



Delhi blast leaves families in deep mourning

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA/
PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
Lucknow/New Delhi

The powerful explosion near Delhi's Red Fort not only shattered the city's calm but also sent shockwaves through homes hundreds of kilometres away, where families are still grappling with the sudden loss of their loved ones. From the quiet lanes of Shravasti and Deoria to the bustling streets of Meerut, Amroha and Shamli, the victims of the devastating car blast were ordinary people — taxi and e-rickshaw drivers, cosmetic shop owners, DTC bus conductors — all striving to support their families and build better lives.

Among the victims was 32-year-old Dinesh Mishra from Ganeshpur village in Shravasti district, who had been working at a printing

press in Delhi's Chawri Bazar to support his wife and three children. His father, Bhure Mishra, said Dinesh had returned home for Diwali. "He was a hardworking man. He wanted to give his children a good education. We still can't believe he is gone," Bhure said, his voice breaking as neighbours gathered to console the family.

District Magistrate Ashwini Pandey said Dinesh's body was being brought back to Shravasti and was expected to arrive by Tuesday evening.

"We have spoken to the family and assured them of all possible assistance," he said.

In Meerut, another family was torn apart not only by grief but also by a painful dispute over where to lay their son to rest. Mohsin, 32, who had moved to Delhi two years ago to earn a living by



(Left to right) relatives of Nouman and others, who died in the blast, outside a mortuary at Maulana Azad Medical College in New Delhi

driving an e-rickshaw, died in the blast near the Red Fort while ferrying passengers.

When his body reached his hometown in Lohia Nagar, an emotional disagreement broke out between his wife, Sultana, and his parents. While Sultana wanted him

buried in Delhi, where they had settled and their children were studying, his parents insisted he be laid to rest in Meerut. Neighbours and relatives tried to mediate as both sides broke down in tears. "The blast took Mohsin away, but now even the



PANKAJ KUMAR/PTI

family is divided," said a neighbour. After several tense hours and police intervention, Sultana finally took the body for burial. Eighteen-year-old Nauman Ansari from Shamli had gone to Delhi to buy cosmetics for his shop when the explosion cut short

his life. "Nauman was killed on the spot while his cousin Aman sustained injuries and is undergoing treatment at Lok Nayak Hospital in Delhi," his uncle Furkan said.

Sonu, a relative working near New Delhi Railway Station, said, "Early this

morning, I got a call from my uncle saying Nauman was no more and asked me to reach LNJP Hospital." Among the other victims was DTC conductor Ashok Kumar, 34, from Amroha district, who had been supporting his elderly parents and two young children through his job in Delhi.

In Deoria, 22-year-old Shiva Jaiswal, who ran a small ready-made garment shop in Bhalauni town, was among those injured in the blast.

He had gone to Delhi to buy new stock for the festive season when he was caught in the explosion near the Red Fort.

His sister, Purnima Jaiswal, told PTI that Shiva had called earlier that day to say he had finished shopping and would visit their aunt before returning home. "Then we heard about the blast on TV and his phone went unreachable.

Later, we found out he was admitted to LNJP Hospital," she said.

Shiva's mother, Maya Jaiswal, a local BJP Mahila Morcha worker, said she was relieved that her son was alive but shaken by how close the tragedy had come. "He was lucky this time," she said softly.

Another deceased, 22-year-old Pankaj Sahni, operated a taxi in the capital to support his family, originally from Bihar.

His relative Ramdev Sahni said a phone call was received from Kotwali police station in Delhi regarding his nephew's death.

"He drove a taxi for three years. We were told the backside of his head was blown off. The car, a WagonR, was completely damaged," Sahni said while waiting outside the mortuary.

Police register FIR under UAPA, BNS sections

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
New Delhi

The Delhi Police's First Information Report (FIR) called the explosion near Red Fort "a bomb blast" as it invoked sections pertaining to conspiracy and punishment for a terror attack under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act in the incident that claimed 12 lives.



Security personnel keep vigil near the Red Fort a day after an explosion in the area in New Delhi on Tuesday

Sections of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967, including Section 16 (punishment for terrorist acts) and Section 18 (punishment for conspiracy). Additionally, charges under the Explosive Substances Act, specifically Section 3

likely to endanger life and Section 4 for the attempt to cause an explosion, have been added.

The Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) has been applied, including Sections 103(1) for murder, 109(1) for attempt to murder and 161(2) for the abetment of assault

on a superior officer.

A high-intensity explosion ripped through a slow-moving car at a traffic signal near the Red Fort metro station on Monday evening, killing at least 12 people and gutting several vehicles, officials said.

Sources said the Delhi Police, in its First Information Report (FIR) lodged in connection with the blast near Red Fort, stated, "This is a bomb blast". The FIR also mentions that the wall of a Delhi Police chowki was damaged in the explosion.

The complainant in the FIR is the chowki in charge of the Red Fort, Vinod Nain. According to the FIR, "There was a loud explosion. The wall of the chowki collapsed due to the explosion. The police staff rushed to the site and witnessed cars that were burning, while the injured were lying on the road. All the injured were taken to a hospital."

Blast survivor aids victims' families once again

NEHA MISHRA ■ New Delhi

Two decades after surviving the Sarojini Nagar market blast, Ashok Randhawa once again found himself surrounded by scenes of chaos and desperation — this time helping families gathered outside the LNJP Hospital mortuary to identify their kin killed in the explosion near the Red Fort.

He was the Sarojini Nagar market association president in 2005 when explosions ripped through two busy markets and a bus in the Govindpuri area on October 29 that year, killing 62 people and injuring more than 200.

Since then, he has made it his mission to help victims and their families whenever such tragedies occur.

On Tuesday, he was outside the LNJP Hospital, providing food, water, ambulance, and emotional support to family members huddled



Crowd of people and lack of security arrangements in Sarojini Nagar market in New Delhi on Tuesday

at the gates, either heartbroken after identifying bodies of their kin killed in last evening's blast or holding on to hope while waiting anxiously for word about their loved ones.

"I know what they are going through. I have lived through that pain, and I am aware how a blast disrupts

lives and leaves families shattered," said Randhawa (68), who now runs an NGO that supports blast victims and their families.

Randhawa said that he rushed to the hospital early on Tuesday morning to extend help. "I am standing here for the people. If anyone needs help with any-

thing — from arranging an ambulance to providing food, financial assistance, or emotional support — we are here."

He said that since morning, most of the bodies of blast victims have been handed over to relatives who managed to identify them.

"We are still here, waiting in case anyone needs any help or support. After this, we will move to the hospital's emergency and casualty wards to assist those who have survived. If they need any help, we will do whatever we can," Randhawa said.

Outside the LNJP Hospital, the atmosphere remained sombre as families continued to identify the bodies.

The Delhi Police's FIR has termed the explosion near the Red Fort a "bomb blast" and invoked sections related to criminal conspiracy and punishment for a terror act under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act.

Silence replaces chaos in lanes around Red Fort

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
New Delhi

The centuries-old lanes around the Red Fort, usually echoing with the calls of vendors and the bustle of shoppers, fell into an unsettling silence on Tuesday morning, a day after a deadly blast ripped through the area, leaving behind a trail of destruction and human remains still scattered on the streets. The area, which typically teems with traffic and tourists, has now turned into a cordoned-off zone of mangled metal and shattered calm. Locals said they continued to spot human remains long after the explosion.

through the street, a piece of flesh got stuck to my slipper. I froze for a moment. It was horrifying. I have never witnessed anything like this before," said local shopkeeper Umesh Rai, who also resides in Chandni Chowk.

Rai recalled that he was at his shop when the blast occurred. "It felt like an earthquake. The whole building shook. Within minutes, people began running in panic. I locked my shop and left," he said.

Residents said that some body parts were flung into a Jain temple adjacent to the site, and they fear that there might be some parts on the terrace of their home or shop. "There might still be some

remains on the rooftops as the intensity was huge," said a local shopkeeper.

Large birds, including eagles, were seen circling over the area cordoned off throughout the morning as police and forensic teams continued their inspection.

Another resident, Sohail, said he found a finger near his shop early Tuesday.

"I immediately informed a police official, who came and collected it. It is painful to even imagine what happened here," he said.

A walk through the area revealed shuttered shops and empty streets around Red Fort, a sharp contrast to the usual rush in the Chandni Chowk market.

False alarms surge after blast panic

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
New Delhi

Hours after the bomb blast near Red Fort killing 12 people, the Delhi Fire Services (DFS) received five calls about "unclaimed" vehicles and bags, all of which later turned out to be false alarms, an official said on Tuesday.

According to DFS officials, the calls started pouring in soon after news of the explosion spread, reflecting a heightened public anxiety across the city.

"The first call was received at 9.15 pm from Bijwasan, reporting an unclaimed bag. We rushed a fire vehicle immediately dispatched to the spot, but nothing suspicious was found," the DFS official said.

He further said that minutes later, at 9.27 pm, another call came from Vasant Vihar about an unclaimed car.

Similarly, one fire tender was sent to the location and returned around 10.15 pm after verification.

2,900 kg explosives seized, probe links to blast

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
Faridabad

A day after 2,900 kg of explosives and inflammable material were recovered from two rented rooms of a doctor hailing from Kashmir in Faridabad, an extensive combing and search operation was being conducted in parts of the district on Tuesday.

Preliminary probe into the blast near Delhi's Red Fort on Monday evening that left 12 dead and many injured has also suggested links to the alleged terror module uncovered in Faridabad.

Police on Tuesday said a team is camping at the Al Falah University, where the

Kashmiri doctor lived for the past three-and-a-half years, and are questioning staff and doctors at the varsity here, a senior police officer said.

Several police personnel are conducting search in the Dhauj police station area, he said.

Investigation so far revealed that a cleric here who was detained by police revealed that he had rented out his room to an autorickshaw driver who then gave it to Dr Muzammil for keeping "drugs" in the room.

Eight people, including the man and two fellow doctors were arrested for allegedly being part of a white collar terror module involving the Jaish-e-Mohammed and

Ansar Ghazwat-ul-Hind and spanning Kashmir, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh, officials said.

Two other doctors, Adeel and Shaheen, have also been arrested in connection with the case. A huge cache of arms and ammunition was recovered from two rooms rented by Muzammil Ganaie alias Musaib (35) in Faridabad. A native of Koil in Jammu and Kashmir's Pulwama, he was a doctor working at Al Falah University at Dhauj, around 45 km from Delhi.

The blast in Delhi occurred hours after the recovery of 2,563 kg of explosives and inflammables from Dahar Colony in Fatehpur Taga village here on Monday.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Property bearing No. 334, Gali No.2, Than Singh Nagar, Anand Parbat, Delhi. This is to inform the public that the original Registered Sale Deed pertaining to the property situated at 334, Gali No.2, Than Singh Nagar, Anand Parbat, Delhi has been lost/misplaced and could not be traced. A Police Report has been filed against the lost document and any person in possession of the said document shall contact the undersigned immediately. Any person, bank, authority, or institution having any claim, lien, demand, right, title, interest, or objection of any nature in respect of the above captioned property should notify the undersigned along with valid documentary proof of so-called claim, in writing, within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice. Hereof, failing which it will be believed that the above-captioned property is absolutely free from all sorts of encumbrances and the owner is vested with the absolute, clear and marketable title in respect to the property and the sale/ transfer/ construction/ collaboration of the said property shall be proceeded with.

Name: Darshana Rani
Address: Property bearing No. 334, Gali No.2, Than Singh Nagar, Anand Parbat, Delhi
Contact No.: 9654869887

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is informed to the general public that my clients **Vishvananth Mahlo S/o Mahesh Mahto & Chitr Rekha Devi W/o Vishvananth Mahto R/o Ward-5, Village Bishanpur Aadhar, Araria, Sitamarhi, Bihar-843330**, have debarred and disinherited their Daughter **Priyanka** from all their movable/ immovable properties and severed all there relations both legal & social with due to disrespectful behavior. Any person any Dealing or relationship with Priyanka they shall be doing at his/her own risk, and my client shall not be responsible for the same.

SANJEEV DWIVEDI (ADVOCATE)
48, Gaganand Block, Tis Hazari, Court, ND-54

PUBLIC NOTICE
TECHAVINI FINANCE PRIVATE LIMITED
Reg. office: SHOP No. 12, GF, OM VIHAR PH-1, KH NO. 821 & 822, METRO PILLAR NO. 702, Uttam Nagar, West Delhi, New Delhi, Delhi, India-110059
CIN: U65900DL2020PTC366515
Email: arman@techavini.com

PUBLIC NOTICE In compliance with the Para 5 of Notification No. DNBR (PD) 029/CN(CO)-2015 issued by Reserve Bank of India on July 08, 2015, Notice is hereby given that the shareholders of **TECHAVINI FINANCE PRIVATE LIMITED**, a company incorporated under the companies Act, 2013 and Registered with Reserve Bank of India vide Certificate Number 1140544 as a Non-deposit taking Non-Banking Finance Company with its Registered office situated at SHOP No. 12, GF, OM Vihar PH-1, KH NO. 821 & 822, Metro Pillar No. 702, Uttam Nagar, West Delhi, New Delhi-110059 is intended to transfer the equity shares from Kaajal Alijz Ilimi (Transferor)" To Arman Alijz Ilimi ("Transferee").

Under the aforesaid transfer, the post shareholding of Arman Alijz Ilimi will be 75.00% in the company the purpose for the restructuring of shareholding in the company to scale up, expand and diversify the business activity. The above Notice is being given pursuant to RBI Circular DNBR (PD) CC, No.065/03.10.001/2015-16 dated July 09, 2015 and other relevant Regulations. The company has already obtained the prior approval for change in Control from RBI. Delhi vide letter 110001 within 30 days from the date of publication of this notice stating therein the nature of interest and grounds of objection. This public Notice is being issued jointly by the Company and the above-mentioned Acquiree For **TECHAVINI FINANCE PRIVATE LIMITED**

Sd/-
ARMAN ALIJZ ILIMI
(Director)

Place: Delhi
Date: 11.11.2025

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform the general public that the original documents pertaining to Property No. 47 AND 48, Priyadarshan Vihar, Part-II, Delhi 110009, have been lost in the Model Town area. The missing documents of both properties are including:

Possession Letter, Section Letter, Allotment Letter from DDA, Perpetual Lease Deed, Mutation Letter, General Power of Attorney (GPA), Agreement to Sell, Will, Special Power of Attorney (SPA), and other related papers.

If anyone finds the above-mentioned documents, kindly contact the undersigned at the earliest.

Name: Pat Singh

CONTACT NO.: 98116 16757

PUBLIC NOTICE
Notice is hereby given to the general public and all concerned that the name of my Company has been changed from "CHAND ENERGY PRIVATE LIMITED" to "UJJWAL FINANCE PRIVATE LIMITED" pursuant to the Certificate of Incorporation issued by the Registrar of Companies, Delhi, dated August 22, 2025, and in terms of approval granted by the Reserve Bank of India vide its letter No. DEL.DOR.NBFCBL. No. S263/24-03-04/2024-2025 dated July 18, 2025. Accordingly, the Certificate of Registration (CoR) earlier issued by the Reserve Bank of India in the name of Chand Energy Private Limited has been surrendered, and a fresh CoR has been issued by the Reserve Bank of India in the name of Ujjwal Finance Private Limited, bearing the fresh CoR number N-14.03666 dated October 28, 2025. Henceforth, the Company shall carry on its business under the new name Ujjwal Finance Private Limited only. All stakeholders, borrowers, lenders, and the general public are hereby requested to take note of the above change. All future correspondence may be addressed to: **UJJWAL FINANCE PRIVATE LIMITED** Registered Office: 32, 3rd Floor, NWA, Club Road, Punjabi Bagh Extn., New Delhi-110026
Email: cepi323@yahoo.com

For and on behalf of UJJWAL FINANCE PRIVATE LIMITED (Authorised Signatory)
Name: Hitesh Mahotra
Designation: Director

Place: New Delhi
Date of Publication: 12.11.2025

PUBLIC NOTICE

My clientless Mrs. Sunita W/o Sh. Satpal R/o H-62/20, Street No.4, Jai Prakash Nagar, Ghonda, Delhi-110053, have debarred their son namely Pankaj Sharma and daughter-in-law Priiti from her all moveable-immovable properties due to their misbehavior and misconduct and broken all relations from them, if anybody deals with them, shall be responsible at their own.

Dinesh Bhaduria (Advocate) Ch. No 183, H Block, Delhi High Court, New Delhi

PUBLIC NOTICE
It is notified to the general public that we, **Jai Prakash Sharma and Sudha Sharma** both residents of Flat No. F706, Corona Optus, Sector-37C, Gurugram 122001, have Disowned our son **Aditya Vashishtha** and his wife **Priyanka Vashishtha** and Grandson **Manan Vashishtha** from our movable and immovable property due to his misbehavior towards us and other members of our family and break the relationship. From today onwards in future if anyone deals/ transacts with our son and Daughter-in law with Grandson then he/she will do so at his/her own risk and responsibility, we will not be responsible for any act done

PUBLIC NOTICE
Notice is hereby given on behalf of **VINOD KUMAR** who is purchasing Plot Bearing No. 15, in Block-C, land area measuring 125 Sq. Yards, out of Kharsa No. 121 and 122, Situated in the area of Village Sarai Pipal Thalia, Delhi and Colony Known as Adarsh Nagar Estn., on Lohiya Road, Delhi-110033 from Mr. Islam who had owned the same by virtue of General Power of Attorney, Agreement to sell and Will dated 21.03.2023 which were executed by Mrs. Jai Nandi Thul. 1) Copy of Death Certificate & SMC of Dull Chand Gool. 2) Copy of Agreement to sell & Will in Mr. Kishan Kumar. 3) Copy of Notarized General Power of Attorney, Agreement to sell & Will dated 01.01.1995 in Mr. Pradeep Kumar. Now, **VINOD KUMAR** intend to purchase and mortgage the subject property against the financial assistance from Cholemandalam Investment and Finance Company Limited. To comply the requirements of BANK/NBFC, we give this public notice that if any Person having any type of claim /right/title/interest/creating mortgage over the said property, may inform in writing, at the address mentioned below, about his objections within 15 days from today, failing which it shall be presumed that the said property is free from all type of Encumbrances, lien, etc. **Lucern Legal LLP Plot No.136, (Basement) Uday Park, New Delhi-110049, Contact 8 011-4046316**

PUBLIC NOTICE
Known to all that my Client Smt. Renu Gulati owner of UFF, PROPERTY No. 63-B, AREA 100 SQ. YDS., KHASRA NO. 20/18, T-BLOCK EXTN., JALLO COLONY, PART-II, UTTAM NAGAR, NEW DELHI-110029, and Smt. Renu Gulati purchased from Sh. Khairati Lal vide GPA, ATS and Will dated 25.06.2015, Now Smt. Renu Gulati wants sell aforesaid property. And it is informed that any deal with said documents by any person except my said client and said institution regarding said property, shall be deemed as null and void. If any person having any claim, right in said property then he may contact and handover the same and apprise the same undersigned within 15 days of this publication.

AD REM LEGAL SOLUTION
Ch. No. 760 - Dwarka Court Sector-10, Dwarka, New Delhi-75
Mobile :- 9899013918

PUBLIC NOTICE
Known to all that my Client Sh. Sunil Kumar Gandas and Sh. Devedhar Kumar Sharma owner of R/S BACK SIDE, THIRD FLOOR Land area 655 SQ.FT. PROPERTY NO.368/OLD PROPE-RTY NO.368/KHASRA NO.619/2/619/3/3 NEW KHASRA NO.619/3, O SAKET M. E ROAD NEW DELHI-110074, and my Client purchased from Sh. Vijay Kumar vide GPA, ATS and Will dated 09.09.2024, Now Smt. My Client wants sell aforesaid property. And it is informed that any deal with said documents by any person except my said client and said institution regarding said property, shall be deemed as null and void. If any person having any claim, right in said property then he may contact and handover the same undersigned within 15 days of this publication.

AD REM LEGAL SOLUTION
Ch. No. 760 - Dwarka Court Sector-10, Dwarka, New Delhi-75
Mobile :- 9899013918

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform that the original land/ property document (sale deed, Allotment letter, Permission letter etc) pertaining to plot/property no. S.F. no. 666/1, 666/3 part and 668/3 part, college Nagar, chiniampalayam, Sale deed registration no. 8319/2008 situated at coimbatore District Bhandipuram sub registration, district coimbatore north taluk kalakatti village has been lost/misplaced. if anybody find the said document please contact me over phone no. 9643403013, 7999270423, 904708290 or at the following address, office 205-208, 1st floor, Ansal API, Palam Corporate plaza Carterpuri road, block C-2, Gurugram, Haryana -122017

Public Notice
This is to inform the general public that Sh. Radhe Shyam Sharma was the owner of Property Land area measuring 600 Sq. Yds. out of Khewat no. 745/820, Khas. No. 860 (old Khewat no. 820/783) Rectangle no. 48, Kila no. 702 and Transfer Deed in Blood Relation dated 09.09.2021 as doc. no. 7641 executed by Mrs. Pratibha Sharma in favour of Smt. Radhe Shyam Sharma in respect of 1 Kanal (608 Sq. Yds) out of Arazi Kila no. 48/712/1. Thereafter, Regd. Will dated 23.08.2018 as doc. no. 821 executed by Sh. Ashok Vashith in favour of Smt. Yogeshwari, Depika (100 Sq. Yds) and Sh. Pranav Sharma & Sh. Ayush Sharma (100 Sq. Yds) and Smt. Rajnish Sharma (100 Sq. Yds) and Smt. Nirmala Sharma (Remaining Portion) in respect of area measuring 600 Sq. Yds. Civil Line property. Thereafter, Transfer Deed in Blood Relation dated 23.08.2023 as doc. no. 3999 executed by Mr. Pranav Sharma and Mr. Ayush Sharma in favour of Mrs. Pratibha Sharma in respect of Property to extent of 30/180 Share i.e. 100 Sq. Yds. out of Khewat no. 745/820, Khas. No. 860 (old Khewat no. 820/783) Rectangle no. 48, Kila no. 712/1 and Transfer Deed in Blood Relation dated 09.09.2021 as doc. no. 7641 executed by Mrs. Pratibha Sharma in favour of Smt. Pratibha Sharma in respect of property extent of 90/180 i.e. 300 Sq. Yds. out of Khewat no. 745/820, Khas. No. 860 (old Khewat no. 820/783) Rectangle no. 48, Kila no. 712/1 and Transfer Deed in Blood Relation dated 09.09.2021 as doc. no. 7641 executed by Mrs. Pratibha Sharma in respect of Property to extent of 30/180 Share i.e. 100 Sq. Yds. out of Khewat no. 745/820, Khas. No. 860 (old Khewat no. 820/783) Rectangle no. 48, Kila no. 712/1 and Transfer Deed in Blood Relation dated 09.09.2021 as doc. no. 7641 executed by Mrs. Pratibha Sharma in respect of Property to extent of 30/180 Share i.e. 100 Sq. Yds. out of Khewat no. 745/820, Khas. 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IN FOCUS



A first-time voter shows her ink-marked finger after casting a vote during the second and final phase of the Bihar Assembly elections in Jehanabad

HC dismisses plea against MERC recording halt

TN RAGHUNATHA
■ Mumbai

The Bombay High Court (HC) on Tuesday dismissed a petition filed by a Mumbai activist challenging a decision of the Maharashtra Electricity Regulatory Commission (MERC) to discontinue audio/video recordings of the proceedings, after holding that such recordings of the proceedings cannot be used as ‘evidence’ in any court of law.

While rejecting a public interest litigation (PIL) filed by Mumbai resident Kamlakar Ratnakar Shenoy, an HC division bench of Chief Justice Shree Chandrashekhar and Justice Ashvin Akhand noted that the PIL lacked ‘public interest’ and was instead ‘motivated by personal grievances’.

In its ruling, the HC bench noted the Supreme Court

had already observed that public trial in open courts was essential for healthy and objective administration of justice and that it is necessary to instil public confidence in the administration of justice and therefore the judicial tribunals, courts etc must hear cases in the open and admit the public to the courtroom.

“These observations by the top court seem to have been misconstrued by the petitioner, who takes the position that the impugned resolution shall not be in public interest... A litigant is not permitted to use the true record of the court proceedings and use the same as evidence. There is, in fact, a prohibition not to record the court proceedings, much less to use them as evidence in a court of law,” Chief Justice Chandrashekhar noted in



his dictated order.

The petitioner, who appeared in person, submitted that he had appeared before the MERC in a matter wherein, according to him, the MERC did not hear him properly and further submitted that “there are a lot of wrongdoings in the MERC, and there are serious lacunae in the way hearing is conducted by the commission and it is not trans-

parent.” The petitioner told the high court that by a resolution dated 4/9/2018, MERC “has discontinued the practice of the recording of the proceedings in audio/video form, which is directly opposite to the direction issued by the Supreme Court in Swapnil Tripathi versus Supreme Court of India”.

Opposing the petition, Advocate Ratnakar Singh —

who appeared for the MERC — told the high court the MERC had this arrangement of audio/video recording of the proceedings for its internal purposes and there is no provision in the Electricity Act 2003 to have mandatory recording of the proceedings.

“However, there is a regulation in place for the conduct of day-to-day business of the Commission with live streaming of the

hearing available to the public at large and conduct of hearing before the Commission is totally transparent,” Singh said.

After giving a hearing to both sides, Chief Justice Chandrashekhar and Justice Ankhad held that the PIL was not in genuine public interest but rather stemmed from a private dispute, and the petitioner was hankering for ‘cheap publicity’ under the guise of a PIL.

“The petitioner is asking for audio/video recordings to use as evidence. No court proceedings can be permitted to be used as evidence and the same can never be provided to any person or litigant. The petitioner by the present petition is seeking to gain cheap publicity. Such practice of filing frivolous petitions should be deprecated,” the court noted.

