disown them from all my moveable/ Immovable properties. I have no social, financial, legal relation with them.

I, Kamlesh Kumari Gulati W/o Kewal Krishan Gulati R/o Flat No. 1104, F- Block, 66 Feet Road, Jalandhar Heights 2, Pholriwal, Garha, Distt. Jalandhar, Punjab-144022 declare that my husband Kewal Krishan Gulati is out of my control. The person transacting with him himself will be responsible, I will not have any responsibility. All concerned please note.

I, Sudarshana Kumari W/o Late Sh. Raj Kumar R/o House No 875, Sector 20-A, Chandigarh inform that my daughter-in-law Sonia W/o Late Shammy out of my control. I disown her from my all moveable and Immovable Properties. Anybody deal with her will do at their own Risk.

I Yadwinder Singh S/o Sh. Tara Singh R/o Village Bhedwal Teh. Rajpura, Distt. Patiala, Punjab, declared that I had disowned my son Gurinder Singh and his wife Balwinder Kaur by newspaper on dated 23.09.2022, now they are under my control, so I taken back my last debarred. Now they're are full rights in my properties.

I Paramjit Kaur W/o Bhupinder Singh R/o Vill Nanhera Teh Rajpura Distt Patiala declare that my son Kuldeep Singh and his wife Kuldeep Kaur are out of my control so I evict them all my moveable immovable property anyone dealing with them at their own risk.

PUBLIC NOTICE

I Anjana w/o Avtar Singh R/o# 361 Khudda Lahora, Chandigarh is hereby declare that in my Son's academic certificate my name wrongly written as Anju Rawat instead of Anjana and my husband's name also wrongly Written as Avtar Singh Rawat instead of Avtar Singh. My Correct Name may be treated as Anjana and my husband name as Avtar singh.

It Is For General Information That I, Yoginder Singh S/O Amrave Singh Residing At 122/2, Ward No-5, Kalayat, Kaithal, Haryana-136117 Declare That The Name Of Mine And My Father Have Been Wrongly Written As Yoginder And Umrao Singh In My Board Of School Education Haryana Class 10th Educational Documents. The Actual Name Of Mine And My Father Are Yoginder Singh And Amrave Singh Respectively Which May Be Amended Accordingly. It Is Certified That I Have Complied With Other Legal Requirements In This Connection.

I, Prinka Rani W/o No. 14430318W Rank Ex Sep name Balraj Singh R/o Vill: Safdarpur Teh-Dasuya Distt. Hoshiarpur declare that in my Army documents of my husband my name written as Priyanka Rani and DOB as 30-01-1985. But my actual name is Prinka Rani and DOB is 20-05-1985.

I Harnek Singh S/o Dilbag Singh R/o Vill Magar Teh Rajpura Distt Patiala that in my passport my father name wrongly entered Dilbagh Singh but my father correct name is Dalbag Singh.

CHANGE OF NAME

I Navdeep kumar S/o Raj kumar gupta, R/o house no B14/ 101, nirmal chhaya towers, near high street, VIP road, zirakpur, SAS nagar, Punjab pin: 140603., have changed my name to Navdeep Gupta.

I Anju Chutani W/o Amit Chuttani R/o House No. 6-A, M.S Enclave, Dhakoli, Zirakpur Punjab have changed my name to Anju Chuttani.

I, Sunita Rani wife of Ashok Kumar resident of Bagwali Tehsil and District Panchkula declare that I have changed my name from Sunita to Sunita Rani. In future I should be known as Sunita Rani.

I, Bhoop Singh S/o Bahadur Singh R/o Baijalpur, Tehsil-Bhuna, Distt-Fatehabad. In my voter card my name is Bhoop Singh & aadhaar card my name is Bhoop Singh Beniwal. Now I want to changed my name to Bhoop Singh. My real name is Bhoop Singh

I, Raj Kumar Chauhan S/o Fateh Singh Chauhan R/o # 1240 First Floor, Sector 43B, Chandigarh have changed my name from Raj Kumar to Raj Kumar Chauhan.

I, Asha W/o Sh. Kuldeep Singh R/o H.No.413/1, Gali No.1, PWT Manimajra, Chandigarh have changed my name from Asha to Kumari Asha.

I, Munish Kumar S/o Sh. Satpal R/o H.No. 1/62, Street No. 04, Dhobi Ghat, Shakti Nagar, Hoshiarpur declare that I have changed my minor son's name from Aryan to Aryan Harish. Concerned note.

I, Pawan Kumar S/o Shankar Dass R/o St. No. 05, Near Shivam Hospital , Santokh Nagar, Hoshiarpur declare that I have changed my name from Pawan Kumar to Pawan Kumar Malhan. Concerned note.

I, Santi Devi Widow of Hari Ram R/o Village & PO Chogawan, Tehsil Indri, Distt Karnal have changed my name from Santi Devi to Shanti Devi and date of birth changed from 2177/1943 to 11/1/1943.

I, Simranjit Singh Virk s/o Baljinder Singh Virk r/o H.No. R-106, Model Town, Karnal, have changed my name from from Simranjit Singh Virk to Simran Jeet Singh Virk.

I, Nidhi W/o Sh. Vikas Bhardwaj R/o VPO Charatgarh Uppera (225), Tehsil Una, Himachal Pradesh - 174315 have changed my name from Nidhi to Nidhi Bhardwaj.

I Surinder S/o Swarn Singh r/o # 110, Sector 41-B, Buterla, Chandigarh have changed my name from Surrender Kaur to Surinder kaur.

I Somvir S/o Sh. Krishan Lal Resident of House No. 643, VPO Kadma District Charkhi Dadri Haryana Pin Code-127308 India have changed the name of my minor son SUMIT aged 13 years and he shall hereafter be known as NAMAN.

I Somvir S/o Sh. Krishan Lal Resident of House No. 643, VPO Kadma District Charkhi Dadri Haryana Pin Code-127308 India have changed the name of my minor son SACHIN aged 12 years and he shall hereafter be known as SUBHAM.

I Shivani W/o Mohak Bansal R/o # 344 Mansa devi complex Sector 4, Panchkula Haryana have changed my name from Shivani to Shivani Bansal.

I Rashpal Singh S/o Ranjeet Singh R/o Vill. Mandheri, Teh. Shahabad (M.), Kurukshetra, I declare that I have changed my name Rachphal Singh to Rashpal Singh. All Concerned please note.

I, Sanjay S/o Banwari Lal r/o Badopal, Tehsil & District Fatehabad have changed my name from Sanjay to Sanjay Bishnoi for all future purpose.

I, Ritu w/o Sanjay s/o Banwari Lal r/o Badopal, Tehsil & District Fatehabad have changed my name from Ritu to Ritu Bishnoi for all future purpose.

I, Shiv Pyari W/o Ram Bilas # 1448-A, Small flats dhanas Chandigarh have changed my name from Shiv Pyari to Savitri.

I, Naushad S/o Mohd Irshad R/o House No 354, Sector 38 West Chandigarh have changed my minor son name from Mohd Safe to Mohd Saif.

I Kuldeep Singh S/o Mani Ram R/o House No.627, Bank Wali Gali Daria, Chandigarh have changed my minor son name from Bhanu Verma to Bhanu.

I, Anil Kumar S/o Madan Mohan Lal R/o # 386/2, Sector 45-A, Chandigarh have changed my name to Anil Sarin.

I, Narender Pal S/o Sh. Dharm Singh Vill. Bahari Tehsil Assandh have changed my name Narender Pal Raghav to Narender Pal for all future purposes.

I, Surajbhan Panwar S/o Labhu Ram R/o 1395/20, Bhagwan Colony, Rohtak Haryana - 124001 have changed my name from Surajbhan Panwar to Surja Ram for all purposes.

I, Jaikishan S/o Hakim Sodagar Mal R/o H. No. 362/13, Tej Colony, Rohtak declare that I have changed my name from Jaikishan to Jai Krishan Kawatra. In future I will be known as Jai Krishan Kawatra.

I Daljeet Singh Jhun Service No. 1c-381288 Rank Major Residing At House No. 2987/1, Sector 42-C, Chandigarh And Now Presently Resident At 108 Fifth Avenue, Kitchener, Ontario, Canada N2c1p4 Have Changed My Son Name From Param Jyot To Paramjit Singh Jhun Vide Affidavit Dated 22.04.2025 At Notary Chandigarh.

