





# Classifieds

## BEDKHALI NOTICE

**I, Sandeep Kumar**, son of Shri Suraj Bhan, resident of village Bagpur, Tehsil Beri, District Jhajjar, declare that my son Sumit is beyond my and my family's control and acts as per his own will. Therefore, I hereby evict him from all my movable and immovable properties. Anyone dealing with him in the future will be responsible for his own dealings. Neither I nor any member of my family will be responsible for any such dealings.

**I, Mohanjit Kaur** W/o Late Sh. Jarnail Singh R/o Village Tira, Tehsil Kharar, Distt. Mohali declare that my daughter Jaspreet Kaur D/o Late Sh. Jarnail Singh is out of my control. I disown her from all my moveable / Immoveable properties. Anybody dealing with her will do so at his /her own risk and responsibility.

**I, Ashok Kumar** S/o Sh. Shobhit Thakur & Rekha Devi W/o Ashok Kumar, R/o Near Veer Ki Hatti, Chhota Bazar, Thanesar, Tehsil Thanesar, District Kurukshetra, declare that our son Rakesh Kumar is beyond our control. Therefore, we disown him from all our movable and immovable property. Anyone who transacts with him in the future will be responsible for their own actions.

**I Suman** W/o Rajesh Kumar R/o House No. 1960, New Indira Colony Manimajra, Sector 13, Chandigarh inform that my son Aman and his wife Shivani are out of my control. I Disown them from my all moveable and Immoveable Properties. Anybody who deal with them will do at their own Risk.

**I Shimla Devi** W/o Late Sh. Jai Singh, R/o House No. 3501, Maloya Colony, Chandigarh informed that my son's Sonu and his wife Poonam and 2nd son Monu and his wife Rajji all are out of my control. I Disown them from my all moveable and immovable properties. Anybody who deals with them will do at their own risk.

**I, Chander Shekhar** S/o Ramkishan R/o Vill-Juan, Sonipat declare that my son Saurabh is out of my control. So I disown him from my all movable/ Immoveable property. Any body deals with them at their own risk.

**I, Gurpal Kaur** W/o Late Gurdial Singh R/o H. No. 104, Gilco Valley, Rupnagar, disown my daughter-in-law Gurpreet Kaur W/o Late Harpreet Singh from movable/ immovable property as she is beyond my control. Anybody deals her shall be self responsible.

**I, Santro Devi** W/o Om Prakash R/o H. No. 297 Ward No. 30 Buda Baba Basti, Vikas Nagar Jind Tehsil and District Jind declared that my son Krishan and his wife Darshana are out of me and my family members control. So, I disown both of them from my movable and immovable property. Anyone dealings with them will be solely responsible. I and my family members will be not responsible.

**We, Surendra** Singh Ahlawat S/o Sh. Maha Singh and Anita Kumari Ahlawat W/o Sh. Surendra Singh Ahlawat R/o 781/7 Near Herbal Park, Sector 27 Madanpur, Panchkula, Haryana declare that our Son Rahul and his wife Nidhi are out of our control. Therefore, we disown our son, his wife from our movable and immovable property.

## PUBLIC NOTICE

**I Mohamad Abas** s/o Jumrati r/o Ganga ram colony kacha phatak near BSNL tower distt panipat declared I had disowned my son Ahsan Ali and his wife Sahana through publication in Hindi News on 04-07-2023 and in English News paper on 18-07-2023. That now I have cancelled the eviction of my son Ahsan Ali and also accepted my son Ahsan Ali into the family who will have equal share of his own in my moveable and immovable properties.

**I, Samsu Din** S/o Basarath R/o 926-B, Small Flats, Dhanas, UT, Chandigarh declare that my father's name mentioned as Yad Ali which is wrong name in allotment letter record. Its No. 515728/RBL-2318/BLA/2024. My father correct name is Basarath. All concerned please note.

**I, Mahender** s/o Amar Singh, r/o Vill. Sehari, Teh. Kharkhoda, District Sonipat, declare that my name is recorded as Mohinder Singh in my 10th mark sheet, which is incorrect. My correct name, as per my other documents, is Mahender, which should be corrected in my 10th DMC.

**I am** Balvinder Kumar, son of Hari pal, village and post office Bajrur Tehsil Anandpur Sahib District Ropar Pin 140119 Punjab (India). There is a spelling mistake in my name, it is written as Balvinder Kumar. Actually, my name has a W in it. From today, Balvinder Kumar should be read and written as Balwinder Kumar.

**I, Parsini Devi** W/o Sarwan Ram R/o Vill: Pandori Beet Po. Kot Malra P.S. & Teh-Garhshankar Distt. Hoshiarpur declare that I have changed my name from Persini Devi to Parsini Devi as per my Aadhar Card and Pan Card and I have changed my DOB from 03-07-1962 to 26-02-1956.

## CHANGE OF NAME

**I, Madalsa Pundir** W/o Surender Singh R/o H.No. 430, VPO Barwala, Tehsil & Distt. Panchkula, Haryana, my name Madalsa and date of birth 01.01.1985 wrongly entered in my Aadhaar Card. My correct name is Madalsa Pundir and date of birth is 07.07.1983.

**I, Harmeet Singh** S/o Gurmit Singh Johal R/o # 64/B, SBP Homes, Sector 126, Mohali have changed my name from Harmeet Singh to Harmeet Singh Johal.

**I, Smt. Nirmla** Devi Mother of 16013935F Rank-Hav. Name: Sunil Kumar of 16 RAJ RIF, C/o- 56- APO R/o Vill. Farmana, Teh. Kharkhoda, Distt. Sonipat, Haryana declares that in my son's service records, my date of birth is wrongly entered as 01/07/1960. My actual date of birth is 01/01/1958. Please correct it.

**I Taranbir Kaur** W/o Sh. Harvinder Singh R/o Village Salaroo, Karnal Haryana have changed my name from Tarnbir Kaur to Taranbir Kaur.

**I, Rakesh** S/o Sh. Raghubir Singh R/o Vill-Bhadana,(190), Teh.& Distt- Sonipat declare that In my son's birthday certificate my name is Rakesh Dahiya wrongly written. But my all documents in my correct name is Rakesh . Pls correct it.

**I, Sunil Kumar** Ex. Army No. 3196622N, Rank NK 19, Jat Regiment s/o Krishan Kumar r/o Kagdana, Tehsil & District Sirsa Haryana in my army service record my wife's name mentioned as Sushiala. Which is incorrect. Correct name is Sushila Rani as per her all other government documents. Which may be amended accordingly.

**I, Chandro Devi** w/o late Bhagwana R/o Village Jui Khurd (65) Tehsil and District Bhiwani, Haryana Nagar have changed my name from Chandro Devi to Chando.

**I Anmol Rattan** kumar s/o Rajender Nath kumar r/o h.no.518-R model town panipat declared change my name from Anmol Rattan to Anmol Rattan kumar and in future my name is Anmol Rattan kumar.

**I, Kamlesh** w/o Jai Parkash R/o Village Barheri, Post Mandhar, Tehsil Radaur, Distt Yamunanagar have changed my name from Kamlesh Kumari to Kamlesh.

**I, Harish Chander** S/o Late Sh. Ram Swaroop R/o # 7, Gali no. 1, Luxmi Nagar, Sarojini Colony, Distt. Yamunanagar have changed my name from Harish Chand to Harish Chander.

**I, No** 14851274L Havildar Chella Pandiyan M, R/O House No 1/31, North Street, Soolapuram, Madurai, Tamil Nadu - 625535 have changed my Son's Name from C VARUNESH MUKUNDHAN to VARUNESH MUKUNDHAN C in my service record vide affidavit dated 21 Nov 2025 before Public Notary Pathankot, Punjab.

**I, Satish Katyal** S/o Mohan Lal R/o 333/3 Krishna Colony Near Old Bus Stand, Rohtak - 124001 declare That I have changed my name from Satish to Satish Katyal for all future purposes.

**I, Nirmala** W/o Mahipal R/o # 567, Dadu Majra Colony, Sector 38west, Chandigarh have changed my name to Nirmala Yadav.

**I, Amjad Khan** S/o Khalik Khan # 3461, Maloya Colony, Chandigarh have changed my minor son's name from Faij Khan to Mohd Faij Khan.

**I, Deepika** Thakur W/o Karan Thakur R/o Karan House Lower Keleston, Shimla Urban 171001 Himachal Pradesh declare that i have changed my name from Deepika Parihar to Deepika Thakur. All concerned please may note.

**I Deepti Ahuja** w/o Rupesh Dang r/o h no 1036/23 Near DAV School, DLF Colony, Rohtak 124001 Haryana have changed my name Deepti Ahuja to Deepti Dang for all future purposes. I also declare that Deepti Ahuja and Deepti Dang are one and the same person.

**I, Shameen** S/o Hamidulla Ansari, R/o H.no.976, Sector 13-17, Huda, Panipat, declare that I have changed my name from Shameen to Shamim Ansari, for all future purposes.

**I Munish** Kumar Dehinwal S/O Joginder Singh R/O H.No. 3A, Golden Tower-2, Kumbra, Distt. SAS Nagar (Pb)-140308, have changed my name from Munish Kumar Dehinwal to Munish Kumar Sharma.

**I, Yogesh** S/o Dharambir R/O Matanhail Tehsil Matanhail District Jhajjar have changed my name from Yogesh to Yogesh Suhag.

**I, Shyam Lal** S/O Ishar Dass R/O House no.149 ward no. 8 HUDA Colony Cheeka Tehsil Guhla District Kaithal Haryana have changed my name from Shyam Lal to Shyam Lal Garg.

**I, Puneya Munjal** S/o Deepak Munjal R/o h.no.74 Yamuna Enclave tehsil district Panipat I have changed my name from Puneya to Puneya Munjal for all future purposes.

**I, Umesh Chopra** S/o Anil Chopra R/o 118, Model Colony, Yamuna Nagar have changed my minor son's name from Aniket Chopra to Reyaansh Chopra.

**I, Nirmala** Wife of Sukdev Kumar R/o Village Shahpur, PO & Tehsil Bilaspur, Distt Yamuna Nagar have changed my name from Nirmala to Nirmala Devi and date of birth from 1/12/1970 to 4/12/1970.

**I Kulwinder** Kaur Rooparai W/O Kirpal Singh R/O House No 3506, Sector 32-D Chandigarh Have Changed My Name From Kulwinder Kaur Rooparai To Kalwinder Rooprai.

**I, Sarbjeet Singh** S/o Buta Singh R/o VPO Kasel, Distt. Tarn Taran, Punjab-143405 have changed my name from Sarbjeet Singh to Sarbjit Singh.

**I**, hitherto known as Ritik son of Rajinder Kumar resident of H.No.D-17/1549 gali No. 3, Kartar Nagar, Chheharta District Amritsar- 143105 Punjab have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Ritik Kumar. It is certified that I have complied with other legal requirements in this connection.

**I Danish Ansari** S/o Salim Ahmed r/o H.No 1632, Sector 45 burail Chandigarh have changed my name from Danish to Danish Ansari and addition of surname of my father from Salim to Salim Ahmed in all my documents.

**I, Reshmi Rani** D/o Sh. Om Parkash R/o H.No. 2201, Block B, Beta IT City, Sector 66, Chajju Majra, PO Dharamgarh District S.A.S Nagar, Punjab-140306 I have changed my name from Reshmi Rani to Reshima Rani.

**I Rekha Mariyam** W/o Raghubir Singh, R/o House No. 924/1, Sector 40-A Chandigarh have changed my name from Rekha Mariyam to Rekha.

**I Amar Singh** S/o Chhota Singh R/ o House no 278, sector 41-D, Badheri ,Chandigarh inform that Amar Singh and Amra Singh is the name of one and same person.

**I Bhupinder Singh** S/o Rawail Singh R/o House No. B-93, Gali No. 19, Ward No. 1, Kamau Colony, Naya Gaon, SAS Nagar Mohali Punjab have changed my name from Bhupinder Singh to Bhupinder Sharma.

**I Seeya** Alias Sita Kumari W/o Gianesh Verma R/o Flat No. 708A, Divine World, Landran Road, Near JTPL Society, Sector 115, Kharar, Post office Kharar, District SAS Nagar (Mohali) Punjab have changed my name from Seeya Alias Sita Kumari to Sita Kumari.

**I Tarun Saini** S/o Raghubir Singh, R/o House No 1967, Khera Colony, Out side Jundla Gate Karnal Haryana have changed my name from Tarun Saini to Tarun.

**I Suman Rani** W/o Wazir Singh R/o H.No.23, Sector 30, Urban Estate, Kurukshetra, Haryana-136118 has changed her name from Suman to Suman Rani.

**I, Chander Prabha** W/o Vijay Kumar Sharma R/o H.No.309, Sector 5, Urban Estate, Kurukshetra, Haryana-136118 have changed my name from Chander Prabha to Chander Prabha Sharma.

**I, Vaishali** W/O Prince Pal Singh R/O Po: Patti, Dist: Hoshiarpur, Punjab-146104 have changed my name to Vaishali Kaur.

**I, Preet Pal** Alias Preetpal Alias Preetpal Dhillon D/O Banta Singh W/O Ravish Khosla R/O House No 13, Aero Street, Sunny Enclave, Sector 123, Kharar, SAS Nagar (Mohali), Punjab-140301 have changed my name to Preet Pal.

**I, Ashwani** Sharma S/O Narinder Sharma R/O House Number-200, Josh Road, Near Mehma Singh House, Sector-11, Kharar, SAS Nagar (Mohali), Punjab-140301 have changed my name to Ashwani Kumar Sharma.

**I, Kamaljit** S/O Joginder Pal R/O Vpo Bajwara, District Hoshiarpur, Punjab-146023 have changed my name to Kamaljit Heer.

**I, Rahul** S/O Virender Singh R/O Bhaini, Maharajpur (121), Rohtak, Haryana-124112 have changed my name to Rahul Phogat.

**I, Sahil** S/O Virender Singh R/O Bhaini, Maharajpur (121), Rohtak, Haryana-124112 have changed my name to Sahil Phogat.

**I, Vikas** S/O Ishwar Singh R/O Bhaini, Maharajpur (121), Rohtak, Haryana-124112 have changed my name to Vikas Phogat.

**I, Gurdeep Singh** S/O Gurmial Singh R/O Bharpur Garh, Fatehgarh Sahib, Punjab-147203 have changed name of my minor son Tripanjot Singh aged 17 years to Tripanjot Singh Mann.

**I, Neelma** Chauhan W/O Hira Singh R/O Village Darshal, Jagothi(54), Shimla Rohri(T), Himachal Pradesh-171207 have changed my name to Nilma Devi.

**I, Jatinder** Kumar Sood S/O Chandu Lal Sood R/O House No.27, House Board Colony, Bindraband, Ward No.9, Tehsil Palampur, Kangra, Himachal Pradesh-176061 have changed my name to Jatinder Sood.

**I, Vijay Kumar** Sood S/O Chandu Lal Sood R/O Near Sal Garden Hotel, Ward No.1, Post Office Bandla Tea Estate, Palampur, Lohna(224), Kangra Himachal Pradesh-176061 have changed my name to Vijay Sood.

**I, Jatin** S/o Manoj Kumar R/o H. No. S-96, Near Sec-9-11, Model Town Extension Hisar declare that I have changed my name from Jatin to Jatin Garg for all future purpose.

**I, Manoj Kumar** S/o Om Parkash R/o H. No. S-96, Near Sec-9-11, Model Town Extension, Hisar declare that I have changed my name from Manoj Kumar to Manoj Garg for all future purpose.

**I, Surender Kumar** S/o Ram Kumar R/o H. No. 7/7, Ward No. 12, Bhamba Ram Colony Fatehabad declare that I have changed the name of my minor daughter from Ira to Ira Gupta for all future purpose.

**I, Shakuntla** (Old Name, which is to be changed) Wife of Sh. Vijeyender Resident of Village Bhojraj PO Dhaima Tehsil & District Hisar have changed my name from Shakuntla (Old Name) to Komal Devi (New Name)

**I, Ram Ditta** (Old Name, which is to be changed) Son of Sh. Hari Ram Resident of House No. 2830 P, Sector 4, Part 2, Hisar Tehsil & Distt. Hisar have changed my name from Ram Ditta (Old Name) to Ramesh Dhamija (New Name).

**I, Reena Kumari** W/o No. 15703615P Ex Sepoy Rajesh Kumar R/o Vill. & P.O. Kansala, Teh. & Distt. Rohtak (Haryana) declare that my name Reena is wrongly mentioned in my husband Army record. But my correct & actual name is Reena Kumari. vide affidavit dated 09.12.2025 before Notary Public Rohtak.

**I, Geeta** daughter of No. 6297852 Ex SIGMN Late Sh. Dayanand R/o Vill. & P.O. Kansala, Teh. & Distt. Rohtak (Haryana) declare that my name Gita and my DOB 15.02.1973 are wrongly mentioned in my father Army record. But my correct & actual name is Geeta and my correct DOB is 01.01.1971. vide affidavit dated 09.12.2025 before Notary Public Rohtak.

**I**, hitherto known as Ravinder Kumar S/o Girdhari Lal R/o VPO Laroi, District Jalandhar, Punjab 144201, have changed my name as Kumar Ravinder and now my given name Ravinder and my surname is Kumar. It is certified that I have complied with other legal requirements in this connection.

**I, Shyam Bihari** Singh Yadav S/o Uma Shankar R/o Nagsar, Newajurai, Distt Gazipur (UP) declare that in my Army Service documents name of my wife has been erroneously written as Renu Devi whereas her correct name is Renu Yadav W/o Shyam Bihari Singh Yadav.

**I** hitherto known as Mahinder Kaur W/O Chhota Singh R/O VPO Chhiniwal Khurd, District Barnala (Punjab) Pin Code 148104 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Mander Kaur.

**I**, hitherto Known as Prabhjot Kaur daughter of Angrej Singh residing at Kapurthala Chowk, Gandhi Vanita Ashram, District Jalandhar-144001 Punjab have changed my name and Shall hereafter be known as Sharanjit Kaur.

**I**, hitherto known as Palak Khanna daughter of Vinod Kumar wife of Vaneet Chopra residing at H.No.1363/10, Gali Tara Singh, Katra Safaid, District Amritsar-143001 Punjab have changed my name and Shall hereafter be known as Palak Chopra

**I**, hitherto known as Jaswinder Singh son of Harpal Singh residing at Booh Hawelian, Harike, District Tam Taran-143412 Punjab have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Bikramjeet Singh

**I**, hitherto Known as Amit son of Chajju Ram residing at Mohalla Kashmiri, Sujampur (Rural) PO Sujampur, District Pathankot-145023 Punjab have changed my name and Shall hereafter be known as Amit Kumar

**I**, hitherto Known as Ravneet Kaur wife of Harpreet Singh Chhina residing at H.No.16-D, Guru Amar Dass Avenue, Ajnala Road, District Amritsar-143001 Punjab have changed my name and Shall hereafter be known as Ravneet Kaur Chhina.

**I**, hitherto Known as Aashiya daughter of Deepak Kumar residing at Nagpal Nagari, Ward No.2, Street No.9, Malout, PO Malout District Muktsar-152101 Punjab have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Aashiya Kumar.

**It** is for general information that I, Roshni wife of Munni Ram residing at Village Gatauli Tehsil Gatoli, Tehsil Julana District Jind-126114 Haryana declare that name of mine has been wrongly written as Roshani in my Husband Muuni Ram PPO Account No.20177030301181. The actual name of mine is Roshni

**I**, hitherto known as Surjit Kaur wife of Nirmal Chand residing at Patti Khera, Phillaur, Rurkee, District Jalandhar-144311 Punjab have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Manjeet Kaur

**I, Rajeev Kumar** S/o Deshraj R/o 75-A, Harkrishan Avenue, Sultanwind Link Road, Amritsar have changed my name from Rajeev Kumar to Rajeev Sharma

**I, Veer Kaur** W/o Gurpreet Singh R/o Village Varpal Tehsil and District Amritsar have changed my name from Ravinder Kaur to Veer Kaur.

**I, Gurmeet Kaur** W/o Sukhwinder Singh R/o Village Manochahal, Tarn Taran have changed my name from Gurmeet Kaur to Gurmit Kaur.

**I, Susmita Maity** is wife of No. 14857256Y Sep Rabin dranath Matia resident of Sek Bar, Purba Medinipur, West Bengal- 721144 now at Army Recruiting Office, Amritsar have changed my name from Susmita Maity to Susmita Matia vide affidavit no. IN-PB00460787198943X dated 09-12-2025, before Notary Public, Amritsar

**I, Rama Salwan** W/o Kuldeep Raj R/o 270, New Urban Estate Lake Head Public School Mahal Sub Urban, PO Chheharta, Amritsar have changed my name from Rama Salwan to Rama Rani

**I, Kuldeep Raj** Salwan S/o Baldev Raj Salwan R/o 270, New Urban Estate Lake Head Public School Mahal Sub Urban, PO Chheharta, Amritsar have changed my name from Kuldeep Raj Salwan to Kuldeep Raj

**I, Nayanaben** Spouse of JC425437M Nb/ Sub Parmar Ashvin Kumar R/o Jivapar, Jamnagar, State Gujarat-361006 now at 15 Mech Inf C/o 56 APO have changed my name from Nayanaben to Parmar Nayna Ashvin Vide Affidavit No.IN-PB00463876964186X Dt.09.12.2025 Before Notary Public Amritsar

**I, Mamta**, spouse of No. JC 251426N Nb/Ris Joginder Singh R/o 85, NA Palri, Village Palri, Karola (14), Gurgaon, Haryana-122504 have changed my name from Mamta to Mamta Devi Vide Affidavit No.IN-PB00592561290731X Dt.09.12.2025 before notary public Amritsar

**I, Parvinder Singh** Bajaj S/o Joginder Singh R/o plot no 19 Gali no 1 Guru Nanak Colony Amritsar have changed my name from Parvinder Singh Bajaj to Parvinder Singh

**I, Sunpreet Singh** S/o Bhupinder Singh R/o H.No.116, Max City Bye Pass Kala Ghanupur, Amritsar have declare that Sunpreet is my Given name and Singh is my Surname.

**I, No 15125210M** Nk Gurmit Singh (Retd.) R/o VPO Hardorawal Tehsil Dera Baba Nanak, Distt. Gurdaspur, State Punjab declare that in my army service record my son's name Dilprit Singh is recorded, which is incorrect but my son's correct and exact name is Dilpreet Singh vide affidavit no IN-PB91243849423001X dated 06 December 2025 before Executive Magistrate Dera Baba Nanak.

**I, Danial** S/o Dial Masih R/o Village Kiri Afghana PO Bhattian Distt Gurdaspur (Punjab) have changed my name from Danial to Danial Masih. Concerned note.

**I, ANSHUL** CHAUDHARY S/o SANJAY CHAUDHARY R/o 1255 A/11, Dhand Road, Model Town, Kaithal, Tehsil and District Kaithal, informs that I have Changed the Name of my Minor Son KIYANSH to KIYANSH CHAUDHARY. Call him KIYANSH CHAUDHARY in future.

**I, Dharmvir** S/o Sh. Ramji Lal R/o Bhairi Akbar Pur Teh. Uklana Distt. Hisar (Haryana) -125113 have changed my name from Dharmbir to Dharmvir, and all in the future, my real name is Dharmvir.

**I Kusum Rani** alias Asha Rani D/o Shiv Dayal wife of Bhim Sain, R/o House No. 5, Village Paharipur, Jagadhri, Yamuna Nagar, Haryana - 135001, have changed my name to Asha Rani for all purposes.

**I, Indu** W/o Vikas Mehra R/o # 1221 Sector 39-B, Chandigarh, have changed my name to Indu Mehra.

**I, Rajender** Kumar, (Old Name, which is to be changed) S/o Shri Mam Raj Resident of 275 Near Bhumiya Kheda Bilaspur PO Bilaspur Tehsil Bilaspur Distt. Yamuna Nagar (Haryana) have changed my name from Rajender Kumar (old name) to Rajinder Kumar (New name)

**I, Mukesh** W/o Late Pardyuman Kumar, House No. 243 G Block Nangal, Tehsil Nangal, (Distt Rupnagar) declare that Mukesh and Mukesh Berwal both are name of same person.

**I, Satish Kumar** S/o Tilak Raj, Dabkhera Upper, Ropar declare that Kumar is my surname and name is Satish.

**I, Kanahiya Lal** Yadav S/o Kedar Nath, 174 Shastri Nagar Road, Manimajra Sector 13 Chandigarh, have changed name to Kanhiya Lal

**I, Jyoti Rani** W/o late Virendra R/o village Bhalot, district Rohtak, declare that in my PAN card my name is written as Choti and date of birth is 01/01/1995 and instead of my father, my husband's name is written which is wrong. My correct name is Jyoti Rani and date of birth is 04/12/1995. my father's name is kulbir.

**I, Naseem** Ahmed S/o Yasin Ahmed R/o Plot No. 2, Street No.1, Rajpura Road, Gobind Bagh, Patiala (Punjab) have changed my name from MD Naseem Ahmed to Naseem Ahmed.

**I, Rekha** Legally Wedded Wife of Army No. 14931582Y Rank: Hav. Name: Devi Charan Unit: 6 Mech Inf. (1 Garh Rif.) Pin 911706 C/o 56 APO, Resident of Bodh Vihar Colony Koopa, Road Sadabad, Hathras, Uttar Pradesh Pin- 281306 have changed my name from Rekha to Rekha Devi.

**I, Shreya** D/o Sh. Mukesh Kumar R/o H.no. 119, Vill- Baroda Mor, Gohana, Sonipat declare that in my all documents my father's name is wrongly written as Mukesh. But my father's correct name is Mukesh Kumar. Pls correct it.

