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AGENDA



## PARIKSHA PE CHARCHA TO BE HELD IN JANUARY

The ninth edition of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's annual *Pariksha Pe Charcha* will be held in January 2026, the registrations to which are open till January 11, according to Ministry of Education officials. "Pariksha Pe Charcha is back with its ninth edition. Students, parents and teachers from India and abroad will engage with the Prime Minister to discuss exam stress and also celebrate examinations as an utsav (festival), as an integral part of life," said a senior official. For the selection of participants, an online competition with multiple-choice questions is being organised on the MyGov portal from December 1 to January 11. Students from Classes 6 to 12, teachers and parents can take part in the competition.

## DRONE ATTACK KILLS 50 IN SUDAN

A drone attack by the Sudanese paramilitary forces hit a kindergarten in south-central Sudan, killing 50 people, including 33 children, a doctors' group said. Paramedics on the scene in the town of Kalogi in South Kordofan state were targeted in "a second unexpected attack," Sudan Doctors' Network said in a statement late Friday. Emergency Lawyers, a rights group tracking violence against civilians in Sudan, reported in a statement Saturday the second strike on paramedics treating survivors in Kalogi and said "a third civilian site near the previous two" was also attacked.

FULL REPORT ON P9

## INCOME BOOST FOR DAIRY FARMERS

Union Home and Cooperation Minister Amit Shah on Saturday expressed confidence that the implementation of the circular economy model across the country will increase dairy farmers' income by 20 per cent in the next five years. Shah was addressing cattle rearers associated with Banas Dairy at an event held at Sanadar village in Gujarat's Vav-Tharad district to mark the inauguration of the dairy's bio-CNG and fertiliser plant and ground-breaking of its milk powder plant. He praised Banas Dairy's management for successfully developing a model for a circular economy in the dairy sector, which includes generating extra income for farmers through various means, such as converting cattle dung into biogas and bio-fertiliser. Shah informed the audience that he had brought several members of Parliament to Banaskantha to understand the circular economy model of Banas Dairy.

FULL REPORT ON P7

## FEELING REALLY FREE IN MIND: VIRAT

Indian batting mainstay Virat Kohli on Saturday said he is "feeling really free" mentally after producing another match-winning effort to help India clinch the three-match ODI series, in which he finished as the leading run-scorer with 302 runs. Kohli scored a rapid 45-ball 65 not out in the third ODI after hitting centuries in the first two games to extend his tally to a record 53, as India crushed South Africa by nine wickets to win the third ODI comprehensively. "Honestly, playing the way I have in the series is the most satisfying thing for me. I feel really free in my mind. I haven't played like this in 2-3 years," Kohli told the broadcaster after the match. "I know when I can bat like that in the middle, it helps the team a long way. Makes me confident, any situation in the middle, I can handle that and bring it in favour of the team," he added. Kohli said self-doubt is inevitable for a batter, irrespective of experience, but felt it helps in overall improvement.

FULL REPORT ON P11

# Centre slams brakes on soaring airfares amid chaos

RAJESH KUMAR ■ New Delhi

With widespread flight disruptions pushing up ticket prices on several domestic routes, the Centre on Saturday capped airfares in the range of ₹7,500 to ₹18,000, depending on the distance, amid soaring air ticket prices due to the IndiGo flight disruptions.

Invoking its regulatory powers to ensure fair and reasonable fares across all affected routes, the Ministry of Civil Aviation issued a fare-cap order and directed all airlines to strictly adhere to it.

As the IndiGo mess and chaos across the airports entered its fifth consecutive day on Saturday, leaving thousands of flyers high and dry, the ministry also directed the airline to complete the ticket refund process for the cancelled flights by Sunday evening, as well as ensure baggage separated from the travellers is delivered in the next two days.

The refund process for all cancelled or disrupted flights must be completed by 8 pm on Sunday, the ministry said in a statement. On Saturday, more than 800 flights were cancelled at various airports.

Under the limits, for a flight flying up to 500 kilometres, the



Passengers standing in a queue at an IndiGo airlines counter at Terminal 1 (T1) of the Indira Gandhi International Airport in New Delhi

PTI

fares are capped at ₹7,500, and for 500-1,000 kilometres, the ticket price cap is ₹12,000. For flights operating 1,000-1,500 kilometres, the fares are limited at ₹15,000 and for flights above 1,500 kilometres, the cap is ₹18,000. These limits apply uniformly across all airlines and booking platforms. The ministry clarified that these limits exclude applicable UDF, PSF and taxes, and will not apply to Business Class or RCS-UDAN flights.

The cap means that for a Delhi-Mumbai flight, which is covered in a distance of over 1,300 kilometres, the fare for at least the economy class is capped at ₹18,000.

The ministry's move comes at a time when passengers across the country have been reporting skyrocketing last-minute fares, in some cases crossing ₹25,000 and up to ₹80,000 on popular metro routes. With the holiday and

wedding travel season ramping up, officials said stabilising the market had become an urgent necessity.

The last time the government-imposed fare caps was in May 2020, when a limited number of flights were allowed to resume following a two-month ban during lockdown measures. The caps were different price slabs based on flight distance.

# PM sets 10-year deadline to end 'Slave Mentality'

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday urged people to completely rid the country of the slave mentality in the next 10 years, asserting that every sector today is shedding the colonial mindset and aiming for new achievements with pride. He also said the term Hindu rate of growth was used when India was struggling for 2-3 per cent growth.

"The policy of Macaulay, which sowed the seeds of mental slavery in India, will complete 200 years in 2035. This means there are 10

years left. Therefore, in these very 10 years, we all must come together to free our country from the slave mentality," he said.

"Linking the growth of the country with the faith of its people, with their identity... This was the symbol of the mindset of colonialism," he said, addressing the Hindustan Times Leadership Summit. An attempt was made to prove that the reason for India's slow growth was Hindu culture, Modi said.

"Today's intellectuals who keep searching for communalism in all things did not see communalism in the use of the term Hindu

rate of growth. This term was made part of books and research papers during their time," he said.

Asserting that India is a model of high growth and low inflation, he said the country's 8.2 per cent growth in the second quarter of this fiscal year shows that it is becoming the growth driver of the global economy.

Modi said that at a time when the world is full of uncertainties, India is seen in a different league. The changes happening in India are not just about possibilities but are a saga of changing thinking and direction, he said.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi speaks during the Hindustan Times Leadership Summit, in New Delhi

PTI

# India, US seek measures by UN against LeT, JeM

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

India and the US have sought additional punitive measures like asset freeze and arms embargo by the UN against Pakistan-based terror outfits Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM), their proxy groups and backers.

The two sides also called for additional designations of ISIS and Al-Qaeda affiliates. These terror groups were designated by the UN, and they have already been facing various punitive actions

under the global body's sanctions regime.

India and the US deliberated on boosting cooperation to combat terrorism at a meeting of their joint Working Group (JWG) on counterterrorism, as well as during deliberations at the 'designations dialogue', held on December 3 in New Delhi. In the talks, the Indian side thanked the US State Department for designating The Resistance Front (TRF), a proxy of LeT, as both a Foreign Terrorist Organisation (FTO) and a Specially Designated Global Terrorist (SDGT).

INDIA AND THE US DELIBERATED ON BOOSTING COOPERATION TO COMBAT TERRORISM

The TRF had taken responsibility for the Pahalgam terror attack.

The two sides emphasised that confronting terrorism requires concerted action in a sustained and comprehensive manner, according to a joint statement released on Saturday. Against this backdrop, the two sides renewed

their commitment to strengthening multilateral cooperation in the field of countering terrorism, including in the UN, Quad and the Financial Action Task Force (FATF).

"The two sides called for additional designations of ISIS and Al-Qaeda affiliates, and LeT and JeM and their proxy groups, supporters, sponsors, financiers and backers, under the UN 1267 sanctions regime, ensuring their members face a global asset freeze, travel ban and arms embargo," the statement said. It said the meet-

ings underscored the importance of bilateral cooperation in countering terrorism, reflecting the "spirit and breadth" of the India-US Comprehensive Global Strategic Partnership.

"Both sides unequivocally condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, including cross-border terrorism.

They expressed concern over the increasing use of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), drones, and AI for terrorist purposes," the statement added.

# Open defecation contaminates Ganga in Haridwar, despite Namami Gange works

ARUN KASHYAP ■ Haridwar

Despite crores of rupees being spent on cleaning the Ganga under the Namami Gange programme, open defecation by slum dwellers along the banks of the holy river in various parts of Haridwar continues to contaminate the river. Lakhs of pilgrims from across the nation and abroad visit Haridwar for a holy dip in the Ganga, but the river continues to be contaminated due to open defecation.

The Namami Gange mission was launched to ensure the purity of the Ganga, and about Rs 45,000 crore have been spent on it so far. Works under the project

have brought about some improvement, but blatant gaps like open defecation along the banks of the Ganga in Haridwar still remain. The open defecation also contradicts the claims of the Uttarakhand Government.

In 2017, the State Government had claimed that Uttarakhand was Open Defecation Free (ODF). Before this announcement was made, a considerable number of toilets were constructed under Namami Gange to prevent contamination along the Ganga. However, this correspondent visited various areas in Haridwar, including Chandighat, Laljiwala, Bairagi Camp and Bajriwala, among others, where residents of



## The Pioneer Campaign

A fact check on Ganga – a holy river that originates in the Dev Bhumi but flows with a sordid tale of human neglect – flushing human waste and washing down multi-crore funding efforts by the Centre and State. Today, *The Pioneer* starts a campaign to wake up the authorities, stakeholders, and last but not least, the citizens, the most important link in the chain.

slums defecate in the open daily.

There is a major shortage of toilets in these settlements,

forcing the residents to defecate in the open. The situation is the worst in the Chandighat settlement.

About 6,000 people reside in this area along the Nildhara bank, but there is not a single proper toilet in the area. With no other option, the majority of the residents of this slum defecate in the open near the Namami Gange Ghat, causing contamination of the Ganga and the city.

The slum dwellers state that they have no toilets and hence defecate in the open, as they have no other option.

Sheela, who lives in a shanty in the Chandighat area, said that they have no toilet and that her family defecate in the open.



Classifieds

BEDKHALI NOTICE

I, **Guddi** w/o Sh.Ram Sahay R/o #3074 Sector 56 Chandigarh.declare that my grand-daughter Roshni kumari kharwar Adhar no245779568259 out of our control. so I disown them from our moveable and immovable property.anybody deal with them at own risk.

I, **Gurwinder Kaur** W/o Widow Jugraj Singh, resident of Kothe Kadriwala, Tehsil Zira, District Ferozepur declare that my sons Jainpal Singh and Gurpreet Singh are totally out of my control. I disinherit both of them from all my moveable and immovable property. I and my family will not be responsible for any good or bad deeds done by them.

I, **Santra Devi** W/o Late Balbir Singh R/o 560, New Indira Colony Manimajra Chandigarh, declare that my Son Naseeb Kumar, his wife Rajni Devi and their Childrens Tarika and Anand Kumar are out of my control. I Disown them from my all moveable/ immovable properties. Anybody deals with them at their own risk.

मै सुखदेव सिंह पुत्र हरदयाल सिंह निवासी गाँव गुरुसर तहसील रतिया जिला फतेहाबाद हलफन बयान करता हूँ कि मेरा लड़का गुरप्रीत सिंह मेरे कहने से बाहर है। मैं अपने लड़के गुरप्रीत सिंह को अपनी चल व अचल सम्पत्ति से बेदखल करता हूँ। भविष्य में मैं तथा मेरा परिवार इसके किसी भी कार्य/ लेनदेन के लिए जिम्मेवार नहीं होंगे।

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Service no. JC2901723K Rank No./Sub.SurajBhan S/o Sh. Jogi Ram R/o H.No.49, Gali No. 9, Shiv Colony Karnal 1321001 declare that my wife and daughter's name has been wrongly recorded as Pooja Rani and Shakshi Devi in my Army records. But my wife and daughter's names are registered as Pooja Devi and Sakshi respectively on their PAN cards and Aadhaar cards. Which is correct. All Concerned noted.

CHANGE OF NAME

I **Sonia** W/O Sunil Gandotra R/O House no .66, Bhadroya Road, Near Water Tank, Opp- Tagore Public School Teh/Distt Pathankot Have Changed My Name From Sonia To Sonia Gandotra.

I **Raj Kumar** S/o Ram Prasad R/o # 156, Indira Colony Sector- 17, Panchkula my Daughter's Birth Certificate, her name wrongly mentioned as Aishwarya. But his correct name is Aishwarya Kumar.

I **Raj Kumar** S/o Ram Prasad R/o # 156, Indira Colony Sector- 17, Panchkula my son's Birth Certificate, his name wrongly mentioned as Prince. But his correct name is Prince Kumar.

I, **Kamal Kishore** Kalra S/o Surinder Kumar Kalra R/o House No. 661, Sector 9, Panchkula, Haryana, have changed my name from Kamal Kishore Kalra to Kamal Kishore.

Continuity Pg. No. 05

**युनाइटेड इंडिया इश्यूरेस कं. लिमिटेड**  
**UNITED INDIA INSURANCE CO. LTD.**  
Regional Office: SCO 123-124, Sector 17-B, Chandigarh. Ph: 0172-5039032, 5039023

**OFFICE ACCOMMODATION REQUIRED ON LEASE AT AZAD NAGAR**

Sealed Tenders are invited for (Commercial) Office premises on lease for Micro Office Azad Nagar having Carpet Area between 200-250 sq. ft. approximately, preferably Ground or First Floor in Azad Nagar and situated on/near Main/Wide road in clean surroundings, with adequate parking space, drinking water and preferably having one toilet for our exclusive use. Interested Parties may submit offers in two bid system viz., "Technical Bid" and "Financial Bid" in two separate sealed envelopes / covers superscribed as "Technical Bid" and "Financial Bid". Both these sealed envelopes should be put in one envelope sealed and superscribed "Offer of premises MO AZAD NAGAR". This envelope should be addressed to Deputy General Manager, Regional Office, SCO No. 123-124, Sector 17-B, Chandigarh. The Technical bid contains details of locality, carpet area, year of construction, toilets, water, power supply etc. The Financial bid contains rent rate per sq. ft., carpet area, lease period etc. Bids which are not in the prescribed formats or incomplete, shall be rejected. Completed bids should reach at Regional Office only at above address on or before 2:30 pm, on 29.12.2025. The prescribed Technical and Financial bids forms can be obtained during Office hours from the Estate Department at above mentioned address or from MO Azad Nagar, 1 floor, shop no. 61 & 62, Sangwa Road, Azad Nagar, Hisar, Haryana. These forms can be downloaded from our Company's Website http://www.uic.co.in- information desk "Tenders/RFP". No Brokerage or Commission is payable. The Company reserves the right to accept or reject all or any of the offers without assigning any reason thereof. Technical Bid would be opened on 30.12.2025 at 4:00 pm in the presence of tenderer, if they wish to be present.

**DEPUTY GENERAL MANAGER**

**सार्वजनिक सूचना**

एस नोटिस के माध्यम से सर्व सामान्य को सूचित किया जाता है कि नगरपालिका पुष्कर लिमिटेड में प्रोपर्टी नम्बर ENB/W03/0632 (NEW PID NO. 6MWNFR7) जो कि शहीदा पुत्र मन पाल के नाम है। श्रीमान पुत्र मन पाल की मृत्यु दिनांक 08-03-2003 को हो चुकी है उनके अन्त में। मृत्यु देवी विधिगत 2, विधिगत पुत्र 3, पत्नीसुता पुत्र 4, अर्थात देवी पुत्री 5, जगदीश चिन्मयी विधिगत 6, मृत्यु देवी पुत्रिमा श्रीमान कनूजी सरनन है। इनके अलावा अन्य कोई वारिस नहीं है, अगर इससे संबंधित किसी अपमान को कोई एजन्स है तो वह अपना एजन्स नगरपालिका एजन्सनाम कनूजी में एस नोटिस माफ के 30 दिनों के अंदर खतबे में दर्ज करवा सका है। प्रमाणित, मेरा देवी, विधिगत, पत्नीसुता, अर्थात देवी, जगदीश चिन्मयी विधिगत, इत्यादी

**Public notice**

This is to inform the General Public that I, Naseeb Rani wife of Harbans Lal resident of Gali No.7, near Shani Mandir, SAS Nagar, Bathinda am the owner of Property measuring 0 Bigha-0.7720 Bigha (64.32 sq yards) ie. 17,360 share of 0 Bigha - 18 Bigha comprising in Khassra No. 4712min/0-18, Khewat/Khatouni No. 2020/2092-2093, Jambabandi 2017-18 Located at Shanidev Mandir, Hansa Nagar, Patthi Jhutti Bathinda on the basis of Sale deed No. 2022/23/23/110663 dated 15.12.2022, Sub Registrar, Bathinda. That previous Sale Deed No. 2022/23/23/14 dated 01.04.2022, Sub Registrar, Bathinda executed by Vijay Kumar son of Vinod Kumar Singh in favour of Vijay Kumar Barea son of Sunder Dass has been lost & DDR bearing LR No. 655262/2025 dated 05/12/2025 has been registered with Police Station, PSOC 123-124, Sector 17-B, Chandigarh. Now I have applied loan from Aadhar Housing Finance Ltd. (AHFL), Bathinda Branch against equitable mortgage of the said property. If any person has any objection or interest with regard to above said property, he/she may approach and file objections with in 7 days before undersigned.

Pankaj Jain Advocate, Chamber No.448, 3rd Floor, District Courts, Bathinda.

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

SMT. NARESH KUMARI SHARMA W/o Sh. Rajinder Kumar Sharma R/o House No.621A PEC CAMPUS Sector 12 Chandiigarh intend to purchase residential flat No.452 Ground Floor Sector 61 Chandigarh allotted to Sh. Vibhuti Bhushan S/o Sh. Santu Saran Sharma R/o Flat No.452 Ground Floor Sector 61 Chandigarh. They have been informed by way of DDR NO.2025/037895 Dated 6th December 2025 and earlier DDR No.2025/029040 Dated 8th September 2025 that the documents lost details given below :-

1. Original Conveyance deed No.7859 Dated 28th March 2012 Registered at Sub Registrar Office Chandigarh.
2. Allotment letter No.601 Dated 2nd July 1998 in the name of Chauri Gupta.
3. Possession letter No.104/452 Ground Floor Sector 61 Chandigarh.
4. No used Certificate Date 1st September 1999 of F. NO.452 G.F. Sec 61 CHD
5. Transfer letter No.9815 Dated 30th May 2011 in the name of Krishna Sharma for the said property of Flat No.452 Ground Floor Sector 61 Chandigarh documents has been lost. Smt. Nareesh Kumari Sharma W/o Sh. Rajinder Kumar Sharma intend to purchase the said property and wish to create charge viz mortgage or otherwise, on the said property for a loan facility from State Bank of India Sector 8- Chandigarh Branch Code 0448. The DDR has already been filed with the police in respect of the above in case any party has any claim towards the said relevant property (ies). The same should be lodged with the interested party and also with the above stated branch of State bank of India, with in 15 days from Publication of this notice.

I, **Preeti Garg** C/o Pardeep Kumar R/o Village, Jaidhari(81), PO Jaidhari, Tehsil Chhachhrauli, Distt Yamuna Nagar have changed my name from Preeti Garg to Preeti.

I, **Pardeep Kumar** C/o Rajinder Kumar R/o Village, Jaidhari(81), PO Jaidhari, Tehsil Chhachhrauli, Distt Yamuna Nagar have changed my name from Pardeep Kumar to Pardeep.

I, **Harpreet Kaur** Kalia C/o Hardeep Singh Anand, 405-L, Model Town, Yamuna Nagar have changed my name from Harpreet Kaur to Harpreet Kaur Kalia. In future, I shall be known as Harpreet Kaur Kalia

I **Amanjeet Singh** S/o Raminder Singh R/o 300, Phase XI, S.A.S Nagar, Mohali have changed my minor son's name from Tejasveer Punj to Tejasveer Singh. In future, he shall be known as Tejasveer Singh.

I, **NAZIR MASHI** S/o JALAL MASSIH residing at H. No. 70, Sunder Nagar, PATHANKOT, have changed my name to NAZIR MASSIH. In future all my relatives, Nears & Dears known me as NAZIR MASSIH.

I **Om Parkash** Arya S/o Lakshman Dass HNo 198/13 sikka colony Sonipat Haryana declares that Om Parkash & Om parkash Arya both are my names. In future, I shall be known as Om Parkash Arya.

I, **Vijay Kumar** S/o Sh. Raj Kumar R/o # 14, Suketri (376) district Panchkula Haryana have changed my minor son name Lakshydeep to Laksh.

I, **Mata Ram Rahi** S/o Sh. Ram Chand R/o House no. 322, Sector 38/A, Chandigarh have changed my name from Mata Ram Rahi to Mata Ram Dh

**IMA Jalandhar Hosts Oncology CME**

**JALANDHAR:** The Indian Medical Association (IMA), Jalandhar in collaboration with RGCIRC (Rajiv Gandhi Cancer Institute & Research Centre) concluded an Oncology Continuing Medical Education (CME) session at Hotel Best Western Summerlea. The event brought together leading oncologists, surgeons, and medical practitioners from the region for an evening dedicated to knowledge sharing, clinical updates, and discussion on evolving standards in cancer care. The CME featured two insightful sessions by senior specialists from RGCIRC, highlighting the rapid strides being made in radiation oncology and breast oncoplastic surgery. Participants actively engaged in each segment, demonstrating strong interest in integrating emerging advancements into routine clinical practice for enhancing patient outcomes.

**Care Health Insurance Issues Public Advisory on HEPA Filter Use**

**LUDHIANA:** Care Health Insurance issued an advisory encouraging households and workplaces to adopt HEPA-certified air filtration in response to escalating respiratory illnesses due to the increasing pollution. In recent weeks, multiple regions have reported a sharp surge in asthma flare-ups, respiratory infections and pollution-related medical emergencies. This trend has been intensified by the high pollution levels. Manish Dodeja, Chief Operating Officer, Care Health Insurance, said that we are witnessing an unprecedented convergence of various factors impacting our air quality. These have a direct impact on our respiratory health. As a responsible health partner to millions, Care Health Insurance is committed to guiding our policyholders with timely, preventive measures. The use of HEPA filtration is a simple yet highly effective step individuals can take to safeguard their indoor air quality.

**Shimla gears up for Winter Half Marathon on December 12**

**SHIMLA:** The hill city is set to welcome fitness enthusiasts for the Shimla Winter Half Marathon on December 14, 2025 from the CTO, Bantony Castle (near Mall Road). The marathon aims to promote a vibrant running culture in the hills, encouraging participants to embrace fitness amidst Shimla's scenic winter charm. The event will feature three race categories—5 km, 10 km and Half Marathon as each one offers a unique blend of challenge, beauty and elevation.

**ESTATE OFFICE UT, CHANDIGARH**

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

Before Sh. Naveen, DANICS, Assistant Estate Officer (Exercising the powers of the Estate Officer U.T., Chandigarh) Subject: Regarding Transfer of ownership in Respect **RESIDENTIAL SITE 109, SECTOR 35- A, Chandigarh** to the extent of 100.00% share on the basis of Family Transfer Deed registered at Sr.No. 3152, Book No. 1, Vol.No. \_\_, Page No., dated 30/08/2013. It is notified for the information of general public and all concerned that as per record of this office Sh./Smt. SH. RAMBIR SINGH is the owner/lessee of **RESIDENTIAL SITE No. 109, SECTOR 35- A, Chandigarh** to the extent of 100.00% share. It has been informed by Sh./Smt. SUDARSHAN KAUR that Sh./Smt. SH. RAMBIR SINGH owner of above said property to the extent of 100.00 % share had executed Family Transfer Deed to the extent of 100.00 % share in favour of SUDARSHAN KAUR on 30/08/2013 and same has been registered at Sr. No. 3152, Book No. 1, Vol.No. \_\_, Page No., dated 30/08/2013 in the office of Sub-Registrar, U.T., Chandigarh. Now SUDARSHAN KAUR has/have applied for the transfer of 100.00 % share of above said property in his/her/his favour on the basis of Family Transfer Deed Dated 30/08/2013. If anybody has any objection upon the mutation of the said share in the said property, in favour of the above named applicants, he/she/they may furnish the same in writing (supported with affidavit duly attested by Magistrate/ Notary) in the office of the undersigned within 30 days from the date of publication of this notice, failing which the said share in the said property will be mutated accordingly in the name of above said beneficiary/ies and no further claim whatsoever shall be entertained at any later stage.

**Naveen, DANICS, Assistant Estate Officer, Exercising the powers of Estate Officer, U.T., Chandigarh**

**COURT NOTICE**

(U/o S Rule 20 CPC) IN THE COURT OF **Dr. Gagandeep Kaur Singh** District and Sessions Judge, Principal Judge, Family Court, Karnal KOMAL SHARMA V/s GOPAL DADHICH **HNA-1258-2022 Cmr No.-HRKR01-016427-2022** Next Date:- 19-01-2026 **PUBLICATION ISSUED TO:-** Gopal Dadhich son of Sh. Mahavir Prashad Dadhich resident of Kherimola Bagar, Distt. Jhunjhunu (Rajasthan) In above titled case, the defendant (s)/ respondent (s) could not be served. It is ordered that defendant (s)/respondent (s) should appear in person or through counsel on 19-01-2026 at 10:00 a.m. For details logon to [https://highcourthd.gov.in/?trs=district\\_notice&district=Karnal](https://highcourthd.gov.in/?trs=district_notice&district=Karnal) (Dr. Gagandeep Kaur Singh) District and Sessions Judge, Principal Judge, Family Court, Karnal Dated, this of 02-12-2025

**Public Notice**

This is to notify all the concerned that, on behalf of my client, Piramal Finance Limited, I hereby giving a notice to the general public that customer/s, Sh. Balram Singh (applicant) and Smt. Kamal Kaur (co-applicants) has/have applied for a loan vide Lead ID HSA000F684A, under the Property Loan, in land connect with above situated at Street No. 13, Rahoun Road, Near Bhola Wala Gurudwara, Village - Rahoun, Subdist No. 224, Tehsil - Khanna, District - Ludhiana, comprised in Khewat No. 387380, Khatauni No. 687, Khassra No. 104/61(1-9), 71/2 (1-10), 72/3(4), 73/3(4), 82/6(14), 83/1(6-10), 12/22 (1-10), 13/31(1-20), 14/17(5), 15/10(9), 17/12(1-4), 18/3 (0-1), 24/7-18), Kite 13, i.e. 5633 share i.e. OK-58A, out of total land 31K-13M is in the name of Kamal Kaur wife Balram Singh S/o Bishan Singh as per jambabandi for the year 2022/23 and vide Sale deed no. 2018-19/1071/1221 dated 22.02.2019 and vide mutation no. 17210. The Present owner (Smt. Kamal Kaur) stated that previous Original Sale deed no. 682 dated 24.06.2015 has been lost and regarding this the DDR has been got lodged in Police station, Ludhiana. City vide no. 655741/2025 dated 06.12.2025. Piramal Finance Limited required the above said previous Original Sale Deed to create equitable mortgage. Since this deed is missing, it is notified that if any concern, bank or person having any claim, objection related to the said equitable mortgage of the above said property with Piramal Finance Limited, he/she may kindly connect with above said company or with me within 7 days from the date of this publication in below mentioned address and can also return the above said mutation, comprised in the name of or on behalf of the property is above mentioned. Detail of the property is above mentioned.

Rupinder Singh, Advocate, Chamber No 508, 4th Floor, Yadvindra Complex Distt Courts, Patiala M:- 9914379170

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

It is hereby notified that important property documents were lost on 15/02/2014 near Bus Stand Panchkula by Satish Kumar Bhauja S/o Sh.Hari Chand, R/o H.No.186, Sector 12, Panchkula, Haryana. The details of the lost documents are as follows: Conveyance Deed in respect of Plot No.186, Sector 12, Panchkula, Haryana, bearing Registration No.2312 dated 13/12/2004. Despite best efforts it could not be located. The above said document has not been deposited with any bank/ FI for purpose of loan. There is no family dispute, court case/criminal case with respect to the same. Owner has lodged DDR vide Rapce No.27 dated 16/09/2014 in Police Station Sector 5, Panchkula. Additionally, please be informed that we intend to mortgage the aforementioned property. If anyone has objections or has found this document, he/she is requested to contact the Branch Manager, Punjab & Sind Bank, Phase 8, Mohali within 15 days. Phone : 82888 39107 (Sh.Balwinder Singh)

**LOST & FOUND**

I, Bal Krishan Dhingra son of Shri Hans Raj Dhingra resident of H.No. 24-C, Narayan Singh Park Distt Panipat declare that my Registry Vaska No. 3004 dated 27/02/1976 and Registry Vaska No. 5581 dated 10/08/1976 and Original Will Vaska No. 76/3 dated 31/05/2002 have been lost at Red Light Chowk Panipat Distt Panipat on 03/12/2025 Whose DDR No. 13234032503552. If anyone finds them, please contact at my Address H.No. 24-C, Narayan Singh Park Distt Panipat, Mobile No. 9265888615.