I, Kanika D/O Jaspal Singh R/O Kothi No 126,New Diamond Avenue Majitha Road Amritsar Have Changed My Name From Kanika To Kanika Gambhir

I, Mallavva mother of No.14930961H Hav Shankrappa Patoti R/o 747, Nandikeshwar Nandikeshwara Badami Bagalkot Karnataka-587201 now at 15 Mech Inf C/o 56 Apo have changed my name from Mallavva to Mallavva Patroti and Date of Birth from 29.04.1956 to 01.01.1953 Vide Affidavit No.IN-PB28064071660622X

DT.22.04.2025 before Notary Public Amritsar

I, Sumana Devi Mother of No.13785241F Rfn Vikash Unit of 11 Jak Rif C/o 56 Apo that in my sons's army service record my name has been wrongly entered as Sumana Devi but my correct name is Sumna Devi Vide affidavit No.IN-PB28056853189985X Dt.22.04.2025 before Executive Magistrate Amritsar

I, Nidhi Gupta W/o Manoj Garg R/o 1175/16, Gali Lala Wali, Katra Ahluwalia, Amritsar have changed my name from Nidhi Gupta to Nidhi Garg

I, Mana Devi Ratwat D/o Bache Singh W/o Khushal Singh Singh R/o H.No.128, Khushal Enclave, Bhabat Zirakpur District SAS Nagar (Mohali) Punjab-140603 have changed my name from Mana Devi Ratwat to Mana Devi

I, Rashmi Sharma w/o Vinod, r/o Bhatnagar Gali, Samalkha, District Panipat, declare that my name is recorded as Rashmi in my son Lakshya's 10th class mark sheet of CBSE Board, Roll No. 17231018, Year 2024, Registration No. H124/41674/0042, which is wrong. My name is recorded as Rashmi Sharma in other documents, which is correct and should be recorded

I, Jabed Ahmad S/O Anish Ahmad R/O H.No.242,Street No.4, Bharatl Nagar, Near Railway Line District Patiala Have Changed My Name From Jabed Ahmad To Javed Ahmed

I, Handeep Singh Sandhu S/O Jaspal Singh R/O Near Govt Sen Sec School Ward No .3 Bariwala District Muktsar Have Changed My Name From Handeep Singh Sandhu To Handeep Singh

I, Mrs. Baljeet Nain W/o Shri Baljeet Singh Nain Resident of House No. 454, Sector-10, Near Jaat Dharamshala, Urban Estate, Jind (Haryana) declare that I have changed my name from Baljeet Kaur to Baljeet Nain for all future purpose.

I, Manjeet Dabla W/o Parveen Kumar R/o W. No. 10, CHC Road, Near Shiv Mandir, Barwala, Hisar, Distt. Hisar, Haryana 125121 declare that I have changed the name of my minor daughter from Cristal to Dirgham for future purpose.

I, Dhanpati W/o Sh. Om Prakash R/o Village Ishapur Khedi Tehsil Gohana District Sonipat, Haryana, declare that my name is Dhanpati in my Aadhar card etc. documents but my name is Dhanpati Devi is mentioned in my husband's service no. 3153377 Rank Sepoy Late Om Parkash record. Dhanpati and Dhanpati Devi both name are one and same woman.

I, Karishma W/o Sachin R/o H No 1436, Gali No 2, Dhani Kishan Dutt, 12 Qtr Road, Hisar (Haryana), have changed my date of birth from 19-10-2002 to 19-09-2000 in my 10th and 12th Class Certificate Records.

I Karan Singh s/o Ram Kala resident of H.no.65, sector-10, Ambala City, District Ambala, Haryana have changed my name from Karan Singh to Karan Singh Sanwal. Sanwal is our surname. In future i will be known as Karan Singh Sanwal s/o Ram Kala .

I Gurdip Singh S/O Gobinder Singh R/O Vpo. Daudhar Garbi District Moga Punjab-142053 Have Changed My Name To Gurdeep Singh.

I Mandeep Singh Bhatti S/O Balwant Singh R/O Vpo. Takhtpura Distt. Moga Have Changed My Name To Mandeep Singh.

I Sandeep Singh Mukar S/O Parmjit Singh R/O Mudki Road St.No.02 Balbir Nagar Bagha Purana Distt. Moga Have Changed My Name To Sandeep Singh.

I Daniel Ronald Hamilton D/O Mark Ronald Hamilton R/O Vill. Jagpalpur P.O. Ranipur Tehsil Phagwara Distt. Kapurthala Have Changed My Name To Darshan Hamilton.

I Ekamvir Singh S/O Gurdeep Singh R/O Vpo. Galib Kalan Distt. Ludhiana Have Changed My Name To Ekamvir Singh Gill.

I Ashmeen Kaur D/O Gurdeep Singh R/O Vpo. Galib Kalan Distt. Ludhiana Have Changed My Name To Ashmeen Kaur Gill.

I Harbant Singh Sidhu S/O Harcharan Singh Sidhu R/O Vpo. Chachrari Distt. Ludhiana Have Changed My Name To Harbant Singh.

I Ridhima W/O Sanjay Kumar R/O St.No.2-D, Pathankot Road, Sarabha Nagar, Jalandhar Declare That My Given Name As Ridhima And Surname As Kumari.

I Shiv Nand S/O Puran Chand R/O H.No.333 Basant Avenue Gill Ludhiana Have Changed My Name To Shiva Nand.

I Darshan Singh S/O Karnal Singh R/O Wara Mansoor Wal (Ferozepur) Have Changed My Name To Gurdarshan Singh.

I Lakshay mittal s/o Ramesh mittal r/o house no 50, near kanahya sahib chowk, yamunanagar. That I have change my name From Lakshay to Lakshay mittal.

I, Darshan Pal Kaur Mangat, W/O Mandeep Singh, village Khiuwali, Tehsil Malout, District Sri Muktsar Sahib, have changed my name to Darshan Pal Kaur.

I Suman Goyal w/o Ajay Kumar R/o Village Adda Devigarh, Teh. Duddhan Sadhan Distt. Patiala have change my Name Suman to Suman Goyal Plz Noted. My Name Is Monika And In Future I Will Be Known As Monika Punia.

I, Rajani Rani W/O Sh. Ashish Kumar R/O Ward No.8, Gali Laxman Dass Monga Wall, Near Old Hanuman Mandir, Nai Dabwali, (Mandi Dabwali), Tehsil Dabwali, Distt. Sirsa, Have Changed My Name From Rajni To Rajani Rani.

I, Manju Bala Alias Manju Bala Saini W/O Sh. Rajesh Kumar R/O 566/20 Prem Nagar, Rohtak Have Changed My Name From Manju Bala Alias Manju Bala Saini To Manju.

I, Ashish Kumar S/O Sh. Mahender Pal R/O 1161, Ekta Nagari, Mandi Dabwali, Tehsil Dabwali, Distt. Sirsa, Have Changed My Name From Ashish Babbar To Ashish Kumar.

I, Amarpreet Kaur Spouse Of No.15490549m Rank Dfr Gurpreet Singh R/O Village Dashmash Nagar (Bahadhar Nagar) Po Mahneke Tehsil Patti District Tarn Taran Declare That In My Husband Army Record My Name Written As Baljinder Kaur. That Amarpreet Kaur And Baljinder Kaur Both Names Are Mine. All Concerned Note.

I, Sushma Devi W/O Late Sh. Mishri Lal, R/O 126, Sector-12a, Village Railly, Panchkula Haryana Have Changed My Name From Sushma Devi To Prem Wati.

I, Kamaljeet Kaur W/O Jagsir Singh R/O Vill. Lakhewali Sri Muktsar Sahib Have Declare That I, Known By Kamaljeet Kaur And Kanwaljeet Kaur Both Names Are Mine

I Hem Raj Bhagat Alias Hemraj S/O S. Mela Ram, Adhar Card No-766601161443, Residence Of #-2115, Sec-79, Po-Sohana, Tehsil & Distt-Mohali (Sas Nagar), State-Punjab Declare That I Have Changed My Name From Hem Raj Bhagata Alias Hemraj To Hem Raj

I Avishek Kumar Jha S/O Sh. Subodh Kumar Jha R/O #500, Ff, Golden Palm, Mubarakpur, Tehsil Dera Bassi, Distt. Mohali Have Changed My Daughter's Name From Arohi Jha To Aarohi Jha.

I, Navneet Son Of Sajjan Kumar Singla Resident Of H.No. 267/3, Jain Sthanak Wali Gali , Gohana Sonipat 131301 Have Changed My Name From Navneet Son Of Sajjan Kumar Singla To Navneet Singla Son Of Sajjan Singla. I Would Like To Be Known By This Name In Future.

I, No. 17000269y Rank Hmt Name Jeet Singh Bhadouria Unit 440(L) Engr Sqn C/O 56 Apo Bathinda Cantt. (Punjab) Permanent Resident Of 60 Foot Road, Ganga Vihar Colony, Gola Ka Mandir, Grid, Gwalior, State- Madhya Pradesh- 474005 Declare That I Have Changed My Minor Daughter Name From Sonali Bhadoriya To Sonali Bhadouria Vide Affidavit Dated 22.04.2025

I, Ashwani Kumar Chopra S/O Ved Pal Chopra R/O #246 Professor Colony, Yamuna Nagar, (Haryana) Do Hereby Declare That In 10th Class Certificate Of My Son Sumit Chopra, His Name & My And My Wife Name Mentioned As Sumeet Chopra, Ashvani Kumar And Raman. But As Per Id Our Names Are Sumit Chopra, Ashwani Kumar Chopra And Raman Chopra. In Future Our Name May Please Be Change/Called As Ashwani Kumar Chopra And Sumit Chopra And Raman Chopra.

I hitherto known as Rajiv Kumar Gupta Alias Rajiv Bindal Alias Rajiv Gupta S/O Krishan Lal Gupta Residing At House No-885, Sector-9, Panchkula, Haryana-134113 Have Changed My Name And I Shall Hereafter Be Known As Rajiv Kumar Gupta. It is certified that I have complied with other legal requirements in this connection.

I, Sabitarani Panda W/o Service No. 14940958W Rank Hav Name Rajendra Panda R/o Village Charigaon PO Anijo, Tehsil – Bontha, District – Bhadrak (Odisha) 756115 at present Unit 25 Mech Inf (R&SP) (VH), c/o 56 APO declare that my DOB erroneously recorded as 02/05/1995 in my husband Army service record . My correct DOB is 12/04/1994 vide affidavit No PB27906812880388X dt 21 April 2025.