**I, Mukesh Kumar** S/o Hawa Singh R/o H.no. 119, Vill- Baroda Mor, Gohana, Sonipat declare that in my daughter Shruti's all documents my name is wrongly mentioned as Mukesh. But my correct name is Mukesh Kumar. Pls correct it.

**I Narender** Kumar (465459843803) Son of Sh.Mehar Singh Resident Village Gijhi Tehsil Sampla Distt Rohtak Declare that I have changed my son name from Vishwas to Vishwas kumar.

**I**, hitherto known as Arpita Soni W/o Shivam Kakkar R/o HIG Flat No. 223 DU-1, Society-1, Guru Gobind Singh Avenue, Jalandhar, Punjab-144001 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Arpita Kakkar.

**I**, hitherto known as Rajbeer S/o Harjinder Singh R/o Vill. Ralhan, PO. Khudda, Tehsil Dasuya, Hoshiarpur, Punjab-144305 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Rajbeer Singh Banwait.

**I**, hitherto known as Gaganpreet Singh S/o Baljinder Singh R/o Ward No. 8, Sham Chaurasi, Distt. Hoshiarpur, Punjab have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Singh Gaganpreet.

**I, Joginder Kumar** S/o Mangat Ram R/o VPO. Wadala, Nakodar Road, Distt. Jalandhar have changed my name to Given name as Joginder & Surname as Kumar.

**I, Apinder Jeet** Kaur W/o Harjinder Singh Parmar R/o H.No.16, Gali No.1, New Joginder Nagar, P.A.P Lines, Jalandhar have changed my name from Apinder Jeet Kaur to Apinder Jeet.

**Continuity Pg. No. 06**



# Suspension Deepens Congress Rift as Dr Navjot Kaur Launches Fresh Barrage of Corruption Charges

MONIKA MALIK ■ Chandigarh

The simmering turmoil within the Punjab Congress spilled out into the open once again on Tuesday as suspended party leader Dr Navjot Kaur Sidhu refused to soften her stance and instead sharpened her attack on the party's top leadership, triggering a fresh political storm. Declaring that she would "never stand with thieves", Dr Navjot Kaur dismissed her suspension as illegitimate, while questioning the authority of state party chief Amarinder Singh Raja Warring, and accusing the senior leaders of corruption, land grabbing, ticket-sale rackets and criminal links.

Dr Navjot Kaur, addressing the media in Amritsar, said that the suspension was issued by a party chief "whom no one accepts", asserting that similar notices had earlier been issued to others as well. She claimed that she remained in constant touch with the party high

command and alleged that "four or five people" had hijacked the organization. "If they are removed, the true picture of the Congress would emerge," she said.

Her sharpest attacks were directed at Gurdaspur MP and former Deputy Chief Minister Sukhjinder Singh Randhawa, against whom she leveled allegations of links with smugglers and questioned the source of his extensive farmland. Dr Navjot Kaur alleged that party tickets were sold for money in Rajasthan, leading to the party's defeat there, and claimed Randhawa could not even ensure his wife's electoral victory. She further accused him of stabbing her husband, Navjot Singh Sidhu, in the back.

Referring to alleged encroachments in the Shivalik range, Dr Navjot Kaur claimed that 5,000 to 10,000 acres of land had been illegally occupied and were now being regularized by Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann. She said that she had raised the issue repeatedly and wanted Rahul Gandhi to take it up as a mass

campaign. However, she blamed "people close to him" for delaying action. By the time she received an appointment at the Governor's office, she said, the moment had passed.

Dr Navjot Kaur also pulled her husband into the political crossfire, revealing that Navjot Singh Sidhu had distanced himself from the controversy. "He told me I have my own mind and that he is staying away from all this now," she said, adding that those who once accused him of destroying the Congress were the same people who now failed to demonstrate unity, despite projecting "five chief ministers within the party".

On the contentious issue of money in politics, Dr Navjot Kaur reiterated her earlier remark that becoming chief minister requires a "Rs 500 crore suitcase", though she maintained that no one had ever directly demanded money from her. She said that she would not disclose details of her conversations with the high command.

Meanwhile, Randhawa

has served her a legal notice demanding an apology within seven days for alleging his links with gangsters and accusing him of selling tickets for cash in Rajasthan. Failure to comply, he warned, would invite legal action. Responding, Dr Navjot Kaur stood by her claims.

After her suspension, Dr Navjot Kaur unleashed a scathing attack on Raja Warring, refusing to recognize him as state president and describing him as "insensitive, irresponsible, morally dishonest and corrupt". She questioned why Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann was "protecting" Warring despite what she termed serious cases including those related to land and arrests. She accused Warring of being more focused on undermining Navjot Sidhu — whom she called his former mentor — than on strengthening the party, and blamed his "indecent statements" for electoral losses.

Dr Navjot Kaur also alleged double standards in

party discipline, asking why the disciplinary committee remained silent when Congress leaders openly supported rival candidates during earlier elections, yet acted swiftly against her.

Her remarks sparked immediate backlash from party leaders. Randhawa countered by asking how much money Navjot Sidhu had allegedly paid to become a Minister and later the state Congress chief. He alleged that the real threat to the Congress came from people like her, accusing them of destabilizing the party as elections draw near.

Leader of the Congress Legislature Party (CLP) Pratap Singh Bajwa termed Dr Navjot Kaur's allegations "baseless" and defended the suspension as a timely and necessary step to enforce discipline. "You cannot attack one person while claiming a problem with someone else," he said, stressing the need to keep the party united.

Congress leader Kulbir Zira went further, alleging that Dr Navjot Kaur ignored

even her husband's advice and accused her of acting at the BJP's behest to weaken the Congress. He also made a personal attack, suggesting medical consultation.

Karanbir Singh Burj, accused by Dr Navjot Kaur of buying Tarn Taran by-election ticket for Rs 10 crore, strongly denied the charge, saying that neither he paid nor was ever asked for money and that he was willing to swear by his statement in a gurdwara.

**FOUR DEFAMATION NOTICES PUSH DR NAVJOT KAUR DEEPER INTO CRISIS**

Mounting legal trouble and intensifying political confrontation have cornered suspended Congress leader Dr Navjot Kaur Sidhu, who is now facing two fresh defamation notices — one from Gurdaspur MP Sukhjinder Singh Randhawa and another from former minister Anil Joshi — over her recent explosive public statements. With this, the total number of legal

notices served on her has now risen to four, marking a steep escalation in the ongoing turmoil within the Punjab Congress.

The latest notice from senior Congress leader Randhawa came after Dr Navjot Kaur's remarks in which she accused him of having links with gangsters and of indulging in corruption, including alleged irregularities in the distribution of Congress tickets during the party's Rajasthan charge. Terming the allegations false, baseless, and defamatory, Randhawa has demanded a public and unconditional apology within seven days, warning that failure to comply would invite legal action. It is important to note that no case has yet been filed in court — only a legal notice has been served at this stage.

Randhawa's notice stated that the accusations were made without evidence and were aimed at damaging his public reputation, which he said he has built over decades of public service. The notice also restrained

Dr Navjot Kaur from making any further defamatory remarks against him.

Almost simultaneously, Dr Navjot Kaur received another defamation notice from former minister Anil Joshi after she made sharp remarks about him, describing him as "frustrated". She alleged that he had paid money to join the Congress, and claimed that he was now preparing to return to the Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD). Offended by the remarks, Joshi sent her a legal notice seeking an apology and warning of legal consequences if she failed to withdraw the statements.

Significantly, this is the fourth legal notice served on Dr Navjot Kaur. Before Randhawa and Joshi, notices had already been sent by Karanbir Burj, the Congress candidate in the Tarn Taran bypoll, and Rajbir Singh Bhullar, the Tarn Taran district Congress president, both objecting to her allegations of money being taken for party tickets.

## Haryana CM releases 'Handbook for Executive Magistrates'; Says it will guide future generations

PNS ■ Chandigarh

Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini on Tuesday released the 'Handbook for Executive Magistrates' in Chandigarh. The book has been authored by retired IAS officer KK Khandelwal and Apoorva Kumar Singh, Additional Chief Secretary to the Government of Haryana.

The book launch ceremony, organized under the aegis of the Haryana IAS Officers' Association, was attended by office-bearers of the Association and several senior administrative officers. On this occasion, Amit Agrawal, Secretary, Haryana IAS Officers' Association, presented a memento to the Chief Minister on behalf of the Association.

The Chief Minister described this moment as meaningful for the state's administrative and judicial systems, stating that it is not just a simple ceremony but a celebration of ideas. When a book is written, it is not merely a compilation of words, but an expression of the author's thoughts, discipline, and emotions. A book is not just an adornment for libraries; it becomes a guide for future generations. He said that this book will play an important role in strengthening the sacred Constitution of Baba Saheb Dr Bhimrao Ambedkar.

Saini said that the release



is historic because the book has been published at a time when a new chapter has begun in the country's criminal justice system. The Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023 has replaced the Criminal Procedure Code, 1973. This reform is a decisive step toward making the justice process faster, simpler, more transparent, and technologically stronger.

He said that the State Government has fully implemented all three new criminal laws in the state. In such transformational times, the role of Executive Magistrates becomes even more crucial because they are the pillars of the administrative system—directly responsible for law and order, public safety, peace, and impartial justice.

Saini said that the specialty of this book is that it is not merely a compilation of laws. It is a comprehensive guide presenting, in a simple and clear manner, every aspect, from the role and powers of Executive Magistrates to practical procedures, legal

requirements, and their application in ground situations. Written in 10 parts and 45 chapters, this book is a complete reference text in itself.

The Chief Minister said that the book includes detailed, analytical, and highly practical explanations of various aspects such as preventive justice, security proceedings, magisterial inquiries, inquest proceedings, identification parades, maintaining public order, riot control, defamation, contempt, disciplinary powers, and more. He expressed confidence that this book will guide new, young, and experienced officers, provide clarity, and strengthen their decision-making ability.

Highlighting the contributions of both authors, the Chief Minister said that KK Khandelwal's vast experience as an engineer, legal expert, administrator, writer, and public servant has been invaluable for the administrative system.

Currently, as the Chief National Commissioner of Bharat Scouts and Guides, his leadership is inspiring young people toward nation-building. Similarly, Additional Chief Secretary Apoorva Kumar Singh has given new direction to the state through his leadership in important departments such as Power, Town and Country Planning, Urban Estates, Mining, Irrigation, and Water Resources. This book is an excellent synthesis of both their experience and vision.

Saini said that officers often face situations in which major decisions must be taken within minutes. In such moments, balance between experience and law helps an officer become capable and effective. This book will help strengthen that balance. He said that the Haryana Government will continue to give top priority to good governance, transparency, and accountable administration. The goal is to make every level of administration simple, safe, and respectful for citizens, he added.

## Punjab CM Mann holds Investment Road Show in South Korea

PNS ■ Chandigarh

An investment Road show by Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann, on concluding day of his South Korea visit, saw participation by leading industrial giants, who evinced their keen interest in investing in the state.

A statement issued here said, Mann addressed the business leaders and highlighted Punjab's transformation into a stable, transparent, and future-ready investment destination. He said that Punjab's robust industrial ecosystem, reliable and cost-competitive power, peaceful labour relations, a talented, resilient and hardworking workforce, coupled with seamless connectivity to major markets makes it a most preferable investment destination. Bhagwant Singh Mann reiterated that Punjab's governance model places the investor at the centre,



ensuring predictability, efficiency, and full support throughout the business lifecycle.

The Chief Minister emphasized Punjab's vision to build technology-driven, innovation-led, and mutually beneficial partnerships with South Korea across priority sectors. He reinforced the commitment of the Punjab government to welcome South Korean companies, promoting innovation-led industrial development, and building long-term, mutually beneficial partnerships. He said that there is a huge scope for collaboration in varied

sectors like manufacturing, technology, food processing, and research.

Mann said that the state government is committed to build a future of shared prosperity through strong economic and cultural ties, adding that Punjab is a land known for courage, resilience, hard work, entrepreneurship, creativity, and a strong sense of community adding that the state has always played a major role in India's development especially in making the country self-reliant in food production.

The CM also showcased the state's governance and regulatory reforms, including the FastTrack Punjab single-window system offering 173 services, auto-deemed approvals, PAN-based business identifiers, and amendments to the Punjab Right to Business Act enabling time-bound in-principle approvals. He also highlighted Punjab's industrial infrastructure adding that over Rs 1.4 lakh

crore of on ground investments which have already been facilitated through Invest Punjab. Meanwhile, Bhagwant Singh Mann said that his vision is simple and clear to make Punjab a preferred destination for global industry by offering stability in policy, speed in decision-making, and a governance system that respects the time and trust of investors.

Mann called upon the investors to join the state at the 6th Progressive Punjab Investors' Summit scheduled from 13-15 March 2026 at the ISB Mohali campus, adding that the summit will showcase Punjab's progress, bring together leading industrial players, and present new opportunities for partnership and collaboration. He reiterated that the Punjab Government is fully dedicated to further giving fillip to the industrial development in the state for which no stone will be left unturned.

## Jakhar Seeks Court-Monitored Probe into Drug Money, Assets of Punjab MLAs

PNS ■ Chandigarh

The transformation of struggling politicians into owners of luxury cars, sprawling farmhouses, and soaring fortunes has triggered a fresh political storm in Punjab, with state BJP president Sunil Jakhar demanding a time-bound, court-monitored probe into the drug money trail and the assets of legislators who, he alleged, have "flourished like anything" after coming to

power.

Terming the narcotics economy the biggest source of Punjab's rot, Jakhar has sought the direct supervision of the Chief Justice of the Punjab and Haryana High Court to expose what he called the "mighty and powerful end beneficiaries" of the drug trade.

Reviving his June 16 letter to Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann amid the ongoing political turmoil and corruption allegations within the Congress, Jakhar

reiterated that only an investigation monitored at the highest judicial level can restore public confidence and establish the government's seriousness in combating drugs.

On Tuesday, he posted the letter on X, asserting that corruption has become "a cancer in society" and reminding the Chief Minister of his own statements on the issue.

Jakhar, in his letter, urged the Chief Minister to formally request the Chief Justice to

set up a credible, time-bound probe — either through a single agency or a multi-agency team — under judicial supervision. He stressed that without "following the money", the fight against drugs would remain meaningless. "Arresting thousands of drug addicts and small players will not make much difference. The elephant in the room has to be addressed," he wrote, asserting that drug cartels cannot thrive without political or official patronage.

# No Hospital Can Detain a Body, Even for Bills: Human Rights Panel Issues 'Dignity-of-the-Dead' Rules

MONIKA MALIK ■ Chandigarh

The dignity of the dead can no longer be held hostage to unpaid hospital bills, administrative gaps, or infrastructure failures. In a sweeping move to protect fundamental human rights beyond death, the Punjab State and Chandigarh (UT) Human Rights Commission (PSHRC) on Tuesday issued comprehensive, binding guidelines to the Health and Family Welfare Departments of Punjab and Chandigarh, mandating strict protocols for the handling, transportation and last rites of all deceased persons — especially the unclaimed, unidentified and economically vulnerable.

Among the most stringent directions is an absolute prohibition on the detention of dead bodies by any hospital — government or private — under any circumstance, including non-payment of medical bills. The

Commission has underlined that such detention violates the dignity of the deceased, inflicts deep trauma on grieving families, breaches medical ethics, and directly contradicts Supreme Court rulings that bar coercive withholding of human remains.

The guidelines, issued on December 9, 2025, have been formally forwarded by the Commission member Jitender Singh Shunty, a Padma Shri awardee, to the Principal Secretary, Health and Family Welfare, Punjab and Chandigarh. He has directed immediate and strict compliance by all government and private hospitals, district administrations, police authorities, municipal corporations, and all concerned agencies across Punjab and UT Chandigarh.

The Commission observed serious systemic gaps while examining health and human rights matters across the region. These include an

acute shortage or complete non-availability of mortuary vans and hearse vehicles, inadequate dead-body handling staff, insufficient mortuary storage and freezing capacity, lack of mobile mortuary freezers for emergencies and remote areas, and the absence of free or assisted cremation and burial facilities for the poor.

Equally disturbing was the practice brought to the Commission's notice wherein certain private hospitals allegedly detained bodies over unpaid bills — an act the Commission has now unequivocally banned.

The guidelines categorically stated that no hospital shall withhold a dead body for any reason, including financial disputes. They mandated that every deceased person, irrespective of caste, religion, gender, or socio-economic status, must be treated with dignity, honour, and respect.

- No hospital — govt or private — can detain a dead body for unpaid bills
- Dignity and respect must be ensured to every deceased person, without discrimination
- Unclaimed, unidentified, underprivileged bodies must receive full protection and support
- District authorities must ensure availability of mortuary vans and hearse services
- Adequate mortuary staff and freezing or storage capacity is mandatory
- Free or assisted cremation and burial must be provided where required
- Proper records and photographic documentation of all deceased bodies must be maintained
- Hospitals must immediately inform police in cases of unclaimed or unidentified bodies
- Police and hospitals must jointly ensure timely last rites as per religious practices
- All last rites must be completed with honour, dignity and respect

Special protection has been assured for unclaimed, unidentified, abandoned and underprivileged dead bodies, with clear instructions for support even after cremation where needed. District administrations have been directed to strengthen infrastructure by ensuring

the availability of mortuary vans, adequate freezing facilities, trained staff, free or assisted last rites, and proper documentation including photographic records. Hospitals are required to immediately inform the police in cases of unclaimed or unidentified bodies. Police and hospital authorities

must then act jointly to ensure timely cremation or burial according to known religious practices. The ultimate responsibility of every agency involved is to ensure the honourable and dignified completion of last rites.

The Commission has directed the Health Department to circulate and notify these guidelines to all concerned institutions without delay. Civil Surgeons, CMOs, Deputy Commissioners, Police officials and Municipal authorities have been brought directly under the compliance framework. The Health Department has also been asked to enforce accountability for any violations.

With these binding directives, the Human Rights Commission has sent a clear message: no one — claimed or unclaimed, rich or poor — will be denied dignity in death in Punjab and Chandigarh.

## UK Deputy High Commissioner calls on Haryana CM

PNS ■ Chandigarh

The UK Deputy High Commissioner Alba Smeriglio on Tuesday called on Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini. According to a Government official spokesperson, during the meeting, important discussions were held regarding leading British universities opening their campuses in Haryana. This initiative will create new opportunities for world-class education, advanced skills and employment for the youth of the state.

The Chief Minister said that India is steadily moving towards self-reliance and is on course to become a developed nation by the year 2047. In this journey, artificial intelligence and education will play a crucial role. Advancing towards this vision, the State Government is continuously working to make Haryana a global education hub and is making concerted efforts to facilitate the establishment of campuses of foreign universities in the state. The entry of British universities into Haryana will give a new dimension to the state's international academic identity, he added.

On this occasion, Alba Smeriglio expressed her commitment to working together on various projects in the future. The meeting also included detailed discussions on the demand for skilled labour in the United Kingdom and the employment and career opportunities available for youth from Haryana. Both sides agreed to enhance coordination and undertake joint initiatives for training and selection of young professionals. In addition, investment possibilities in key sectors such as automobiles, aviation, agriculture and defence equipment were also deliberated upon.

Saini apprised the UK delegation of Haryana's policies, industrial infrastructure and the state's excellent investment climate, and invited British investors to invest in Haryana. The meeting was organised by Haryana's Department of Foreign Cooperation, during which extensive discussions were held to further strengthen cooperation between the two countries.











# Classifieds

## CHANGE OF NAME

**I, Manpreet** S/o Paramjit R/o Moh. Navi Kothi, VPO Sarai Khas, Distt. Jalandhar have changed my name from Manpreet to Manpreet Singh.

**I, Kirandeep** D/o Joga Singh W/o Sandeep Singh R/o Village Atta, Po. Goraya, Tehsil Phillaur, Distt. Jalandhar have changed my name from Kirandeep to Kaur Kirandeep.

**I, NO.2707720H** Rank NK Name Chauhan Mukeshbhai Is Legally Husband Of Daxa (Wife) Is Presently Resident At S/O Gada Bhai, Vill- Talli, Po- Datha, Teh- Talaja, Distt- Bhavnagar, State- Gujarat, Pin- 364130. Have Changed My Wife Name In My Army Service Record From Daxa To Daxa Mukeshbhai Chauhan. Vide Affidavit No- In PB00744198652673X. Dated 09-12-2025 Before Notary Public District Court Gurdaspur Punjab.

**I, 17009866P** NK Wagh Ganesh Nivrutti Is Legally Father Of Manan (Son) Presently Resident At Wasari, Ta Malegaon, Washim Maharashtra, Pin - 444504, Have Changed My Son Name From Manan To Manan Ganesh Wagh Vide Affidavit No- In PB007471716336006X. Dated 09-12-2025 Before Notary Public District Court Gurdaspur Punjab.

**I Jagjit Singh** S/O Karnail Singh Resident Of Vill Dhehrwal Kiran P.O Bishankot Gurdaspur Punjab, I Have Changed My Name From Jagjit Singh To Singh Jagjit, Surname As Singh And Given Name As Jagjit.

**I, Gurmeet Singh** S/O Tara Singh R/O Village- Ganja. Po- Dorangla, Distt- Gurdaspur, Punjab, India. Declare That My Given Name As Gurmeet And My Surname As Singh.

**I, Arun Kumar** Thakral S/o Chiman Lal R/O Tilak Colony, Pehowa, Kurukshetra have changed my given name Arun Surname Kumar.

**I Mohinder Singh** S/O Ujjagar Singh R/O Vpo. Ghal Kalan Distt. Moga Have Changed My Name To Mahinder Singh.

**I, Dharmpal Singh** S/O Puran Singh R/O Vpo. Lopon, Tehsil Nihal Singh Wala, District Moga Have Changed My Name To Dharmpal Singh Dhalilwal.

**I Kamal Kishore** S/O Rajesh Kumar R/O Near Preet Dharan Kanda, Bharwai Road Kotla Gonsepur, Hoshiarpur Declare That My Given Name As Kamal And Surname As Kishore.

**I, Roop Lal** S/O Sarwan Ram R/O Mohalla Mast Nagar Satnampura Phagwara District Kapurthala, Punjab Have Changed My Minor Daughter's Name From Prema To Prema Mehmi.

**I, Jagdish Kaur** W/O Subhash Chander R/O Vpo. Nangal Majha, Tehsil Phagwara, District Kapurthala Have Changed My Name From Jagdish Kaur To Kaur Jagdish.

**I Paramjit Kaur** W/O Gurpreet Singh R/O Vpo Kaulgarh Teh Balachaur District Sbs Nagar Have Changed My Name Kaur As Surname Paramjit As Given Name.

**I, Akashdeep** Singh S/o Daljit Singh R/o Vill: Aladinpur, Tehsil & Distt. Tarn Taran-143401, declare that Akashdeep is my given name and Singh is my surname.

**I, Hardeep Singh** S/o Partap Singh R/o Sant Nagar Colony Khichian Po. & Teh-Mukerian Distt. Hoshiarpur, Punjab-144211, have changed my name from Hardip Singh to Hardeep Singh.

**I, Rajinder Pal** Singh S/o Balwinder Singh R/o Vill: Fattawal Po. & Teh- Mukerian Distt. Hoshiarpur Punjab-144211, have changed my name from Rajinderpal Singh to Singh Rajinder Pal.

**I, Bharti Devi** D/o Rajesh Kumar R/o Bhatha Colony Mukerian Po. & Teh-Mukerian Distt. Hoshiarpur Punjab-144211, have changed my name from Bharti to Bharti Devi.

**I, Surjit Singh** S/o Gurmukh Singh R/o Vill: Nikkuwal, Po. Jhinjri, Teh-Anandpur Sahib, Dist. Rupnagar (Pb) have changed my name from Surjeet Singh to Surjit Singh.

**I, Seema** W/o Balram Kumar R/o #50/4 Nai Abadi Khanna, Teh- Khanna Distt. Ludhiana-141401 have changed my name from Seema to Seema Rani.

**I, Jujhar Singh** S/o Satwant Singh R/o Vill: Shadipur Po. Mehmoodpur Teh-Guhla Distt. Kaithal (Haryana) have changed my name to Singh (surname) Jujhar.

**I, No 4466950F** Ex NK Kashmir Singh S/o Swaran Singh Village Mangarh PO Bhana Teh Dasuya Distt Hoshiarpur (Punjab) have changed the name of my daughter from Sablin Kaur to Savleen Kaur.

**I, No 4466950F** Ex NK Kashmir Singh S/o Swaran Singh Village Mangarh PO Bhana Teh Dasuya Distt Hoshiarpur (Punjab) have changed the name of my son from Jaslin Singh to Jasleen Singh.

**I, Surindra** Kumari W/o No 13729150 Late Rfn Jit Ram Village Talwandi Kanugo PO Sham Chaurasi Teh & Distt Hoshiarpur (Punjab) have changed my name from Surindra Kumari to Surinder Kaur.

**I, Gourav** S/o Daljit Singh R/o Ward No. 5, Azad Ngar, Khanna (Ludhiana) have changed my name to Gourav Mehra. Concerned please note.

**I, Veer** S/o Piara R/o Qutabpura (Ferozepur) have changed my name to Veer Singh.

**I, Paramjit Kaur** W/o Gurdeep Singh R/o Vill: Sultampur Po. Dayalpur Teh-Phillaur Distt. Jalandhar have changed my name from Paramjit Kaur to Paramjeet Kaur.

**I, Iqbal Singh** alias Iqbaljit Singh R/o Vill: Bhaini Po. Haripur Khalsa Teh-Phillaur Distt. Jalandhar have changed my name to Iqbaljit Singh.