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

I, Sudesh w/o late Balraj R/o Krishna Colony, Gohana, Sonipat, own a 138 square yard house in Krishna Colony, Gohana, which is mortgaged to SBI Gohana. The registration document for this property, registration number 5969 dated 06-03-2020, in the name of Anju wife of Ashok, has been lost. The FIR number is 132390352502015.

**Public Notice**

If hereby informs to public at large that Satpal So Chander Singh R/o Village Mazadpur, Tehsil Harsid, District Haryana has secured loan on property from AU SMALL FINANCE BANK LIMITED for Rs. 10,80,000/- (Ten Lacs & Eighty thousand Only) vide RLOS No. 984795 have its branch office at Hisar, Haryana on their Residential house Plot House LGD no. 61/6706/132 as UD no. 06/1076MU20000TH0132 Measuring 217.54 Sq. Mtrs. Situated at Lal Dora of Village Mu-zadpur, Tehsil Hisar, District Hisar as per Certificate Deed of Title/Ownership No. 11373 dated 08.11.2017 having the following boundaries: East: 31' 6" + 17' 9" + 32' 5" + 12' 7" + 27' 3" 32" - House of Baljeet son of Virbhan & House of Virbhan son of Raji Ram & Rajesh son of Nate Singh, West: 10' 1" + 11' + 20' 5" + 27' 3" 32" - House of Baljeet son of Virbhan & House of Krishan son of Te Ram, North: 27' 5" + 11' 10" + 4' 5" + 26' 10" + 8' 10" - Street, South: 35' + 11' 10" + 8' 10" + 9' 10" - House of Baljeet son of Virbhan is a sole owner of above property and there is no co-sharer in this property and Original Swamitav paper not issued by authority. If anybody have any right/title/ litigation/ claim or claiming any prior rights or interest in any manner in above mentioned property as per register sale certificate, then may approach the undersigned and take possession of the property (Seven days) from the date of this public notice. After the expiry of period of this no claim shall be entertained and the said claim shall be deemed to be false, fake, frivolous, fraudulent, and baseless claim and shall have no value in the eyes of law, please contact, Advocate Bhupinder Kumar, Ph. no. 8259498981 / 1591, Sector 16-17, HISAR WITHIN 7 DAY OF THIS PUBLICATION.

**Public Notice**

It is brought to the Notice of the Public at large that Original Transfer deed No.2353 dated 24.5.2019 executed by Harinder Singh son of Babu Singh in favor of Gurpreet Singh son of Harinder Singh And Sale deed No.2720 dated 27.5.2005 executed by executed by Harinder Singh son of Babu Singh in favor of Gurpreet Singh son of Harinder Singh has been registered with Sub-Registrar Bathinda. It is informed by me that Original title deeds are missing/lost from me the same has not been used for other purposes by the property owner and the same has been lost. If anybody has any objection, may respond within Seven days, to the undersigned after this, no claim whatsoever shall be entertained. Detail of property- Property constructed house/shop part of bearing MC No.1786 measuring 355.33 Sq. Yards (Part of UD No.2-3, 002268), assessment for the year 2012-13, assessment register No.25 Page No.67, Situated within the MC limits of Sector No.6, Bal Basti, Bathinda owned by me Gurpreet Singh son of Harinder Singh through Transfer deed No.2353 dated 24.5.2019 measuring 306.32 Sq. Yards And Sale deed No.2720 dated 27.5.2005 (measuring 50 Sq. Yards) (Gurpreet Singh son of Harinder Singh, Resident of # 1786, St. No.06, Bal Basti, Bathinda-151001 Mobile No.83600-17404)

**SYMBOLIC POSSESSION NOTICE**

**ICICI Bank** Branch Office: ICICI Bank Limited Plot No-23, Shal Tower, 3rd Floor, New Rohtak Road, Karol Bagh, New Delhi- 110005

The Authorised ICICI Bank Officer under the Securitisation, Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of the powers conferred under section 13(12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002, issued Demand Notices to the borrower(s) mentioned below, to repay the amount mentioned in the Notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said Notice.

Having failed to repay the amount, the Notice is issued to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken symbolic possession of the property described below, by exercising powers conferred on him/her under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules on the below-mentioned dates. The borrower in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property. Any dealings with the property will be subject to charges of ICICI Bank Limited.

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower(s)/ Loan Account Number	Description of Property/ Date of Symbolic Possession	Date of Demand Notice/ Amount in Demand	Name of Branch
1.	M/s. Parmod Kumar Parveen Kumar/ Ankit Gupta/ Parmod Kumar/ Parveen Kumar/ 062605002163	Commercial Property Bearing Shop No.238, Admeasuring Area 277.77 Sq. Yrds & Build-up Area 344.5 Sq. Yrds, Situated At New Anaj Mandi, Rewari, Tehsil & District Rewari, Haryana, 123401. (Admeasuring An Area of 277.77 Sq. Yrds & Build-up Area 344.5 Sq. Yrds Bounded By: on The North By: Shop No.239 on The South By: Shop No.237 on The East By: Rasta Sae Aam on The West By: Rasta Sae Aam/ Date of Symbolic Possession- December 04, 2025	July 07,2025/ Rs. 1,27,30,613.47/-	Rewari/ Gurgoon

The above-mentioned borrower(s)/guarantor(s) is/are hereby issued a 30 day Notice to repay the amount. The above mortgaged properties will be sold after 30 days from the date of publishing this Notice, as per the provisions under Rules 8 and 9 of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002.

Date: December 04, 2025  
Place: Rewari

Sincerely Authorised Officer  
For ICICI Bank Ltd.

**SMFG India Home Finance Co. Ltd.**

Corporate Off.: 503 & 504, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor, G Block, Inspire BKC, 8KC Main Road, Bandra Kurla Complex, Bandra, (E), Mumbai - 400015  
Regd. Off.: Commertze IT Park, Tower B, 1st Floor, No. 111, Mount Poonamallee Road, Porur, Chennai - 600116, TN

**POSSESSION NOTICE FOR IMMOVABLE PROPERTY [(Appendix IV) Rule 8(1)]**

WHEREAS the undersigned being the Authorized Officer of SMFG India Home Finance Co. Ltd. a Housing Finance Company [duly registered with National Housing Bank (Fully Owned by RBI)] (hereinafter referred to as "SMHFHC") under Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (54 of 2002), and in exercise of the powers conferred under Section 13(12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued Demand Notice dated mentioned below under Section 13(2) of the said Act calling upon you being the borrowers (names mentioned below) to repay the amount mentioned in the said notice and interest thereon within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice. The borrowers mentioned herein below having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on me under sub-section (4) of Section 13 of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002. The borrowers mentioned here in above in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with said property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of "SMHFHC" for an amount as mentioned herein under and interest thereon.

Sl. No.	Name of the Borrower(s) / Guarantor(s) LAN	Description of Secured Assets (Immovable Property)	Demand Notice Date & Amount	Date of Possession
1.	LAN - : 610139511260716 1. Rakesh Kumar, S/o. Chhagan Pawar 2. Banarsi Devi W/o. Chhagan Lal	All The Piece And Parcel Of The Property Bearing House No-B-14-436/A, Measuring 76 Sq Yards, Situated At Village-Saidan, Abadi Known As Prem Nagar, Tehsil & District-Ludhiana As Per Transfer Deed Bearing Vaska No.1596 Dated 7-3-2006 Recorded In The Name Of Rakesh Kumar S/o Chhagan Lal Bounded As Under:- East-Kuldip Gali, West-Girdhari Lal, North-Jagan Nath, South-Street.	16.09.2025 Rs. 24,68,663.90 (Rs. Twenty Four Lakh Eighty Five Thousand Six Hundred Sixty Three & Paise Ninety Only) as on 10.09.2025	04.12.2025
2.	LAN - : 615339211798327 & 615339511992785 1. Bohar Singh S/o. Bachittar Singh 2. Jaspreet Kaur C/o. Bohar Singh	All The Piece And Parcel Of The Property House Measuring 15 Marla Which Is 5/47 Share Of Total Land 7 Kanal 1 Marla, Comprised In Khassra No-108/16(20-13), 17/1(1-0), 17/2(5-8), Khewat No-152, Khatauni No-245, Jambabandi For The Year 2022-23, Situated At Samalser-1, District-Moga As Per Sale Deed Bearing Vaska No-2024-25/1401/560 Dated 20-1-2025 Recorded In The Name Of Bohar Singh S/O Bachittar Singh, Bounded As Under:- East-Rasta, West-Boota Singh, North-Rasta, South-Jasvir Singh.	16.09.2025 Rs. 16,73,414.39 (Rs. Sixteen Lakh Seventy Three Thousand Four Hundred Fourteen & Paise Thirty Nine Only) as on 10.09.2025	05.12.2025
3.	LAN - : 609839211292291 & 609839511313881 1. Deep Deek C/O. Jatinder Kumar 2. Seema Rani W/o. Jatinder Kumar	All The Piece And Parcel Of The Property Measuring 0 Kanal 5 Marla, Comprised In Khatta No-15/15, 118/130, Khassra No-18/1(0-10), 1(2-12/3), 2(7-11), 3(1-0), Kitta-4, Rakba 11 Kanal 14 Marla Da 5/234 Hissa, Bb 10/10, Situated At Channalo, Tehsil-Kharar, District-Sas Nagar (Mohali) As Per Sale Deed Bearing Vaska No-2020-21/15/12942 Dated 1-9-2020 Recorded In The Name Of Deep Deek S/O Jatinder Kumar, Bounded As Under:- East-Rasta, West-Owner Sell, North-Sham Lal, South-Jaswinder Kaur.	16.09.2025 Rs. 40,86,462.54 (Rs. Forty Lakh Eighty Six Thousand Four Hundred Sixty Two & Paise Fifty Four Only) as on 10.09.2025	04.12.2025
4.	LAN - : 610139211643178 1. Deepak Kumar S/o. Ravinder 2. Pooja Rani C/o. Deepak Kumar	All The Piece And Parcel Of The Measuring 100 Sq Yards, Comprised In Khassra No-36/142, 15/1, 27, Khatta No-635/652, Page No-1167, Jambabandi For The Year 2007-08, Situated At Village-Jassian, Abadi Tarsen Colony, Tehsil & District-Ludhiana As Per Sale Deed Bearing Vaska No-2023-24/11/19217 Dated 15-3-2024 Recorded In The Name Of Pooja Rani W/O Deepak Kumar, Bounded As Under:- East-Neighbour, West-Neighbour, North-Street, South-Neighbour.	16.09.2025 Rs. 21,39,567.26 (Rs. Twenty One Lakh Thirty Nine Thousand Five Hundred Sixty Seven & Paise Twenty Six Only) as on 10.09.2025	04.12.2025
5.	LAN - : 615339511683313 1. Dilpreet Singh S/o. Randhir Singh 2. Gurmeet Singh W/o. Randhir Singh	All The Piece And Parcel Of The Property Measuring 0 Kanal 9/14 Marla, Comprised In Khatta No-522/828, Khassra No-241(0-5), 249/1(2-12), 520(4-12), Kitta-3, Total 2 Kanal 13 Da 37/164 Share, Jambabandi For The Year 2018-19, Situated At Village-Dugal Kalan, Tehsil-Patran, District-Patala As Per Transfer Deed Bearing Vaska No-2023-24/831/3543 Dated 14-3-2024 Recorded In The Name Of Dilpreet Singh S/O Randhir Singh, Bounded As Under:- East-Darbara Singh, West-Rasta, North-House Lakhbir Singh, South-House Bhagan Singh.	16.09.2025 Rs. 18,79,383.95 (Rs. Eighteen Lakh Seventy Nine Thousand Three Hundred Eighty Three & Paise Ninety Five Only) as on 10.09.2025	05.12.2025
6.	LAN - : 615339511614840 1. Kanwaljit Kaur W/o. Gurmeet Singh 2. Gurmeet Singh S/o. Atma Singh	All The Piece And Parcel Of The Property Measuring 0.3 Biswa, Comprised In Khatta No-29/50, Khassra No-2179/1965/1590-3, Jambabandi For The Year 2018-19, Situated At Village-Dhura, Tehsil-Dhuri, District-Sangrur As Per Sale Deed Bearing Vaska No-2023-24/12/12942 Dated 10-2-2023 Recorded In The Name Of Kanwaljit Kaur W/O Gurmeet Singh.	16.09.2025 Rs. 8,23,759.13 (Rs. Eight Lakh Twenty Three Thousand Seven Hundred Fifty Nine & Paise Thirteen Only) as on 10.09.2025	05.12.2025
7.	LAN - : 61534011738054 1. Karaj Sadhu S/o. Sadhu 2. Seema Bohra W/o. Karaj	All The Piece And Parcel Of The Property Shop Measuring 0 Kanal 2.12 Marla, Comprised In Khewat No-42, Khatauni No.42, Mustil-14 Killa-16/2(7-4) Da 1/162 Share Bakdar 0 Kanal 5 Marla 8 Sarsai And Khewat No-153, Khatauni No-169, Mustil 15 Killa-19/1(0-6), 20/12(1-0/7), 20/12(2/4-2), Total 5 Kanal 5 Marla Da 1644/13920 Hissa Bakdar 0 Kanal 1 Marla 2 Sarsai, Jambabandi For The Year 2021-22, Situated At Village-Vijay Khane Ke Ahil, Ferozepur As Per Sale Deed Bearing Vaska No. 2025/116/1677 Dated 11-7-2024 Recorded In The Name Of Karaj S/O Sadhu, Bounded As Under:- East-Built Up Shop, West-Commercial Vacant Plot, North-Vacant Plot, South-Road.	16.09.2025 Rs. 11,39,441.94 (Rs. Eleven Lakh Thirty Nine Thousand Four Hundred Fifty One & Paise Fifty One Only) as on 10.09.2025	03.12.2025
8.	LAN - : 615339211583121 1. Lakhveer Singh S/o. Major Singh 2. Kulveer Kaur W/o. Lakhveer Singh	All The Piece And Parcel Of The Property Measuring 13 Marla 3/12 Sarsai, Comprised In Khassra No-541(12-13), 17/24(4/3-4), 25(3-0), Khewat No-975, 977, Khatauni No-1173, 1175, Jambabandi For The Year 2017-18, Situated At Kokri Kalan Shamali, Tehsil & District-Moga As Per Transfer Deed Bearing Vaska No-2022-23/19/1718 Dated 16-3-2022 Recorded In The Name Of Kulvir Kaur W/O Lakhveer Singh, Bounded As Under:-East-Road/Kokri Wehniwal Road), West-Gurjant Singh Etc., North-Sukhmandar Singh Etc., South-Gurjant Singh Etc.	16.09.2025 Rs. 20,66,555.12 (Rs. Twenty Lakh Sixty Six Thousand Five Hundred Fifty Six & Paise Twelve Only) as on 10.09.2025	05.12.2025
9.	LAN - : 609939511582094 1. Mandeep Singh Brar 2. Manpreet Kaur W/o. Mandeep Singh Brar	All The Piece And Parcel Of The Property Measuring 16 Marla Which Is 26/376 Share Of Total Land 18 Kanal 16 Marla, Comprised In Khassra No-1275/1-8, 1277/1		



## Punjab Leader of Opposition Bajwa seeks extension in last date for nominations for Punjab Panchayat Polls

PNS ■ Chandigarh

Senior Punjab Congress leader Partap Singh Bajwa on Saturday called on the State Election Commission to extend the last date for filing nominations for the December 14 Zila Parishad and Panchayat Samiti polls, claiming that opposition candidates faced "intimidation and systematic obstruction" in filing nomination papers.

Leader of Opposition Bajwa, along with former deputy chief minister O P Soni, met State Election Commissioner Raj Kamal Chaudhuri here, alleging that the nomination papers of opposition candidates were torn and snatched, and they were blocked from entering government offices on December 4, which was the last day for filing nominations.

Bajwa also raised the issue of a purported audio clip, claiming that Patiala Senior Superintendent of Police Varun Sharma, along with some senior officers, were allegedly heard conspiring to prevent opposition candidates from filing nomination papers. "When those entrusted with safeguarding democracy become participants in its sabotage, the credibility of the entire electoral system comes under threat," Bajwa said after the meeting.

He informed the commission that several candidates were allegedly detained illegally, waylaid, picked up, or forcibly prevented from reaching the centres, despite being present within the stipulated time.

Multiple videos clearly show miscreants fleeing with nomination papers and violent clashes at various locations, Bajwa claimed, stressing that because these incidents

occurred on the last day, the affected candidates had no opportunity to re-file their papers. Such obstruction, he said, amounts to a direct violation of Articles 14, 19, and 21 of the Constitution, which guarantee equality before law, freedom to participate in democratic processes, and protection of personal liberty.

He urged the SEC to extend the last date for filing nomination papers in light of the alleged snatching, tearing, and obstruction that prevented lawful submission of papers on December 4.

He also sought a thorough, impartial, and time-bound inquiry into all incidents, including the alleged misconduct by police officials, and strict action against those responsible for undermining the democratic process.

**SAD SAYS ITS CONTESTANTS REJECTED AT AAP'S BEHEST**

Meanwhile, Shiromani Akali Dal on Saturday said the nominations of several of its candidates for the upcoming Zila Parishad and Panchayat Samiti elections in Punjab were rejected at the behest of the ruling Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leaders.

It slammed the State Election Commission for its alleged failure in supervising the conduct of free and fair elections. SAD leader and former minister Daljit Singh Cheema also demanded the removal of Patiala Senior Superintendent of Police Varun Sharma, claiming that in a purported audio clip, Sharma, along with some senior officers, were allegedly heard conspiring to prevent opposition candidates from filing nomination papers.

Addressing the media in Chandigarh, Cheema said the State Election Commission should have

removed the Patiala SSP in order to restore people's confidence in fair elections, but it has "failed" to do so. Police had earlier refuted the allegations and said, "It has come to notice that an Artificial Intelligence-generated video -- created with malicious intent to mislead public, spread misinformation, and disturb law and order -- is being circulated on social media."

Cheema, accompanied by party spokesperson Arshdeep Singh Kaur, claimed that nominations of several opposition candidates were rejected at the behest of AAP leaders. He said that in Tarn Taran, 31 out of 72 nominations for Zila Parishad elections and 31 out of 63 nominations for Panchayat Samiti polls were rejected. Similarly, 37 nominations for Panchayat Samiti polls in Gandiwind, 43 in Khadoor Sahib, and 56 in Patti were rejected, he said. In Zira Panchayat Samiti in Ferozepur district, not even a single SAD candidate could file nominations, while for Qadian Panchayat Samiti in Gurdaspur district, 15 nominations of SAD candidates were rejected, Cheema claimed.

**CONGRESS-AKALI DAL HAS HISTORY OF VIOLENCE AND ELECTION RIGGING; THEY ARE MAKING FALSE ALLEGATIONS: AAP**

Reacting to the allegations, Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) Chief Spokesperson and MLA Kuldeep Dhaliwal attacked the Akali Dal and Congress, saying that their history has been one of violence and rigging, but under the leadership of Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann, for the first time in Punjab's history, the Zila Parishad and Block Samiti elections are going to be conducted fairly and peacefully.

Addressing a press conference on Saturday, Dhaliwal said that preparations for the elections scheduled for the 14th are complete. By this evening, the final list of candidates (after scrutiny) will be released, and from tomorrow, candidates of all parties will begin campaigning. Recalling the history of hooliganism and violence during these elections under Akali-Congress governments, he said that their leaders have attempted the same this time as well.

Referring to an incident that took place on Friday in village Bhindi Saidan of the Raja Sansi assembly constituency, he said that last night, Congress leaders opened fire and attacked our Zila Parishad candidate Lakhwinder Singh Lakha and some AAP workers. This is extremely condemnable. He said that as always, Congress has again resorted to violence to win elections through intimidation. This exposes Congress' "low-level mindset."

Putting Congress and Akali Dal governments in the dock, he said that during their rule, they used to declare their candidates winners in sarpanch elections by issuing direct lists without conducting elections at all. But under the AAP government, for the first time, elections have taken place freely and without any political discrimination.

Warning the opposition, Dhaliwal said that AAP contested sarpanch elections for the first time and is now contesting Zila Parishad and Block Samiti elections. AAP candidates will win these elections as well. We will seek votes on the basis of the developmental work of the last four and a half years.

## Install rooftop solar panels on all govt buildings: Haryana CM asks officials

PNS ■ Chandigarh

Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini on Saturday directed that all government buildings like schools, colleges, hospitals, offices, etc, be equipped with rooftop solar systems to accelerate the state's transition towards clean and green energy.

He was chairing a high-level review meeting on the budget announcements of the power sector at the civil secretariat here.

During the meeting, Saini reviewed the progress of the PM Suryagarh Muft Bijli Yojana and instructed officials to expedite rooftop solar installations across households in the state. He also examined the month-wise achievements under the scheme and emphasised strict monitoring and accountability.

In addition, the CM directed the creation of solar parks across the state to harness Haryana's renewable energy potential. He also ordered immediate removal of old and defunct electricity poles from major state roads and highways to enhance public safety and improve road aesthetics.

Chairman, Haryana Power Generation Corporation Ltd (HPGCL), Shyamal Misra said 42,486 rooftop solar installations have been completed in the state as of November 20, 2025. A target has been set to install 2,22,000 rooftop solar systems in the state by March 31, 2027. He said power distribution companies have also formulated a new scheme, 'Saur Urja Protsahan Yojana' and it has been submitted to the state government for approval.

Once implemented, this initiative is expected to substantially accelerate rooftop solar adoption and help the state achieve and potentially surpass the assigned rooftop solar targets. CM Saini said all power sector targets must be met within stipulated timelines to ensure uninterrupted electricity supply to every household in the state.

Haryana aims to achieve 24,000 MW of power availability in the next seven years to guarantee 100 per cent power supply to every consumer. A major component of the state's capacity expansion is thermal power augmentation. The CM was informed that work on the 1x800 MW ultra-supercritical thermal unit in Yamunanagar will commence shortly with the assistance of BHEL (Bharat Heavy Electricals Ltd).

**CM ORDERS TIME-BOUND COMPLETION OF PUBLIC HEALTH ENGINEERING PROJECTS**

CM Saini on Saturday also chaired a high-level review meeting on the key budget

announcements of the Public Health Engineering Department and issued clear instructions that the department must complete all pending projects within the stipulated timelines. He said the government's priority is to ensure that citizens receive basic amenities promptly and effectively; therefore, every officer must work with responsibility and urgency.

Officials informed the Chief Minister that under the Mahagram Yojana, work to provide urban-level drinking water and sewerage facilities in 12 selected villages is progressing rapidly. The drinking water and sewerage network has already been completed in Bhora Kalan (Gurugram), Bhainswal Kalan (Sonipat) and Khambi (Palwal). The remaining work in two other villages will be completed by December 31, marking a significant milestone in improving rural infrastructure.

Saini was also apprised that under the budget announcement to lay 150 km of new sewer lines in various cities, 23 cities have been identified. Of these, 100 km of sewer lines have already been laid, and the remaining work will be fully completed within the next three months. The CM said the objective of the government is to stop the unnecessary extraction of groundwater to meet the rising demand for drinking water and to promote maximum utilisation of treated wastewater. He directed all departments concerned to work in coordination and prioritise recycling and reuse projects.

It was informed in the meeting that the treated wastewater generated from STPs (Sewage Treatment Plants) set up by the Public Health Engineering Department in various cities is being supplied to industrial units and the Irrigation Department, thereby reducing the consumption of fresh water in both industry and agriculture. Saini directed that further possibilities in this direction be explored and 100 percent reuse of treated wastewater be ensured.

He said water conservation and water management are among the biggest future challenges. Therefore, the government is working on long-term plans to ensure the optimal use of every drop of water.

The meeting also included a detailed review of the CM announcements related to the department, and a progress report was presented. Saini instructed that all announcements must be completed within the stipulated time frame so that the benefits of the schemes reach citizens at the grassroots level. He said officers must monitor progress regularly and complete all necessary procedures at the earliest.

## BRIEFS

**HIMACHAL CM PAYS TRIBUTE TO DR. B.R. AMBEDKAR ON HIS DEATH ANNIVERSARY**



**Shimla:** Chief Minister Sukhinder Singh Sukhu on Saturday paid floral tributes to Bharat Ratna Dr. Bhim Rao Ambedkar, the principal architect of the Indian Constitution, at Chaura Maidan, Shimla on his death anniversary. Speaking on the occasion, he said that Dr. Ambedkar was a visionary statesman and a pioneering social reformer who dedicated his life to upholding equality, justice, and the rights of marginalized communities. Sukhu stated that Dr. Ambedkar's legacy continues to inspire and guide the nation in building a progressive and inclusive India. Rural Development and Panchayati Raj Minister Anirudh Singh, PCC President Vinay Kumar, Deputy Mayor Uma Kaushal, Advocate General Anoop Rattan, former Speaker Gangu Ram Musafir, Councillors, Deputy Commissioner Anupam Kashyap, Superintendent of Police Sanjeev Gandhi, and other dignitaries were present on the occasion.

**PUNJAB HARYANA REEL UNDER INTENSE COLD FARIDKOT COLDEST AT 2.5 DEGREE**

**Chandigarh:** Punjab and Haryana are reeling under intense cold with minimum temperatures settling one to four degrees below normal at many places. Faridkot was the coldest place in Punjab as it recorded its minimum at 2.5 degrees Celsius on Saturday. Among other places in Punjab, Gurdaspur's minimum was 5 degrees Celsius while Amritsar recorded its minimum at 5.6 degrees Celsius, according to a report of the Met department here. Ludhiana, Patiala, Pathankot and Bathinda recorded their respective minimums at 7, 9, 5.2 and 4.6 degrees Celsius. Chandigarh, the joint capital of the two states, also experienced cold weather at 7.9 degrees Celsius, 2.7 degrees below normal. In Haryana, Narnaul was the coldest place at a minimum of 3.8 degrees Celsius, four degrees below normal. Hisar experienced cold weather conditions at 4.7 degrees Celsius while Kamal recorded a low of 7.5 degrees Celsius. Bhiwani, Sirsa and Ambala recorded their minimums at 6, 6.4 and 9.8 degrees Celsius respectively.

**HARJOT BAINS PROMISES TO RESOLVE NANGAL LAND DISPUTE**

**Chandigarh:** Taking a firm stand to safeguard rights of Nangal residents, Punjab Education Minister Harjot Singh Bains on Saturday vowed to permanently resolve the longstanding land dispute that has cast a shadow over the town. He expressed his deep connection to Nangal, calling it "Punjab's and the country's most beautiful town" and pledged to protect residents' livelihoods, as the BBMB's claim over prime land, especially in Kilan area market and Pahari market, threatens the city's lifeline. In a video message, the Education Minister said that he recently met with elderly residents and shopkeepers, and he was moved by their decades-long struggle with constant fear and harassment. "They live with the dread that their roofs and livelihoods could be snatched away at any moment," he said, while emphasising that this is unacceptable. A recent High Court order related to a shop has heightened the urgency for a resolution. Bains said that a high-powered committee with Punjab's top officials, including the Advocate General, will examine land records and lead the effort. He will also lead a delegation of Nangal residents to meet the Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann next week. He emphasised that the land belongs to the Punjab Government and BBMB has been harassing residents. The goal is to restore land rights to residents through legal means, ending their insecurity, he asserted.

**CHANDIGARH EMPLOYERS OF UP TO 20 WORKERS EXEMPTED FROM PUNJAB SHOPS ACT COMPLIANCE**

**Chandigarh:** The Centre has extended to Chandigarh the Punjab Shops and Commercial Establishments (Amendment) Act, with an aim to reduce compliance burdens on small businesses and enhance the ease of doing business in the state, a government order on Friday said. The amendment allowed establishments employing up to 20 workers, constituting 95 per cent of shops and commercial establishments in Punjab, to be exempted from all provisions of the Act. The Punjab government had enacted the amendments in August this year to free shopkeepers from the "Inspector Raj", a statement from the state government had said. The registration work under the law will now be applicable only for shops employing more than 20 persons. The registration process has also been streamlined, and establishments with 20 or more employees will now receive deemed approval for registration within 24 hours of application submission. Under the amendment, establishments employing up to 20 workers are only required to provide basic information and are not obligated to register.