Delhi blast: Grief pours in from across the world

ASHOKE RAJ
■ New Delhi

A powerful car explosion near Delhi’s iconic Red Fort on Monday evening killed at least ten people and injured over 20 others, sending shockwaves through the nation and prompting global condolences.

The blast, which occurred near Gate No 1 of the Red Fort metro station, caused a massive fire that engulfed several vehicles. Investigators have said preliminary evidence suggests a terror attack.

Messages of sympathy and solidarity poured in from across the world as foreign governments, diplomats, and global leaders condemned the attack and expressed support for India.

The United States Embassy in New Delhi said it was “deeply saddened by the terrible explosion in New Delhi,” offering condolences to the victims and their families. The embassy also issued a security alert advising American citizens in India to avoid

crowded areas, especially around the Red Fort and Chandni Chowk, and to remain alert.

British High Commissioner Lindy Cameron said her thoughts were with those affected by the tragedy and urged UK nationals in India to follow the guidance of local authorities. The British Government also updated its travel advisory for India in light of the incident.

Argentina’s Ambassador to India, Mariano Caucino, extended condolences on behalf of his government and people, wishing a speedy recovery to the injured. French Ambassador Thierry Mathou also expressed grief, saying France stood in solidarity with India during this difficult time.

The Sri Lankan High Commission in New Delhi expressed deep sorrow over the loss of lives, conveying condolences to the families of the victims and praying for the recovery of those injured.

The Bangladesh High Commissioner to India also expressed solidarity and con-

dolences. In a post on X, the envoy said, “I & Bangladesh High Commission colleagues deeply condole death of at least 10 Indians and many injured in this evening’s car blast in Red Fort, Delhi. Our thoughts and prayers remain with all those impacted, including their families. Bangladesh stands by India at this distressful hour.” He tagged the Ministry of External Affairs.

Sri Lanka’s Opposition Leader Sajith Premadasa also reacted to the incident, saying, “Shocked to hear about the terror attack in New Delhi. All should unite to eradicate the scourge of terrorism. Our thoughts and prayers are with those who were impacted by this dastardly attack.”

The Embassy of Morocco, the Australian High Commission, and the Iranian Embassy joined other nations in expressing condolences and solidarity with India.

Home Minister Amit Shah confirmed that the explosion took place inside a Hyundai i20 car parked near a traffic

signal close to the Red Fort. He said CCTV footage and forensic evidence are being examined as part of a comprehensive investigation. “We are exploring all angles and will ensure that the findings are made public,” he said.

Emergency services responded swiftly to the blast, and the fire was brought under control after several hours of effort. Images from the scene showed charred vehicles, shattered windows, and thick smoke rising from the area, one of Delhi’s most popular tourist destinations.

Security has been stepped up across the national capital, with additional personnel deployed at metro stations, airports, and key government buildings. Delhi Police and central agencies remain on high alert as investigations continue.

As Delhi mourns the victims of one of the deadliest attacks in recent years, leaders and citizens worldwide continue to express solidarity, emphasizing the need for global unity against terrorism.

Muslim bodies flag concern over blast

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

Prominent Muslim bodies voiced concern on Tuesday over a blast near the iconic Red Fort in Delhi, flagging security lapses, and urged the Government to conduct a comprehensive, unbiased and multi-dimensional investigation into the incident.

The All India Muslim Personal Law Board expressed profound grief and sorrow over the blast that occurred on Monday evening. The board conveyed heartfelt condolences to the families of those who lost their lives and prayed for a swift recovery of the injured, according to a statement issued by it.

Board president Maulana Khalid Saifullah Rahmani expressed serious concern over the explosion that occurred in close proximity to the historic Red Fort in the national capital.

He urged the government to conduct a comprehen-

sive, unbiased and multi-dimensional investigation into the incident.

Rahmani said if the incident was accidental, it was extremely unfortunate, resulting in the loss of many innocent lives and injuries to a large number of people.

“But if it was an act of terrorism, it is deeply alarming, raising serious questions about the effectiveness of the country’s security apparatus, especially if even the most sensitive areas of the national capital are not secure,” Rahmani said. He further said the All India Muslim Personal Law Board stands in solidarity with the bereaved families and prays for an early recovery of all those injured.

Jamaat-e-Islami Hind (JIH) president Syed Sadatullah Husaini expressed profound grief over the blast that has killed at least 12 people and demanded a transparent and high-level investigation. He also demanded immediate accountability for security lapses and ade-

THE ALL INDIA MUSLIM PERSONAL LAW BOARD EXPRESSED PROFOUND GRIEF AND SORROW OVER THE BLAST THAT OCCURRED ON MONDAY EVENING

quate compensation for the victims and their families.

“We are deeply saddened by the deadly blast near Red Fort in Delhi on Monday evening that claimed precious lives and left many injured. We express our deepest condolences to the families of those who lost their loved ones and stand in solidarity with the injured, praying for their swift and complete recovery. We stand with the people of Delhi in this hour of grief and anguish,” Husaini said in a statement.

“Preliminary media reports suggest this may have been an act of terror. If confirmed by investigation agencies, we unequivocally condemn this heinous act and demand that the culprits be brought to justice at the earliest. Such an incident in the heart of the national capital represents a grave lapse in security,” he said.

There must be immediate accountability from those in power, who are responsible for public safety, he said.

The lives and security of citizens are paramount, and the government must fulfil its constitutional duty to protect them, Husaini said. He also criticised the irresponsible behaviour of certain sections of the media and social media users for spreading misinformation and communal narratives regarding the incident.

“In hours of crisis, we need unity and solidarity among citizens more than ever. Those who use such despicable incidents for their ideological or political gains must be called out and punished as per the law,” he said.

CM Rekha announces plan to make Delhi clean, beautiful

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

Chief Minister Rekha Gupta on Tuesday announced a comprehensive plan to make Delhi clean, well-maintained, and beautiful. Key measures include installing modern waste compactors, deploying machines for green waste processing, and requiring officials to conduct daily field visits to monitor sanitation.

Chairing a high-level meeting at the Delhi Secretariat, the Chief Minister reviewed the status of sanitation and cleanliness in the city. The meeting was attended by Urban Development Minister Ashish Sood, Chief Secretary Rajeev Verma, MCD Commissioner Ashwini Kumar, and senior officials from DDA, PWD, DSIDDC, and other departments.

Chief Minister Rekha Gupta said her government



is “highly sensitive” towards sanitation issues. “The dream of a developed Delhi can only be achieved when the city remains clean and tidy,” she said. She also announced that a special committee of officials from all departments related to road construction will be formed to coordinate the planning and execution of road projects.

Chief Minister Rekha Gupta criticised the previous

government’s “lack of seriousness” on cleanliness, urging Delhi to improve faster. She emphasised that funds are available and called on officials to propose practical, innovative sanitation measures, promising swift approvals. She instructed departments to promptly install and replace dustbins citywide.

According to officials, several key decisions were taken in the meeting. High-

capacity compactors will be installed in various areas, with land to be provided by DDA and DUSIB. In view of Delhi’s green cover, modern machines will be introduced to manage green waste, first at the Assembly constituency level, and later in each ward.

The Chief Minister said field visits by officers would help ensure accountability and motivate sanitation workers. “Visible presence of officers will send a strong message,” she said. Departments were also advised to set both short-term and long-term goals for cleanliness. The Chief Minister directed officials to use social media to post “before and after” photos of cleaned areas to raise awareness and encourage citizen participation.

Urban Development Minister Ashish Sood raised concerns over poor road design and repeated road-cutting across the city. “The

problem persists because of a lack of coordination,” he said. Sood suggested forming a comprehensive policy and involving architects to ensure roads are designed efficiently.

Responding to the issue, the Chief Minister directed the Chief Secretary to set up a special committee with representatives from departments involved in road construction. The committee will finalise designs, ducting, and utility planning before any work begins.

“This integrated approach will minimise the problem of repeated road-cutting and ensure high-quality infrastructure,” the Chief Minister said. Officials said the government’s focus now is on visible improvement, cleaner streets, faster waste collection, and stricter accountability. The Chief Minister said the goal is clear: a cleaner, greener, and better Delhi.

Nagrota, Budgam record impressive voter turnout in J&K bypolls

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Jammu

Two Assembly constituencies of Nagrota and Budgam recorded an impressive voter turnout on Tuesday to elect their new public representatives during bypolls in Jammu and Kashmir.

The Nagrota Assembly recorded over 75 per cent voter turnout, while the politically significant Budgam segment witnessed a healthy voter turnout of over 50 per cent amid tight security arrangements.

According to the Election Commission of India, Nagrota Assembly Constituency (AC-77) registered a final turnout of over 75.08%, indicating robust participation from voters throughout the day.

In Budgam Assembly Constituency (AC-27), the final voter turnout crossed 50%,

with officials noting a steady inflow of voters despite cold weather conditions in several areas.

A total of 10 candidates were in the fray in the Nagrota Assembly constituency. The bypoll was necessitated following the demise of former MLA Devender Singh Rana on October 31, 2024.

His 30-year-old daughter, Devyani Rana, riding on public sympathy and goodwill, is contesting on a BJP ticket.

She faces NC’s 37-year-old nominee Shamim Begum, a postgraduate in Urdu and a sitting District Development Council (DDC) member, and JKNPP president Harsh Dev Singh, a senior advocate and former education minister.

On the other hand, as many as 17 candidates were in the fray for the Budgam

seat, where a bypoll was necessitated after Omar Abdullah vacated the seat, retaining Ganderbal after winning both the constituencies in the 2024 Assembly elections.

Budgam has been a bastion of the National Conference (NC), with its candidates securing victory from the constituency since 1962, barring once in 1972 when the Congress candidate won from the seat. NC Lok Sabha MP from Srinagar, Aga Rullah Mehdi, won from the Budgam seat in the 2002, 2008 and 2014 Assembly polls, before Abdullah emerged victorious from here in 2024.

National Conference candidate Agha Syed Mehmood is locked in a straight contest with the PDP’s (People’s Democratic Party) Aga Syed Muntazir Mehdi.

CCTV, clues and a burnt car: Inside...

Even as the case has been transferred to NIA, Delhi Police’s Special Cell along with intelligence agencies, unraveled the 11-hour route map of the Hyundai i20 that exploded. The vehicle entered Delhi via the Badarpur border from Faridabad. At 8:13 am, the car crossed the Badarpur toll plaza and entered Delhi; it was spotted near a petrol pump close to the Okhla Industrial Area at 8:20 am. The car entered the parking area near the Red Fort complex at 3:19 pm, where it remained parked for around three hours. The car left the parking area at 6:22 pm and moved toward the Red Fort. Just 24 minutes after its exit, at 6:52 pm, a powerful explosion occurred inside the car. Police said the car was parked in the parking area of the Sunehri Masjid near the Red Fort for nearly three hours, and during this time, Umar did not leave the car. Apparently, he was either waiting for someone or for further instructions. However, he did not meet anyone in the

parking lot. “The target could have been

“The white Hyundai i20 car-borne IED was meant for a much bigger attack. The man behind the wheel of the car is suspected to be Dr. Umar Mohammad Nabi, who was part of a radicalised group of doctors - a ‘white-collar’ terror module - and was in touch with members of JeM in Kashmir, like other members of his group, who had planned a massive strike in Delhi,” investigators said.

Security agencies said they are analysing CCTV footage collected from across Delhi and adjoining National Capital Region (NCR) areas to track the car’s every movement and identify anyone who may have been in contact with it during the day.

Doctors, explosives, dark designs

According to police, Dr Umar, who was in touch with the two arrested doctors, went missing after their detention. According to investigating agencies, the hot chase led them to his native village of

Pulwama.

Dr Umar recently got engaged, and his family was looking forward to solemnising his marriage at the earliest. He briefly spoke to his family last Friday and assured them that he would be visiting home in a couple of days. On Tuesday, J&K Police detained his ailing father, Ghulam Nabi Bhat, for questioning and his mother was asked to undergo DNA testing to confirm whether the charred remains found at the blast site belonged to him. The police teams have also rounded up several doctors who were working with blast suspect Umar Nabi in Faridabad.

Bihar records historic votes...

Two pollsters -- *Axis My India* and *Today’s Chanakya* -- will release their exit polls on Wednesday.

While *People’s Insight* predicted 133-148 seats for the NDA, 87-102 for the INDIA bloc and 0-2 for Jan Suraj, *People’s Pulse* gave 133-159 seats to the NDA, 75-101 to the INDIA bloc, and 0-5 to Prashant

Kishore’s party.

Meanwhile, *Chanakya Strategies* gave the NDA 130-138 seats, 100-108 to the INDIA bloc, and zero to Jan Suraj, pollster *P-Marq* predicted the NDA to win 142-162 seats, INDIA bloc 80-98 and Jan Suraj 1-4. While the NDA is hoping to return to power in Bihar, the Opposition INDIA bloc is looking to form the Government with RJD’s Tejashwi Yadav its chief ministerial face.

The second phase, in which eight ministers of the current Cabinet are in the fray, involves high stakes for the ruling NDA. Whereas the Opposition is pinning its hopes on the incumbency factor, as well as the high concentration of Muslims in many of the poll-bloc districts.

The second phase is of particular significance for the Congress, a spent force which is, nonetheless, the second-largest constituent of the INDIA bloc in Bihar. Of the 19 seats it had won in the 2020 assembly polls, 12 went to polls in the current phase. Its sitting MLAs include state president Rajesh Kumar Ram (Kutumba) and Shakeel Ahmed Khan (Kadwa).

Bijapur: Six Naxalites killed in encounter

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ Bijapur

Six Naxalites were killed in an encounter with security personnel in Chhattisgarh’s Bijapur district on Tuesday, police said.

Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai lauded the operation, describing it as another step towards eradication of the Maoist menace.

The gunfight broke out at around 10 am in the Indravati National Park area when a joint team of security personnel was out on anti-Naxalite operation based on inputs about the presence of senior Maoist cadres in the region, Bijapur Superintendent of Police Jitendra Yadav said.

Personnel belonging to police’s District Reserve Guard (DRG) from Bijapur and Dantewada districts and Special Task Force (STF) were involved in the operation, he said. Intermittent exchange of fire continued for several hours, the SP said, adding that during the search of the encounter site, the bodies of six Maoists with automatic weapons, including an

INSAS rifle, sten guns, a .303 rifle and explosives, were found, the official said. Additional teams of DRG, STF, Bastar Fighters, Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) and Chhattisgarh Armed Force (CAF) were rushed to cordon off the area and nab fleeing Maoist cadres, he added. The operation was still underway, said SP Yadav.

In a post on X, CM Sai said, “The campaign against the Maoist insurgency continues, and Naxalism is coming to an end. Today, during an ongoing encounter between a joint team of DRG and STF of Chhattisgarh police, and Naxalites in Bijapur, six Naxalites have been neutralised so far. “This is a major success for the security forces in the direction of completely eradicating the Maoist menace, and I salute their courage. It is the resolve of our Prime Minister Narendra Modi ji and Union Home Minister Amit Shah ji to end Naxalism from the country and the state by March 31, 2026. We are achieving success in fulfilling this resolve,” he added.

Meanwhile, in a separate operation, an injured Naxalite was apprehended following an encounter between security forces and Maoists in the forest of Annaram village in Tarlaguda area of Bijapur, police said. The injured Maoist was subsequently hospitalised, they said.

With the latest action, 259 Naxalites have been killed in encounters in Chhattisgarh so far this year. Of them, 230 were eliminated in the Bastar division, comprising seven districts including Bijapur, while 27 others were gunned down in Gariband district which falls in Raipur division.

Two Naxalites were killed in Mohla-Manpur-Ambargh Chowki district in Durg division. On September 22, two senior Naxalites, Raju Dada alias Katta Ramachandra Reddy (63) and Kosa Dada alias Kadari Satyanarayana Reddy (67), both Central Committee members of the outlawed Communist Party of India (Maoist), were killed in an encounter in the state’s Narayanpur district.

Congress asks Govt to provide clarity on Delhi blast



The Congress' media and publicity department head Pawan Khera on Tuesday urged the Government to provide clarity on the blast near the Red Fort saying there is fear and concern among the people that such a thing happened in the Delhi.

Ganesh Godiyal appointed Uttarakhand Congress chief

The Congress on Tuesday appointed Ganesh Godiyal as the president of its Uttarakhand unit with immediate effect, replacing Karan Mahara. Mahara was appointed as a special invitee to the Congress Working Committee. Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge also appointed chairpersons for the campaign committee and the election management committee of the party's Uttarakhand unit.



Ex-TDB president N Vasu held in Sabarimala gold case



The SIT probing the missing gold from the Sabarimala temple arrested former TDB president N Vasu on Tuesday, sources said. Vasu, who had also served twice as Commissioner of the Travancore Devaswom Board before being appointed its president in November 2019, was arrested following his questioning, they said.

BJP govt in Rajasthan has lost public trust, says Sachin Pilot

Congress general secretary Sachin Pilot on Tuesday said that the BJP Government in Rajasthan has lost public trust in two years of its rule. He said that there are multiple power centres in the party and the Government, and it was not clear who was running the Government. "There is an internal conflict between the Government and the party. It is not clear who is running the Government," he said.



Bihar needs result, respect, not hollow rhetoric: Tejashwi

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Patna

RJD leader and INDIA bloc's chief ministerial candidate Tejashwi Yadav on Tuesday said that through the "record voting" in the first phase of Bihar elections, people have given a direct message that they want "result" and not *jumla* (hollow rhetoric).

Claiming that the administration may slow down the pace of the polls at several places, he urged people not to step back from voting queues without exercising their franchise.

The second and last phase of polling is underway in the state on Tuesday, and it will end at 5 pm.

The RJD leader, in a long social media post on the day of the second phase of voting, said, "All that the people have got from the NDA government is assurances, slogans, rhetoric, and empty promises. People of Bihar can no longer stand



these, not even for a second." He claimed that the INDIA bloc has, over the past few years, worked hard to design a development policy for Bihar, which is "inclusive in nature and caters to every class, caste, religion, and community". Yadav, the INDIA bloc's chief ministerial face, said that the people have "annulled the dirty tricks of the NDA" meant to mislead them. "My dream is the

same as yours. Your pain is the same as mine. Our goals are the same, which no outsider to Bihar can truly understand," he said. He claimed that it is already too late as, in the last 20 years, the authorities have failed to achieve real development.

"The Government could not provide jobs for the youth, reduce crimes, ensure quality education, or build good hospitals for effective healthcare. Farmers remain

stricken with floods, traders are facing losses, and people are still in the grip of inflation," he added. The RJD leader asserted that true freedom lies in liberation from issues like unemployment, bribery, corruption, inflation, oppression, injustice, exploitation and inequality.

"Our vision is to make every Bihari self-reliant and aware! The rise of the village will bring the rise of the nation, and we're committed to that spirit in empowering Bihar's villages," Yadav said. In another post, Yadav also urged people who had gone to vote not to return home exercising their franchise.

"It is possible that the administration will slow down the polls at several places but you don't need to fall for their conspiracy. If you find any irregularities, send a recorded video to the WhatsApp numbers 9905953451 and 9334469007," the RJD leader said.



Nitish turns up at JD(U) war room

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ Patna

Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar on Tuesday demonstrated that he was neither tired nor in a mood to retire as he turned up at the JD(U)'s war room in Patna to take stock of the final phase of the Assembly polls that were underway.

The JD(U) president, who has been in the seat of power longer than any of his predecessors, reached a party office shortly after a meeting with Union minister Rajiv Ranjan Singh 'Lalan', one of his most trusted aides.

The 75-year-old is understood to have been buoyed by reports that his party, which had suffered a setback in the 2020 assembly polls, was poised for a better-than-expected performance this time.

In the last elections, the JD(U)'s tally had crashed to 43, a drop of more than 25 seats compared with the previous assembly polls, which was primarily blamed on the revolt of Lok Janshakti Party headed by Chirag Paswan. Paswan had fielded candidates in all seats contested by the JD(U), many of them BJP rebels.

This time, though, Paswan, whose party is now known as Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas), is contesting as a junior NDA constituent. The BJP, which had outperformed the JD(U) in 2020, also did not insist on the lion's share in the seat-sharing deal.

Apparently, belying rumours of his indifferent health, Kumar walked briskly, accompanied by his close cabinet colleague Vijay Kumar Chaudhary, who struggled to keep pace.



Union Minister Jitan Ram Manjhi

Jan Suraj leader Prashant Kishor

Top leaders cast votes in second phase

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ Patna

From JD(U)'s acting president Sanjay Jha and Union Minister Jitan Ram Manjhi to Jan Suraj Party founder Prashant Kishor and state Congress chief Rajesh Ram—leaders from both sides of the political divide cast their votes in the second phase of the Bihar elections on Tuesday.

State Industries Minister Nitish Mishra, Purnea MP Pappu Yadav, BJP's Jamui candidate Shreyashi Singh and Independent nominee Jyoti Singh, who is the wife of Bhojpuri singer Pawan Singh, also cast their votes.

BJP leader Shahnwaz Hussain and Congress MLA Ajeet Sharma, too, voted in this phase. Ram claimed that a large number of people are voting in favour of the INDIA

bloc in this phase. "The body language of voters, candidates, and the INDIA bloc leaders is indicative of a clear victory for the alliance," he said. JD(U)'s Jha, on the other hand, claimed that the NDA was heading to a "record-breaking majority".

"There is no anti-incumbency against CM Nitish Kumar despite him staying in power for 20 years. There is pro-incumbency and a strong undercurrent in favour of the Government among people," he claimed.

Jha alleged that RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav was doing politics of desperation as he has "already accepted his defeat". After casting his vote in Kargahar in Rohtas district, Kishor urged the people to judiciously exercise their right to franchise.

"I would urge the people of Bihar not to waste time

inside their homes or with their neighbourhoods. They must venture out, reach their polling booths and vote for a change, for their own betterment," he said.

"The elections are an opportunity to choose good candidates and ensure that there is an improvement in education and job creation. If this opportunity is missed, the state shall have to put up with another five years of rampant corruption, unemployment and forced migration," he added. Manjhi claimed that the work done by him at the Centre has greater resonance in regions going to the polls in the second phase.

"In the second phase, voter turnout will be greater than in the first phase. Women and Dalit voters will particularly vote in large numbers in favour of the NDA," he claimed.

Congress leader, ex-MoS Shakeel Ahmad resigns from party

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ NEW DELHI

Congress leader Shakeel Ahmad on Tuesday announced his resignation from the party citing differences with local leadership in Bihar, where the second and last phase of polling concluded earlier in the day.

Ahmad, who hails from Bihar, is a former Union minister of State for home, communications and IT and a former AICC general secretary. He was the president of Bihar Pradesh Congress Committee from 2000 to 2003.

Ahmad has been a three-time MLA, 1985-90, 1990-95 and 2000-2004, and twice MP, 1998 and 2004, from

Bihar. He also served as a minister in the Bihar cabinet and held the health portfolio. Ahmad, a doctor by profession and a third generation politician, sent his resignation to Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge.

In his letter, he said he continues to believe in the Congress ideology, and would not be joining any party.

"With a heavy heart, I have decided to resign from the membership of the Congress party. My resignation does not mean that I will join another party. Indeed, I have no intention of doing so. Like my forefathers, I have complete faith in the ideology and principles of the Congress

party, and I will forever remain a supporter of these ideologies and principles. I can assure you, the last vote of my life will also go to the Congress," he wrote to Kharge. Ahmad said his grandfather, Ahmad Ghafoor, was elected as a member of the legislative Assembly in 1937. After his death, his father, Shakoor Ahmad, was elected MLA five times between 1952 and 1977 and served in various posts.

"Though I had made the decision to leave the party earlier, I am announcing it today and polling has ended. I did not want any wrong message to be sent before the vote, and cause the party to lose even five votes.

High to moderate voting in Assembly bypolls, Anta in Rajasthan clocks over 77 per cent

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ New Delhi

High to moderate voting was recorded in the bypolls to eight Assembly constituencies spread across six States. The seats that went to polls are Anta in Rajasthan, Dampa in Mizoram, Ghatshila in Jharkhand, Jubilee Hills in Telangana, Nuapada in Odisha, Budgam and Nagrota in Jammu and Kashmir, and Tarn Taran in Punjab.

While Anta saw a high turnout of 77.17 per cent (till 5 pm), it was 75.92 per cent in Dampa till the close of polling, 75.37 per cent (till 5 pm) in Nuapada, 74.63 per cent (till 5 pm) in Nagrota, 73.88 per cent (till 5 pm) in Ghatshila, 59.21 per cent (till 5 pm) in Tarn Taran, 49.92 per cent in Budgam at the end of the polling and 47.16 (till 5 pm) in Jubilee Hills.

The figures, however, are likely to increase as a number of voters were in queue even after the official voting hours. Votes will be counted on November 14. The results aren't likely to have any

impact on the respective governments even though the contests have become a prestige issue for the parties.

Voting passed off peacefully in all the seats. In Odisha, two poll officials were suspended for failing to maintain voting secrecy.

The Anta bypoll, which was necessitated after BJP MLA Kanwar Lal Meena was disqualified following his conviction in a criminal case, saw 15 candidates in the fray, with the contest primarily between BJP's Mormal Suman and Congress candidate and former minister Pramod Jain Bhaya.

A voter turnout of 75.92 per cent was recorded provisionally at the close of polling in the Dampa assembly by-election in Mizoram, seen as a key test for the ruling Zoram People's Movement (ZPM) ahead of next year's civic polls.

The bypoll was necessitated following the death of incumbent MNF legislator Lalrinthuanga Sailo in July. In Nuapada seat, polling parties, along with EVMs,

were airlifted by two IAF helicopters from the Sunabeda Wildlife Sanctuary area, identified as highly sensitive due to Maoist activity, to the district headquarters after voting ended.