**I Shukhwant Kaur** W/o Pankajdeep Singh (Doctor Jagtar Singh) R/o Near Santosh Mata Mandir Azad Nagar Khanna That Change My Name Shukhwant Kaur To Sukhwant Kaur All Noted

**I, Bhawanpreet** Singh S/O Ranjit Singh R/O Village Panjurkha, Tehsil Khanna (Ludhiana) Declare That My Name Be Read As Given Name Bhawanpreet And Surname Singh.

**I, Navkiran Kaur** W/O Parmraj Singh R/O W.No.07, Sunder Nagar, Samrala (Ludhiana) Declare That My Name Be Read As Given Name Navkiran And Surname Kaur.

**I, Gurjant Singh** S/O Jasmail Singh R/O VPO Ikolaha, Tehsil Khanna (Ludhiana) Declare That My Name Be Read As Given Name Gurjant And Surname Singh.

**I, Gurpreet Singh** S/o Amarjeet Singh R/o Vill: Malloke Teh-Zira Distt. Ferozepur have changed my name to Gurpreet Singh and Singh is my surname.

**I Amreek Singh** S/O Kandhara Singh Vill Bhail Dhaiwala Tehsil & Distt Tarn Taran I Have Changed My Name From Amreek Singh To Amrik Singh.

**I Rafiq Shah** S/O Alia Shah R/O House No-115, Chandigarh Road, Police Colony, Jamalpur, Ludhiana, Punjab - 141001 Have Changed My Name To Rafeek Shah.

**I, MARIYAPPAN** father of No 14838137N, Rank – Hav, Name – M. SENTHIL KUMAR, resident of Village & Post – GUDDUR CHOWTAHALLI, Tehsil & District – KRISHNAGIRI, State – TAMIL NADU, PIN – 635112, have changed my name and date of birth from MARIYAPPAN, DOB – 01/07/1962 (Old Name & DOB) to MARIYAPPAN MARIMUTHU, DOB – 30/03/1955 (New Name & DOB), vide affidavit dated 09 Dec 2025 sworn before Notary Public Satpal, Pathankot. Please correct it.

**I, DWARKA** am Mother of Army No: 2814331A Rank- NK Name- Shinde Girjalal Taterao Permanent Address: At Sultanvadi .Post: Pimplagaon, Teh: Phulmbri, Dist: Aurngabod, State: Maharashtra, Pin: 431111 declare that I have changed my name from DWARKA to DWARKABAI TATERAO SHINDE and Also Correct my Date of birth from 14/04/1973 to 01/01/1974. Vide Affidavit No: 11AA 219173, Dated: 09/12/2025

**I, SHUBHANGI** am legally Wedded Spouse of Army No: 2814331A Rank- NK Name- Shinde Girjalal Taterao Permanent Address: At Sultanvadi, Post: Pimplagaon, Teh: Phulmbri, Dist: Aurngabod, State: Maharashtra, Pin: 431111 declare that I have changed My Name from SHUBHANGI to SHUBHANGI GIRJALAL SHINDE. Vide Affidavit No: 11AA 219171, Dated: 09/12/2025

**I, KASTURABAI** am Mother of Army No- 2824181H Rank-Sep Name- Diwane Atul Ramesh Permanent Address: Shirwa, Kharbadi, Buldhana, State: Maharashtra, Pin: 443103 declare that I have changed my name from KASTURABAI to KASTURABAI RAMESH DIVANE. Vide Affidavit No: 11AA 219172, Dated: 09/12/2025

**I, MITRABAI** am Mother of Army No: 2821822Y Rank- Sep Name- Jayebhaye Bhimrao Balaji Permanent Address: At Hippraga (Shaha), Post- Hadoli (Br), Tehsil- Kandhar, Dist- Nanded, State- Maharashtra, Pin- 431724 declare that I have changed my name from MITRABAI to JAYEBHAYE MITRVANDA BALAJI and Also Correct my Date of birth from 01/01/1969 to 01/01/1982. Vide Affidavit No: 11AA 219170, Dated: 09/12/2025

**I, SANGEETHA** am legally Wedded Spouse of Army No- 18005806Y Rank- NK Name- Babu V Presently Posted at: GE Project Airforce Ambala Permanent Address: 32, Alagiri Samy 4th Street, Near E.B Transformer, Periyar Nagar, Vyasarpadi, Chennai, Tamil Nadu 600039 declare that I have changed My Name from SANGEETHA to SANGEETHA B. Vide Affidavit No: 11AA 219169, Dated: 09/12/2025

**I, ANJALI** Mahure Daughter of No. JC- 491893X Sub Daulat Singh resident of VPO- Bedham, Teh- Deeg, Dist - Bharatpur (Rajasthan) Pin-321203, have changed my Name from Anjali Mahure to Anjali Vide affidavit No.IN- PB00733433166388X dated 09 Dec 2025 before notary public Pathankot

**I, Banwari** Faujdar Son of JC-492549Y Sub Dhanpal Singh resident of Vill- Nagla Mahloni, Post- Mahloni, Tehsil- Bayana, District- Bharatpur, State- Rajasthan, Pin-321401, have changed my name from Banwari Faujdar to Banwari Foujdar Vide affidavit No.IN- PB00732832592789X dated 09 Dec 2025 before notary public Pathankot

I hitherto known as CHAMNO DEVI wife of SH. GIAN CHAND Resident of SCF No. 33, Harmilap Nagar, Phase-1, Baltana, District S.A.S. Nagar (Mohali) Punjab Pin Code 140604, India have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as CHIMNO.

**I, LAXMI** mother of No 14838137N, Rank – Hav, Name – M. SENTHIL KUMAR, resident of Village & Post – GUDDUR CHOWTAHALLI, Tehsil & District – KRISHNAGIRI, State – TAMIL NADU, PIN – 635112, have changed my name and date of birth from LAXMI, DOB – 01/07/1967 (Old Name & DOB) to LAKSHMI MARIYAPPAN, DOB – 18/01/1960 (New Name & DOB), vide affidavit dated 09 Dec 2025 sworn before Notary Public Satpal, Pathankot. Please correct it.

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## Impeachment bid is political intimidation: Andhra Dy CM

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE  
■ Amaravati



Andhra Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan on Tuesday dubbed the INDIA bloc constituents' impeachment move against a Madras High Court Judge as "political intimidation".

The Janasena Party founder charged that it was an attempt at "silencing" the judiciary.

Several opposition MPs, led by the DMK, on Tuesday submitted a notice to Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla to move a motion for the removal of Madras High Court judge GR Swaminathan, whose order directing Subramaniya Swamy temple authorities in Madurai's Thirupparankundram to ensure that a lamp is lit at the deepathoon (pillar) sparked a row.

"Over 120 MPs from the INDIA Bloc, led by the DMK, have weaponized the Constitution to call for the impeachment of a judge. This is not judicial accountability; this is blatant political intimidation," Kalyan said in a post on 'X'.

Why were certain political parties going to such extreme lengths to impeach a judge for a judgement that simply upholds the right to practice the Hindu faith, he asked.

"Is this not a cynical attempt to strong-arm and silence the broader judiciary," the actor-politician said.

Was this motion not a signal to all judges that they must be "careful" when ruling in cases about Hindu traditional practices and faith, he added.

"The selective outrage and weaponisation of the impeachment process in this case expose a disturbing bias. This incident only solidifies the urgent need for a unified institutional voice," Kalyan added.

Calling for the establishment of a 'Sanatana Dharma Rakshana Board' as the need of the hour, Kalyan asserted that devotees can actively manage their temples and religious affairs without the fear of alleged political interference or judicial overreach spurred by "political vendetta" under such as set up.

According to the deputy CM, when a constitutional

bench of the Supreme Court had delivered the Sabarimala judgment overturning a "centuries-old, deeply cherished custom" regarding entry into one of the most sacred Hindu sites, no judge was impeached.

Their ruling, which fundamentally altered a core religious practice, was met only with legal review petitions, not political motions for removal, he said.

However, he alleged that the political establishment has set a dramatically different standard now and a High Court Judge is being 'targeted' just because he delivered a judgement upholding the right of believers to light a lamp and practice a long-standing ritual on property legally recognised as belonging to a religious institution.

## It will be disaster if BJP comes to power in Bengal: Mamata

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ Kolkata



In what the State saffron leadership called a sign of "pre-Parivartan" (change) trepidation, Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Tuesday warned the people of Bengal against any possible takeover of power by the BJP saying, "there will be disaster if BJP comes to power in Bengal" vowing to prevent its surge at any cost.

The Chief Minister while addressing a rally at Cooch Behar in North Bengal alleged that special intensive revision (SIR) of electoral rolls would bring national citizenship register (NRC) and detention camps in the State vowing to prevent it at any cost. She asked the people to remain alert about their rights and "ensure that your names do not get deleted from the voters' lists."

On why she was "forced to comply to the orders of the Election Commission of India implementing the SIR regime in Bengal she said, "it was due to the threat of President's Rule that we had to do it or else they would have allowed the time to lapse and implemented President's Rule which would be a de facto BJP rule in Bengal and then they would have conducted and manipulated the elections."

"SIR is not a single scheme, it will bring in its trail NRC and detention camps this is all being done by the BJP to usurp power in our State and remember if Bengal goes into

the hands of the BJP then there will be disaster, there will be no self-respect, no peace, no security for the people there will be only jealousy and hatred and the whole State will become a detention camp," Banerjee said adding "we will not allow the State to turn into a detention camp, we will protect it at any cost we will not allow NRC in Bengal there will be no detention camp in our State I will prevent this at any cost."

The Chief Minister who rolled out a list of deprivation of the State at the hands of the Centre all in terms of clearance of central funds from MNREGA, rural housing and rural road construction schemes said how the Centre had the gall to find out ways to preempt the orders of the Court to prevent MNREGA dues to come to her State.

She said, that her Government received a letter from Delhi wherein a quarterly labour budget was demanded from the State Government. "Even after the Courts have ordered them to

clear the funds they have imposed a restrictive condition but where is the time to show it? This is December, and the election is due early next year then they are also talking about providing training, my question is when will you train and when will you give the jobs? I say this piece of paper is valueless." Bengal did not want mercy it asked for its rights, she said.

Hitting out at Prime Minister Narendra Modi for addressing writer Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay as "Bankim da" (brother Bankim) in Parliament — which was objected to by TMC MP Saugato Roy prompting the Prime Minister to correct his words calling him "Bankim Babu" — the Chief Minister demanded his apology saying, "you did not even show him the minimum respect he deserves. You should apologise for this, to the nation."

Chattopadhyay the writer of patriotic novel Ananda Math coined the word Vande Mataram. It is a part of India's National Song.

## Chandrayaan-3 reveals high electrical activity near Moon surface

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE  
■ Bengaluru

The electrical environment near the Moon's surface in the south polar region is far more active than previously understood.

In physics, plasma is often called the fourth state of matter, consisting of a mixture of charged particles, including ions and free electrons. Despite being electrically neutral overall, plasma is highly conductive and responds strongly to electromagnetic fields.

"The Moon's thin plasma environment, or lunar ionosphere, is governed by several major processes. Solar wind, a continuous stream of charged particles (primarily electrons and hydrogen and helium ions) ejected from the Sun's upper atmosphere, constantly

impinges on the Moon's surface," ISRO said.

This, along with the photoelectric effect where high-energy photons from the Sun knock out outer-shell, electrons from atoms on the surface and in the sparse atmosphere, causing ionisation is the primary mechanism for generating plasma.

The lunar plasma is further influenced by the deposition of charged particles originating from the Earth's magnetosphere (specifically the magnetotail) when the Moon passes through that region, typically for 3 to 5 days during 28 days, resulting in a constantly changing and dynamic electrical environment near the surface, ISRO said.



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### Order Order

## CBI arrests senior passport superintendent for influencing witnesses



The CBI has arrested a senior passport superintendent posted in Mumbai in a disproportionate assets case against him for allegedly trying to influence witnesses and mislead the investigation, officials said Tuesday.

The accused officer, Deepak Chandra, was booked in March this year for allegedly amassing illicit assets worth ₹85 lakh during his tenure at the regional passport office, Ghaziabad, from July 30, 2018, to September 30, 2024.

"During the course of investigation, a search was conducted at the residential premises of the accused, which led to the recovery of huge unaccounted cash of around ₹60.00 lakh, details of investments in immovable properties as well as details of various expenses of high magnitude," a CBI spokesperson said.

The CBI arrested Chandra on Tuesday night from Mumbai, where he is currently posted, when the agency found that he was allegedly influencing witnesses and deliberately, with malafide intention, tried to mislead the investigation, she said. He was produced before a special court in Ghaziabad, which sent him to CBI custody till December 12. "On the application of CBI, Special Judge, Anti-Corruption, CBI Court, Ghaziabad vide its order dated 17.09.2025 had also issued an ad-interim attachment order for attachment of his properties, including one residential flat and one commercial shop," she said.

## Shoegate fame lawyer thrashed in Karkardooma court



A lawyer who almost hurled a shoe at former Chief Justice of India BR Gavai was allegedly attacked inside Karkardooma district court premises on Tuesday. The video showed a group attacking 71-year-old Rakesh Kishore with a slipper, while the lawyer defended himself. The clip also showed the lawyer asking the attacker why he was beating him and then shouting several times, "Sanatan Dharm ki jai ho."

"There was a huge ruckus. We rushed to the spot on hearing the commotion," said advocates. On October 6, Rakesh Kishore approached the dais when a bench led by the ex-CJI was hearing the mentioning of cases by lawyers, removed his shoe, and tried to throw it at the judge. Later, the SC refused to initiate contempt action against him, though the Bar Council of India suspended him from practice.



# OTS with bank no ground to quash criminal cases: SC

J GOPIKRISHNAN  
■ New Delhi

In a diverse judgment within weeks, the Supreme Court's another bench on Tuesday held that One Time Settlement (OTS) with banks is not ground for quashing criminal cases. Holding that economic offences undermine public interest far beyond the immediate financial loss to a bank, the apex court has restored criminal proceedings against M/s Sarvodaya Highways Ltd and its directors in a loan fraud case involving approximately ₹52.5 crore. A Bench of Justice Vikram Nath and Justice Sandeep Mehta ruled that a one-time settlement (OTS) with the bank cannot justify quashing a prosecution where forged documents were allegedly used and a clear loss to the public exchequer is evident.

Meanwhile, in a curious development, another Bench comprising Justices JK Maheshwari and Vijay Bishnoi on November 19 allowed the fugitive Chetan-Nitish Sandesara brothers' firms to deposit ₹5,100 crore as OTS in the Registry by December 17 to avoid all cases, including criminal cases registered by various probe agencies. The apex court was agreeing to the Central Government which submitted the OTS scheme including withdrawing all cases in a sealed cover on November 18. With this order Supreme Court has allowed fugitive Sandesara brothers and their Sterling Group to go scot-free from all criminal cases filed by CBI, ED and Income Tax related to bank loan frauds by paying ₹5,100 crore, which is only 1/3 of the dues.

On Tuesday, in a diverse order, a



Justice Sandeep Mehta

Justice Vikram Nath

Bench of Justice Vikram Nath and Justice Sandeep Mehta set aside a 2022 judgment of the Punjab and Haryana High Court, which had quashed the CBI case after the company paid ₹41 crore under an OTS with the State Bank of Bikaner and Jaipur (now SBI). Allowing the CBI's appeal, the Court noted that the settlement amount was significantly lower than the actual liability and was accepted by the bank under compelling circumstances typical of recovery processes in NPA cases.

The case involved offences under Section 120B (criminal conspiracy) read with Sections 406 (criminal

breach of trust), 420 (cheating), 467, 468, 471 (forgery, fabrication etc) of the Indian Penal Code, 1860 and Section 13(2) read with 13(1)(d) of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988. Corruption case can't be quashed on settlement Referring to established precedents, the Bench observed that economic offences are not private disputes capable of compromise.

"There are plethora of judgments of this Court, some of which we have referred to above, which categorically hold that in cases involving economic offences, it is not merely the Bank that stands defrauded, but the society at large

is also impacted." The Court stressed that one-time settlements, by their very nature, do not represent full recovery. In this case, while the bank recovered around ₹41 crore, the outstanding liability was approximately ₹52 crore.

"One-time settlements are, as a rule, effected under circumstances where the Bank under duress is compelled to accept lesser amount in order to secure the maximum possible recovery against the defaulting account. In this background, we feel that the High Court committed error apparent in the eyes of law by quashing the proceedings." The Court also noted that

precedents such as Gian Singh "expressly prohibits quashing of proceedings of a criminal case on strength of a compromise where loss to public exchequer is evident and the offences under the PC Act, 1988 are applied.

"Fabricated Documents, Collusion Found in Probe the CBI had registered an FIR in 2015 based on a complaint alleging that the company obtained credit facilities by submitting fabricated work orders, manipulated revenue records, and false stock statements. An internal bank inquiry had declared the account an NPA and estimated a fraud of ₹52.5 crore. After investigation, the agency filed a chargesheet against the company, its directors and the then branch manager for offences under IPC provisions related to cheating, forgery and criminal conspiracy, and under Section 13(1)(d) read with 13(2) of the Prevention of Corruption Act.

Prosecution sanction had been granted against the bank manager. The High Court had quashed the FIR and chargesheet under Section 482 CrPc on the ground of settlement, noting that the bank had received payment and closed recovery proceedings. The Supreme Court held this approach to be legally unsustainable. It noted that the High Court failed to consider vital aspects, including the alleged fabrication of documents, the involvement of a bank official, the application of the PC Act, and the deficit of over 75 crore even after settlement. Restoring the chargesheet, the Court directed the trial court to proceed on merits and clarified that none of its observations should prejudice the accused.

## Retired judges object to 'motivated campaign' against CJI Surya Kant

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE  
■ New Delhi

Several retired judges of the Supreme Court and High Courts issued a statement on Tuesday expressing "strong objection to the motivated campaign targeting Chief Justice of India Surya Kant in the wake of his remarks in proceedings concerning Rohingya migrants".

The statement noted that an open letter was issued on December 5 by some former judges, lawyers and the Campaign for Judicial Accountability and Reforms (CJAR), raising "deep concern at certain unconscionable remarks made about Rohingya refugees on December 2" by a top court bench that was hearing a plea alleging custodial disappearance of Rohingya refugees in India. Underlining that "disparagement of the Supreme Court is unacceptable", the statement said judicial proceedings should only be subject to fair and reasoned criticism.

"What we are witnessing, however, is not principled disagreement but an attempt to delegitimise the judiciary by mischaracterising a routine courtroom proceeding as an act of prejudice. "The Chief Justice is being attacked for asking the most basic legal question: who, in law, has granted the status that is being claimed before the court? No adjudication on rights or entitlements can proceed unless this threshold



Chief Justice of India Surya Kant

is first addressed," the statement said.

It said the campaign against the CJI omitted the bench's clear affirmation during the proceedings that no human being on Indian soil, citizen or foreigner, can be subjected to torture, disappearance or inhuman treatment, and that every person's dignity must be respected.

"To suppress this and then accuse the court of 'dehumanisation' is a serious distortion of what was actually said," the statement signed by more than 40 judges said.

It said if every "searching judicial question" on nationality, migration, documentation or border security is accused of hate or prejudice, judicial independence itself would be at risk.

"We therefore affirm our full confidence in the Supreme Court and in the CJI, condemn motivated attempts to distort the court's remarks and personalise disagreement into attacks on individual judges; and support consideration of a court-monitored SIT into the illegal procurement of Indian identity and welfare documents by foreign nationals who have entered Bharat in violation of law," said the statement signed by 44 retired judges.

It said the country's constitutional order require both humanity and vigilance.

"In upholding human dignity while safeguarding national integrity, the judiciary has acted in accordance with its oath. It merits principled support, not vilification," the statement said.

## Curtail litigation, not generate it, SC on revenue map case

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE  
■ New Delhi

The Supreme Court on Tuesday stressed that any unnecessary remand of a matter for fresh consideration by a higher court should be avoided as it generates fresh round of litigation. The idea is to curtail the litigation and not generate it, a bench of Justices Rajesh Bindal and Manmohan said, as it set aside an order of the Allahabad High Court, which had remanded back a matter — related to authorities rejecting a man's application for correction of a revenue map — for fresh consideration after hearing all parties concerned.

While dealing with the appeal, the top court noted that court had taken the wrong premise and interpretation of Section 30 of the Uttar Pradesh Revenue Code, 2006, which deals with maintenance of map and the field book. The bench said this could have generated unnecessary further litigation.

"We may also add that earlier view by this court was that in case there were violations of principles of natural justice, the matter was to be remanded for affording opportunity of hearing to the party concerned. However, with the passage of time, the view changed," the bench said. It further said, "The idea is to curtail the litigation and not generate it. Any unnecessary remand by a higher court generates fresh round of litigation, which should be avoided."

Initially, the application filed before the collector seeking correction of

map for a plot was dismissed. Later, the Additional Commissioner also dismissed the appeal against the collector's order. After around 17 years, again an application was filed seeking correction of revenue map but the same was rejected by the concerned authority.

The matter had then reached the High Court which remanded the issue for fresh consideration after affording due opportunity of hearing to all concerned.

Referring to Section 30 of the Code, the apex court bench noted the collector is duty-bound to maintain, in the manner prescribed, a map and a field book for each village and any changes made in it have to be recorded annually or after such longer intervals as may be prescribed. "If the facts of this case are examined, the issue regarding the correction of map stood settled between the parties when the appeal filed by the private respondents against the order passed by the Collector was dismissed on September 4, 2001. The maps were already final," the bench said.

It said after the purchase of the land, an effort made by the private respondents to get the revenue map corrected had failed and they could not be permitted to raise the same issue after a gap of over 17 years. The bench said it was not a case where any error was found in the revenue record which deserved correction under Section 30 of the Code. While allowing the appeal, the bench set aside the order passed by the High Court.

## Thirupparankundram lamp lighting row: HC asks Chief Secretary, ADGP to appear on Dec 17

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE  
■ Madurai

The Madurai Bench of the Madras High Court on Tuesday directed Tamil Nadu Chief Secretary and ADGP (L&O) to appear before the court through video conference on December 17 in the Thirupparankundram lamp lighting row case.

The Union Home Secretary has been included as a party to the proceedings.

During the hearing of a contempt plea, Additional Advocate General Veera Kathiravan, appearing for the State, informed that a special leave petition filed by the Tamil Nadu authorities challenging the single judge order on lighting the lamp atop the Thirupparankundram hill was pending before the Supreme Court.

Justice G R Swaminathan, hearing the contempt petition filed by Rama Ravikumar, directed the Chief Secretary and Additional Director General of Police (Law and



Justice GR Swaminathan

Order) to appear via video conference on December 17.

Ravikumar, represented by Advocate MR Venakatesh had moved the court seeking proceedings against the Madurai District Collector,

Commissioner of Police, and the Executive Officer of Arulmighu Subramanya Swamy temple, Thirupparankundram, for not complying with the court's earlier orders.

The counsel for the petitioner said the authorities were "attempting to drag the case without complying with the court's order."

On December 1, Justice Swaminathan had ordered the temple management to arrange the lighting of the lamp on a stone pillar in Thirupparankundram hill during Karthigai Deepam festival on December 3.

However, when the event did not take place despite the court order, the judge permitted the petitioner and ten others to light the lamp with CISF protection on the evening of December 3.

While admitting the contempt plea on December 4, the court quashed the prohibitory order enforced by the district collector during the Karthigai Deepam festival.

Meanwhile, Opposition parties led by DMK on Tuesday filed Impeachment Notice to Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla for removing Justice GR Swaminathan.

## SC examines grant of 'personal hearing' to those with bank accounts declared fraud

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE  
■ New Delhi

The Supreme Court on Tuesday wondered what purpose the grant of "personal hearing" would serve to the bank account holders whose accounts were declared as fraud after following due diligence prescribed by the Reserve Bank of India in 2017.

A bench of Justices JB Pardiwala and KV Viswanathan was hearing a plea of the State Bank of India challenging a decision of the Calcutta High Court which directed giving personal hearing by following the principle of natural justice to such bank account holders.

"How do you justify the grant of personal hearing to you when the banks what they are actually doing as per the RBI circular is due diligence at the back end and providing you an opportunity to put your point forward in writing after issuance of a show cause notice," the

bench told senior advocate K Parameshwar, appearing for private firm Amit Iron Pvt Ltd.

At the outset, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the country's largest bank SBI, said that insisting on a personal hearing causes concrete prejudice to the banks and to the integrity of the regulatory regime, while the borrower suffers no real prejudice so long as it has had a full and effective opportunity to place its case in writing and have that case duly considered.

He said the circular (Master Directions on Fraud, 2017) relating to declaration of fraud was required for two essential purposes — the sheer magnitude of the number of banking frauds in the country has shown a demonstrable rise, requiring the RBI to step in and provide a mechanism to be followed by the entire banking sector. Also, any impact on any bank or banking sector has a direct effect on the nation-

al economy; therefore, the financial strength of the banking sector is always a prime consideration.

Giving figures for banking frauds and the amounts involved from 2022 to 2025, according to the RBI's latest Annual report for 2024-2025, Mehta said the number of frauds for 2022-23 was 13,494 involving ₹18,981 crore, in 2023-24 there were 36,060 bank frauds involving amount 12,230 crore and in 2024-25 there were 23,953 bank fraud cases involving 36,014 crore.

He submitted that these increased incidences of banking fraud and malpractices led the RBI to constitute multiple committees and working groups, including the Amitava Ghosh Committee in 1991, and the NL Mitra Committee in August 2003. "Based on the recommendations of these committees and working groups, the RBI issued circulars/directions from time to time advising banks on major fraud-prone areas,

new modus operandi detected earlier, and necessary safeguards to be adopted for the prevention of fraud.

"However, despite this, there were problems, including delays in the detection of fraud, inadequate reporting to the RBI, and delays in reporting and alerting other banks on fraud by borrowers," Mehta submitted.