**STATE CONGRESS COMMITTEE TO BE IN PLACE IN 3 MONTHS: HIMACHAL CONGRESS CHIEF**

**Shimla:** The Himachal Pradesh Congress Committee will be re-constituted within three months, party state unit chief Vinay Kumar announced on Saturday, adding that the block presidents would be appointed first, followed by district presidents and then the state working committee. "All posts come with challenges. For the past year, there has been no Congress organisation in the state. I have been appointed as the state Congress president to unite everyone, as I have good relations with all," Kumar told reporters. Kumar was appointed as the new Congress state chief on November 22 after more than a year without a leader and took charge on November 30. On November 6, 2024, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge dissolved the Pradesh Congress Committee in Himachal Pradesh, along with the district and block units, effective immediately. Despite this, Pratibha Singh remained in her position as state Congress chief. Former deputy speaker of Himachal Pradesh Vidhan Sabha, Vinay Kumar (47), a Dalit, is a three-term MLA from Renukaji assembly constituency in the Sirmaur district.

**INSPECTION OF ROADS UNDERGOING RE-CARPETING AND REPAIR IN CHANDIGARH**

**Chandigarh:** The UT Administration on Saturday said it is taking all necessary steps to ensure the timely completion of repair and re-carpeting work on major roads, including V1, V2, and V3, to facilitate smooth traffic flow across the city. An intensive inspection of roads was conducted, based on which they were categorized as very poor, poor, or satisfactory. Repair and re-carpeting work is being undertaken accordingly. A site inspection of the ongoing works was carried out by the Chief Engineer, U.T., along with the Superintending Engineers and Executive Engineers concerned at various locations. They emphasized that all work must meet strict quality standards and adhere to prescribed specifications to ensure the durability and safety of the roads. Regular sampling and material checks are being conducted as required, and third-party inspections by independent agencies are also underway to ensure high-quality execution of the re-carpeting work.

## Himachal to induct women into fire services, commence recruitment of home guards

PNS ■ Shimla

Himachal Chief Minister Sukhinder Singh Sukhu on Saturday announced that women would now be inducted into the Fire Services, saying the Himachal Pradesh government is prioritising women empowerment.

Presiding over a ceremony marking the 63rd Raising Day of Himachal Pradesh Home Guards and Civil Defence, the chief minister said recruitment to the force would commence shortly and necessary amendments to recruitment rules would be made soon to induct women into the Fire Services. He also emphasised that the state government has extended maternity leave benefits to women home guards, ensuring essential support and job security during maternity.

Congratulating the personnel of Home Guards,



Civil Defence, Fire Services and the State Disaster Response Force (SDRF), Sukhu said the Home Guards and Fire Services successfully carried out 708 search-and-rescue operations during the year, saving 448 lives.

The forces helped protect property worth Rs 2,000 crore from damage, it said, adding that the department has also restored 1,035 water bodies. Honouring various units and personnel for outstanding service, the chief minister said

the state government is taking steps to strengthen the Department of Home Guards and Civil Defence.

During the present tenure, four new fire stations have been established at Deha, Ubadesh, Nerwa and Indora, while 27 new fire tenders have been procured and 150 posts have been sanctioned to operate these units this year. The government has allocated Rs 55 crore under the Fire Services Modernisation Scheme, while

advanced equipment worth Rs 6 crore has been provided to the SDRF to enhance its operational capacity. This includes drones for aerial surveys, search operations and monitoring disaster-prone areas -- boosting preparedness and response capabilities.

The Department of Home Guards and Civil Defence presented a 'Safe Himachal' demonstration featuring fire-fighting and search-and-rescue mock drills. Additional Director General Satwant Atwal Trivedi said the Home Guards and Fire Services has conducted nearly 11,000 mock drills and 3,000 awareness camps, training around two lakh citizens.

On the occasion, the chief minister also launched the 'Miracle of Mind' mobile application, developed in collaboration with the Isha Foundation, aimed at strengthening efforts against drug abuse.

## Astronaut Shubhanshu Shukla shares his space mission experiences

PNS ■ Panchkula

Indian Air Force Group Captain Shubhanshu Shukla, the first Indian astronaut to go to the International Space Station, on Saturday said that the country is rapidly advancing in the field of science and technology and its self-reliance in the domain is a matter of pride for every citizen.

Shukla, who was interacting with students and science enthusiasts during a session at the four-day India International Science Festival here, urged them to pursue science and space research with determination. The responsibility of realising the vision of a developed India by 2047 rests on the shoulders of the youth; when they progress, the nation progresses, he said.

Shukla told students that in 2018, when Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced from Red Fort that a son or daughter of India would soon go to space, it inspired him to pursue his journey to space. From that moment on, he began making consistent



efforts in that direction.

Regardless of one's circumstances, one should continue to strive as success follows persistent efforts, he said. To a student's query whether one could become an astronaut only after entering the Air Force, Shukla responded that a new framework is being

developed, under which individuals from various fields would also be able to pursue a career as astronauts. Stating that India's first astronaut Wing Commander Rakesh Sharma was his inspiration and courage, Shukla expressed confidence that many more Indians will journey into space in future.

The IAF Group Captain, sharing experiences from his space mission, said that the view of India from space was breath-taking. He said that during his space journey, he conducted several scientific experiments and gathered crucial information for the Gaganyaan mission, which will add a new chapter to India's human spaceflight programme.

Talking to reporters later, Shukla said he enjoyed his interaction with children at the science festival. "This is a good platform that celebrates science. To realise our ambition of a Viksit Bharat by 2047, it is necessary that we celebrate science and create an excitement among children. I think children now have opportunities before them. As a country, we have made it possible for them to think of becoming an astronaut as a career choice," he said.

Shukla was the first Indian to visit the International Space Station as part of the Axiom-4 mission. He returned to India from the US on August 17, 2025, after the 18-day mission.

PNS ■ Chandigarh

Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini paid floral tributes to Dr B R Ambedkar, the architect of India's Constitution, on his 69th death anniversary on Saturday. On the occasion, Saini said Baba Saheb's thoughts, principles and struggle are a source of inspiration not only for Indian society but for all of humanity.

"Every chapter of his life teaches us that even in difficult circumstances, strong willpower, education and dedication towards equality can bring a positive change in society," he said.

Saini said Dr Ambedkar not only established democratic values in the Constitution of India but also laid the foundation for ensuring equal rights and justice for every section of the society. He continuously fought against social discrimination and described education as the most effective medium for social upliftment.



Baba Saheb's teachings and his ideas will continue to inspire the society forever, the chief minister said, adding that his unwavering commitment towards equality, justice and human rights will continue to illuminate our path. Saini said the Haryana government, following the ideals of Dr Ambedkar, is committed to connecting the deprived, economically weak and backward sections of the society with the mainstream.

The state government has implemented several welfare policies to ensure quality education, employment, social security and equality of opportunities, he added.









‘Historic blunders’ on J&K, China part of Nehru’s legacy: BJP hits back at Sonia

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi

The Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) on Saturday alleged that “historical blunders” like “allowing” Pakistan and China to occupy Indian territory and giving special status to Jammu and Kashmir are Jawaharlal Nehru’s legacy, as it hit out at Congress leader Sonia Gandhi over her accusation that the ruling dispensation’s main objective is to vilify him.

Hitting back at the Congress parliamentary party chairperson over her allegations that the ruling BJP’s goal is not just to “erase” the legacy of the country’s first prime minister but to “destroy” its social and political foundations, BJP national spokesperson Gaurav Bhatia said the word destruction that Sonia Gandhi used in her accusation is “synonymous with” her son Rahul Gandhi.

“If there is any ‘Bhasmasur’ in Indian politics today, he is Rahul Gandhi. He destroyed the parties of Sharad Pawar and Uddhav Thackeray in Maharashtra, then Arvind Kejriwal by forging an alliance with his party during the Lok Sabha polls in Delhi,” Bhatia charged.

“After destroying Tejashwi Yadav recently in Bihar (polls), he is now heading for Uttar Pradesh to destroy Akhilesh Yadav in the state,” he said.

Bhasmasur is a demon in Hindu epics known for a boon he received from Lord Shiva that allowed him to turn anyone into ashes (bhasma) by touching their head. However, this power ultimately led to his destruction. Sonia Gandhi had on Friday alleged that a systematic attempt is being made to denigrate, distort, demean and defame Nehru, which was not acceptable.

Addressing an event to launch the Nehru Centre India at Jawahar Bhawan, she said that the project to vilify Nehru is the main objective of the ruling dispensation.

She said the sole objective of this is to not only diminish Nehru as a personality but also his universal recognised role in India’s independence struggle and to demolish his legacy in a crude and self-serving attempt to rewrite history.

Reacting sharply to her charge, Bhatia asked, “What is Nehru’s legacy?”

“Nehru’s legacy includes inclusion of Article 370 in the Constitution, turning down an offer to become UN Security Council member for China and allowing both Pakistan and China to capture Indian territory,” the BJP spokesperson alleged, and demanded a response from Sonia Gandhi.

Bhata said that the country has been paying for the “historic builders” made by Nehru.

However, the country is “so strong today” under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and is “making amends” to those “blunders” made by Nehru, he said, citing the abrogation of Article 370 of the Constitution in 2019, which revoked the special status given to Jammu and Kashmir.

The BJP spokesperson also played Rahul Gandhi over his allegation that the Government tells visiting foreign dignitaries not to meet him, accusing the Leader of Opposition (LoP) in the Lok Sabha of playing “politics of lies”.

Bhatia showed pictures of Gandhi’s meeting with former Bangladesh prime minister Sheikh Hasina last year and his meeting with Prime Minister of Mauritius Navinchandra Ramgoolam and Prime Minister of New Zealand Christopher Luxon this year, and accused the Congress leader of repeatedly playing the victim card and indulging in drama.

Gandhi on Thursday alleged that the Government tells visiting foreign dignitaries not to meet the Leader of the Opposition due to its “insecurity”.

He said it is a tradition that visiting foreign dignitaries meet the LoP, but Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the Ministry of External Affairs were not following this norm.

Gandhi’s remarks came hours ahead of Russian President Vladimir Putin’s two-day visit to India.

Hitting back, Bhatia said, “Global diplomacy runs on credibility and not on the sense of entitlement.”

“It is a misfortune of our country that he has become an LoP. He doesn’t even know how to make responsible statements, keeping in mind the occasion. He has been a major source of embarrassment for our country,” the BJP spokesperson charged.

CPI(M), LDF never linked with Jamaat-e-Islami: Kerala CM

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Thirissur (Kerala)

Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan on Saturday claimed that neither the CPI(M) nor the LDF has ever had any association with the Jamaat-e-Islami, rejecting opposition UDF allegations that the Left party and the Muslim outfit were political partners for decades.

Vijayan said that the Left Front never had the “misfortune” of seeking votes from the Jamaat-e-Islami and never gave the Muslim outfit a “good certificate”.

“But there are some people now who are desperately trying to give a good certificate to the Jamaat-e-Islami,” the chief minister said at a press conference here. He alleged that it is the Jamaat-e-Islami which shapes the political agenda of the Congress and also contributes to UDF poll campaigns.

The remarks came in response to a statement by Indian Union Muslim League (IUML) national general secretary P K Kunhlikuttu, who claimed that the CPI(M) and Jamaat-e-Islami have been linked for decades in a relationship

that “cannot be severed easily.”

IUML is a key constituent of the Congress-led UDF opposition. Hitting back, Vijayan said the UDF and Jamaat-e-Islami leaders “will say anything,” and their claims of CPI(M) links with the Muslim outfit are baseless.

Supporting his claim, the CM noted that the Jamaat-e-Islami began voting in elections only from 1987, a time when the Left was not in power in Kerala.

He said that in 1987, the Jamaat-e-Islami had explicitly refused to vote for Marxist or fascist groups, making it clear they voted for the Congress.

In 1992, the Congress Government at the Centre classified the Jamaat-e-Islami as a prohibited group, preventing it from supporting the party in 1996, he added.

“In subsequent years, the Jamaat-e-Islami adopted a candidate-based voting stance and sometimes contested elections themselves. During the VS Achuthanandan Government (2006-2011), the outfit’s youth wing Solidarity, actively worked against the Left Front,” Vijayan said.

ZUBEEN DEATH PROBE NEARS COMPLETION, CHARGESHEET TO BE FILED ON DECEMBER 12

TONY DAS ■ Guwahati

Investigation into the death of Assam’s cultural icon Zubeen Garg is almost complete, and

the chargesheet will be filed on December 12, a senior police officer said on Saturday. Special Director General of Police of Criminal Investigation

Department (CID), Munna Prasad Gupta, while addressing a press conference here, said, “The investigation is almost complete. The details

will be given in the charge sheet.” Gupta, who is leading the Special Investigation Team (SIT) probing Garg’s death, said seven arrests have been

made so far and over 300 witnesses examined. He said the chargesheet will be filed in CID case number 18/2025, the original case registered after nearly

60 FIRs were filed across the state following Garg’s death. He died while swimming in the sea in Singapore on September 19.

Classifieds

CHANGE OF NAME

**I, Guru Dayal Pandit** S/o Gokhul Pandit, R/o House no. 1054 Gobindpura, near Gurunank Atta Chaki, Mani Majra, Chandigarh have changed my name from Guru Dayal Pandit to Gurudayal Pandit.

**I No 14689767M** Rank NK Surajit Haldar C/O DiLip Haldar R/O V+P- Kechuadanga, Teh-Tehta, Distt- Nadia, Pin 741158, declare that in my army record my wife name is wrongly written as Sangita haldar, whereas her correct name is Sangita Halder Ghosh.

**I, Rajat Kumar** s/o Esham Singh, r/o Manu majra, Tehsil Barara (Ambala), have changed the name of my minor son Riyansh to Riyansh Choudhary.

**I, Mukesh Kumar,** (Old Name, which is to be changed) S/o Shri Chandan Ram Resident of VPO Jathlana (4) Distt. Yamuna Nagar, Haryana have changed my name from Mukesh Kumar (old name) to Mahender Pal (New name)

**I, Vikas Rohilla** S/o Sh. Ramesh Kumar R/o Shri Ram Nagar Colony, Rohtak-124001 declare that in my Aadhar Card, Bank Account my name is written as Vikas Rohilla but in my DMC written as Vikas. Vikas Rohilla and Vikas is one and same person.

**I, Arvind Kumar** son of Shri Dharam Pal resident of H.No. C-100, TDI Connaught Estate, Sector 23 Panipat Distt Panipat, Haryana, India state that I have changed my name from Arvind Kumar to Arvind Ahuja.

**I, Lokesh,** S/o Satish Kumar, R/o Didwari village, Tehsil Israna, District Panipat, declare that I have changed my name from Lokesh to Lokesh Poonia. In the future, I will be known and recognized as Lokesh Poonia. I have no loans or police cases pending under my old name.

**I Gurnam Singh** S/o Sh. Kundan Ram R/o H. No C-237, Yamuna Eclave, Panipat, i have changed my Son name from Harshit to Harshit Mehla for all future purposes.

**I, Mandeep Singh,** S/o Raj Kumar R/o H.No. 110 Ward No. 07 Near Police Station, Siwani Distt. Bhiwani, declare that I have changed the name of my minor daughter from SAMRIDDHI TO SAMRIDDHI DHANDA for future purposes.

**I, Mandeep Singh** S/o Raj Kumar R/o H.No. 110 Ward No. 07 Near Police Station Siwani Distt. Bhiwani, declare That I have changed the name of my minor daughter from TAPASYA TO BHAVISHA DHANDA for future purposes.

**I, Kamal** S/o Rakesh Kumar R/o H.no.156 Satkartar Colony Distt.Panipat declared change my name from Kamal Poply to Kamal and in future my name is Kamal.

**I, Rakesh Kumar** S/o Shiv Dayal R/o H.no.156 Satkartar Colony, Distt.Panipat declared change my name from Rakesh Poply to Rakesh Kumar and in future my name is Rakesh kumar.

**I Vanshika Bhoker** D/o Sh. Vikram Pal R/o H.No. 2044-A, Ansal Sushant City, Sector 32, Kurukshetra have changed my name from Vanshika to Vanshika Bhoker. In future I should be known as Vanshika Bhoker.

**I Baljit Kaur** W/o Service No 4478774F Ex-L/NK - Harbhajan Singh S/O Kishan Singh Resident of Village- Mathola -PO-Bharath Tehsil- Batala Distt- Gurdaspur, Punjab. That I declare change my name from Baljeet Kaur to Baljit Kaur and date of birth from 17/09/1982 to 12/06/1979 in my husband army record.

**I, Jatinderpal Singh** S/o Kashmir Singh R/o Village Jogi Cheema PO Qadian Distt Gurdaspur (Pb) have changed my name from Jatinderpal Singh to Singh Jatinderpal. In future Singh is my surname and Jatinderpal is my given name. Concerned note.

**I, Kishor Kumar** Tiwari S/O Khila Nand R/O 169/8, Ward No 8, Near Yash Mahlotra Kasi Ram Pakodey Wali Gali, Gohana, Sonipat, Haryana-131301 have changed my name to Kishor Kumar.

**I, Rahul Urf** Naveen Kumar S/O Girdhari Lal R/O Dostpur, Dostpur(254), Po-Nangal Chaudhary, Mahendragarh, Haryana-123023 have changed my name to Rohit.

**I, Deepika** D/O Ravinder Singh R/O House No. 124/12, Near New Bus Stand, Chotta Pana, Kalanaur Khurd (Part)(127), Distt-Rohtak, Haryana-124113 have changed my name to Deepika Kataria.

**I, Swankita** D/O Bhupender Singh R/O H/No-807, Ward No. 02, Gurera (131), Bhiwani, Haryana-127046 have changed my name to Swankita Godara.

**I, Sonika** W/O Prashant Sanghotra R/O House No. 735, Phase 2, Urban Estate Dugri, Phullanwal, Ludhiana, Punjab-141013 have changed my name to Sonika Sanghotra.

**I, Balwinder Kaur** W/O Bhupinder Singh R/O 920 B 17 Preet Nagar, Near I T I, Sub District: Jagadhri, District: Yamunanagar, Haryana-135001 have changed my name to Balvinder Kaur Bedi.

**I, Jasvir Singh** s/o Sucha Singh r/o Patti Takhar, Vill. Shankar, Tehsil Nakodar, Distt. Jalandhar, Punjab declare that Given name as Jasvir & Surname as Singh.

**I, Bhupinder Kaur** w/o Jasvir Singh r/o Patti Takhar, Vill. Shankar, Tehsil Nakodar, Distt. Jalandhar, Punjab declare that Given name as Bhupinder & Surname as Kaur.

**I,** hitherto Known as Ritu wife of Pardeep Kumar residing at Village Uchana Mandi, Tehsil Uchana District Jind, Haryana-126115 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Ritu Rani

**I,** hitherto Known as Ramehar Singh son of Om Parkash residing at Village Milakpur, Tehsil Namound District Hisar Haryana-125039 have changed my name and Shall hereafter be known as Ram Mehar Singh

**I,** hitherto Known as Gurdev Singh Son of Garja Ram residing at Village Chapra (156) Tehsil Saha, District Ambala, Haryana-133101 have changed my name and Shall hereafter be known as Ram Narayan Singh

**I, Jagroop Singh** son of Om Parkash residing at Village Panniwala Mota Tehsil Kalanwati District Sirsa Haryana-125077 have changed the name of my minor Son Akshay 16 Years and he shall hereafter be known as Dakshay

**I,** hitherto Known as Sukhwinder Singh son of Amar Singh residing at Village Chur Chak, P.O. Naushehra Majja Singh, District Gurdaspur-143518 Punjab have changed my name and Shall hereafter be known Sulakhan Singh.

**I,** hitherto Known as Charan Kaur wife of Dayal Singh residing at Basant Kot Dhianpur, District Gurdaspur-143605 Punjab have changed my name and Shall hereafter be known as Charanjit Kaur

**I, Sukhdev Masih** Son of Bua Masih residing at Village Athwal, Naushehra Majja Singh Post office Naushera Majja Singh District Gurdaspur-143518 Punjab have changed the name of my minor Son Arien Aged 13 Years and he shall hereafter be known as Arrian Mattu

**I,** hitherto Known as Himat Pal Singh son of Puran Singh residing at Purani Mandi, Guru Bazaar, Chheharta, District Amritsar-143105 Punjab have changed my name and Shall hereafter be known as Himmatpal Singh

**I,** hitherto Known as Amarjeet Singh son of Inder Singh residing at Village Valtho Tehsil Patti District Tarn Taran-143416 Punjab have changed my name and Shall hereafter be known as Amarjit Singh

**I, Vimla Devi** mother of No 13779946X Nk Pintu Choudhary Unit of 11 Jak Rif C/o 56 Apo that in my son’s army service record my name has been wrongly entered as Vimla Devi but my correct name is Bimla Devi Vide affidavit No.IN-PB99735492938336X dt.05.12.2025 before Executive Magistrate Amritsar

**I, No.6498797W** HAV Prabodh Kumar Turkey S/o Victor Turkey Village Kammora PO Sitonga, District Jashpur Pin 496331 have changed my wife’s name from Smt Neelam Kishori Minj to Neelam Kishori Turkey vide affidavit No.IN-PB99427544182420X dt.05.12.2025 before Executive Magistrate Amritsar Punjab

**I, Manpreet Singh** S/o Balkar Singh R/o Village Rakh Manawala PO Manawala Tehsil District Amritsar have declare that Manpreet is my Given name and Singh is my Surname

**I, Malika** W/o Surinder Arjun R/o H.No.51-B, Court Road, Amritsar have changed my name from Malika to Kiran Arjun

**I, Kalwant Kaur** W/o Kuldeep Singh R/o Village Jahangir Distt Tarn Taran have changed my name from Kalwant Kaur to Kulwant Kaur.

**I, Amanpreet Kaur** W/o Manpreet Singh R/o V.P.O Dhoot Kalan Distt. Hoshiarpur have changed my name to Kaur Amanpreet. Kaur is my Surname and Amanpreet is my Given Name. Concerned Note.

**I, Manpreet Singh** S/o Kulwinder Singh R/o V.P.O Dhoot Kalan Distt. Hoshiarpur have changed my name to Singh Manpreet. Singh is my Surname and Manpreet is my Given Name. Concerned Note.

**I, Kuldip Kaur** W/o Tarsem Singh R/o Guru Teg Bahadur Colony, VPO Tanda Ram Sahai, Tehsil Mukerian District Hoshiarpu -144214 Punjab declare that my name is Kuldip Kaur. My surname is Kaur and my given name is Kuldip. Concerned note.

**I, Mohammad Ershad** S/o Late Mohd Hanif, R/o. House No. 743, Near Shayam Sunder Mandir, Village Daria, Chandigarh. That I have changed my name from Mohammad Ershad to Mohd Ershad.

**I, Vishal** S/o Jain Singh R/o H.No.922/8, Rajiv Colony, Sector 17, Panchkula, Haryana, have changed my name from Vishal to Vishal Singh.

**I, Inatulla** S/o Sh. Abdula, R/o. House No. 47/3, Small Flats, Maloya, Chandigarh. That I have changed my name from Inatulla to Inayat Tulla.

**I, ALKA** wife of Rohtash R/o H.No. 533, Village Chikanwas (144), Distt. Hisar (Haryana) 125047 hereby changed my name from Alka Bhadu to ALKA for all future purposes.

**I, SNEHA** NOONIA daughter of Balwan Singh R/o House No. 1910, Sector 1-4, Tehsil & Distt. Hisar 125001 (Haryana) hereby changed my name from Sneha Noonia to SNEHA SHARMA for all future purposes.

**I, PHOOL** CHANDRA GUPTA S/o Shri Sant Lal Gupta R/o Hanumaan Park, Shanti Nagar, Hisar (Haryana) hereby changed my name from PHOOL CHANDRA SANTRAM GUPTA to PHOOL CHANDRA GUPTA for all future purposes.

**I, SHALINI** GUPTA w/o Shri Phool Chandra Gupta R/o H.No. 208/11A, Shanti Nagar, Hisar (Haryana) hereby changed my name from SHALINI PHOOLCHANDRA GUPTA to SHALINI GUPTA for all future purposes.

**I, Avtar Singh** S/o Karnail Singh R/o VPO Village Manakpura Tehsil Patti District Tarn Taran have changed my name from Avtar Singh to Avtar as my Given Name and Singh as my Surname.

**I, KOMAL DEVI** w/o Shri Surender Hooda R/o Vill. Petwar, Distt. Hisar (Haryana) hereby changed my name from Komal to KOMAL DEVI for all future purposes.

**I, Suman** W/o Sh. Hemant Kumar R/o Village Khuyan Malkana, Sirsa, Distt. Sirsa (Haryana). That I have changed my name from Suman to Suman Lata , in future my name is to be called as Suman Lata.

**I Samson Masih** S/o Karam Chand, R/o House No. 171, Raipur Khurd, Chandigarh have changed my name from Samson Masih to Keemti Lal.

**I, MADHURI** am legally Wedded Spouse of Army No- 2813362N Rank- L/Hav Name- Nishan Adesh Bachhav Permanent Address: Bhaygaon, Malegaon, Vajirkheda, Nashik, Maharashtra, 423105 declare that I have changed My Name from MADHURI to MADHURI NISHAN BACHHAV. Vide Affidavit No: 11AA 219150, Dated: 06/12/2025

**I, TSERING** TENZEN is Father of Army No: 9928586F Rank: L/Hav Name- Stenzin Angchuk Presently Posted at Unit: 5 Ladakh Scouts C/o 56 APO Permanent Address: Lossani, Lossani Paddar, Losain, Kishtwar, Jammu and Kashmir-182204 declare that I have Correct my Date of birth from 15/08/1960 to 05/06/1960. Vide Affidavit No: 11AA 219145, Dated: 06/12/2025

**I, SH. STENZIN** SKALDEN is Father of Army No: 9928586F Rank: L/Hav Name- Stenzin Angchuk Presently Posted at Unit: 5 Ladakh Scouts C/o 56 APO Permanent Address: Lossani, Lossani Paddar, Losain, Kishtwar, Jammu and Kashmir-182204 declare that I have changed my name from SH. STENZIN SKALDEN to TSERING TENZEN. Vide Affidavit No: 11AA 219144, Dated: 06/12/2025

**I, SHOBHA** am Mother of Army No- 2813362N Rank- L/Hav Name- Nishan Adesh Bachhav Permanent Address: Bhaygaon, Malegaon, Vajirkheda, Nashik, Maharashtra, 423105 declare that I have changed my name from SHOBHA to SHOBHABAI AADESH BACHHAV and Also Correct my Date of birth from 18/02/1971 to 01/01/1961. Vide Affidavit No: 11AA 219151, Dated: 06/12/2025

**I, THAKUBAI** am Mother of Army No- 2824818F Rank-Sep Name- Dharam Vishal Mathaji Permanent Address: Villager: Dhoki, Post: Dhotre Bk, Teh: Parner Dist: Ahmadnagar, State: Maharashtra, Pin: 414304 declare that I have changed my name from THAKUBAI to THAKUBAI MATHAJI DHARAM. Vide Affidavit No: 11AA 219147, Dated: 06/12/2025

**I, SANGITA** am Mother of Army No- 2824559K Rank-Sep Name- Gawli Appasaheb Yuwraj Permanent Address: At Kalegaon Haveli Post Nalwandi, Bid, Beed, Maharashtra, 431122 declare that I have changed my name from SANGITA to GAWLI SANGITA YUWRAJ. Vide Affidavit No: 11AA 219146, Dated: 06/12/2025

**I, DIPA** am legally Wedded Spouse of Army No: 2813263L Rank: Nk Name: Thakare Changadeo Ramchandra Permanent Address: At: Vill: Udapur Post: Paradgaon Teh: Bramhapuri, Dist: Chandrapur, State: Maharashtra, Pin: 441206 declare that I have changed My Name from DIPA to DIPA CHANGADEO THAKARE. Vide Affidavit No: 11AA 219149, Dated: 06/12/2025

**I, MEERA** am Mother of Army No: 2813263L Rank: Nk Name: Thakare Changadeo Ramchandra Permanent Address: At: Village: Udapur Post: Paradgaon Teh: Bramhapuri, Dist: Chandrapur, State: Maharashtra, Pin: 441206 declare that I have changed my name from MEERA to MIRABAI RAMCHANDRA THAKARE and Also Correct my Date of birth from 11/08/1967 to 01/01/1967. Vide Affidavit No: 11AA 219148, Dated: 06/12/2025

**I, No.14846045W** Hav Radha Kishan resident of Village- Isai Khas, Post- Isai Gopalpur, Tehsil- Kurali, District- Mainpuri, State- Uttar Pradesh, Pin-205265, have changed my Son name from Devesh Beghel to Devesh Baghel Vide affidavit No.IN-PB99650615513172X dated 05 Dec 2025 before notary public Pathankot

**I, Shehenaj** Mother of No.15809852K L/NK (SS) Sheikh Shahrulkh Sheikh Aji resident of Village- Warora, Post- Warora, Tehsil- Warora, District- Chandrapur, State- Maharashtra, Pin- 442907, have changed my name from Shehenaj to Shahanaj Ajii Shekh Vide affidavit No.IN-PB96157303646629X dated 26 Nov 2025 before notary public Pathankot.