There was a temporary disruption in voting at Mongarapali polling station on Khariar Road due to a technical glitch in the EVM, though it was rectified, an official said, adding three ballot units, three control units and one VVPAT were replaced.

The bypoll was necessitated following the death of sitting BJD MLA Rajendra Dholakia on September 8.

In Nagrota, BJP's Devyani Rana, daughter of former MLA Devender Singh Rana whose death necessitated the bypoll, is pitted against NC nominee and sitting District Development Council (DDC) member Shamim Begum and JKNPP president Harsh Dev Singh.

Nagrota has alternated between the BJP and the NC over the last five assembly elections since 1996.

Rajnath Singh pitches for 'digital sovereignty'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ New Delhi

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Tuesday called upon the military to extend its approach of self-reliance to the digital domain for control over algorithms, data architectures and encrypted networks.

"True strategic autonomy will come only when our code is as indigenous as our hardware," he said in an address at a defence conclave. Singh underlined the need to not only acquire new innovations, but create the conditions where niche products thrive through sound processes, agile institutions, and a spirit of collaboration. He pitched for an approach that unites soldiers, the scientists, the startups and the strategists.

The defence minister underscored the need to extend *Aatmanirbharta* (self-reliance) beyond manufacturing indigenous systems to "digital sovereignty" saying control over the algorithms, data, and chips that power platforms was crucial. "We are encouraging secure,



Defence Minister Rajnath Singh during the Delhi Defence Dialogue 2025 in New Delhi

PTI

indigenous software stacks, trusted semiconductor supply chains, and home-grown AI models trained on Indian data."

"Amidst all the excitement about machines and algorithms, we must remember that technology is not meant to replace human judgement, but to amplify it," he said. "We must also invest in the ethical, psychological, and legal dimensions of

these emerging technologies. India, as a civilisational power, can and must lead the conversation on responsible and humane use of military technology," he said. Singh pressed on the fact that technology must be seen not only as a force multiplier, but also as a resource optimiser.

He supported leveraging technology and data analytics in the capital procure-

ment process to improve decision-making and ensure optimal use of every resource.

"In many advanced nations, the concept of life-cycle cost is deeply woven into their procurement frameworks. Recently, I have directed that we too must begin to assess these sustenance costs right at the inception stage of every procurement proposal," he said. "This will help us see the full

picture, not only what we invest today, but what we must sustain tomorrow," he said. The Defence Minister also called for building systems and ecosystems that make the creation as well as adoption of new technology natural, swift and self-sustaining.

"If our foundations are strong, our institutions agile, our minds open, and our collaboration seamless, then every new technological wave will not overwhelm us. It will propel us," he said.

"We will not merely adapt to revolutions made elsewhere, but become the architects of revolutions born here." While Singh stressed on absorbing and adapting to disruptive technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), machine learning and quantum computing he said the true test of advancement lies in how the apparatus functions.

"The power of technology is not limited to devices or algorithms; it lies in its all-encompassing nature—the way it redefines every process, system, and decision that contributes to national security."

■ States Focus ■



BRING PERPETRATORS TO JUSTICE: SHIVAKUMAR URGES CENTRE

Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar on Tuesday urged the Central Government to ensure that the perpetrators behind the blast, near the Red Fort in Delhi that left 12 people dead, are brought to justice.

He also asserted that the country needs to be “careful” about terror activities. Not willing to indulge in any political blame game in connection with the blast, for now, he said, this is not the time for it and pitched for measures across the country to ensure peace and that the lives of people are protected. Speaking to reporters, he said the Congress party condemns the incident and urged the Central Government to investigate and arrest those behind it.



MP CM PAYS TRIBUTES TO DELHI BLAST VICTIMS

Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav on Tuesday directed officials to maintain strict vigil in the State in the wake of the blast in Delhi that killed at least 12 persons.

Yadav visited the “situation room” at Mantralaya (State Secretariat) and reviewed the law and order situation virtually by interacting with the district collectors.

Later, Yadav paid tributes to the persons killed in the Delhi blast by observing a two-minute silence at the Panch Sarpanch Mahasammelan. “We have faith in our PM Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah, and culprits (of Delhi blast) won’t be spared”, the CM said.

Mamata flags off 110 ‘mobile medical units’ to cater patients in remote corners

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Tuesday flagged off 110 ‘mobile medical units’, which would cater to patients in remote rural areas of the State.

Banerjee, who is also the State’s health minister, launched the units at a programme organised by the health department at the ‘Swasthya Bhawan’, after returning from a north Bengal visit. Describing it as a milestone in the State’s efforts to expand medical access, she said the move reflects her government’s commitment to ensuring that *Maa, Mati, Manush* receive quality healthcare regardless of geographical or socio-economic barriers.

“A total of 210 mobile medical units have been readied. Today, I’m flagging off 110. These units have facilities for blood test, chest X-ray apart from 35 other clinical examinations free of cost. There are over 29 equipment inside these units. This is like *duare swasthya* (healthcare services at doorstep)”, the CM said.

Each MMU functions as a self-sufficient health clinic on the wheels, staffed with doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and technicians, she said.

“These vehicles are designed to reach the most remote corners of the state, including hilly terrains, tribal areas, and backward regions, offering maternal and child care, general consultations, and a wide range of diagnostic tests,” Banerjee said.

Several MMUs deployed in regions like the Sundarbans will also have ultrasonography machines to provide prenatal care and other diagnostic services, she said.

The West Bengal Government has spent ₹84 crore on procuring these vehicles, with around ₹2.5 crore per month required for operational expenses, the Chief Minister said.

Delhi blast: TMC slams Shah for security lapse

SAUGAR SENGUPTA
■ Kolkata

The top Trinamool Congress leadership hit out at Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Tuesday for what they called a “severe (security) lapse” that led to 12 deaths in Monday’s terror attack in Delhi.

“My heartfelt condolences go out to the bereaved families, and my prayers are with those recovering from their injuries. It is extremely distressing that such an incident has taken place in the heart of our national capital, Delhi,” TMC general secretary Abhishek Banerjee said, holding the Union Home Ministry responsible for the tragic deaths.

The Diamond Harbour MP, who is also the nephew of Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, said that, as the Delhi Police, which functioned under the Union Home Ministry, was primarily responsible for maintaining law and order of the Capital, it was the Home



Minister to should explain the lapses in security.

“How then, are such grave lapses in security being allowed to occur?” he asked, referring also to the seizure of huge quantity of explosives from Faridabad in Haryana earlier on Monday raising, “alarming questions about internal security and the evident decline in vigilance,” and demanding “an impartial, time-bound investigation,” into the Delhi blast to fix accountability.

Demanding Shah’s resignation, another senior MP,

Kalyan Banerjee, said, “What is going on in the name of security management? Who is handling the security system, and what does Amit Shah have to say about the duty he was entrusted and the duty that he failed to perform? He should accept responsibility for the security lapses and resign.”

Party MP from Krishnagar, Mahua Moitra, too attacked Shah, saying the Delhi blast itself proved that India needed a capable Home Minister. Moitra wrote on social media, “India needs a

capable Home Minister, not a full-time Hate Campaign Minister. Isn’t it... Amit Shah’s duty to protect both our borders as well as our cities? Why is he failing so spectacularly on all counts?”

Meanwhile, Kolkata was on high alert ahead of the India-South Africa test match, which would begin on Friday, with security agencies conducting random Naka checks around the city. This was in response to the Cricket Association of Bengal’s request to the Kolkata Police for additional forces to be deployed in and around Eden Gardens, where the match would be held.

Kolkata Commissioner of Police Manoj Verma, who took stock of the security system at the venue on Tuesday, said that “things are fine and all appropriate steps have been taken to ensure a foolproof security and nothing will be compromised, rampant checking is being conducted everywhere.”

Andhra CM urges release of ₹695 crore under PM-RKVY

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Jammu

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu on Tuesday urged Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan to release additional funds of ₹695 crore under the PM Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana.

According to its website, the scheme was launched in 2007 as an umbrella programme to ensure the holistic development of agriculture and allied sectors by allowing States to choose their development activities based on district and State agriculture plans.

Chouhan called on the chief minister at his camp office, accompanied by Minister of State for Rural Development P Chandrasekhar.

“CM Chandrababu Naidu requested ₹695 crore for fiscal 2024-25 and 2025-26,” said a press release.

Naidu also sought the release of the Centre’s share of ₹100 crore under

the market intervention scheme extended for Totapuri (called ‘Bengalura’) mango farmers.

The chief minister discussed agriculture and minor irrigation in the state and briefed Chouhan on the devastation caused by cyclone ‘Montha’.

Earlier in the day, Chouhan and Chandrasekhar participated in the launch of ‘Watershed Mahotsav’ in Guntur, marking the national celebration of community-led water rejuvenation, soil health enhancement and sustainable rural development.

The union minister lauded Andhra Pradesh’s active participation in watershed initiatives and expressed satisfaction over the successful completion of the Vengalayapalem project.

He also announced that the Centre has sanctioned ₹380 crore for road construction works in the State.

Actor Dharmendra stable, under observation; family requests privacy

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ Mumbai

Amid false rumours about his deteriorating health spread across Mumbai and elsewhere in the country in the early part of the day, the family members of veteran actor Dharmendra — who has been admitted to Mumbai’s Breach Candy hospital — said on Tuesday that he was “stable and under observation” at the hospital.

On a day when the country’s commercial capital woke up to strong rumours about the 89-year-old actor, Dharmendra’s wife and senior actress Hema Malini took to micro-blogging site “X” slammed the “respon-

ble” television channels for putting out “false news about a person who is responding to treatment and is recovering”.

“What is happening is unforgivable! How can responsible channels spread false news about a person who is responding to treatment and is recovering? This is being extremely disrespectful and irresponsible. Please give due respect to the family and its need for privacy,” Hema Malini wrote on “X”.

Her daughter and actress Esha Deol also rubbished the news circulating in a section of the media and also the social media about Dharmendra. “The media seems to be in overdrive and spreading

false news. My father is stable and recovering. We request everyone to give our family privacy. Thank you for the prayers for papa’s speedy recovery,” Esha Deol wrote on “Instagram”.

“Mr Dharmendra is stable and under observation. Further comments and updates will be shared as available. Kindly don’t indulge in spreading false rumours regarding his health. Request everyone to pray for his speedy recovery and respect the family’s right to privacy,” a PR team of the Deol family said.

On October 31, Dharmendra was hospitalised for his routine check-up. He has been undergoing treatment at the Breach



Candy Hospital since then.

On Sunday night, Sunny Deol was seen arriving at Breach Candy Hospital to check on his father. The who’s who of Bollywood, including wife Hema Malini, Salman Khan, Shah Rukh Khan, Ameesha Patel, among others, visited the hospital on Monday.

In his six-decade-long career, Dharmendra has acted in more than 300 films. He is known for his memorable performances in films such as Aayee Milan Ki Bela, Phool Aur Patthar, Aaye Din Bahar Ke, Seeta Aur Geeta, Raja Jani, Jugnu, Yaadon Ki Baaraat, Dost, Sholay, Pratiggya, Charas, Dharam Veer, among others.

Karnataka to set up five aerospace, defence parks: CM

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Bengaluru

Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Tuesday announced that the state Government is developing five world-class aerospace and defence parks in strategic locations across Bengaluru, Belagavi, Mysuru, Tumakuru and Chamaraajanagar.

He said the parks will offer “plug-and-play” facilities to drastically reduce setup time for industries.

“We are developing five world-class Aerospace & Defence Parks in strategic locations — Bengaluru, Belagavi, Mysuru, Tumakuru and Chamaraajanagar. These parks will offer ‘plug-and-play’ facilities to drastically reduce setup time for industries,” Siddaramaiah said.

He was speaking after inaugurating the Collins India Operations Centre developed by Collins Aerospace at the KIADB Aerospace Park in Devanahalli. The Chief



Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah addressing a press conference in Mysuru. Karnataka

Minister said the new 26-acre facility marks a major milestone in Karnataka’s journey as a global hub for advanced aerospace manufacturing.

“The decision by Collins Aerospace, a global major with over a century of aviation legacy, to establish this comprehensive centre in Bengaluru is a powerful

endorsement of Karnataka’s robust industrial ecosystem and its future potential,” he said. “Collins Aerospace is investing \$25 million in Karnataka. This new facility will create over 2,000 skilled jobs in research, development and advanced manufacturing. Karnataka contributes nearly 65 per

cent to India’s aerospace and defence sector,” Siddaramaiah was quoted as saying in a statement.

He described the centre as a “shining example” of a successful public-private partnership that aligns with the state’s goals and the national ‘Make in India’ mission. Siddaramaiah said more than 2,000 small and medium enterprises are engaged in the aerospace and defence sectors across the State.

“Companies such as Mahindra Aerospace and Rangsons have made substantial investments, and 48 agreements have been signed in this sector. Rangsons, in partnership with Boeing, is investing ₹2,915 crore. The state aims to attract ₹45,000 crore in investments and create 60,000 jobs over the next five years,” he said.

Inviting global aerospace leaders to invest in Karnataka, the Chief Minister added, “Our policies, our people and our proven track

record make us the ideal partner for your success.”

Large and Medium Industries Minister M B Patil, who also attended the event, said this is Collins Aerospace’s first facility in India under the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme. “The unit will cater to leading global aviation majors such as Boeing and Airbus,” he said, adding that KIADB and Karnataka Udyog Mitra provided all necessary approvals, infrastructure and support to operationalise the facility.

Patil said Karnataka’s new industrial policy places strong emphasis on high-tech sectors such as aerospace, defence and electronics. “The investment by Collins Aerospace is a historic milestone and aligns with the State Government’s long-term vision. This manufacturing facility stands as a fine example of ‘Ease of Doing Business’ and demonstrates Karnataka’s industry-friendly ecosystem,” he added.

Gehlot calls for deep probe into Delhi blast

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Jaipur

Former Rajasthan chief minister Ashok Gehlot on Tuesday called for a thorough investigation into the Delhi Red Fort blast and alleged large-scale cash distribution in the Bihar election.

Speaking to reporters at his residence in Jaipur, Gehlot, about the blast, said any such incident, regardless of location, was “tragic and deeply disturbing.”

“As I said yesterday, the Delhi incident must be investigated thoroughly. It is important that the truth comes out before the country. Many such incidents have taken place in the past where inquiries were announced but never completed,” he said.

The Congress leader also alleged that money was openly distributed to influence voters in Bihar.

“We are hearing that

₹10,000 were distributed to women. This has never happened before. The Election Commission of India is sitting with its eyes closed while money is being transferred even as the polling happened,” Ashok Gehlot said.

He claimed that despite such tactics, people, especially women voters, were wise and would vote independently. “Women are smart; they will not be influenced by money. Bihar is a politically aware State, and we hope voters will make a fair choice.”

Gehlot criticised the EC for “failing to act” despite clear violations of the Model Code of Conduct.

“When Atal Bihari Vajpayee’s government was in power, even signboards on national highways were removed after the code of conduct was enforced. But now, despite cash being distributed, no one is taking action,” he said.

HC takes serious note of deteriorating condition of roads in Madhya Pradesh

GIRISH SHARMA
■ Bhopal

The Madhya Pradesh High Court has taken serious note of the deteriorating condition of roads and the alarming rise in fatal accidents across the State, issued notices to the Central and State Governments as well as major road agencies. The court’s intervention follows a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) alleging gross negligence and administrative apathy in maintaining road infrastructure, which has resulted in thousands of preventable deaths.

A division bench comprising Chief Justice Sanjeev Sachdeva and Justice Vinay Saraf has directed the Union Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI), the Madhya Pradesh Road Development Corporation (MPRDC), and

the Madhya Pradesh Rural Road Development Authority (MPRRDA) to submit detailed reports within two weeks. The reports must outline measures taken to repair critical road stretches, fill potholes, and strengthen road safety mechanisms.

The PIL, filed by retired Indore banker Rajendra Singh and argued by advocate Abhinav Malhotra, paints a grim picture of the state’s road safety record. Citing official data, the petitioner stated that Madhya Pradesh reported 5,840 road accidents in 2023, resulting in 2,161 deaths—a sharp 31.4 per cent increase over the previous year.

The petition described the state’s highways and district roads as “death traps,” where poor maintenance, lack of signage, and unregulated construction have turned commuting into a daily gamble with life.

During the hearing, the High Court expressed deep concern over the systemic neglect and observed that the “poor condition of roads is not merely an inconvenience but a serious public safety hazard.” The bench questioned how such widespread deterioration could occur while toll collection and maintenance contracts continue unabated. “The State cannot abdicate its constitutional responsibility to protect lives,” the court observed, adding that recurring accidents reflect both governance failure and administrative indifference.

The court’s directive mandates a status report identifying accident-prone stretches, ongoing repairs, and accountability for lapses in supervision. The bench has fixed December 15, 2025, as the next date of hearing.

The PIL also highlighted

multiple instances where newly constructed roads developed cracks and potholes within months, indicating substandard material use and weak quality control. It sought judicial intervention to ensure that officials and contractors responsible for such lapses face penalties under the Prevention of Damage to Public Property Act and related provisions.

Officials from the PWD and MPRDC have claimed that inadequate budget allocations and delays in contract renewals have hampered timely repairs. However, the court’s tough stand is expected to trigger stronger accountability and tighter monitoring mechanisms across departments.

For citizens across the State—from Bhopal to Betul and Gwalior to Guna—the court’s notice has come as a step toward safer travel.

Ensure timely implementation of solar programme: Andhra chief secretary

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Tirupati

Andhra Pradesh Chief Secretary K Vijayanand on Tuesday directed the distribution companies to ensure timely and effective implementation of the NABARD-ADB backed solar rooftop investment programme.

The chief secretary reaffirmed that the State Government is committed to accelerating the rollout of rooftop solar systems to promote clean, affordable, and sustainable energy with financial support from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD).

“Ensure timely and effective implementation of the NABARD-ADB supported Solar Rooftop Investment Programme (SRIP) across Andhra Pradesh,” said

Vijayanand in an official release. While reviewing the power distribution companies (DISCOMS) along with the representatives of ADB and NABARD, he checked the progress of SRIP under Pradhan Mantri Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana (PM-SGBY) through the Utility-Led Aggregator (ULA) model.

NABARD has been onboarded as the financial intermediary to provide concessional financing to the state DISCOMS. According to the chief secretary, Andhra Pradesh has accorded high priority to rooftop solar power adoption as part of its broader commitment to clean and sustainable energy.

He said the State has been actively promoting solar energy deployment across residential, institutional, and Government sectors to ensure affordable and reliable power for all.

Emphasising that rooftop solar power is a key pillar in achieving the state’s renewable energy targets and reducing dependence on conventional power, Vijayanand said it contributes to empowering consumers through decentralised power generation.

“The State Government remains fully committed to supporting DISCOMS and collaborating with development partners like ADB and NABARD to make Andhra Pradesh a leader in rooftop solar (power) implementation in the country,” he said.

Delving on the Government’s special focus on solarisation of the Kuppam constituency, represented by Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu, Vijayanand stated that the southern state aims to make it a 100 per cent solar and net zero constituency.

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Order Order

Delhi court rejects plea by Lalu, Rabri Devi for daily trial in IRCTC scam case



A Delhi court on Tuesday rejected the plea by former Bihar Chief Minister and Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) President Lalu Prasad Yadav and his wife Rabri Devi's against holding day-to-day trial in the IRCTC scam case in which they have been charged with criminal offences. Special Judge (PC Act) Vishal Gogne of the Rouse Avenue Courts said that their prayer was not maintainable, practicable or justified.

The fast track court said that the Constitutional courts have asked trial courts to expedite cases against Members of Parliament (MPs) and Members of Legislative Assemblies (MLAs), avoid adjournments and record evidence on a day-to-day basis. "The court is therefore disinclined to bind and restrict its future daily orders by introducing a negative direction inter alia "not listing the matter before one week after each hearing", as prayed by the applicants," Judge Gogne said.

The CBI charge is that Yadav and his family accepted prime land and shares as bribe for awarding contracts to a private firm when he was the Union Railway Minister.

Former TDB president N Vasu arrested in Sabarimala gold case



The SIT probing the missing gold from the Sabarimala temple arrested former Travancore Devaswom Board president N Vasu on Tuesday, sources said here. Vasu, who had also served twice as Commissioner of the TDB before being appointed its president, was arrested following his interrogation, they said. The arrest of Vasu, who is reportedly close to the top leadership of the State Government, is one of the high-profile arrests in the case. The Kerala High Court is monitoring the SIT probe.

He is an accused in the case relating to the disappearance of gold from the door frames of the sreekovil (sanctum sanctorum) of the hill shrine, sources said.

J GOPIKRISHNAN

■ New Delhi

When the President of India issued a notification on 26 September 2025 extending Ramaswamy Venkataramani's term as the Attorney General for India for another two years, it was more than a bureaucratic decision: it was a reaffirmation of trust in a man known for his quiet competence, sharp intellect and unimpeachable integrity. The extension, valid until 30 September 2027, signals the Government's faith in his ability to steer the nation through an increasingly complex and politically charged legal environment.

R Venkataramani's journey to the highest law office of the land is a story of perseverance, scholarship and deep respect for the rule of law. Enrolled as an advocate with the Bar Council of Tamil Nadu in 1977, he began his career with humility and hard work, soon moving to New Delhi to practice in the Supreme Court of India in 1979. His early years were shaped by his apprenticeship under the eminent constitutional expert, late PP Rao, Senior Advocate, whose influence left a lasting imprint on his legal philosophy. By March 1982, Venkataramani qualified as an Advocate-on-Record at the Supreme Court and in 1997, in recognition of his outstanding contribution to the legal profession, he was designated a Senior Advocate by the Supreme Court.

Appointed as Attorney General for India on 28 September 2022, Venkataramani brought with him decades of experience, deep constitutional insight and a reputation for restraint and clarity. His reappointment in 2025 comes at a time when the legal challenges facing the Government are multifaceted, spanning constitutional disputes, international arbitration,



Attorney General of India, R. Venkataramani

political litigation, and the fast-evolving interface between law, technology and governance.

Today's legal landscape is no longer confined to conventional courtroom arguments. It extends into the realm of governance, diplomacy and public perception. The Attorney General's office, as the principal legal advisor to the Government of India, stands at the intersection of law and politics.

Every legal opinion or court submission has the potential to shape not only judicial outcomes but also political narratives. Venkataramani's modesty and meticulous approach make him ideally suited for this high-stakes environment. His style, measured, reasoned and devoid of spectacle, has earned him both respect and trust in equal measure.

The coming years will test his ability to navigate the complex and often turbulent waters of Indian politics and governance. The Modi administration, though led by one of the strongest polit-

ical personalities in recent memory, currently operates as a minority Government. This makes the role of the Attorney General especially critical, as he must delicately balance legal propriety with political pragmatism. In such circumstances, the Attorney General becomes more than just a lawyer, he becomes the moral compass of the administration's legal strategy, ensuring that the pursuit of political objectives remains within the bounds of constitutional discipline.

Venkataramani's challenge extends beyond domestic politics. On the international front, India faces increasing scrutiny over its compliance with trade pacts, investment treaties and environmental and human rights obligations. As global corporations and international bodies become more litigious, the Attorney General must not only defend India's interests in global forums but also ensure that its legal positions align with the principles of fairness and justice that



SC seeks EC response to pleas challenging SIR

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

The Supreme Court (SC) on Tuesday sought separate responses of the Election Commission of India (ECI) on pleas filed by DMK, CPI(M), West Bengal Congress and Trinamool Congress leaders challenging the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of the electoral rolls in Tamil Nadu and West Bengal respectively.

A bench of Justices Surya Kant and Joymalya Bagchi asked the poll panel to respond to the fresh petitions in two weeks.

The Supreme Court asked the Madras and Calcutta High Courts to keep in abeyance any proceedings on petitions challenging the SIR exercise in Tamil Nadu and West Bengal.

It also allowed the listing of an intervention application filed by the AIADMK in support of the SIR in Tamil Nadu.

During a brief hearing, senior advocate Kapil Sibal, appearing in the court for the ruling DMK in Tamil Nadu, said the exercise is being done hurriedly, without following the due process, and different sets of documents are being sought from voters.

He said the northeast monsoon in Tamil Nadu is always heavy during November-December and the coastal districts experience heavy to very heavy rains during this season.

"According to the meteorological department, this year, heavier rain than usual is predicted. Because of this, the common people will be preparing for the same and the revenue officials who are enlisted as BLOs, EROs, AEROS



will have to manage the flood relief as well. Hence, practically, this is not a conducive time for conducting the above exercises," Sibal said.

Justice Kant said in a country as big as India, some states will always face natural calamities. Sibal said there is very poor connectivity in certain areas of the southern state and there will be difficulties in uploading documents.

"Similarly, in West Bengal also, rural connectivity is very poor and much bad with regard to Tamil Nadu," he said. The bench said, "It appears that the case being projected before us is that for the first time, electoral rolls are being prepared. We also know the ground realities. There is a constitutional authority which is doing the

exercise and it is mandated to do it. Earlier also, it has been done."

Justice Kant said the problem is that everybody wants "status quo". Sibal said the petitioners want the EC to do its work but not in this fashion and hurriedly. The bench said political parties should not be apprehensive of the exercise and the EC will give all details related to it.

"If we are satisfied that there is something wrong, we will annul the entire exercise," the court said.

On the argument that different modalities are being adopted in Tamil Nadu, compared to what was followed in Bihar during the SIR exercise, the bench said it means that the EC has rectified its mistakes. Sibal said the Bihar SIR has nothing to do with the

exercise in Tamil Nadu and the situation and conditions are different in the two states.

Senior advocate Rakesh Dwivedi, appearing in the court for the EC, sought to file replies to the fresh petitions.