He said that the experience of RBI and deliberation before the expert committees revealed why such frauds take place and are perpetrated and one of the most important problems was the inevitable lack of coordination between various banks.

"This resulted in a borrower committing fraud with one bank, and they would approach another bank and avail huge finances, due to the delay in detection and fraud reporting. This would result in a chain reaction and, therefore, the RBI Directions, inter alia, elaborated on the said issues," the SBI said.



Editor's  
TAKE

## The politics of heritage and beyond

As parties clash over the meaning of Vande Mataram in Parliament, a deeper question emerges: should a symbol of unity be pulled into the realm of partisan politics?

*Vande Mataram. Sujalam suphalam malayaja-sitalam, sasya-syamalam mataram!* The first stanza of the national song translates to: "I bow to thee, Mother-rich with waters, rich with fruits, cool with the southern breeze, verdant with crops and fields-Mother!" This heartfelt ode to Mother India by the great poet Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyaya is once again at the centre of a political storm. The political class across the country agrees with and bows to its sentiment, yet it is being fiercely debated in Parliament. The debate over *Vande Mataram* in Parliament on December 8 was more than an exchange of rhetoric; it revealed the complicated intersections of heritage, nationalism, and electoral politics in contemporary India.

When Prime Minister Narendra Modi invoked Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyaya's iconic hymn, it carried enormous symbolism-drawing upon a century of collective memory, pride, and sacrifice. Yet it also raised an uncomfortable question: should such a sacred piece of India's freedom struggle become the subject of partisan debate? Should not our freedom struggle and its symbols remain sacrosanct? *Vande Mataram* occupies a sacred space in India's national imagination. Born out of Bankim's *Anandamath*, it emerged as the rallying cry of the freedom struggle, uniting Indians across communities during the anti-colonial movement. Tagore's voice at the 1896 Congress session, Bhikaji Cama's flag in Stuttgart bearing its words, and the chants during the 1905 anti-Partition protests all cemented its status as a symbol of resistance and aspiration. It was never merely a poem; it was an emotional force field. This is why its invocation in Parliament is both powerful and fraught with the danger of the song itself being drawn into political crossfire.

Prime Minister Modi's speech wove together strands of spirituality, nationalism, and cultural pride. He recalled Gandhi's admiration for *Vande Mataram* and used it to position his government as the custodian of a nationalist legacy. But, coming ahead of the 2026 Bengal elections, it can also be construed as an electoral plank. As observers noted, cultural symbolism served not just as homage but as political strategy. Bengal's pride in Bankim, Tagore, and its reformist icons makes any such invocation deeply consequential in the state's political arena. India's cultural symbols belong to the nation, not to any party-neither the Congress nor the BJP. When political actors selectively elevate one icon while denigrating others-such as the recent remarks against Raja Ram Mohan Roy-they risk distorting the pluralistic, composite spirit that animated the Bengali renaissance and the freedom movement.

Bankim, Tagore, Roy, Vivekananda, and many others did not belong to a party; they belonged to the nation at large. They represented an expanding universe of ideas that shaped modern India. Appropriating or diminishing them harms the national cause-the nation loses more than it gains. When symbols like *Vande Mataram* become contested rather than cherished, their universal appeal-and their power to unite-dissipates. That is a loss not just for politics, but for the nation.

# From grid burden to green power: Goa's solar-powered water supply

The future of India's renewable strategy will depend on striking the right balance between utility-scale projects and widespread community-level solarisation



SHRIPAD  
YESSO NAIK

India stands at a defining juncture in its clean-energy transformation. Guided by the Panchamrit commitments announced by Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi ji at COP26, the country has set for itself some of the world's most ambitious climate goals: 500 GW of non-fossil fuel capacity by 2030, meeting half of its energy requirements from renewables by the same year, reducing projected carbon emissions by one billion tonnes, cutting carbon intensity by 45 per cent, and ultimately achieving Net Zero by 2070. These targets are not distant aspirations; they form the backbone of a nationwide movement that is steadily gathering momentum.

India's progress in renewable energy over the past few years has been nothing short of remarkable. The country has already crossed the milestone of achieving 50 per cent of its total installed power capacity from renewable sources, with the renewable energy portfolio now reaching an impressive 259 GW. Solar and wind continue to drive this growth with record annual capacity additions. The rise of ultra-mega solar parks, hybrid renewable corridors, offshore wind zones and floating solar plants reflects a sector in rapid evolution. Yet, complementing these large-scale investments is an equally important push for distributed solar, one that brings clean energy directly to households, farmers and communities.

Two flagship programmes of the Government of India underscore this vision. The PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana, launched by the Hon'ble Prime Minister, is propelling rooftop solar to an unprecedented scale. With a target of one crore household installations and subsidies streamlined through a single national portal, residential solar has moved from novelty to mainstream, easing electricity bills and empowering families to become producers of clean energy.

Similarly, the PM-KUSUM scheme has emerged as a transformative initiative for India's farmers. By solarising agricultural pumps, both standalone and grid-connected, and enabling decentralised renewable plants in rural areas, the scheme reduces diesel dependence, stabilises farm incomes and supports climate-resilient agriculture. Thousands of farmers across the country have already benefited, turning agricultural fields into clean-energy hubs.

However, as India accelerates renewable capacity growth, the challenges associated with bulk RE-intermittency, long-distance transmission requirements, land availability and rising grid congestion-highlight the need for innovative, decentralised energy models. Distributed generation, especially rooftop and community-level solar, is proving to be a powerful solution. By producing electricity where it is consumed, it reduces network stress, improves voltage stability, cuts transmission losses and significantly lowers infrastructure costs for power utilities. The future of India's renewable strategy will depend on striking the right balance between utility-scale projects and widespread community-level solarisation.



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REACHING AN  
IMPRESSIVE 259  
GW

The writer is the Union  
Minister of State for Power  
and New and Renewable  
Energy, Government of  
India

 shripadyessonaik  
 @shripadnayik  
 The Pioneer

At the pumping station near Podar School in Old Goa, a pioneering solar project has been implemented under the CSR support of IREDA, a PSU under the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy. The facility, which operates 60 HP pumps to lift water from a ground-level sump to an overhead tank, generally functions between 9 am and 1 pm, coinciding perfectly with peak solar generation hours. By integrating a 45 kW solar plant with net-metering capability, the station not only meets its daytime energy needs but also exports surplus clean power to the grid.

The impact has been significant. The Drinking Water Department now saves nearly ₹4.0 lakh annually in electricity expenditure, while revenue from surplus energy generation further strengthens its operational budget. Environmentally, the system offsets close to 45 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> every year, equivalent to the carbon absorption of more than 2,050 mature trees. Nearly 650 residents now rely on a water supply system powered substantially by renewable energy. With a project cost of ₹28 lakh, a payback period of seven years and a system life of around 25 years, the initiative will continue delivering free, clean electricity for nearly two decades after cost recovery — an exemplary model of sustainable public infrastructure.

The success of this project reflects the foresight and commitment that guide my efforts to strengthen essential public services through clean and sustainable energy solutions. These efforts are deeply inspired by the broader national vision shaped by Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi ji, under whose guidance India has emerged as a global frontrunner in renewable energy adoption. At a time when cities across the world struggle with deteriorating air quality, such grassroots initiatives demonstrate how local innovation can drive both environmental protection and community development.

The solarisation of the Old Goa pumping station is more than a technical upgrade; it is a blueprint for India's sustainable future. As the nation marches towards its Net Zero commitment, the next phase of growth must lie in harnessing renewable energy for unconventional, often overlooked applications such as water supply systems, government buildings, rural institutions, agricultural infrastructure and community assets. Each such project not only reduces the burden on the grid but also brings clean energy closer to the people it serves. India's clean-energy journey is ultimately a collective one. With the right blend of visionary leadership, technological innovation and community participation, projects like the one in Old Goa will become the cornerstone of a greener, more resilient and more inclusive future.

The Pioneer  
SINCE 1865

## A spiritual path to ending gender inequality



RAJYOGI BRAHMA  
KUMAR NIKUNJ JI

2<sup>ND</sup> OPINION  
THE PIONEER

The Constitution of India not only guarantees equality for women but also empowers the State to adopt measures of positive discrimination to offset the cumulative social, economic, educational and political disadvantages they have historically faced. Yet, despite such strong constitutional safeguards, women continue to struggle for dignity, independence and equal opportunity. This compels us to ask why gender inequality remains so deeply embedded in our society.

Although India has made significant progress over decades of reform and development, our core mindset regarding gender has remained largely unchanged. For centuries, society has believed that the roles, characteristics and status of men and women are determined solely by biological sex-natural, fixed and therefore unquestionable. Gender thus became tied to predetermined behaviours and expectations assigned to boys and girls.

From the moment a child is born, society begins the subtle but powerful process of gendering. The birth of a son is often celebrated, while the birth of a daughter is still viewed with hesitation or sorrow in many households. As children grow, boys are encouraged to be assertive, bold and independent, while girls are conditioned to be quiet, obedient and confined to domestic spaces. These distinctions are not inherent differences; they are social constructs created and perpetuated by all of us. Within this rigid framework, we overlook a fundamental truth: men and women are not meant to be adversaries. Instead, they are meant to play complementary roles that create harmony and balance in society. At the spiritual level, the human soul-regardless of whether it resides in a male or female body-possesses both sets of qualities. Courage, determination and resilience coexist naturally with compassion, nurturing and gentleness. What we often label as "male" or "female" qualities are, in reality, learned traits rather than innate ones.

True empowerment therefore requires a shift in consciousness. It calls for moving beyond body consciousness to soul consciousness, where we recognise that our identity is not confined to gendered expectations. By connecting the self with the supreme source-the highest and purest form of energy-we awaken the inherent balance within us. This spiritual connection restores self-respect, self-confidence and self-reliance. It nurtures holistic growth, enabling individuals to embody both strength and empathy, both willpower and compassion. Our scriptures remind us that the Almighty embodies the complete spectrum of these qualities. When we anchor ourselves to this supreme source, we too receive this wholeness.

When we identify solely with the physical body and its gendered limitations, we develop only partially. Spirituality thus becomes not an escape from reality but a prerequisite for social harmony. It dissolves hostility and division, replacing conflict with integration, equality and unity. It opens the "third eye" of wisdom, allowing us to access an inner reservoir of strength and purity. The real solution to gender inequality does not lie in replacing male dominance with female dominance. It lies in freeing both men and women from the chains of gender bias rooted in body consciousness. When individuals rise to higher awareness, society becomes more just, balanced and compassionate. Let us therefore empower ourselves spiritually and work together to ensure that every individual, regardless of gender, can live with dignity, equality and purpose.

The writer is a spiritual educator & popular columnist

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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Passengers deserve fair compensation

This refers to recent news concerning IndiGo's fiasco, which is presently under the scrutiny of the Prime Minister's Office. The airline's conduct appears to have violated regulations framed in accordance with international aviation standards. Large-scale flight cancellations caused severe inconvenience to passengers, while other airlines took advantage of the situation by sharply increasing airfares. Many travellers, compelled by urgency, were forced to make expensive last-minute bookings to reach their destinations.

Compensation for the loss of valuable time, financial resources, and mental peace resulting from such lapses is a legal imperative. The Directorate General of Civil Aviation has failed to discharge its responsibilities effectively, leading to reputational damage. Operating aircraft beyond stipulated terms and conditions results in physical and psychological fatigue among pilots, thereby increasing safety risks.

The Consumer Protection Act, 2019, allows for class-action proceedings against companies providing deficient or misleading services. Although the Ministry of Civil Aviation issued fare-cap orders and regulatory directions, the evident negligence of both IndiGo and the DGCA warrants strict penalties.

YUGAL KISHORE SHARMA | HARYANA

### Reactive regulation threatens aviation trust

The recent IndiGo airline imbroglio exposes how reactive regulatory oversight, combined with a market duopoly, leaves passengers vulnerable and weakens confidence in the aviation sector's long-term prospects. The spillover effects of mismanagement have also cast a shadow over airline privatisation plans in the post-pandemic era. India's domestic aviation market is dominated by IndiGo and Air India, making it particularly sensitive to disruptions. Soft regulation and delayed intervention undermine operational credibility and investor confidence alike. In contrast, mature aviation markets such as the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, and Australia enforce strict consumer protection laws. Airlines in these countries are mandated to compensate passengers for cancellations and delays.

The 2022 Southwest Airlines crisis led to legal action, government investigation, and substantial reimbursements, reinforcing accountability and consumer trust. Indian aviation, however, continues to rely on ad hoc measures during crises rather than preventive oversight.

The IndiGo episode highlights how market concentration amplifies systemic risk. India must shift from reaction to anticipation by enforcing accountability and safeguarding passenger trust.

VIJAY SINGH ADHIKARI | UTTARAKHAND

### Switch off stress, switch on life

With the rapid expansion of the digital revolution worldwide-through information technology, the internet, and smartphones-the practice of employers contacting employees beyond official working hours has increased sharply. Emails, phone calls, and instant messages now intrude into personal time, blurring the boundary between work and rest. This constant connectivity has resulted in rising levels of mental and physical stress among employees. To address this growing concern, the concept of the "Right to Disconnect" was first discussed in Europe and has since gained global attention. Even after completing their daily tasks, many employees feel compelled to respond to work-related communications, often out of fear of professional repercussions.

To provide legal protection and work-life balance, discussions on this right have been underway for several years. In a Bill presented in Parliament, MP Supriya Sule proposed the establishment of an Employee Welfare Authority. The Bill grants employees the right not to respond to work-related emails or calls beyond official working hours. Its objective is to reduce stress in both personal and professional life. As work increasingly shifts online, such legislation is timely and necessary to protect employee well-being.

DATTAPRASAD SHIRODKAR | MUMBAI

### PIC TALK




Employees wearing Santa Claus costumes perform during a parade celebrating Christmas at Lotte World Adventure in Seoul, South Korea.

PHOTO: PTI

### DIGITAL EXPERIENCE



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### WORLD HUMAN RIGHTS DAY AND ITS GROWING GLOBAL RELEVANCE

Since 1948, the United Nations has observed 10 December each year as World Human Rights Day. The primary objective of this observance is to promote and protect the fundamental human rights of people across all nations. The theme for Human Rights Day 2025, "Human Rights, Our Everyday Essentials," highlights how basic rights such as clean air, food, shelter, dignity, and personal safety are inseparable from everyday life.

At present, the world is witnessing widespread geopolitical turbulence. Prolonged conflicts such as the Israel-Palestine crisis and the Russia-Ukraine war continue to destabilise regions, displace populations, and deprive millions of their basic rights. Tensions and internal unrest in several other parts of the world

further deepen humanitarian suffering. It increasingly appears that global peace has become fragile and uncertain.

Despite the devastation caused by two world wars, humanity continues to resort to armed conflict rather than dialogue, cooperation, and mutual respect. The consequences are borne not by leaders but by ordinary citizens, who lose their rights to life, security, health, and freedom.

All religions advocate peace, compassion, and coexistence. Yet these principles are often ignored in practice. Upholding human rights is essential for lasting peace.

Without their protection, societies may increasingly descend into conflict in pursuit of dignity and justice.

JITESH MORI | GUJARAT

Please send your letter to the [info@dailypioneer.com](mailto:info@dailypioneer.com). In not more than 250 words. We appreciate your feedback.



# Water warriors lead the water revolution in countryside

As the world is literally sitting on a hot spot, notwithstanding these CoPs, which are hilariously optimistic without any substance of change, we in India need to take drastic action at the level of civil society as well as within the government, with a bottom-up innovative approach right from village level to national level



VK BAHUGUNA

Amidst when the world climate change negotiators are busy pulling wires in Brazil at the UNFCCC CoP 30 summit, the world, especially those suffering most from climatic vagaries, is watching to see if there is a thaw between the divergent positions of developed and developing countries, especially in truly adhering to the cardinal principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. But this is a matter to be dealt with separately.

As this writer has been repeatedly warning government negotiators and policy makers about charting out South-South climate-resilient developmental planning to ward off the deleterious effects of climate change on the environment, especially on food, nutrition and water security of billions of people, Brazil's Tropical Forest Forever Facility (TFFF) climate change fund of \$125 billion to support tropical forests through government and private contributions, spending \$4 per hectare on improving forests, is a welcome move. Brazil herself has committed \$1 billion to this fund. India has supported it in principle. The fund may help in water and biodiversity conservation.

However, India should take the lead in focusing on creating a fund in collaboration with China and the Group of 77 to conserve and manage water for better climate management, as the temperature has already crossed the 1.5 degree Celsius threshold this year, as reported by Carlo Buontempo, the Director of the European Climate Agency Copernicus, and this is going to severely impact world hydrology. If India can take a lead as it did in creating the 'Solar Alliance' by creating a water conservation fund, forests will automatically be taken care of.

As the world is literally sitting on a hot spot, notwithstanding these CoPs, which are hilariously optimistic without any substance of change, we in India need to take drastic action at the level of civil society as well as in government, with a bottom-up innovative approach from the village level to the national level.

Already, the Water for Every Household scheme launched in 2019 by the Prime Minister is a resounding success with community participation and has provided



THE NATIONAL WATER AWARDS, RECOGNISING INNOVATIONS, HAVE GALVANISED ACTION, PROVING THAT LOCAL INGENUITY CAN RECHARGE ECOSYSTEMS AND EMPOWER MARGINALISED SECTIONS FACING ACUTE WATER STRESS

The writer is a former Principal Secretary and Agriculture Production Commissioner, Government of Tripura

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 bahuguna-vk-39b46350

almost 78.58 per cent (15.56 crore out of 18 crore) households access to tap water connections, compared to around 7 crore earlier, before 2019. Let us substantiate water conservation from the examples created by our civil society.

The water availability study done by the Central Water Commission using space inputs (2019) assessed the average annual per capita water availability for the years 2021 and 2031 as 1,486 cubic metres and 1,367 cubic metres respectively. Annual per-capita water availability of less than 1,700 cubic metres is considered a water-stressed condition, whereas annual per-capita water availability below 1,000 cubic metres is considered a water-scarcity condition. The country's rivers run dry, aquifers deplete, and millions face seasonal scarcity, underscoring the urgency of sustainable practices.

So, we need to look into our countryside to search for water warriors beyond government programmes. The country has shown time and again that our society produces leaders from the grassroots level, from the freedom struggle to tree conservation through the world-famous Chipko Movement, to now "sow seed to get water" (pani bao pani pao) launched successfully in Uttarakhand by Mr Mohan Kandpal and others elsewhere in the country. This has become amply clear in the 2025 Water Awards announced by the

Ministry of Jal Shakti, Government of India. These water warriors brought to fame this year have shown how a public movement can change the countryside scenario drastically.

This writer, while in the Planning Commission, had in 2010 assessed the great work done by Popat Pawar in the Hiware Bazar village in Ahmednagar district of Maharashtra, turning a ghost village into one bubbling with prosperity solely due to water harvesting in adjoining forests under the Joint Forest Management programme, resulting in huge agricultural and milk production.

In this context, water conservation awards serve as beacons of hope, spotlighting grassroots innovators, communities and institutions that transform despair into resilience. These examples celebrate individual and collective triumphs but also produce scalable models, fostering a culture of stewardship. The National Water Awards, recognising innovations, have galvanised action, proving that local ingenuity can recharge ecosystems and empower marginalised sections who have been facing acute water stress.

This year's awards were announced and conferred by President Droupadi Murmu on November 18, 2025 at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi, and honoured 46 winners — a 30 per cent increase from prior years. These honours were backed by field

verifications from the Central Water Commission and the Central Ground Water Board.

At the heart of this narrative stands Mohan Chandra Kandpal, a 59-year-old chemistry teacher from Kande village in Uttarakhand's Almora district, whose lifelong crusade earned him the Best Individual (North Zone) award. For 36 years, Kandpal has traversed the fragile Himalayan foothills, where deforestation and erratic monsoons have rendered ancient springs and traditional stone reservoirs dry. Fate struck him in 1990 when he observed the Riskan River's tributaries dwindling amid drought coupled with soil erosion. He resolved to act and launched "Pani Bao-Pani Uggao" (Sow Water-Grow Water), a masterstroke that charged women and youth into action, blending this rhetoric with indigenous community wisdom and mobilisation.

Kandpal's strategy hinges on khals and chaals-shallow percolation pits that capture runoff, allowing rainwater to recharge aquifers. Between 1990 and 2012, he spearheaded the digging of thousands, coupled with afforestation drives planting over 100,000 saplings of native species like oak and rhododendron. People changed ploughing techniques in agricul-

tural fields to till perpendicular to slopes, creating furrows that channel water deeper into the earth rather than letting it run off. This low-cost tweak, disseminated through farmer workshops, amplified recharge efficiency. By 2025, over 5,000 such structures dotted 40 villages, reviving 27 depleted sources in hamlets like Valna, Bitholi, Kande and Ganoli. Complementing this is the "Woh Pani Hoga" (That Water Will Be There) initiative, which has bolstered the Riskan River's flow, turning seasonal streams perennial. It was purely a public programme, though MGNREGA funds might have been dovetailed.

Another well-known example is Dr Rajendra Singh, the original "Waterman of India", whose 50-year odyssey in Rajasthan's arid heartland earned the 2001 Ramon Magsaysay Award and the 2015 Stockholm Water Prize-the "Nobel of Water". Singh revived over 1,000 villages by resurrecting more than 8,600 johads (earthen check dams) and bamboo drip systems in the Aravalli hills, and by targeting the parched Alwar district he started "Pani Panchayats" — village water parliaments-thus democratising resource governance. The results are visible: five rivers now flow perennially across 6,500 sq km, enabling afforestation of 1.5 million trees and the repopulation of ghost villages.

Yet another example is from Bihar's flood-prone plains, where Kishore Jaiswal, a Munger-based activist, bagged the Best Individual (Eastern Zone) award for desilting the Ganga's tributaries. He, with the NGO Jalsrot Vikas Sansthan, mobilised 20,000 volunteers to remove five lakh cubic metres of silt from the Chandan River, restoring flow to 100 villages.

In another example of social institutions, the Art of Living Social Projects received two awards for reviving more than 50 lakes in Karnataka and Tamil Nadu through yoga-integrated clean-ups, impacting one million lives. The Barmer district administration also bagged the rainwater harvesting award, which was received by the District Collector, Tina Dabi. If each block of the country does this, prosperity and progress with climatic adaptation will be at our doors and happiness on the faces of millions of rural masses. These people have shown, in a much better manner, how to tackle climate change in tandem with communities than the big CoPs of the UNFCCC.

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## The end does not justify the means



BALRAJ MEHTA

"Though no one can go back and make a brand new start, anyone can start and make a brand new ending": Carl Bard

A few days ago, I came across a news item about a young married woman from a prominent business family being found hanging in her room. This was utterly shocking because such an incident is least expected to occur in well-established, educated, and successful business families. I have no access to intimate details about the personalities involved or the circumstances, other than the published news reports. We will have to await the completion of investigations to know why such a drastic step was taken by this lady.

My mind went back to 1985 when, unfortunately, a young mother in our family circle died of 90 per cent burns suffered while cooking on a kerosene stove. It was a suicide-plain and simple — but this angle was deliberately not pursued by the family because she had two small children who were to be brought up by her husband. It was no small matter that a few months earlier she had expressed a strong desire to permanently return to her maternal home. Her father had not accepted this and forced her to go back and "adjust" in her marital home. She obviously could not, and found no other way out of her unhappy life.

Later, in 2004, I witnessed another tragedy unfold in our residential colony in Delhi Cantt when a schoolboy from Class 12 consumed poison and his body was found behind the complex near the railway tracks. We came to know that the boy had been forced by his father to take up the PCM stream, while his own interests lay in the arts. He was regularly shamed and harshly treated at home due to his inattention to studies and poor grades, which led to the extinguishing of a promising young life.

Globally, over 7,27,000 people die by suicide every year, as per the WHO report of March 2025. In India, the National Crime Records Bureau pegged suicides at 1,53,052 in 2020, 1,64,033 in 2021, 1,70,924 in 2022, and 1,71,418 in 2023. Some key trends and demographics are listed below:

- Gender disparity: Males account for 72-73 per cent of suicides.
- Age groups: Young adults aged 18-30 years and people aged 30-45 years account for the largest share-about two-thirds.
- Major causes: Family problems, illnesses, mental health issues, bankruptcy or indebted-

ness, and other work-related problems.

- Professional groups: Daily wagers constitute the largest group, followed by housewives and the self-employed.
- Academics: Students facing academic pressure and family expectations are the most vulnerable strata.
- Risk factors: Access to firearms, sleeping pills, pesticides, drug addiction, and/or previous suicide attempts.

It has been established by various studies that a large percentage of people with mental disorders do not receive proper treatment due to lack of awareness, attached social stigma, and an acute shortage of professionals. The WHO has assessed an ideal requirement of three psychiatrists per one lakh population, whereas availability worldwide is 1.7 and, in India, only 0.75 per one lakh.

Admittedly, the social stigma attached to mental ill health is very strong, leading to facts being hidden from society, friends, and even family members. The indicators may be visible much before full-blown symptoms appear, but are not understood, acknowledged, or accepted. In my experience, about half of us have one or another quirk or kink in our personality that needs sorting out, but we cannot see our blind spots, and even if we do, we do not accept them comfortably. Parents are often unaware of the warning signs in their children and do not realise the grave consequences of ignoring these red flags until it is too late.

If proper preventive and curative measures are taken for emerging symptoms at an initial stage, much damage can be prevented. Warning signs of an upcoming mental storm could include one or more of the following:

- Sleep or appetite changes
- Decline in personal care and hygiene
- Mood changes
- Social withdrawal and absenteeism
- Difficulty in managing bodily pain
- Unusual drop in academic or professional performance
- Unexplained problems in coherent thinking or speech
- Increased sensitivity to sound, light, touch, or smells
- Apathy towards surroundings
- Fear or nervousness
- Any other unusual behaviour

As brought out earlier, a suicidal impulse can be triggered by mental illness, physical disease, relationship stress, heartbreak, loss of loved ones, or major financial, professional, or personal setbacks. Any person behaving abnormally will usually give sufficient indications that can be picked up by a concerned friend or family member.