**I, Pandhare** Manisha Amit Wife of NK No.15819908Y NK Pandhare Amit Namdeo resident of Village- Karoli (T), Post- Karoli (T), Tehsil- Kavathe Mahankal, District- Sangli, State- Maharashtra, Pin- 416405, have changed my name from Manisha Prabbakar Wagmode to Pandhare Manisha Amit Vide affidavit No.IN-PB99603013782285X dated 05 Dec 2025 before notary public Pathankot

**I, Dhumeti** Devi Mother of Nitin Kumar resident of Village- Colony Mahavalipur, Post- Thora, Tehsil- Jewar, District- Gautam Buddha Nagar, State- Uttar Pradesh, Pin- 203155, have changed my name from Dhumeti Devi to Dumaiti Vide affidavit No.IN-PB99885413653478X dated 06 Dec 2025 before notary public Pathankot

**I, Shakuntla** Devi Mother of Munendra Singh resident of Village- Kishandas Pur, Post- Kishunpur, Tehsil- Fatehpur, District- Fatehpur, State- Uttar Pradesh, Pin-212653, have changed my name from Shakuntla Devi to Shakuntala Devi Vide affidavit No.IN-PB99885411250676X dated 06 Dec 2025 before notary public Pathankot

**I, Vijendra** Singh Father of Munendra Singh resident of Village- Kishandas Pur, Post- Kishunpur, Tehsil- Fatehpur, District- Fatehpur, State- Uttar Pradesh, Pin-212653, have changed my name from Vijendra Singh to Bijendra Singh Vide affidavit No.IN-PB99701664453619X dated 05 Dec 2025 before notary public Pathankot

**I Jagjeet Singh** S/O Mahinder Singh R/O Vpo. Kothe Pona Tehsil Jagraon District Ludhiana Have Changed My Name To Jagjeet Singh Punia.

**I Saroj Kumari** W/O Bhagwan Dass Jaidka R/O 1780/49-D St.No.3 East Moti Bagh Jagraon Distt. Ludhiana Have Changed My Name To Saroj Kumari Jaidka.

**I, No. Jc522933x** Ex Sub Hony Lt Balraj Singh S/O Sh Ravi Singh R/O Village- Nawana Naushehra, Po- Tibri, Tehsil And Distt- Gurdaspur, State- Punjab. Have Changed My Daughter Name From Nitasa To Nitasha.

**I Smt Malkiat Kaur** Is Legally Wedded Spouse Of No. 14908624n Ex Hav Lakhwinder Singh R/O Village- Gill Bob, Po- Bham, Tehsil - Batala, Distt- Gurdaspur, State- Punjab. Have Changed My Name From Malkat Kaur To Malkiat Kaur And Date Of Birth 10-10-1968 To 02-05-1970.

**I, No. 3398613p** Ex Nk Resham Singh S/O Sh Ragubir Singh R/O Village- Dalam Nangal, Po- Dalam, Tehsil - Batala, Distt- Gurdaspur, State- Punjab. Have Changed My Daughter Name From Simarjit Kaur To Simranjeet Kaur.

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■ States Focus ■



### CM NITISH LAUNCHES JD(U)'S MEMBERSHIP DRIVE IN BIHAR

Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar on Saturday inaugurated the membership drive of the JD(U), the party headed by him, for the period between 2025 and 2028. The drive began with Kumar assuming the membership of the party, followed by JD(U) national working president Sanjay Jha, senior leader Bashishtha Narain Singh and State unit president Umesh Kushwaha, among others. “It was only natural that our national president Nitish Kumar first assumed the membership. This time around, we have set a target of 1 crore, which is higher than the target of the previous membership drive,” Jha told reporters.



### JAGANNATH TEMPLE OWNS OVER 60,000 ACRES IN ODISHA

Shree Jagannath Temple in Puri owns over 60,426 acres of land in Odisha, and nearly 400 acres in six other States, Law minister Prithiviraj Harichandan said in the Assembly on Saturday. Harichandan said this while replying to a written question of BJD MLA Sudarshan Haripal in the Assembly. The 12th century shrine in Puri is governed by the Law department as per the Shree Jagannath Temple Act, 1956. While 60,426.943 acres of land in the name of Lord Jagannath are located across 24 districts of Odisha, another 395.252 acres of temple land were traced in six States – West Bengal (322.930 acres), Maharashtra (28.21 acres), Madhya Pradesh (25.11 acres), Andhra Pradesh (17.02 acres), Chhattisgarh (1.7 acres) and Bihar (0.27 acres).

## J&K CM, LG offices lock horns over CCE age relief

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ Jammu

Despite maintaining a cordial working relationship, a fresh round of ‘war of words’ has broken out on social media between the office of Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah and the Lieutenant Governor (LG) Manoj Sinha over the issue of age relaxation to the aspirants of the Jammu and Kashmir Combined Competitive (Preliminary) Examination-2025 (CCE).

The day-long confrontation between the two sides prompted Chief Minister Omar Abdullah to write a letter to the Chairman of the Jammu and Kashmir Public Service Commission, seeking postponement of the exam, which is scheduled to be held on December 7.

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, in a letter to Arun Kumar Choudhary, Chairman JKPSK Saturday said: “I am writing in the context of the extraordinary situation presently confronting the aspirants of the Jammu and Kashmir Combined Competitive (Preliminary)



Examination-2025, scheduled to be conducted by the Jammu and Kashmir Public Service Commission. The ongoing disruption in the air services has caused widespread travel chaos across the region. This is further compounded by the prevailing uncertainty arising due to the delay in the proposal regarding age relaxation — an enabling provision that has been extended multiple times in the past. Together, these factors have placed unprecedented mental and logistical stress on the competing candidates.



In view of the above, and keeping in mind the principles of fairness, equity and equal opportunity for all aspirants, I would urge the Commission to take cognizance of the prevailing circumstances and consider postponement of the forthcoming examination by a reasonable duration, purely in the interest of the candidates.

I am confident that the Commission as always, will take a compassionate and balanced view of the matter in the larger public interest”. Earlier in the day, the Office

of the Lieutenant Governor (Lok Bhavan) said that several social media posts circulating about the JKPSK Prelims examination were “misleading,” asserting that the age-relaxation file sent by the Government was promptly returned the same day with a key query, but no response has been received since.

In a post on X, the Office of LG Jammu and Kashmir, said: “Social media posts with regard to JKPSK exam are misleading. Lok Bhavan had received the file on 2nd December, 2025, which was categorically related to age relaxation only. The file was returned the same day, 2nd December, 2025, with a query whether it is logistically possible to conduct the exam on 7th December, by incorporating modifications in eligibility criteria at such a belated stage. Despite a lapse of 4 days, Lok Bhavan did not receive any response. I fully sympathise with young aspirants.

The advertisement notice for the examination was published by the Jammu and Kashmir Public Service

Commission on 22/08/2025. The exam was notified to be conducted on 07/12/2025 through a notice on 06/11/2025”.

Reacting to the ongoing tussle, the Peoples Democratic Party Chief Mehbooba Mufti, in a post on X, said, “Aspirants of the JKPSK CCE are caught in a tussle between the LG and the CM. In this cold, they are out on the streets asking for nothing more than basic fairness – age relaxation and a reasonable exam schedule. I urge @OfficeOfLGJandK and @OmarAbdullah to step in and resolve this issue without any further delay”.

The ruling National Conference accused the BJP-PDP Alliance Government for reducing the age limit during their tenure in power.

“Which Government permanently reduced the age limit for all students of Jammu and Kashmir to apply for Government services? It was the PDP–BJP Government in 2018, said a post of the JKNC handle on X (earlier Twitter). Hitting back, PDP wrote back on X, “Excuses and finger-

pointing at a Government that ceased to exist seven years ago cannot wash away the responsibility you carry today. NC sought votes in the name of resolving people’s issues, sort this out”.

People’s Conference Chairman Sajad Lone in a post on X said, “The JKAS age relaxation issue is turning out to be yet another classical case of passing the buck at the cost of young aspirants. First CM posted, suggesting that he had no role in the scuttling of the age relaxation file. And now the LG has suggested that they had sent the file back on the 2nd of December. For heaven’s sake, can the CM put something in writing? The CMs office cannot be run through TV bytes. What stops him from issuing written orders? Let them defy written orders. If the other side is falsifying facts. Let us call their bluff. Every single day we have a moaning CM complaining about his file being turned down. Yet nothing in the form of written communication”.

## Female Greylag Goose tagged for migration study

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Patna

In a bid to track and study its migratory movements, the Bird Ringing and Monitoring Station (BRMS) in Bihar’s Bhagalpur district has tagged a female Greylag Goose, which breeds across northern Europe, Central Asia and South Asia, with a solar-powered GPS-GSM transmitter.

GPS tracking will help map its migration route, timing, stopover patterns and habitat use — critical information for wetland conservation across Bihar, a senior officer said. The tagged bird has been named ‘Sonbarsa’, after the village in Bhagalpur district where it



was recently captured. Officials said the name reflects the area’s identity, with Sonbarsa signifying a fertile, gold-toned landscape shaped by riverine soils, symbolising abundance and harmony with nature.

“BRMS, Bhagalpur, a joint venture of the State Government’s Department of Environment, Forest and

Climate Change and the Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS), tagged a female Greylag Goose on Friday at the Ghatara wetland near Sonbarsa village with a solar-powered GPS-GSM transmitter to study its migratory movements.

“This is the first-ever GPS tagging of a bird in Bhagalpur district, marking a significant milestone in Bihar’s migratory bird research,” Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (PCCF), Prabhat Kumar Gupta, said on Saturday.

Greylag Goose, which travels thousands of kilometres along the Central Asian Flyway, uses wetlands like Ghatara as stopover or wintering sites.

He said this tagging marks a major step toward advancing scientific understanding and safeguarding migratory birds that depend on the State’s wetlands.

This effort follows the GPS-GSM tagging of two Bar-headed Geese in Jamui district in February this year, strengthening Bihar’s contribution to waterbird monitoring under the Central Asian Flyway.

Earlier, BRMS, Bhagalpur had documented a juvenile Greater Flamingo in the Ganga near Sultanganj on December 8, 2024. It marked the first documented appearance of the species in the Bhagalpur district, the PCCF said.

## Ayodhya under heavy security on Babri demolition anniversary

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Lucknow/Ayodhya

Ayodhya remained under an extensive security blanket on the 33rd anniversary of the demolition of the Babri mosque organised political or religious mobilisations — a sharp contrast to earlier years when rival groups marked the day with symbolic demonstrations.

Security personnel were on high alert and carried out checking drives across the holy town, especially around the newly constructed Ram temple, railway station, bus stands and major roads, and other sensitive areas in Uttar Pradesh, including Varanasi and Mathura, with mosque-temple disputes, stopping vehicles at multiple checkpoints, verifying IDs and strengthening vigil.

“December 6 is

always a sensitive date for Ayodhya. This year, we are ensuring no breach of peace or security,” said Superintendent of Police (City) Chakrapani Tripathi.

He said that strict directives had been issued prohibiting public gatherings or rallies, while hotels had been asked to maintain detailed visitors’ records. Bomb squads and dog squads also carried out checks at railway station parking areas along with Railway Protection Force (RPF) and Government Railway Police (GRP) personnel, he said.

Unlike previous years, there were no organised political or religious mobilisations. Local activists and residents said it reflects both the administrative curbs imposed after the Supreme Court’s 2019 verdict and the passing away of the once-key



Security personnel stand guard near Beldanga Railway station in Murshidabad on Saturday

PTI

leaders from both sides of the dispute. “The Government has banned observing ‘Black Day’ or ‘Victory Day’ (Shaurya Diwas) after the final verdict,” said Indu Bhushan Pandey, a social activist in Ayodhya.

The BJP posted messages on its X handles paying tributes to those associated with

the Ram Temple movement on “Shaurya Diwas” — observed by Hindu outfits to mark the demolition in 1992. “Jai Shri Ram, On Shaurya Diwas, a hundred salutations to the Sanatanis who, by offering their lives in the Shri Ram Mandir movement, paved the way for the cultural renaiss-

sance of the nation,” a post on the official handle of the BJP’s Uttar Pradesh unit said.

Many prominent figures associated with the Ram Janmabhoomi movement, including Ashok Singhal, Kalyan Singh, Bal Thackeray and Mahant Avaidyanath, have either passed away or faded from public life. Leaders from the Babri mosque Action Committee, such as Zafaryab Jilani, Syed Shahabuddin, Abdullah Bukhari and Sultan Salahuddin Owaisi, are also no longer alive.

Even the main litigants, including Hashim Ansari and Triloki Nath Pandey, in whose name the court decree for the Ram temple was issued, have passed away.

Meanwhile, the five-acre plot allotted by the Supreme Court to the Sunni Central Waqf Board for building a mosque remains barren.

The Ayodhya Development Authority had rejected the initial plan submitted for the proposed mosque, and no revised map has since been filed.

The new mosque project rollout at Dhannipur, around 25 km from the holy city, could begin around April 2026, the head of the trust tasked with the project said.

“If all fits in place, and of course, subject to the Ayodhya Development Authority’s (ADA) approval of the revised layout plan of the mosque that we hope to submit by December-end, a tentative timeline of the mosque project rollout could be around April 2026,” Zufar Faruqi, chairman of the Indo-Islamic Cultural Foundation (IICF), which will undertake the construction of the mosque-complex project, said.

## Rajasthan 1st State to digitise 100% of voter rolls under SIR

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Jaipur

Rajasthan on Saturday completed 100 per cent digitisation of its electoral roll under the Special Intensive Revision (SIR), becoming the first State in the country to do so, Chief Electoral Officer Navin Mahajan said.

He said that coordinated effort and meticulous execution by BLOs, assistant staff supervisors, district election

officers and other staff engaged in the exercise were behind this success.

“Rajasthan now also leads the country in voter mapping, with more than 97 per cent of the mapping work completed. As a result, only 3 per cent of voters will need to furnish documents during the claims-objections phase,” he said.

On average, he said, only about 30 voters per booth will be required to submit documents.

He said high-quality mapping has made the SIR process simpler, more transparent and greatly reduced repeated verification for voters.

Mahajan said that the dedication of field staff, especially BLOs and panchayat-level employees, was central to this achievement.

He said the success reflects not just statistical progress but the collective spirit that enabled the State to set a new benchmark.

The chief electoral officer said that the draft electoral roll will be published on December 16, adding that claims and objections can be filed from December 16 to January 15, 2026.

Hearings, verification and decisions on claims and objections will be conducted from December 16 to February 7, 2026. The final electoral roll will be published on February 14, 2026, the officer said.

don’t know about it. The AICC has nominated a five-member committee under Girish Chodankar. What you say is astonishing. We are with the DMK.”

When the reporter persisted, the Congress leader said, “I really don’t know what to say. There was no coverage in the media to say the meeting took place. I can’t react to speculation.” He exuded the hope that the DMK would not underestimate the strength of Congress and that it would allot them a modest number of seats this time.



this time.

Responding to a question on the reported meeting between Chakravarty and Vijay, who heads the Tamilaga Vettri Kahagam, Selvaivelunthagai replied, “I

stressed. The panel had called on Stalin, the leader of the Secular Progressive Alliance, on December 4 and informally commenced the process of discussing seat-sharing.

Selvaivelunthagai, Congress Legislature Party leader Rajesh Kumar, and AICC secretaries Suraj MN Hegde and Nivedith Alva were the other members of the committee led by Chodankar.

The Congress, which won 18 out of 25 seats it contested in alliance with the DMK in the 2021 Assembly election, is aiming to contest more seats

## Adhikari slams Mamata after Kabir lays down foundation stone of Babri mosque

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ Kolkata

Bengal Opposition Leader Suwendu Adhikari on Saturday slammed Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee for allowing “communal elements” like former Trinamool Congress MLA — Humayun Kabir to thrive in the State by providing them political patronage.

Adhikari’s Statement came soon after Kabir — who was on Thursday suspended from his party — laid the foundation stone of a proposed Babri Mosque at Beldanga in Murshidabad district bordering Bangladesh.

“It is a very dangerous step we have no problem if anyone constructs a mosque or a temple or a church anywhere but where the name of Babar is being used it becomes really dangerous because everyone knows that Pathans and Mughals invaded India, tortured the Hindus and converted thousands of them, looted their wealth and women, we have problem not with the mosque but with the name he was not Indian. He was a



Former TMC MLA Humayun Kabir (left) waves to the gathering, he laid the foundation stone for a mosque, modelled on Ayodhya’s Babri Masjid in West Bengal’s Murshidabad district on Saturday

PTI

rapist and a robber. His name was invoked without any permission,” Adhikari said blaming the Chief Minister for making what Kabir had become today.

Adhikari was taking part in a rally on the occasion of “Saurya Diwas” that started in front of Swami Vivekananda’s residence and marched a few kms till Shyambazar crossing in North Kolkata.

Wondering why the Chief

Minister would not take action against Kabir when he during the last general elections threatened to cut and throw the 30 per cent population (Hindus) of Murshidabad in River Bhagirathi (Ganges), Adhikari said, “Mamata Banerjee provided police protection to men like Humayun Kabir where as one has to approach the court to celebrate Saraswati Puja, a few days ago, the police transported Goddess Kali in a prison

van, instead of taking action against a section of the population who were disturbing the Puja today’s development will not bring any peace.”

However, Kabir who managed to draw many thousand people to witness the foundation stone laying ceremony said that he was not doing anything unconstitutional by setting up a mosque.

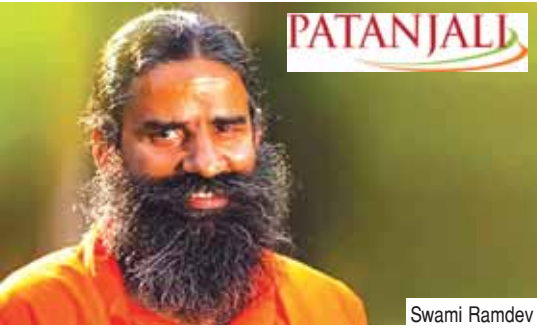
“I am not doing anything unconstitutional. Anyone can build a temple, church I will build a mosque It is not written anywhere that I cannot build the Babri mosque if a Ram Temple can be built at Sagardighi why cannot a Barbari Mosque be build here,” A Hindu religious organisation has been building a replica of Ayodhya Ram Temple at Sagardighi which is also in Murshidabad district.

Meanwhile, even as the Trinamool Congress on Saturday observed a Sanhati Diwas (Solidarity Day) the Chief Minister took to the social media saying her struggle to contain communal hatred would continue.



PROSPECT

## Patanjali Group signs MoU to enter Russia with its Ayurveda products



Swami Ramdev

Yoga Guru Baba Ramdev-led Patanjali Group on Saturday signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Russian Government that will facilitate its entry into the country. The MoU aims to promote health and wellness, health tourism, exchange of skilled human resources and research-related initiatives, as per a statement. The MoU was signed here by Ramdev on behalf of the Patanjali Group and Sergey Cheremin, Chairman of the Indo-Russia Business Council and Minister of Commerce of Russia.

The Patanjali Group, founded by Baba Ramdev and Acharya Balkrishna, is an Indian conglomerate known for its Ayurvedic and FMCG products, encompassing Patanjali Ayurved and Patanjali Foods (formerly Ruchi Soya). Ramdev, addressing the programme, said people in Russia appreciate and actively practice yoga, Ayurveda, and naturopathy. He further said "our foremost goal is to take this wellness science of the sages to nearly 200 countries across the world, with Russia serving as the entry point".

"The first major objective of this MoU is to expand Patanjali's wellness services in Russia. The second objective is to share India's spiritual knowledge, culture, yoga, Ayurveda and invaluable heritage with Russia.

For this purpose, India's cultural and sage traditions will be taken to Russia," he said. Additionally, under this MoU, leading Indian brands will be promoted in Russia and Russian brands in India. While Sergey Cheremin said they will strengthen their partnership with Patanjali. By adopting Patanjali's yoga, Ayurveda and naturopathy, they aim to transform the lifestyle of the people of Russia and make them healthier and disease-free, he said.

## Install rooftop solar panels on all Govt buildings: Haryana CM to officials



Nayab Singh Saini

Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini on Saturday directed that all Government buildings like schools, colleges, hospitals, offices, etc, be equipped with rooftop solar systems to accelerate the State's transition towards clean and green energy. He was chairing a high-level review meeting on the budget announcements of the power sector at the civil secretariat here, according to an official statement. uring the meeting, Saini reviewed the progress of the PM Suryaghar: *Muft Bijli Yojana* and instructed officials to expedite rooftop solar installations across households in the State. He also examined the month-wise achievements under the scheme and emphasised strict monitoring and accountability.

In addition, the CM directed the creation of solar parks across the State to harness Haryana's renewable energy potential. He also ordered immediate removal of old and defunct electricity poles from major State roads and highways to enhance public safety and improve road aesthetics. Chairman, Haryana Power Generation Corporation Ltd (HPGCL), Shyamal Misra said 42,486 rooftop solar installations have been completed in the State as of November 20, 2025. A target has been set to install 2,22,000 rooftop solar systems in the state by March 31, 2027. He said power distribution companies have also formulated a new scheme, 'Saur Urja Protsahan Yojana' and it has been submitted to the State Government for approval.

## Assam CM launches seed capital cheque distribution for women of Hailakandi and Dholai

TONY DAS  
Guwahati

Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Saturday launched the distribution of seed capital cheques under the *Mukhyamantri Mahila Udyamita Abhiyan* for women beneficiaries across Hailakandi and Dholai Legislative Assembly Constituencies (LACs) in the Barak Valley.

A total of 17,774 beneficiaries from Hailakandi LAC and 20,045 from Dholai LAC each received cheques of ₹10,000 under the initiative, aimed at ensuring sustainable economic empowerment for women in Assam.

Speaking at the Hailakandi distribution event, the Chief Minister noted that cheque distribution has already been completed in 50 constituencies in the past two months, benefiting 12 lakh women across the State.



CM Himanta Biswa Sarma is distributing seed capital cheque to women beneficiary during the Mukhyamantri Mahila Udyamita Abhiyan programme in Hailakandi on Saturday

Pioneer photo

He highlighted Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision to transform three crore women into "*Lakhpati Didis*," stating the State Government aims to transform 40 lakh women associated with Self-Help Groups (SHGs) into "*Lakhpati Baideus*" (elder sisters).

CM Sarma urged beneficiaries to make the best use of the initial ₹10,000 seed fund, explaining that depositing it in their SHGs could create a working capital of ₹1 lakh for enterprises or business expansion.

Following a six-month assessment of fund utilisation,

beneficiaries will be eligible for subsequent support of ₹25,000 and ₹50,000. Eligibility for these subsequent benefits is restricted to beneficiaries with up to three children. The CM also announced that under Orunodoi 3.0, two to three thousand new beneficiaries will be included from Hailakandi LAC. Further-more, from January 1, ration card holders will be able to purchase dal, salt and sugar at Rs. 100 per kg, a reduction from the existing ₹117.

On development, CM Sarma announced the installation of an MRI machine at Hailakandi Civil Hospital and directed the District Commissioner to identify land for a medical college.

Earlier, the Chief Minister laid the foundation stone for the statue of Bharat Kesari Dr Syama Prasad Mukherjee on Puranibazar Road, Hailakandi.

# Customs simplification next big reform: FM

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE  
New Delhi

Ahead of Budget 2026, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Saturday said the simplification of customs would be the next big reform agenda for the Government. During the current financial year, the Government undertook reforms such as rate rationalisation and simplification of the income tax and Goods and Services Tax (GST) in a bid to boost consumption by providing more cash in the hands of the common man.

"We need a complete overhaul of customs... We need to have customs simplified for people to feel that it is not cumbersome to comply... Need to make it more transparent," Sitharaman said while speaking at the HT Leadership Summit here.

There is a need to bring the virtues of income tax to the customs side in terms of transparency, she said, adding that the proposed reforms will be comprehensive and entail customs duty rate rationalisation. The announcements to this effect can be made in the upcoming Budget, likely to be presented on February 1. "We have brought down



Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman

customs duty over the last two years steadily. But in those few items where our rates are considered to be over the optimal level, we have to bring them down as well. Customs is my next big cleaning-up

assignment," she said.

In this year's Budget, among other measures announced, the Government proposed eliminating seven additional customs tariff rates on industrial goods, following

the removal of seven tariffs in 2023-24 (announced in the previous budget speech on July 23, 2024). This reduces the total number of tariff slabs to eight, including a zero rate. On the depreciating rupee

## Circular economy to boost dairy farmers' income by 20% in 5 years: Amit Shah



Union Minister for Home Affairs and Cooperation, Amit Shah inaugurates the newly constructed Bio-CNG and Fertiliser Plant by Banas Dairy

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE  
Ahmedabad

Union Home and Cooperation Minister Amit Shah on Saturday expressed confidence that implementation of the circular economy model across the country will increase dairy farmers' income by 20 per cent in the next five years. Shah was addressing cattle rearers associated with Banas Dairy at an event held at Sanadar village in Gujarat's Vav-Tharad district to mark the inauguration of the dairy's bio-CNG and fertiliser plant and ground-breaking of its milk powder plant.

He praised Banas Dairy's management for successfully developing a model for a circular economy in the dairy sector, which includes generating extra income for farmers through various means, such as converting cattle dung into biogas and

bio-fertiliser. Shah informed the audience that he has brought several members of Parliament to Banaskantha to understand the circular economy model of Banas Dairy.

"So far, our cooperative dairies have received huge success in procuring milk from farmers and giving back the income generated from selling milk products. Now, the time has come to focus on the circular economy. You will get your share from the income generated by the dairy by selling biogas and fertiliser produced from cattle dung procured from farmers," he said. A concrete plan for the implementation of this circular economy model across the country will emerge from the meeting of MPs in Banaskantha in the evening, the minister said.

Shah also informed the gathering that chairpersons and managing directors of all

the major cooperative dairies will visit Banas Dairy in January 2026 to understand more about the initiatives taken by the dairy, considered Asia's largest dairy with a turnover of ₹24,000 crore.

"Apart from the usual milk products like paneer and curd, there are many products that are in demand across the globe, but they are not produced in India. If we focus on those products, dairy farmers can earn extra income," he said.

Shah said Prime Minister Narendra Modi has created a system wherein dairies will get the required finance and technology to adopt this circular economy model, which also includes leather production from the hide harvested from the cattle that died naturally. "Our Government has created three cooperatives for the agriculture sector and three for the dairy sector. I want to

assure you that the circular economy will increase dairy farmers' income by 20 per cent in the next five years," he said. Shah said his ministry and the Centre have done detailed planning for implementing the circular economy model in the dairy sector. He expressed confidence that targets set by PM Modi under the 'White Revolution 2.0' initiative will be achieved through collective efforts.

On the occasion, Shah praised women dairy farmers for their contribution and efforts in strengthening the sector in this arid region of Gujarat. "Women dairy farmers of this region sent a message to NGOs around the world that advocate for women's empowerment. Without any agitation, you worked hard to create a system where your earnings are deposited directly into your bank account," he noted.

## Need stronger arbitral institutions for infrastructure sector: Justice Rajesh Bindal

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE  
New Delhi

Supreme Court judge Justice Rajesh Bindal has underlined the need for strong arbitral institutions, stating that the country's booming infrastructure sector requires expert involvement and problem-solving approaches to prevent disputes from stalling projects.

The Supreme court judge was speaking at the 5th Biennial International Conference on Construction Law and Arbitration organised by the Society of Construction Law here on Friday evening, in collaboration with Khaitan and Co, Larsen and Toubro, JSA Advocates and Solicitors, among others. Justice Bindal said construction law is a highly specialised field.

He said the rapid growth of India's infrastructure, including power, roads, metro, ports and dams, has naturally increased disputes.

"Activity is increasing, so percentage of disputes will go up — some genuine, some creative.

We should solve them at each stage, instead of taking the entire dispute to the end and stalling the project," Justice Bindal said.

He endorsed institutional arbitration in construction disputes, to combat its current issues of inflated costs and delayed proceedings by ensuring the availability of technical experts, proper record-keeping, and structured case management.

He also stressed contract drafting as a key area for reducing disputes.

"The best form of agreement is where all relevant laws and terms are incorporated in a single document, avoiding overlaps and patho-



Justice Rajesh Bindal

logical clauses," he said.

Justice Bindal warned about challenges posed by Artificial Intelligence (AI) in arbitration and litigation, including fabricated evidence, non-existent judgments, and confidentiality risks on open AI platforms.

Speaking at the event, Attorney General R Venkataramani called for dedicated legislation for the construction sector, underlining its current fragmented nature.

He urged law schools to play a larger role in shaping the future of construction law and regulatory frameworks.