Senior advocate Kalyan Banerjee, appearing for Trinamool Congress (TMC) leader Dola Sen, said they too have filed the petition challenging the SIR in West Bengal.

Advocate Prashant Bhushan, appearing in the matter for NGO Association for Democratic Reforms, questioned various "procedural irregularities" on the EC's part like issuing a machine-readable voter list in Bihar.

The bench said notices are being issued to the EC on all the fresh petitions and the

court will look into the pleas after the poll panel's response. It told the EC, "You should adopt the best practice and experience of the Bihar SIR in exercises which are to be conducted in other states. However, you should always keep in mind the local conditions."

The court listed the matter for further hearing on November 26 and 27, and said it will hear the arguments on the interim relief sought by different political leaders, such as a stay on the SIR.

Besides Sen, West Bengal Congress leader Shubhankar Sarkar, DMK's RS Bharathi, CPI-M's P Shanmugam and other leaders have filed separate petitions challenging the SIR in Tamil Nadu, West Bengal and Puducherry.

In his plea filed through advocate Vivek Singh, Bharathi has claimed that the exercise is violative of Articles 14, 19 and 21 (rights to equality, freedom of speech and life) and other provisions of the Constitution, the Representation of the People Act and the Registration of Electors Rules of 1960.

The CPI(M) has challenged the constitutional validity of the EC's directive to conduct the SIR in Tamil Nadu, terming the process "arbitrary, illegal and unconstitutional".

Meanwhile, the AIADMK has supported the poll panel's decision to conduct the SIR in the southern State, calling it a "legitimate and necessary" exercise to uphold the sanctity of elections and prevent voter fraud. On October 27, the EC announced the conduct of the second phase of the SIR in 12 States and Union territories between November and February next year. These states and Union territories are — the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Lakshadweep, Chhattisgarh, Goa, Gujarat, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Puducherry, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal.

Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, Kerala and West Bengal are scheduled to go to polls in 2026. The EC has said for Assam, where polls are also due in 2026, the revision of the electoral rolls will be announced separately.

The second phase of the SIR exercise began on November 4 and will continue till December 4. The EC will release the draft electoral rolls on December 9 and the final electoral rolls on February 7.

Stubble burning worsening Delhi-NCR air quality levels, SC told

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

Stubble burning has commenced in a big way with impunity in Punjab and Haryana leading to further worsening of air quality levels in Delhi-NCR, the Supreme Court was told on Tuesday.

A bench headed by Chief Justice BR Gavai, which is scheduled to hear the air pollution case on Wednesday, was urged by senior advocate Aprajita Singh, who is assisting the bench as an amicus curiae, that a response be sought from the Governments of Punjab and Haryana.

Singh referred to NASA satellite images to buttress her point that stubble burning in these two states has commenced and it is contributing to already severe air pollution levels in Delhi-NCR. "The Supreme Court orders are being flouted with



Stubble burning in Amritsar

impunity," she said, adding that these states should respond to the present situation. "We will pass some orders on Wednesday," the CJ said. Earlier on November 3, the Supreme Court directed the Commission for Air Quality

Management (CAQM) to file an affidavit detailing the steps it has taken so far to prevent air pollution in Delhi-NCR from peaking further. The bench, also comprising Justice K Vinod Chandran, was hearing the MC Mehta case and had said that the

authorities must act proactively and not wait for pollution levels to reach a "severe" stage.

Amicus curiae Singh had flagged media reports indicating that several air quality monitoring stations in Delhi were not functioning during the Diwali period. "There are newspapers after newspapers saying that monitoring stations are non-functional. If the monitoring stations are not even functioning, we don't even know when to implement GRAP (graded response action plan)... Out of 37 monitoring stations, only nine were functioning continuously on the day of Diwali," she said.

The amicus urged the bench to ensure that CAQM submits clear data and an action plan. She said the earlier orders mandated pre-emptive measures, rather than reactive steps, once pollution worsened. "The CAQM is required to place on record an affidavit as to

what steps are proposed to be taken to prevent the pollution from turning severe," the bench said in its order. The counsel for the CAQM said that the Central Pollution Control Board is responsible for monitoring data. However, Additional Solicitor General Aishwarya Bhati assured the bench that the agencies concerned will file the required report.

On October 15, the CJ-led bench permitted the sale and bursting of green firecrackers in Delhi-NCR during Diwali with conditions aimed at balancing tradition with environmental and health concerns. The court had made it clear that use of green crackers will be confined to specific hours on Diwali and a day before. The sale of green crackers was permitted from October 18 to 20.

It had also made clear that the relaxation was only on a "test case basis and it shall be only for the period specified".

R Venkataramani: India's Attorney General for tumultuous times

have long defined its constitutional ethos. Acting as both lawyer and diplomat, he must maintain India's credibility abroad while safeguarding its sovereignty.

Within India, a surge of politically sensitive cases has blurred the line between law and ideology. The courts have become arenas where political battles are fought by other means. From electoral disputes and constitutional amendments to the validity of administrative actions, the Government faces legal challenges that can have profound implications for its longevity and legitimacy. Venkataramani's calm temperament and deep constitutional grounding will be indispensable in such moments.

Many in the legal community had anticipated a change of guard at the top law office earlier this year. Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, known for his aggressive courtroom style and articulate advocacy, was widely seen as the front-runner for the post.

However, sources reveal that when the decision reached the Prime Minister's desk, Narendra Modi preferred continuity and composure over confrontation. The choice of R Venkataramani over a more flamboyant alternative reflects Modi's instinct to rely on steady, unassuming competence, particularly crucial in a phase when legal stability underpins political survival.

Behind Venkataramani's quiet demeanor lies a formidable intellect and an unwavering commitment to the institution of justice. Those who have worked with him describe him as a "lawyer's lawyer", deeply committed to the purity of legal reasoning, yet pragmatic enough to appreciate the compulsions of governance. His professional conduct, coupled with his personal simplicity, has earned him the confidence of both the judiciary and the exec-

utive. Venkatramani, since his student days, has held a reflective admiration for American legal institutions, attorneys and jurists who shaped them. Names such as John Marshall, Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr, Hugo Black, Earl Warren, Louis Brandeis, Benjamin Cardozo, Felix Frankfurter, William Storey, Thurgood Marshall, William Brennan, and, more recently Antonin Scalia, represent for him a wide philosophical spectrum where judicial reasoning is not merely technical but rooted in social conscience, moral clarity and constitutional faith.

He regards Attorney Generals like Robert F Kennedy, Elliot Richardson and Edward Levi as figures who demonstrated how law, when anchored in democratic values, can remain both principled and transformative.

For Venkatramani, the appeal of the American legal traditions lies not in replication but in the seriousness with which it attempts to balance liberty, accountability and judicial independence through interpretative discipline and institutional design. India, with its civilisational depth, constitutional vision, and the responsibility of delivering justice to over a billion people, requires legal systems that are transparent, humane and responsive to social complexity.

He has often emphasised that legal thinking must remain compassionate, historically aware, and connected to the lived experiences of ordinary citizens, rather than confined to academic abstraction. This belief continues to guide his intellectual and institutional engagements.

His aspiration is to foster thoughtful dialogue between legal cultures through comparative research programs, shared judicial training, and collaborative professional networks. Such engagement, in his view, does not weaken India's

legal identity; rather, it strengthens it by encouraging clarity, public trust and ethical responsibility.

Thus, his admiration for American juristic traditions is part of a broader commitment to renew and reinforce India's constitutional order, ensuring it remains resilient, purposeful and deeply anchored in the rights and aspirations of its people.

In an era when the credibility of the legal profession is under strain, amid allegations of politicisation, judicial activism, and media trials: the Attorney General's role assumes symbolic importance.

He is the guardian of the Government's legal conscience, the voice that must uphold reason even in the heat of political rhetoric. For Venkataramani, this means ensuring that the Government's actions are not merely defensible in court but also justifiable in principle.

An insider in the Government recently remarked that it is Venkataramani's quiet professionalism and unassuming personality that have inspired the Prime Minister's confidence. In times when the country's legal institutions are often pulled between competing pressures from within and outside its borders, his steady hand offers reassurance.

R Venkataramani's reappointment, therefore, represents more than administrative continuity: it symbolises the Government's faith in sobriety over showmanship, diligence over drama, and principle over personality. As India's foremost law officer embarks on his extended tenure, the nation will look to him not only for legal guidance but also for moral steadiness amid the clamour of courtroom and political battles.

The next two years will not just define his legacy but may also shape the very contours of India's constitutional resilience.

Editor's
TAKE

Delhi bears the brunt of an explosion once again

The explosion is a grim echo of Delhi's violent past. It is a moment not for panic, but for resolve – to ensure such tragedies never repeat

Delhi is in a state of shock. Just when the people thought that Delhi was safe from explosions, a powerful blast near the Red Fort shattered that sense of security. Whether it was a terror attack or a technical glitch that caused the CNG tank in the car to explode, the effect was horrendous. In either case, complacency in governance cannot be ruled out.

For Delhi, it was a heartbreakingly familiar scene – one that revived the discomforting memories of past terror attacks that once shook the national capital. Preliminary reports suggest the blast originated from within the car, though at this point it is not clear what exactly caused the explosion – a bomb or a cylinder blast. Whether it was a mechanical failure, an accidental CNG explosion, or a deliberate act of terror remains unclear. Yet, the timing and intensity of the explosion – coming just hours after the recovery of nearly 2,900 kilograms of explosives in neighbouring Haryana – point towards the possibility of sabotage. Investigative agencies have not ruled out the involvement of a terror module. For Delhiites, this tragedy reopens old wounds. Delhi has endured a long and painful history of bombings – from the serial blasts of 2005 to the 2011 High Court explosion that claimed dozens of lives. Those incidents briefly united the city in grief and outrage, only to give way to complacency, allowing the lessons learned to blur. The capital remains vulnerable to old methods of destruction. If it was an act of terror, it was meticulously planned. The location of the blast - near the Red Fort – a site symbolic of India's independence and national pride, makes the act even more devastating, striking not just at human lives but at the country's collective sense of security. Beyond grief and anger, this moment demands action. The first step must be a transparent, meticulous investigation. Every piece of evidence – from the vehicle's remnants to surrounding CCTV footage – must be examined with scientific precision. The people of Delhi have a right to know – regular, credible updates, not speculation or secrecy. This is essential not only for justice but for restoring confidence in the state's ability to protect its people.

Equally important is a re-evaluation of urban security. High-density zones like Old Delhi, with their narrow lanes and chaotic traffic, require tailored strategies – stricter parking norms, periodic scrutiny of vehicles, and stronger inter-state coordination in monitoring suspicious movements. Public awareness campaigns, emergency drills, and citizen participation can make a significant difference. Finally, there is a need for emotional and civic healing. As Delhi mourns the dead, it must also reaffirm its spirit – the unbreakable resolve of a city that has seen empires rise and fall, yet never surrendered to fear. The explosion near the Red Fort must not become another entry in the long list of tragedies that fade with time. It must become an incident where the city's vigilance was restored and people feel safe once again.

Faith, power, and nationhood in conflict

From British colonial manipulation to Partition, the story of India has been shaped by cycles of conquest, accommodation, and awakening. The roots of today's anxieties lie deep in this complex past



Questions such as whether our Constitution is secular or whether “Vande Bharat” is a patriotic or political slogan are not merely contemporary concerns; they are rooted in centuries of Indian history. To understand current controversies, one must go back to AD 1194, when Mohammad Ghori defeated Prithviraj Chauhan in the Second Battle of Tarain. Some trace the origins even further. Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah once claimed that Pakistan was born the day the first Hindu converted to Islam in the subcontinent. Muslims came to India as conquerors, guests, or converts-few could claim native descent. Among the rulers, some were benevolent, others harsh, and a few destructive. The brightest phase came under Emperor Akbar, whose long and liberal reign brought a rare harmony to India. In contrast, Aurangzeb's intolerance marked the darkest chapter of Mughal rule.

A puzzling feature of Indian history is the absence of a united Hindu resistance to the Sultans and Badshahs of Delhi. Shivaji stands out for his courage and statecraft, yet his influence remained confined to the Deccan. Maharana Pratap, too, fought heroically against Akbar, but his struggle was limited to Mewar. A pan-Indian uprising never materialised. By the mid-18th century, the declining Mughal order gave way to new powers. The reckless Nawab of Bengal, Siraj-ud-Daulah, alienated his own officers and merchants, pushing them into alliance with the East India Company. Their support ensured Robert Clive's victory at Plassey in 1757, which opened the gates of Bengal to British domination. Subsequent British victories-over Tipu Sultan in 1799 and the annexation of Awadh under Dalhousie-completed the dismantling of Muslim authority.

The Revolt of 1857 briefly shook British confidence. For a year, large parts of North India were aflame, but the uprising ended in defeat. In 1858, Queen Victoria assumed direct control, and two decades later, in 1877, she was proclaimed Empress of India. The British concluded that Muslims had been the principal instigators and punished them more severely than Hindus.

This perception deepened Muslim resentment and nostalgia for lost power. Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, founder of the Aligarh Movement, even argued that when the British eventually left, they should return India to the Muslims from whom they had taken it. Whether this was foresight or delusion remains debatable. Ironically, the Indian National Congress-often branded a “Hindu party” – was not formed by Hindus at all. It was founded in 1885 by a retired English



“VANDE MATARAM” SHOULD NOT DIVIDE INDIANS; IT SHOULD REMIND THEM OF THEIR SHARED SOIL AND DESTINY. HISTORY MAY BE SCARRED BY CONQUEST AND DIVISION, BUT THE FUTURE MUST REST ON REASON AND RECONCILIATION

The writer is a well-known columnist, author, and former member of the Rajya Sabha

 Prafull Goradia
 @prafullgoradia
 The Pioneer

civil servant, Allan Octavian Hume. Yet, by 1906, Muslims had established their own political platform-the All-India Muslim League-reinforcing the belief that while Hindus were traders and cultivators, Muslims were natural rulers. This sentiment persisted even after Mahatma Gandhi entered the scene in 1915.

Gandhi's early political strategy was curious. To bridge Hindu-Muslim divides, he supported the Khilafat Movement, launched by the Ali brothers – Mohammad and Shaukat – to restore the Ottoman Caliphate after World War I. Astonishingly, Gandhi even became President of the Khilafat Committee, formed to defend a Turkish sultan thousands of miles away. Many observers saw this as proof that political power in India still revolved around Muslim leadership. Gandhi's satyagraha, though morally compelling, appeared to many as nothing more than a moral appeal, not really a political challenge to imperial rule.

In 1940, at Lahore, Jinnah declared that Hindus and Muslims were “two distinct nations.” No strong Indian voice publicly disputed this claim. When the premiers of Punjab and Bengal initially opposed Partition, Congress leaders quietly welcomed their stance, believing Jinnah's plan would fail. Yet, by May 1947, Mountbatten announced the Partition, confirming that Jinnah's vision had prevailed. Once again, Muslim political will had triumphed. Partition's aftermath was tragic and uneven. In Pakistan's western wing, Hindus and Sikhs were virtually wiped out by 1948. The eastern wing (now Bangladesh) saw its Hindu population fall from 33 per cent to barely 8 per

cent. Migration was overwhelmingly one-sided-millions of Hindus fled Pakistan, but few Muslims left India. The imbalance revealed the persistent perception that power and initiative in the subcontinent lay largely with Muslims, not Hindus.

This historical backdrop helps explain why, even today, debates such as the one surrounding “Vande Mataram” evoke old anxieties. Some Muslim leaders continue to act as if their community still sets the terms of national discourse. Such illusions are not merely harmless-they perpetuate misunderstanding and hinder social harmony.

India's past is too complex to be reduced to communal binaries. Both Hindus and Muslims have shaped its destiny, for better and for worse. Yet, national progress demands a sober recognition of facts, not romanticised memories of lost empires or imagined privileges. True secularism lies not in appeasement but in equal accountability. The maturity of a nation is measured not by the volume of its grievances but by its capacity to face history without distortion.

In the final analysis, “Vande Mataram” should not divide Indians; it should remind them of their shared soil and destiny. History may be scarred by conquest and division, but the future must rest on reason and reconciliation. Every citizen-Hindu, Muslim, or otherwise-must realise that the power to shape India's tomorrow lies not in nostalgia for the past, but in unity of purpose and respect for truth. Only then can the spirit of Vedanta-of oneness and universality – truly prevail.

The Pioneer
SINCE 1865

The Ostrich Effect cripples classroom progress



2ND OPINION
THE PIONEER

In classrooms across the country-urban or rural, elite or modest – there exists a peculiar breed of educators who have perfected the art of selective blindness. These are the practitioners of what might be called the Ostrich Effect: the time – honoured skill of ignoring inconvenient truths while claiming to see everything else with hawk-like precision. They can catch a whispered secret from the last bench with uncanny accuracy, yet fail to notice that half the class has mentally checked out. They spot a passing chit instantly but seem blissfully unaware that their lesson plan, crafted in the pre-smartphone era, now holds the relevance of a typewriter at a coding boot camp.

The Ostrich Effect isn't just a teaching quirk – it's a full-

blown lifestyle choice. For some, every issue in the classroom is blamed on a supposed “decline in student discipline.” When test results disappoint, the stars are at fault-Mercury's retrograde, Jupiter's misalignment, or, of course, the mythical “loss of moral values.” Anything but the possibility that their own approach might need an update. Why explore creative methods or technology-enhanced learning when one can cling to the comforting familiarity of dictation drills and the age-old threat of “I'll call your parents”? The phenomenon shines brightest during classroom observations. Where reflective educators see feedback as a ladder for growth, the ostrich-style teacher perceives it as a personal attack. Suggest a more student-led activity, and the reaction is pure drama: “But this is how I've always taught!” they protest, mistaking longevity for excellence. It's the educational equivalent of bragging about 25 years of driving experience while routinely ignoring traffic lights. Experience, after all, means little without evolution.

Parent-teacher meetings provide yet another stage for this performance. These sessions-ideally moments for collaboration-often turn into exercises in intellectual gymnastics. Faced with poor test scores or unfinished work, some teachers twist and turn until blame lands squarely on the parents. “Your child lacks discipline at home,” they declare, conveniently forgetting their own ungraded assignments or absence of meaningful feedback. The

student sits there silently, still unsure about integers, hoping someone notices. But that would mean lifting one's head out of the sand, and we can't have that, can we? Even professional development workshops-those rare chances to refresh and reimagine teaching-are treated by some with theatrical disinterest. Arms crossed, faces blank, they endure new ideas as if attending a lecture on the history of paper-clips. Student engagement strategies? Emotional intelligence? Digital tools? Surely, they must be fads. After all, if chalk-and-talk worked forty years ago, why change now?

Yet, beneath the stubbornness lies something human: comfort. Familiar methods feel safe. Reflection feels risky. Acknowledging blind spots takes humility and humility is rarely comfortable. But education cannot thrive in comfort zones. Today's learners think, question, and process information differently. They need classrooms that evolve as quickly as the world around them.

If teaching is truly about preparing students for the future, then teachers must model adaptability, curiosity, and courage. The classroom is not a museum of traditions but a living ecosystem. It needs gardeners, not ostriches-educators who nurture growth, tend to changing needs, and take responsibility for what they cultivate. And, unlike ostriches, gardeners keep their heads up.

The writer is an educator and councillor

COP30: Turning promises into action

The 30th United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP30), being hosted in the Amazonian city of Belém, is expected to deliberate on critical issues such as climate financing, the transition to green fuels, and the escalating global warming crisis. From catastrophic wildfires in California to recurring disasters across the Himalayan ecosystem, the spiralling effects of climate change have become deeply alarming. In this context, host nation Brazil's call to prioritise the implementation of earlier commitments-such as COP28's pledge to phase out fossil fuels-rather than introducing new targets-appears both timely and pragmatic.

Key initiatives like the “New Collective Quantified Goal” (NCQG) and the “Loss and Damage Fund,” launched in previous summits, remain severely underfunded and largely non-binding. Furthermore, the earlier withdrawal of the United States from the Paris Climate Agreement, with former President Trump dismissing climate change as a “hoax,” continues to cast a shadow over global unity.

A sharper focus on mitigation strategies, carbon trading mechanisms, and the timely achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) will be essential to respond meaningfully to the urgent appeals of climate activists like Greta Thunberg.

PRASUN KUMAR DUTTA | WEST BENGAL

A grim reminder of terror's state links

The primary question was answered in the affirmative-if this was someone else's operation executed using Pakistani nationals, then who was the real mastermind behind this terror attack? The truth soon came into the open. The moot point remains that terrorism is not merely religious; it often functions as an instrument of state policy, forming an integral part of statecraft and diplomacy between nations.

Pakistan-based co-conspirators, long involved in orchestrating devastating terror strikes such as the 2008 Mumbai attacks, now appear to have turned their focus elsewhere after Operation Sindhoor. Around 6:52 pm, a slow-moving car halted at a red light outside the Red Fort and exploded moments later. The powerful blast damaged nearby vehicles and triggered a fire that engulfed several others, causing casualties and chaos in the bustling area. Emergency services, including the Forensic Sciences team and the National Investigation Agency, rushed to the site, with the situation closely monitored. Fortunately, the Red Fort's light and sound show, *Jai Hind*, which dramatises India's journey from the 17th century to the present day, was closed for its weekly off. Had it been operational, the toll in human lives could have been far higher.

MANI RAMANI JAYANTHI | UTTAR PRADESH

Chronic kidney disease threatens India

Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD) is rising rapidly across India, yet reliable national data remain unavailable. Experts are calling for a National Mission for Prevention and Early Detection to ensure timely diagnosis and treatment. Recent data from South Asia reveal that nearly 16 per cent of the population is affected-a grave public health concern.

India, now home to over 1.4 billion people, faces multiple health challenges, with CKD emerging as a major threat. Contributing factors include the high prevalence of diabetes and hypertension, pollution, toxic chemicals, and the country's hot climate.

Modern lifestyles have worsened the problem-diets high in sugar and salt, sedentary routines, and poor sleep due to work pressure and constant digital exposure all increase the risk. In some cases, genetic factors also play a role.

Currently, dialysis and kidney transplantation remain the only treatments for kidney failure. Dialysis facilities are limited and costly, while organ shortages make transplants difficult. Although understanding of CKD is improving and modern medicines can slow its progression, many doctors are still unclear about when transplantation should be done.

YASH PAL | DELHI

NATION GRIEVES AFTER RED FORT TERROR EXPLOSION

India is in mourning following the horrific car explosion near the Red Fort Metro Station in Delhi, which claimed over ten lives and left several injured. The powerful blast tore through a Haryana-registered vehicle parked near Gate No 1, leaving behind a trail of devastation. Flames engulfed nearby cars, shattered streetlights, and sent waves of panic through one of the capital's busiest heritage zones.

Emergency services responded swiftly, rushing the injured to Lok Nayak Jai Prakash (LNJP) Hospital, with several victims in critical condition. Authorities have since declared a high alert across Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, and Mumbai, tightening security at metro stations, markets, and religious sites. The attack serves

as a grim reminder of the continuing threat posed by terrorism and the fragile calm that often follows such violence.

This tragedy must not be politicized. It's imperative that all parties rise above partisan divisions and stand united in confronting those who seek to spread fear and destruction. Only through solidarity, vigilance, and decisive action can the nation uphold peace and safeguard its citizens. In times of grief, unity must prevail over division, for national resilience is the greatest answer to terror.

May the victims find peace, and may the nation stand stronger in the face of adversity. Together, we must remain vigilant and committed to protecting the safety and harmony of our communities.

BHAGWAN THANDI | MUMABI

Please send your letter to the info@dailypioneer.com. In not more than 250 words. We appreciate your feedback.

PIC TALK



A captivating scene of gulls flying over the Narmada River at Gwarighat, Jabalpur, enlivening the sky. PHOTO: PTI

DIGITAL EXPERIENCE

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Sustainable future through knowledge and innovation

The future will be shaped not just by what we know, but by how we choose to use that knowledge. Science gives us the tools; wisdom determines their purpose. When guided by ethics and inclusivity, science becomes a bridge between human aspiration and planetary well-being



Science has always been the light that guides humankind through the darkness of the unknown. It is far more than a collection of data, laboratories, and formulae — it is a mindset, a way of looking at the world with curiosity, logic, and creativity. As the world celebrated ‘World Science Day for Peace and Development’ on November 10, 2025, under the theme “The Role of Science in Sustainable Societies,” we are reminded that science shapes not just our technologies but our destiny — a destiny rooted in peace, equity, and sustainability.

Science as the Foundation of Human Advancement

From the moment humans discovered fire to the decoding of the human genome, the story of civilisation has been powered by science. It has been the engine behind every leap in understanding and innovation, but at its core, science is not merely about invention — it is about improving lives and ensuring that progress does not rob future generations of their right to thrive.

The United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) provide a blueprint for global well-being, from eradicating poverty to ensuring clean energy and combating climate change. Every one of these 17 goals depends on science. Whether it is increasing agricultural productivity through biotechnology, designing vaccines that save millions, or creating cleaner energy systems, science provides the evidence-based tools needed to turn vision into reality. A truly sustainable society is one that listens to scientific insight and applies it wisely — growing food without degrading the soil, building cities without choking the air, and meeting human needs without harming the planet.

Science as the Key to a Sustainable World

Science allows humanity to understand how the Earth’s systems — air, water, forests, and biodiversity-interconnect. It gives us the means to predict weather, conserve resources, and prepare for natural disasters. India stands as a powerful example. The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)



THE THEME OF WORLD SCIENCE DAY FOR PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT 2025 — “THE ROLE OF SCIENCE IN SUSTAINABLE SOCIETIES” — REMINDS US THAT THE FUTURE WILL BE SHAPED NOT ONLY BY WHAT WE KNOW, BUT BY HOW WE CHOOSE TO USE THAT KNOWLEDGE

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has launched satellites that monitor monsoons, cyclones, and forest fires, while the India Meteorological Department (IMD) has significantly improved forecasting accuracy-saving countless lives.