I Biswajit Ghosh s/o Amulya Ratan Ghosh r/o village-Anchuri, PO Salboni, Tehsil and District-Bankura, Pin-722102, (West Bengal), India declare that my mother has changed her name from Nandrani Ghosh to Nandarani Ghosh due to wrong name record in my Army service record.

I, No: 14501904 Ex HAV- Hardilbag Singh S/O Ajit Singh Resident of Village- Wazirpur Afgana PO- Dorangla Tehsil and Distt. Gurdaspur Punjab that I declare changed my name from Har Dil Bag Singh to Hardilbag Singh and changed my wife name from MPK Deol to Mohinder Pal Kaur and date of birth of my wife from 10/05/1955 to 10/05/1954 in my army record.

I Subhash Singh S/o Ganesh Singh R/o Village Saddingpur, P.O: Shaligrami, Ward No.3 Police Station S.Kamal, Pin-851217 Distt. Begusarai (Bihar) declare that I have changed my minor daughter name from Surabhi to Surbhi Kumari.

I, Ritik Saharan S/o Sh. Tek Chand R/o VPO Jodhpuria Tehsil Rania Distt. Sirsa Haryana (125076) have changed my name from Ritik to Ritik Saharan in all documents.

I, Kavita W/o Karambir R/o H. No 299 Bhiran Patti Vill Kalwan The Narwana Distt Jind 126116 Haryana, have changed my name Kavita to Kavita Devi.

I, Karamvir S/o Maman Ram Rio , H. No 299 Bhiran Patti Vill Kalwan The Narwana Distt Jind 126116 Haryana, have change my name Karamvir to Karambir.

I, Seema Atwal D/o Karam Singh, R/o H.No. 881, Kila Patti, Malout, Sri Muktsar Sahib, Punjab-152101, have changed my name from Seema Atwal to Aryika Atwal for all purposes.

I, Madhusudan s/o Shanker Yadav r/o # 171 Village Badheri Sector 41-D Chandigarh have changed my name to Madhusudan Yadav

I, Urmila Singh w/o Late Indra Bahadur r/o # 1709 Sector 39-B Chandigarh have changed my name to Urmila Devi

I Kala Singh s/o Raj Singh r/o Khumbar, Tehsil and District Fatehabad have changed the name of my son from Rehan to Mohammed Ayaan Khan. In future my son should be known and identified as Mohammed Ayaan Khan.

I, Neetu Alias Hanna Khanna W/o Gaurav Khanna R/o H.No. EC-377, Qilla Mohalla, Jalandhar-144001, Punjab have changed my name from Neetu Alias Hanna Khanna to Hanna Khanna.

I, Balbiro d/o No.8004476 PNR Late HariChand r/o H.No.E-10-563 Street No. 3 Near Kal Sadak, Baba Sain Bhagat Colony, Ludhiana, Punjab have changed my name from Balbiro to Balbir Kaur.

I, Ramvachan Singh f/o Nk Sajjan Singh,R/o Pansarthi Gorakhpur Sadar Nagar Uttar Pradesh have changed my name from Ram Bachan Singh to Ramvachan Singh

I, Rupinder Kaur W/o Sandeep Singh R/o H.No.150, Vishavkarma Market, Kartarpur, Distt. Jalandhar, Punjab have changed my name to Kaur Rupinder (Kaur as Surname).

I, Sandeep Kaur W/o Gurpreet Singh R/o H.No. 150, Vishavkarma Market, Kartarpur, Distt. Jalandhar, Punjab have changed my name to Singh Didar (Singh as Surname).

I, Didar Singh S/o Kartar Singh R/o H.No.150, Vishavkarma Market, Kartarpur, Distt. Jalandhar, Punjab have changed my name to Singh Didar (Singh as Surname).

I, Gurpreet Singh S/o Didar Singh R/o H.No.150, Vishavkarma Market, Kartarpur, Distt. Jalandhar, Punjab have changed my name to Singh Gurpreet (Singh as Surname).

I, Vijay Lakshmi D/o Muni Lal R/o H.No.62, Gujja Peer Road, Shankar Garden Colony, Jalandhar, Punjab have changed my name from Vijay Lakshmi to Vijay Lakshmi Chadha.

I, Sukhdeep Kaur Dhamija W/o Amarjot Singh R/o 921/2-A, New Gopal Nagar, Jalandhar, Punjab have changed my name from Sukhdeep Kaur Dhamija to Sukhdeep Kaur.

ਮੈਂ, ਰੋਖਾ ਪਤਨੀ ਸੁੰਦੀਪ ਸਿੰਘ ਭਾਸੀ ਮਕਾਨ ਨੰ. 495, ਨਿਊ ਅੱਬਕ ਨਗਰ, ਟੀ. ਟੀ. ਸੀ. ਲੁਧਿਆਣਾ, ਪੋਸਟ ਆਫਿਸ ਸੈਂਟਰਲ ਪੋਸਟ ਆਫਿਸ, ਤਰੀਸੀਲ ਤੋਂ ਜ਼ਿਲਾ ਲੁਧਿਆਣਾ ਨੇ ਆਪਣਾ ਨਾਮ ਰੋਖਾ ਤੋਂ ਬਦਲ ਕੇ ਜਸਬੀਰ ਕੌਰ ਰੱਖ ਲਿਆ ਹੈ।

I, Seema Rani Monga W/O Kiran Kumar Kukkar R/O Jalaleana Road, Near Ram Dev Mandir, Korakaapura (Faridkot) Have Changed My Name After Marriage Seema Rani Kukkar.

I, Rachi Goyal W/o Sh. Rajat Kansal R/O H.No. 15, Mori Gate, Near K.D. Shastri Vidyalaya, Pathana Mohalla, Hisar have changed my name from Rachi Cansal alias Rachi Goyal to Rachi Goyal for all future purposes.

I, Smarty Davi W/o Army No 14937624w HAV Deepak Kumar R/o PO Narot Jaimal Singh, Teh & Distt. Pothankot, Taloor, Gurdaspur, Punjab-145026 have changed my name from Smarty Devi to Smarty vide affidavit dated 23.04.2025 before Distt. Session Court. Hisar.

I, Ajit Singh Son of Sadhu Singh R/o Lallian Kalan, PO. Lallian, Distt. Jalandhar have changed my name from Ajit Singh to Ranjit Singh. All concerned please note.

I, Hemant Chore S/o Sharad Chore R/o A-401, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar NIT Campus, G.T. Road Bypass, Jalandhar-144008 have changed my name from Hemant Chore to Hemant Sharad Chore. All concerned please note.

I, Kalpana W/o Ashwani Kumar R/o Vill. Rabon, PO. Saproon, Teh. & Distt. Solan (HP) have changed my minor son's name from Bhupendar Singh to Bhavesh.

I, Neha Kumari D/o Shri Inder Singh R/o Villi Karmote, PO. Taproli, Teh. Rajgarh, Distt. Simour (HP) have changed my name from Neha Kumari to Neha Kanwar.

I, Rupali legally spouse of No. 15814066P L/NK More Sanjay Sitaram presently residing at Shahupuri Satara, Distt – Satara, State – Maharashtra, PIN - 415002 have changed my name from Rupali to Rupali Sanjay More and date of birth from 31-10-1988 to 04-02-1988 vide Affidavit dated 21/04/2025 before executive Magistrate Jalandhar, (PB).

I, Gouravva legally Mother of No. 16117644N Nk Muttappaa Dasharath Yadav (Unit 201 Engr Regt C/o 56 APO) resi of Vill & PO – Kudachi, Tehsil – Raibag, Distt - Belagavi, State – Karnataka – 591311 have changed my name from Gouravva to Gouravva Dasharath Yadav vide Affidavit dated 21/04/2025 before executive Magistrate Jalandhar, (PB).

I, Nanda Kunwar legally Mother of No. 2715647K GDR Virendra Singh presently residing at ward No. 07, Vill- Banikhed, PO – Dalouda, Distt – Mandsaar, State MP, PIN - 458667 have changed my name from Nanda Kunwar to Nandkunwar Sisodiya and date of birth from 01-01-1971 to 01-01-1972 vide Affidavit dated 02/04/2025 before executive Magistrate Jalandhar, (PB).

I, Padma Singh legally Father of No. 2715647K GDR Virendra Singh presently residing at ward No. 07, Vill- Banikhed, PO – Dalouda, Distt – Mandsaar, State MP, PIN - 458667 have changed my name from Padma Singh to Padam Singh Sisodiya and date of birth from 14-12-165 to 14-12

MONIKA MALIK ■ CHANDIGARH

Patel's remarks are being seen as a categorical acknowledgment by the US of the severity of extremist violence linked to Khalistani outfits, particularly in Punjab. For decades, Indian agencies — such as the NIA — central counter-terrorism law enforcement agency, and Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) — India's main international intelligence agency — have identified BKJ, Khalistan Zindabad Force (KZF), and other affiliated groups as terrorist organizations. However, intelligence agencies in the US and other Western countries had often downplayed these threats, framing them as political dissent or freedom of expression under asylum protections.

Khalistani outfits, particularly in Punjab. For decades, Indian agencies — such as the NIA — central counter-terrorism law enforcement agency, and Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) — India's main international intelligence agency — have identified BKJ, Khalistan Zindabad Force (KZF), and other affiliated groups as terrorist organizations. However, intelligence agencies in the US and other Western countries had often downplayed these threats, framing them as political dissent or freedom of expression under asylum protections.