Delhi High Court judge Justice Tejas Karia highlighted the rapid evolution and complexity of India's infrastructure sector and emphasised the need for specialised dispute resolution frameworks.

"The future of construction disputes is clear. It will be faster, more data-driven and supported by technology. It will be less adversarial and more collaborative and rely on early resolution structures and enforcement.

If we build a dispute resolution system that is clear, predictable, economically enabled and globally trusted, we can position India as a hub for infrastructure arbitration," he said.

## MP Manoj Tiwari flags off FICCI-CASCADE anti-smuggling auto rally

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE  
New Delhi

FICCI-CASCADE (Committee Against Smuggling and Counterfeiting Destroying the Economy), on Saturday organised the third edition of its Annual Auto Rally. The event was flagged off by Lok Sabha Member of Parliament Manoj Tiwari. The aim of the rally was to raise large scale awareness on the impact of smuggled and counterfeit goods on India's economy, public health and national security.

On the occasion Tiwari made a passionate appeal during the flag-off ceremony and urged citizens to act as informed consumers and join the nation's collective crusade against smuggling, which continues to drain Government revenue and undermine legitimate industry.

"Smuggling is not just an economic offence, it is a silent threat that fuels criminal networks and even terrorism. A bomb blast shocks the nation in a single moment, but the funding for such acts often begins quietly through the sale of smuggled and illegal goods. Many citizens do not realise that when



Manoj Tiwari, Member of Parliament and Anil Rajput, Chairman, FICCI CASCADE, flagging off the Anti-Smuggling Auto Rally in Delhi, with over 300 auto-rickshaws participating to raise awareness on the rising threat of smuggling and counterfeiting

Pioneer photo

they buy products without a bill or choose cheaper, smuggled items, they unintentionally strengthen the very forces that work against India's safety and stability.

Today, I appeal to every Indian: let us take a clear and conscious pledge that we will never purchase goods that come through illegal channels.

Even if it costs a little more, let us always choose rightful, tax-paid, bill-certified products.

This is not only about supporting honest businesses — it is about protecting our nation, safeguarding our people, and weakening the networks that misuse our hard-earned money against us," he said.



FROM THE

WORLD

USA

Woman charged with smuggling

A 42-year-old woman has been charged for her role in an international smuggling conspiracy under which individuals primarily from India were brought illegally to the US across the border from Canada. Stacey Taylor of Plattsburgh, New York, appeared for an arraignment this week after a federal grand jury in Albany returned an indictment in October charging her for her role in the smuggling conspiracy, according to an official statement on Friday. Court records show that US Border Patrol agents interdicted Taylor's vehicle near Churubusco, New York, near the Quebec border in the early morning hours in January, and found four foreign nationals inside her vehicle. The four men - three Indian nationals and one Canadian national - had crossed the US-Canadian border illegally, without inspection.

PAKISTAN

Nine terrorists gunned down

Security forces have gunned down nine terrorists belonging to the banned Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) in two separate intelligence-based operations in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province in northwest Pakistan, military's media wing said on Saturday. The operations were conducted in Khyber, Tank and Lakki Marwat districts of the province on Friday, the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the media wing of the Pakistan Army said in a statement. An intelligence-based operation was conducted in Tank on the reported presence of terrorists. After an intense fire exchange, seven terrorists were killed, the ISPR statement said. In a separate IBO conducted in Lakki Marwat, "two more khawarij were effectively neutralised by security forces."

India boosts Sri Lanka recovery efforts

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

■ Colombo

A top Indian diplomat on Saturday briefed Sri Lankan corporate leaders about New Delhi's "response and continued commitment" to the cyclone-hit island nation in its resurgence from the disaster that has claimed over 600 lives so far.

Indian High Commissioner Santosh Jha met Sri Lankan corporate leaders associated with the 'Rebuilding Sri Lanka Fund' as the island nation is grappling with widespread flooding, landslides and severe infrastructure collapse following Cyclone Ditwah.

Till Saturday noon, as many as 611 people had died because of the disaster, which also left several districts isolated and acutely strained the country's disaster-response capacity.

During his meeting with the corporate leaders, Jha discussed the "way ahead for rehabilitation and recovery", the Indian High Commission said in an X post.

He also briefed them on the elements of "India's response and continued commitment to stand by Sri Lanka in its resurgence from this crisis," it added.

India was the first country to respond to Sri Lanka's international appeal for assistance under its Operation Sagar Bandhu.

Its humanitarian assistance has continued across land and air, focusing on both emergency response and sustained medical care, the Indian mission here said in a press release. Since the launch of Operation Sagar Bandhu on November 28,



High Commissioner Santosh Jha during a meeting with Sri Lanka's corporate leaders associated with Rebuilding Sri Lanka Fund

PTI

India has provided more than 58 tonnes of relief material including dry rations, tents, tarpaulins, hygiene kits, water purification kits and around 4.5 tonnes of medicines and surgical equipment.

Another 50 tonnes of equipment including generators, inflatable rescue boats, and Outboard Motors have been provided, and 130 tonnes of Bailey Bridge units have been airlifted along with 31 engineers to restore critical connectivity.

The Indian Engineer Corps is conducting surveys and reconnaissance for the construction of Bailey Bridges on vital road routes to restore connectivity in flood-hit

areas. On Saturday, a ship laden with 950 tonnes of essential goods including 300 MT rice was dispatched by Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin.

It is carrying clothes and food to be distributed among those affected by the cyclone following a request made by the Sri Lankan Deputy High Commission in Chennai, according to the Sri Lankan Foreign Ministry.

"India was the first country to respond. India sent helicopters and rescue teams. They sent food and medicine very quickly," Foreign Minister Vijitha Herath said, calling the response received from the international community to Sri Lanka's appeal

"overwhelming". Under Operation Sagar Bandhu, two columns of the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), comprising 80 experts and K9 units with specially trained dogs, conducted rescue and relief operations, evacuating around 150 stranded persons. A full-fledged field hospital with 78 medical personnel from India is now providing life-saving care in Mahiyanganaya near Kandy.

It was airlifted by the Indian Air Force on Wednesday. In its first 24 hours, the facility provided much-needed medical care to around 400 patients affected by the cyclone, conducted 55 minor procedures and

an operation, the High Commission said in an X post. Commander of the Sri Lanka Army Lieutenant General Lasantha Rodrigo reviewed the field hospital and thanked the Indian Government for its swift response and for ensuring that critical medical care reaches those in need.

Medical centres have also been set up using the BHISHM (Bharat Health Initiative for Sahyog Hita and Maitri) Arogya Maitri cubes in the badly hit Ja-Ela and Negombo. "India's medical teams continue to stand beside Sri Lanka, ensuring that timely care reaches those in need," the X post said.

Major terror bid foiled in Pak, 24 terrorists arrested

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

■ Lahore

Law enforcement agencies have foiled a major terror plot in Pakistan's Punjab province and arrested 24 terrorists, most of whom belong to the banned Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), police said on Saturday.

The terrorists were arrested during operations in different areas of the province this week, the Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) of Punjab said in a statement.

It said the CTD Punjab conducted 364 intelligence-based operations in different districts, in which 24 terrorists were arrested along with weapons, explosives and other prohibited materials. Eleven of those arrested belong to the outlawed TTP. Around 5 kg of explosives, 24 detona-



tors and four bombs were recovered from those arrested.

The CTD said that the terrorists had planned to target important buildings in different cities. As many as 24 cases have been registered against the arrested terrorists and further investigation is being carried out against them, it said. Since there has been a rise in terror incidents in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, Punjab has been put on high alert.

Following last month's suicide attack in Islamabad that claimed 12 lives, Punjab police have been put on high alert with instructions to heighten arrangements for the security, especially of judges, courts and bars across the province.

The police officers were instructed to ensure daily and weekly inspections of the security arrangements.

Miniature model of Gandhi statue set for UK auction

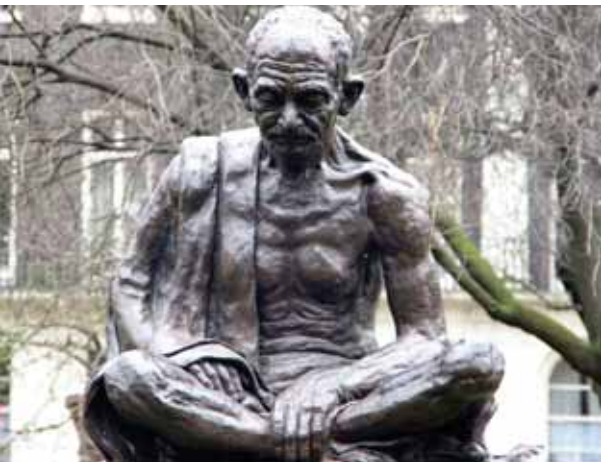
PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

■ London

A miniature model of an iconic sculpture of Mahatma Gandhi from a central London square is set to go under the hammer at an auction in England next week, with a guide price estimate between 6,000 and 8,000 pounds.

The 27-cm tall bronze maquette is said to be the earliest complete vision of the statue by Polish sculptor Fredda Brilliant that has been installed at Tavistock Square in London's Bloomsbury since 1968. In September, its plinth was targeted with "racially aggravated" graffiti and had a spruce up in time for Gandhi Jayanti on October 2.

"Fredda Brilliant first conceived of the idea of a sculpture of Mahatma Gandhi in 1949, but it was not until the early 1960s that she was commissioned to make the memorial in Tavistock Square,



London," Woolley & Wallis auction house from Wiltshire said in a statement.

"She initially explored three poses, one of Gandhi standing, one of him walking, and the final one offered here, sitting cross-legged, a pose she described as 'traditional and intimate, suited to the small but beautiful [Tavistock] square'," it stated. Once the

sculptor had settled on the pose, she created a customary metal miniature. It is the first of two of these maquettes that is being offered at auction next Thursday. A second maquette sold back in June 2019 for 65,000 pounds to a private collector. "Given Fredda's growing reputation and the fierce bidding we've seen for her Gandhi works in the past,

the emergence of this first maquette from a private London collection is significant," said Victor Fauvelle, Woolley & Wallis specialist.

"It offers collectors an exceptional chance to secure the piece that set one of Fredda's most internationally recognised monuments and sculptures in motion," he said. The bronze sculpture, created with the backing of India League, was unveiled at the square as a nod to Mahatma Gandhi's days as a law student at the nearby University College London.

The sculpture depicts Gandhi in a classic meditative pose, with the inscription on the plinth saying: "Mahatma Gandhi, 1869-1948." Gandhi Jayanti, designated as International Day of Non-Violence by the United Nations, is commemorated with floral tributes and Gandhiji's favourite bhajans at the monument in London annually on October 2.

Israeli defence firm says it plans to supply first batch of LMGs to India early next year

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

■ Jerusalem

A leading Israeli defence firm has said it intends to supply the first batch of 40,000 light machine guns (LMGs) to India starting early next year, while it is in the final stages of signing a contract to supply nearly 1,70,000 new-age carbines.

Shuki Schwartz, CEO of Israel Weapon Industries (IWI), also said that his firm is currently collaborating with various agencies within India's Ministry of Home Affairs to market their products, including pistols, rifles, and machine guns.

"We're now involved in three significant programmes. First is the contract for 40,000 light machine guns, which was signed last year. We have completed all tests, trials, and

FINAL STAGES OF SIGNING A CONTRACT TO SUPPLY NEARLY 1,70,000 NEW-AGE CARBINES

Government checks, and we have received the license for production. We intend to supply the first batch at the beginning of the year," Schwartz told.

LMGs supply is for five years. We can do it faster, but the first supply will be at the beginning of the year," he said when asked about the timeline of the supply.

Schwartz said the second programme involves the CQB (Close Quarters Battle) carbines tender, where the firm was the second bidder. Bharat Forge is the primary bidder. "We intend to supply

40 per cent of the contract. We are in the stage of pre-signing of the contract, and I believe it will be finalised by the end of this year or the beginning of next year," he said. Sixty per cent of the CQB carbines supply will be sourced from Bharat Forge, while the remaining 40 per cent (170,000 units) will be delivered by PLR Systems, a subsidiary of the Adani Group. On Arbel technology, the first computerised weapon system that uses a complex algorithm to determine when a soldier is on target and quickly strikes with high precision, Schwartz said that they are in the early stages of talks with India about integrating this technology into the country.

"We are in the initial stages of discussions with different agencies to adopt the Arbel systems. Once they

take it, we will supply it through co-production in Israel and India," he said.

He added that PLR Systems will handle the co-production locally in India. "We are also collaborating with the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) and various agencies within MHA to sell our complete range of products, which includes pistols, rifles, and light machine guns. Our dealings involve smaller quantities across many contracts, and we have been working in this area for several years," he said. When asked about annual supply numbers, he mentioned it could be "tens of thousands of weapons a year."

He acknowledged that while the two major contracts will last for a few years, there is a demand for quicker delivery due to the current situation.

Gaza ceasefire at critical moment: Qatar



Palestinian Ahmed Abu Amra riding his motorcycle and shows off his skills on a sandy hill in the Al-Zahra area, central Gaza Strip

AP

ASSOCIATED PRESS

■ Doha

Qatar's Prime Minister on Saturday said the Gaza ceasefire has reached a "critical moment" as its first phase winds down, with the remains of just one Israeli hostage still held by militants. Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani told an international conference in the Qatari capital that international mediators, led by the US, are working "to force the way forward" to the second phase to cement the deal.

"What we have just done is a pause," he told the Doha Forum. "We cannot consider it yet a ceasefire."

"A ceasefire cannot be completed unless there is a full withdrawal of Israeli forces, there is stability back in Gaza, people can go in and out, which is not the case today," he said.

While the ceasefire halted the heavy fighting of the two-year war, Gaza health officials say that over 360 Palestinians have been killed by Israeli fire since the truce took effect in October. In new violence, two Palestinians were killed in an Israeli airstrike northwest of Gaza City, Shifa Hospital said.

Israel's army said it wasn't aware of an airstrike in that location. However, it said that Israeli soldiers on Saturday killed three militants who crossed the "yellow line" into Israeli-controlled northern part of Gaza and "posed an immediate threat." Since the ceasefire, the Israeli army says it has carried out a number of attacks on Palestinians crossing the ceasefire lines.

The first phase of US President Donald Trump's 20-point peace plan took effect

October 10. The fighting stopped and dozens of hostages held in Gaza were exchanged for hundreds of Palestinians held in Israeli prison. Israel sent a delegation last week to Egypt for talks on returning the remains of the last hostage.

The next phase, which includes the deployment of an international security force in Gaza, formation of a new technocratic Government for the territory, disarmament of Hamas and an eventual withdrawal of Israeli forces from Gaza, has not yet begun. Arab and Western officials told The Associated Press on Friday that an international body overseeing the ceasefire, to be led by Trump himself, is expected to be appointed by the end of the year. In the long term, the plan also calls for a possible "pathway" to Palestinian independence.

Sheikh Mohammed said that even the upcoming phase should be "temporary" and that peace in the region could only take place with the eventual establishment of a Palestinian State — something that is opposed by Israel's hard-line Government.

"If we are just resolving what happened in Gaza, the catastrophe that happened in the last two years, it's not enough," he said. "There is a root for this conflict. And this conflict is not only about Gaza." He added: "It's about Gaza. It's about the West Bank. It's about the rights of the Palestinians for their state. We are hoping that we can work together with the US administration to achieve this vision at the end of the day." Turkey's Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan said there is a "big question" over the formation of an international security force for Gaza.

Bolsonaro's son says he will run for presidency of Brazil

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

■ Sao Paulo

Brazilian Senator Flávio Bolsonaro, the eldest son of former President Jair Bolsonaro, said on Friday that his father decided he should represent their political group and run for president in 2026. Bolsonaro was arrested last month and began serving a 27-year prison sentence after being convicted of attempting a coup. The far right leader has already been barred from running for office until 2030 as part of a separate process against him. "It is with great responsibility that I confirm the decision of Brazil's greatest political and moral leader, Jair Messias Bolsonaro, to entrust me with the mission of continuing our national project," Flávio Bolsonaro wrote on X. The office of Sen. Bolsonaro confirmed that he will challenge President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, who is running for a fourth nonconsecutive term.



Indian student dies from injuries in US house fire

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

■ New York

A 24-year-old Indian student in the US has died after suffering severe injuries in a house fire, according to the Indian mission. Sahaja Reddy Udumala was pursuing a Master's degree in Albany, New York. The Consulate General of India in New York said in a post on X on Friday (local time) that it is "deeply saddened by the untimely demise" of Udumala, who lost her life in the house fire incident in Albany. "Our thoughts and heartfelt condolences to her family during this difficult time," the Consulate said, adding that it is in touch with Udumala's family and is extending all possible assistance. The Albany Police Department said in a statement that its personnel and the Albany Fire Department responded to the house fire on the morning of December 4.







# Sudanese paramilitary drone attack kills 50

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
■ Cairo

A drone attack by the Sudanese paramilitary forces hit a kindergarten in south-central Sudan, killing 50 people, including 33 children, a doctors' group said. Paramedics on the scene in the town of Kalogi in South Kordofan state were targeted in "a second unexpected attack," Sudan Doctors' Network said in a statement late Friday. Emergency Lawyers, a rights group tracking violence against civilians in Sudan reported in a statement Saturday the second strike on paramedics treating survivors in Kalogi and said "a third civilian site near the previous two" was also attacked. The group condemned the attack, blaming the paramilitary group, the Rapid



Support Forces, or RSF, for the strikes, calling them "a flagrant violation of international humanitarian law, including the protection of civilians, especially children, and vital civilian infrastruc-

ture." The death toll is expected to be higher, but communication blackouts in the area have made it difficult to report casualties. Thursday's attack is the latest in the fighting

between the RSF, and the Sudanese military, who have been at war for over two years. It is now concentrating in the oil-rich Kordofan states."Killing children in their school is a horrific vio-

lation of children's rights," said UNICEF Representative for Sudan Sheldon Yett in a statement Friday. "Children should never pay the price of conflict," said Yett. He said UNICEF urges all parties "to stop these attacks immediately and allow safe, unhindered access for humanitarian assistance to reach those in desperate need." Hundreds of civilians were killed throughout the Kordofan states in the last few weeks as intensified fighting shifted from Darfur after the RSF took over of the besieged city of el-Fasher. Sudanese military aerial strikes on Sunday killed at least 48 people, mostly civilians, in Kauda, South Kordofan. UN Human Rights Chief Volker Türk warned that Kordofan could face new atrocities like those in el-Fasher. Separately, the RSF con-

demned in a statement Friday a drone strike on the Chad-Sudan border, accusing the Sudanese military of being behind it and posted a video showing billowing black smoke. This couldn't be independently verified and it is unclear whether there were casualties in this strike. There was no immediate comment from the Sudanese military. RSF's violent takeover of el-Fasher was marked with executions of civilians, rapes and sexual assaults, and other atrocities. Thousands escaped and thousands more are feared killed or trapped in the city. The RSF and the Sudanese military have been fighting for power over Sudan since 2023. More than 40,000 people were killed in the war, according to the World Health Organization, and 12 million displaced.

## Doctors postpone ex-PM Zia's travel abroad for treatment



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
■ Dhaka

The medical board treating critically ill Bangladesh's former prime minister Khaleda Zia on Saturday postponed her planned travel to London for an indefinite period, her personal physician said. The three-time premier Zia was scheduled to depart for London on Sunday after her plan to leave on Friday was postponed as an air ambulance offered by Qatar could not reach Dhaka due to technical issues. Media reports suggested Doha later rented an alternative aircraft from Germany. "The medical board thinks it is not appropriate for her to travel abroad at this moment," Dr AZM Zahid Hossain her personal physi-

cian and also a member of the party's policy-making standing committee, told reporters. He added that doctors continued their "highest-level efforts" to arrange Zia's treatment abroad, while a medical ambulance was fully ready to fly her abroad whenever the situation suits her travel. "Allah has cured her from even more serious conditions in the past. The medical board is confident that Begum Khaleda Zia will overcome her current physical complications," he said. BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir on Friday had said if everything went well, the air ambulance provided by Emir of Qatar Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani would arrive on Saturday to fly her to London on Sunday.

## 11 killed in mass shooting at South African bar

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
■ Cape town

A mass shooting carried out on Saturday by multiple suspects in an unlicensed bar near the South African capital left at least 11 people dead, police said. The victims included three children aged 3, 12 and 16. Another 14 people were wounded and taken to the hospital, according to a statement from the South African Police Services. Police didn't give details on the ages of those who were injured or their conditions. The shooting happened at a bar inside a hostel in the Saulsville township west of the administrative capital of Pretoria in the early hours of Saturday. Ten of the victims died at the scene and the 11th died at the hospital, police said. The children killed were a 3-year-old boy, a 12-year-old boy and a 16-year-old girl. Police said they were searching for three male suspects. "We are told that at least three unknown gunmen entered this hostel where a group of people were drinking and they started randomly shooting," police spokesperson Brig Athlenda Mathe told national broadcaster SABC. She said the motive for the killings was not clear. The shootings happened at around 4.15 am, she said, but police



were only alerted at 6 am. South Africa has one of the highest homicide rates in the world and recorded more than 26,000 homicides in 2024 — an average of more than 70 a day. Firearms are by far the leading cause of death in homicides. The country of 62 million people has relatively strict gun ownership laws, but many killings are committed with illegal guns, authorities say. There have been several mass shootings at bars — sometimes called shebeens or taverns

in South Africa — in recent years, including one that killed 16 people in the Johannesburg township of Soweto in 2022. On the same day, four people were killed in a mass shooting at a bar in another province. Mathe said that mass shootings at unlicensed bars were becoming a serious problem and police had shut down more than 11,000 illegal taverns between April and September this year and arrested more than 18,000 people for involvement in

illegal liquor sales. Recent mass killings in South Africa have not been confined to bars, however. Police said 18 people were killed, 15 of them women, in mass shootings minutes apart at two houses on the same road in a rural part of Eastern Cape province in September last year. Seven men were arrested for those shootings and face multiple charges of murder, while police recovered three AK-style assault rifles they believe were used in the shootings.

## 12 arrests in Minneapolis as part of immigration operation

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
■ Minneapolis

Federal agents have arrested a dozen people in Minneapolis since launching an enforcement operation this week primarily focused on Somali immigrants living unlawfully in the US, but fewer than half of those detained are Somali. US Immigration and Customs Enforcement said Thursday that agents had arrested 12 people. Of those, six are Mexican nationals, five are from Somalia and one is from El Salvador. Minneapolis-St Paul, which has the nation's largest Somali community, is the latest area targeted by the Trump administration for mass deportations, following operations in Chicago, Los Angeles and Charlotte, North Carolina.

CRACKDOWN SPARKS CRITICISM; OFFICIALS DENOUNCE RHETORIC, VOW SOMALI COMMUNITY PROTECTION

This week, immigration authorities have also arrived in New Orleans, where officials said they intend to arrest up to 5,000 people. A statement from DHS Assistant Secretary Tricia McLaughlin called the 12 people federal agents arrested some of the "worst of the worst criminal illegal aliens". Eight of them had been charged or convicted of crimes, including assault, fraud, domestic violence and driving under the influence, according to ICE. President Donald Trump

recently targeted Somali immigrants in public remarks, calling them "garbage" and saying "they contribute nothing". He also blamed Democratic Governor Tim Walz for allowing alleged fraud in government programs to happen on his watch, which a conservative publication claimed was funneling money to a Somali militant group. The crackdown has drawn intense criticism from local and state officials who have denounced Trump's rhetoric and pledged to protect the Somali community. Minneapolis Mayor Jacob Frey said city police would not participate in federal immigration enforcement. DHS' McLaughlin accused Frey and Walz of not enforcing immigration laws and endangering citizens.

## Russia unleashes a massive drone, missile attack on Ukraine

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
■ Kyiv

Russia unleashed a major missile and drone barrage on Ukraine overnight into Saturday, after US and Ukrainian officials said they'll meet on Saturday for a third day of talks aimed at ending the nearly four-year-old war. Following talks that made progress on a security framework for postwar Ukraine, the two sides also offered the sober assessment that any "real progress toward any agreement" ultimately will depend "on Russia's readiness to show serious commitment to long-term peace." The statement from US special envoy Steve Witkoff, Trump's son-in-law Jared Kushner as well as Ukrainian negotiators Rustem Umerov and Andriy Hnatov came after they met for a second day in Florida on Friday. They offered only broad brushstrokes about the



progress they say has been made as Trump pushes Kyiv and Moscow to agree to a US-mediated proposal to end the war. Russia used 653 drones and 51 missiles in the wide-reaching overnight attack on Ukraine, which triggered air raid alerts across the country and came as Ukraine marked Armed Forces Day, the country's air

force said Saturday morning. Ukrainian forces shot down and neutralized 585 drones and 30 missiles, the air force said, adding that 29 locations were struck. At least eight people were wounded in the attacks, Ukrainian Minister of Internal Affairs Ihor Klymenko said. Among these, at least

three people were wounded in the Kyiv region, according to local officials. Drone sightings were reported as far west as Ukraine's Lviv region. Russia carried out a "massive missile-drone attack" on power stations and other energy infrastructure in several Ukrainian regions, Ukraine's national energy operator, Ukrenergo,

wrote on Telegram. Ukraine's Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant temporarily lost all off-site power overnight, the International Atomic Energy Agency said Saturday, citing its Director General Rafael Mariano Grossi. The plant is in an area under Russian control since early in Moscow's invasion of Ukraine and is not in service, but it needs reliable power to cool its six shut-down reactors and spent fuel, to avoid any catastrophic nuclear incidents. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said that energy facilities were the main targets of the attacks, also noting that a drone strike had "burned down" the train station in the city of Fastiv, located in the Kyiv region. Russia's Ministry of Defence said its air defences had shot down 116 Ukrainian drones over Russian territory overnight into Saturday.

## Protesters held for smearing custard on King Charles jewels



ASSOCIATED PRESS  
■ London

Four protesters were arrested on Saturday after splattering food on the case of a priceless diamond-encrusted crown at the Tower of London. The Crown Jewels display was closed after members of a group called Take Back Power smeared apple crumble and poured yellow custard — two staples on British dessert menus — on the display case containing the Imperial State Crown worn by King Charles III during his coronation in 2023 and during his speech to open Parliament in 2024. The Metropolitan Police said the protesters were arrested on suspicion of criminal damage. The group that advocates for a permanent citizens' assembly and wants to tax extreme wealth said two of its members

had thrown the food and two others were also arrested and taken into "custard-y." The act of civil disobedience is one of many that has targeted prized treasures and artworks to draw attention to a political cause. Petroleum protesters were imprisoned last year for tossing a can of tomato soup on glass protecting Van Gogh's "Sunflowers" at London's National Gallery. Video of the stunt at the Tower of London, once a royal palace also known as the prison where Anne Boleyn, Thomas More and others were executed, showed two protesters attacking the case as other visitors stepped back in shock. After an employee intervened and radioed for help, the two demonstrators unfurled a sign saying, "Democracy has crumbled."

## KPK Govt approves closure of related to May 23 incidents



ASSOCIATED PRESS  
■ Peshawar

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provincial (KPK) Government has approved the closure of all "politically motivated" cases registered in connection with the May 2023 violent incidents that erupted following the arrest of former Pakistan prime minister Imran Khan. The decision in connection with the cases registered on May 9 and 10, 2023 was taken during the provincial Government's cabinet meeting held under the chairmanship of Chief

Minister Sohail Afridi late on Friday. "The cabinet termed the cases filed on May 9 and 10 as politically motivated and lacking evidence, and therefore granted approval for their withdrawal," Special Assistant to the Chief Minister on Information, Shafi Jan, said. On May 9, 2023, workers belonging to Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party vandalised a dozen military installations, including the Jinnah House (Lahore Corps Commander House), Mianwali Airbase and the ISI building in Faisalabad, some 130 kms from Lahore.



## Mexico freezes Miss Universe co-owner's bank accounts

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
■ Mexico City

Mexico's anti-money laundering office has frozen the bank accounts of the Mexican co-owner of Miss Universe as part of an investigation into drugs, fuel and arms trafficking, an official said. The country's Financial Intelligence Unit, which oversees the fight against money laundering, froze Mexican businessman Raúl Rocha Cantú's bank accounts in Mexico, a federal official told The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to comment on the investigation. The action against Rocha Cantú adds to mounting controversies for the Miss Universe organization. Last week, a court in Thailand issued an arrest warrant for the Thai co-owner of the Miss Universe Organization in connection with a fraud case and this year's competition.



## US to expand travel ban to more than 30 countries

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
■ Washington

The Trump administration will be expanding its ban on travel for citizens of certain countries to more than 30, Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem said, in the latest restriction to come since a man from Afghanistan was accused of shooting two National Guard members. The expansion would build on a travel ban already announced in June by the Republican administration, which barred travel to the U.S. for citizens from 12 countries and restricted access to the U.S. for people from seven others. In a social media post earlier this week, Noem had suggested more countries would be included. Noem, who spoke late Thursday in an interview with Fox News Channel host Laura Ingraham, would not provide further details, saying President Donald Trump was considering which countries would be included.