Agricultural science, too, has evolved through innovations like climate-resilient crops and efficient irrigation systems. Initiatives like NICRA (National Innovations in Climate Resilient Agriculture) by ICAR are helping millions of farmers adapt to extreme climate changes and secure food for future generations. Renewable energy offers another shining example. India’s transformation from a fossil-fuel-dependent economy to a renewable energy leader-through solar, wind, and green hydrogen-demonstrates how science and policy can together turn environmental challenges into opportunities.

Blending Traditional Wisdom with Modern Science

The path to sustainability is not limited to high-tech laboratories. It also runs through the fields, forests, and villages where generations have practised indigenous science.

Traditional knowledge systems-such as organic farming, rainwater harvesting, and herbal medicine-have long sustained communities in harmony with nature. Today, modern science is rediscovering

and validating this wisdom. Farmers combine traditional practices with digital weather forecasts and satellite-based advisories. Ayurveda and modern biomedicine are being integrated to offer holistic health solutions. When traditional knowledge and modern science work together, they create ecosystems that are both resilient and deeply rooted in culture.

Science and Climate Action: A Global Responsibility

Climate change is the defining challenge of our time — and science is our most powerful ally. From uncovering the human causes of global warming to developing mitigation and adaptation strategies, scientific research has guided international action. Global collaboration has strengthened this effort. Nations share satellite data, co-develop early warning systems, and exchange knowledge about disaster preparedness. This is

science diplomacy — where cooperation replaces conflict and shared understanding becomes the foundation for peace. India has been an active player in this movement. Initiatives such as the International Solar Alliance (ISA) and partnerships under SAARC and BIMSTEC showcase how scientific collaboration can build regional resilience. When nations connect through science, they build trust-and trust builds peace.

Science as a Bridge for Peace and Diplomacy

“Science for Peace” is not just a slogan; it is a philosophy. Scientific collaboration transcends political boundaries because the problems humanity faces — climate change, pandemics, natural disasters-do not recognise borders.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) stands as a symbol of this cooperation. Thousands of scientists across the world contribute to its reports, enabling leaders to make informed decisions for the planet’s collective good. The COVID-19 pandemic further reminded the world that when scientists unite across continents, they can save lives faster than any army or treaty.

Innovation, Industry, and the Path to Sustainability

Science fuels innovation-and innovation drives progress. Across India, young entrepreneurs and start-ups are using science to solve local problems: from recycling waste to developing renewable energy solutions and improving healthcare access. Programmes such as Start-up India and Atal Innovation Mission have nurtured a generation of innovators who view sustainability not as a constraint but as a catalyst for growth. The use of AI in flood prediction, drones in agriculture, and 3D printing in affordable housing are transforming communities. The future will belong to those who innovate responsibly — balancing economic ambition with ecological care.

Science Education and Public Awareness

For science to truly serve humanity, it must move beyond laboratories and reach every citizen.

Science education must be strengthened-particularly in rural and underserved areas — so that children grow up with curiosity and critical thinking. Promoting STEM education (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) and encouraging more girls and women to pursue scientific careers will unlock vast reservoirs of talent.

However, beyond education, public engagement is essential. Citizen science projects, environmental clubs, and science fairs can help communities link their everyday actions — such as water conservation and waste segregation-to the broader global goals of sustainability. A scientifically literate society makes better

decisions, demands accountability, and fosters an environment of rational problem-solving.

Science in Policy and Governance

Effective governance must rest on evidence. From urban development to agriculture, policymaking informed by scientific data ensures efficiency and long-term impact. India’s national institutions — such as NITI Aayog and the NDMA — already integrate research into public policy. Geospatial data, satellite imagery, and climate models are increasingly employed to design infrastructure that anticipates future risks. Strengthening the science-policy interface, where scientists and policymakers collaborate directly, is essential for creating adaptive and resilient systems of governance.

The Ethical Compass of Science

As we celebrate the power of science, we must also recognise its ethical boundaries. The rapid advancement of artificial intelligence, genetic engineering, and nuclear research poses profound moral questions.

Science must always serve humanity, never threaten it. A sustainable society advances knowledge with humility and compassion, using discovery as a means to protect life, preserve dignity, and promote equality. Responsibility must guide every breakthrough.

A Common Vision for the Future

The theme of World Science Day for Peace and Development 2025-“*The Role of Science in Sustainable Societies*” — reminds us that the future will be shaped not only by what we know, but by how we choose to use that knowledge.

Science provides us with the tools; wisdom determines their purpose. When guided by ethics and inclusivity, science becomes a bridge between human aspiration and planetary well-being.

It teaches us humility — for every answer leads to new questions, and every discovery to new responsibilities. Let us, therefore, commit to a culture that values inquiry, respects innovation, and ensures that science always serves peace and sustainability.

As Albert Einstein wisely said, “Peace cannot be kept by force; it can only be achieved by understanding.” And understanding — the true essence of science — remains humanity’s greatest hope for a peaceful and sustainable future.

The Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses at 60: The making of strategic thought



When India faced its defining strategic crisis in the early 1960s, it was compelled to rethink what security truly meant. The 1962 War with China exposed not only military shortfalls but also an absence of intellectual preparedness. The young republic, still discovering the grammar of power, realised that ideas could be as critical to defence as armies or arsenals. From that period of national introspection emerged an institution that would shape India’s strategic imagination - the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, now the Manohar Parrikar IDSA. Its establishment in 1965 marked India’s decision to think systematically about power in a turbulent world.

The Institute’s origins lie in a series of encounters abroad. In May 1964, Defence Minister YB Chavan and Defence Secretary PVR Rao travelled to Washington, DC, seeking ideas to modernise India’s defence planning. There, they encountered the RAND Corporation — an institution that applied mathematical precision to questions of war and strategy. RAND’s systems-analysis methods, championed by Robert McNamara’s “whiz kid” Alain Enthoven, demonstrated how data and models could inform complex military decisions. Soon after, Enthoven was invited to New Delhi, where he proposed that India should establish its own RAND. Almost simultaneously, Alastair Buchan, the founding director of London’s Institute for Strategic Studies (now IISS), arrived with a very different idea. Buchan viewed strategy as conversation — an exercise in context, interpretation, and policy dialogue rather than equations. Between these two approaches, India chose the latter. Lacking the resources for RAND’s computational rigour but drawn to the British tradition of policy debate, it adopted the IISS model. That decision gave the Institute its defining temperament — conceptually rich and intellectually vibrant, yet marked by a persistent absence of quantitative rigour that continues to shape its analyses even today.

The mid-1960s were a charged moment in Indian politics. With Nehru gone and Lal Bahadur Shastri navigating post-war anxieties, national confidence required renewal. The 1965 War with Pakistan revived military

morale but also exposed the need for coherent strategic planning. It was in this environment — uncertain yet purposeful — that the idea of an autonomous research body took form: one that could advise, critique, and think alongside the state while remaining independent of it.

On November 11, 1965, IDSA was formally registered as a society, with Major General Som Dutt — fresh from a fellowship at the IISS and formerly Commandant of the Defence Services Staff College, Wellington — as its first Director. During his London tenure, he authored two notable Adelphi Papers: The Defence of India’s Northern Borders and India and the Bomb. In the latter, written soon after China’s detonation of three atomic devices in 1966, he argued that India might one day need its own nuclear capability to maintain Asia’s strategic balance.

Within three years, the Institute launched its first publication — the IDSA Journal. In his foreword, Home Minister YB Chavan captured the spirit of a changing era: “In this nuclear age, traditional principles of military operations begin to be in doubt... previous tenets of national security have to be re-examined and fresh ones evolved.”

It was a declaration of intellectual independence - questioning, analytical, and unafraid. The inaugural issue featured PVR Rao’s essay on “National Defence Policy and the Higher Direction of War” and Lieutenant General GG Bewoor’s study on “High Altitude Mountain Warfare,” laying the groundwork for India’s emerging defence discourse. Bewoor would later become the Army’s eighth Chief of Staff.

Under K Subrahmanyam, IDSA began to forge a distinct intellectual identity within India’s strategic community. A civil servant, Subrahmanyam returned in 1968 after a stint at the London School of Economics and a study tour of US institutions — joining first as Director (Programme) and soon after as Director.

At a time when open debate on national security was rare, he transformed IDSA into a forum of rigorous inquiry, insisting that it hold no official line but embrace diverse viewpoints. He often remarked that the Institute’s true strength lay in its ability to sustain disagreement with dignity.

That ethos was tested almost immediately. In 1968, as the world’s major powers - the United States, Soviet Union, and United Kingdom — advanced the draft of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), India faced a critical policy dilemma. At IDSA, the debate was both intense and illuminating. Some argued that accession to the NPT would com-

promise India’s sovereignty and erode its strategic autonomy, while others viewed participation as a constructive step towards reinforcing global norms of nuclear restraint. The Institute, true to its founding ethos, refrained from adopting an institutional position, allowing individual scholars to articulate their analyses independently. This pluralism of thought not only enriched the discourse but also underscored IDSA’s enduring commitment to intellectual freedom and analytical integrity.

Among those who advanced this legacy were PR Chari and Jasjit Singh, who deepened IDSA’s analytical influence through their scholarship and policy engagement. Later, K Santhanam brought a markedly different sensibility to the Institute. A nuclear scientist by training, Santy, as he was fondly known, had been part of the quartet that orchestrated India’s 1998 nuclear tests alongside R Chidambaram, Anil Kakodkar, and APJ Abdul Kalam. When he took over as Director from 2001 to 2004, he infused into IDSA a scientist’s discipline — rooted in modelling, systems thinking, and quantitative analysis — dimensions the Institute had long underplayed. If Subrahmanyam, the civil servant-scholar, had endowed IDSA with conceptual depth and a culture of debate, Santy sought to complement it with empirical precision. Both exemplified a shared conviction that India’s strategic thought must remain informed, autonomous, and unswayed by political expediency.

This intellectual autonomy yielded a substantial corpus of scholarship. In 1977, Strategic Analysis was launched as a monthly journal, later transitioning into a peer-reviewed quarterly in 2002 and, in partnership with Routledge, into a bi-monthly publication in 2007. Over the decades, it has become a principal forum for India’s security discourse, publishing influential analyses on nuclear policy, regional strategy, intelligence reform, and military modernisation.

Sixty years on, the Institute’s founding purpose endures. Yet, despite its considerable contributions, IDSA has been slower to integrate quantitative and interdisciplinary methodologies into its research framework. This methodological gap continues to constrain the infusion of empirical rigour and analytical precision into India’s strategic studies — a limitation that future scholarship must consciously address.

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Twin glitches in India’s sky



Two breakdowns in aviation rarely occur together by chance; it’s like lightning striking the same place twice. When Delhi’s Automatic Message Switching System (AMSS) failed recently, slowing air traffic operations to a crawl, several pilots also reported GPS anomalies over northern India-signals suggesting possible spoofing of satellite navigation data. Though officially unconnected, the two events are uncomfortably close in time. In a world where both digital and satellite networks can be disrupted-intentionally or indirectly-this coincidence warrants deeper investigation rather than a quick technical explanation.

The AMSS is the nerve centre of air traffic communication, routing flight plans and operational messages between control towers, airlines, and radar units. It functions much like the WhatsApp of aviation, instantly linking every element of the airspace network. When it fails, controllers revert to manual procedures-typing and reading flight data line by line-slowing traffic and increasing workload. Around the same time, aircraft over India and nearby regions reported intermittent GPS errors and position shifts, classic signs of spoofing. Reports of GPS interference near the India-Pakistan border further strengthened the possibility of deliberate interference by state or non-state actors. Pilots flying along certain northern corridors have noted erratic readings, and the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has reinstated traditional Instrument Landing Systems at Delhi to ensure redundancy when satellite signals are unreliable. In this context, the overlap of a major ground-system failure and a navigation disturbance cannot be dismissed as mere coincidence. The geopolitical proximity to conflict-sensitive regions makes the possibility of spill-over interference entirely plausible. Spoofing, unlike simple jamming, does not block a signal but imitates it. Fake satellite transmissions trick onboard computers into accepting false coordinates, distorting position data. For pilots, this may cause the aircraft symbol to drift on the navigation display, the map to jump, or warnings of “position disagree” to appear.

Such interference has become a global hazard. Data compiled by the international pilot and controller forum OPSGROUP shows a dramatic rise in spoofing incidents-from roughly 300 daily flight disruptions in early 2024 to about 1,500 per day by mid-year. Over one month last summer, more than 41,000 flights worldwide were affected by navigation deception or signal loss. Independent

analytics by Aireon and WTW also confirm that cases of jamming and spoofing have risen by more than 60 per cent since 2021. The surge aligns closely with regions under military tension-particularly the Middle East, the Black Sea, and parts of Eastern Europe-where electronic warfare systems are routinely deployed to mislead drones or missiles, with civil aircraft becoming collateral victims. International regulators have long warned of this trend. The European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) has documented the spread of GNSS interference and urged a unified European response. Its 2024 advisory called for centralised monitoring networks and pilot training in recognising spoofing symptoms.

The International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) recently highlighted GNSS disruption as a rising “safety-of-flight risk” and urged continuous reporting by air navigation service providers. OPSGROUP identified multiple safety concerns and operational risks, noting that spoofing is now common and often impacts several aircraft simultaneously. The Delhi incident reveals broader systemic vulnerabilities, as increased automation in aviation, while efficient, creates dangerous dependence on complex technology. A simultaneous failure of ground networks and satellite links greatly reduces the chances for human intervention. The way forward globally is being defined: ICAO, EASA, and IATA advocate creating real-time GNSS interference monitoring cells-akin to weather centres-to issue alerts swiftly. Airlines are advised to train crews to cross-check navigation sources, maintain proficiency in radio-based navigation, and log interference systematically. Airports are reinforcing conventional aids (VOR, DME, ILS) for non-satellite redundancy.

Crucially, regulators must treat simultaneous system failures as credible scenarios, not hypotheticals. With dense airspace, overlapping

civil-military operations, and proximity to high-tension borders, India cannot afford to treat GNSS disruptions as distant or occasional events. A joint civil-military monitoring cell under the DGCA and the Airports Authority of India should integrate pilot reports, satellite analytics, and ground data into a real-time alert network. Strengthening indigenous navigation systems such as NavIC and the GAGAN satellite-based augmentation system will also reduce dependence on foreign GPS signals, enhancing both safety and self-reliance. Delhi’s recent turbulence may be a temporary hiccup, but the lesson endures. “Coincidence” isn’t an adequate explanation for the simultaneous failure of two critical aviation systems in an era of hybrid warfare. The silence carries an urgent question: what truly happened when India’s messages stopped and its satellites started lying?

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WHIRLING POOL

Private-equity firm Advent International is reportedly interested in buying a 31 per cent stake in Whirlpool of India, and take over the company. If a deal is clicked, it may mark a pivotal shift in the large-appliances segment. The billion-dollar purchase may trigger an open offer to the existing shareholders, and make Advent a majority owner. Whirlpool of India will undergo a strategic reset, as the global parent moves away from operational control to focus on licensing arrangement, brand management, and technology agreement.

The new majority owner, if it achieves this objective, will bring higher capital, hopefully sharper focus on India-specific products, closer alignment with local consumers, and faster-paced innovation. But a private equity player will need to access technology, and product lines from the parent, or through partnerships with competitors. There is a signal that the global Whirlpool may be interested in the Indian market, but does not want a solid footing.

An important emerging and crucial factor in the appliances segment is the acceleration of the upgrade cycle. Valued at more than \$75 billion, the business is likely to grow at a compounded annual rate of more than seven per cent. As the Indian consumers move from basic models to inverter-compressor refrigerators, fully-automatic smart washing machines, larger capacity units, and connected appliances brands need to refresh line-ups, launch India-specific models, and introduce new features regularly and quickly.

A change in Whirlpool of India's ownership may set the stage for faster product roster, which will perhaps include shifting from global templates to local-market priority models. The new products may emphasise features such as Wi-Fi connectivity, energy-efficiency, smart-diagnostics, and penetration into smaller cities and towns. The deal can open new doors of manufacturing and localisation. In India, appliances remain in a phase of structural opportunity with rising urbanisation, increasing electricity access, e-commerce channel growth, and policy support for local manufacturing.

Whirlpool has an existing manufacturing footprint, which may expend under the new ownership. There can be efforts to drive cost efficiencies, reduce import dependence, and speed up time-to-market. This is critical as competitors are doing the same. Haier Appliances India, for example, recorded revenues of ₹8,900 crore in 2024, and hopes to add another ₹2,500 crore in 2025. It plans to have a new manufacturing facility in the south India.

The Whirlpool deal, therefore, may enhance these broader shifts in the segment, with global players willing to either step up local manufacturing, or step back a bit, and hand over control to either capital-specific, product-specific, or tech-specific players. For the consumers, these moves may translate into faster introduction of premium models, stronger service networks, even in the smaller cities, and improved spare-parts and maintenance support.

Private equity players have shown considerable in select Indian sectors in the recent past. They bring in capital, but have the ability and flexibility to forge constructive partnerships with existing businesses. The opportunities exist as the appliance market is under-penetrated in many categories such as large-capacity fridges, and smart washers, and is ready-and-steady for heady growth. The entry of structured investments suggests that the capital-focused players believe that there is an intrinsic value to unlock.

The strategies can be varied or multi-disciplinary, and include operational improvement, product differentiation, and distribution expansion. For instance, Reliance Retail acquired the Kelvinator brand from Sweden's Electrolux as part of its push into consumer durable. Reliance and other Indian firms wish to buy a slice of the Haier India, which may be valued at two billion dollars, or more. The market is in a phase of consolidation, global-local re-balancing, and feature-led competition, rather than volume-led growth.

On the demand side, consumers are ready for the next wave of technology-led home appliances. The urge to upgrade, higher disposable incomes, faster replacement cycles, and expansion in smaller cities create a favourable backdrop. But there are likely to be execution risks for the companies. Hence, new owners need to deliver on manufacturing, product roll-outs, service networks, pricing discipline, and consumer trust. In markets like India, this is not easy. The practicality of the potential is invariably a question-mark.

Powerful brands like LG and Samsung lead in the premium segments, and advertise AI features, smart-home integration, and large-door configurations. Whirlpool of India's financials are not-so-good, as indicated by its second quarter results in this fiscal year. Revenues from operations were down almost four per cent, net profits declined by more than 20 per cent, and EBIDTA margins squeezed from over five per cent to 3.5 per cent. The last suggests "challenges in maintaining its operational efficiency during the quarter."

The stock price of the company indicates pressures, and decline in investors' interest. Although the returns over the past one month were over seven per cent, the figure for six-month returns was a negative two per cent, more than 30 per cent year-to-date, more than 35 per cent in the past 12 months, and more than 40 per cent in the past five years. The 52-week high and low has wildly fluctuated between ₹900 and more than ₹2,000. On November 11, 2025, the share price slipped from ₹1,290 to ₹1,248. For investors, the question is whether the financial and stock fortunes will change with the change in ownership. If yes, the Advent-Whirlpool deal can spur the launch of next-generation appliances in India.

The Pioneer

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BUSINESS

10

Expectation, solution, governance

The numbers are a revelation. A recent McKinsey study on ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) finds that such corporate concerns are on the rise. Among 89 large firms in the survey, the ESG-related KPIS (Key Performance Indicators) have increased to 100, a 30 per cent rise in seven years. Media mentions of ESG have soared more than 50 times in a decade (2014-24), even as venture capital and private equity investments in ESG measurement businesses took off by 37 times. "Yet, the rapid proliferation of ESG checklists has crowded out CEO agendas, leading to ESG fatigue," states the survey. Firms are being pulled in opposing directions.

One of the major problems that the global firms face is to find opportunities that align with solutions to local-social issues. Some of the them overstretch, and take on too many issues, which is visible among Indian firms CSR (Corporate Social responsibilities) activities, which may be distinct from, but related to, ESG. Finding solutions require specific tailor-made partnerships that are hard to find, difficult to execute, or tough to sustain. Expectations are generally short-term among the firms, which limit the options. Returns on ESG investments materialise over a long period.

Criteria related to capabilities, and incentives determine the role played by a specific firm. Hence, the ESG fit includes alignment with products, services, and supply lines. Viability is crucial, and in cases where the end users cannot pay directly, there is a need for third-party support. The regulatory and policy environment can impact the environment and ecosystem of a company. Such issues require clarity, streamlined permitting, or cross-sector coordination. In most instances, among the three factors stated, there is a mismatch. Companies that meet the first (capabilities) but not the second (viability) need narrower focus, better collaborations, and long-term outlook. "Conversely,

when all three factors align, business-led solutions flourish rapidly," states the report.

This three-cornered adjustment is dubbed by McKinsey as "horses for courses." The horses are, of course, the companies that can enhance their innovating and scalability only if matched to the right issue, or course. The survey concludes that large companies account for 30 per cent of the value at stake in accelerating progress across 18 issues, and this roughly equal to their share of the global GDP. This is dependent on the share of value-added that provides more of the goods and services. The same is true of negative externalities like emissions, which too is measured in terms of the share of the total.

In 10 out of the 69 industries analysed, there were capabilities to make them the leading candidates to progress on four or more of the 18 issues, and 41 industries had the skills to address merely 1-3 issues. This forces firms to focus narrowly on some issues, which impact the industry in a distorted manner compared to its size. This is the need of the day. "For example, healthcare providers generate just four per cent of revenues across large companies overall, but they could account for 35 per cent of the progress to improve maternal and neonatal health, 25 per cent to reduce non-communicable diseases, 25 per cent to improve mental health, and eight per cent to reduce communicable diseases," states the report.

Such effects can be large relative to the industry's size in dollar terms. In non-communicable diseases, the intervention investments can be \$1 trillion over and above the recent historical rate, of which roughly two-thirds is linked to pharma efforts. This represents a business opportunity that is 40 per cent of the current revenues of large pharma companies. In transportation infrastructure, the additional money required is \$70 billion, of which a quarter goes

to the construction and engineering firms. This is one per cent of current revenues for the large firms in these two segments. The figure is modest but represents significant opportunities.

Obviously, the main hurdle to find the investment sources. McKinsey finds that to enhance progress on the 18 issues to the levels in nations that made the most progress requires \$6 trillion, which is three times the profits earned by Fortune Global 500 companies in 2024. This is an "insurmountable hurdle," unless the society and nations decide to allocate massive public funds, and other resources. Governments need to intervene actively, as do state-owned entities, as the benefits far outweigh the costs in the long run. In essence, the efforts do pay off admirably, but "often only over decades."

Thus, the think tank pinpoints nations where an issue of the 18 is most prevalent, and clustered them around the prevailing economic contexts such as nations being exiting poor, accelerating empowerment, and transforming mature systems. However, the benefit-to-cost ratios can vary widely between the different contexts, with the issues with the highest annual costs being most prevalent in the high-income nations. Such ratios can help guide the policy-makers, and the firms. The metrics cannot capture everything, especially non-economic factors, and discount rates used. A five per cent rate can be ideal, though it is high for social investments, and low for corporate money. But no standards exist.

"A capabilities-based, horses-for-courses approach requires identifying where and how companies are best suited to address social issues. History is chockablock with examples of the many ways in which companies find business opportunities, all of which have structural similarities when it comes to advancing innovation, and scaling or making business models work in the interests of the societal needs, to help society under many different circumstances. In some cases, companies can act immediately. In others, policy interventions and collaborations are required to adjust the conditions, and enable private-sector participation. Whether to do so is a societal choice about funding, regulation, and coordination," the study concludes, and leaves the crucial questions open.

One of the successes cited in the study is that of Reliance Jio, which began the 4G rollout in 2013. Within two years, India launched the Digital India initiative, which aimed to connect 250,000 villages. The next year, Jio went live nationwide, and offered six months of free 4G data and voice services. In 2017, the Government reduced inter-company charges, which lowered mobile plans. JioPhone was priced at \$20, and 80 million units were sold. By 2021, interconnection charges were abolished. In 2023, JioPhone Next, built with Google, and costing less than \$50, was targeted at 500 million users. There was an additional \$12 version of the model for the poor. Thus, "expanding Internet access rapidly... was spurred by a dynamic iteration of improved technology... and government policy, resulting in low-cost option that delivered access to hundreds of millions."

Should India cope or cop-out?

Most people say that Belem, which hosts COP30 multilateral meet, is a spectacularly beautiful place in Brazil. The event marks the 30th edition of a global alliance, which wants to mitigate the effects of Climate Change, and tackle the looming crisis. Predictably, soon after he was elected for a second term, the US President Donald Trump withdrew his country from the 2015 Paris Agreement. He did the same during his first tenure. Nevertheless, the Brazilian event will continue, even as it struggles to find solutions.

Like most institutions, which are either governed directly or indirectly by the United Nations, its future faces challenges. For India, events like COP30 are of extreme importance for various factors. One, they trigger old and haggard arguments about the double standards, and hypocrisy of the West in Climate Change issues. Two, there is the growing pressure from global activists, actively aided and abetted by what I would call the brown sepoys. Three, although India is successful, particularly since the signing of the Paris Agreement, to grow its share of renewable production, and consumption increases rapidly, it faces stark choices.

Despite the successes, the pressures are mounting. In an article, Anurabha Ghosh, a leading activist, wrote, "The time for promises is now over. COP30 must mark the shift from a bank of promises to a bank of actions where delivery not declarations mark progress. Nowhere is this more important than in South Asia, a region on the front lines of clear climate crisis.... For India, climate action is both a necessity and an opportunity.... But for it to succeed, the world must come together through smarter, more inclusive multilateralism."