The FBI's action has been hailed by Indian security agencies as a long-overdue reckoning for Khalistani terror operatives who had previously operated with near impunity from foreign soil. Sources said

With a Rs five lakh bounty placed on him by the NIA following his role in a grenade attack on a retired police officer in Chandigarh, Happy Passia's capture marked a breakthrough. More importantly, it underscored an evolving understanding among international agencies that Khalistani extremism is not merely a political movement, but a terrorist threat with global ramifications.

PNS PANCHKULA

As part of India's ongoing vulture reintroduction programme, 34 captive-bred vultures, including 20 long-billed and 14

The vultures were transported in individual wooden boxes, one bird per box, to minimise stress and ensure safety during the

The team was led by Rundan Katkar, RFO, Kolsa, TATR, and supported by veterinarian Mayank Barde from PTR, Manan Mahadev, senior biologist, BNHS, and two forest guards. Chief Wildlife Wardens of Haryana and Maharashtra, Vivek Saxena and Srinivasa Rao and BNHS Director Kishor Rithe monitored and guided the entire operation. The BNHS has set up the four Jatayu conservation breeding centres in the country, at Pinjore, Bhopal, Rajabhatkha (West Bengal) and Rani, Guwahati (Assam).

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP)-led Punjab Government, under Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann, had recently ordered the transfer of 56 Tehsildars and 166 Naib Tehsildars as a part of sweeping administrative reforms in the Revenue Department. The move followed persistent complaints from the public regarding inefficiency, delays, and alleged misconduct in revenue offices. However, several officers have reportedly failed to join their new positions despite the transfer orders being issued.

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PNS ■ CHANDIGARH/FARIDKOT/MOGA

In Faridkot, DGP Yadav inaugurated a state-of-the-art Cyber Crime Police Station, a hi-tech Conference Hall, and a Briefing Hall with a seating capacity of 250. These facilities are aimed at enhancing operational efficiency and inter-agency coordination. Later in Moga, he inaugurated a futuristic Smart Police Control Room, equipped with cutting-edge surveillance and crime-monitoring technology.

Faridkot, the DGP said, has emerged as the top-performing district in Punjab in terms of registering FIRs based on public tips received via the Punjab Government's anti-drug helpline 'Safe Punjab - 9779100200'. Since the launch of 'Yudh Nashian Virudh' on March 1, 2025, the district has seen over

In Moga, while inaugurating the Smart Police Control Room, the DGP noted that the facility will serve as the technological nerve centre for policing. It includes AI-enabled surveillance systems to monitor public spaces, traffic, and inter-district checkposts.

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Launching a scathing attack, Punjab BJP general secretary Anil Sareen accused the AAP Government of institutionalizing extortion through the Tax Department. "The AAP government has weaponized the taxation machinery to fill its coffers and fund the luxuries of Delhi leaders," said Sareen at a press conference in Chandigarh. Citing an April 18 order instructing each ETO to conduct four inspections monthly, Sareen warned that the plan would lead to approximately 1,200 inspections across Punjab every month, potentially extracting fines worth Rs 96 crore monthly — or Rs 1,152 crore annually.

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Cheema underscored that this step is not a standalone measure but part of a sus-

"Every rupee collected goes back to the people in the form of welfare schemes, infrastructure, and better governance," said Garg, adding, "Unlike BJP's corrupt regime, where revenue vanished into private pockets, we invest it transparently for

“The trading community is already reeling from threats by extortion gangs. Now, they are being hounded by tax officers. We demand an end to this double trauma,” Sukhbir said, adding that SAD would launch a public movement if the government fails to roll back the directive. As Punjab’s political parties clash over the contentious directive, traders find themselves at the receiving end of growing uncertainty. BJP is threatening statewide protests, while SAD is calling for a mass movement, and AAP is defending the move as a step towards efficient tax collection.

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

During the meeting, the Chief Minister was informed that 17.40 lakh women had registered under the Har Ghar-Har Grihini Yojana. The Chief Minister instructed officers to verify the data of Ujjwala Scheme beneficiaries and BPL (Below Poverty Line) families through door-to-door checks. He also directed gas companies to set up camps at depots to assist consumers with LPG cylinder distribution. He reiterated that BPL families would continue to receive LPG cylinders

Presiding over the 17th meeting of the Haryana Enterprise Promotion Board (HEPB), the Chief Minister approved a special incentive package of Rs 37.68 crores for Vayu Products Pvt. Ltd for setting up a State's first Medical Liquid Oxygen Plant in Jhajjar and a Captive Solar Power Plant in Ambala. During the review of the project, Saini said that the establishment of the project in the Chemicals & Petrochemicals sector would not only attract significant investment to the state but also generate numerous job opportunities for local youth, thus strengthening the state's economy. Of the total investment of Rs 125.49 crores, Rs. 72.24 crores will be allocated for the Medical Oxygen Plant, while Rs 48.25 crores will be invested in the Captive Solar Power Plant. This project will mark Haryana's first Medical Liquid Oxygen Plant, which is expected to create approximately 100 jobs within the state.

During his visit, DGP Yadav also honoured high-performing officers and personnel from both Faridkot and Moga with DGP Commendation Discs and appreciation letters, encouraging the police force to maintain momentum in enforcement and public engagement.

During the review meeting of the Sports Department, the Chief Minister directed that special plans be prepared to ensure high-quality infrastructure and support for athletes' training in state sports stadiums and sports nurseries. He also emphasized setting up excellence centers focusing on specific elite sports and issuing unique IDs to athletes. During the meeting, a new portal for managing cash rewards and scholarships for sportspersons was launched. Through this portal, athletes can apply for scholarships and cash rewards provided by the Sports Department, ensuring transparent and convenient access to benefits. Since 2014, under the cash reward scheme, 16,305 athletes have been disbursed Rs. 599.43 crore by the department. Discussing the state's sports infrastructure, officers shared that Haryana presently has 3 state-level, 21 district-level, 25 sub-division level stadiums, 163 Rajiv Gandhi Sports Complexes, and 245 mini rural stadiums, all

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Announcing the decision, Finance Minister Harpal Singh Cheema said that the new policy reflected the Bhagwant Mann-led government's commitment to inclusive, compassionate, and forward-thinking governance. "Earlier, the CCL provision was only available to female employees with minor children. While that addressed a crucial need, it failed to reflect the diversity of caregiving roles and the intense demands faced by single male parents or families with children suf-

Saini also gave directions about the improvement of cricket stadiums in the state during the meeting. He directed that the ground and seating area of Panchkula Cricket Stadium be upgraded. Besides this, the installation of high-mast lights and other modern facilities should also be ensured in the stadium. Similar improvements are planned for Raja Nahar Singh Stadium in Faridabad. Besides this, discussion on developing an international-level sports complex on 100 acres in Palwal was also held. A special project has been proposed, which includes a cricket stadium, multipurpose hall, badminton and boxing halls, athletics field, fitness and rehab center, hotel and restaurant, and seating capacity for 35,000–50,000 spectators.

The Finance Minister emphasized that the Mann Government is committed to fostering a compassionate work culture where employee well-being, family care, and professional growth go hand in hand. “This decision is a step forward in promoting gender-neutral and disability-sensitive governance, and we hope it inspires similar reforms across the country,” he said.

By amending the CCL policy, Punjab has set a national precedent for progressive, inclusive, and empathetic public administration — one that supports its employees not just as workers, but as caregivers and human beings.

Date: 23-04-2025
Place: Haryana

Sd/- (Authorised Officer)
Piramal Capital & Housing Finance Limited

Editor's TAKE

A cultural gesture or a strategic reachout?

JD Vance's 3-day visit to India is more than a family trip. It's a message

United States Vice President JD Vance's three-day visit to India might appear on the surface as a cultural homecoming for his family, but beneath the surface lies a layer of strategic nuance that reflects the evolving dynamics of India-US relations — particularly amid the backdrop of Donald Trump's sanctions policy. Vance's India trip is being billed as a family-focused tour, with cultural visits to Jaipur and Agra aimed at helping his children connect with their Indian heritage through their mother, Usha Chilukuri Vance.

However, even such personal diplomacy carries weight. As the highest-ranking US official to visit India under the current administration, his presence alone sends a strong signal: despite recent tensions and Trump-era trade policy headwinds, the US values its long-term strategic relationship with India.

While the official itinerary includes only one major formal engagement — a meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi followed by a state dinner — the subtext of that conversation is expected to be significant. Trade negotiations between the two nations remain in a delicate phase, especially with Trump's reciprocal tariffs on Indian goods paused only temporarily until July. The resumption or removal of those tariffs hinges on political will from both sides. Vance's visit offers a diplomatic window for quiet discussions, signalling a willingness from Washington to keep dialogue channels open even if the Trump administration's broader rhetoric leans toward economic nationalism.

Vance's visit comes just weeks after Director of National Intelligence Tulsi Gabbard's trip to India, indicating a deliberate staggered engagement from Trump's key officials. Vance's attendance at regional and business forums in Jaipur, including a speech at the Rajasthan International Centre, and his interactions with political figures, provide an opportunity to reinforce bilateral ties beyond just military or economic frameworks.

His presence also comes at a time when Modi is preparing for a high-profile visit to Saudi Arabia, underscoring how both nations are recalibrating their global engagements and seeking balance in a multipolar world order. Vance's India stop, sandwiched between Italy and other key visits, thus plays a quiet yet strategic role in maintaining American visibility in the Indo-Pacific theatre.