BRIEFLY

LILLE BEATS MARSEILLE IN LIGUE 1



Lille gave Marseille its first Ligue 1 loss in six weeks after Ethan Mbappé's goal for a 1-0 win. Fourth-placed Lille tied third-placed Marseille on points in the table. Marseille was unbeaten in six league games but it went behind in the 10th minute thanks to some hesitant defending. A mix-up between goalkeeper and the defense allowed Mbappé to steal in and poke in Nabil Bentaleb's long pass. Lille's third straight win boosted its fine home record to 16 wins and only two defeats in its last 23 Ligue 1 matches. The defeat was Marseille's first in the league since Oct. 25 against Lens. Marseille struggled on a chilly night in Lille and did not shoot on target until the 76th. Brest notched a third successive win after beating Monaco 1-0. Kamory Doumbia headed the only goal after 28 minutes.Brest's Ludovic Ajorque was sent off on the hour mark for a bad tackle on Lamine Camara but the team held on and rose to ninth place.

GILL CLEARED TO PLAY FIRST T20I AGAINST SOUTH AFRICA



India's T20I vice-captain Shubman Gill has been cleared by the Sports Science team of the BCCI's Centre of Excellence (CoE) to play the opening T20I against South Africa after successfully completing his rehabilitation from a neck injury sustained during the Kolkata Test. Gill was selected in the squad subject to fitness and had to undergo all rehabilitation and skill-training protocols required for Return To Play (RTP). "Shubman Gill has successfully completed his rehabilitation at CoE and has met the requisite criteria to be declared fit for all formats of the game," a communication from the CoE has gone to the team management's Sports Science and Medicine (SSM) team, comprising physio Kamlesh Jain, strength and conditioning coach Adrian Le Roux and sports doctor Dr Charles.

IPBL: Hyderabad Royals stun Chennai Super Warriors

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
■ New Delhi

Hyderabad Royals staged a comeback from 0-2 down to topple Chennai Super Warriors 4-2 in Qualifier 1, sealing their spot in the final of the Indian Pickleball League (IPBL) on Saturday.

A resurgent Mumbai Smashers then defeated Lucknow Leopards in the Eliminator with an identical score to advance to Qualifier 2. A three-way tie for fourth meant a Play-In preceded the knockouts, with the Global Pickleball Federation President Javier Regalado in attendance.

With Grand Rallies played to 25, Mumbai Smashers edged Capital Warriors Gurgaon 25-24 in the opener, then backed it up with a composed 25-22 win over Bengaluru Blasters to secure fourth place and seal their spot in the playoffs.

In the final placement rally, Bengaluru defeated Gurgaon 25-21 to finish fifth.



In the Qualifier, first-placed Chennai Super Warriors faced the second-ranked Hyderabad Royals for a direct ticket to the final. Mitch Hargreaves gave Chennai the perfect launch, winning the men's singles 15-11 before teaming with Harsh Mehta to repeat the scoreline in the men's doubles for a 2-0 lead. The women's singles brought the headline show-down – unbeaten Roos van Reek versus Megan Fudge.

Fudge came out firing, dominating the kitchen line to lead 7-3, but van Reek clawed back to 7-7. But Fudge closed

out a 15-13 upset, handing van Reek her first singles loss of the league.

Hyderabad carried that momentum into the women's doubles, where Fudge and Shreya Chakraborty held off a late Chennai push to win 15-13 and level the tie.

Hyderabad rose to the moment in a tense Grand Rally, overturning a brief lead for Chennai to prevail 21-17 and book their place in the final, sending their opponent to Qualifier 2. Fudge and Newell were named the Players of the Tie.

Russell led third practice ahead of Norris and Verstappen, with Piastri fifth. Hamilton lost the rear of the Ferrari coming out of Turn 9 and spun full circle before sliding into the barriers, bringing out the red flag. He stepped out of the car and picked up some of the debris himself.

Hamilton owns F1 records for most wins (104) and pole positions (104) but called his own performance “terrible” this season. The 40-year-old Briton won a sprint race in China in March, but nothing else this season. He has not even been on the podium in a main race this campaign.

Norris had a scare during third practice when he narrowly avoided running into the back of Yuki Tsunoda's Red Bull, swerving around him just in time.

Toward the end of practice, Mercedes driver Kimi Antonelli lurched into the side of Tsunoda's Red Bull in the pit lane as Tsunoda was driving past him.

Norris showed good pace to lead Friday's first two practice sessions ahead of Verstappen. **Title showdown** Taking the pole is crucial in Abu Dhabi, where overtaking is hard on the 58-lap circuit.

Every driver starting on pole has won the race since 2015. The last not to do so was Nico Rosberg a year earlier, when he was beaten

Bhaker (578) came in sixth, while Sainyam (573), the 2023 junior world champion, barely managed to make the final after finishing eighth in qualification.

However, the final saw the 21-year-old Sainyam in a different zone altogether as she led the field for a major part of the final before conceding the top spot to Suruchi after shooting four below-average scores of 9.5 each in the elimination round.

Suruchi, the daughter of a Havildar hailing from Jhajjar — the same district as Bhaker — earned Euro 5,000 for her effort, while Sainyam received a pay cheque of Euro 4,000.

India's former world champion Rudranksh Patil and Paris Olympic finalist Arjun Babuta missed out on medals in men's 10m air rifle, finishing fourth and sixth respectively.

Elavenil Valarivan also came up short in women's 10m air rifle, finishing ninth in the qualification round, failing to make the eight-shooter final.

Rudranksh, the 2022 world champion who has shown good form this season by clinching the World Cup gold

India need to lift its game to prevail over Germany in FIH Junior WC semifinals

SAUMOJYOTI S CHOUDHURY  
■ Chennai

Eyeing to reclaim the crown after nine years, the Indian men's hockey team will have to raise its game by leaps and bounds if it hopes to get past seven-time champions and title holders Germany in the semifinal of the FIH Junior World Cup on Sunday.

Two-time champions India last won the title way back in 2016 in Lucknow.

The Indians had a relatively easy pool outing, scoring 29 goals and conceding none against lowly sides like Chile, Oman and Switzerland to breeze into the quarterfinals.

But the PR Sreejesh-coached side faced their first real test against Belgium in the quarterfinals. India had to dig deep into their reservoir to eke out a 4-3 shoot-out win against Belgium after both the sides were locked 2-2 at the end of regulation time.

It took a superlative effort from goalkeeper Prinedeep Singh to keep India in the hunt. Prinedeep not only made some fantastic saves in the regulation 60 minutes but also effected two brilliant saves in the shoot-out to take India forward.

India's defence was hardly tested in the pool stages, but against Belgium got a taste of what is awaiting for them in the knockout stages of the tournament against quality opponents.

Sreejesh was not at all happy with the team's performance against Belgium despite the win and asked his players to keep their “feet on the ground”.

“I sweetly made them understand that it was not the final. To keep your feet on the ground is most important and we need to focus on the next match,” Sreejesh said after the Belgium match. He listed the areas which



in Buenos Aires, came into the star-studded final after finishing fourth in the qualification round with a score of 631.9.

Babuta entered the eight-shooter final after finishing third 633.3 even as double Olympic gold medallist at the Paris Olympics, China's Sheng Lihao led the field tallying 637.7, while former world champion Victor Lindgren of Sweden was second with a score of 633.5.

The top-class final saw Rudranksh shoot just one below-par score of 9.8 in his second shot of the first series, which made the difference in the end as the Indian tallied

209.9. Lindgren took the gold and Euro 5,000 in prize cheque with a score of 253.0, while Lihao bagged the silver (252.6) and Euro 4,000 in prize money.

Another stalwart, Hungary's Istvan Peni won the bronze.

Elavenil, fresh from her World Championships bronze medal in Cairo, could not make the eight-shooter final as she finished ninth in qualification with a score of 630.

World Championships bronze medallist in trap, Zorawar Sandhu was placed ninth among 12 shooters after he notched up 70/75 on day one of competition.



India need to improve going ahead if they desire to reclaim the title.

“We expect the same (performance) from Germany too in the next match. So we have to raise our level according to the occasion. What we need to do is score and that's the most important thing,” he said.

“Another important thing is to focus on the mistakes you have committed. What is easy

is to keep in your mind what good things you have done in the match but what is important is to learn from the mistakes we have committed inside opponent's D and how to get more outcome.”

The Indian forwards, who shone bright in the pool stages against weaker opponents, fell flat against Belgium despite creating numerous scoring chances. And come Sunday,

Argentina will open their World Cup defence against Algeria

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
■ Washington

All around the globe, eyes focused on the stage where World Cup paths were sorted, nations' names chosen one by one in a draw that determined Argentina and Lionel Messi will start their title defence against Algeria.

Twenty-seven months after qualifying began, teams from five-time champion Brazil to newcomers Cape Verde, Curaçao, Jordan and Uzbekistan learned their group-stage opponents in the expanded 48-nation, 104-game tournament that starts June 11 in the United States, Canada and Mexico.

“Exciting for the island, for the people there. They're so proud,” said Dick Advocaat, the 78-year-old Dutchman leading Curaçao, a Caribbean country with a population of 150,000, into an opener against four-time champion Germany.

On a day that began with snow falling on the nation's capital, the ceremony at the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts included U.S.



Inter Miami forward Lionel Messi, centre, does drills during a training session for Saturday's MLS Cup soccer match against the Vancouver Whitecaps

President Donald Trump receiving a newly created peace prize awarded by FIFA, soccer's governing body. Trump, Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum and Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney picked up plastic spheres containing their own nations' names from bowls — Sheinbaum drew more applause from those gathered in the hall than Trump.

FIFA's lead-in show, featuring music and stars from sports and entertainment, was almost as long as a 90-minute soccer match, with the actual draw starting nearly 1 1/2 hours into the proceedings. Tom Brady, Shaquille O'Neal, Aaron Judge and Wayne Gretzky took part. New Zealand was the last orb picked.

“Just watching Americans on stage and the president giving speeches and performances, it made it feel like an American event already,” said U.S. Midfielder Tyler Adams, who watched from England,

where he plays for Premier League club Bournemouth. “And I think we know the expectation of what it's going to be like when we go there and there's going to be half-time shows and there's going to be celebrities and the big draw of what America brings to sports.”

Three-time champion Argentina opens on June 16 at either Kansas City, Missouri, or Santa Clara, California. Specific sites for all group stage games and kickoff times were to be announced Saturday. The Albiceleste then face Austria and Jordan in Group J. Argentina surprisingly lost its 2022 opener to Saudi Arabia before going on to win the final over France on penalty kicks.

Messi, who turns 39 during the tournament, hasn't committed yet to playing but it would be shocking if he decided against appearing in a record sixth World Cup. “We are just awaiting for him to decide,” coach Lionel Scaloni said. “In principle, everything is going well.”

The U.S., which reached the semifinals at the inaugu-

al World Cup in 1930 and the quarterfinals in 2002, starts Group D against Paraguay on June 12 in Inglewood, California. The Americans play Australia six days later at Seattle, then face Turkey, Romania, Slovakia or Kosovo — one will emerge next year from playoffs — on June 25 back at SoFi Stadium.

Mexico hosts the tournament opener at Azteca Stadium in Mexico City on June 11 against South Africa in Group A, a rematch of the 1-1 draw at the 2010 opener in Johannesburg. El Tri then meets South Korea and closes the first round against the Czech Republic, Ireland, Denmark or North Macedonia. Forty-two of the teams have been determined; 22 are competing in playoffs for six berths that will be decided March 31.

Winners and second-place nations from the 12 groups advance to the new round of 32 along with the top eight third-place teams. All games from the quarterfinals on will be in the U.S., culminating in the July 19 final at East Rutherford, New Jersey.

by his then-Mercedes teammate Hamilton.

Norris will win the title if he's on the podium in Abu Dhabi. Even if Verstappen wins, the Dutchman needs Norris to be fourth or lower. If Piastri wins, he requires Norris to finish outside the top five.

**McLaren rues errors** Norris had the chance to wrap up the title at last week's Qatar Grand Prix but a botched strategy call by McLaren handed Verstappen the win, boosting his chances of a fifth straight title to equal Michael Schumacher's feat with Ferrari from 2000-04.

Verstappen's victory in Qatar was his 70th overall. His title chances were suddenly improved after Norris and

Piastri were disqualified in Las Vegas. Tense title race After winning the Dutch GP on Aug. 31 for his seventh victory, Piastri led by Norris by 34 points and was 104 ahead of Verstappen, who had won just two races.

Piastri, who is looking to become the first Australian champion in 45 years, hasn't won in eight races since his Zandvoort win.

When Norris won the Brazil GP sprint race in early November, he moved 39 ahead of Verstappen with four races to go.

Verstappen also qualified in 16th for the main race in Sao Paulo and said he could “forget about” winning the title at that point.



# Jaiswal's ton powers India to series win over South Africa

G UNNIKRISHNAN  
■ Visakhapatnam

Yashasvi Jaiswal reeled off an unbeaten maiden ODI hundred, carrying India to a nine-wicket victory in the third and final one-day and a 2-1 series win against South Africa on Saturday.

It was always a case of the margin of victory once Jaiswal (116 not out, 121 balls) and his senior opening partner Rohit Sharma (75, 73 balls) stitched 155 runs in 25.5 overs, and it turned precisely so as India finished with 271 for one in 39.5 overs, chasing 271.

Virat Kohli contributed a classy 65 not out off 45 deliveries. Quinton de Kock made a refined 106 off 89 balls, his 23rd ton in ODIs, but it remained a shiny footnote as Indian batters dictated the course with authority.

Jaiswal was not comfortable initially in his innings but the assured presence of Rohit

at the other end was a massive blessing for him.

Rohit guided the under-study, who was playing only his fourth ODI, through some early turbulent phases, and also did the bulk of the scoring. The 38-year-old reached his fifty in 54 balls, tranquil by his standards but those patented, magical swivel pull shots, three of them sailed for sixes, lent the innings a touch of aggression.

It enabled Jaiswal to collect runs unhurriedly, and walked to fifty in 75 balls. But once he reached his fifty, the left-hander grew in confidence and opened a lot more, unbuckling some of those drives and cuts that he carefully avoided in the early phase of his innings.

Rohit, who became the fourth Indian batter to reach 20000 international runs during his knock after Sachin Tendulkar, Rahul Dravid and Kohli, looked set for another

hundred. But an ill-timed sweep off left-arm spinner Keshav Maharaj cut short his stay. But that didn't deter Jaiswal, who, accompanied by Kohli, kept India's innings moving.

The 23-year-old reached the coveted three-figure mark in 111 balls with a single off pacer Corbin Bosch and immediately tore his helmet away to slip into an energetic celebration — a combination of sprint, jump, roar and punch in the air.

Jaiswal and a typically assertive Kohli added 156 runs for the second wicket as India calmly went past the target to whip some frenzy among a nearly 27000-strong crowd.

Earlier, a largely disciplined bowling effort also played its part in keeping South Africa to a manageable total, an effort led by pacer Prasidh Krishna (4/66) and Kuldeep Yadav (4/41). After Arshdeep



India's Yashasvi Jaiswal celebrating his century during the third ODI cricket match of a series between India and South Africa, at ACA-VDCA Cricket Stadium in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh

Singh sent back Ryan Rickelton early, De Kock (106, 89 balls, 8x4, 6x4) struck his seventh century against India and put on 113 runs off 124 balls with skipper Temba Bavuma (48, 67 balls) as the visitors moved to a healthy position.

De Kock was severe on Prasidh (4/66), who erred on length continuously in his first spell (2-0-27-0). The left-hander biffed the pacer for 6, 6, 4 in his second over to milk 18 runs. The 32-year-old quickly pounced on anything that was short, and pacers Prasidh and Harshit Rana offered him plenty of feed on his pet areas.

De Kock moved to fifty in 42 balls, and never let the tempo down reaching his hundred in 79 balls.

India found temporary relief when Ravindra Jadeja induced a false slash from Bavuma (48, 67 balls) to get caught by Kohli at point.

TALKS ABOUT SPLIT COACHING  
SURPRISING, SAYS GAUTAM GAMBHIR

Visakhapatnam: India head coach Gautam Gambhir on Saturday came down heavily on theories doing the rounds on social media about split coaching, terming them "surprising" and asked those opinion-makers to stay "in their domain."

After India's recent 0-2 Test series defeat against South Africa, some influential cricketing names, including an IPL team owner, asked the BCCI to consider appointing separate coaches for red-ball and white ball formats.

"Look, there were a lot of talks because the results didn't go in our favour (in Test series). But the most surprising thing is that not once did any media or journalist write that our first Test match (in Kolkata)

was played without the captain (Shubman Gill), who didn't bat in both innings (because of a neck injury)," Gambhir said during the post-match press meet after India clinched the ODI series against SA 2-1. Gambhir said such opinion makers should refrain from making remarks that have no direct connection with on-field cricketing matters.

"Some people also said things that have nothing to do with cricket. An IPL team owner (Parth Jindal of Delhi Capitals on X) also wrote about split coaching.

"So this is surprising. It's very important for people to stay in their domain. Because if we don't go into someone's domain, then they also don't have the right to come into our domain," Gambhir added.

## Feeling really free in mind: Virat after match-winning effort

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
■ Visakhapatnam

Indian batting mainstay Virat Kohli on Saturday said he is "feeling really free" mentally after producing another match-winning effort to help India clinch the three-match ODI series, in which he finished as the leading run-scorer with 302 runs.

Kohli scored a rapid 45-ball 65 not out in the third ODI after hitting centuries in the first two games to extend his tally to a record 53, as India crushed South Africa by nine wickets to win the third ODI comprehensively.

"Honestly, playing the way I have in the series is the most satisfying thing for me. I feel really free in my mind. I haven't played like this in 2-3 years," Kohli told the broadcaster after the match.

"I know when I can bat like that in the middle, it helps the team a long way. Makes me confident, any situation in the middle, I can handle that and bring it in favour of the team," he added.

Kohli said self-doubt is inevitable for a batter, irrespective of experience, but felt it helps in overall improvement.

"When you play for that long — 15-16 years — you do



India's Virat Kohli playing a shot during the third ODI cricket match of a series between India and South Africa, at ACA-VDCA Cricket Stadium in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh

doubt yourself. Especially as a batter when one mistake can get you out. It's a whole journey of getting better and getting better as a person along the

way. It improves you as a person and it improves temperament as well," he said.

"I'm just glad that I'm still able to contribute to the team. When I play freely, I

know I can hit sixes. There's always levels you can always unlock," he added.

Adjudged the player of the series, Kohli, who topped the batting charts with 302 runs at an average of 151 with two tons and a fifty, said the hundred at Ranchi was the most special knock among the three.

"The first one at Ranchi, because I hadn't played a game since Australia. Just how your energy is on the day, Ranchi is very special for me and I'm very grateful as to how these three games have gone," he said.

India captain KL Rahul said it was important for bowlers to get a break from bowling in wet outfield after dew factor influenced the play in first two matches.

"We got tough conditions in the first two games. So, it was good to give the bowlers a break in a wet outfield. (The surface) was still a really good wicket, what we were able to do was pick up wickets in bunches," he said after India bowled out South Africa for 270.

India's win was set up by Prasidh Krishna (4/66) and Kuldeep Yadav (4/41) in the first half of the game.

"We were able to squeeze in the middle. Prasidh picked up those two or three wickets in a spell which was

really crucial and then Kuldeep coming in, picking two wickets in an over. In ODI cricket, that's how you try and contain teams," he said.

South Africa captain Temba Bavuma said his side "gifted" wickets to India as they slipped from 168 for two to 270 all-out.

"We would have wanted to make it a lot more exciting today. From a batting point of view, we didn't have enough runs. It tends to get easier under lights. Probably should have been smarter as we gifted wickets," he said.

"The Indian team showed their quality - kudos to them. We could have been a lot more smarter, if you look the first two ODIs, we did that. Probably today, the conditions were different. You never want to get bowled out in a 50-over game."

Bavuma, however, was happy to see that South Africa was able to put pressure on the Indian spinners in the ODI series.

"We have definitely grown, we speak a lot about how we want to play," he said.

"India have quality spinners and it's never easy to put them under pressure. For large parts of the series we did that. I think if there were 10 boxes, we ticked 6 or 7 of them."

## Starc torments England with bat and ball in second Ashes test

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
■ Brisbane (Australia)

Mitchell Starc has been menacing England with the ball in this Ashes series. Now he's doing damage with the bat, too. At stumps on Day 3 of the second test, England was teetering on 134-6 in its second innings and still needed to score 43 runs to make Australia bat again.

Starc was voted player of the match for his 10-wicket haul in Australia's thumping eight-wicket win in the series opener at Perth last month.

Now he's in line for another award in the day-night test in Brisbane. After taking six wickets in England's first innings of 334 on Days 1 and 2, Starc scored an innings-high 77 as Australia responded with 511 on Saturday afternoon and then took two wickets in the night session.

England's hopes now rest on skipper Ben Stokes, who will resume Sunday on 4.

Starc's day outThe 35-year-old Starc made England's bowlers toil all afternoon in sunny, subtropical conditions at the Gabba as he led Australia to a 177-run first-innings lead.

With the lights on and the pink ball starting to move



Australia's Mitchell Starc appeals successfully for the wicket of England's Joe Root, left, during the second Ashes cricket test match between Australia and England in Brisbane

around on the third night of the match, Starc took the crucial wicket of top-ranked Joe Root (15) to have England reeling at 123-5, still 54 runs in arrears.

He added the wicket of Jamie Smith in his next over as England slipped to 128-6.

Scott Boland and Michael Neser combined to take the first four wickets for Australia after Starc, for the first time in the series, didn't take a wicket in the first over of the innings.

Boland removed Ben Duckett (15) and Harry Brook (15) and Neser took two sharp

return catches to dismiss Ollie Pope (26) and Zak Crawley (44).

Neser later credited Starc with being the greatest left-arm bowler of all time.

"He's a special player," Neser said. "He doesn't like to admit it, but he is the GOAT — the greatest lefty of all time."

"He does it with the ball, the bat, and to be next to him, witnessing what he does, is just amazing."

Starc and the bowling attack will be aiming for four quick wickets Sunday to give Australia a 2-0 lead in the five-match series.



Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma felicitated Simu Das, whose outstanding performance helped India win the Women's Blind T20 World Cup 2025 and presented her a ₹10 lakh cheque as a token of support for her sporting career

## West Indies draw with New Zealand in first test

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
■ Christchurch

Justin Greaves made an unbeaten 202 in a 230-run partnership with Kumar Roach as the West Indies won an endurance contest against a threadbare New Zealand attack on Saturday to draw the first test after being set 531 to win.

The West Indies' second innings of 457-6 was the highest fourth-innings score since tests have been limited to five days. At times they flirted with the highest winning run chase in history Saturday until with six wickets down in the last session Greaves and Roach

finally put up the shutters.

Greaves batted for almost 9 1-2 hours, first in a 196-run partnership with Shai Hope, who made 140 before being only of only two West Indies batters dismissed on the final day. Roach, who finished 58 not out, faced 233 balls to add a half century to his five-wicket bag in the New Zealand second innings.

"Resilient is the word we've thrown around in the dressing room a lot so for me to to there at the end of the day was really important. Anything for the team at the end of the day," Greaves said.

"It's a special, special day for me, a special day for the team. We were pretty much



up against it."

At the same time, New Zealand's heavily depleted attack toiled through part of the fourth day and all of the final day with only two fit

seamers, both novices, a spin bowling allrounder and a part-time spinner. New Zealand lacked the armory on a flat pitch to take the six wickets it needed on the fifth

day to win the match and take a 1-0 lead in the three-match series. After injuries to the attack spearhead Matt Henry and to medium pace allrounder Nathan Smith, the only fit pacers New Zealand had were Jacob Duffy and Zak Foulkes, both playing in their first test at home and only the second test of their careers.

New Zealand seemed poised to complete a convincing first-test victory on the fourth day when, after setting the West Indies a mammoth total to win, it had the tourists 72-4 early in the second session.

Greaves and Roach gave only a couple of chances to the field in all of the final day.

## Goa beat Jammu & Kashmir in Syed Mushtaq Ali T20 Trophy

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
■ Kolkata

Skipper Suyash Prabhudessai led from the front with an unbeaten 28-ball 51 as Goa handed a seven-wicket defeat to Jammu and Kashmir in their Syed Mushtaq Ali T20 Trophy's Group B clash on Saturday.

Goa were also bolstered by a fine 44-ball 59 with eight fours and a six by Kashyap Bakhale in the chase as they responded with 167 for three in 19 overs after keeping Jammu and Kashmir to 161 for six earlier.

Goa used as many as six bowling options and it was Shubham Tari who was the pick among them, returning 4-0-30-3, while Deepak Gaonkar and Vikash Singh claimed one wicket apiece.

At the iconic Eden Gardens here, J&K batters Yawer Hasan (48) and skipper Shubham Khajuria (45) made



key contributions, while Abdul Samad provided a late surge with a nine-ball 22 which included two fours and as many sixes.

J&K pacer Auqib Nabi and Sunil Kumar bowled identical spells of 1/31 but could not avert a defeat for their side.

At the Jadavpur University Ground, Bihar suffered a crushing seven-wicket defeat to Hyderabad who won a low scoring match with more than eight overs to

spare. Teenage batting sensation Vaibhav Sooryavanshi fell for a run-a-ball 11 as Bihar could not find any momentum with the bat. Piyush Singh scored 34 with the fours and Bipin Saurabh hit three late sixes to make 31 not out, as they crawled to 132 for eight. In reply, Tanmay Agarwal cracked 11 fours and a six to make 67 not out off 42 balls as Hyderabad responded with 134 for three in 12.5 overs.

JHARKHAND BEAT TN BY 28 RUNS; SAURASHTRA EKE OUT ONE-RUN WIN OVER KARNATAKA

Ahmedabad: Strong fifties from Kumar Kushagra and Virat Singh were complemented by a disciplined bowling effort as Jharkhand defeated Tamil Nadu by 28 runs in their Elite Group D match of the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy on Saturday. Asked to bat, Jharkhand made a woeful start and slipped to 29 for 2 in the fifth over before Kushagra (84 off 48 balls) and Virat (72 off 39 balls) stitched together a 120-run stand to take the innings close to the 150 mark in the 15th over. Virat and Anukul Roy then provided the late acceleration to propel Jharkhand to a strong 207 for 3. Kushagra struck five fours and as many sixes, while Virat's innings was laced with 10 boundaries and two sixes.

In reply, Tamil Nadu stayed in contention in the first half of the chase, with Sai Sudharsan (64 off 42 balls) anchoring the effort as they reached 124 for 2 in the 14th over.

However, Sudharsan's run-out in the same over triggered a collapse, and Tamil Nadu failed to recover, finishing at 179 for 7. Sushant Mishra (2 for 51) and Bal Krishna (2 for 29) picked up two wickets apiece. Saurashtra edge out Karnataka by one run.

In another match, Saurashtra registered their narrowest T20 victory in terms of runs, edging Karnataka by one run.

Battling first, Saurashtra rode on collective contributions, with Vishvaraj Jadeja (40) and Siddhant Rana (42) leading the way as they posted 178 for 8.

## Puducherry stun Bengal by 81 runs

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
■ Hyderabad

Spinners Jayant Yadav and Sidak Singh outshone out-of-favour India pacer Mohammed Shami with four and three wickets respectively as Puducherry stunned Bengal by 81 runs in a Group C match of the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy on Saturday.

Electing to field first, Bengal restricted Puducherry to 177 for 5 with veteran Shami taking three wickets for 34 runs from his four overs. He was well supported by off-spinner Wittrick Chatterjee (2/53) while pacer Akash Deep went wicketless.

For Puducherry, captain Aman Khan top-scored with a strokeful 40-ball 74, studded with five fours and seven sixes, while Jashwanth Shreeram contributed 45.

Chasing 178 for a win, Bengal were bowled out for 96 in just 13.5 overs, with off-

spinner Jayant taking four wickets for 28 runs from his four overs, while left-arm spinner Sidak returned with stunning figures of 3 for 9 from his three overs.

Adil Ayub Tunda and Aman got one wicket each.

For Bengal, Karan Lal top-scored with 40 off 23 balls while his opening partner Abhishek Porel and captain Abhimanyu Easwaran made 11 and 12 respectively. All other Bengal batters could not reach double digit figures.

Abhishek shines again with a half century

World No 1 T20 batter Abhishek Sharma shone yet again in Punjab's 73-run thrashing of Services.

Opening with Prabhsimran Singh after Punjab were asked to bat, Abhishek smashed 62 off 34 balls with the help of eight fours and three sixes to guide his side to 233 for 6 in 20 overs.