Of course, as is the case with global activists, the voice is eloquent, articulate, and passionate. But India's choices cannot be dictated only by the western or global concerns. For example, take the case of the increasing pressure to reduce the use of thermal energy, or of electricity generated by coal. In contrast, the European nations, which are not openly hostile to the Paris Agreement like the US, adopt a peculiar stance on energy sources. As far as they are concerned, natural gas is

good, but coal is dirty, old, and polluting.

It is ironic that gas, like coal, is a fossil fuel, and no matter how one spins it, or liquefies it, gas remains a polluting fuel. One cannot condone the use of one, and condemn the other. Obviously, everyone does not buy the argument. An environmentalist, Sunita Narain of the Center for Science and Environment, pertinently asks: "Why single out coal? Why not natural gas, which is also a fossil fuel, and emits gases that contribute to global warming? I know, I am asking an inconvenient question. But bear with me. I do so, knowing that we need to drastically cut greenhouse gas emissions, and fast. But we need clarity on what we are doing and why?"

Now, Narain is not a fan of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, or the ruling regime. She is not a fan of coal, or Trump. When the US president says that Climate Change is a hoax, and a fraud, Narain asks the reasons to single out coal vis-à-vis gas. She is merely harping on the

fact that it is unjust, and cruel to impose restrictions on energy use on the third world countries.

Narain has pointed that the average electricity consumption of an American is 36 times that of an average Indian household. Hence, as the Indian economy grows rapidly, emerges as the fastest-growing major economy in the world, millions will walk out of a life of poverty and destitution, and become part of the new aspirational Indian middle-class generation. These are families that have never used a refrigerator, mixer, or microwave oven, forget about a washing machine, dishwasher, or other gadgets. They need electricity, whatever may be the source, and coal is most obvious one in India.

But the brown sepoy of the global activists have other arguments. They want India to give up coal, adopt gas in the interim period, and accelerate the production and use of renewables, and green energy. While this may be

The Pioneer

SINCE 1865

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Addressing the Urban Waste Crisis in India



Unfortunately, one of the most prominent features of our urban landscape is overfilled landfills and garbage strewn everywhere. Every single day Indian cities produce 1.6 — 1.7 lakh tonnes of waste of which only half is processed. Treating just 50 per cent of this organic fraction through



decentralised biogas plants could produce more than 15 million tonnes of CBG annually. Yet cities still rely on open dumping and low-grade composting. The volume of waste is going to dramatically rise in the coming years with growing urbanisation. It is estimated that India may need over 60,000ha of new landfill space which itself is going to be almost impossible to find. Meanwhile, this continues to emit deadly methane which is more than 25 times more potent than the CO₂ and poisonous leachate trickles to pollute ground water. We are witnessing a literally rising crisis which threatens to reach monumental proportions. There have been some attempts to collect and process this waste over the years. Many have projects have failed, initially due to technology issues but also due to lack of support from the concerned

urban bodies and lack of a workable financial model. India's waste is a category by itself and collecting and desegregating it is a challenge. Urban local bodies must institutionalise waste segregation, including waste from temples, cattle yards, vegetable markets, ensure that non-organic waste, goes for energy recovery or recycling and channel wet organic waste towards biogas generation. In fact, we need a mission for all components of waste including plastic, bio medical, industrial, e-waste, paper/cardboard/glass etc. This is essentially a management problem. Tipping/transport fee payment to

the collector, segregator and aggregator is necessary to make waste collection viable and reach the processor in segregated form. Land has to be provided for processing plants. The bio gas that will be produced has to be fed into the city gas grid and a proper price paid to the injector developer. The organic material that remains or digestate can be used as soil enhancer in municipal gardens, parks golf courses and even packaged and sold for urban gardens. We must learn from best practices and what failed where and how. We cannot continue to spend crores of rupees in collecting and transporting such waste to ever increasing landfills only to keep potential energy locked in high landfills. Landfills must be cleared and cities reimagined as circular hubs. The developers will provide an

With the volume of waste rising dramatically, the writers pitch for a National Biogas Mission to tackle all types of waste



essential service. Incentives across *Swachh Bharat*, *GOBARDHAN*, *AMRUT* and fertiliser subsidy pro-

grams should be aligned to reward them and cities that produce and use both biogas and bio-slurry. In urban India, over 1,250 sewage

a waste in waste. If anaerobic digestion is optimised, sewage can produce 5-10 million tonnes of CBG while recycling over 80 per cent of wastewater, which itself is of great value because of the water crisis which is beginning to overwhelm urban India. The Liquid Waste Management Rules must go beyond drainage and septage to mandate biogas recovery from sewage and organic waste. All STPs above 10 MLD capacity should include anaerobic digesters and plans for gas utilisation which should get suitable incentives. This gas can also be injected into the city gas distribution system. There is a great opportunity waiting to be realised. It requires a bold approach and a clear declaration that we will clean our cities.

Mr Deepak Gupta, IAS (Retd), Ex Secretary, Ministry of New and Renewable Energy and Ex-Chairman, UPSC, and Dr D.K. Khare, Ex-Advisor (Bioenergy), Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, Govt of India and Incharge of India chapter of World Biogas Association, UK

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treatment plants (STPs) are in operation, with hundreds more under construction under flagship missions like *Namami Gange* and *AMRUT*. Unfortunately, most large STPs lack anaerobic digesters for sludge treatment. The biogas cannot be taken out. Where there are digesters most either flare the gas or leave the units under-utilised since there is no mandate to recover and use biogas or CBG in new STPs. This is

Tech-led smart agriculture key for building *Viksit Bharat*: Niti Aayog member

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
New Delhi

Technology-led smart agriculture holds the key to building a *Viksit Bharat*, Niti Aayog member Ramesh Chand said on Tuesday. "The agri-tech landscape is evolving rapidly, from genetic modification and precision farming to data science and ICT-based advisory systems," Chand said, while addressing an Assocham event here. He said farmers today must have access to capital, knowledge and partnerships that enable them to adapt to this transformation, according to a statement. "Every technology brings both a solution and a challenge; we must ensure innovation also respects sustainability and environmental balance," Chand said, adding that India is not just a food-secure nation, but one moving towards value addition and climate-smart agriculture. The *Niti Aayog* member said 46 per cent of the country's population is employed in the agricultural sector, making it the largest contributor to the *Viksit*

Bharat mission, with significant growth observed in tier-II regions such as Assam and Madhya Pradesh. Agriculture Commissioner Praveen Kumar Singh said the focus must be on making agriculture both productive and sustainable. Platforms like upag.gov.in are integrating agri statistics, Fasal Bima, crop yield and Kisan Credit Card data should be used to ensure informed decision-making, he said. Waste-to-wealth initiatives, such as converting crop residues into CBG and schemes like *KUSUM*, are linking energy efficiency with crop cultivation. "With digital agriculture and real-time intelligence, we are working to make data available in farmers' local languages, enabling every farmer to benefit from technology — driven solutions," he added. UPL Ltd Global Corporate and Industry Affairs Sagar Kaushik said global initiatives like COP30 and the United Nations' climate agenda remind us that agriculture must be part of the climate solution, not the cause.



Net equity flows in MF schemes drop by 19% in October

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
Mumbai

Net inflows into mutual funds' equity schemes dropped by nearly 19 per cent to ₹24,690 crore in October, making it the third consecutive month of a decline in the number, an industry body said on Tuesday. On the systematic investment plans (SIPs), the preferred vehicle of retail investors, the overall inflows grew to ₹29,529 crore from September's record high of ₹29,631 crore. Amid the rally in gold prices, gold exchange traded funds saw net inflows at ₹7,743 crore during the month taking the overall assets under management (AUM) in the category to above ₹1 lakh crore, as per data disclosed by the Association of Mutual Funds of India (Amfi). The net flows into equity MFs

long-term value creation and hence tracked closely, stood at ₹35.16 lakh crore as on October 31 as against ₹33.68 lakh crore in the month-ago period. As per previous experience, the beginning of a new quarter saw higher interest in the debt schemes, with net inflows of ₹1.59 lakh crore in October as against an outflow of ₹1.01 lakh crore in September, Chalasani said. The overall MF industry's AUM rose by over 5 per cent to ₹79.88 lakh crore on the back of the positive activity in the debt segment. On the gold ETFs front, the net inflows reduced to ₹7,743 crore in October from ₹8,363 crore in September, and the AUM stood at ₹1.02 lakh crore. Chalasani attributed the continued investor interest in the precious metal to the price increase in the spot prices and also



had declined 9 per cent on-month to ₹30,421 crore in September, after August's 22 per cent decline to ₹33,430 crore, amid corrections in the equity benchmarks. Speaking to reporters on Tuesday, Amfi's chief executive V N Chalasani asserted that there is no pattern in the investor interest and attributed the fall to higher redemptions because of the profit-booking amid surge in markets. The overall redemptions stood at ₹38,920 crore in October as against ₹35,982 crore in September. However, the funds mobilised by equity schemes declined in October to ₹63,611 crore from ₹66,404 crore in September. The AUM for the equity schemes, which are looked as the favoured vehicle for

its value as a safe haven asset. He said the silver ETFs also saw an inflow of ₹3,000 crore and the category AUM now stands at over ₹42,000 crore, he said. Chalasani said the SIP AUM grew to ₹16.25 lakh crore and now contributes over a fifth of the overall industry's AUM. The total number of active SIP accounts rose to 9.45 crore from 9.25 crore in the month-ago period, he added. The total number of SIP accounts stands at 9.73 crore, he said, pointing out that there were additions of 60 lakh accounts and 45 lakh account closures as well during the month. On the micro SIPs or *chhota* SIPs front, where the regulator Sebi has voiced concerns on the low traction.

Indigenous apps and platforms add to the definition of *swadeshi*



These days, the entire leadership of the country, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi, is constantly urging citizens to adopt *Swadeshi*. The Prime Minister says that no country can develop as long as it remains dependent on other countries. To reduce this dependence, citizens must use indigenous products. However, we know that the general public uses not only indigenous products but also a variety of services. In recent years, due to new technologies, the use of various foreign apps has increased. WhatsApp for messaging, general calling and video calls; Facebook and Instagram for social networking; Google's Gmail for email; Google Maps for navigation; Amazon, Flipkart-Walmart for shopping and a variety of other apps have seen a tremendous growth in usage. Google charges hefty fees for downloading many apps, while Facebook and many other platforms also offer advertising services and enjoys near monopoly. The surprising thing is that the providers of these services are making huge profits, yet they are not even ready to pay taxes in India.

Advent of *Swadeshi* apps with huge support from the people, is fast changing the digital space in the country. Every country and its citizens have the right to choose what to use and what not to use. The call for *Swadeshi* can truly be seen as a means to increase employment within the country, reduce dependence on foreign countries, and keep the country's wealth within the boundaries of the country. It is not just a slogan, but a life vision that centers self-reliance, self-respect and national interest. Today, when the Indian economy has become heavily dependent on foreign countries, the consequences of which are being borne by the country's economy and the common man, the call for *Swadeshi* has once again become important. It is noteworthy that in the era of globalisation, it had been argued that to provide affordable goods to consumers worldwide, it is essential to eliminate barriers to the global value chain. Components for production can be efficiently manufactured and shipped to different locations in different countries, allowing for higher-quality products to be produced at lower costs. A similar argument was made regarding the movement of



goods; that consumers can access the cheapest goods, only through free trade. Goods that can efficiently be produced in our country and then be sold in global markets through free trade.

The logic of globalisation has totally collapsed
The logic of the global value chain was shattered when some countries, especially China, began weaponising their monopoly in global value chains. We haven't yet forgotten the US ban on vaccine supplies during COVID-19, when global production of many goods, including automobiles, came to a standstill due to China's deliberate blockade of semiconductor supplies. Similarly, recently, China began blackmailing other countries, including India, by disrupting the supply of products made from rare earths. For more than seven months, the US President has imposed tariffs on almost all of its trading partners, flouting global agreements. The truth of globalisation has been fully exposed. Consequently, not only India but other countries around the world are now talking about self-reliance.

Swadeshi apps and platforms
As the entire country rapidly embraces *Swadeshi*, and the general public understands that *Swadeshi* is not limited to indigenous goods but it also

includes services; in this digital world, digital services in the form of apps, platforms and e-products,



among other services, have become increasingly important. Zoho Corporation, an Indian software product company, has developed numerous products, including the messaging app Arattai, ZohoMail for emailing and numerous other e-products developed by several Indian start-ups and companies, which are becoming increasingly popular among our citizens. India and its leadership have now fully realised that if India's industries are to be revived and the Indian economy is to be put on fast growth trajectory, we must minimise our dependence on foreign countries, including China and the United States. Therefore, the age-old concept of *Swadeshi* is being promoted by everyone in the Government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and this is encouraging people to adopt indigenous products. We need to understand that India is heavily dependent not only on foreign products, but also on digital services, platforms and

other e-products. Therefore, when we talk about *swadeshi*, we should not limit ourselves to indigenous products; it also includes electronic services, both social media and e-commerce platforms and other services related to intellectual property rights (IPR). Therefore, the scope of *swadeshi* is expanding. In this context, two new products have gained the most momentum: Arattai (a messaging app developed by India's Zoho Corporation, which is an alternative to WhatsApp) and ZohoMail, an alternative to Gmail. In addition to individuals and businesses, the Indian Government is also rapidly shifting to ZohoMail for its email. Leading Indian apps, platforms, and e-products in the digital sector, such as social media, messaging, e-commerce and other technological solutions, offer numerous advantages — especially in the context of *Atmanirbhar Bharat* and *Swadeshi* thought process. Indian apps often prioritise regional languages (over 15-20 Indian languages). User data is stored in India, ensuring privacy and compliance with Indian data laws. Indian apps also offer customised monetisation options for Indian customers and small creators. Indigenous social media apps help build a self-reliant digital ecosystem instead of relying on global giants like Meta or Twitter. Zoho's "Made-in-India" messaging app, Arattai, has several advan-

tages over WhatsApp. First, Arattai, being an Indian app, stores user data on servers in India, and being developed by Zoho (an Indian company), it aligns with the Government's "*Atmanirbhar Bharat*" goals. While foreign companies are subject to data being captured by companies under foreign jurisdiction, indigenous apps offer data security. They offer a unique ad-free experience, with the promise that user data will not be used for targeted advertising. Indian platforms have been developed for Indian conditions. For example, Arattai is optimised for low-end devices and poor networks. Furthermore, Arattai includes several features that other apps don't have. Arattai is gaining local support and endorsement being Indian, and is gaining visibility and endorsements from some public figures and celebrities, which helps drive trust and adoption. We must not forget that by adopting these apps and platforms, we will not only save significant amounts of foreign exchange, but also benefit from better security features and the guarantee that user data will be stored in their respective regions and not sold for profit.

Author is a national co-convenor *Swadeshi Jagran Manch* and former professor, PGDAV College, Delhi University

FROM THE WORLD

TAIWAN

Evacuation ahead of storm

Taiwan evacuated more than 3,000 people from vulnerable areas and closed schools and offices on Tuesday ahead of the arrival of tropical storm Fung-wong, which killed at least 18 people and displaced more than 1.4 million in the Philippines after making landfall.

Fung-wong was classified as a typhoon but is losing intensity while approaching Taiwan and is expected to make landfall Wednesday afternoon or evening near the southwestern port city of Kaohsiung. On Tuesday morning, the storm had maximum sustained winds of up to 108 kph and gusts of 137 kph and is expected to sweep across the island and exit from its northeastern side Wednesday evening or early Thursday, Taiwan's weather agency said.

BOTSWANA

Murmu ends 4-day visit

President Droupadi Murmu on Tuesday left for Botswana on the second leg of her two-nation State Visit after concluding her trip to Angola, where she held discussions on expanding the economic ties beyond the traditional energy business. On the last day of her four-day State Visit to Angola, President Murmu attended the country's 50th Independence Day celebrations before moving to the Angola International Airport, where she was given a ceremonial farewell.

Senate approves Bill to end shutdown

ASSOCIATED PRESS
■ Washington

The Senate passed legislation on Monday to reopen the Government, bringing the longest shutdown in history closer to an end as a small group of Democrats ratified a deal with Republicans despite searing criticism from within their party.

The 41-day shutdown could last a few more days as members of the House, which has been on recess since mid-September, return to Washington to vote on the legislation. President Donald Trump has signalled support for the bill, saying on Monday that “we're going to be opening up our country very quickly.”

The final Senate vote, 60-40, broke a gruelling stalemate that lasted more than six weeks as Democrats demanded that Republicans negotiate with them to extend health care tax credits that expire January 1.

The Republicans never did, and five moderate Democrats eventually switched their votes as federal food aid was delayed, airport delays worsened and hundreds of thousands of federal workers continued to go unpaid.

House Speaker Mike Johnson urged lawmakers to start returning to Washington “right now” given shutdown-related travel delays, but an official notice issued after the Senate vote said the earliest the House will vote is



Senate Majority Leader John Thune speaking to reporters after final Senate passage of the stopgap funding bill

AP

Wednesday afternoon.

“It appears our long national nightmare is finally coming to an end,” said Johnson, who has kept the House out of session since mid-September, when the House passed a bill to continue Government funding.

After weeks of negotiations, A group of three former governors — New Hampshire Sen. Jeanne Shaheen, New Hampshire Sen. Maggie Hassan and Independent Sen. Angus King of Maine — agreed to vote to advance three bipartisan annual spending bills and extend the rest of Government funding until late January. Republicans promised to hold a vote to

extend the health care subsidies by mid-December, but there was no guarantee of success.

Shaheen said Monday that “this was the option on the table” after Republicans had refused to budge.

“We had reached a point where I think a number of us believed that the shutdown had been very effective in raising the concern about health care,” she said, and the promise for a future vote “gives us an opportunity to continue to address that going forward.”

The legislation includes a reversal of the mass firings of federal workers by the Trump administration since the shutdown began on

October 1. It also protects federal workers against further layoffs through January and guarantees they are paid once the shutdown is over.

Tim Kaine of Virginia, home to tens of thousands of federal workers, also voted Sunday in favor of moving forward on the agreement. Illinois Sen. Dick Durbin, the Number 2 Democrat, Pennsylvania Senator John Fetterman and Nevada Sens. Catherine Cortez Masto and Jacky Rosen also voted yes. All other Democrats, including Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer of New York, voted against it. The moderates had expected a larger number of Democrats to vote with them

as 10 to 12 Democratic senators had been part of the negotiations. But in the end, only five switched their votes — the exact number that Republicans needed. King, Cortez Masto and Fetterman had already been voting to open the Government since October 1.

Schumer, who received blowback from his party in March when he voted to keep the Government open, said he could not “in good faith” support it after meeting with his caucus for more than two hours on Sunday. “We will not give up the fight,” Schumer said, adding that Democrats have now “sounded the alarm” on health care”

Chris Murphy.

12 killed, 36 injured in suicide attack outside Islamabad court

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ Islamabad

A suicide bomber on Tuesday detonated his explosives near a police vehicle outside a court in Pakistan's capital, killing at least 12 people and wounding

36 others, Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi said.

Naqvi, who visited the site of the blast, said the attacker wanted to enter the court complex, but on failure, he detonated his explosives near a police vehicle at the gate of the

building in the G-11 area of the capital at 12.39 pm.

The minister said that 12 people were killed and 27 others injured, including security personnel and a lawyer, in the blast near the Islamabad District Judicial Complex. No group or individual claimed responsibility for the attack, but such strikes are usually carried out by the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistani (TTP). “Our first priority is to identify the attacker. Whenever the attacker is identified, we will share with the media,” Naqvi said as he vowed to bring the perpetrators to justice. Naqvi said that the process of identifying the victims has been going on. He said that those sponsoring militants in Pakistan had increased their funding by threefold.

“We are linking today's blast with many factors.



Things will be clear in the coming hours. There are several messages of it,” he said. “I don't want to say anything at this point, as often the Indians do (start blaming soon after such incidents). We will come with full evidence and details.”

Naqvi said Pakistan is clear that Afghanistan should stop terrorism coming from their

G-7 Canada summit amid Trump tensions

ASSOCIATED PRESS
■ Toronto

Top diplomats from the Group of Seven industrialised democracies are converging on southern Ontario as tensions rise between the US and traditional allies like Canada over defence spending, trade and uncertainty over President Donald Trump's ceasefire plan in Gaza and efforts to end the Russia-Ukraine war.

Canadian Foreign Minister Anita Anand said in an interview with The Associated Press that “the relationship has to continue across a range of issues” despite trade pressures as she prepared to host US Secretary of State Marco Rubio and their counterparts from Britain, France, Germany, Italy and Japan on Tuesday and Wednesday.

Anand also invited the foreign ministers of Australia, Brazil, India, Saudi Arabia, Mexico, South Korea, South Africa and Ukraine.

She said “15 foreign ministers are coming from around the world to the Great White North and funnily enough on the week of our first large snowfall.”

“The work that Canada is doing is continuing to lead multilaterally in an era of a greater movement to protectionism and unilateralism,” Anand said. “And in an era of economic and geopolitical volatility.”

Canada's G7 hosting duties this year have been marked by strained relations with its North American neighbour, predominantly over Trump's imposition of tariffs on

Canadian imports. But the entire bloc of allies is confronting major turbulence over the Republican president's demands on trade and various proposals to halt worldwide conflicts.

One main point of contention has been defence spending. All G7 members except for Japan are members of NATO, and Trump has demanded that the alliance partners spend 5 per cent of their annual gross domestic product on defense. While a number of countries have agreed, others have not. Among the G7 NATO members, Canada and Italy are furthest from that goal.

There have also been G7 disagreements over the Israel-Hamas war in Gaza, with Britain, Canada and France announcing they would recognise a Palestinian state even without a resolution to the conflict. With the Russia-Ukraine war, most G7 members have taken a tougher line on Russia than Trump has. The two-day meeting in Niagara-on-the-Lake on Lake Ontario near the US border comes after Trump ended trade talks with Canada because the Ontario provincial Government ran an anti-tariff advertisement in the US that upset him. That followed a spring of acrimony, since abated, over Trump's insistence that Canada should become the 51st US state.

Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney apologised for the ad and said last week that he's ready to resume trade talks when the Americans are ready.

ReNew Wind Energy (Jath) Limited							
CIN No. U40101DL2012PLC236227							
Regd. Office : 138, Ansal Chambers II, Bikaji Cama Place, Delhi-110066 India							
Corporate Office : ReNew Hub, Commercial Block-1, Zone-6, Golf Course Road, DLF City Phase-V, Gurugram 122009, Haryana, India Phone No. : 124 489 6670/80							
Statement of Unaudited Financial Results for the quarter and half year ended 30 September 2025							
(Amounts in INR millions, except share and per share data, unless otherwise stated)							
Particulars	Quarter ended 30 September 2025 (Unaudited)	Quarter ended 30 June 2025 (Unaudited)	Quarter ended 30 September 2024 (Unaudited)	Half year ended 30 September 2025 (Unaudited)	Half year ended 30 September 2024 (Unaudited)	Year ended 31 March 2025 (Audited)	
Total income from operations	322	237	368	559	534	675	
Net profit (before tax, exceptional and/or extraordinary items)	201	131	226	332	249	164	
Net profit before tax (after exceptional and/or extraordinary items)	201	131	226	332	249	164	
Net profit (after exceptional and/or extraordinary items)	154	95	169	249	186	118	
Total comprehensive income [comprising profit (after tax) and other comprehensive income (after tax)]	154	95	169	249	186	118	
Paid up equity share capital	153	153	153	153	153	153	
Reserves (excluding revaluation reserve)	2,187	1,839	1,888	2,187	1,888	1,938	
Securities premium	1,366	1,366	1,366	1,366	1,366	1,366	
Net worth	2,340	1,992	2,041	2,340	2,041	2,091	
Paid up debt capital / Outstanding debt	1,766	2,296	2,467	1,766	2,467	2,295	
Debt equity ratio	1.02	1.12	1.22	1.02	1.22	1.12	
Earnings Per Share (of Rs. 10/- each) (for continuing and discontinued operations)							
1. Basic (In INR) :	10.08	6.20	11.08	16.29	12.13	7.71	
2. Diluted (In INR) :	10.08	6.20	11.08	16.29	12.13	7.71	
Debtenture Redemption Reserve (In INR millions)	133	147	153	133	153	143	
Debt Service Coverage Ratio*	0.73	0.66	0.54	1.29	0.65	0.98	
Interest Service Coverage Ratio*	4.55	4.18	2.56	4.52	3.41	2.43	
Current Ratio	2.52	2.35	2.30	2.52	2.30	2.23	
Long Term Debt to Working Capital	1.62	1.17	2.40	1.62	2.40	1.30	
Current Liability Ratio	0.32	0.32	0.31	0.32	0.31	0.32	
Total Debts to Total Assets Ratio	0.34	0.37	0.43	0.34	0.43	0.39	
Debtors Turnover Ratio*	0.99	1.41	1.38	1.77	2.23	7.19	
Inventory Turnover Ratio	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	
Operating Margin (%)	71%	68%	74%	70%	63%	38%	
Net Profit Margin (%)	48%	40%	46%	45%	35%	17%	
*not annualized							
Disclosures pursuant to Regulations 52(4) and 52(8) Securities and Exchange Board of India (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015.							
Notes :-							
1. Ratios have been computed as follows:-							
- Earning per share = Profit after Tax / Weighted average number of equity shares							
- Debt Equity Ratio = Debt (Amount due to Debtenture Holders) / Equity (Equity share capital, share premium, loan from Related party and excluding unamortized fees)							
- Interest Service Coverage Ratio = Profit before interest, tax and depreciation / Total Interest Expense.							
- Current Ratio = Current Assets/ Current Liabilities							
- Long Term Debt to Working Capital = Non- Current borrowing including current maturities of Non-current borrowings/ (Current Assets - Current Liabilities excluding current maturities of Non-Current borrowings)							
- Bad debts to Accounts Receivable ratio = Bad debts / Average Trade receivables and Average unbilled Revenue							
- Current Liability Ratio = Current Liabilities/ Total Liabilities							
- Total Debts to total Assets = Non- Current borrowing including current maturities of Non-current borrowings/ Total Assets							
- Debtors turnover= Revenue from operation/ Average trade receivables and Average unbilled Revenue							
- Inventory Turnover- The company does not generate revenue from selling of inventory, hence this ratio is not applicable.							
- Operating margin(%)= (Profit before tax + Finance costs - Other income)/ Revenue from operations							
- Net Profit Margin (%) = Net profit after Tax/ Revenue from Operations							
- Debt Service Coverage Ratio* = (PAT based on Project Revenues realised (excluding non-cash adjustments, if any)+ Depreciation+ Interest Interest, Guarantee Fees, other financing costs payable under Debtenture and Project Documents)) / (Interest + Principal Repayment+Guarantee fee).							
*As per Debtenture Trust Deed dated 11 September, 2015 (as amended).							
2. The above is an extract of the detailed format of quarterly financial results filed with the Stock Exchange(s) under regulation 52 of the Listing Regulations. The full format of the quarterly financial results is available on the website of National Stock Exchange of India Limited and the listed entity (URLs https://www.nseindia.com & https://renewpower.in/ renew-wind-energy-limited-jath/).							
3. For the other line items referred in Regulation 52 (4) of the SEBI (LODR) Regulations, 2015, the pertinent disclosures have been made to the National Stock Exchange of India Limited and can be accessed on the URLs https:// www.nseindia.com & https://renewpower.in/renew-wind-energy-limited-jath/).							
4. The statement has been prepared in accordance with recognition and measurement principles laid down in accordance with the Indian Accounting Standard 34 "Interim Financial Reporting" ("Ind AS 34") as prescribed under Section 133 of the Companies Act, 2013 ("the Act") read with Rule 3 of the Companies (Indian Accounting Standards) Rules, 2015 and relevant rules issued thereunder and other recognized accounting practices and policies.							
5. The company is in the business of development and operation of wind power. There is only one segment (business and/ or geographical) in accordance with the requirements of Ind AS - 108 "Operating Segments".							
6. The financial results for the quarter and half year ended 30 September 2025 have been approved by the Board of Directors in their meeting held on 11 November 2025.							
7. India Ratings and Care Ratings has assigned long term issuer rating and rating for the outstanding non-convertible debtentures of the Company to "IND AA (CE)" with negative outlook and "CARE AA (CE)" with stable outlook, respectively.							
For and on behalf of the							
ReNew Wind Energy (Jath) Limited							
(Sd./-) Balram Mehta							
Managing Director, DIN : 06902711							
Place : Gurugram							
Date : 11 November, 2025							

GOVERNMENT OF ASSAM

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, PWRD, DHAKUAKHANA & NAOBOICHA TERRITORIAL ROAD DIVISION, DHAKUAKHANA

No. TB/282/DNTRD/2025-26/.....