By prioritising a family-led cultural immersion alongside limited political engagements, Vance is walking a fine line. It's a display of soft power — highlighting shared values, people-to-people ties, and the significance of diaspora connections — while also reaffirming the transactional, interests-based nature of current US foreign policy under Trump.

The symbolic guard of honour, shopping trips for Indian handicrafts, and visits to Jaipur's heritage sites are diplomatic gestures that soften the harder edges of policy friction. This duality makes Vance's visit a potent blend of optics and opportunity. Whether Vance's trip translates into tangible outcomes on trade or security remains to be seen. But the fact that his first visit to India is being positioned as a cultural one, while quietly engaging on serious policy matters, reflects the Biden-Trump transition's lingering complexities — and how Vance is being groomed not just as a vice president, but as a statesman with cross-cultural appeal.

In a time of strained alliances and recalibrated partnerships, JD Vance's India visit is a quiet assertion: that while policy may shift, relationships endure — and sometimes, it's the personal visits that pave the way for political resets. As India and the United States navigate a landscape marked by shifting alliances and political flux, visits like Vance's offer more than ceremonial value. They signal intent, test the waters of diplomacy and often sow the seeds for future policy recalibration. In an age when optics can drive narrative, such symbolic overtures may well prove to be the quiet bridges over turbulent geopolitical waters.

India bolsters ties with Sri Lanka

As China deepens its presence through major investments, India is doubling down to protect its strategic interests — offering aid, infrastructure to send a message that it is Sri Lanka's most reliable partner

Amid the intensifying India-China battle for influence in Sri Lanka, New Delhi has reason to be satisfied following the recent two-day state visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to the island nation during which economic, defence, and energy ties with an important neighbour were shored up. India's strategic interests are intrinsically tied with those of Sri Lanka, hence the need to maintain close and robust bilateral relations with it. New Delhi also sought to convey to the Anura Kumara Disسانayaكe — led Government the message, yet again, that it can reap greater benefits from India, which is a reliable friend.

The underlying message herein being that China isn't one. It was also conveyed to Colombo once again that protecting India's security interests as well as its own should be of paramount importance. Towards this end, New Delhi also extracted from President Disسانayaكe an assurance, yet again, that he will keep in mind India's security interests.

To New Delhi's undoubted relief, President Disسانayaكe reiterated that he will not allow Sri Lankan territory to be used in any manner that will threaten India's security interests. For now, the Disسانayaكe Government appears to be walking the talk on this account going by news reports that Sri Lanka cancelled a joint naval exercise with India's arch-foe Pakistan, which was to be held in the waters off the strategically located Trincomalee, not too far from the Indian coastline. But not before New Delhi intervened and made its security concerns known, following which the exercise — which was to have been held around the dates PM Modi was to visit the island nation — was scrapped. Given its strategic imperatives in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR), it's essential for New Delhi to consolidate its influence in Sri Lanka where India no longer holds sole sway, and to maintain robust ties with the new Government in place there.

In its outreach to the island nation, New Delhi is also seeking to burnish its credentials as a leader of the Global South, projecting itself as a dependable partner for nations facing economic hardship, and who need not fear falling into a debt trap as is often the case when they avail of loans from China.

During the PM's visit, there was also important messaging for Colombo about the perils of hob-nobbing too closely with Beijing, with PM Modi stating during the visit, "We have shared security interests. The security of both countries is interconnected and co-dependent." As a maritime neighbour in the Indian Ocean straddling vital sea



lanes, New Delhi knows that Chinese expansionism can pose a strategic threat to both India and Sri Lanka.

The spreading tentacles of China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) in Sri Lanka too have given New Delhi sleepless nights. As China's footprints in Sri Lanka increase, New Delhi



knows well that it cannot afford to let its guard down vis-à-vis Beijing as the latter builds deep inroads into India's immediate and extended neighbourhood.

This has forced India to redouble its efforts to ramp up its engagement and provide all manner of development assistance to countries in its neighbourhood so that they remain within its sphere of influence. In the case of Sri Lanka, India provided financial assistance totalling \$4.5 billion in 2022 and 2023 to it during its post-pandemic economic meltdown. This played a vital role in helping Sri Lanka obtain an IMF bailout. India's outreach to the Disسانayaكe Government has also seen it convert \$20.66 million given as lines of credit into grant assistance to reduce Sri Lanka's debt burden. All this, plus New Delhi's willingness to help Sri Lanka achieve economic stability, is possibly what has helped it forge close ties thus far with the Disسانayaكe Government.

Despite pursuing a policy of 'Neighbourhood First,' India's strategic space in the IOR is increasingly shrinking amidst a relentless Chinese onslaught. Though India has coined the new term 'Mahasagar' (Mutual and Holistic Advancement for Security and Growth Across Regions) replacing the earlier coinage of 'Sagar' (Security and Growth for All) for countries in the IOR, containing China's influence remains a challenge. India's efforts don't always bear fruit, especially when China-leaning Governments are in power in the neighbourhood. Besides, the offer of Chinese loans and financial assistance to build infrastructure is too tempting to resist for cash-strapped neighbours of India struggling to execute mega projects.

In the case of Sri Lanka, the Left-leaning Disسانayaكe has adroitly managed to balance his country's diplomatic ties with the two Asian giants in the six months since he took charge. It also means that the island nation for now is seeking to reap the benefits from the fierce India-China rivalry in Sri Lanka and the wider IOR. So if Disسانayaكe earlier this year managed to secure the largest-ever FDI (foreign direct investment) of \$3.7 billion for his country from China for a state-of-the-art oil refinery at Hambantota to be built by Sinopec, he's being wooed by India as well in the area of energy security. PM Modi's visit saw the joint launch of the plan to build the Sampur solar power plant.

It will be developed by the Trincomalee Power Company, which is a joint venture

between Ceylon Electricity Board and India's NTPC. To boost the island nation's energy security, all the more imperative as it went through a crippling forex crisis post the pandemic — which meant huge fuel shortages — the visit saw a tripartite agreement between India, Sri Lanka, and the UAE to develop Trincomalee as a regional energy hub. India needs to consolidate its foothold in Trincomalee on the island nation's eastern coast and keep China at bay. With its huge natural harbour, Trincomalee is of immense geo-strategic import and has the potential to be developed as a naval base. India is also already jointly redeveloping with Sri Lanka World War II — era strategic oil tank farms in Trincomalee. Apart from Trincomalee, New Delhi is also keeping a close eye on another strategic port, the one in Kankesanthurai, which lies not too far away from the Indian coastline. The port in Sri Lanka's Tamil-dominated northern province is close to the Indian coastline and is being "rehabilitated" with a \$61.5 million grant assistance from India. Given its vital security stakes in Sri Lanka, a defence cooperation agreement with the island nation, the first between the two countries, inked during the visit would also help India counter Chinese moves in the region.

After all, China's hegemonic ambitions present a real and present danger to India and indeed the entire IOR.

(The author is Senior Journalist. Views are personal)

Overthinking is injurious to mental health

SECOND Opinion

BY SAKSHI SETHI

Overthinking is a subtle but destructive habit that many people silently suffer from. It often disguises itself as caution or deep reflection, but in truth, it's a mental loop that traps individuals in cycles of worry, doubt, and inaction. While it may seem like a method of preparation or problem-solving, overthinking is far from harmless — it quietly undermines peace of mind, self-confidence, relationships, and even opportunities.

What begins as a desire to make the right choice or prepare for future outcomes quickly spirals into obsessive thinking. The mind replays conversations, dissects every detail, and invents endless "what ifs" and "should haves."

Instead of arriving at clarity, individuals find themselves stuck in a loop of mental noise that prevents real progress. A 2013 study published in the Journal of Abnormal Psychology found that overthinking is closely linked with anxiety and depression. Repetitive negative thinking was shown to be a shared factor in many mental health issues. This highlights that overthinking isn't just an annoying quirk — it's a serious risk factor that drains emotional energy, limits engagement with real life, and inhibits personal growth. Overthinkers often question every decision they make, fearing failure or embarrassment. This undermines

self-trust, making even small choices feel high-stakes. When someone begins to believe that every decision must be perfect, they become paralysed by the fear of imperfection, holding themselves back from growth, both personally and professionally. Relationships are also affected. Overthinkers tend to overanalyse texts, tones, or expressions, often creating negative narratives. A delayed response from a friend can spiral into "They're mad at me," or "I must've said something wrong." These imagined scenarios create emotional distance, tension, and unnecessary stress, making it hard to connect authentically. On top of that, the constant mental activity can interfere with sleep, leading to insomnia or disrupted rest, which further affects emotional well-being. So what fuels this habit of overthinking? At its core, overthinking is driven by fear — the fear of failure, of being judged, of losing control.

Often, these fears stem from past experiences where mistakes were punished or outcomes were unpredictable. As a coping mechanism, the brain tries to take control by playing out every possible scenario. Ironically, this attempt at control results in more chaos and mental fatigue. To escape the grip of overthinking, the first step is awareness. You can't change what you don't recognise. Start by observing your thought patterns and identifying when helpful reflection turns into rumination. The next step is to disrupt the cycle. One effective technique is to set a "thinking deadline." For instance, give yourself 30 minutes to evaluate a decision, weigh the pros and cons, and then make a choice. This method trains your brain to move from overanalysis to

action. Journaling is another powerful tool. Writing down your thoughts gets them out of your head and onto paper, immediately reducing their emotional charge. It also engages the logical part of the brain, helping you process emotions more constructively.