The American Society for the Prevention of Suicide lists the following warning signs:

1. Talk: If a person talks about
  - Killing themselves
  - Feeling helpless

- Having no reason to live
- Being a burden to others
- Unbearable pain

2. Behaviour: Indicated by

- Increased use of alcohol or drugs
- Online searches for ways to end their life
- Withdrawal from activities
- Isolation from family and friends
- Sleeping too much or too little
- Visiting or calling people to say goodbye
- Giving away prized possessions
- Unnatural aggression
- Constant fatigue

3. Mood:

- Depression
- Anxiety
- Loss of interest
- Irritability
- Humiliation or shame
- Agitation or anger
- Sudden relief or improvement

Admittedly, significant efforts are being made by governments and social organisations to spread awareness, but incidents do not seem to be declining. Regular sensitisation of teachers, parents, and business managers must be ensured by the concerned authorities. Dignity of labour and respect for the workforce need to be inculcated from school onwards. The newly instituted labour laws should help address issues faced by the salaried class in the private sector, but effective monitoring of remuneration for domestic staff and gig workers is essential. A grievance redressal mechanism must be established at various levels. Creating awareness about cybercrimes and the harmful effects of digital addiction also needs focused attention.

Ultimately, as a society, we must reorient our sensitivities away from material pursuits and refocus on respect for life and care for fellow human beings-especially the disadvantaged. Family units must remain cohesive while respecting individual choices. Parents must realise that a present artist son is far better than a forever-lost engineer son, and that a divorced daughter is far better than a dead daughter.

We need to talk more openly about mental health and remove the shame associated with it. When we are physically unwell, we go to a hospital for treatment, and once better, we exercise to remain fit. Similarly, to deal with day-to-day stress, we should not hesitate to seek counselling or therapy when required, treating it as joining a "mental gym". It is not a shame, but simply a set of exercises to become mentally stronger.

As someone said, "It is not weak to ask for help. It is like using a flashlight when you are lost in the dark."

The writer is a Major General and has been decorated with Sena Medal

 @majgenbalrajmehta

 @majgenbalrajmehta

 gen-balraj-mehta-sm-585098308

## REPM: Boosting electronics



T SENTHIL SIVA SUBRAMANIAN



N MANIKANDAN

The 21st century is a promising era for India, which has achieved global recognition in attaining a meaningful economy. In fact, this year, 2025, India has touched 8.2 per cent GDP growth during the period from July to September, which demonstrates the capability of several factors, including consumer demand and the supply chain. The present need of the hour is rare earth permanent magnets. The Government of India has strongly emphasised their significant role, which has led to the launch of the Rare Earth Permanent Magnets (REPM) scheme. The scheme would revolutionise India's advanced manufacturing ecosystem. This scheme envisions the creation of a rare earth valley and manufacturing zones in India, thereby boosting the electronic economy. This initiative would bring together several stakeholders-government, industry, start-ups and academia, especially Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs) to collaborate with localised manufacturing industries and the Government of India, thereby transforming products from lab to market. REPM would encourage HEIs to partner with UGC and AICTE to develop a model curriculum on rare earth permanent magnets, minor degree programmes, electives, minor capstone projects and internships on rare earth permanent magnets. The REPM scheme would facilitate HEIs to develop MOOC courses in collaboration with industries on rare earth permanent magnets. There is ample opportunity for HEIs to partner with Sector Skill Councils under the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, Government of India, to develop skill enhancement courses on rare earth permanent magnets, which could be aligned with NEP 2020 and the National Credit Framework (NCF) across different job roles from Level 4 to Level 8, fulfilling skill mission objectives.

REPM would allow and provide opportunities, especially for women students, to collaborate with the National Institute for Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development (NIESBUD) and the Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India (EDI), Gujarat, under the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship and the Ministry of Science and Technology, Government of India, respectively, to explore and start their own ventures under the Swavalambini Programme scheme in the field of rare earth permanent magnets. The REPM scheme would drive HEIs to interface with localised manufacturing industries, with a special focus on SMEs working on rare earth magnets. This activity

would enhance community-based learning under the Government set-up known as MY Bharat.

HEIs can selectively work on different manufacturing problem ideas and concepts of local industries and thereby ideally develop:

1. Idea-to-business models
2. Proofs of concept (PoCs) for rare earth permanent magnets

The collaboration would provide a significant opportunity for HEIs to design and develop Minimum Viable Products (MVPs), which would lead to Swadeshi designs on rare earth permanent magnet products. This, in turn, would further enhance India's autonomy and self-reliance and thereby meet the objectives of "Viksit Bharat" / "Amrit Kaal". HEIs would get a platform to develop design simulation tools and technology frameworks for rare earth permanent magnet products.


Research explorations on REPM would receive a significant boost at the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), and Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC). The scheme is expected to bring tangible and intangible investments to the nation. It would also promote HEIs to create design-thinking-based products and process solutions, simulation software tools and techniques. Additionally, REPM would add value to responsible research innovation, leading to intellectual property rights such as trademarks and copyrights in rare earth permanent magnets. These innovations would give a major push to Higher Educational Institutions to reinvent technologies using rare earth permanent magnets that could be applied across different sectors, especially the Electronic Manufacturing Services (EMS) and Electronics System Design and Manufacturing (ESDM) sector — an industry initiative under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), Government of India.


This will be a boon for boosting the electronic economy, leading to the development of Vocal for Local products, processes and solutions.


The products developed in laboratories will reach the market through a lab-to-market approach, achieving Technology Readiness Levels (TRL), Manufacturing Readiness Levels (MRL), Consumer Readiness Levels (CRL) and Investment Readiness Levels (IRL). Best practices in rare earth permanent magnets would strengthen partnerships with the Global South in knowledge transfer, capacity building and R&D, while enabling inclusive growth through links with rural development and women entrepreneurship.

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Dr T Senthil Siva Subramanian and Dr N Manikandan are Head of the Institute-Industry Interface and Postdoctoral Fellow, Hindustan College of Science and Technology, Mathura, and IIT Delhi

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PADDY DADDY



Whatever one may say about Donald Trump, the US president, there is no denying the fact that his politics, though random and chaotic, is theoretically calculated. Even as a US delegation wings its way to India to discuss the bilateral trade deal, which is in the making for months, Trump fires a sensitive verbal missive against India. At a meeting at the White House, he asked why India could ship large volumes of rice to the US, and those too at low prices. He wanted additional duties on rice exports, since they symptomised “dumping.” He ranted that India “cannot do that... should not be dumping.” One is not sure if it signals new tariffs, whether the statements were aimed to assuage the miffed feelings among the American farmers who complain about falling domestic prices due to imports, or whether it was a means to verbally arm twist New Delhi into granting more access, and concessions for select farm imports from America.

For a long time, India has opposed the entry of farm goods at lower duties. In fact, the prime minister, and other ministers, have repeatedly maintained that the interests of the local farmers will not be compromised, or placed at the altar of trade and tariffs. However, farm imports remain the most contentious, and possibly the last few details to be ironed out before finalising a bilateral deal. By introducing rice as another factor, and raising the fears of new duties on Indian exports, Trump hopes to influence the Indian negotiators to give in a bit more. Couple this with the fact that America recently announced a \$12 billion support package for the local farmers to “shield domestic agriculture from perceived foreign competition.” In addition, the US eased the duties on several food items like spices and tea, which are shipped from India. These did not include rice.

Stock markets react much like Trump, and are swayed by short-term, and immediate events, and non-events. The reactions in the bourses are as random, and knee-jerk, as Trump. Bu, like the case of the US president, there is a method to the madness of sock movements. For example, in the rice-Trump incident, shares of rice exporters such as Kohinoor Foods, LT Foods, Chaman Lal Setia Exports, and KRBL tumbled on the Indian exchanges. It did not matter to the investors that the US comprises a small share of the country's rice exports. Higher tariffs by America will not make a material difference to the firms' revenues, and profits. Since theoretically, it was a negative event, despite being a non-event, the practical impact was negative. Kohinoor Foods, for example, plunged nearly 10 per cent to an intraday, and a 52-week low of just over Rs 24.

Such drastic stock movements are visible in other cases. Let us take the example of H-1B visas, which has proved to be a controversial topic for several months, including during Trump's first term. Under the republican regimes, there are consistent efforts to change the visa regime to enable the hiring of more American employees in IT, and discourage the entry of low-cost, less-experienced Indians and Chinese. This year, Indian IT stocks were constantly hurt by the H-1B-related announcements, decisions, actions. A bill introduced by a senator, which had minimal chances of passing through triggered stock sales. Even when the decisions were permanent, the reactions had little links to the ground realities. Investors did not think through the ramifications, and consequences. They just sold, with the IT sector being one of the star underperformers among Indian equities this year. Experts have talked about the re-rating of IT stocks, but been optimistic over their valuations in 2026.

Consider the \$1,00,000 fee on H-1B visas. This will clearly reduce the outflow of Indian manpower to the US. Or, at least it will force the Indian IT firms to spend more to send people. If one considers that the US gives 65,000 such visas every year, and India accounts for 70 per cent of them, the annual visa bill amounts to more than \$4,500,000,000, or a massive \$4.5 billion. Of course, it is a huge hit. However, investors failed to reckon several possible scenarios, which are being, and will be, translated into reality. The first is that Indian IT firms will reduce the dependence on H-1Bs. This is happening, and data shows that Indians' share has reduced in the recent past. Second, Indian IT firms, and recruiters, may push the visa on the applicants. If you are interested to go to America, please pay the visa fees from your pockets, and do not depend on the firm.

Finally, the visa fee may hurt the American firms more than the Indian ones. A large part of H-1Bs is cornered by Indian students, who study in America, and automatically are absorbed by the American firms via H-1Bs. No firm will pay \$1,00,000 for a fresh recruit, and a rookie employee. The students, who have spent massive amounts on education, may not wish to cough out such large amounts to get the visa. Thus, the absorption of Indians in American firms is likely to reduce. This will service Trump's objective that more American are hired at the low and middle levels. But it will hurt the interests of the American firms.

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BUSINESS10

OUR TAKE



**Sutanu Guru**  
Author, Journalist and Academician

# China exports trump tariffs

## A trade surplus of \$1 trillion offsets lower shipments to the US

Like with most overconfident leaders, reality is difficult to swallow, especially when it stares in the face. This is precisely what is happening to Donald Trump, the US President, who thought that his theatrics, tantrums, tariffs, and trade wars would bring the Chinese economy down to its knees. He felt America could once again emerge as the undisputed hegemon in the Asia Pacific region, and the rest of the world, not just militarily but in economic terms. He probably had an inkling, which may partially explain his decision to agree to a temporary truce with the Chinese counterpart, Xi Jinping.

However, the latest China's trade data proves that Red Dragon is winning the trade war against Uncle Sam. In the first 11 months of 2025, China created a historic record, and generated a trade surplus of more than \$1 trillion. Let us put this number in perspective. The figure is 2.5 times India's nominal GDP in dollar terms. It is almost 30 times the GDP of Pakistan. This is the nature of success against all odds, and it has deep lessons for India.

If one considers the monthly numbers, the trade surplus in November 2025 was more than \$100 billion, or the highest since June 2025, and higher than the \$90 billion in October. Yes, China's exports to the US fell by 25 per cent in October 2025, and close to 29 per cent in November. These were huge blows since America is, and was, one of the largest and most promising markets for Chinese products over the past few decades. But, on an overall basis, Chinese exports grew by 5.9 per cent in November, thanks to higher non-US shipments, after a more than one per cent decline in October.

This is indeed a phenomenal achievement. No country in the world, no global economy has ever achieved it in history. To do it despite lower exports to the US implies, maybe proves, that China has clearly and decisively won the trade war. Trump can huff and puff. He can threaten more action, despite the so-called trade truce. He can yell and scream some more. But China has demonstrated that even the most powerful nation cannot beat the Red Dragon in a trade war. You can dub this as famous or infamous depending on ideology.

What are the reasons for Trump's failure to contain China economically via excessively high tariffs? One, unlike India and other nations, China had prepared for this situation, and scenario for a long time. Most nations were blindsided during Trump's second term, and his ever-increasing, and ever-changing trade-tariff threats. Even allies like Europe, Japan, South Korea, and others felt the heat of the president's anger and actions. These nations capitulated because they were very dependent on the US for military and economic support. In different ways, they quietly surrendered.

Not China, which refused to blink. Since Trump took oath for the second time, it launched a strategy to diversify the export basket. The results are clear. Exports to the European Union, which is a counter to the American market, increased by 15 per cent. There were similar spectacular increases in shipments to Latin America, despite Brazil's opposition, Southeast Asia, and Africa. Even with a partner-adversary nation like India, the bilateral trade went up to \$115 billion, and India stares at a trade deficit of more than \$100 billion. Clearly, China knew what it was doing.

Two, the Chinese economy is too strong for any nation to bully it. There are more than 150 economies in the world, whose largest trading partner is China. Thus, any attempts to stall, stop, or dissuade these nations from dealing, negotiating, and trading intensively with China, are bound to fail. China offers cheap, competitive, and good quality products, something that the US cannot do. Chinese trade partners realise that the Red Dragon's manufacturing juggernaut will benefit them. Despite the American fears, they negotiated decent, though defeatist, trade terms with the US, even as they enhanced the links with China.

The third reason for Trump's failure is perhaps the president's ill-conceived notions that his opinions can sway the world. Perhaps, if he really wanted to contain Chinese manufacturing, he could have focused on creating a practical China+1 consensus among the nations. Instead, he hector, threatened, and got angry with the allies. Nations such as Vietnam, India, and Malaysia, which could have emerged as potential counters to China's manufacturing, were antagonized by the theatrics, arrogance, and tantrums of Trump. The US president can still turn things around, but it will take more time, more effort, and better negotiations to create a consensus.

Of course, one needs to watch whether the November trade performance is sustainable, and carries momentum. This is because China's exports were more than two percentage points higher than a poll survey among experts by a news agency. Similarly, imports were lower than predicted. This pushed up the monthly trade surplus, and resulted in the over \$1 trillion figure in the first 11 months. Thanks to America's inability to ink bilateral trade deals, some nations like India were forced to buy more from China in the recent past.

However, one can safely assume that China has decisively won this round of the trade wars and, even in the future, there is not much that Trump can do. Indeed, by recently meeting Xi at a summit in South Korea, the US president gave the indication that he is no longer able to absorb the economic and political costs of the trade wars with several nations, especially China. For India, it is a sobering wake-up call that manufacturing needs to be a priority. If the economy does not produce globally-competitive world class products, and in volumes, it is likely to be in trouble, sooner or later.

Let us take a few lessons from the China example. Even today, Chinese experts, quoted in the western media, contend that the trade surplus will not come down, but widen in the next year. Exports were “likely to remain resilient” due to three reasons. First, China has re-routed products to increase its share in other nations and regions. Second, it offers more attractive prices to non-US buyers, including America's allies. Finally, deflation has pulled down the currency's real effective exchange rate. Still, the growing surplus may result in a backlash. Already, France has threatened higher tariffs if the bilateral surplus is not balanced.

The author has worked for leading media houses, authored two books, and is now Executive Director, C Voter Foundation

## The Tech Wrecker

# When big shareholders say No

## Investors oppose CEO pays, royalties, and anti-climate moves



Norway's \$1.7-trillion sovereign wealth fund, a large shareholder of Microsoft, recently voted against CEO Satya Nadella's dual posting as chairman of the board, and his nearly \$100 million pay package. The fund did this due to its stance against large salaries, and dual responsibilities. However, the majority of the shareholders supported Nadella, and backed his appointment, and compensation. The Norway fund's anti-vote fits into a larger pattern of shareholder activism, which involves institutional and small investors, cuts across several issues, and is seen across continents, and nations.

Asset sales, buybacks of shares, strategy, leadership, capital efficiency, climate change, and corporate ethics are increasingly coming under scrutiny. From Silicon Valley to Mumbai, big oil to tech, investors are no longer content to remain silent partners, and rubber-stamp the decisions of the promoters and boards. In 2021, the US-based Invesco and the UK-based Abdn, which together held nearly 18 per cent in Zee Entertainment, sought the removal of CEO Punit Goenka, along with an overhaul of the board. This led to a sustained proxy war between the global investors, and promoter family, which spilled into court-rooms and regulatory forums.

Although Goenka continues to be the CEO, the shareholder activism forced Sony to walk away from a proposed \$10-billion merger with Zee in early 2024. The potential buyer cited issues like unresolved governance, and leadership uncertainty. Between 2017 and 2019, Maruti's shareholders repeatedly voted against proposals to increase royalty payments to Japan's Suzuki Motor. Investors argued that the proposed hikes, which were cleared by the board, were excessive. The board renegotiated the terms. The case proved that even the small, and minority shareholders can push for excessive changes.

Even small, seemingly-inconsequential institutions can make a difference. In 2021, a little-known activist fund, Engine No.1, which held a mere 0.02 per cent of ExxonMobil, achieved what decades of environmental protests did not. The fund led a movement that ended with the election of three dissident directors on the board of the world's largest listed oil company, and defeat of the management-backed candidates. Of course, the victory was possible due to the coalition-building among the different shareholders, as Engine No.1 secured the backing of giant pension funds.

Subsequently, Exxon's strategy reflected climate transition risks, not just quarterly profits. The oil giant recalibrated capital allocations, expanded low-carbon investments, and adopted a more restrained tone on the growth of fossil fuels. While it remains deeply rooted in the exploration and marketing of hydrocarbons, the episode fundamentally altered how energy boards think and act. More oil firms directed more efforts towards green energy, and energy savings. Diversification into renewable sources became the norm, and experts contend that several fossil-fuel players are likely to morph into the producers of solar, wind, and hydrogen energy.

Shareholders question diversifications, and even straight-forward linear but exponential, growth. In 2023, activist-investor Starboard Value built a near-two per cent stake in Salesforce, and pressed for aggressive cost controls, and margin expansion. This was a time when most enterprise-software firms believed in frenetic growth, rather than profitability. Salesforce had to respond with a 10 per cent work-force reduction, tighter expense management, and sharper revenue-to-profit conversion. The stock rallied, as investors rewarded the new focus on operational efficiency, and profits. Indian IT noticed that capital efficiency mattered as much as innovation.

In 2019, Elliott Management, which had a \$3.2-billion stake in AT&T, launched a public attack on the telecom major's strategy to diversify into media, and emerge as a conglomerate. The acquisitions of Time Warner and DirecTV, Elliott argued, destroyed shareholder value, and distracted AT&T from its core communications business. Within three years, the Telco unwound its M&As. It spun off WarnerMedia, which was merged with Discovery, and became a focused telecom operator. The divestment was widely seen as an admission that the activist-investor's critique was valid.

What emerges from these examples is not a single theory of shareholder activism but a widening set of outcomes that Indian and global boardrooms need to contend with. Investor opposition does not follow a single script. It can take on various forms, tackle several subjects, and end in public ruptures, strategic retreats, regulatory and judicial intervention, and corporate resets. In some cases, as with Microsoft, shareholders' dissent may be symbolic to begin with, but can gather steam over time. The vote against Nadella did not alter the leadership structure. Yet the signal is on record.

Over time, such signals may shape the boards, and the design of executive pay packages. Even when a vote fails, it results in internal and external conversations and debates, especially when the media highlights them.

In other cases, as was evident in Zee, investor interventions destabilise operations, and have commercial consequences. The pressures from the shareholders can alter the strategic trajectories of the companies. Zee Entertainment rethought its strategies, even as the promoter-family fought to retain its hold. In Exxon, the mindset changed, even if only slightly.

A decade ago, shareholder activism in India was minimal, except in hotly-contested, politicised, and sensitive cases. For example, state-owned institutions, with large shareholdings, finally opposed the late Swraj Paul's attempts to take over DCM and Escorts in the 1980s. In the 1990s, the former did the same, when they wrested management control in L&T away from the Ambani family. Today, it is an embedded force, and the impact is felt across firms. What is happening globally, i.e., a narrowing gap between promoter-management-board powers, and investors' influences.

Yet, the activism in India still looks different from the US. This is because promoter holdings remain high in the former, hostile takeovers are rare, regulatory and legal processes play larger roles, and proxy battles at the shareholders' meetings are uncommon. But things are changing, and an underlying discipline is being imposed on internal boardroom decisions from the outside. Promoter control offers insulation, which is not absolute. Institutions apply pressures through courts, voting patterns, media narratives, and merger approvals. Small investors react, and retaliate if they remain unhappy. Governance stress turns into systemic risks.

Shareholder activism is moving beyond questions of short-term financial returns, and valuations, into the architecture of corporate power. Hence, most firms believe in consensus and negotiations, rather than resort to confrontations. They need to involve large and small investors in the decision-making process, and convince them about the necessity of the strategic and tactical initiatives. Shareholders are not rubber-stamps, and institutions are not satisfied with board positions, especially if they form a minority. Powerful hedge funds, as well as activist-investors, believe that they have the right to influence firms, and boardrooms.



# IndiGo messed up, but so did the IBC

The spectacular failure of airline bankruptcy proceedings in India has perversely crippled the start-up airline market in India



KUSHAN MITRA

IndiGo's spectacular meltdown in the first week of December left people stranded across the country. I was attending the media drive of the Tata Sierra in Chandigarh last weekend and many of my friends had severely delayed flights or cancelled flights. And stories of weddings and holidays being ruined filled social media.

But airlines can have meltdowns, earlier this year when operations were severely restricted at Delhi Airport due to fog, planes and passengers found themselves all over the country. And this is not just an Indian thing, across the world, every so often an airline has a massive flight meltdown. Sometimes triggered by weather, sometimes by strikes or sometimes by software.

It is possibly true that IndiGo's poor planning of the Flight Duty Time Limitations (FDTL) issue was a major factor in the meltdown. But it is also true that the meltdown impacted an abnormal number of people simply because of IndiGo's massive network and the fact that they have nearly two-thirds of the Indian aviation market.

I am a well-wisher of the airline, not only because I take 15-20 flights with the airline every year, I am a shareholder in the airline and have been one ever since the Initial Public Offering. I also believe that IndiGo is an important instrument for the Indian Government because I feel that it is India's interest as a major global economy to have an airline, actually multiple airlines with global reach. We surrendered our aviation industry to middle-eastern carriers such as Emirates in particular, whose global dominance was achieved with Indian rupees.

But it will take a few years for Tata Sons to stabilise things at Air India and IndiGo's growth over the past few years, particularly in the short and medium haul international sectors, has been stunning. Just look at connectivity to countries like Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam and now China.

Early next year when IndiGo gets their first Airbus A321neo XLR aircraft with a much longer range, they will start flights between Delhi/Mumbai and Athens in Greece. India has



become extremely close to Greece over the past few years, especially if you look at projects like the Indian Middle-East Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC) where Greece plays a pivotal role. Whether you like it or not, IndiGo plays a role in India's diplomacy.

There is also the fact that IndiGo has been adversely impacted by the high rate of failure of the American Pratt and Whitney 1100G Geared Turbofan engine and over 40 IndiGo aircraft are still grounded for no fault of the airline. The failure of the American company to make 'dependable engines' as they promise on their logo was a major reason for the collapse of Go First.

This neatly brings me to the fact that the bankruptcy proceedings of Go First airlines. This was a completely and totally botched process. The airlines promoters and then administrators abused the process to not return the leased aircraft operated by the airline. While the Resolution

Professional of Go First tried to argue that without planes the airline is worthless, it was nothing short of stealing assets.

The leasing companies stopped supporting the aircraft, many of which couldn't fly anyway thanks to Pratt and Whitney. It is true that Go First had severe financial issues before the engine failures, but that was truly the straw that broke the camels back. And even when some engines were repaired, the aircraft lessors refused, rightly, to give them to Go First.

But here is where the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) did not deregister the aircraft and did not allow leasing companies to take back their assets. A similar situation also occurred with SpiceJet which has been taken to court in India and the United Kingdom for not returning or paying leasing firms.

While SpiceJet still survives today, many of their aircraft are still grounded and they are mainly operating wet-leased aircraft. This is not

the only story, the botched bankruptcy process of Jet Airways is well known. Many planes owned by the Naresh Goyal promoted airline are still gathering dust on the tarmacs of Delhi and Mumbai airport, assets that at one point of time worth almost two billion dollars and withering away.

A similar story played out with Kingfisher airlines, although all Airbus aircraft owned by the airline managed to be ferried out before the gory end and one plane, VT-VJM, Vijay Mallya's personal private jet is believed to have been taken over by the Indian Air Force. That said, many ATR turboprops rotted away at Chennai airport and when the airport flooded they were not airworthy anymore.

The reason I am mentioning botched airline bankruptcies and the legal issues faced by SpiceJet here is that India's reputation among global leasing companies is pathetic. Only IndiGo backed by its vast scale and Air India

backed by the financial muscle of Tata Sons and Singapore Airlines can lease aircraft at globally competitive rates. Other airlines can only grow slowly, Akasa for example has been holding off on taking deliveries of ready aircraft allegedly because they are still negotiating leasing deals at globally competitive rates.

The other airlines in the Indian market such as Star Air and Fly91 are small and other start-up airlines are finding it impossible to lease new planes unless they either pay usurious monthly rentals or have massive deposits. Starting up with older, less economical planes is the only option some have but even then, the amount that they pay is higher than start-up airlines in most parts of the world. This will not allow them to be economically competitive with the likes of IndiGo.

Let us face the facts, while business passengers prioritise timings and frequency over fares, tourists prefer cheaper flights. And on both these sides, no start-up can compete with IndiGo and Air India to an extent, unless they are willing to burn money for half a decade.