Against Puducherry on

Thursday, Abhishek had smashed a nine-ball-34 and then taken 3 for 23 with his left-arm spin in Punjab's 54-run win.

Prabhsimran made 50 off 28 balls while Naman Dhir contributed 54 off just 22 deliveries at No 4 as Punjab made merry in their innings.

Punjab bowlers then complemented their batting colleagues' top show, shooting Services out for 160 in 19.4 overs.

Just like in the previous match, Abhishek took two wickets for eight runs from his two overs. Sanvir Singh and Harpreet Brar also got two wickets apiece to derail the Services run chase.

In another Day/Night match, Haryana won by eight runs against Baroda who were without Hardik Pandya.

Opting to field first, Baroda restricted Haryana to 174 for 7 with Atit Sheth taking two wickets for 48 runs.



# Shaadi Season Shenanigans

Invitations pile up, playlists change, and suddenly the perfect outfit becomes non-negotiable, says SAKSHI PRIYA

Wedding season is back — love is in the air and every street feels like it's playing its own wedding band. It's the moment when everyone begins searching for the look, the feeling, the "it dress" that captures who they are. Brides linger over fabric swatches, grooms surprise themselves by caring about pocket details, and families hope for outfits that feel unforgettable. Within this celebratory mood, designers are interpreting weddings in ways that feel personal rather than performative.

Taraasa by Frontier Raas presents Destination Bridal 2025 — *Past, Present, Forever* as a thoughtful narrative rooted in emotion. Creative Director Gaurang Batra observes that today's bride seeks connection — she chooses outfits that reflect her voice and values rather than rules. The collection moves from heritage ivories and soft shimmers to a classic red lehenga. Handwoven and light, it is created for brides who want their "this is my moment" outfit to feel effortless and meaningful, whether the celebration takes place in a palace, by the sea, or at home.

In contrast, Qbik offers a strikingly different expression of the season with *Disco Discord*. Co-founders Vrinda Sachdev and Gurinder Singh design for couples who want their wedding presence to feel individual. Satin finds contrast in CNC-cut metal, crafted into sculptural details across sarees, blouses, tuxedos, and gilets. Sachdev sees this balance as a reflection of modern weddings-emotional yet confident-while Singh highlights the quiet strength metal brings to both menswear and womenswear. A satin saree with an underwired, metal-detailed blouse becomes a favourite for brides, while sharply tailored tuxedos with sculptural buttons stand out for grooms.

Together, these visions crown a new chapter in wedding style, where love reigns, as tradition and modernity unite gracefully.

Vrinda Sachdev and Gurinder Singh

Qbik : DISCO DISCORD

Gaurang Batra

Frontier Raas: Taraasa

TWO DESIGNERS DEFINE DARING, REWRITING WEDDING STYLE WITH CONFIDENCE

## Your plus-one for every wedding



TEAM VIVA

Weddings slow us down in unexpected ways. Between rituals, conversations, and moments of waiting, your bag ends up sharing more of the day than you realise — resting on your lap, tucked beside you, moving from space to space.

The Leather Garden's *Saaya* comes from observing scenes like these. Its design language takes cues from Indian architecture, where arches and *jharokhas* filter sunlight into shifting patterns. Those fleeting shadows became the starting point for the collection, influencing the shapes, textures, and fine detailing of each bag.

The process behind *Saaya* was careful and hands-on. It started with two colour stories — lighter tones balanced with deeper shades — chosen with wedding settings in mind. Then came material trials, leather experiments, and dozens of small embroidery samples, tested, rejected, and refined. Craft practices from different parts of India informed the surface work in subtle ways. Conceived by founder Neeharika, the collection is made to be lived with — carried, kept, and returned to across many milestones.



## The Christmas markets you have to hit!

**THE SORBET SOIRÉE CHRISTMAS MARKET**  
A festive mix of shopping, food, live music, workshops, art zones, a kids' wonderland and a pet-friendly area. Over 80 stalls and thousands expected.  
**Where:** Sunder Nursery, Nizamuddin  
**When:** 19-20 December  
**Time:** 10am-9pm  
**Entry:** Free (Nursery entry ₹50 adults / ₹25 kids)



**CHRISTMAS EARTH MELA 2025**  
Delhi's sustainable festive carnival with 120+ mindful Indian brands, global food, live music, a bar, kids' zone, fun corners, massages, and quirky experiences.  
**Where:** Italian Embassy  
**When:** 13-14 December  
**Time:** From 11am onwards (last entry 7pm)  
**Entry:** ₹200 onwards (book online)



**GERMAN CHRISTMAS MARKET 2025**  
A two-day Indo-German festive fair featuring German food, curated gifts, crafts, live music, and family-friendly activities.  
**Where:** PSOI Lawns, Vinay Marg, Chanakyaपुरी  
**When:** 13-14 December 2025  
**Time:** 11am-8pm  
**Entry:** ₹600 (Free for children under 12)



## Shayari se Guftagu Tak: Gulzar, Divya Dutta



SAKSHI PRIYA

"Lafzon ne chiraag jalaye, shaam ne tehzeeb ka libaas pehna, Yamuna ke kinaare, shehar thoda ruk kar khud ko sunne laga."

Baansera Park set the tone for the opening day of Jashn-e-Rekhta's tenth edition, where Urdu quietly held the evening together. Along the riverfront, people moved between stages, book stalls and small *baithaks*, guided by *guftagu*, *kalaam* and *likhi hui zubaan*. In one corner, a *purani nazm* found its way

back into memory; in another, a *khamosh qiraat* continued in its own quiet way. Urdu felt familiar in the space, already known.

The lamp-lighting ceremony marked a decade of the festival, shaped by founder Sanjiv Saraf's sustained vision. It served as a reminder that Jashn-e-Rekhta has grown into a space where Urdu continues to find new listeners while staying rooted in tradition.

At Mehfil-Khana, the evening found one of its strongest anchors. *Mehakki Khushbu ka Safar*: Gulzar ke Saath brought

the audience together for careful listening. Framed as a conversation, it allowed Divya Dutta to engage Gulzar with restraint and sensitivity, drawing him into thoughts on memory, writing and the inner life of words. Listening to Gulzar was a reminder of why his voice continues to matter year after year. His reflections carried precision and honesty, shaped by lived experience and close observation. When he spoke about writing, it stayed measured and grounded, returning often to the ordinary-silences at home, passing expressions, moments that stay longer than expected. Divya Dutta guided the exchange with care, allowing his words to find their place with the audience.

Later, the same space shifted mood with *Rang-e-Mausiqi*, as Sukhwinder Singh took the stage. His voice filled the grounds with familiarity and force, drawing people closer through lyric and sound, closing the evening with a balance of poetry and music.

Beyond the stages, food, books and calligraphy con-



RANG-E-MAUSIQI

Sukhwinder Singh's performance filled the evening with power and familiarity, turning poetry into song and drawing the audience together through voice, energy and shared feeling.

verged, as audiences moved between taste, text and thought, shaping an evening where culture was absorbed as much as it was performed.

With the final day of Jashn-e-Rekhta now underway, one question remains: how often does a city listen so closely to Urdu — its *kahaniyaan*, its *shayari*, its *khamoshiyan* and carry those notes back into everyday life? Perhaps the true measure of the festival lies not on the stage, but in the words people carry home.





# The Pioneer AGENDA

It is better to be violent, if there is violence in our hearts, than to put on the cloak of nonviolence to cover impotence.  
- Mahatma Gandhi



## Putin Dials Delhi

New Delhi's red-carpet welcome to the Russian President, despite pressure from Western powers, shows that the two countries assert their autonomy and commitment to independent foreign-policy choices



### Indo-Russia: Cementing strategic ties

Russian President Vladimir Putin's state visit to India on December 4-5 for the 23rd India-Russia Annual Summit marked a significant diplomatic moment, demonstrating the resilience of one of the world's most enduring strategic partnerships. The visit, Putin's first to India since the Ukraine conflict began in 2022, was laden with symbolism, from Prime Minister Narendra Modi's personal reception at the airport to the ceremonial guard of honour at Rashtrapati Bhavan.

The optics were deliberate and unmistakable. At a time when Western nations have sought to isolate Russia diplomatically, India's warm embrace sent a clear message about the independent trajectory of its foreign policy. The traditional Modi hug at the airport, extended only to very select visiting dignitaries, underscored the personal rapport between the two leaders and India's commitment to its time-tested partnership with Moscow.

#### Beyond Ceremony: Practical Priorities

While the pomp and pageantry captured headlines, the substance of the visit revealed a relationship recalibrating itself for contemporary challenges. Trade and economic cooperation emerged as the central theme, reflecting both nations' pressing economic needs. Russia, reeling under Western sanctions, and India, facing 50 per cent tariffs from Washington, see in each other vital alternative markets.

The leaders endorsed the Programme for the Development of Strategic Areas of India-Russia Economic Cooperation till 2030, setting an ambitious bilateral trade target of \$100 billion by the decade's end. This represents a significant



VIKAS SWARUP  
Ambassador

leap from the current \$68.7 billion, though much of the recent growth stems from India's purchases of discounted Russian oil, a factor now under American scrutiny. The joint statement emphasised developing bilateral settlement systems using national currencies, a strategic move to insulate trade from dollar-dependent mechanisms. Both nations agreed to enhance interoperability of national payment systems and explore central bank digital currency platforms. This financial architecture aims to ensure "uninterrupted maintenance of bilateral trade" despite external pressures.

#### The Energy Equation

The elephant in the room was oil. India's purchase of Russian crude has surged since 2022, providing crucial revenue to Moscow's sanctions-hit economy while offering Delhi energy security at competitive prices. Putin emphasised Russia's readiness to ensure "uninterrupted oil supplies" to India, but conspicuously, no specific agreements were announced.

This silence is telling. India faces mounting pressure from the Trump administration to curtail Russian oil imports, while its energy security imperatives pull in the opposite direction. The absence of concrete commitments suggests Delhi is keeping its options open, attempting the delicate balancing act of maintaining strategic autonomy while managing great power pressures.

#### Defence: The Unspoken Dimension

Equally notable was what wasn't announced. Despite speculation about

major defence acquisitions-including the advanced Su-57 fifth-generation fighter aircraft and additional S-400 air defence systems-no blockbuster defence deal materialised.

This reflects India's careful calibration between its defence relationship with Russia, which supplies approximately 60 per cent of its military equipment, and its growing strategic ties with the United States.

The joint statement emphasised reorienting military-technical cooperation toward "joint research and development, co-development and co-production" under the Make-in-India initiative. Both nations agreed to encourage joint manufacturing of spare parts and components for Russian-origin equipment, with potential exports to friendly third countries.

However, Russia's capacity to deliver on existing orders remains questionable, with its defence industrial base stretched by the Ukraine conflict. The delayed delivery of remaining S-400 units serves as a reminder of these constraints.

#### Expanding Horizons

Beyond traditional pillars, the visit yielded progress in emerging areas. Both nations are committed to regular consultations on Arctic-related issues and cooperation on the Northern Sea Route, with India training seafarers for polar water operations. The opening of Indian consulates in Yekaterinburg and Kazan signals intent to deepen regional connections beyond traditional centres.

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### The most reliable partnership in the world

As an Indian-born Russian citizen who has made Russia his home for decades and now serves as a two-time elected legislator in the Kursk State under President Vladimir Putin's United Russia Party, I occupy a rare vantage point. I am rooted in Indian heritage yet deeply committed to the Russian state and people. This dual identity allows me to see the India-Russia partnership not only through the lens of geopolitics and diplomacy but also through civilisational continuity, cultural warmth, and human connection.

President Putin's visit to India is a vivid reminder that the relationship between our two nations does not depend on fluctuating global winds. It is grounded in trust accumulated over decades and reinforced by genuine goodwill between the leaders guiding both countries today.

Despite global turbulence, shifting alliances, and emerging rivalries, the deep mutual respect between India and Russia remains one of the least disrupted relationships in modern international affairs.

One of the most compelling aspects of our bilateral relationship today is the personal chemistry between President Vladimir Putin and Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Personal diplomacy is often underestimated by those who



ABHAY KUMAR SINGH  
Legislator, Kursk State, United Russia Party, Russia

view the world only through structural or strategic frameworks. But anyone who has witnessed these leaders together knows that personal warmth and trust can accelerate cooperation in ways that formal channels alone cannot.

I recall the recent Shanghai Cooperation Organisation summit in China, where both leaders travelled in the same car — an unusual gesture in diplomatic practice. Before that, Prime Minister Modi broke strict protocol by personally receiving President Putin at the airport, accompanying him to the red carpet. These are not mere symbolic acts. They reflect instinctive comfort and mutual respect cultivated over years. Their relationship predates their rise to the highest offices and is built on familiarity, clear communication, and confidence in each other's intentions. Such gestures cannot be choreographed or fabricated.

They demonstrate genuine rapport between two leaders who understand their historical responsibility. This personal trust has tangible policy consequences: negotiations move faster, uncertainties shrink, and long-term projects gain continuity. In a time of global uncertainty, such a relationship is not just beneficial — it is essential.

A crucial aspect of our cooperation is defence. One example is the Su-57 fighter jet, which offers India a strategic advantage. The Su-57 is not only technologically advanced but also far more cost-effective than Western alternatives such as the French Rafale. For the price of one Rafale, India can acquire two Su-57s, significantly strengthening its defence capabilities.

Moreover, the deal with Russia includes licenses for 'local manufacturing, operation, and production in India', supporting domestic defence production and self-reliance. Such agreements highlight how the India-Russia partnership goes beyond diplomacy into tangible national security benefits.

What makes the India-Russia relationship exceptional is that it is not dependent on any single pair of leaders. Our shared history stretches back nearly eight decades in its modern form, and even further in cultural and civilisational terms. India and Russia have never been adversaries—never fought a war, never clashed over territory or ideology, never confronted each other even indirectly. This absence of conflict is rare in international affairs. Many nations today struggle with difficult pasts: colonial legacies, border disputes, ideological confrontations. India and Russia, however, have maintained goodwill consistently, across generations and governments.

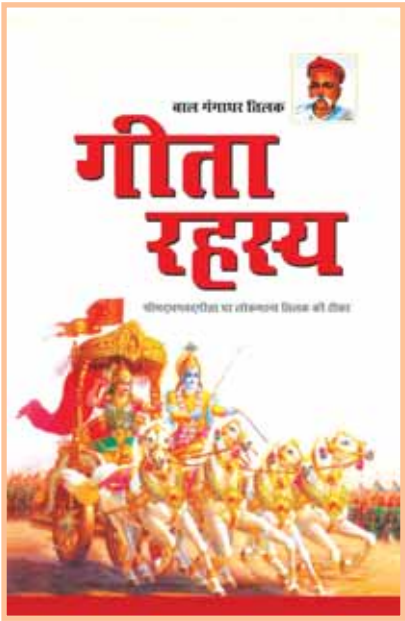
This friendship is enriched by historical stories that may be lesser-known but are deeply telling. During the Soviet period, one of the world's most closed political environments — Stalin's daughter, Svetlana, was allowed to travel to India and live there. Such permission was nearly impossible to obtain at the time. Her visit was not just a personal journey; it symbolised the trust and respect the USSR extended toward India.

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“A PEOPLE WITHOUT THE KNOWLEDGE  
OF THEIR PAST HISTORY, ORIGIN  
AND CULTURE IS LIKE A TREE  
WITHOUT ROOTS”  
— MARCUS GARVEY



# Global significance of the

# Gita

The Bhagavad Gita was inscribed on UNESCO's *Memory of the World Register* in April this year. This recognition highlights its global significance. The Gita has been translated into all major languages of the world. The largest number of commentaries in various languages across the world have been written on the Gita itself.

The British scholar Charles Wilkins translated the Gita into English in 1785 as *Bhagvat Geeta*, or *Dialogues of Krishna and Arjun*. In 1787, AJ Parraud translated the Gita into French. In 1823, August Schlegel translated the Gita into German, and the German poet Friedrich Schlegel wrote a commentary on it. The distinguished British poet and journalist Edwin Arnold published a poetic English translation of the Gita in 1885, titled *The Song Celestial: A Poetic Version of the Bhagavad Gita*.

The American writer and philosopher RW Emerson wrote a famous poem centred on the Gita, called *Brahma*, in the nineteenth century. In the same century, the American poet and philosopher Henry David Thoreau, while commenting on the Gita, wrote that, compared to the Gita, world literature stands at a lower level. The American scholar Thomas J Hopkins, in his commentary on the Gita, praised its greatness. The English writer and philosopher Aldous Huxley, while writing the preface to *Bhagavad Gita: The Song of God*, translated by Swami Prabhavananda and Christopher Isherwood in



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Professor at Mahatma Gandhi  
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1944, described it as a great work. The list of the world's scholars who have studied the Gita is very long.

In India, in the ninth century, Shankaracharya (788-820), while writing a commentary on the Gita, derived the principle of renunciation (sannyasa) from it. In the eleventh century, Ramanujacharya drew the element of devotion (bhakti) from the Gita and explained that knowledge is attained through devotion. In the thirteenth century, Saint Gyaneshwar composed the Gyaneshwari. In the sixteenth century, Eknath, and in the seventeenth century, Ramdas wrote commentaries on the Gita.

In the modern era, Rishi Arvind Ghosh presented his commentary by writing the book *Essays on the Gita*. The book *The Bhagavad Gita as Viewed by Swami Vivekananda* reveals how deeply Vivekananda was influenced by the Gita. The great Tamil poet and journalist Subramanya Bharati published a Tamil translation of the Gita. India's former President Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan translated the Bhagavad Gita into English and wrote a commentary on it, stating that it is less a philosophical treatise and more a religious scripture. Bal Gangadhar Tilak, through his book *Gita Rahasya*,

extracted the principle of Karma Yoga from the Gita. He wrote this book to provide a spiritual foundation for the Indian freedom struggle. Mahatma Gandhi wrote the book *Gita Ki Mahima* and called the Gita his mother. Vinoba Bhave translated every stanza of the Gita from Sanskrit into Marathi, in equal measure, as per the wish of his mother, Rukmini Devi. This work was named *Gitai* by Vinoba, which means Mother Gita. Kamalnayan Bajaj envisioned the construction of a memorial on Gitai. Thus, the conceptualisation of Gitai Mandir was the result of Kamalnayanji's thinking.

The Bhoomipuian of this temple was performed by Vinobaji on November 4, 1964. It is worth mentioning that the occasion was graced by the presence of all three Bhave brothers, namely Vinobaji, Balkobaji and Shivaji. On November 4, 1969, the foundation stone of Gitai Mandir was laid by Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan (Badshah Khan). Gitai Mandir was constructed on land covering 0.92 acres in Wardha, Maharashtra. Marathi shlokas of the Gitai, written by Vinobaji, were engraved on the rock slabs of this temple. This is the first project in India in which a complete Marathi scripture, Gitai, is engraved on rock slabs.

For inscribing 700 shlokas of 18 chapters of *Gitai*, 18 types of rock slabs were used. These rock slabs were brought from all four corners of the country, namely Chunar (Eastern Uttar Pradesh), Kolhapur (Maharashtra), Karoli (Madhya Pradesh), Bundi (Rajasthan) and Kuppam (Andhra Pradesh). Granite slabs were also brought from several places in Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and other areas. The parallel walkway was constructed using stones from Wardha, Tadoba and Saoner. Thus, the stones used in the construction of the Gitai Mandir firmly represent the unity of the nation.

The selection of rock slabs was based on the advice of specialists and proven experiments. They are least affected by possible weathering action, ensuring their durability in the future. While fixing the shape of the rocks, due consideration was given to the effects of rain, wind and sun. Each rock slab is 9 feet high, 2 feet wide and 1 foot thick, embedded 2 feet below ground level in concrete. The rocks have been kept naturally rough, symbolising the simplicity of the Sarvodaya programme and presenting a rural

appearance.

One *Gitai* shloka is inscribed on each rock slab. These inscriptions are placed between 5 and 6 feet from the ground level, making them suitable for reading without obstructing movement. The size of the letters is large enough to be read easily from a distance of 8-10 feet. Care has been taken to maintain uniformity in the shape and size of all letters.

The temple encircled by these rock slabs has no traditional roof, floor or walls. There is a gap of 3 inches between consecutive rock slabs, allowing air and light to flow naturally. The shadows of the rock slabs change with the movement of the sun's rays. In this way, the five elements-sky, sun, air, water and earth—are present in the temple, symbolising humanity's natural connection with them. The rock slabs stand in a continuous row without interruption.

To enter the temple, steps are arranged in a tunnel-like form. Once inside, a visitor may move towards the left along a circular path to complete the circumambulation while reading the *Gitai* shlokas engraved on the slabs. Built of exposed concrete, the main entrance of the Mandir is unique in shape and size and is also a remark-

able example of architecture (Vastukala). At the entrance stands a pillar in the shape of a Swastik, bearing Vinobaji's words engraved in his own handwriting, expressing his emotional bond with Gitai. It reads:

"Gitai is my mother; I am her child. Whenever I fall down and cry, she lifts me up in her lap." Vinobaji's messages to the world-Truth, Love and Compassion-are also engraved on the same pillar, along with the essence of the Gita in one word, Samyayog. The Gitai Mandir is not a traditional place of worship but a space for contemplation and meditation. The atmosphere of the temple is peaceful.

The Gitai Mandir reminds us of the wisdom of the Gita for living a meaningful and righteous life. The 700 shlokas of the 18 chapters of *Gitai*, inscribed on 18 types of rock slabs, offer philosophical, spiritual and practical guidance for navigating life's challenges and attaining spiritual liberation. The Gitai Mandir emphasises the importance of performing one's duty (dharma), acting selflessly, and remaining calm in both success and failure.



## FROM AGENDA COVER

### Indo-Russia: Cementing strategic ties

In a move to boost cultural and economic exchanges, Modi announced that India will launch a free 30-day e-tourist visa and a 30-day group tourist visa for Russian citizens.

In civil nuclear cooperation, both sides welcomed progress on the Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant, with fuel shipments arriving for Unit 3. They agreed to accelerate discussions on Russian-designed reactors and localisation of nuclear equipment manufacturing, aligned with India's goal of 100 GW nuclear capacity by 2047.

Critical minerals emerged as a new frontier, with both nations expressing interest in cooperation on exploration, processing and recycling technologies, crucial for advanced manufacturing and emerging technologies.

#### Multilateral Convergence

The leaders emphasised strengthening cooperation within BRICS, SCO and G20, with Russia pledging full support for India's upcoming BRICS Chairship in 2026. They advocated for UN Security Council reform, with Russia reiterating support for India's permanent membership in an expanded council.

On counter-terrorism, both nations condemned terrorist attacks in their territories and

called for concerted action against UN-listed terrorist groups, emphasising the need to combat terrorism "without hidden agendas and double standards."

Notably absent from the joint statement was any direct reference to the Ukraine conflict, though the leaders emphasised their commitment to "global peace and stability in a multipolar world" and stressed that their relationship should be "ensured upon the basis of equal and indivisible security." This carefully calibrated language reflects India's consistent position of calling for dialogue and diplomacy while refusing to condemn Russia explicitly.

#### The Geopolitical Tightrope

Putin's visit illuminated India's evolving foreign policy doctrine. Delhi is no longer boxed in by old Cold War binaries and is instead practising a confident, multi-aligned approach rooted in strategic autonomy. The message was clear: India engages Moscow on terms shaped by its own interests, not by external criticism.

As Prime Minister Modi noted, addressing tariff and non-tariff barriers, ensuring smooth payment mechanisms, and regular business interaction are key to achieving the revised trade target. Whether India can simultaneously maintain its Russian partnership while securing trade deals with Washington remains the defining question. The "informal dinner" between Modi and Putin,

described by Russian officials as addressing "the most urgent, most sensitive and most important issues," likely involved frank discussions on these very dilemmas.

The 23rd India-Russia Annual Summit reaffirmed a partnership anchored in mutual respect and converging interests, even as both nations navigate an increasingly complex global landscape. The relationship's resilience lies not in ignoring differences but in pragmatically managing them while advancing shared objectives.

Vikas Swarup is a retired Indian Foreign Service officer, he was the High Commissioner of India to Canada and the official spokesperson for the Ministry of External Affairs

### The most reliable partnership in the world

Even earlier, philosophical exchanges between Mahatma Gandhi and Leo Tolstoy created intellectual bridges linking two great moral traditions. Russian painter Nicholas Roerich, who lived in the Himalayas, left a vast artistic legacy that continues to connect our nations. These examples show that India-Russia ties are rooted as much in civilisational exchange as in statecraft.

In the present day, one of the most significant people-to-people bridges between our nations is education. Nearly one lakh Indian students study in Russian universities, especially in med-

icine, engineering, and technical fields. This trend spans three generations. Families trust Russian education because graduates return well-trained, well-prepared, and often capable of clearing Indian qualifying examinations with confidence. As Russian policymakers, we are committed to making this experience even more supportive. Indian students enrich Russian cities culturally, while the knowledge they acquire strengthens India's workforce.

Cultural diplomacy is another powerful pillar of this relationship, with Bollywood playing a key role. Indian cinema once enjoyed immense popularity in Russia. Raj Kapoor's films, in particular, created a wave of affection that still resonates among older generations. The songs, storytelling, and emotion deeply connected with Russian audiences. Later, Amitabh Bachchan and Mithun Chakraborty carried this legacy forward.

In recent decades, however, Bollywood has shifted its focus elsewhere, and younger Russian audiences have gravitated toward Hollywood. But this need not be permanent. Russia remains visually stunning, with its snowfall, white nights, and the unmatched beauty of Saint Petersburg. These cinematic treasures are waiting to be rediscovered. With the Russian government actively promoting cultural engagement with India, the moment is ripe for Bollywood's return. Such collaboration would strengthen cultural understanding and revive the emotional connection

that once defined our soft diplomacy.

At the strategic level, India and Russia continue to cooperate in defence, energy, nuclear technology, trade, and increasingly in sectors such as digital technology, pharmaceuticals, and manufacturing. What sets this partnership apart is its consistency. It does not fluctuate with elections, leadership changes, or international pressure. It evolves steadily because it is underpinned by mutual respect. As the global order becomes more complex, the India-Russia partnership is poised to play a stabilising role. Both countries have the capacity—and, more importantly, the desire—to build a world where cooperation outweighs confrontation.

As someone who carries both Indian heritage and Russian citizenship with pride, I believe deeply in the potential of this partnership. It is not just strategic or economic. It is emotional, historical, and human. It is a bond between civilisations, strengthened by people and guided by leaders who understand its importance.

The future of India-Russia relations, in my view, is bright—not because of treaties or agreements alone, but because of the trust that lives in the hearts of our peoples. That trust is our greatest asset—and the world would do well to pay attention to it.

Abhay Kumar Singh is Indian-born Russian Citizen and Two-time Legislator, Kursk State, United Russia Party (Putin Party)



“FOOD IS THE MOST PRIMITIVE  
FORM OF COMFORT”  
— SHEILA GRAHAM

# Manipur: Timeless beauty and a cuisine rooted in nature



ANIL  
RAJPUT

Manipur, one of the Seven Sister States of North-East India, is often called The Jeweled Land. The name derives from the Sanskrit word mani (jewel) and pur (land or city) because of the region's natural beauty, culture and dance traditions. Its landscape is marked by serene valleys and gentle hills and surrounded by majestic mountain ranges that encompass it. The state shares a long boundary with Myanmar and shares borders with Nagaland, Mizoram and Assam facilitating an active interaction in the eastern Himalayas. Imphal, the capital of Manipur is located in a valley at an elevation of nearly 2,600 feet above sea level, which influences its agreeable weather throughout the year. The Loktak Lake, located in the Bishnupur district, has the distinction of being the largest fresh water lake in the north-east, and is famous for its floating biomass known as phumdis, besides being the world's only floating national park. This geography of rich water bodies, cool hills and plentiful vegetation, shaped the habitation patterns and agricultural practices of Manipur's people, defining not only their identity but their cuisine, rituals and relationship with nature.

Human settlement in Manipur began in the fertile Imphal Valley, where early clans and proto-Meitei groups set up small farming communities along the rivers. Over time, these villages grew into organized chiefdoms and eventually formed the base of the Meitei kingdom that took shape in the first century CE. As the valley communities developed, Tibeto-Burman groups migrated into both the Imphal Valley and the surrounding hills. Each brought its own language and rituals, adding to the region's growing mix of cultures. Kangla Fort, on the banks of the Imphal River, became the seat of the Meitei kings and served for centuries as the center of political authority, ritual life, and administration. It played a key role in holding the various clans together. Meanwhile, hill communities such as the Tangkhul, Mao, Maram, Thadou, Hmar, Paite, Zou, Kuki, and others kept their distinct identities while staying closely connected to the valley. Trade in salt, forest products, woven textiles, bamboo goods, and dried meats helped maintain these ties and supported a long history of interaction and mutual dependence.