Cognitive-behavioural therapy (CBT), a scientifically supported method, is built around this very idea — challenging irrational thoughts and replacing them with more realistic, balanced perspectives. Most importantly, take action. Overthinking convinces us to wait until we feel perfectly ready, but clarity often comes after we start. Even the smallest step — sending a message, making a phone call, beginning a project — can break the mental gridlock and build momentum.

We begin to see that the consequences of our decisions are rarely as catastrophic as we imagine, and even when things go wrong, we gain experience and resilience. Building trust in yourself is crucial. Each small, confident decision reinforces your capability. Along the way, practising self-compassion helps loosen the grip of perfectionism. You don't need to be flawless or have all the answers. Life is unpredictable by nature, and embracing that truth allows space for peace and growth. In the end, overthinking drains our most valuable resources — time and mental peace. It disguises itself as preparation but only delays action and postpones growth. Life isn't meant to be overanalysed — it's meant to be lived fully and authentically.

(The writer is an educator. Views are personal)

Leaderspeak



Deeply Pained by the Passing of His Holiness Pope Francis. Pope Francis will always be remembered as a beacon of compassion, humility, and spiritual courage by millions across the world. From a young age, he devoted himself towards realising the ideals of Lord Christ. He diligently served the poor and downtrodden. For those who were suffering, he ignited a spirit of hope.

PRIME MINISTER NARENDRA MODI

Letters to the Editor

SY Quraishi and the politics of identity

Madam — Former Chief Election Commissioner SY Quraishi responded firmly to BJP MP Nishikant Dubey's recent remark labelling him a "Muslim Commissioner." On Monday, April 21, Quraishi stated his unwavering belief in an India where individuals are defined by their contributions, not their religious identities. He noted that for some, such identities are used to push hateful political narratives. Quraishi served India with distinction as Chief Election Commissioner from July 2010 to June 2012. During his tenure, he introduced key reforms such as the creation of a Voter Education Division and Expenditure Control Division, and he founded the India International Institute of Democracy and Election Management.

A proud member of the Haryana cadre of the IAS, Quraishi's public service career is a model of integrity and dedication. His work has been recognised by many, including Dr Gopalkrishna Gandhi, the distinguished grandson of Mahatma Gandhi and C Rajagopalachari. Dr Gandhi lauded Quraishi's efforts to uphold the values of India's constitutional institutions. Dubey's inflammatory comment followed Quraishi's criticism of the Waqf (Amendment) Act, which he described as a "sinister and evil plan" to seize Muslim lands. In a time when hate speech threatens the fabric of democracy, voices like Quraishi's serve as crucial reminders of the constitutional values India must continue to uphold.

BHAGWAN THADANI | MUMBAI

Rohit Sharma's wankhede moment

Madam — There could be no better timing than this for Indian cricket captain Rohit Sharma. Soon after the Mumbai Cricket Association honoured him by naming a stand after him at Wankhede Stadium, he delivered a stunning unbeaten 76-run knock against Chennai Super Kings, featuring four boundaries and six sixes.

His performance not only secured victory but also pushed Mumbai Indians up to sixth place on the IPL points table. From a young boy in Borivali known for breaking window panes to a cricketing legend who has broken records on the global stage, Rohit's rise is truly inspirational.

His success stems from a passion for the game and an unrelenting commitment to his team, not personal milestones.

What sets Rohit apart is his leadership, consistency, and ability to inspire. He is the only Indian cricketer to win two T20 World Cups — once as a player, once as captain — and has led the team to multiple ICC titles.

He is also the only player with three double centuries in ODIs and holds records for the most international sixes and the highest ODI score.

A fearless and flamboyant cricketer, Rohit Sharma's name now fittingly graces a stand at Wankhede. When he bats, it's nothing short of a festival for fans — an experience of joy, energy, and unforgettable moments.

G DAVID MILTON | MARUTHANCODE

Nurturing emotional bonds

Madam — Recent scientific research lends weight to poet William Wordsworth's timeless observation that "the child is father of the man." A study conducted by King's College London, Duke University, and the University of Oslo emphasises that children given the right emotional support can positively influence society as a whole. It is troubling to see that emotional bonds within families are weakening. The lure of seductive technologies is isolating children from authentic human interaction, inhibiting essential emotional and intellectual qualities such as empathy, compassion, and kindness.

In the 21st century, children are often subjected to rigid schedules and academic pressure, leaving little time for meaningful connection with their parents. Given the rise in societal violence, insecurity, and alienation, even small acts of kindness — whether a warm gesture, kind word, or embrace — can serve as seeds for empathy and resilience. In a world increasingly fragmented by ego, hatred, and authoritarianism, the parent-child relationship remains a powerful antidote to many of humanity's ills. Emotional support fosters empathy, resilience, and compassion — qualities essential for a humane society. As technology and pressure erode connection, small acts of love within families can counteract alienation and help shape a more compassionate, unified future.

RANGANATHAN SIVAKUMAR | TAMIL NADU

A BREWING CRISIS THREATENING KERALA'S COMMUNAL HARMONY

Munambam, the jewel of Vypeen Island in Kochi, is a picturesque suburban area nestled along the Arabian Sea. However, it has now become the Achilles' heel of Kerala. In 1902, Abdul Sattar, a prominent member of the Kutchi Memon community — a Muslim trading group from Gujarat that had migrated to the state — was granted a lease for over 400 acres of land in Munambam by the princely state that governed the area. Later, in 1948, his close relative Mohammed Siddique Sait registered the deed, and in 1950, he endowed the land to Farook College in Kozhikode.

Over time, the college sold portions of the land to various encroacher-occupants. In 1971, the Paravur Sub Court ruled that the land was covered under a formal waqf deed. This decision was upheld by the Kerala High Court in 1975. Reports submitted by the Emakulam Collectors to the High Court in 2008 and 2009 also confirmed the land's waqf status. Subsequently, in 2019, the Kerala Waqf

Board formally registered the property as waqf, effectively nullifying all previous land sales. Amid the ensuing confusion, numerous tourist resorts have been established on the disputed land. The residents of the area — primarily Latin Catholic fisherfolk — have been staging a relay hunger strike for over 175 days, demanding recognition of their revenue rights over the land they have long inhabited. Unfortunately, the issue has been framed as a Christian-Muslim conflict, driven by partisan political narratives that now threaten Kerala's communal harmony. Union Minister Kiran Rijji, during his speech in Parliament while introducing the Waqf (Amendment) Bill 2025, stated that the Munambam issue would be resolved in favour of the residents once the Act came into force. These statements reflect a lack of sincere intent to address the serious concerns of the affected residents. A respected Archbishop recently told the media that the hope for a resolution now lies with the State Government.

— HARIDARSAN RAJAN | KOZHIKODE

Why India must cut GST on farm equipment?

As rural labour dwindles and food security demands rise, mechanisation is no longer optional — it’s imperative. Yet the very tools needed to modernise farming are taxed more than luxury items, placing an unjust burden on small and marginal farmers

FIRST
Column

India’s agricultural sector, the backbone of rural livelihoods, is at a critical juncture. The transition to modern and mechanised farming is no longer a choice but is necessary to ensure food security, optimise productivity, and improve farmers’ incomes. Yet, a significant bottleneck hampers this transition — the irrational Goods and Services Tax (GST) structure on tractors and other agri-implements.

Today, farm equipment is taxed at 12 per cent, more than a luxury watch is taxed at 5 per cent. For a small or marginal farmer purchasing a low-horsepower tractor costing ₹5-7 lakh, this means paying ₹60,000 to ₹84,000 upfront as GST alone — a prohibitive cost for most. This, in turn, delays the mechanisation process in areas where it is needed the most.

Pre-GST Scenario Was More Farmer-Friendly

Before the implementation of GST on July 1, 2017, tractors and most agri-implements were exempt from excise duties and subject to only 4-6 per cent Value Added Tax (VAT), depending on the state. Fertilisers, an essential element of agriculture, were previously taxed at 6 per cent (1 per cent excise and 5 per cent VAT). In the GST regime, the introduction of a 12 per cent GST rate on fertilisers was reduced to 5 per cent. However, on agricultural machinery still, 12 per cent GST disrupted the affordability landscape, disproportionately impacting small and marginal farmers, who make up over 86 per cent of India’s total landholdings and are responsible for producing more than 60 per cent of the country’s food grains.

While GST has unified the country’s indirect tax system, it has also inadvertently penalised these vulnerable farmers by making essential farm tools more expensive. Rationalising GST to 5 per cent or even zero for tractors, their components, and agri-implements would significantly ease their financial burden and accelerate rural mechanisation.

Haryana’s Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini has recently written to the Union Finance and Agriculture Minister seeking GST exemption on 10 essential farm implements like rotavators, zero-till drills, super-seeders, straw-balers, and tractor-mounted spray pumps — a move and other states CMs should also collectively endorse.

Policy Contradictions: Subsidise on One Hand, Tax on the Other

The contradiction is glaring. The Government’s flagship schemes, like the Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY) and the Sub-Mission on Agricultural Mechanisation (SMAM), offer subsidies of up to 50 per cent on machinery such as tractors, combine harvesters, sugarcane harvesters, cotton pickers, for establishing custom hiring centres (CHCs) and also to individual farmers for buying pump sets, tractor mounted sprayers, zero till and seed drills. Yet, these efforts are undermined when the same equipment attracts a steep GST rate.