And if a well-capitalised conglomerate and promoter like Bombay Dyeing and the Wadia family can't keep an airline going, what hope do start-up airlines have? Even if the Government gave start-up airlines breaks on landing and navigation fees, if they cannot get planes at competitive rates, or at all for that matter, how will they fly and compete.

The only solution is if Indian financial institutions get into the business of aircraft leasing. Given Indian aviation's massive growth and continued prospects, this actually makes sense, if the Finance Ministry gave some incentives to Indian leasing companies, some breaks are being provided through GIFT City in Gujarat. Indian financial institutions might be better placed to deal with the Indian legal and bureaucratic system, especially the IBC.

To blame IndiGo for 'becoming' a monopoly is unfair, it was enabled to become a quasi-monopoly. And likely due to no intention of theirs but thanks to the circumstances listed above, India needs globally-competitive airlines and IndiGo is important towards that end, but India also needs a few more large airlines because we cannot be so reliant on one airline alone. How and when that will happen, remains to be seen.

Author is a senior journalist, Printer and Publisher of 'The Pioneer'

## China's surplus surpasses \$1 trillion

ASSOCIATED PRESS

■ Bangkok

Higher tariffs have dealt a "severe blow" to the world economy, China's premier said on Tuesday, even as China's own trade surplus has surged past \$1 trillion. Premier Li Qiang made the remarks at a forum of top international organisations held in Beijing while top Chinese leaders are attending an annual economic planning meeting.

"Starting from the beginning of this year, we've seen the stick of tariffs being wielded around the world with growing restrictive measures on the economy and trade, which have dealt a severe blow to the global economy," Li said, without mentioning US President Donald Trump and his tariff hikes specifically.

"As the situation has unfolded, the damaging consequences of tariffs hurting both others and oneself have become increasingly evident, and calls from all sides to uphold free trade have grown ever stronger," Li told the gathering of top representatives from the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the World Trade Organisation. Trump's sharply higher tariffs on imports from China and other countries have dented Chinese exports



to the US, but that has been offset by higher shipments to other global markets. Chinese customs figures reported Monday showed exports to the United States plunged 29 per cent in November from a year earlier in the eighth straight month of declines.

Meanwhile, China's trade surplus in dollar terms for 2025 had already exceeded \$1 trillion as of November, while exports rose 5.9 per cent from a year earlier.

Trade friction between Beijing and Washington has eased somewhat after Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping met in late October during a regional economic summit in South Korea. The two sides agreed to dial back earlier steps and extend a truce in retaliatory measures for a year. With investments in technology rising, outpacing

overall investments, Li called for "collaborative innovation," saying "we need to embrace an open mind and work hand in hand to pursue openness and cooperation." The Central Economic Work Conference, the annual planning meeting held this week, follows a top-level meeting in October to draft China's plan for 2026-2030.

It focused on China's aim to remain a global manufacturing power and build a stronger domestic economy that is more reliant on consumer spending and technological advances. China's economy grew at a 4.8 per cent annual pace in the last quarter, the slowest pace in a year. However, economists expect growth to hit the official 2025 target of about 5 per cent, thanks partly to strong exports.

## Stock markets fall for 2nd day on profit booking

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

■ Mumbai

Stock markets closed lower for the second straight day on Tuesday, with benchmark BSE Sensex declining by 436 points as investors booked profit ahead of the US Federal Reserve's policy decision.

The 30-share BSE Sensex dropped 436.41 points, or 0.51 per cent, to close at a nearly two-week low of 84,666.28. During the day, the barometer plunged by 719.73 points, or 0.84 per cent, to hit an intraday low of 84,382.96 as blue-chip private banks, oil and IT shares retreated.

The 50-share NSE Nifty dropped by 120.90 points, or 0.47 per cent, to settle at 25,839.65. In the intraday session, it depreciated by 232.55 points, or 0.89 per cent, to hit a low of 25,728. Analysts said persistent foreign fund outflows and weak global cues weighed on the investor sentiment.

Among the Sensex constituents, Asian Paints, Tech Mahindra, HCL Technologies, Tata Steel, Maruti Suzuki India, Sun Pharmaceuticals, Tata Consultancy Services, ICICI Bank, Bajaj Finance, UltraTech Cement, Mahindra & Mahindra and Tata Motors Passenger Vehicles were the laggards.

However, Eternal, Titan, Adani Ports, Bharat Electronics Ltd, State Bank of India, Bajaj Finserv, NTPC and Bharti Airtel were among the gainers. "Domestic equities opened lower, extending profit booking amid caution ahead of tomorrow's US Fed policy decision, rupee weak-



ness, persistent FII outflows and ongoing uncertainty over the US-India trade deal. IT stocks led the decline, while PSU banks, realty and consumer durables gained, with small caps outperforming other indices," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Investments Ltd, said. The US Federal Reserve is set to begin its two-day policy meeting later on Tuesday, where the central bank's Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC) will decide on key benchmark interest rates for the world's largest economy.

"The equity benchmarks staged a partial rebound on Tuesday after a steep sell-off at the open, with value buying helping the indices trim losses through the afternoon. The Sensex recovered nearly 450 points from its intraday low, while the Nifty climbed back above 25,900, though both remained in negative

territory," Gaurav Garg, Research Analyst at Lemonn Markets Desk, said. Broader markets rebounded with BSE midcap gauge rising by 0.60 per cent and smallcap index advancing 1.27 per cent.

Among sectoral indices, Focussed IT declined the most by 1.18 per cent, Information Technology by 0.89 per cent, Teck by 0.72 per cent, Auto by 0.63 per cent, Metal by 0.34 per cent, and Consumer Durables and Energy fell by 0.16 per cent each.

On the other hand, Capital Goods, Power, Industrials, Telecom, Consumer Discretionary, FMCG, Utilities were among the gainers. As many as 2,550 stocks advanced, while 1,625 declined and 156 remain unchanged on the BSE.

"Fresh tariff concerns on Indian rice exports weighed on agri-related stocks, while persistent FII outflows and the rupee's slide past 90 contin-

ued to add to investor anxiety," Ajit Mishra — SVP, Research, Religare Broking Ltd said.

In Asian markets, Hong Kong's Hang Seng index, Shanghai's SSE Composite, South Korea's KOSPI settled lower while Japan's Nikkei 225 benchmark ended in the green territory. European markets are trading higher. Wall Street ended lower in overnight deals on Monday.

Nair added that global sentiment was further pressured by surging Japanese bond yields and expectations of the Bank of Japan (BoJ) tightening monetary policy at its upcoming December meeting.

While the markets largely anticipate a 25-basis-point rate cut by the Fed and a rate hike by the BoJ, forward guidance for 2026 will be critical.

Meanwhile, Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth `655.59 crore on Monday, while Domestic Institutional Investors (DIIs) bought stocks worth `2,542.49 crore, according to exchange data. "In the near term, central bank commentary, currency movement and FII flows will steer sentiment, while domestic macro resilience is expected to provide a cushion against downside risks," he said.

Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, fell 0.27 per cent to \$62.33 per barrel. On Monday, the 30-share BSE Sensex plunged by 609.68 points to close at 85,102.69. Snapping a two-day gaining streak, the 50-share NSE Nifty declined by 225.90 points to settle at 25,960.55.

## Many Indian professionals want to work for themselves: Report

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

■ New Delhi

A significant percentage of professionals in the country said they want to work for themselves in the near future, with factors like AI adoption, a strong skilling appetite and the power of trusted professional networks making it easier to start and scale their business, says a LinkedIn report.

According to LinkedIn's latest Small Business Work Change India Report, the number of Indian members adding 'founder' to their profiles has increased by 104 per cent in a year, as more than 7 in 10 professionals in the country say they want to work for themselves in the near future. The report

noted that three factors will fuel this shift: AI adoption, brand credibility and networks. "AI is becoming part of everyday operations for India's small businesses. Eightytwo per cent of SMB leaders here say it has made starting and running a business easier, and 97 per cent already use it in some form. For 83 per cent, AI has become critical for business growth," the report said.

To keep pace, SMBs (small and medium businesses) are building skills as quickly as they adopt new tools. AI literacy has risen 52 per cent year-on-year among companies with 11-200 employees, as 81 per cent of SMBs admit they are investing in AI capabilities.

Around 95 per cent of

Indian SMBs are already investing in or planning AI adoption, outpacing the global average (83 per cent). "India's small businesses are moving with extraordinary speed and ambition. What sets India apart is the combination of rapid AI adoption, a strong skilling appetite and the power of trusted professional networks. Together, these forces are reshaping how businesses build, scale and succeed," Kumaresh Pattabiraman, India Country Manager, LinkedIn, said.

As we enter 2026, India's SMBs aren't just keeping pace with global change—they're setting the direction. LinkedIn is committed to helping them build credibility, find talent and unlock opportunity at

every stage of their growth, Pattabiraman added. Globally, 61 per cent of small business owners are creating content themselves and 71 per cent said showing up authentically online matters. This focus on connection is also witnessing a rise, with 88 per cent agreeing that people skills are even more important in the age of AI.

Moreover, in India, 85 per cent of marketers say audiences now follow real voices such as customers, employees, partners and creators, because they help people make smarter decisions.

"With AI-generated content rising, SMBs are treating relationships as essential infrastructure for insight, opportunity, and resilience," the report said.

## Fertiliser import likely to jump 41 % in FY26: FAI

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

■ New Delhi

India's fertiliser imports are estimated to jump 41 per cent to 22.3 million tonnes in the 2025-26 fiscal year due to a surge in domestic demand following good monsoon rains, the Fertiliser Association of India (FAI) said on Tuesday. The world's second-largest fertiliser consumer has imported 14.45 million tonnes during April-October, up nearly 69 per cent from 8.56 million tonnes a year earlier, the industry body said.

"There has been an increase in imports of fertilisers because of a sudden spurt in domestic demand because of good rains," FAI Chairman S Shankar Subramanian told reporters ahead of the association's three-day annual seminar. Fertiliser stocks stood at 10.2 million tonnes by end-November versus 9.97 million tonnes a year earlier, including 5 million tonnes of urea, 1.7 million tonnes of DAP and 3.5 million tonnes of NPK fertilisers, he said. Shankar Subramanian, who is also managing director of Coromandel International, said India has contracted large volumes in the last two months and there are no supply constraints. While there were iso-



lated shortages during the kharif season, overall supplies remained adequate, he added. Domestic fertiliser production rose marginally to 29.97 million tonnes in April-October from 29.75 million tonnes a year earlier, FAI data showed.

Production included 17.13 million tonnes of urea, 2.32 million tonnes of DAP, 7.04 million tonnes of NPK fertilizers and 3.48 million tonnes of SSP. Over 150 companies meet nearly three-quarters of India's nutrient needs, with imports covering the rest, the association said. India, serving

more than 140 million farming households, consumes close to 70 million tonnes of fertiliser annually, second only to China. The Government provided more than `1.9 lakh crore in subsidies through urea and nutrient-based frameworks in 2024-25. India has forged strategic partnerships with resource-rich nations, including Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Morocco, Qatar and Russia to strengthen supply security, FAI said. The seminar starting December 10 will be inaugurated by Fertiliser Minister J P Nadda.



FROM THE WORLD

MEXICO

Ex-Governor taken into custody

Mexican federal authorities took a former governor of the northern border state of Chihuahua into custody in preparation for charging him with laundering money diverted from state coffers while in office, the Attorney General's Office said Monday. Ex-Chihuahua Gov. César Duarte – identified in a statement only as “César N” in keeping with rules over the protecting the identity of the accused – was extradited by the United States three years ago to face state charges of embezzlement and was under house arrest. Juan Carlos Mendoza Luján, a lawyer representing Duarte, told the newspaper El Heraldo de Chihuahua that Duarte had been detained and that his lawyers were still gathering information, but that his detention appeared unlawful.

PAKISTAN

Hindu woman, daughter abducted

A Pakistani Hindu woman and her minor daughter have been reportedly kidnapped by unknown gunmen in Pakistan's Sindh province, officials said. The incident took place on Saturday in the Sindh Mohalla in Sher Shah, Karachi. According to initial accounts provided by the family, the woman was taken away by three armed individuals who forced her into a white Alto car moments after she stepped out of her home. The case has sparked a wave of fear and concern within the local community. Shiva Kaachi, a civil rights activist for the Hindu community in the Sindh province, said Rani and her minor daughter were still missing, and her family feared she would be forcibly converted to Islam and then married off to one of the abductors.

Pakistan, Indonesia ink seven MoUs to bolster cooperation

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Islamabad

Pakistan and Indonesia on Tuesday inked seven agreements to further bolster bilateral cooperation in diverse fields as Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif held “productive” talks with Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto here. This is Subianto's maiden visit to Pakistan. The last presidential visit from Indonesia to Pakistan was undertaken by President Joko Widodo in 2018. According to State-run Radio Pakistan, the MoUs include cooperation in higher education, a grant program for Indonesian state scholarships, and facilitation of business development for small and medium enterprises. It also includes collaboration between national archives, narcotics

Cambodia vows fierce fight against Thailand

ASSOCIATED PRESS ■ Surin

Cambodia's powerful Senate President Hun Sen on Tuesday vowed that his country would carry out a fierce fight against Thailand as a second day of wide-spread renewed combat between the Southeast Asian neighbours drove tens of thousands of people to flee border areas. Fighting broke out following a skirmish in which one Thai soldier was killed on Sunday night, despite a cease-fire that ended fighting in July over competing territorial claims. The five days of fighting then left dozens dead on both sides, and forced the evacuation of over 100,000 civilians. In a sign that neither side was willing to back down, Thai Prime Minister Anutin Charnvirakul said Tuesday that Cambodia had not yet contacted Thailand about possible negotiations and the fighting would continue. “We've got to do what we've got to do,” he said. “The Government will support all kinds of military operations as planned earlier.” He had said on Monday that military action



Local people taking refuge in Prey Chamkar Ta Doak market in Banteay Meanchey province in Cambodia, near the border with Thailand

PTI

was necessary to safeguard the nation's sovereignty and ensure public safety. In a statement posted to Facebook and Telegram, Hun Sen claimed that his country had refrained from retaliating on Monday, but overnight began to fire back at Thai forces, saying Cambodia would “weaken and destroy enemy forces through counterattacks.” Thailand's military said Cambodia attacked Thai positions with artillery, rocket and drone attacks on Tuesday. Thailand says that

Cambodian forces also fired at its troops Sunday and Monday, but each side blames the other for firing the first shots. “Cambodia wants peace, but Cambodia is forced to fight back to defend its territory,” Hun Sen wrote. He was Cambodia's long-

serving prime minister until 2023, when he was succeeded by his son Hun Manet, but is still widely seen as the country's de facto leader. Cambodia's military announced on Tuesday that the new fighting had killed seven civilians and wounded

Sri Lanka bids farewell to 2 IAF choppers involved in relief work

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Colombo

Sri Lanka Air Force bid farewell to two IAF helicopters after they ended their rescue mission in cyclone-hit island nation, even as INS Gharial reached Trincomalee with 700 tonnes of essential relief material from Tamil Nadu. The Indian Air Force (IAF) choppers, which departed on Monday, were involved in air-lifting immediate relief supplies to distressed communities, evacuating those affected and providing air cover for those involved in rescue missions in the aftermath of havoc caused by Cyclone Ditwah and adverse weather conditions. “Their contribution significantly enhanced Sri Lanka's national disaster response during a period of urgent need,” the Sri Lankan Air Force said in a statement issued on their official website on Monday. The Indian High Commission in Colombo said the helicopters evacuated



264 survivors and airlifted about 50 tonnes of relief material, adding that more Indian relief action was due. Meanwhile, the Indian Navy Ship (INS) Gharial reached Trincomalee On Monday, with 700 tonnes of food items, essentials and clothing from Tamil Nadu. “The consignment was formally received by Deputy Foreign Minister Hon Arun Hemachandra, who appreciated India's swift and sustained assistance,” the

mission posted on social media on Tuesday. Tamil Nadu has sent about 1,000 tonnes of essential food items and clothes to Sri Lanka under Operation Sagar Bandhu. Of these, about 300 tonnes reached Colombo in 3 Indian Naval Ships on Sunday. Additionally, the fully operational Indian field hospital Mahiyanganaya near Kandy, is delivering life-saving treatment to flood-affected communities. “Equipped for trauma care,

surgeries, ambulance support and critical medical services, the facility ensures urgent healthcare reaches where it matters most,” it added. Indian Army's Engineering Task Force is also working alongside Sri Lankan authorities to restore connectivity along the main road arteries of Sri Lanka in the wake of devastation caused by Cyclone Ditwah, it said. Indian High Commissioner Santosh Jha on Monday met Nalinda

Jayatissa, Minister of Health and Mass Media and discussed the ongoing efforts to bolster healthcare in Sri Lanka. The two discussed “deployment of field hospitals and BHISHM Cube, providing urgent and quality health care to the people of Sri Lanka in the wake of #CycloneDitwah. They also discussed next steps to strengthen these efforts,” it said. As of Tuesday, 9 am, 638 people have been killed, with 191 missing, in catastrophic floods and landslides caused by extreme weather conditions since November 16. India was the first country to respond to Sri Lanka's international appeal for assistance under its Operation Sagar Bandhu. A UNDP analysis released on Sunday said out of the estimated 2.3 million affected by Ditwah, more than half were women, and it hit 1.1 million hectares or almost 20 per cent of the island's land area. The cyclone triggered 1200 landslides in the hill country, where the impact of devas-

tation was severe. “The floodwaters reached nearly 720,000 buildings, about one in every twelve buildings in the country. Over 16,000 kilometres of roads, enough to circle the island's coastline more than twelve times, were exposed to flooding. Similarly, over 278 km of railway tracks and 480 bridges were located in flooded areas,” Azusa Kubota, UNDP Resident Representative in Sri Lanka, said. Cyclone Ditwah struck regions already weakened by years of economic stress, he added. “After one of its worst economic crises and a slow but steady recovery underway, Sri Lanka cannot shoulder more debt to cover the costs of a rebuild from this massive natural disaster,” he said. International partners must step up with affordable financing and innovative instruments that enable a rapid recovery and rebuilding with greater resilience, without the country falling off the debt cliff, he added.

UN to grant \$4.5 million to help cyclone-hit Sri Lanka

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Colombo

The United Nations on Tuesday announced the release of \$4.5 million from its Central Emergency Response Fund to assist Sri Lanka in recovering from the devastation caused by Cyclone Ditwah. “Cyclone Ditwah has upended lives across the country, and many families are still struggling to meet their basic daily needs,” said Marc-André Franche, United Nations Resident Coordinator in Sri Lanka. He said that the UN is working closely with the Government, civil society partners and the humanitarian community in Sri Lanka to ensure a coordinated response guided by evidence and priority needs. “This emergency funding will help us reach those most severely affected with the support they urgently need,” he added. Sri Lanka's Minister of Foreign Affairs Vijitha Herath thanked the UN for the contributions. “The impact of the disaster on all sectors, including daily livelihood, economy, and agriculture, requires continued international support for the rebuilding process,” Herath posted on social media. The funds will enable the UN to rapidly scale up emergency food assistance, shelter support, and water, sanitation and hygiene services for the severely affected. Communities across Sri Lanka are continuing to grapple with the widespread impacts of the cyclone, with thousands of families still displaced after extensive damage to housing and infrastructure. Even as response efforts are underway, latest assessments indicate that the effects of the cyclone are broader and more severe than initially understood, leaving many communities in urgent need of sustained support to fully recover from Cyclone Ditwah. Over 1.7 million people from over 500,000 families were affected by the cyclone-triggered extreme weather, with 638 deaths and 191 missing.

Lithuania Govt declares national emergency

ASSOCIATED PRESS ■ Vilnius

Lithuania's Government on Tuesday declared a national emergency over security risks posed by meteorological balloons from Russia-allied Belarus that have violated its airspace in recent weeks. Tensions between Lithuania and Belarus have escalated after the balloons forced Lithuania to repeatedly shut down its main airport, leaving thousands of people stranded. “In combating the Belarusian hybrid attack, we must take the strictest measures and defend the areas most affected by this attack,” Prime Minister Inga Ruginiene said. The announcement followed a Cabinet meeting of the Baltic state, which is a NATO member and strong backer of Ukraine in its fight against the Russian forces who launched a full-scale invasion in February 2022.

TENSIONS BETWEEN TWO NATIONS ROSE AFTER BALLOONS FORCED LITHUANIA TO SHUT DOWN ITS AIRPORT

Interior Minister Vladislav Kondratovic said that the state of emergency means the army would be given the possibility to patrol in the border area, together with police and other uniformed services or alone, in order to detect the balloons. He promised the impact on civilians would be limited. While the balloons are used to smuggle cigarettes into Lithuania, officials in Vilnius see their numbers and trajectories as deliberate acts of disruption orchestrated by Belarus. Kondratovic said Lithuanian prosecutors launched an investigation into the balloons and that the secret services would provide

information about the connection with the Minsk regime. “I have no information that the Belarusian side is trying to curb the senders of the balloons,” the minister said. “And this is one of the proofs that this is a hybrid attack.” In October, Lithuanian authorities closed two border crossings in response to the airspace violations by the balloons. Belarus' authoritarian President Alexander Lukashenko denounced Lithuania's move to close the border as a “mad scam” and part of a “hybrid war” against his country. He suggested that Vilnius itself needs to combat the smuggling of contraband. Lithuania, Poland, and other European Union countries in the region have in recent years accused Belarus of other activities aimed at triggering instability, including with cyberattacks. They also accuse Minsk of direct-

ing a large influx of migrants from the Middle East and Africa to their borders to create a migration crisis. “Belarus is signalling to Lithuania that it can raise the price at any moment,” Linas Kojala, head of the Geopolitics and Security Studies Centre in Vilnius, told. “Yesterday with weaponised migration, today with balloons that are hardly separable from regime control.” Europe overall has been on high alert since drone intrusions into NATO's airspace reached an unprecedented scale in September and the Russian invasion of Ukraine nears its fourth year. However, smuggling balloons is a challenge unique to the Baltic states bordering Belarus. Representatives of the EU and NATO have expressed support but offered scarce concrete information about what could be done.



Mexican National Guardsman kills 3 fellow service members

ASSOCIATED PRESS ■ Mexico

A Mexican National Guardsman shot and killed three fellow service members at a barracks over the weekend in the western Mexican state of Michoacan, where the Government has surged security forces in the wake of recent high-profile killings. A federal official confirmed the shooting Monday to The Associated Press, requesting anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss it publicly. The shooting, which wounded a fourth service member, was under investigation, the official said. The suspect was in custody in Michoacan. The shooting occurred Saturday hours after a car bomb exploded in Coahuayana, Michoacan, killing five people outside a local police station. President Claudia Sheinbaum declined to give more details Monday.



ICC sentences Sudanese militia leader for Darfur crimes

ASSOCIATED PRESS ■ The Hague

Judges at the International Criminal Court (ICC) sentenced a leader of the feared Sudanese Janjaweed militia to 20 years imprisonment Tuesday for war crimes and crimes against humanity committed in the catastrophic conflict in Darfur more than two decades ago. At a hearing last month, prosecutors sought a life sentence for Ali Muhammad Ali Abd-Al-Rahman, who was convicted in October of 27 counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity that included ordering mass executions and bludgeoning two prisoners to death with an axe in 2003-2004. “He committed these crimes knowingly, willfully, and with the evidence shows, enthusiasm and vigour,” prosecutor Julian Nicholls told judges at the sentencing hearing in November.



# India-Russia Summit 2025: A quiet reset in a noisy world



BHASKAR  
JYOTI  
MAHANTA

When Vladimir Putin stepped down from his aircraft in New Delhi on the afternoon of December 4th, 2025, the moment felt almost symbolic. The world today is anything but settled - Europe still burns with conflict, the United States continues to tighten sanctions, Beijing expands its strategic ambitions, and global alliances are beginning to look like the chessboard of a new Cold War. Yet, there on Indian soil, two leaders greeted each other with familiarity, not caution. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's decision to personally receive President Putin, and later accompany him in the same vehicle, was a message written not in language but in gesture: India and Russia still trust each other, despite the storm outside.

We have watched the India-Russia relationship evolve for decades - from the days of Soviet camaraderie when every defence

installation in India seemed to carry Cyrillic markings, to the more uncertain period after the Soviet collapse, and now into this new era where India is no longer a passive customer, but an assertive nation charting its own destiny. This summit, the 23rd India-Russia Annual Summit, did not simply acknowledge that relationship - it renewed and reshaped it.

The defence discussions were among the most consequential. Russia remains one of India's oldest and most dependable military partners. The MiGs and Sukhois that roar over our skies, the T-90 tanks that guard our borders, and even the S-400 systems now protecting our strategic installations - all of these are reminders of how deeply intertwined the two nations' security frameworks are. What made this summit different was a new tone: the shift from buyer-seller to co-developer. I am told Russian officials privately reassured their Indian counterparts that Moscow is willing to open access to technologies that were once held back, and that Russia sees India as a long-term defence partner capable of building, not merely purchasing. On energy, Putin's



calm but firm declaration that Russia will continue to supply India with oil "without interruption" stood out. It was a direct counter to the pressure India has faced from Washington and European capitals ever since the war in Ukraine escalated. The truth is simple: India cannot compromise energy security because another part of the world is at war. Cheap Russian crude stabilized India's energy market when global oil prices went wild - a fact ordinary citizens may not realize,

but policymakers cannot forget.

Equally significant were the discussions on building a diversified economic roadmap. In the closed-door interactions, Indian negotiators emphasised the imbalance in trade: India imports far more than it exports.

For the first time in years, both sides agreed that the economic basket must expand - into sectors such as heavy engineering, manufacturing, fertilizers, skilled labour mobility, ports, shipping lanes, and even digital payments.