PRESS NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Executive Engineer PWRD, Dhakuakhana & Naoboicha Territorial Road Division, Dhakuakhana, on behalf of Governor of Assam invites bid for 13 (thirteen) nos. of works under SOPD-G for the year 2025-26 in Lakhimpur District of Assam amounting to Rs 272.50 Lakhs. Please note that Bids are invited as an advance action to facilitate issue of work orders soon after receipt of sanction. In the event of non-sanction of the estimates, the bids may be cancelled and no claim what so ever on this account shall be entertained from the bidders. Details may be seen in the office of the undersigned from 12.11.2025 during office hours.

Sd/-

Executive Engineer, PWRD

Dhakuakhana & Naoboicha Territorial Road Division

DIPR/CF/PIO/2532/12-Nov-2025 Dhakuakhana

GOVT. OF ASSAM

OFFICE OF THE PRINCIPAL CUM CHIEF SUPERINTENDENT

JORHAT MEDICAL COLLEGE & HOSPITAL, JORHAT

(Under Society for Medical Education Jorhat)

No. SMEI/JMCH/2552/2021/PT-3/2025/ 5200

Notice Inviting Tender

(Fore-Procurement of Radio Diagnostic and Interventional Items)

Online bid (two bid systems) are invited from experienced Supplier for supply of "Radio diagnostic and Interventional. Items " on rate contract basis for Jorhat Medical College & Hospital, Jorhat-Assam as per following schedule:

Name of the Activity	Estimated Value (In Rs.)	Date and Time of Publishing of E-Bid Document	Date and Time of Pre-Bid Meeting	Date and Time of Start of Bid Submission	Date and Time of End of Bid submission	Date and Time of Opening of E-Technical Bid
Supply of Radio Diagnostic and Interventional Items on rate contract basis for JMCH, Jorhat	Rs. 60,00,000.00	5.00 P.M of 10/11/2025	12:00 PM of 18/11/2025	2:00 P.M of 19/11/2025	12:00 PM of 03/12/2025	1:00 PM of 03/12/2025

Instructions for e-tenders:1. The complete e-tender document may be obtained from the e-tender portal: <https://assamteiders.gov.in/> & our official website: <https://jorhatmch.assam.gov.in> (reference only).2. The bidder **MUST** be submit a hardcopy of their tender document (technical bid) to the o/o. the Principal cum Chief Superintendent. JMC&H. Jorhat after successful submission of their tender through online on or before **03-12-2025 upto12.00 P.M.**3. A Pre-Bid Meeting will be held on **18-11-2025 from 12.00 P.M onwards**. The address for the Pre-Bid Meeting is **College Council Hall, Administrative Building, Jorhat Medical College, Jail Road, Jorhat (Assam).**4. The bid will be opened online on the e-procurement portal as per the schedule mentioned above.5. The TIA reserves the right to accept or reject any bid/tender, and to cancel/annul the bidding process and reject all bids at any time prior to contract award

DIPR/C/PIO/586/12-Nov-25

Principal cum Chief Superintendent, Jorhat Medical College & Hospital, Jorhat

soil, “otherwise we will have to take action against them.” Both President Asif Ali Zardari and Defence Minister Khawaja Asif termed the attack a “suicide blast”.

Defence Minister Asif said the Afghan Taliban has sent a message through the bombing. “The rulers of Kabul can stop terrorism in Pakistan, but bringing this

war all the way to Islamabad is a message from Kabul, to which - praise be to God - Pakistan has the full strength to respond,” he said in a message on X to express his reaction to the attack in Islamabad.

“In this environment, it would be futile to hold out greater hope for successful negotiations with the rulers of Kabul,” he said. The minister warned that Pakistan was in a state of war.

“Anyone who thinks that the Pakistan Army is fighting this war in the Afghan-Pakistan border region and the remote areas of Balochistan should take today's suicide attack at the Islamabad district courts as a wake-up call: this is a war for all of Pakistan, in which the Pakistan Army is giving daily sacrifices and making the people feel secure.”

President Zardari strongly condemned the suicide blast and expressed deep condolences to the bereaved families. He also prayed for the early recovery of the injured.

Earlier, State-run Pakistan Television (PTV) reported that the rescue authorities retrieved 12 bodies from the site of the blast and transferred them to the Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences Hospital. It added that 20 injured individuals have been shifted to the emergency department of the PIMS Hospital.“The suicide bomber's head was found lying on the road,” it reported.

The attack came days after the third round of talks between Pakistan and the Afghan Taliban failed to reach any agreement to tackle the issue of terrorism emanating from Afghanistan.

Bangladesh Islamists demand charter referendum

ASSOCIATED PRESS ■ Dhaka

Islamists in Bangladesh rallied on Tuesday to demand the interim Government legalise a national charter proposed after the ouster of the previous regime, saying that there is no possibility of holding a general election without a legally binding roadmap for political reforms.

Thousands of supporters of the largest Islamist party Jamaat-e-Islami and seven other political parties who gathered in the capital, Dhaka,

also demanded that the next election — expected to be held in early 2026 — be held under a proportional representation system.

The key demand is for a referendum on the “Jury National Charter”, which is named after the national uprising that began in July 2024 and led to the fall of former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina following a 15-year rule that critics said had become increasingly autocratic.

But the charter is currently non-binding, and the parties

say a referendum is needed to make it legally binding and a part of the constitution. Only a Parliament can bring changes to the constitution in Bangladesh, a parliamentary democracy of 170 million people.

The roadmap for political reform was proposed by the interim Government headed by Nobel Peace Prize laureate Muhammad Yunus who took over three days after Hasina's ouster in a mass uprising on Aug 5 last year.

Its provisions would include bringing more checks and balances to the country's political system to avoid authoritarian administrations, including by giving the presidency more authority to balance what had been a powerful prime minister position. It also proposes term limits for legislators, and measures to prevent conflicts of interest, money laundering and corruption. The Bangladesh Nationalist Party, headed by former Prime Minister Khaleda Zia, signed the charter on Oct 17 along with 24 other parties.

The country has 52 registered political parties. Other than Zia's party, Hasina's Awami League party is another major party.

Call for Taiwan’s substantive participation in INTERPOL



CHOU
YEW-WOEI

Founded in 1923, INTERPOL currently has 196 member states, making it the world's second-largest international organisation after the United Nations. INTERPOL is an essential platform for global law enforcement cooperation. It closely monitors transnational criminal activity including terrorism, cybercrime and organised crime, and conducts exchanges with law enforcement agencies worldwide through its network of National Central Bureaus.

INTERPOL's mandate is to ensure and promote the widest possible mutual assistance between all criminal police authorities. Yet, for more than four decades, Taiwan has been unjustly excluded from the organisation for political reasons.

Taiwan's law enforcement authorities have extensive experience and expertise in crime prevention, public safety and international cooperation. They have achieved significant success in areas such as combating drug smuggling and cyberfraud, earning Taiwan a strong reputation in the international community. However, Taiwan

is unable to access INTERPOL's databases, participate in its events, and share information with other countries in real time. This hampers Taiwan's ability to counter transnational crime, encourages criminals to expand cross-border activities and undermines the security of Taiwan, the Indo-Pacific and the rest of the world.

Globalisation has accelerated the transnational development of crime. Criminals and illicit assets can move swiftly across borders, meaning that drug smuggling, human trafficking, cybercrime, and other illegal activities are not confined to individual countries or regions, but are challenges facing the whole international community. At a time when crime is becoming increasingly globalised and sophisticated, it is imperative for the world's police to work together to build a seamless and inclusive global security network. Enhanced international cooperation is needed to effectively combat cross — border illegal activity and safeguard global stability.

Taiwan's participation in INTERPOL would enable countries to coordinate their efforts in an unimpeded manner, confront common threats and uphold public safety and order.

Taiwan’s strong capabilities in combating crime

According to the Numbeo global data-

base, Taiwan ranks fourth in safety among 147 countries worldwide. Taiwan's high placement is due to its low crime rate, strong sense of community, effective law enforcement and close civic cooperation with the police. Taiwan's crime rate is just over 1,200 reported incidents per 100,000 people, with homicide at only 2.3 per 100,000 far below the global average.

This internationally recognised public safety record sets an important benchmark for law enforcement policymakers around the world, and makes Taiwan an attractive destination for international travelers.

As a responsible member of the international community, Taiwan is ready to play a full part in fighting transnational crime, contributing to criminal investigations, and working with partner countries to protect the safety and property of people around the world.

Supporting Taiwan to close the gap in the global security network

Taiwan has had success in combating telecom fraud, drug trafficking, and other cross-border crimes. In the fisheries sector, it has long-term experience in identifying vessels involved in human trafficking; forced labor; and illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing.

But without access to INTERPOL's I-24/7 global police communications system, Taiwan cannot share urgent

information and join coordinated enforcement efforts in real time.

Delays in reporting can lead to loss of evidence, failure to apprehend suspects, and unnecessary suffering of victims. Taiwan's absence undermines the international law enforcement framework and creates a significant gap in global security. This should be recognized as a matter of serious concern.

Taiwan is areliable law enforcement partner for countries worldwide

In recent years, fraud and other financial crimes have become increasingly transnational. Scam syndicates have shifted operations to such countries as Cambodia, Thailand, Myanmar, and Laos. Victims from around the world have been lured to the region through false promises of travel and employment, only to be trapped in scam centers where they are forced to carry out financial crimes.

Some are even sexually exploited, sold to other criminal groups, or trafficked for organ harvesting. A crime trend update published by INTERPOL on June 30 warned of the globalization of human trafficking-fueled scam centers.

The report noted that as of March, people from 66 countries across all five continents had been trafficked into such operations, with the estimated

number of victims running into the hundreds of thousands.

Taiwan's police have the experience, expertise, and capacity to assist in combating and preventing such crimes. In 2024, Taiwan broke up an online forum for large-scale distribution of child sexual exploitation materials called the Creative Private Room.

The message board, which had over 5,000 members, enabled the easy exchange of child sexual exploitation content, using cryptocurrency payments to evade detection by law enforcement agencies. The platform's mastermind, known online as Lao Ma, was based in China.

The case involved encrypted communications, anonymous networks, cryptocurrency laundering, and cross-border coordination—all key challenges that the international community faces in combating online abuse of children.

The investigation highlighted Taiwan's determination and capacity to tackle cybercrime as well as underscoring its commitment and readiness to cooperate with the international community to protect children and combat transnational sexual exploitation.

Global call for Taiwan’s substantive participation in INTERPOL

In an article published on September 5, titled “Taiwan's INTERPOL Exclusion

Undermines Global Policing Efforts,” Dr. John Coyne of the Australian Strategic Policy Institute argued that Taiwan was an important and capable partner in the Indo-Pacific region.

He pointed out that its ports, airlines, and banking system were prime targets for transnational criminals. Dr Coyne stated that Taiwan's exclusion led to delays in intelligence sharing and apprehension efforts, limiting the effectiveness of international joint action.

Faced with a growing epidemic in transnational crime, the international community must strengthen intelligence exchange and deepen partnerships to improve cross-border law enforcement.

We urge all countries to support Taiwan's bid to participate as an observer in the INTERPOL General Assembly and to meaningfully engage in INTERPOL meetings, mechanisms, and activities, so that Taiwan and INTERPOL's member states can engage in unhindered interactions.

Taiwan remains committed to strengthening communications and cooperation with countries worldwide and working with the international community to combat transnational crime.

Author is a Commissioner
Criminal Investigation Bureau

PM Modi’s Bhutan visit focuses on connectivity, border infrastructure and clean energy cooperation

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Thimphu/New Delhi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday reaffirmed India's commitment to deepening its partnership with Bhutan through improved connectivity, enhanced border infrastructure, and expanded clean energy collaboration.

His two-day visit to Thimphu highlights the growing synergy between the two Himalayan neighbours, particularly in the fields of transport, trade, and renewable energy. During the visit, Prime Minister Modi, welcomed by Bhutanese Prime Minister Tshering Tobgay, attended a special event commemorating the 70th birth anniversary of former King Jigme Singye Wangchuck.

Modi praised the former monarch for his vision in promoting democracy, peace, and sustainable development in Bhutan, and for laying the foundation of the two nations' enduring friendship.

A key highlight of the visit is the inauguration of a 1,020-megawatt hydroelectric power plant, a major milestone expected to boost Bhutan's hydropower capacity by about 40 per cent.

The project is part of the broader Indo-Bhutan energy partnership that has made Bhutan a leader in renewable energy and the world's first carbon-negative country. Modi also confirmed that work would soon resume on another



Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Bhutan King Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck offer prayers at the holy relics of Lord Buddha, at the Grand Kuenrey Hall in Tashichhodzong, Thimphu, Bhutan

long-pending hydro project and announced new joint efforts in solar energy. Emphasizing the role of connectivity in economic growth, Modi said the new rail links between Gelephu and Samtse in Bhutan and India's rail network would open new trade opportunities for Bhutanese industries and farmers. "Improved connectivity creates new pathways for prosperity," he noted. India will also assist in developing infrastructure for Bhutan's ambitious Gelephu Mindfulness City, an economic and cultural hub envisioned by King Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck.

To facilitate smoother cross-border travel and

investment, Modi announced that India would set up an immigration checkpoint near Gelephu. New Delhi has allocated ₹10,000 crore for Bhutan's current five-year development plan, supporting initiatives in roads, healthcare, agriculture, and financial services.

Modi reiterated that the prosperity of Bhutan and India is "intertwined through geography, culture, and shared progress."

Digital and youth collaboration also featured prominently in the discussions. The two sides are expanding India's Unified Payments Interface (UPI) services in Bhutan, while young innovators from both countries continue to collaborate in

space technology, education, and entrepreneurship — including the development of a joint satellite. Modi also underscored the importance of cultural bonds, citing the opening of the Royal Bhutanese Temple in Rajgir, India, and announcing that land has been provided in Varanasi for a Bhutanese temple and guesthouse.

Closing his address, Modi lauded Bhutan's guiding philosophy of Gross National Happiness, saying it continues to inspire nations worldwide to measure progress through well-being, not just wealth. "Our friendship stands on the solid foundation of trust, respect, and shared values," he said.

Ukraine detains 5 in energy sector graft investigation

ASSOCIATED PRESS ■ KYIV

A Ukrainian anti-corruption agency said on Tuesday it has detained five people and identified seven other suspects in a major graft investigation that centres on alleged kickbacks worth some \$100 million in the country's energy sector.

The National Anti-Corruption Bureau did not name the suspects in its statement but said they included a businessman believed to be the scheme's mastermind; a former advisor to the country's energy minister; and an executive of the

national atomic energy company Energoatom.

The statement came a day after the agency revealed some details of a 15-month investigation into suspected energy sector corruption, including at Energoatom.

Large amounts of Ukrainian and foreign funds have flowed into the energy sector as infrastructure is repeatedly repaired following relentless Russian aerial attacks.

Ukraine's Energy Ministry said Tuesday that Russia attacked energy infrastructure in the Kharkiv, Odesa and Donetsk regions overnight

and that scheduled power outages were in place in most regions of Ukraine.

The Anti-Corruption Bureau is tasked with rooting out entrenched corruption, which is widely regarded as an impediment to Kyiv's efforts to obtain membership in the European Union. It targets high-level corruption, particularly cases involving senior officials and state-owned enterprises.

It has previously been reported that uncovered a major graft scheme involving inflated military procurement contracts and the embezzlement of millions of dollars' worth of funds earmarked to buy mortar shells for Ukraine's efforts to foil Russia's all-out invasion.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy welcomed the latest probe. "Any effective action against corruption is an urgent need," he said in his Monday night address to the nation.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

I, Mahendra Prakash Garg, son of Hari Ram, resident of House No. 148, Near Gandhi Nagar, Near Water Tank, Ghaziabad, hereby inform that my wife, Mitlesh Garg, and I have shifted to live with our son, Rahul, at the following address: C-173, Murphy El-de Gardens, Sector 51, South City-2, Gurugram, Haryana.

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is informed that Ravindra Kumar, son of Shri Karan Singh, resident of village Sahaspur, Tehsil Garhmukteshwar, District Hapur, proposes to mortgage his property house number 254/19, Mohalla/Village Kishna Nagar, Bagu, Hadbast village Mawla, Tehsil and District Ghaziabad, area 100 square yards (i.e., 83.61 square meters, part of Khassra number 364m10, to Vast Housing Finance Corporation Ltd., Hapur, in exchange for financial assistance. This property was purchased by Ravindra Kumar from Smt. Kunthi Devi wife of Shri Gurushtaran and Uday Pratap Singh son of Shri Gurushtaran on 24-08-2025. Gurushtaran, son of late Shri Surma, was the owner and in possession of 1/2 share of the said property, through a sale deed dated 17-05-2002, document number 3067. Gurushtaran died on 23-09-2014, and his heirs are Kunthi Devi (widow) and Uday Pratap (son). Gurushtaran's heir certificate has actually been lost. If any person/organization has any objection or opposition regarding the eligibility or the proposed mortgage, they can register their objection or opposition by contacting the following mobile number within seven days from the date of publication of this advertisement. No objection or opposition will be accepted after this period.

(MANISH VERMA) ADVOCATE, Ch.No.Dc-28 District & Session Court, Hapur Mob. No. 9258311480

US close to seal trade deal with India: Trump

PRESS TRUS OF INDIA
■ New York/Washington

The US is "pretty close" to reaching a "fair trade deal" with India, President Donald Trump has said, adding that he will lower the tariffs imposed on Indian goods at "some point".

This is the second time in less than two weeks that the US president held out hope to seal the proposed bilateral trade deal with India. It is not immediately clear whether it was Trump's usual hyperbole or there was some progress in the negotiations for the much-awaited deal between the two sides.

"We're making a deal with India, a much different deal than we had in the past. So right now, they don't love me, but they'll love us again," Trump said on Monday without elaborating.

He made the remarks during a ceremony in the Oval Office where Sergio Gor was sworn in as the US Ambassador to India by



Donald Trump shaking hands with US Ambassador to India Sergio Gor in the Oval Office in Washington

Vice President J D Vance. "We're getting a fair deal, just a fair trade deal. We had pretty unfair trade deals. They're very good negotiators, Sergio, so you have to take a look at that, if you would please," Trump said.

"But we're getting close. Scott, I think we're pretty close to doing a deal that's good for everybody," Trump said to Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent, who was present at the ceremony. "That's right," Bessent responded to Trump.

"In the old days, do you think (former US President Joe) Biden would ask that question? I don't think so. 'How are we doing with India?' He didn't know about India. He didn't know a damn thing. That's okay," Trump said.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Preeti, wife of Shri Nikhil Jindal, residing at House No. 18/93, Trilokpur, Patparganj, East Delhi - 110091, hereby declare that my correct name is 'Preeti', as mentioned in my Aadhaar Card (No. 5290 1357 5051) and PAN Card. However, my name has been incorrectly recorded as 'Pritee' in my Bank Account. I further declare that 'Preeti' and 'Pritee' refer to the same and one individual — myself.

Public Notice

This is to inform the general public that Smt. Ravinder Pal Kaur & Smt. Bhajan Kaur were the owners of Entire Ground Floor without roof rights of property no. J-12/53 area measuring 200 sq. yds., situated at Rajouri Garden, village Tatapur, New Delhi-110027 vide sale deed dated 07.04.1995 as doc. no. 2225 executed by Smt. Kamla Devi & Shri Vinod Kumar. Shri Agiya Pal Singh & Smt. Bhajan Kaur were the owners of Entire First Floor without roof rights of property no. J-12/53 area measuring 200 sq. yds., situated at Rajouri Garden, village Tatapur, New Delhi-110027 vide sale deed dated 26.07.2000 as doc. no. 7480 executed by Smt. Kamla Devi & Shri Vinod Kumar. Unfortunately, Smt. Bhajan Kaur expired and his legal heirs namely Smt. Triptal Kaur, Smt. Baljeet Kaur & Smt. Dolly Mamkiz in favour of Shri Agiya Pal Singh in respect of their share in the half undivided share of the First Floor without roof rights of property no. J-12/53 and Relinquishment deed dated 01.01.2018 as doc. no. 55 executed by Smt. Triptal Kaur, Smt. Baljeet Kaur & Smt. Dolly Mamkiz in favour of Shri Agiya Pal Singh in respect of their share in the half undivided share of the Ground Floor without roof rights of property no. J-12/53 of the said property. Shri Agiya Pal & Smt. Ravinder Pal Kaur intend to transfer the ownership of above-mentioned floors by way of Sale Deed to Sachin Ahuja & Meenakshi Ahuja. Subsequently, Sachin Ahuja & Meenakshi Ahuja are in the process of mortgaging the said Floors with JIO CREDIT LTD. Any objections or concerns regarding this transaction should be raised within a period of 7 days from the date of this public notice. Any objections submitted after the completion of the 7-day period will not be considered binding with respect to the said property or the interests of our client. If anyone wishes to raise an objection, please do so within the stipulated 7-days period by contacting Law Veritas: North (Advocates & Legal Consultants) at Office No. 11, 1st Floor, Building No. A-4/A, Sector-16, Noida, Uttar Pradesh-201301. Landline(s): +91012-44499711; e-mail: accounts@nvlnorth.in

Social Responsibility Council (SRC)

114, 1st Floor Pratap Bhawan, 5 BSZ Marg, New Delhi 110002

Ref. No.: NSTFD/C/SR-SANITARY PAD VENDING MACHINE-T3/2025-26 Dated: 12.11.2025

Short Notice Inviting Proposal for Selection of Vendor for Sanitary Pad Vending Machine Installation in Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS)

The Tender document is available on the official website of the Social Responsibility Council (SRC) at www.srcouncil.in from 12.11.2025. Interested Applicants are required to download the tender document from the SRC website www.srcouncil.in and submit their proposals via email to pro@srcouncil.in in only on or before 18.11.2025, 17:00 hrs (IST). The technical bids will be opened on 19.11.2025, 11:00 hrs (IST). The Authority reserves the right to reject any or all proposals at any stage without assigning any reason.

PRO-SRC

NORTHERN RAILWAY

OPEN E-TENDER NOTICE

For and on behalf of President of India, Sr. Divisional Mechanical Engineer (Fr.), Northern Railway, Delhi Division invites open e-tender on 'SINGLE PACKET SYSTEM' for following work from experienced and capable tenderers.

1	Name of work	PU Painting of steam locomotives, Road Rollers, Steam Crane, heritage coach and lounge car at Steam locomotive Shed Rewari as per Scope of Work.
2	Work Place	Rewari, Haryana
3	Period of Work	Six (06) Months
4	Advertised Value	Rs. 31,52,212/- (including provision of GST)
5	Earnest Money to be deposited	Rs. 63,100.00 /-, through net banking or gateway only
6	Tender Document Cost	Nil
7	Date and Time availability of E-Tender Document	From 10.11.2025 to 01.12.2025 at 12:00 hrs
8	Date and time of E- tender Closing	01/12/2025 at 12:00 hrs
9	Date and time of E- tender opening	On 01.12.2025 after 12:00 hrs, if the date of opening happens to be holiday then E-Tender shall be opened on the next working day
10	Place for opening E- Tender	Mechanical Department, Divisional Railway Manager's Office, Northern Railway, State Entry Road, New Delhi-55

Note: The complete particulars of the tender may be found in website www.reps.gov.in No: NRDLNMCNW402025 Date: 11/11/2025

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE 3500/25

कार्यालय नगर पालिका परिषद, दमोह (म.प्र.)