A reduced GST rate on farm machinery will empower smallholder farmers and reduce the Government’s subsidy burden. Lowering upfront taxes means farmers can buy machines at more reasonable prices, translating into more minor subsidy requirements for the Government.



AS MITTAL

Inconsistencies in the Green Energy Push

The policy incongruities extend to the renewable energy sector as well. Renewable energy devices such as solar panels, biogas plants, and windmill components attract only 5 per cent GST to promote sustainability. Electric vehicles (EVs) also enjoy a 5 per cent GST and a 15 per cent discount on third-party insurance premiums. Yet, electric tractors — vital for reducing agriculture’s carbon footprint — are taxed at 12 per cent GST, the same as diesel tractors, and do not qualify for any insurance premi-

um relief. According to a study by the International Council on Clean Transportation (ICCT), aligning electric tractors with EV incentives could reduce the price gap between electric and diesel tractors by nearly 40 per cent, helping India make a greener shift in agriculture.

INDIA’S AGRICULTURAL FUTURE HINGES ON WIDESPREAD MECHANISATION, YET HIGH GST RATES ON ESSENTIAL FARM EQUIPMENT ACT AS A MAJOR ROADBLOCK. SMALL AND MARGINAL FARMERS — ARE UNFAIRLY BURDENED BY THE 12 PER CENT GST ON TRACTORS AND IMPLEMENTS, A RATE HIGHER THAN THAT ON LUXURY ITEMS.

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The Urgency for Mechanisation

Mechanisation is the key to addressing India’s agricultural productivity paradox. Despite India being the world’s second-largest agricultural producer, only 47 per cent of its farming processes are mechanised, compared to 95 per cent in the United States, 75 per cent in Brazil, and 57 per cent in China. At this pace, India will need at least 25 more years to reach comparable levels.

Labour shortages due to rural-to-urban migration have further exacerbated the crisis. The share of the agricultural workforce has dropped from 59 per cent in 1991 to just 39 per cent in 2023. Mechanisation is essential to offset this shrinking labour force, increase yields, reduce drudgery, and make farming more attractive to rural youth.

Limited uptake

Tractors dominate India’s farm equipment market,

while implements such as harvesters, seed drills, tillers, and planters account for only 15-20 per cent of the market share. This limited uptake is due to the prohibitive costs and a lack of awareness about the productivity benefits of modern equipment.

The Government and multilateral agencies are already focusing on mechanisation schemes. However, these interventions will not reach their full potential unless complemented by lower taxation.

Farm mechanisation is not merely about replacing manual labour; it is about optimising inputs, improving efficiency, and securing rural incomes in a challenging agrarian landscape. It is time for the GST Council to undertake an urgent review of agri-implement tax slabs. A uniform GST rate of 5 per cent or zero on all agricultural machinery and their components would make mechanisation affordable for small and marginal farmers, stimulate demand in under-mechanised regions, encourage the adoption of green technologies like electric tractors, and reduce Government subsidy outflows in the long run. The ‘magical’ character of farm mechanisation needs a booster dose. Rationalising GST will empower farmers, create rural entrepreneurship opportunities via CHCs, and help India achieve sustainable development goals. It will bridge the mechanisation gap and unlock the true potential of Indian agriculture. Mechanisation is the future, but affordability is the key.

India’s agricultural future hinges on widespread mechanisation, yet high GST rates on essential farm equipment act as a major roadblock. Small and marginal farmers — who form over 86 per cent of India’s agrarian base — are unfairly burdened by the 12 per cent GST on tractors and implements, a rate higher than that on luxury items. This policy contradiction undermines Government subsidies offered through schemes like RKVY and SMAM, inflating costs and stalling progress. Haryana’s call for GST exemption on key implements is a step in the right direction that other states must support. The mismatch extends to green technologies too — electric tractors face the same GST rate as diesel ones, with none of the incentives that electric vehicles enjoy. This hinders both affordability and sustainability goals.

Meanwhile, India’s mechanisation rate lags behind other major agricultural economies, slowed further by rural labour shortages and high upfront machinery costs. Rationalising GST to 5 per cent or zero for all agricultural equipment is critical. It would ease financial pressure on farmers, reduce Government subsidy burdens, and accelerate the adoption of both conventional and green technologies. Mechanisation is not a luxury — it’s a necessity. Affordability, enabled through fair taxation, is the key to unlocking a more productive, sustainable, and prosperous agricultural future.

(The writer is Chairman of ASSOCHAM Northern Region Development Council. Views are personal)

RTI amendment erodes transparency

By removing the public interest safeguard from Section 8(1)(j), the amendment now imposes a blanket exemption on all personal data — even when linked to public duties — thereby crippling the citizen’s ability to hold public officials accountable

The recent amendment to the Right to Information (RTI) Act, 2005, through the Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Act, 2023, marks a pivotal retreat from the transparency regime that India painstakingly built over nearly two decades. By shielding personal information under a blanket exemption, the Modi Government has altered the balance between privacy and the public’s right to know.

The operation of the RTI Act — informed by several judgments by the Supreme Court and High Courts — has shown that personal information not related to public activity was already protected.

It underlines that there was already sufficient judicial restraint in place to protect genuinely private data. Landmark rulings like *Girish Deshpande vs CIC* (2013), and the *Puttaswamy* (2017) privacy judgment, drew clear boundaries between personal data and information relevant to public interest. Courts consistently held that unless the disclosure of personal information served a larger public cause, it should be denied.

Therefore, the amendment was not needed and shows legislative overreach, reflecting mistrust in judicial discretion. It signals a shift from a principle-based regime to a bureaucratic shield where no scrutiny is possible. The amendment now legalises the denial of information that courts had earlier allowed when public interest was evident-setting a regressive precedent that may encourage arbitrariness and corruption.

The SC judgment reinforces that safeguarding personal privacy and promoting institutional transparency are not mutually exclusive but are jointly essential.

This point underscores a vital democratic balance. The Supreme Court, especially in the *Puttaswamy* case, held that privacy is a fundamental right but not an absolute one; it must be balanced with transparency, especially when public interest is involved. The original RTI Act embodied this balance by permitting the release of personal information where larger institutional accountability or public interest was at stake.

The amendment breaks this balance by giving unchecked primacy to privacy, even when it is used as a smokescreen to hide inefficiency, nepotism, or corruption. For instance, public access to officials’ attendance, disciplinary records, or property



details — which can reveal disproportionate assets — would now be blocked. The implication is that institutions become unanswerable to the public, reducing the citizen’s role from a watchdog to a mute spectator.

The sweeping changes have been introduced through the Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Act, 2023, which amended Section 8(1)(j) of the RTI Act. Earlier, this section exempted disclosure of personal information unless there was an overriding public interest. The amendment removes this public interest override and comprehensively exempts all personal data from disclosure under RTI, regardless of its connection to

interest override and comprehensively exempts all personal data from disclosure under RTI, regardless of its connection to

public duties. It is a fundamental shift from a “case-by-case” evaluation to an “absolute bar” on access to personal information, thereby hollowing out the core of the RTI regime.

The implication is grave: details about the conduct, performance, assets, and public duties of Government officials — even when crucial to detect corruption-can now be shielded from public scrutiny under the excuse of “Privacy”. It turns the RTI from a transparency-enabling instrument into a tool riddled with opaque exemptions, undermining citizens’ ability to hold officials accountable.

This proviso was a crucial equaliser — it mandated that any information which cannot be denied to Parliament or a State Legislature should not be denied to a citizen.

Its removal gives disproportionate access to legislators while stripping ordinary citizens of equal standing in accessing information. It opens the doors for selective transparency, where MPs and MLAs can

access sensitive Government information while citizens are stonewalled. This defeats the spirit of the RTI Act, of 2005 which was built on the idea that transparency is not a privilege but a right.

The move indicates a central tendency to empower the political class at the cost of democratic equity. It also allows the bureaucracy to selectively disclose information to suit political interests while denying the same to activists, journalists, or public-spirited individuals.

This technical change has a wide-ranging impact. By using the DPDP Act to amend Section 8(1)(j) of the RTI Act, the Government has effectively introduced a data protection regime that overrides the RTI’s foundational purpose-access to public information. The phrase “all personal information” is undefined and absolute, allowing information officers to deny almost anything under the guise of personal data.

Details such as educational qualifications, performance appraisals, transfer postings, and reasons for disciplinary action can all

now be denied, even if such data expose abuse of power or fraud. This will embolden non-performance, discourage whistle-blowers, and limit the ability of journalists, lawyers, or citizens to demand accountability. In essence, it turns a democratic law into a bureaucratic fortress.

The Modi Government claims that legal obligations under RTI remain unaffected but this assertion is misleading. Section 44(3) of the DPDP Act directly amends the RTI Act itself, thereby altering the legal obligation.

There is a common perception amongst the citizens having consciousness about the RTI Act that the center should pause and review the amendment which reflects a broader democratic concern as it will dilute the purpose of the entire process of seeking information. The vociferous demand to reconsider the amendment is a red flag from the opposition and civil society as these changes are not about protecting privacy but about restricting scrutiny.

The repeal demand stems from fears that the Government is creating an architecture of secrecy behind the smokescreen of data protection. If allowed to persist, this may institutionalise opacity and convert public institutions into information black holes-something antithetical to participatory democracy.

The RTI Act was a landmark law that was an unprecedented achievement of the people’s movement under Magsaysay winner, Aruna Roy that democratised access to governance and brought the citizen to the center of accountability. By altering its core provisions, the Modi Government risks reversing this progress.