The idea of a payment system insulated from sanctions - using local currencies - was not just economics. It was strategy.

Another moment worth noting came during the leaders' joint statement at Hyderabad House. Modi did not explicitly mention Ukraine, yet his reminder that "peace and diplomacy remain the only viable path" was not lost on anyone in the room.

Putin, for his part, responded not with defensiveness, but with controlled pragmatism - signalling that Russia understands India's diplomatic balancing act and respects it.

For the United States, this summit will be read carefully. Washington has grown accustomed to India's partnership - be it in the Indo-Pacific, QUAD, defence cooperation, semiconductor supply chains, or intelligence sharing.

But India's relationship with Russia predates many of its modern partnerships. It is built on decades of reliability, shared technology, and geopolitical trust that did not disappear even when Moscow grew closer to Beijing. That continuity matters - especially for a nation like India, which seeks strategic autonomy and

not alliance dependency.

Does this visit change the trajectory of the Russia-Ukraine war? Not directly. It does, however, weaken the Western attempt to make Russia a pariah state. For Moscow, having India publicly reaffirm the partnership at a time when many nations are cautious is not a minor achievement - it is geopolitical oxygen.

Looking ahead, what does this summit mean for India?

If both sides follow through, India could emerge not just as a military and economic partner of Russia, but as one of the pivotal powers shaping the emerging multipolar order. The infrastructure corridors discussed - from the Northern Sea Route to the Chennai-Vladivostok maritime link - could reshape India's access to the Arctic, East Asia, and Eurasia. Co-manufactured defence platforms could strengthen India's capabilities and reduce dependence on Western suppliers vulnerable to sanctions and political conditionality. Continued access to Russian energy, nuclear cooperation, and joint technical research could bolster India's long-term capacities - especially as its population and economy continue to expand.

Yet, caution is necessary. Implementation - not headlines - will define the true legacy of this visit. Agreements must become factories, production lines, shipping routes, training programs, and operational military assets.

India must also ensure it remains balanced: no one partnership - Russian, American, or otherwise - should become a strategic crutch. In many ways, this summit tells us something deeper about India's foreign policy evolution. India is no longer choosing sides - it is choosing itself. And nations that choose themselves are the ones that shape history. Years from now, when scholars and diplomats revisit this moment, they may conclude that this was not just another leader-to-leader visit. It was an inflection point - when India proved, not through rhetoric but through action, that it will steer its path based on sovereignty, national interest, and long-term vision. The world may be dividing into camps again. India, instead, is building corridors.

The author is the Former Director General of Police, Assam and General Secretary of the Think Tank Society to Harmonise Aspirations for Responsible Engagement-SHARE

## Bangladesh EC to announce poll schedule in next 2 days



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
Dhaka

Bangladesh Election Commission (EC) has completed all preparations to hold the 13th general elections in February and will announce the schedule in the next two days, a top official said on Tuesday. "After a meeting with the President (Mohammad Shahabuddin), the schedule would be announced tomorrow evening or the day after," Election Commissioner Abdur Rahmani Masud told reporters.

He said that the meeting is scheduled for Wednesday at the Bangabhaban presidential palace.

Meanwhile, the EC officials said that Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) AMM Nasir Uddin was expected to announce the schedule in a nationwide address.

The CEC met Chief Justice Syed Refaat Ahmed on Tuesday at the Supreme Court ahead of the announcement of the date for elections and a referendum to seek public opinions on a series of reform proposals rolled out by the Muhammad Yunus-led interim government.

Former prime minister Khaleda Zia's Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) has emerged as the frontrunner, with its former ally Jamaat-e-Islami and its right-wing Islamic allies being the main

rival in the absence of deposed premier Sheikh Hasina's disbanded Awami League. Both parties have announced their nominees in the election for the 300-seat parliament.

Masud said that special emphasis will be given to ensuring the cooperation of all, including political parties, in the announcement of the election schedule. He also said that the symbols of any banned or suspended parties will not appear in the final postal ballots, in a veiled reference to the Awami League. A special tribunal last month sentenced Hasina to death on charges of crimes against humanity. She is currently in India. Most of her senior colleagues and activists in the party and Government were in jail awaiting trial on identical charges, while many of them are on the run at home and abroad.

The scenario made it difficult for Awami League leaders to contest the polls as independent candidates despite having a large support base. Meanwhile, tension between Jamaat-e-Islami and the BNP over election campaigning in the Sirajganj-1 constituency erupted into violence Monday night, injuring around 15 Jamaat activists, party sources said.

The BNP has denied involvement, blaming locals for the clash.

## Zelenskyy refuses to cede land to Russia as he rallies European support

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
Rome

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has reaffirmed his firm refusal to cede any territory, resisting US pressure for a painful compromise with Russia as he continued to rally European support for Ukraine. "Undoubtedly, Russia insists that we give up territories. We, clearly, don't want to give up anything. That's what we are fighting for," Zelenskyy said in a WhatsApp chat late Monday in which he answered reporters' questions.

"Do we consider ceding any territories? According to the law, we don't have such a right. According to Ukraine's law, our constitution, international law, and, to be frank, we don't have a moral right either." In an interview with Politico released Tuesday, US



Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and Pope Francis waving to journalists during their meeting in Castel Gandolfo AP

President Donald Trump again pressed Zelenskyy to accept the US proposal that Ukraine cede territory to Putin, arguing that Russia retains the "upper hand" and that Zelenskyy's Government must "play ball." Zelenskyy met on Tuesday with Pope Leo XIV at Castel Gandolfo, a papal residence

outside Rome, and is to have talks with Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni later in the day. The Vatican said the pope "reiterated the need for the continuation of dialogue and expressed his urgent desire that the current diplomatic initiatives bring about a just and lasting peace." The Holy See has tried to

remain neutral in the war while offering solidarity and assistance to what it calls the "martyred" people of Ukraine. Leo, who has met three times with Zelenskyy and has spoken by telephone at least once with Russian President Vladimir Putin, has called for a ceasefire and urged Moscow in particular

## 22 people killed in office building fire in Indonesia

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
Jakarta

A fire ripped through an office building in Indonesia's capital, Jakarta, on Tuesday, killing at least 22 people, including a pregnant woman, police said.

Flames engulfed the seven-story building, sending thick black smoke billowing into the sky and causing panic among nearby residents and workers in a neighbourhood in central Jakarta. The fire, which broke out around midday, is believed to have started on the first floor of the building in the Kemayoran neighbourhood before spreading to other floors, Central Jakarta police chief Susatyo Purnomo Condro said.

Hundreds of personnel and 29 fire trucks were deployed to try to contain the blaze. The cause of the fire is still under investigation. Many workers in the building, which was used as a sales and storage office for a drone company, were out for lunch when a battery started sparking in a storage and testing area, said Condro, citing several witnesses. The fire was extin-



guished after three hours of intense effort. At least 22 bodies - seven men and 15 women, including a pregnant woman - were recovered from the building and taken to the police hospital in East Jakarta for identification.

A resident, Intan Puspita, whose home is close to the building, told The Associated Press that the fire started with a loud bang and workers running outside. "When asked, they said that there was an alleged short circuit in one of the batteries during the charging process," Puspita said. The fire spread quickly, and she saw workers on the upper

floors trying to escape by moving to the rooftop.

"I saw about 20 victims in the body bags being evacuated from inside," Puspita said. "It was tragic."

Television reports showed the tense evacuation of more than a dozen trapped workers, including many women, from the sixth floor using an emergency ladder extended by firefighters. Each person had to be lowered one by one from the building, and several struggled to breathe because of the thick smoke while waiting for their turn. Authorities said most of the victims died from smoke inhalation. Firefighters managed to rescue at least 19

trapped workers, some of whom suffered minor injuries, but were in a weak and traumatised condition. A police officer and a firefighter also experienced breathing difficulties.

"We will comb through the entire building again," Condro said when asked about the possible rise in the death toll. "Firefighters are cooling down the scene because the smoke is still thick, and it is not yet possible for us to enter the structure."

Jakarta Governor Pramono Anung called on company leaders to foster a workplace safety culture and to have emergency action plans for evacuation. "This case obviously shows the company does not provide emergency access' from fire in the direct physical sense," Anung told reporters when visiting the site. Families anxiously awaited news at hospitals or near the building occupied by PT Terra Drone Indonesia, a company that provides unmanned aerial vehicle technology for various industrial sectors such as construction, mining, oil and gas, energy, plantations and urban planning.

## Macron faces backlash for using slur against feminist protesters

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
Paris

Brigitte Macron was facing criticism on Tuesday after a video emerged of her using a slur to denounce feminist protesters. The scene filmed Sunday showed France's first lady in discussion backstage at the Folies Bergere theatre in Paris with Ary Abittan, a French actor and humorist previously accused of rape, before a performance he was about to give. The previous night, feminist campaigners had disrupted his show with shouts of "Abittan, rapist!"

Before Sunday's performance, Brigitte Macron asked him how he was feeling. When he said he was feeling scared, she made a derogatory and sexist reference to the women, adding: "We'll toss them out." Her office said in a statement that she'd been trying to calm his nerves: "As the video shows, Mrs Macron's only intention was to reassure an artist who, in his dressing room before going on stage, had just told her, 'I'm scared,' because his show had been disrupted the previous

evening." "In no way is she attacking a cause. She does, however, disapprove of the radical methods used to prevent an artist from performing on stage, as was the case on Saturday night."

The feminist campaign group "Nous Toutes" ("All of Us") said its activists disrupted Abittan's show to protest what it described as "the culture of impunity" around sexual violence in France.

Magistrates terminated the investigation of the 2021 rape allegation against Abittan for lack of evidence in 2024, a decision then confirmed on appeal in January this year, according to French media. In a statement on Instagram, Nous Toutes said: "We denounce venues that roll out a red carpet for men accused of rape, normalising sexist and sexual violence. It is a public insult to the victims. Victims, we believe you. Rapists, we do not forgive you!"

Opponents of President Emmanuel Macron on the left wing of French politics criticised his wife's use of a sexist slur, and some said she should apologise.

## Hamas wants pressure on Israel before next phase of ceasefire

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
Jerusalem

A Hamas leader on Tuesday threatened to not move forward into the next phase of the Gaza ceasefire agreement until more pressure is placed on Israel to open up a key border crossing, cease deadly strikes and allow more aid into the Palestinian territory. The accusation came as Israel's Government says it's ready to move into the next, more complicated phase of the ceasefire deal - even as it has called on the militant group to return the remains of the last Israeli hostage held in Gaza. Husam Badran, a member of Hamas' political wing, called for the "full implementation of all the terms of the first phase" before moving forward, including an end to what he called the continuing demolition of Palestinian homes in the part of the territory still controlled by Israel.



## Military transport aircraft crashes in Russia

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
Moscow

An Antonov An-22 military transport aircraft with seven people on board crashed in Russia's central Ivanovo Region on Tuesday during its first flight after repairs, the defence ministry said. "The aircraft crashed in an unpopulated area. A search and rescue crew has left for the accident site to determine the fate of the aircraft's crew," the ministry said. TASS reported that fragments of the An-22 were found on the shore and in the water. The An-22 is a heavy transport aircraft used by the Russian Aerospace Forces (VKS) to transport heavy weapons. The aircraft has a maximum takeoff weight of 225 tonnes and a payload capacity of 60 tonnes. With a total cargo weight of up to 40 tonnes, the An-22 can fly over 5,000 km, according to Russian TV channels.





## PROSPECT

### Sudha Murty to grace Andhra University’s ‘WAVES-2025’ alumni meet



The Andhra University annual alumni meet ‘WAVES-2025’ is scheduled to be held on Saturday, the 13th December, under the auspices of AU Alumni Association (AAA) with the support and association of Andhra University. Sudha Murty, Member of Parliament, Rajya Sabha and founder chairperson, Infosys Foundation and Chairperson, Murty Trust, will be the Chief Guest. Dr GM Rao, founder Chairman, AAA, an eminent industrialist and an illustrious alumnus of AU, will preside. The theme of WAVES-2025 is women’s empowerment. This Meet aims to bring Alumni from various affiliated colleges, Alumni from various countries, campus colleges, academicians, researchers and members from the University community. The program will include reflections from the Alumni on the centennial journey of the Institutions and felicitations to the distinguished Alumni. This year, alumni from overseas, Delhi, Hyderabad, Amaravathi and Godavari chapters are expected to participate. Andhra University Alumni are committed to supporting their Alma mater and fostering relationships with the Industry. Alumni bond with Alma mater, strengthening the AU journey of excellence and heritage. Alumni will extend their support to make AU a Global University of par excellence. The University shall be a place of learning for students across the Globe.

### Sahaj gets corporate agency licence from IRDAI

Sahaj Insurance Services Pvt Ltd, which recently received a corporate agency licence from IRDAI, aims to sell about 10 crore insurance policies designed to suit the rural population. Sahaj Insurance Services Pvt Ltd, a subsidiary of Sahaj Retail Ltd, operates a network of about 4.5 lakh digitally enabled rural centres serving over 70 crore people. In a statement, the Kanoria Foundation company said the new vertical is designed to make insurance, long characterised by low awareness and limited access in rural regions, simple, affordable and accessible at the last mile. Sahaj Centres will offer a full suite of insurance products, with trained Sahaj Mitrs facilitating customer onboarding, support and claims assistance, it said. “Customers will be able to access assisted digital enrolment, paperless processes, multi-lingual support and help with filling claims. These features are essential for first-time insurance adopters in rural markets. The services will also integrate Government-backed insurance and social-security schemes to deepen financial inclusion,” Sahaj Retail Ltd CEO Biswajit Chatterjee said.

## RRB rejects question paper compromise claims

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE  
■ New Delhi

The Railway Recruitment Board (RRB) has categorically refuted claims circulated in a section of the media, particularly in the Dehradun region, suggesting that the Level-I question paper for the ongoing recruitment process against Centralised Employment Notice (CEN) 08/2024 has been compromised. The RRB issued a statement following reports of a candidate malpractice incident detected on 2 December 2025 during the second shift of the Computer Based Test (CBT) at the iCreate Solutions Test Centre in Dehradun. During live CCTV surveillance, a candidate named Vivek was observed consulting a handwritten chit. Examination officials immediately intervened and recovered the slip. Upon questioning, the candidate confessed that the chit had been provided by external individuals who had misled him into

believing it contained correct answers. The RRB confirmed that the recovered chit merely listed numerals from 1 to 4 and bore no relevance to the examination, as the questions and answer options are uniquely and randomly shuffled for every candidate. The Board emphasised that the slip could have provided no advantage, concluding that the candidate had been deceived by external miscreants. Following the incident, the RRB reiterated that its digital system for generating, storing and administering question papers is fully secure and encrypted, asserting that the incident was one of isolated individual misconduct and did not constitute a breach of the secure examination process.

# Waqf Boards’ ‘Umeed’ shows strong results

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE  
■ New Delhi

After the launch of the UMEED Portal on June 6, 2025, the Ministry of Minority Affairs worked tirelessly with States and Waqf Boards to train and prepare them for data upload. Seven zonal review-cum-training meetings were conducted with all States/UTs and capacity-building funds of nearly Rupees 10 crore were released in tranches to 30 States/UTs and 32 Waqf Boards.

Helpline support, VC-based training sessions and Master Trainer workshops were also organised. Yet, despite these extensive efforts, most Waqf Boards failed to utilise the first four months of the six-month upload window. They became active only in November, when over 2.42 lakh properties were initiated on the Portal. In contrast, June saw only 11 uploads, July

50, August 822 and September a little over 4,000, showing how casually the Boards treated the process



initially. The following table is self explanatory to understand the seriousness of Waqf Boards in uploading existing properties on the UMEED Portal.

UMEED Act, 1995 came into effect on 8 April 2025 and the window for uploading existing Waqf properties on the Central Portal closed on 6 December 2025.

A total of 5,17,082 properties were initiated for upload, with the main surge occurring only in the final weeks, particularly in the last six

days, when more than 2,43,582 properties were initiated on the Portal. This shows the robust nature of the UMEED Portal.

The data shows that almost all Waqf Boards, barring a few exceptions, remained inactive for the first five months and moved only when the deadline neared. Even then, the UMEED Portal handled the sudden spike smoothly, with many States ultimately completing uploads at exceptionally high level.

Those Mutawallis who could not upload their Waqf properties before the 6 December deadline are not without recourse. The UMEED Act provides a clear remedial mechanism: they may approach their respective Waqf Tribunals for resolution.

Recent media reports claiming that “only 27 per cent of Waqf properties have been uploaded” are based on

MONTH-WISE WAQF PROPERTY INITIATIONS ON UMEED PORTAL	
MONTH (2025)	PROPERTIES INITIATED
June	11
July	50
August	822
September	4,327
October	25,827
November	2,42,463
December (till 6th)	2,43,582
GRAND TOTAL	5,17,082

a fundamentally flawed and outdated premise. They rely entirely on old WAMSIs figures, numbers that today have no official relevance.

WAMSIs have long been recognised as unreliable: thousands of entries contained errors such as zero-area properties, mismatched

or duplicate codes, inflated land areas without proof and significant data-entry inconsistencies.

Several State Boards themselves acknowledged these defects. The Ministry repeatedly directed States to correct the data; the matter was placed before both the JPC and the Hon’ble Supreme Court. Ultimately, due to persistent inaccuracies, WAMSIs were formally disabled on 8 May 2025 and stands closed for all official purposes.

Using this defunct dataset as the denominator for any percentage calculation is misleading and factually untenable.

Unlike WAMSIs, UMEED is built on fresh, authenticated data captured through a maker-checker-approver workflow, with documentary evidence at every stage. Comparing this verified dataset with WAMSIs’ error-ridden numbers is an apples-to-stones comparison.

## Himanta launches distribution of PMAY-G letters to 3.25 lakh beneficiaries

TONY DAS  
■ Guwahati

Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Tuesday ceremonially launched the distribution of sanction letters to 3,25,234 beneficiaries under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana–Gramin (PMAY-G) at a significant state-level event held at Gandhi Maidan, Boko, in Kamrup district.

Addressing the gathering, the Chief Minister affirmed that the Government aims to ensure that every family currently residing in a kutcha house is provided with a pucca home. He highlighted that Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the PMAY-G scheme specifically to ensure housing for economically weaker families across the nation, a goal which

Assam has been working continuously to fulfil.

Sarma recalled the State Government’s sustained efforts, including the distribution of sanction letters to five lakh beneficiaries on May 19, 2022.

This was followed by the release of the first instalment to two lakh beneficiaries in May 2022 and another three lakh beneficiaries in February 2023. He further noted that the Government had facilitated the ‘Griha Pravesh’ (housewarming) ceremony for more than three lakh PMAY beneficiaries in the state on a single day in July 2023.

The Chief Minister highlighted recent milestones, including the inauguration of a PMAY-G colony with 113 houses at Namchang Tea Estate cluster in Naharkatia



in March 2024. He also referenced the historic dedication of 5,67,083 completed PMAY homes by Prime Minister Modi from Meleng–Meteli

Pathar in Jorhat on March 9, 2024. He stressed that today’s approval of 3,25,234 new beneficiaries, following the distribution to

3,88,358 beneficiaries in March this year, marks yet another crucial achievement for PMAY in Assam. Reiterating the

Government’s commitment to welfare, he stated the goal is to create a system where poor families can easily access all welfare schemes without corruption. He cited the monthly Orunodoi assistance of ₹1,250 and subsidised ration supplies, which together provide benefits worth nearly ₹3,000 per month to every poor family in Assam. The event was attended by Panchayat and Rural Development Minister Ranjeet Kumar Dass, MLAs Hemanga Thakuria and Nandita Das, GMC Mayor Mrigen Sarania, Additional Chief Secretary B Kalyan Chakravarty, P and RD Commissioner Keerthi Jalli, Kamrup District Commissioner Deva Kumar Mishra and several other senior officials.

## Darrang district distributes PMAY-G sanction letters to over 11,700



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE  
■ Guwahati

In a major push towards the Assam Government’s “Housing for All” mission, the Darrang district administration on Tuesday conducted the ceremonial distribution of Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana–Gramin (PMAY-G) sanction letters to 11,753 beneficiaries.

The district-level distribution was held concurrently with the Central Programme held at Boko in Kamrup district, which was attended by Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma. The Chief Minister reaffirmed the Government’s commitment to providing secure and permanent homes to all eligible rural families,

with the State-level programme being live-streamed across the three Legislative Assembly Constituencies of Darrang. The distribution drive was executed simultaneously in Mangaldai, Sipajhar and Dalgao to ensure broad outreach.

At the Mangaldai Boys’ HS Field, 1,487 beneficiaries received their letters in the presence of Mangaldai MLA Basanta Das and Gurujyoti Das, Chairman of the Assam Fisheries Development Corporation (AFDC) and former MLA. In Sipajhar, 2,592 beneficiaries were handed their sanction letters at the Sipajhar CDC Field by MLA Paramananda Rajbongshi.

The largest contingent

of 7,674 beneficiaries received their letters at the Dalgao Town Field. The distribution here was overseen by MLA Mazibur Rahman and Krishna Saha, Chairperson of the Kharupetia Municipal Board.

The coordinated execution across all venues was ensured by District Commissioner Parag Kumar Kakaty, CEO Zilla Parishad Karabi Saikia Karan, Darrang Zilla Parishad President Sewali Goswami Kalita, Darrang Municipal Board Chairperson Nirmali Devi Sharma and other dignitaries. The initiative marks a significant step in the district’s implementation of the flagship housing scheme.

## Bintin media announces revolutionary documentary *Bharat Ek Vishwaguru*



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE  
■ New Delhi

Bintin Media, a youth-driven Indian production house on Tuesday announced the release of its groundbreaking documentary “Bharat Ek Vishwaguru”, a powerful investigation into the gradual decline of India’s ancient education system and a clarion call to revive the Gurukul model and introduce the Bhagavad Gita as a compulsory subject in the

modern curriculum. Directed and produced by Nitin Vashisth, the documentary traces India’s journey from the era of world-renowned Gurukuls and universities such as Nalanda and Takshashila, to the cultural destruction under foreign invasions and finally to the impact of modern Westernized education on today’s Indian youth. Speaking about the documentary, Director Nitin Vashisth said “India has the

world’s largest youth population. If our youth loses its cultural foundation, India loses its future. This film is not just a project - it is a national movement to bring back values, identity and purpose into Indian education.” “Bharat Ek Vishwaguru” will soon be screened for policymakers, cultural leaders, educational institutions and youth organisations across the country. Public release details will be announced shortly.

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## ICICI Prudential settles death claims worth ₹893 crore in H1-FY2026

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE  
■ Bhopal

ICICI Prudential Life Insurance has reported an industry-leading claim settlement ratio of 99.33 per cent for the first half of FY2026—the highest among the top life insurance companies in the country.

The company’s average claim settlement turnaround time during this period was just 1.1 days for non-investigated claims. It settled death claims worth ₹893.38 crore in total during the

same period. Amish Banker, Chief Operations Officer, ICICI Prudential Life Insurance, said, “Our claim settlement process is designed to deliver an enhanced customer experience and we handle every claim with utmost sensitivity. “In H1-FY2026, we achieved a claim settlement ratio of 99.33 per cent and our average turnaround time for non-investigated claims was only 1.1 days. We also settled death claims amounting to over ₹893.38 crore during the period,” he said.

“Our customer-first approach



and strong focus on digitalisation empower us to deliver quick claim settlements, providing timely financial relief when families need it most. With convenient digital platforms such as our mobile app, WhatsApp, chatbot and website, claimants can easily

lodge and track their claims,” he added.

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Importantly, the average claim settlement turnaround time was just 1.1 days for non-investigated claims. Also, during this period, the total value of death claims settled by the Company was at ₹893.38 crore.

Amish Banker, Chief Operations Officer, ICICI Prudential Life Insurance said, “Our claim settlement process is designed to deliver enhanced customer experience and we handle every claim with utmost sensitivity.

“In H1-FY2026, we had a claim settlement ratio of 99.33 per cent

and our average claim settlement turnaround time for non-investigated claims was just 1.1 days. Besides, we settled death claims totalling over ₹893.38 crore in the same period”, he said.

“Our customer-first approach and strong focus towards digitalisation empowers us to deliver quick claim settlements, providing timely financial relief when families need it most. With convenient platforms like our mobile app, WhatsApp, chatbot and website, claimants can lodge and track claims easily,” he added.



BRIEFLY

DEMBELE, CHEVALIER TO MISS MATCH AGAINST ATHLETIC



Ballon d’Or winner Ousmane Dembele and goalkeeper Lucas Chevalier will both miss Paris Saint-Germain’s trip to Athletic Bilbao in the Champions League on Wednesday. PSG said Dembele is sick while Chevalier is still recovering from a right ankle injury. It’s another setback for Dembélé, who returned from a left calf injury against Tottenham at the end of November and only made two more appearances in the French league. Before that, Dembele had been sidelined several weeks by a right hamstring injury sustained while playing for France in September. PSG will also still be without Morocco right back Achraf Hakimi, who has a sprained left ankle and faces a race against time to recover before the Africa Cup of Nations in his home country from December 21. Matvei Safonov is expected to start in goal in the absence of Chevalier, who was injured in a loss against Monaco after a violent tackle from Lamine Camara on November 29.

J&K: HUNDREDS PARTICIPATE IN ARMY-SPONSORED MARATHON



Hundreds of enthusiastic youth on Tuesday took part in an Army-sponsored marathon near the Line of Control (LoC) in Jammu and Kashmir’s Poonch district, officials said. Commander of Bhimber Gali Brigade, Brigadier Rahul Kumar, flagged off the marathon and encouraged the youth to adopt fitness as a way of life and consider a future in the armed forces. An Army official said the marathon was part of the second edition of Mendhar festival, which commenced on November 23 and is scheduled to end on December 11. Despite the challenging terrain and sensitive location, the event witnessed participation of more than 1,500 runners from across the region, the official said.