The Anglo-Manipur conflict of 1891 marked a turning point, bringing the region under British influence and new administrative systems besides exposure to the world outside its hills and valleys. Yet the cultural depth of the Manipuri people remained resilient despite the changes and its deeply rooted traditions endured. Manipur's strategic location also provided an ideal gateway for trade and cultural exchanges with Southeast Asia and they enriched each other with their trade, culture and cuisines. This region continues to be an important element in India's Look East policy that seeks closer and mutually beneficial ties with the rest of East Asia.

Religion in Manipur revolved, like in neighboring states, around animism (forces of nature), ancestor reverence and local cosmologies. Early Meitei spiritual life was centred on Sanamahi worship that was believed to ensure protection, prosperity and the well-being of the family. Leimarel Sidabi, considered the Mother Earth figure, and other deities representing forests,



lakes and skies formed a spiritual constellation that guided moral conduct, agricultural cycles and community life. Lai Haraoba, an ancient and popular Meitei festival honours the Umang Lai, the ancestral forest deities of Manipur, through rituals, songs, and dance sequences performed by priestesses. It brings together different clans in worship and serves as one of the oldest unifying traditions of Meitei civilization.

The spread of Vaishnavism in the eighteenth century during the reign of King Pamheiba (Garib Niwaz) introduced another set of transformations in the valley. Hymns, devotional poetry and the Ras Leela dance form gave Manipur's society the depth of the bhakti tradition that blended seamlessly with earlier beliefs. The emergence of this new devotional identity did not erase the earlier beliefs but created a harmony of philosophies where rituals for ancestors, forest spirits and Vaishnava beliefs coexist even today.

Cuisine in Manipur, one of the most intricate food cultures of the region, is mostly inspired by its geography and reflects its religious and social traditions. Much like the varied tribal cuisines of the north-east, Manipuri cuisine cannot be generalized because it is created on a foundation of ecological diversity, traditional methods of cooking and nuances of subtle flavours. An abundance of local produce provides diverse ingredients that are native to the region's ecology. Fresh herbs, seasonal greens, fermented ingredients, and fresh water fish form the basis of everyday meals, while techniques such as steaming, slow-cooking, and light seasoning bring out natural flavours rather than being overpowering. Manipuri food reflects a long tradition of using what the land and waters provide and is prepared in ways that preserve both nutrition and taste.

The cuisine of Manipur's valley regions is characterised by fresh, seasonal ingredients especially herbs, greens, and river fish and prepared with

minimal oil to preserve natural flavours. Light fermentation, gentle spicing, and simple cooking methods like boiling and steaming give the food an earthy taste and ensures nutritional value. Ngari, fermented fresh water fish that is sun-dried, forms the base of many local dishes and is known for its strong aroma and deep flavour. It is a key ingredient in popular dishes such as iromba and kangsoi and various chutneys, adding a punch to everyday meals. Iromba is made by combining boiled vegetables with mashed ngari and hara mirch (green chilli) with vegetables such as yongchak, seasonal beans, colocasia stems, and lai, a leafy green, that are stirred together into a delicious dish to be eaten with steamed rice. Iromba varies from one household to another, with some preferring it milder and others enhancing its sharpness with additional chillies. Another celebrated valley dish is singju, a spicy and crunchy salad of shredded vegetables, lotus stems, cabbage and herbs mixed with ngari. The use of roasted til (sesame) and a hint of lemon lends the salad its nutritious and nutty character.

A signature preparation of the Meitei culinary repertoire is chak hao, the famed black rice of Manipur, cooked during festivals and special occasions. It is often transformed into a sweet pudding with doodh (milk) and a touch of gur (jaggery), creating a rich and irresistible dessert. Another preferred dish is kangsoi, a boiled vegetable stew flavoured with adrak (ginger), hara mirch and a few herbs, cooked gently until the vegetables release their natural juices. This dish is an almost daily fare across the valley because of its lightness and nourishment, especially when the seasons are changing since it has properties that enhance immunity. Paaknam,



a savoury cake made of besan (gram flour), herbs, vegetables and sometimes fish, and wrapped in banana leaves and steamed, creates a fragrant dish served during festive periods.

To top it all, Morok metpa, a fiery chutney made from roasted mirch (chilli), onions and herbs, along with ngari accompanies nearly every meal and reflects the local preference for heat balanced with freshness.

The valley also has a unique relationship with freshwater fish. Loktak Lake provides a wide variety that feature in dishes such as nga thongba, a fish stew prepared with adrak, pyaaz (onion), tomatoes, potatoes and herbs simmered slowly until the fish becomes tender. Nga atoiba, a fresh water fish stew, cooked with ingredients such as colocasia stems (paangkho), yong-chak, mustard leaves, chilli, turmeric, and sometimes herbs like maroi. Unlike spicier dishes, nga atoiba keeps the seasoning minimal to let the natural flavour of the fish stand out. The harmony between the natural sweetness of vegetables and the depth of ngari forms the heart of daily meals, creating a palette that is distinct, refined and deeply rooted in the land.

In the hill districts to the north, east, west, and south, tribal communities like the Tangkhul, Mao, Paite, Kuki, and Thadou have their own unique cuisines. These cuisines rely on forest produce, smoked meats, and traditional preservation methods. In the northern hills where the Tangkhuls live, the food is richer and often includes smoked or dried meats. Smoking happens carefully at home, allowing the meat to take in the aroma of firewood. This process creates flavors that fit well with the cool monsoon season. One beloved dish is hentak, made from a blend of sun-dried fish powder and a paste of edible Alocasia petioles, shaped into small balls and left to ferment. Hentak has a mildly pungent smell and is rich in protein. It is often used to add flavor to everyday meals, especially in stews, vegetable dishes, and chutneys. In the valley region, it is a household essential, valued for its long shelf life and the deep flavor it brings to home-style Manipuri cooking.

In the western hills, where the Mao Nagas live, the cuisine emphasises ginger, yam, fermented bamboo shoots and leafy vegetables. Smoked pork cooked with bastenga, fermented bamboo shoot, is a common delicacy symbolic of their reliance on preservation methods perfected over generations. The dish combines pork, bamboo shoot, mirch and adrak, simmered long enough to merge flavours yet still preserve the natural textures. Another traditional western hill dish is anishi made from fermented taro leaves cooked with pork. The slow cooking brings out an inten-

sity that pairs well with steamed rice and seasonal vegetables.

In the southern hills inhabited by Kuki and Paite groups, cuisine shifts toward heartier stews, dried meats and dishes cooked with a greater amount of pyaaz and tomatoes. Pork and chicken are central to many dishes, where meat is stewed with bamboo shoots, lai and seasonal herbs collected from nearby forests. One popular preparation is sai bhaji, where pork is simmered with beans, vegetables and adrak until it becomes tender and richly flavoured and is eaten during family gatherings or community feasts. The southern tribes also prepare dried fish broths that combine dried river fish with mirch and herbs to create warming meals suited to the cooler hill climate.

In the eastern districts bordering Myanmar, cross cultural influences emerge more prominently. Here, communities prepare rice noodles used in broth-based dishes enriched with vegetables, herbs and sometimes fish. The technique of boiling, steaming and using minimal spices reflects a shared culinary heritage shaped by both Manipuri and Southeast Asian practices. Seasonal greens feature in broths that are mild but nourishing, providing comfort during rainy months. Bamboo shoot curries, steamed fish seasoned with adrak and hara mirch, and boiled yam preparations are widespread across the eastern settlements, reinforcing a shared culinary identity that is both local and trans-regional.

As can be seen from the above recipes, fermentation holds deep significance in Manipuri gastronomy across both valley and hills. Ngari in the valley and hentak or bastenga in the hills reflect a deep understanding of natural preservation techniques. Rice also plays an essential role, not only as a staple but a cultural symbol. The valley's sticky rice, known as chak-hao (black aromatic rice) and other varieties in white, are staple in daily diets. Local beverages made through natural fermentation are also popular during rituals, reflecting the continuity of age-old practices linked to changing seasons.

Manipuri cuisine is being kept alive in contemporary times by the increasing numbers of cafes and restaurants that reinterpret traditional dishes while taking care to preserve their basic flavors. Indeed, this trend is welcome and calls for applause. Chefs are presenting classics like iromba, singju, chak-hao kheer, and ngari-based stews by reinventing them in lighter textures to suit the taste of modern times. Every care is undertaken to get farm-to-table sourcing that appeals to the health-conscious young. Ingredients hitherto confined to home kitchens-like hawajiar, wild herbs, black rice, and seasonal greens-now feature in curated menus and fusion dishes. Community-led food festivals and local entrepreneurs ensure authentic cooking ingredients and methods using family recipes remain central, allowing Manipuri food to evolve without losing its original character.

It is my belief that we have an obligation to protect these culinary traditions and keep them alive for future generations. The flavours of Manipur are not simply recipes but an expression of a people's tradition shaped by their land, their beliefs and their ancestral wisdom. They are the collective repository of the knowledge of generations who worked with forests, rivers, hills and fields, understanding nature and its importance for nourishment. Preserving this heritage is therefore an act of cultural responsibility that we must assume for ourselves. By valuing these traditions today, we affirm that the cuisine of Manipur will continue to nourish, teach and inspire the generations to come.

(The writer is Secretary, Cuisine India Society)

## Naples comes calling with its Sourdough legacy



### TEAM AGENDA

The aroma of rested sourdough has finally found its way to Delhi. For a city that takes its food seriously, the arrival of Si Nonna's feels timely and assured. Celebrated across continents, it brings with it the legacy of Naples-five centuries of Neapolitan sourdough tradition and the distinction of being the world's largest AVPN-certified pizzeria network.

At Si Nonna's, the emphasis remains firmly on craft and discipline. Dough rests patiently for 24 hours, flour is thoughtfully sourced, cheese stays fresh, and every step-from fermentation to firing-follows methods shaped long before pizza became global currency. The result is flavour built on balance and restraint, confident without excess.

That philosophy runs through the menu. Pizza No. 2, topped with tomato sauce, buffalo mozzarella, basil and olive oil, achieves quiet harmony. Pizza No. 3 deepens the profile with garlic, olives, capers, basil and Fior di Latte, delivering layered flavour that remains

light on the palate. Other selections-numbers 6, 8 and beyond-continue this careful conversation between crust and topping, where nothing competes and everything belongs. Paired with a cup of strong hot coffee, the experience feels satisfying and complete.

Beyond pizzas, the menu reflects the comfort of a Neapolitan table. *Panuozzo sandwiches*, *Eggplant Parmigiana*, *fresh gelatos*, *kombuchas*, cooling beverages and a *classic Tiramisu* add depth and variety. Vegetarian, vegan and Jain-friendly options sit naturally alongside the rest, without implication or afterthought.

The space reinforces the experience. An open kitchen allows diners to watch dough being stretched, topped and eased into the oven. Guests — both children and adults — are invited to participate, crafting sourdough pizzas with aprons, chef hats and gentle guidance, creating a shared

family tradition rather than a staged performance.

Ayush Jatia, the force behind Si Nonna's, describes Delhi as a city "curious, energetic and deeply passionate about food" — a fitting stage for its presence. With GK2 as its home, Si Nonna's presents a revival of Neapolitan heritage, blending Italian kitchen traditions with Delhi's appreciation for authentic flavours.



## Chronicles of Deccan delights



### TEAM AGENDA

There are food festivals, and then there are culinary experiences that feel like stepping into someone's home, where the air is fragrant with slow-cooked spices and every bite carries memory. Hyderabad! Rasoi, hosted at Hyatt Place Gurgaon, firmly belonged to the latter. Across a week-long celebration, the hotel revived a culinary legacy rooted in warmth, patience and tradition, led by the quietly formidable Nizami Dilnaz Baig.

Hyderabad! cuisine reflects centuries of cultural dialogue — Nizami opulence shaped by Persian finesse, Mughlai richness, Turkish depth and Deccan earthiness. At this festival, those influences unfolded with rare authenticity. Dilnaz Baig, 74 and fiercely passionate, brought to Gurgaon the flavours of Hyderabad's home kitchens rather than theatrical interpretations. Her presence transformed the event into an intimate cultural exchange. Having travelled through Pakistan, Iran, Turkey, Thailand and Europe, Dilnaz absorbed global influences without losing sight of her culinary origins. Her cooking draws from memory and instinct, both shaped by generations of practice.



"Hyderabad! cuisine is about heritage," she explained. "Every dish carries a story from the royal kitchens of the Nizams, where spice, aroma and time work together."

The menu honoured that philosophy. *Khatti Dal* set a comforting tone, while *Hyderabad! Dum Biryani*, *Haleem*, *Mirchi ka Salan* and *Bagara Baingan* showcased depth, balance and restraint. *Pathar ka Gosht* and *Shikampuri Kebabs* impressed with simplicity and technique, while thoughtful vegetarian options ensured inclusivity.

Guests could choose a relaxed table d'hôte lunch or a generous buffet dinner. What stayed was a sense of belonging. As General Manager Neha Kapoor observed, this was food steeped in familiarity and tradition. For one memorable week, Hyderabad arrived — alive on every plate.



‘JUST BE IN THE SIMPLE, INNOCENT STATE OF  
“I DON’T KNOW!” WHEN WE LIVE THE  
BEAUTIFUL MYSTERY OF LIFE SO TOTALLY, JOY  
DAWNS.’

Why meditation is non-negotiable to your mental health

GURUDEV SRI SRI RAVI SHANKAR

See, in schools, teachers often tell children not to get angry or not to feel sad. But nobody teaches you how not to get angry or how to handle this restless mind or negative emotions. We teach dental hygiene to our children, but forget to teach them about mental hygiene. What is mental hygiene? Taking care of your mind is mental hygiene. Everybody likes to wear clean clothes; everybody takes a shower daily. In the same way, we need to learn how to keep our minds free from the impressions we gather in the course of daily life.

Mental hygiene is necessary, and you can maintain it through practices like meditation. Taking some time out every day to consciously relax the mind and repose in your Self is like pressing the delete button on all the unnecessary files on your computer. It lets you start afresh with a clear slate. We teach children to brush their teeth when they are very young, so their teeth remain healthy and their smiles intact. But a smile comes not only from healthy teeth, but from a pleasant state of the mind, which you get from meditation to begin with. And then where does it lead us? Is it limited only to hygiene or wellness of the mind? No, it leads us to another dimension deep within us, which is a field of all possibilities.

The Antidote to Stress

A primary mental health concern today is stress, which does not go away just by talking or advising alone. We need to learn some techniques and tools to get rid of stress and calm the mind. Meditation is for those who have a lot to do in the world. It helps those with responsibilities, deadlines, challenges, and pressure. It gives you inner stability. It makes you peaceful within and dynamic outside. The quality of your life depends on the quality of your mind. If the mind is not centred, external influences can easily disturb it. Meditation helps you achieve that centredness.

The formula for stress is too much to do, too little time, and no energy to do it. Now, you cannot reduce your workload, nor can you have more time; you are left with only one thing to do, which is to increase your energy level. And this is where meditation can be of immense help.

Meditation gives you deep rest, deeper than the deepest sleep. When the mind becomes calm and centred, it gains access to the enormous intelligence and energy that reside within us. Meditation is a way to take that deep rest, and yet remain alert and conscious.

People have a common misconception that meditation is about focusing the mind. No, meditation is effortless and fun. It is what your soul has been looking for. When the mind becomes calmer with practice, you make better decisions and create a positive, harmonious atmosphere around you. When the mind is disturbed, your perception is disturbed, and any decision you take from that place is one you end up regretting.

What Does Science Say About Meditation and Stress?

Today, there are more than enough scientific

A primary mental health concern today is stress, which does not go away just by talking or advising alone. We need to learn some techniques and tools to get rid of stress and calm the mind



studies on how meditation benefits both body and mind. Studies show that stress, anxiety, and negative feelings create lesions in the hippocampus of the brain. When these lesions are removed through deep conscious relaxation, you begin to feel better, fresher, and more alert. Meditation empowers you to be in the present moment — not worried about the future or brooding over the past.

Another study shows that the amygdala, the central part of the brain, starts shrinking when you begin meditating. When the amygdala is larger, you are more prone to nervousness and other emotional imbalances. Scientists also say that grey matter increases in the brain with meditation. Grey matter processes information and controls muscles, memory, and emotions.

Researchers at Harvard Medical School have found that under stress, the brain may shift from cognitive to survival mode, which can cause memory loss over time, as more energy goes into surviving than cognition.

Chronic stress can lead to atrophy of brain mass and a decrease in its weight. These structural changes impact how you respond to stress, cognition, and memory. Stress can lead to irritability, moodiness, anxiety, and depression. Meditation works at the root of this by calming the system and restoring balance. Through meditation and breathing techniques, we can cleanse the mind of negative emotions and address mental stress effectively.

Modern medicine also supports these spiritual practices in reducing stress hormones. Psychiatrists at the National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences have found that cor-

tisol levels — the stress hormone — are significantly lower among practitioners of Sudarshankriya, a powerful breathing technique and meditation practice. Research from Sweden shows that Sudarshankriya reduces stress and anxiety and increases optimism and well-being. It is as effective as standard drug therapy, free of side effects, and does not strain the wallet. You can also increase your energy levels by chanting, which is a path to meditation. These chants have existed in human consciousness for thousands of years. When you chant, the deepest level of consciousness begins vibrating, energising you while calming your mind at the same time. It is because of these practices — singing bhajans and chanting — that people in ancient times did not experience many instances of depression, despite living modest lives in India. People chanted often, so the subtle energy remained high.

Meditation and Sleep

The biggest casualty of a stressful lifestyle is the quality of sleep. Every night when you sleep, you wake up energised and rejuvenated because the mind, body, and breath come together into one rhythm, eliminating the stress of the day. But there is another way of resting that is far superior to natural sleep — meditation. In meditation, you relax consciously.

With conscious meditation, or conscious rest, and this state of restful alertness, you can remove stress from the body-mind system in a very short period of time. It brings clarity to the mind, makes your skin glow, and your heart glow as well.

Power of Intention

There are more than 400 benefits of meditation; over 100 have been proven and documented. Meditation enhances intuition, creativity, decision-making, work-life balance, and interpersonal relationships. It also boosts immunity. Beyond these benefits, it strengthens the power of intention.

When there is disturbance in the world, if you can remain calm and maintain equanimity, ideas arise in your mind about what to do. Peace becomes possible when the mind is serene. When we are disturbed, we are of little help to ourselves or to others. People seek altered states of consciousness through harmful means because they want relief, but the state they seek is already present in their breath. Sit and meditate for a few minutes, and you experience joy within. Millions have emerged from harmful habits, violence, and extreme stress through meditation.

Is Meditation for Everybody?

It is a natural human tendency to seek joy that does not diminish and love that does not distort or turn into negative emotions such as anger, hate, or jealousy. Wanting comfort is natural because you once experienced that unmatched state of comfort in your mother's womb. There, you had to do nothing. Food was supplied effortlessly, and you floated peacefully. That is meditation, and meditation is absolute comfort. Meditation is an art. Just as everyone has ten fingers and only needs to learn how to use them to create something melodious with



IN SANSKRIT, IT IS SAID, “MANANATRAYATEITI MANTRA.” A MANTRA PROTECTS THE MIND FROM REPETITIVE THOUGHTS AND WORRIES. MANTRA-BASED MEDITATION TECHNIQUES SUCH AS SAHAJ SAMADHI HELP FREE THE MIND FROM THIS CYCLE

an instrument, similarly, as long as you have a mind with which you can think, you can meditate. Often, people complain that it is difficult to focus the mind or relax, but meditation does not require renunciation or drastic lifestyle changes. You do not need to go to the Himalayas or practise extreme penance. To meditate, you simply need to know how to relax — like making an effort to catch a train, but once you are on it, you can rest. You can begin meditation with the help of a qualified instructor who uses a mantra — a specific sound. In Sanskrit, it is said, “Mananatrayateiti mantra.” A mantra protects the mind from repetitive thoughts and worries. Mantra-based meditation techniques such as Sahaj Samadhi help free the mind from this cycle.

To meditate effortlessly, I offer three principles. First, *Achah* — “I want nothing.” Put all desires aside temporarily. Second, *Aprayatna* — “I do nothing.” Meditation is not about effort, focus, or control. Just let go. Third, *Akinchan* — “I am nothing.” Drop all labels you associate with yourself. For those moments, simply be nobody.

In the very first sitting, you experience something beautiful. With regular practice, once or twice a day, a transformation begins within you — one that others around you will also begin to notice, recognising the calm and positive energy you carry. No, enjoy the ride for a while. Be on it! Never mind! But see that your goal, or what you set as a goal, is already there where you are. And knowing this brings you serenity, beyond any words or explanation.

Former colonies demand reparations: Britain owes a debt – moral & otherwise

GYANESHWAR DAYAL

A few years ago, when ShashiTharoor stood at Oxford and argued that Britain owed a moral debt to India and its former colonies, his words were treated as an eloquent aside rather than a rallying cry. He suggested that even a simple apology would signal remorse for centuries of plunder and subjugation. At the time, he was largely a solitary voice. That is no longer the case. What was once an academic argument has now consolidated into the largest global demand for reparations in recorded history?

In an extraordinary development, former colonies of the British Empire have jointly advanced claims amounting to an estimated \$180 trillion. This unprecedented figure transforms decades of moral debate into a concrete economic reckoning-one that directly challenges a powerful imperial legacy that continues to shape global inequalities.

Momentum has gathered across continents. In Yemen, Sana'a University recently held an intellectual seminar examining British colonial crimes in southern Yemen. Timed with Independence Day, the event formed part of the ongoing Academics Toward al-Quds series. University President Dr Mohammed al-Bukhaiti emphasised the institution's responsibility to preserve national memory and expose the lasting impact of colonial domination, particularly in an era shaped by contested narratives and information warfare. Dr Zaid al-Warith, Assistant Rector for Centres Affairs, reminded participants that such anniversaries are not ceremonial markers; they carry the weight of generations who resisted British rule with persistence and resolve. The seminar underscored the enduring relevance of colonial history to contemporary political and economic struggles.

The staggering global claim of \$180 trillion is a composite of demands emerging from nations across the Caribbean, Africa and Asia. It reflects decades of research, the maturation of reparatory discourse, and a coordinated diplomatic realignment. African



leaders, meeting in Algiers for their second major summit this year, advanced the movement into a decisive phase. Preliminary assessments from the African Union estimate damages inflicted by British colonial rule on the continent at \$100-120 trillion, while Nigeria has independently lodged a \$5 trillion claim.

The Caribbean Community (CARICOM) has also intensified its efforts. During a visit to London in mid-November, its leaders pressed Prime Minister Sir KeirStarmer directly, reiterating collective claims valued at \$24 trillion, including Barbados's assessment of \$4.9 trillion. Their arguments draw upon extensive documentation of long-term social and economic harm rooted in slavery and indenture.

India's position lends considerable weight to the global claim. A major Oxfam study published in 2024 estimated Britain's economic extraction from India at \$65 trillion-a figure now widely cited in international legal and academic circles. Scholars and legal experts in London note that while the scale of these demands is unprecedented, the depth and credibility of the underlying research give the claims a seriousness that international courts cannot easily dismiss. The documentary From Slaves

to Bond has further highlighted the difficulty of quantifying generational trauma, structural impoverishment and the enduring economic architecture of empire.

The debate arrives at a sensitive moment in British politics. A 2024 declaration signed by Sir KeirStarmer and 55 Commonwealth leaders acknowledged the need to address "reparatory justice" for the "abhorrent" transatlantic slave trade. Now, as Prime Minister, Starmer faces a formalised global demand that extends far beyond symbolic recognition. His government, however, continues to reject financial reparations, insisting that contemporary partnerships and development assistance remain the appropriate mechanisms for redress.

With \$180 trillion proposed as the starting point for negotiation, Britain is no longer confronted with abstract historical guilt, but with a detailed accounting of imperial extraction. The months ahead will determine whether this coordinated international push reshapes global frameworks of justice-or whether it stands as an unresolved reminder of a history the world is no longer prepared to ignore.

(The writer is a Senior Editor with The Pioneer)

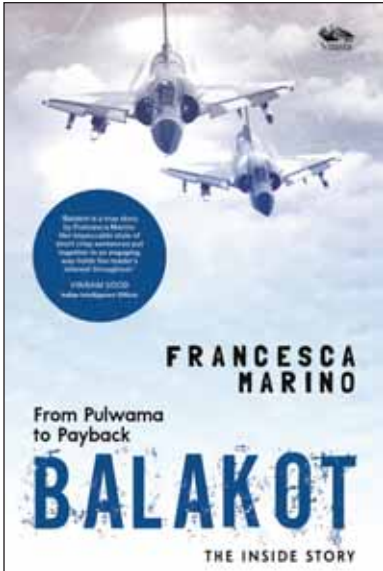
What really happened at Balakot: Unravelling Pakistan’s terror facade

REENA SINGH

More than six years after the Balakot air strikes, Italian journalist Francesca Marino brings readers a sharp, meticulously documented account of what really happened on the night of 26 February 2019. *Balakot: From Pulwama to Payback* cuts through political noise, propaganda, and deliberate misinformation to present one of the clearest factual narratives of the Indian Air Force's strike on a major Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) training camp deep inside Pakistan. The result is a book that is simple in its language but uncompromising in detail-a rare combination in reporting on the India-Pakistan conflict.

The core claim established in the book is unmistakable: the Indian strike hit its intended target, a functioning JeM training facility, killing between 150 and 170 terrorists, including trainers from outside Pakistan. Marino's evidence is neither speculative nor second-hand. She presents eyewitness testimony from a man who was at the camp that night — an account that describes the immediate chaos after the strike, the rapid arrival of Pakistani soldiers, and the urgent evacuation of bodies and injured militants to a nearby military hospital. According to this witness, the site was thereafter swiftly sanitised. Debris was removed overnight and dumped in a river; families of the dead were summoned and paid off-and silenced with threats. It is rare to find such direct testimony from inside a terror camp, and Marino uses it appropriately.

Where Pakistan attempted to weave a narrative of “missed targets”, “fallen trees”, and “dead crows”, Marino demonstrates how that story was constructed for Western media consumption. Pakistan insisted that Indian aircraft intruded and then fled, dropping bombs in empty fields. Marino's book dismantles this narrative with satellite imagery, independent intelligence, and on-ground reports from her long-established network in Pakistan-built over thirty years of reporting on South Asia. Her work exposes how Pakistan's establishment produced a



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coordinated cover-up to hide the scale of the damage, even going so far as to rebuild structures with the same rubble material to ensure that nothing looked new when the foreign press visited weeks later.

But *Balakot* is more than an investigation into one night's events. Marino places the strike against the long, grim history of Pakistan's terror machinery. She traces the origins of JeM, profiles its leadership and trainers in meticulous detail, and explains its links with Pakistan's shadowy power centres and the ISI. Through biographies, funding trails, and the mapping of multiple training camps, she shows how deeply the Pakistani state — not just its rogue elements — has been invested in terrorism. These sections sometimes read like intelligence dossiers, but they enrich the reader's understanding of the larger ecosystem in which Balakot occurred.

A key strength of the book lies in its laying out of how ordinary Pakistani cit-

izens — many of them migrants in Europe — are drawn into this system. Marino documents how money is channelled from overseas to keep the terror infrastructure running, and how networks of mosques and religious schools contribute to ideological recruitment. She also discusses the use of social media platforms by these terror outfits-Twitter, Facebook, and X — as tools of propaganda, radicalisation, and fund-raising. The book does not exaggerate these points; it presents them plainly, supported by sources and patterns that have been observed for years.

One of the most important sections in Balakot is Marino's exclusive interview with Air Chief Marshal Birender Singh Dhanoa, who was heading the Indian Air Force at the time of the strike. Dhanoa offers a clear, jargon-free explanation of the operation: the choice of bombs, the precision of the targeting, and the unique method of triggering explosives inside a cavity to maximise shrapnel and contain the blast radius. His account stands in stark contrast to the Pakistani narrative — it is measured, technical, and evidence-based. For readers trying to understand what exactly happened that night, this interview alone is worth the price of the book.

Some parts of the narrative read with the pace and tension of detective fiction-Marino pieces together movements, timelines, intelligence inputs, reactions, and cover-up operations with the skill of a storyteller. Other chapters, listing camps, biographies, and funding chains, are more sober and documentary in tone. Together, they form a comprehensive picture of the terror apparatus, the international media's frequent gullibility, and the geopolitical stakes that continue to define India-Pakistan relations.

Marino is a journalist who has taken risks that few foreign reporters have been willing to take in Pakistan. Her access to both official sources and ordinary locals, especially those wary of the Pakistani state, gives the book its depth. This combination-of high-level interviews and grassroots testimony-allows her to connect dots across borders and institutions in a way that few journalists can.

For the complete book review please see our website www.dailypioneer.com

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