While data protection is necessary in the digital age, it should not come at the cost of institutional transparency. Instead of finding a nuanced balance, the Government has chosen to impose blanket opacity.

The implications go far beyond legalese-they erode the foundations of a transparent republic, where the citizen has the right to question power. This amendment must be revisited, reviewed, and if necessary, repealed to restore the sanctity of the RTI Act.

(The writer is a senior political analyst and Ex Chairperson of the Standing Committee of All-State Public Service Commissions in India. Views are personal)

OR BLACK AND WHITE ADS
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PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ San Francisco

She further said a significant thrust on infrastructure development has also created a strong foundation for manufacturing-led growth by bolstering investor confidence over the last 10 years.

— NIRMALA SITHARAMAN, FINANCE MINISTER

“Over the next two decades, sustaining

Despite the pandemic shock and a banking crisis, she said, "our progress over the past decade, anchored in strong macro-

More than 65 per cent of Global Capability Centres (GCC) in India have their headquarters in the US, she said, adding, these GCCs provide high-value-added, bespoke services in areas such as R&D, management consulting and auditing. Observing that the US is a mature start-up hub which has developed over 50-60 years, while India's start-up journey is a nascent one, she said, "over the course of the last decade, the government's focus was on reducing the cost of entrepreneurial risk-taking by removing regulatory and infrastructural barriers.Rs

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ San Francisco

engagement. Siddharth expressed his desire to see India at the forefront of the AI revolution and spoke about working in the domain of AI with India and through

“FM @nsitharaman underlined the steps that the Government of India has taken over years to boost digital infrastructure, including budgeting ₹10,300 crore for IndiaAI Mission, creating AI language technologies through BharatGen and Sarvam-1, and the establishment of the Srijan Centre for

Generative AI at IIT Jodhpur @saide_ijit among others,” another post said. The Finance Minister explained to him about the potential opportunity through the proposed Rs 1 lakh crore corpus, private sector-driven research, development, and innovation scheme, and informed about India ranking first globally in AI skill penetration where India is ahead of many developed countries. In another meeting with Anjney Midha, General Partner with a16z and Raghu Raghuram advisor VMware, Sitharaman suggested that a16z and VMware may like to explore collaboration across sectors within the domain of AI including in education, healthcare, and AI Centres of Excellence.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ New Delhi

“As we enter this new financial year, we reaffirm our commitment to sustained

The new signings were in Goa, Kolkata, Chennai, Rishikesh, Indore, Bhimtal, Mukteshwar, Gorakhpur, Mohali, Surat and Ayodhya, it said, adding that with these Fortune Hotels now has presence in over 65 cities across India and Nepal.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ New Delhi

"Additionally, weakness in the US dollar following the tensions between Trump and Fed Chair Powell, and uncertainties around the US-China trade war are another crucial factors that has pushed gold price to a record high," Colin Shah, MD, Kama Jewellery, said.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ New Delhi

years, owing to lack of viability and afford-

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ New Delhi

The government has extended the term of RBI Deputy Governor T Rabi Sankar for another one year

This is the second one-year extension granted to him. The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) has approved the re-appointment of Rao for a period of one year with effect from May 3, 2025, or until further orders, sources said, quoting a government order dated April 21. The ACC is headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He was appointed as RBI Deputy Governor in May 2021 for an initial period of three years. In his previous role as Executive Director, Sankar was looking after the Department of Payment and

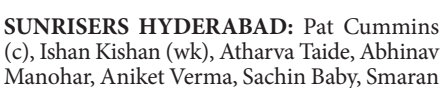
nor extended

Chairman Anil Agarwal urged accelerated industrial growth in Rajasthan, citing its vast mineral wealth and \$196B GDP. He emphasized transforming resources into value-added products and raised the state's entrepreneurial spirit, reaffirming Vedanta's commitment to Rajasthan's economic ascent.



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Hyderabad

The five-time champions are coming off a



MUMBAI INDIANS: Hardik Pandya (c), Rohit Sharma, Suryakumar Yadav, Robin Minz, Ryan Rickelton (wk), Shrijith Krishnan (wk), Bevon Jacobs, Tilak Varma, Naman Dhir, Will Jacks, Mitchell Santner, Raj Agad Bawa, Vignesh Puthur, Corbin Bosch, Trent Bouldt, Karn Sharma, Deepak Chahar, Ashwani Kumar, Reece Topley, VS Penmetsa, Arjun Tendulkar, Mujeeb Ur Rahman, Jasprit Bumrah.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ New Delhi

Noted commentator Harsha Bhogle has rejected speculation that he was kept away from the IPL match between Kolkata Knight Riders and Gujarat Titans on Monday due to a complaint by the Cricket Association of Bengal, insisting that he was only empanelled for two games in Kolkata, which are over. His clarification came a day after the CAB's letter to the BCCI, sent about 10 days ago by its secretary Naresh Ojha, was revealed in media reports. In the letter, the body asked for the removal of Bhogle and New Zealand's Simon Doull from the

"Asking me would have resolved the issue. Rosters are done before the tournament starts. I was rostered for two games in Kolkata. I was there for the first and an illness in the family prevented me from being at the 2nd," he added without specifying the games. KKR played against

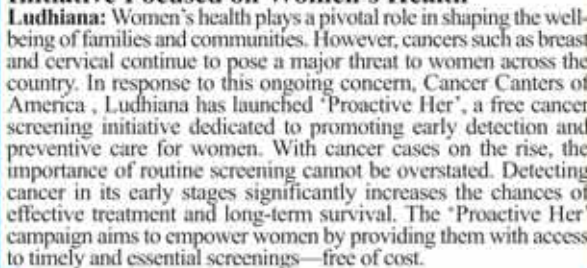
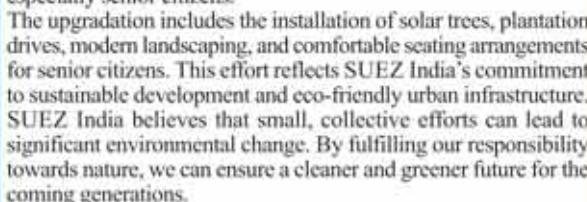
Bhogle had also stated that KKR deserved to have the home advantage.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Kolkata

"Kolkata Knight Riders has simply not

"It was interesting to hear Ajinkya Rahane talk about 199 being a chaseable score because towards the back end of Gujarat Titans' innings, we thought the

"As a captain, having a seamer who can make that kind of impact in the middle overs is absolutely priceless."



Date: 23.04.2025
Place: Haryana

	IDFC FIRST BANK CIN: L65110TN24PLC097792 Registered Office:- KRM Towers, 8th Floor, Harrington Road, Chetpet, Chennai-600031. Tel: +91 44 4564 4000 Fax: +91 44 4564 4022	<h2 style="margin: 0;">IDFC FIRST Bank Limited</h2> <p>(erstwhile Capital First Limited, amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited and presently known as IDFC First Bank Limited)</p>								
APPENDIX- IV-A [See proviso to rule 8 (6) & 9 (1)] SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8 (6) & 9 (1) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002										
<p>Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower (s), Co-Borrower (s) and Guarantor (s) as per column (iii) that the below described immovable properties as per column (iv) mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, the possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of Formerly known as IDFC Bank Ltd, will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is" as described hereunder, for the recovery of amount due to IDFC FIRST Bank Limited (Formerly known as IDFC Bank Ltd) from Borrower (s) and Co-Borrower (s) as per column (i).</p> <p>For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please refer to the link provided on IDFC First Bank website i.e. www.idcfirstbank.com.</p>										
S. No.	(i) Demand Notice Amount	(ii) Agreement ID & QR Code of Property Survey	(iii) Name of Borrower (s), Co-Borrower (s) and Guarantor (s)	(iv) Mortgaged Property Address	(v) Reserve Price Amount	(vi) EMD Amount	(vii) Date and Time of Auction	(viii) Date and Time EMD of Auction	(ix) Date and Time of Inspection	(x) Authorized Officer Name & Contact Number
1.	INR 1929851.00/- Demand Notice dated: 14-Feb-2024	10057053214 & 10049159131	M/S NG Solutions, Sadhana & Nagendra Prasad Singh	All That Piece And Parcel Of Flat No. 303 On Third Floor, Front Left Hand Side, With Roof Right, Consisting Of Two Bedrooms, Two Bathrooms, One Drawing Dining Room, One Kitchen, Having Covered Area 450 Sq. Ft. On Plot No. 2894 A Gali Hanuman Mandir, Vishnu Garden, Rajindra Park, Khasra No. 12(3-8-0), Tehsil & Distt. Gurgaon, Haryana-122006, And Bounded As:- East: Plot No. 2893, West: Road 19.3 Ft., North: Other Property & South: Road 20 Ft.	INR 3150000.00/-	INR 3150000.00/-	27-May-2025 11.00 AM to 1.00 PM	26-May-2025 10.00 AM to 5.00 PM	21-May-2025 10:00 AM To 4:00 PM	Name- Pushpendra Saini Contact Number- 9772306344 Name- Vasuu Bhasin Contact Number- 8006555503
								(xi) QR Codes of Property Location & Property Images	 	
Disclaimer: Please note that the said notice is issued for sale of immovable property only and IDFC FIRST Bank Limited has no right to sale of the movable assets, if any, present at the immovable property.										
Date: 23.04.2025 Place: Haryana										
Authorised Officer IDFC FIRST Bank Limited (Formerly known as IDFC Bank Ltd)										