AC Milan win 3-2 over Torino in Serie A

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
■ Turin

A second-half double from substitute Christian Pulisic gave AC Milan a come-from-behind 3-2 win over Torino and swept it back to the top of Italy’s Serie A.

Weekend wins for title rivals Napoli and Internazionale left Milan in third and it knew three points were required to return to the summit.

However, it was 2-0 down after 17 minutes on Monday. Nikola Vlastić gave the home side the lead with a penalty after nine minutes, and then made the second goal eight minutes later when he powered forward to feed Duvan Zapata, whose powerful angled drive beat Mike Maignan from 12 meters.

Milan got back into the game seven minutes later, Adrien Rabiot lashing in a shot from 35 meters that will feature in many goal of the season competitions



come May. It fell to American forward Pulisic to turn the game around with two second-half goals.

After 67 minutes, one minute after replacing Davide Bertesaghi, he found himself unmarked in the box and made no mistake from close range.

Ten minutes later Pulisic put Milan ahead for the first time in the match when he swept home a low cross from the right.

Milan avoided what would

India eye podium finish in FIH junior WC

SAUMOJYOTI S CHOUDHURY  
■ Chennai

The dream of reclaiming the FIH Men’s Junior World Cup title might have been over, but hosts India will hope to at least finish on the podium and give the home fans something to cheer when they take on Argentina in the bronze medal match on Wednesday.

India, who won their last title nine years back in 2016 in Lucknow, lost 1-5 to seven-time champions and title holders Germany in the semifinals on Sunday.

Heartbroken at missing out the title yet again, India would look to regroup, make amends of their mistakes and at least finish with a medal in the home tournament.

Two-time champions Argentina will, however, be a tough customer for India and they have already showed their prowess in the tournament. Argentina, who won the title in 2005 and 2021, lost 1-2 in a closely contested semifinal against Spain and



they too are hurt and desperate to finish the tournament on a high.

The Indians were simply hammered by the ruthless Germans in the semifinals. The home team simply buckled under pressure and conceded soft goals, which

they can’t afford on Wednesday against Argentina if they want to stand on the podium.

The Indian backline was guilty of giving away possession easily, resulting in goals, while the forwards cut a sorry figure in front of the Germans

after a superb show in the pool stages against lowly opponents.

The likes of Dilraj Singh, Arshdeep Singh, Sourabh Anand Kushwaha, Gurjot Singh and Ajeet Yadav created a lot of chances but simply failed to convert them into

goals against the Germans. India’s chief coach PR Sreejesh too admitted that his side failed to execute their plans and committed silly mistakes that ultimately put paid to their tile hopes.

“We committed silly mistakes, conceded goals and it is quite hard for these guys after conceding easy goals in a Junior World Cup semifinal. If you fail to execute your plans then that definitely is going to hurt yo,” Sreejesh had said after the loss against Germany.

“Winning and losing matters a lot, it doesn’t matter if you lose 1-0 or 10-0, it’s the same but the problem is how we concede the goals. We need to focus on that first.

“It’s all about collective effort. You need to defend well first and then you need to attack and create opportunities. We are not converting our opportunities,” he added.

The Indian defence, led by skipper Rohit, will have to raise their game by leaps and bounds to control the Argentines.

The midfield too lacked cohesion against Germany the other day and the likes of Rosan Khujur, Ankit Pal, Manmeet Singh, Adrohit Ekka and Thounaojam Ingalemba Luwang will have to be more proactive and cohesive to create chances for the strikers.

Penalty corner is another area which continues to be India’s perennial problem.

Anmol Ekka scored India’s lone goal against Germany through a penalty corner, but skipper Rohit, India’s best bet from drag-flicks, simply couldn’t make his mark in the tournament from set pieces.

There is no question about his solid defensive skills but India expected more from Rohit from penalty corners.

Princedeep Singh has been the stand-out performer at the Indian goal and the hosts will expect the young Punjab goalkeeper to continue his fine showing.

Meanwhile, Germany will be looking for their eighth title when they take on Spain in the summit clash, also on Wednesday. (PTI)

Goalkeeping stints in football shaped Princedeep’s hockey career

SAUMOJYOTI S CHOUDHURY  
■ Chennai

What began as a stint at full-back eventually turned into a career between the posts for Princedeep Singh, whose early goalkeeping experiences during football training sessions played a pivotal role in shaping his journey in hockey.

The 21-year-old custodian from Batala in Punjab, who has been one of India’s standout performers at the ongoing FIH Junior World Cup, idolises two-time Olympic medallist and current junior men’s team captain PR Sreejesh.

“I started my career with the Cheema Academy in Batala, Punjab, as a full back. That time I used to be a goalkeeper in football during training sessions but used to play hockey as full back,” Princedeep said.

“I used to make good saves then and from there it started. The coaches told me to



become a goalkeeper in hockey.” Princedeep credited Sreejesh for shaping his mindset.

“I started my hockey career in 2015 and in 2016 I saw Sreejesh bhai playing in the Olympics. I idolise coach sir only, got to learn a lot of things from him. He was himself a goalkeeper and he knew how to handle pressure,” he said.

Princedeep made crucial

saves against Belgium in the quarterfinal, including two in the shoot-out, to take India into the semifinal, where they fell short against Germany, losing 1-5.

Princedeep admitted that playing in front of a packed stadium can test nerves but stressed the importance of internal communication. “We get so support from the crowd and it increases your confidence,” he said. (PTI)

La Liga: Osasuna beat Levante 2-0

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
■ Madrid

Rubén García made one goal and scored another as Osasuna beat Levante 2-0 to ease the club’s relegation worries and condemn its rival to a fifth consecutive Spanish La Liga defeat.

The game on Monday pitted fourth-bottom Osasuna against last-place Levante. The home side controlled the game from the kick off, with García in commanding form against the club where he played much of his career. It was his cross from the right that brought Osasuna the lead after 13 minutes, Victor Muñoz expertly heading down and into the net.

García was fortunate 23 minutes later when he got his name on the scoresheet. His shot from just outside the box was cruelly deflected past the Levante keeper Mathew Ryan.

García refused to cele-



brate but acknowledged it was a vital win for his side.

“I’d have preferred it not to be against Levante, but I have to be happy because of what we were playing

for,” said García. “(These three points) feel necessary.” Osasuna is up to 15th in the 20-team table, three points clear of the drop zone.

Messi, Suarez to reunite on Mumbai ramp for a cause

TAPAN MOHANTA  
■ Kolkata

Argentine football icon Lionel Messi will walk the ramp in Mumbai “for a cause” during his India tour, the organisers of which have requested him to bring select memorabilia from their 2022 World Cup triumph for an auction.

The sole promoter of the ‘GOAT India Tour 2025’, Satadru Dutta, said on Tuesday that Messi, along with long-time strike partner Luis Suarez and Argentina midfielder Rodrigo De Paul, will feature in a 45-minute fashion segment on the night of December 14. It will be a “philanthropic fashion show for a cause”, Dutta said.

“It’s a fully reserved night. There will be celebrity models, celebrity cricketers, Bollywood celebrities, millionaires, founders. Tiger and Jackie Shroff, John Abraham among others,” he said.

Suarez will also be part of a Spanish music show, while



the organisers have “made a formal request” for Messi to bring “some memorabilia of the 2022 World Cup which will be auctioned” during the Mumbai leg of the tour.

The Mumbai event starts at 5pm at Wankhede Stadium, preceded by a Padel Cup at 3.30pm at Cricket Club of India.

Kolkata leg: Statue unveiling switched to virtual mode In the Kolkata leg, the unveiling of Messi’s “biggest

ever statue” — a 70-feet structure — will be done virtually from his team hotel owing to security concerns.

“Police has not given permission so he will do it from the hotel. It will be done virtually in the morning,” a Kolkata Police source said.

Earlier, the eight-time Ballon d’Or winner was scheduled to visit Sreebhumii in person for the inauguration.

Kolkata Police sources confirmed Messi will land in the

city at 1.30am in the wee hours of Saturday and will stay at a five-star hotel on the EM Bypass.

A sponsor-exclusive meet-and-greet programme will run from 9.30am to 10.30am.

A special Argentine-Indian fusion food festival will be held on the sidelines, keeping in mind Messi’s love for ‘mate’ (Argentine herbal tea).

It will showcase Argentine herbal tea infused with Assam flavours, along with a spread of Bengali fish delicacies — including hilsa — and an assortment of local sweets. A 25ft x 20ft Messi mural, planned for the upcoming Durga Puja season, will also be unveiled.

“Not only will he unveil his biggest-ever statue, we will have a huge mural, which will be kept at strategic Durga Puja pandal-hopping locations so that all his fans will have an opportunity to paint and post messages in a nearby message box,” Dutta said. (PTI)

Manchester United beat Wolverhampton 4-1 in premier league

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
■ Wolverhampton

Bruno Fernandes scored two goals and made another as Manchester United beat Wolverhampton 4-1 to move into the top six of the English Premier League.

Fernandes’ first-half goal was cancelled out on the stroke of half time by Jean-Ricner Bellegarde but Bryan Mbeumo restored United’s lead early in the second half on Monday. Mason Mount added a third in the 62nd minute before Fernandes rounded off a comprehensive victory with an 82nd-minute penalty.

It was the eighth defeat in a row for Wolves and saw sixth-place United move on to 25 points, level with Chelsea, which is fifth. Wolves remains bottom of

the table with two points, eight adrift of the team above it, Burnley.

“We got ourselves back in the game but, with the goals we conceded, you’re never going to get anything out of a game of football,” Wolves coach Rob Edwards said.

“There’s a nervousness and I can understand it but, in the big moments in the game, we insisted on giving the ball back to them. We’re getting punished and we’ve got to try and improve and be consistent – but it’s not going to be a quick turnaround.”

Although United has been consistently inconsistent all season, it came into the game as heavy favourites against a team that has one of the worst starting records of any Premier League side at this stage of the campaign.



Thousands of Wolves fans boycotted the first 15 minutes in a coordinated protest at the ownership of the club by Chinese conglomerate Fosun International. They had barely sat down when United took the lead with a goal that typified Wolves’ season. The Brazilian player Andre lost the ball in midfield

and a counter attack led to Fernandes racing inside the Wolves box.

He fought off the attentions of Emmanuel Agbadou and, even though he lost his footing, he still managed to get in a shot that the goalkeeper Sam Johnstone got a hand to but couldn’t stop from rolling into the net.

United failed to capitalize

on its pressure and it paid a price seconds before half time.

David Moller Wolfe crossed from the byline and Wolves’ standout performer Bellegarde whipped his volley past Senne Lammens into the United net.

It was Wolves’ first league goal since a 3-2 loss at home to Burnley on Oct. 26, and the 13th league game in succession United has failed to keep a clean sheet.

Nevertheless, United out-classed Wolves in a second-half blitz. Ruben Amorim’s men were 2-1 up after 51 minutes, Mbeumo tapping in Diogo Dalot’s neat pass to complete a fine counter attack.

Mount converted Fernandes’ lovely chipped assist 11 minutes later before Fernandes added the fourth.

First transgenders’ football league kicks off in Jamshedpur

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
■ Jamshedpur

In a landmark development in Indian football, seven transgender teams made debut in an exclusive tournament under the umbrella of Jamshedpur Super League (JSL). The Transgenders’ League, which began here on Sunday, features seven teams —Jamshedpur FT, Chaibasa FC, Chakradharpur FC, Jamshedpur Indranagar FC, Naomundi FC, Saraikela FC and Kolhan Tiger FC — in a five-a-side format.

Initially, only four teams were to compete in the transgenders’ league but later three more sides were added. The tournament forms a part of the Jamshedpur Super

League, which also has other competitions such as age-group leagues.

In the inaugural match of the Transgenders’ League on Sunday, Jamshedpur FT trounced Chaibasa FC 7-0, while Kolhan Tiger FC notched 3-0 win over Chakradharpur FC, and Jamshedpur Indranagar FC and Naomundi FC played out a goal-less draw.

For Jamshedpur FT’s Puja Soy, scoring four goals in the opening match of the Transgenders’ League was the beginning of a new identity, not as a transgender, but as a footballer finally recognised on the stage she had long dreamt of.

“Football is such a beautiful sport, and for the first time, I felt like I wasn’t being

seen for my gender, but for my game,” she said.

“This is the first time we are playing in a proper professional environment,” said Aliya, another participant in the league.

“The support from the club and the fans makes us feel like we truly belong to the football family.” For many of these players, participation itself is a liberation.

“We are thrilled to be part of this ground-breaking initiative, India’s first Transgender League,” said Pyari Hessa, captain of Jamshedpur FT.

“It gives us a platform we never had before and will hopefully inspire other states to create similar spaces. We’re very grateful to Jamshedpur FC for making this possible.”



# Pandya's blazing fifty, ruthless bowlers earn India 101-run win over SA

**TAPAN MOHANTA**  
■ Cuttack

Hardik Pandya made a memorable comeback to national colours, striking a mood-lifting unbeaten fifty and then took a key wicket as India etched a dominant 101-run win over South Africa in the opening match of the five-match series here on Tuesday.

— Arshdeep Singh, Jasprit Bumrah, Varun Chakravarthy and Axar Patel grabbed two wickets each, while Pandya fittingly chipped in with the prized scalp of David Miller. It was also South Africa's first defeat in three T20Is in Cuttack, and if India had started shakily, South Africa began disastrously.

Arshdeep set the tone with a superb away-swing that kissed past Quinton de Kock's tentative prod for a two-ball duck.

In his next over, Arshdeep produced another beauty -- a length ball that jagged back into the in-form Tristan Stubbs (14).

India went upstairs for the



India's players during the first T20I cricket match between India and South Africa at Barabati Stadium, in Cuttack

Earlier, coming back after 74 days following a left quadricep injury that forced him out of the Asia Cup, Pandya walked in at No. 6 and immediately changed the tempo of the match.

India had slipped in both the power play and middle overs losing six wickets, but Pandya, who had proved his fitness at the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy for Baroda with a 42-ball 77 not out, counter-attacked with clean, fearless hitting to finish en route his sixth T20I fifty.

He began with two towering sixes against Maharaj just after a well-set Tilak Varma (26) fell. Pandya then ripped into Anrich Nortje with a 17-run over, even stepping out to a 149kph thunderbolt to punch it for four.

Jansen tried to rush him with short balls, but Pandya pulled one with vengeance before racing towards fifty that lifted the mood in the stadium.

He struck a six and four off Lutho Sipamla (2/38) in the 19th over, and reached his half-century in 25 balls with

a ramped six over third man off Nortje in the final over, celebrating it with a muted raise of the bat.

Pandya's late fireworks helped India add 71 runs in the last six overs.

But on a fresh red-soil surface offering two-paced bounce, India struggled early.

Abhishek Sharma (17), Shubman Gill (4) and Suryakumar Yadav (12) all fell inside seven overs as Lungi Ngidi (3/31) exploited the conditions superbly with clever variations.

He removed Gill early as the batter chipped to Jansen at mid-off, and later had skipper Suryakumar holding out to Markram to have India 17/2. Abhishek tried to force the pace after the field restrictions lifted, but fell to Sipamla, thanks to a stunning sliding catch by the 2.06m Jansen sprinting across from long leg to fine leg.

His brief stay of 17 off 12 balls ended just as he began to find rhythm with back-to-back boundaries as India soon slipped to 48/3 in 6.3 overs.



## Desert Vipers beat Gulf Giants in Super Over thriller

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Dubai

Desert Vipers held their nerves to prevail over Gulf Giants in the first-ever Super Over finish of the ILT20 after Sam Curran and Dan Lawrence heroics here.

After the scores were tied at 179, the Vipers went on to score 13 in the Super Over with Lawrence finding the boundary once, before Thushara got his wicket. But, Naseem Shah clinched the game for the Vipers after restricting the Giants to just nine runs on Monday.

The Vipers have beaten the Giants in each of their previous five matches. Curran (44 off 36) and Dan Lawrence's (55 off 31) partnership ensured the Vipers tied the scores despite a challenging target of 180.

Azmatullah Omarzai bagged four wickets for the Giants, but it was not enough to stop the Vipers from their third straight win of the season. The lower-order batters of the Vipers also scored crucial runs in a team effort. The Gulf Giants started on the front foot, with Pathum Nissanka (56 off 29) and Rahmanullah Gurbaz (41 off 31) taking 14 runs off Naseem in the opening exchanges. The opening pair raced to a 50-run stand inside five overs and powered the Giants to 58 in the powerplay.

Nissanka continued his rich vein of form, bringing up his

third half-century in as many games, off just 27 balls. He struck Noor Ahmad for his fourth six of the innings, but the Afghan spinner had the final say, dismissing him off the very next delivery to end the 73-run opening stand.

Gurbaz then took charge, with James Vince providing solid support with 25 runs off 22 balls. Their 54-run partnership was broken by Khuzaima Tanveer, who removed Vince before sending Gurbaz back two balls later. The Giants were 129/3 at the end of the 14th over.

The Giants' bowlers fought their way back into the contest thereafter. Noor picked up his second wicket by dismissing Azmatullah Omarzai (20 off 13), while David Payne removed Moeen Ali (11 off 11). With only 38 runs coming from the final five overs, the Giants finished on 179/5.

Omarzai made early inroads for the Giants by dismissing Fakhar Zaman (1 off 9). Mark Adair struck soon after, removing Andries Gous (11 off 9), leaving the Vipers struggling at 14/2 early in the chase.

Curran and Impact Player Max Holden (15 off 15) attempted to steady the innings, but Haider Razzaq provided the third breakthrough by sending Holden back. At the halfway mark, the Vipers were 65/3, still needing 115 runs for victory.

## IPL 2026 auction to feature 350 players including 240 Indians

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Mumbai

A total of 350 cricketers — 240 Indians and 110 overseas players — will go under the hammer in the Indian Premier League auction to take place in Abu Dhabi on December 16, with South Africa's wicketkeeper-batter Quinton de Kock, who recently came out of his ODI retirement, featuring in the final list.

De Kock is a late addition to the list at a base price of ₹1 crore. The list also includes Australia batter Steve Smith at a base price of ₹2 crore. Smith last played in the IPL



in 2021. A total of 1390 players registered for the Player Auction.

The number was pruned to 1005 players before 350 were finally shortlisted to battle for 77 slots available across the 10 teams for the 19th edition of the world's biggest T20 league.

The first set of players in the auction includes India and Mumbai batters Prithvi Shaw and Sarfaraz Khan, who both have kept their base price at ₹75 lakh each.

The list shared by the IPL features two Australians in Cameron Green and Jake Fraser-McGurk, along with New Zealand and

## Hazlewood out of Ashes series; Cummins set to return for Australia



ASSOCIATED PRESS  
■ Brisbane

Australian pace bowler Josh Hazlewood has been ruled out of the Ashes series with hamstring and Achilles injuries.

Hazlewood missed Australia's two eight-wickets wins over England in Perth and Brisbane but had been expected to return later in the five-match series.

Australia coach Andrew

McDonald on Tuesday said the veteran paceman would now be targeting a return for the Twenty20 World Cup early next year.

"He'll be out of the series and his preparation will then shift toward the World Cup, which is an incredibly important campaign for us," McDonald said.

"It's really flat for him. A couple of setbacks we didn't see coming — we thought he'd play a huge part in the

series." Hazlewood has been a key member of Australia's regular bowling attack for a decade.

There was better news for skipper Pat Cummins, who is expected to return for the third test in Adelaide starting December 17 after missing the first two tests while he recovers from a back problem.

The 32-year-old paceman increased his training workload at Allan Border Field in

Brisbane while the Australians were playing the second test against England at the Gabba.

He is set to be recalled as captain when the match squad is announced Wednesday. Steve Smith has been leading the Australia XI in the absence of Cummins.

"We feel as though he'll be as best prepared as can be," McDonald said. "Us seeing him further advanced, we feel he'll be really well placed for the challenges of Adelaide."

"We feel as though the simulation in the nets has got him skill ready. His body's ready to go. Barring anything else happening in the next week, I'd be expecting Pat to be tossing the coin and putting the blazer on."

The under-fire England squad, which needs a win in Adelaide to have any chance of reclaiming the Ashes, is taking a few days out this week to rest and relax at one of Australia's iconic beach towns. The fourth test starts Boxing Day at the Melbourne Cricket Ground and Sydney will host the fifth test from January 4.

England hasn't won an Ashes test in Australia since the 2010-11 series.



## England's Mark Wood ruled out of Ashes series with knee injury

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
■ Brisbane (Australia)

Injured fast bowler Mark Wood has been ruled out of the Ashes in a major setback for an England lineup trailing 2-0 in the five-match series.

Wood had limited impact in the first test, bowling 11 overs without taking a wicket in the eight-wicket loss in Perth. He then missed the second cricket test in Brisbane because of his troublesome left knee.

The 35-year-old Wood's fitness had been an issue ahead of the Ashes tour after he only recently returned following knee surgery in March.

Matt Fisher, who made his only test appearance in the Caribbean in 2022, was drafted into the test

squad as cover.

In an Instagram post, Wood said he was "gutted to be out the remainder of the Ashes. After extensive surgery and seven long, hard months of work and rehab to get back into the test arena, my knee just hasn't held up."

Wood said he traveled to Australia "with high expectations about making a big impact. I'm desperately disappointed that despite yet more injections and intensive medical treatment it has become clear that the flare up in my knee is worse than feared."

Wood was England's leading wicket-taker in the 2023 Ashes series, when his return from injury coincided with a big comeback by the home team.

## Hardik Pandya unique in Indian T20 side: Bangar

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
■ New Delhi

Former India batting coach Sanjay Bangar believes there is no other player like Hardik Pandya in the national T20 set-up because the star all-rounder is capable of commanding a spot in the team merely as a specialist batter or bowler too. Out for more than two months due a quadricep injury during the Asia Cup, Pandya will return to the Indian squad for the home five-match ODI series against South Africa beginning in Cuttack on Tuesday.

"Look at all the all-rounders in world cricket now. Does England have a back-up for Ben Stokes? No. In one-day or even Test cricket, there is no back-up for Ravindra Jadeja. It is the same with Hardik Pandya," JioStar expert Bangar said. "He (Pandya) can command a spot in the top five on his batting alone.



He could also be one of the top three seamers in any team if he was just a bowler.

"The point is, to be that kind of all-rounder, you must earn your place with your batting and also with your bowling. There is no other player like Hardik Pandya in the Indian team." On Pandya's workload management, Bangar said he should at least play the first three matches against South Africa. "We need to see how he copes," he

said, insisting that it is too early to say if he should play six or seven T20Is before the World Cup.

"Playing in the SMAT (Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy) is different from the intensity of an international game. The team management must manage the workload of important players like him. So, if needed, we must do that for Hardik too. A fit Hardik Pandya allows the team to play its desired combination, especially with the spin options we have. That's why his presence is critically very vital."

Before the India return, Pandya made a 42-ball 77 not out for Baroda in SMAT before bowling four overs at full tilt for 1/52. Test and ODI captain Shubman Gill is also making a return after missing almost a month of cricket owing to a neck spasm suffered while attempting a slog sweep during the opening Test against the Proteas.

Bangar said Gill's growth as Test captain will benefit him in other formats.

"The confidence Shubman Gill has now after doing so well in Test cricket over the last year will certainly help him. More than his skill, his mindset has grown. Taking extra responsibility as a Test Captain makes him a far more rounded player. He now understands the game situation and what is needed from him. "At the top of the order, Shubman Gill could do the job for the team in T20I cricket. And if needed, Hardik Pandya could do a similar job in the middle order."

Bangar felt Sanju Samson may find it difficult to get a slot in the Indian T20 side.

"...His best spot in T20 cricket is still at the top. With players like Tilak Varma, Shivam Dube, or Hardik Pandya available, there may not be a place for him at number four, five, or six.

## Tendulkar recalls Gursharan's gesture in scoring Irani Cup ton in 1989-90

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Mumbai

Sachin Tendulkar on Tuesday recalled former India player Gursharan Singh's gesture to walk out at No 10 with a broken hand only to help him score a valiant 103 for the Rest of India in their Irani Cup match against Delhi in 1989-90.

A rampant Delhi crushed the Rest of India by 309 runs in the contest played here at the Wankhede Stadium in which Tendulkar waged a lone battle scoring 103, with former India opener WV Raman's 41 being the other noticeable performance.

Struggling at 209 for nine in pursuit of a mammoth target of 554, the former India, Delhi and Punjab player Gursharan walked out at No 10 with a broken hand to support Tendulkar as the two put on another 36 runs for the final wicket. ROI were bowled out for 245

"As they say, promises are meant to be kept. I feel I'll go a step further and say that promises are meant to be



kept, but also meant to be delivered... And that is what is our DNA," Tendulkar recalled at an Ageas Federal Life Insurance event here.

"I can recall an incident... Long way back in 1989 when I was playing Irani Trophy. This was a trial match before one got selected for India. I was batting in the 90s, and my partner, Gursharan Singh, had an injury - a

broken hand - and he wasn't supposed to bat.

"But he was asked by the chairman of the selection committee, Raj Singh Dungarpur, to go out and bat and support his teammate. Gursharan came and helped me reach my hundred and I got selected to play for India after that. Afterward, Gursharan also became part of the Indian cricket team," he added.

Tendulkar said the gesture from Gursharan, who made a solitary appearance each in Tests and ODIs for India, was something that touched his heart.

"I thanked him profusely on the ground and in the dressing room because it was a big thing for him to come out with a broken hand," Tendulkar said.

"Just stepping out with a broken hand was significant. Whether I scored a hundred or not was secondary. His intent and attitude mattered most to me (and) that truly touched my heart," he added.