-: तृतीय निविदा सूचना :-

क्रं./न.पा./2025/2457

दमोह दिनांक 10/11/2025

निम्नलिखित कार्य हेतु केंद्रीयकृत प्रणाली में पंजीकृत टेकेदारों से अधोलिखित विवरण अनुसार दर पर ऑनलाईन निविदाएं आमंत्रित की जाती हैं। निविदा का विस्तृत विवरण www.mptenders.gov.in पर देखा जा सकता है।

क्र	टेण्डर नं.	कार्य का नाम एवं विवरण	अनुमानित लागत	अमानत राशि	समयावधि	अंतिम तिथि
1	2025_UAD_461830-1	अमृत 2.0 योजना वाटर बोर्डि के अंतर्गत फूटेरा तालाब, पुरैना तालाब तथा पाठक तालाब का जीर्णोद्धार कार्य।	Rs. 295.79 लाख	148000/- रू	15 दिवस	29/11/2025

नोट :-

1. इच्छुक निविदादाता विस्तृत निविदा एवं अन्य समस्त जानकारी ई-टेंडरिंग पोर्टल www.mptenders.gov.in पर Key-Date अनुसार देखी जाकर निविदा प्रपत्र निविदा प्रपत्र ऑनलाईन कय किये जा सकते हैं।

2. निविदा में यदि कोई संशोधन होता है तो केवल ऑनलाईन किया जावेगा समाचार पत्र में नहीं।

3. समस्त करों को कर्तवियों शासन के नियमानुसार की जावेगी।

मुख्य नगर पालिका अधिकारी

नगर पालिका परिषद दमोह

Thailand demands apology from Cambodia

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Bangkok

Thailand said it has indefinitely paused implementation of a US-brokered ceasefire until Cambodia apologises for a land mine explosion on Monday that injured four Thai soldiers at their border.

Thai Prime Minister Anutin Charnvirakul visited the injured troops at the border on Tuesday as the Thai army accused Cambodia of laying new mines in violation of the truce agreement Thailand and Cambodia signed last month.

Territorial disputes between the Southeast Asian neighbours led to five days of combat in late July that killed dozens of soldiers and civilians.

Others have been injured by land mine explosions before and after July's combat, and tensions have simmered despite the truce. The Thai army said one soldier lost his right foot after stepping on a land mine.

PROSPECT



Meghalaya Bharat Scouts and Guides celebrated the 75th Foundation Day and the Rajya Puraskar Rally at the Iarvn of the Raj Bhavan, Shillong. On this auspicious occasion, the Governor of Meghalaya CH Vijayashankar handed over the Rajya Puraskar (Governor's Award) Certificates, the highest State award for Scouts and Guides. A total of 305 recipients (80 Scouts and 225 Guides) from various schools around the State received the meritorious award for their dedication and perseverance

SPIIL maintains solid Q2 FY26 results

Shakti Pumps India Limited (SPIIL) reported a robust performance for Q2 and H1 FY26, delivering one of the highest quarterly revenues in its history despite operational challenges posed by an extended monsoon and raw material cost increases. The company posted consolidated revenue of ₹666.4 Crores in Q2 FY26, a 5 per cent YoY growth, taking H1 FY26 revenue to ₹1288.9 Crores, up 7.2 per cent YoY. EBITDA stood at ₹136 Crores for the quarter with margins at 20.4 per cent, impacted by a 3-4 per cent rise in prices of copper, steel and solar panels. PAT came in at ₹90.7 crores in Q2 and ₹187.5 crores for H1 FY26. Dinesh Patidar, Chairman & Managing Director, said, "Despite prolonged monsoon conditions and raw material inflation, we delivered one of the highest quarterly revenues in our history. Maharashtra has led strongly in order inflows and our pipeline across states remains robust. Our solar rooftop business is scaling rapidly and emerging segments are showing encouraging growth. With strong execution capabilities, a diversified order pipeline and strategic investments, we remain confident of delivering our FY26 guidance and sustaining long-term growth."

Awfis Q2 profit down 59% to ₹16 cr on high base effect

Realty firm Awfis Space Solutions Ltd on Tuesday reported a 59 per cent decline in its consolidated profit to ₹15.97 crore in the latest September quarter on a high base effect. Its net profit stood at ₹38.67 crore in the year-ago period, helped by an exceptional gain of ₹24 crore. Total income, however, grew to ₹392.97 crore in the July-September quarter of this fiscal from ₹301.95 crore in the corresponding period of the preceding year, according to a regulatory filing. Awfis, which has recently been listed on stock exchanges, provides flexible managed office spaces to corporates of all sizes. It takes office space from property owners to establish centres and then sub-lease the workspaces to enterprises.

GOC Spear Corps visits forward areas of Dibang Valley

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Itanagar

General Officer Commanding, Spear Corps, visited Anini and forward air-maintained posts of Dao Division in the Dibang Valley to review operational preparedness, logistics sustenance and troop morale in the challenging high-altitude terrain of Eastern Arunachal Pradesh. During the visit, the Corps Commander witnessed the on-ground validation of the Kill Box and Ashni Platoon—specialised combat teams demonstrating integrated hard kill and soft kill responses against hostile

drone threats. The exercise showcased the Indian Army's growing capability in counter-drone warfare, blending technology with tactical acumen to enhance battlefield resilience. GOC interacted with the troops, commended their professionalism and dedication in extreme climatic and terrain conditions and emphasised the importance of technological adaptation in modern warfare. He reiterated the Indian Army's commitment to operational readiness and the continual evolution of combat tactics to meet emerging security challenges along the Eastern frontier.



World Bank debarred Transformers and Rectifiers shares tanks 28%

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

The World Bank's debarring has seriously affected Transformers and Rectifiers (India) Ltd (TARIL). 'The Pioneer' reported on Sunday that the Indian company was debarred by World Bank for fraudulent corruption practices in Nigerian powergrid supply. The company's shares were ₹396 on Friday tanked to ₹313 on Monday after the report and on Tuesday further collapsed to ₹282 in Stock Exchanges.

Interestingly, TARIL shares were only priced ₹7.40 only in January 1, 2020 and in January 2025, the company shares shot up to ₹650. 'The Pioneer' reported that more than 50 Indian companies and individuals were debarred by the World Bank for corruption, bribery and fraudulent practices.

The company CFO Chanchal S Rajora on Tuesday told media that the firm was caught in Nigerian politics. Explaining the issues in supply of equipments in the Nigerian projects, he said that the issues will be sort out in six months.

The World Bank has banned the company for four years till June 2029. Gujarat based TARIL was debarred by the World Bank on November 4 for 486 Million Dollars contract in Nigerian power sector.

Share price of Transformers and Rectifiers (India) Ltd (TARIL) extended their sharp fall on Tuesday, slipping 10 per cent to a one-year low of ₹282.80 on BSE. With this, the stock has lost nearly 28 per



The Pioneer exclusive report on November 09, 2025 on World Bank debarring of Indian companies and individuals

PIONEER PHOTO

cent over the last two trading sessions, following a World Bank debarment notice.

The company issued a clarification stating, "We wish to inform that Transformers and Rectifiers (India) Ltd has received a Notice of Uncontested Sanctions Proceedings dated November 4, 2025, from the World Bank in connection with Sanctions Case No. 788 relating to the Nigeria Electricity Transmission Project (IDA Credit Nos. 6185-NG and 6186-NG)."

TARIL said the communication referred to an earlier Notice of Sanctions Proceedings dated July 30, 2025, which the company had not received. "Accordingly, the Company has initiated steps to contest the matter and will submit

its reply to the World Bank, seeking an opportunity to review and address the allegations in detail," it added. The proceedings have been initiated under the Sanctions Proceedings and Settlements in Bank-Financed Projects, issued by the World Bank on November 30, 2023.

Providing background, TARIL said it had received an order worth \$24.74 million in FY20 for the supply of 70 transformers on a CFR basis to Nigeria. The order was executed in FY22 and as per the terms, 90 per cent payment was received under a letter of credit during the same year.

"During shipment of last consignment, while it was being transported from Nigerian Port to its Storage,

3 Nos transformers got damage due to accident. Claim filed by TCN and Insurance was passed during FY22, but payment was received under the insurance during FY24 in staggered manner, due to shortage of USD in Nigeria. We manufactured new Transformers against the previous 3 Nos damaged and supplied them during FY25 end, against which balance payment of 10 per cent was released by World Bank and received during Q1 FY26."

The company clarified that the debarment relates to "certain alleged irregularities concerning a past supply order executed under a World Bank-funded project for Transmission Company of Nigeria Plc (TCN), Abuja."

It further noted that all required

Dish TV partners with Amazon Prime

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

Dish TV, one of India's leading content distribution companies, has partnered with Amazon Prime to offer Prime Lite benefits to its customers, reinforcing its commitment to innovation, convenience and customer value.

The collaboration spans the Dish Group's entire ecosystem — including its DTH services, Watcho streaming platform, VZY Smart TVs and extensive ISP partner network. Eligible Dish customers will gain seamless access to Prime Video's premium entertainment library, featuring award-winning Indian and international Originals, blockbuster films and more, all on a single device of their choice in HD quality.

In addition to unlimited entertainment, Prime members will also enjoy shopping benefits such as free unlimited Same-Day and Next-Day delivery on eligible products, as well as early access to major sales events like Prime Day. This partnership marks another milestone in Dish TV's journey to



transform home entertainment through technology, content and convenience. With a strong presence across both DTH and OTT, Dish TV's ecosystem includes its pioneering DTH brands — Dish TV and D2H — the Watcho OTT Super App and the creator-driven FLIQS platform.

The recent launch of VZY Smart TVs has further expanded its footprint into connected entertainment devices, offering viewers a complete and integrated experience. By integrating Prime Lite, Dish TV continues

to uphold its commitment to delivering unmatched value, innovation and entertainment to millions of Indian households, blending its DTH legacy with next-generation streaming technology to create a truly seamless and immersive viewing experience. Prime Video offers consumers access to one of the largest selections of the latest and exclusive Indian and international movies and TV shows, award-winning Amazon Original series, stand-up comedy, popular kids' shows and more.

Speaking about the collab-

oration, Manoj Dobhal, CEO and Executive Director of Dish TV India Limited, said, "Entertainment today is all about accessibility, simplicity and personalisation. Dish TV has always believed in empowering viewers with the freedom to choose how and where they watch content. Partnering with Amazon Prime, renowned for its vast library of movies, series and acclaimed Originals worldwide, further strengthens our commitment to delivering world-class entertainment experiences across every screen."

DGCA asks pilots, air traffic controllers to report GPS spoofing within 10 mins of occurrence

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

Aviation watchdog DGCA has asked airlines, pilots and air traffic controllers to report GPS spoofing incidents within 10 minutes of the occurrences, amid recent such incidents at the Delhi airport.

In recent days, incidents of GPS spoofing and interference has been reported in and around the national capital's Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGIA), the country's busiest airport that handles over 1,500 flight movements daily.

Against this backdrop, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has decided to put in a place system to ensure real time reporting of GPS interference and spoofing incidents.

Global Positioning System (GPS)/ Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS) spoofing and jamming refers to attempts to manipulate a user's navigation system by giving false signals.

"Any pilot, ATC controller, or technical unit detecting abnormal GPS behaviour (eg. Position anomalies, navigation errors, loss of GNSS signal integrity, or spoofed location data) shall initiate real time reporting (within 10 minutes of occurrence)," the regulator said in a three-page circular issued on November 10.

The initial report should compulsorily have details such as date and time of occurrence, aircraft type and registration, airline name, flight route and coordinates of occurrence or area affected.

Also, the watchdog has said the entities should mention about the type of interference as to whether it was "jamming / spoofing / signal loss / integrity error" as well as aircraft equipment affected by the interference.

According to the DGCA, airline operators, pilots and ATS units may include further supporting details such as preservation of system logs, screenshots or

images of the Flight Management System (FMS) and records of effects on connected systems and platforms.

ATS refers to Air Traffic Services. All aircraft operators, flight crew and Airports Authority of India (AAI), including Air Traffic Control (ATC) and Communication, Navigation, Surveillance (CNS) units, operating in and around the Delhi airport have been asked to follow the instructions in the circular.

The CNS is the main function of Air Navigation Services (ANS) and Air Traffic Management (ATM). These critical functions are provided by the AAI.

"In view of the recent occurrences of GPS spoofing and GNSS interference reported in and around IGI Airport, New Delhi, it is imperative that all aviation stakeholders ensure prompt detection and real-time reporting (within 10 minutes of occurrence) of such events to maintain flight

safety and operational integrity," the circular said.

The DGCA is probing the incidents of GPS spoofing at the Delhi airport and is also collecting such occurrences to have a better understanding of the situation.

In India, as many as 465 GPS interference and spoofing incidents were reported in the border region, mostly in the Amritsar and Jammu areas, between November 2023 and February 2025.

Several airlines had reported that aircraft operating in and around Amritsar have experienced GPS/GNSS interference.

Airlines have been reporting GPS interference with their flights in different parts of the world, especially while flying near or over conflict zones.

Both the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) and the International Air Transport Association (IATA) have been looking at the issue of GPS spoofing and jamming and looking at ways to deal with them.

राष्ट्रीय प्रौद्योगिकी संस्थान, कुरुक्षेत्र

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY KURUKSHETRA

(Under the Ministry of Education, Govt. of India)

KURUKSHETRA-136119

Advt. No.26/2025

Admission to Ph.D. Program in Even Semester of Academic Year 2025-26

National Institute of Technology, Kurukshetra invites online applications via Google Form from Indian and Foreign nationals for admission to the Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) Degree Programmes on Full Time (Institute/CSIR-UGC-NET-JRF, Project), Visvesvaraya Fellowship Scheme, Full-Time (Self-Financed), and Part-Time seats for Academic Year 2025-26. Number of Seats, Online Application Form Link, and other relevant details along with Ph.D. Ordinance & Regulations are available on the Institute website: www.nitkkr.ac.in under Admission 2025-> Ph.D. tab.

All interested candidates may fill the Google Form latest by November 24, 2025, 05:00 p.m. If the application is incomplete or any information is found misleading/false at any point during or after the admission process, the candidate's candidature/admission will be cancelled and the application fee will not be refunded in any case.

Please visit Institute website regularly for any announcement or updates in this regard.

Registrar /lc

Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar

Engineering Department

Tender Notice

Tender Reference No. GNDU/ENGG/2025/11/09-16

The Engineering Department of Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar invites online bids for:-(i) Renovate the existing allocated space for centre to make state and art lab facility to conduct research work of centre for basic and translational research in health Science (ii) Providing and Placing Lab Furniture for Modernization of Various Computer and Science Labs (iii) SITC of Modernization Work of Science and Computer Labs in various Department (iv) Purchase of Public Health Material CP 5Braz Fitting Material, Chinaware Material, PTMT Fitting Material Required for Upgradation of Various Toilets (v) Purchase of Civil and Public Health Material for Modernization of Labs Science and Computer in Various Department (vi) Purchase of Civil Work Material Building Material, Wooden Material, Tiles, Adhesive, Granite, Paint Material, Hardware Material, Frosted Glass for Renovation and Upgradation of various Toilets (vii) Upgradation of automatic RF Access Management System for Barrier Gates (viii) Electrical Work of renovation of bathrooms at various departments (Labour Rates basis) Closing date & time: 02-12-2025 for sr. no. 1 and 27-11-2025 for sr. no. 2 to 8 upto 04:00 pm

For details log onto www.eproc.punjab.gov.in

Note: Any Corrigendum/Addendum to the tender notice shall be published on the above website only.

2426/12/2025-26/4853 Dated GND :- 11/11/2025

Assam CM Himanta Biswa Sarma inaugurated the Chaparmukh Railway Overbridge- Linking Raha to Chaparmukh Railway Junction and West Karbi Anglong

PIONEER PHOTO

BRIEFLY

SHUBHANKAR TIED 6TH AT DP WORLD QUALIFYING SCHOOL



Indian golfer Shubhankar Sharma was placed tied sixth after the fourth round of the DP World Tour Final Stage Qualifying School at Infinitum's Lakes and Hills courses. With rounds of 70-69-66-67 he was 14-under but eight shots behind the leader, Zander Lombard. There are two more rounds left in the six round final stage of the Q-School.

Australian Connor McKinney (67) is solo second at 16-under, while the trio of Quentin Debove, Benjamin Follett-Smith and Matthew Baldwin are tied third at 15-under.

Sharma, who has had a difficult 2025 season in the DP World Tour this year has previously been ranked as high as 64th on OWGR. This year he missed 17 consecutive cuts after the Hero Indian Open held in March. The season saw him lose his tour card and return to the Q School in a bid to retain playing privileges.

The 29-year-old who has previously won two titles on the DP World Tour stated during the DP World India Championships that he has struggled with equipment changes through the year and has yet to find a combination that works for him.

Things have looked better this week, though 36 holes remain to be played.

DEEPIKA, DHIRAJ LEAD INDIA AT ASIAN ARCHERY



Star archers Deepika Kumari and Dhiraj Bommadevara were back to their best after missing out on the team berths, as India secured at least three individual medals in recurve events of the Asian Archery Championships here on Tuesday.

Top-ranked Indians Deepika and Dhiraj, who had failed to make the team events after finishing last among their compatriots in qualification round on the opening day, bounced back strongly when the individual eliminations got underway.

Deepika stunned Shanghai World Cup gold medallist Lee Gahyun of Korea 7-3 to storm into the women's recurve semifinals, where she will face compatriot Ankita Bhakat. Ankita, meanwhile, produced one of the biggest upsets of the day, toppling top seed and former world champion Jang Minhee of Korea 6-4.

Sangeeta too joined the party, defeating Iran's Zare Reyhane 7-1 to enter the last-four, where she will meet Korea's Nam Suhyeon. With Deepika, Ankita and Sangeeta all in the semifinals, India stand a strong chance of completing a clean sweep in the women's recurve individual category.

Vihaan to captain India U19 A in triangular series

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ New Delhi

Rising talent Vihaan Malhotra was on Tuesday named captain of the India U19 A squad for an upcoming triangular series also featuring India B and Afghanistan's U19 teams.

Hyderabad's Aaron George will lead the India B U19 side in the competition that will be held at the BCCI's Centre of Excellence, Bengaluru, from November 17 to 30. Malhotra was handed captaincy, even as his two superstar teammates Vaibhav Sooryavanshi and Ayush Mhatre remain occupied with other engagements. Wicketkeeper



Abhigyan Kundu will be Malhotra's deputy in the three-nation tournament, while Vedant Trivedi has been named vice captain of the India U19 B squad.

Delhi lose to J&K in Ranji for the first time

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ New Delhi

Delhi cricket hit a new low on Tuesday after a spirited Jammu and Kashmir thrashed them by seven wickets for their first-ever Ranji Trophy victory over the formidable opposition that was powered by opener Qamran Iqbal's superb hundred.

After four games, Delhi coached by Sarandeep Singh, are sixth among eight teams in Group D with seven points and it will take a miracle to qualify for the knockouts with only four points from three home games.

Questionable selections, poor strategies, absence of smart captaincy and a state unit in which teams have suffered due to factionalism and infighting has brought about the team's downfall.

Since 1960, Delhi and Jammu & Kashmir have met 43 times and 37 of those games have ended in outright wins for the seven-time champions.

Chasing a target of 179 for victory, J&K needed 124 runs on the final day with opener Iqbal (133 not out off 147 balls) at the crease with night-watchman Vanshaj Sharma (8 off 55 balls).

What looked like a difficult pitch suddenly became placid as Iqbal took it upon himself to use his long levers and big stride to negate any turn off the surface.

The roughs and indents were created on both sides of the track and Delhi's spin-



Players of Jammu & Kashmir and Delhi greet each other at the end of their Ranji Trophy 2025-26 cricket match at the Arun Jaitley Stadium in New Delhi PTI

ners Mannan Bhardwaj and Hrithik Shokeen didn't attack the stumps as much, trying to bowl too fast which also didn't get them any purchase.

Towards the end, Iqbal was hitting one-handed slog swept sixes and lofted boundaries. Even 40-year-old skipper Paras Dogra, the former doyen of Himachal Pradesh cricket, played his part with a first innings hundred.

In his 22nd first class

season, Dogra only second to Mumbai stalwart Wasim Jaffer in terms of runs in Ranji Trophy, scored tons against both Mumbai and Delhi this season.

For Delhi, retaining Sarandeep as the head coach after a disastrous last season due to alleged pressures from a strong DDCA lobby has only ensured that there was no consistency in selection. Skipper Ayush Badoni is scoring some attractive half-

centuries but no team in

domestic cricket is in awe of him. Arpit Rana, a top scorer in DPL, has been found wanting against quality seam bowling as Aujib Nabi with his seaming deliveries exposed his poor technique.

A positive opening batter like Priyansh Arya was benched in first two games only to be played out of position at number 4.

Worse, with two good keeper batters in Tejasvi Dahiya and Pranav Raghuvanshi on the bench,

Anuj Rawat, a player with less than 30 average across eight seasons keeps on playing.

After this defeat, DDCA president Rohan Jaitley is expected to crack the whip.

In the last group match to finish on Tuesday, Hyderabad earned three points for taking a first-innings lead after the contest against Rajasthan ended in a draw on the fourth and final day in Hyderabad.

Hyderabad, who had put 364 on board batting first,

Rekhade seals Vidarbha's 100-run win; Jharkhand-Baroda draw

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ Nagpur

Left-arm spinner Parth Rekhade returned with a five-wicket haul as Vidarbha registered a 100-run win over Odisha to move to the top of Group A in the Ranji Trophy on Tuesday.

Chasing 345 for victory, Odisha were bowled out for 244 in 84 overs after a promising 100-run opening stand between Swastik Samal (65) and Gourav Choudhury (47). Vidarbha now lead the table with 19 points, while Odisha remain second from bottom with just one point.

Resuming at 44 for no loss, Samal and Choudhury added 56 more runs before Rekhade provided the breakthrough in the 24th over, trapping the latter leg before wicket.

Samal too became his victim soon after, while Sandeep Pattnaik's painstaking 27 off 105 balls ended



when he was trapped in front by Praful Hinge in the 38th over. Skipper Subhanshu Senapati (28) and Govinda Poddar (46) tried to steady the chase but failed to convert their starts, as Odisha kept losing wickets at regular intervals. Rekhade (5/80) led the bowling effort with Hinge (3/41) providing able support, while Nachiket Bhute (1/50) also chipped in.

In Vadodara, opener Shikhar Mohan struck an unbeaten 102 as Jharkhand reached 226 for four in their second innings before agreeing to a draw with Baroda.

Jharkhand, who bagged three points for their first-innings lead, are placed second in the group with 18 points. Baroda settled for one to be at fifth spot with a total of 9 points.

Denish, Sibsankar salvage draw against Tripura

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ Agartala

Skipper Denish Das and senior batter Sibsankar Roy struck defiant centuries to help Assam salvage a draw against Tripura on the fourth and final day of their Ranji Trophy Group C match here on Tuesday.

Resuming on overnight 78 for 3 in their second innings and facing a huge deficit, Assam showed remarkable grit to bat through the day, ending at 367 for 7 when the teams agreed to call off play in the final session.

Captain Denish Das (103 off 197 balls) anchored the innings with a composed century, guiding Assam out of trouble after a shaky start.

He found solid support from wicketkeeper Sumit Ghadigaonkar (54 off 161) as the duo steadied the innings with a 150-run partnership for the fourth wicket.



Assam's Denish Das celebrates his century during Ranji trophy cricket match between Tripura and Assam in Agartala, Tripura PTI

After Denish's dismissal, Roy took charge, batting fluently for an unbeaten 101 off 141 balls, which was decorated with 17 fours and two sixes. His counterattacking approach ensured Assam not only avoided an innings defeat but also batted Tripura out of the contest.

Lower down, Ayushman Malakar (21 not out) provid-

ed valuable resistance as the visitors stretched their lead past 100 before stumps were drawn.

For Tripura, Ajay Sarkar was the pick of the bowlers, claiming 3 for 70, while Swapnil Singh (2/88) and Rana Dutta (2/34) also chipped in with wickets but couldn't bowl out Assam as the pitch eased out.

India adds two silver through Aishwary, Esha and Rana

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ Cairo

Olympian Aishwary Pratap Singh Tomar equalled the qualification world record and then won his first-ever individual World Championship medal by settling for silver in the men's 50m rifle 3 positions final on Tuesday.

Newly-crowned air pistol world champion Samrat Rana and defending champion Esha Singh also ended with a silver medal in the 10m air pistol mixed team competition, after they went down 10-16 in the gold



medal match to China's Kai Hu and Qianxun Yao. Before that Aishwary, the two-time Olympian, managed 466.9 in the 45-shot final to finish behind China's reigning Olympic champion Liu

Yukun, who ended 0.2 ahead with 467.1. India continued to hold the second position in the medal tally behind China with three gold, five silver and three bronze in their kitty.

Germany seeks compensation for players switching national teams

ASSOCIATED PRESS
■ Berlin

The German soccer federation (DFB) wants compensation when players opt to represent other countries after representing Germany at youth levels.

"It simply makes no sense to me why a player who has been coached primarily at his club for five years but also by the federation as a junior partner should be able to switch national associations for free," DFB managing director Andreas Rettig told news

agency dpa on Tuesday.

German-born Juventus star Kenan Yildiz is a Turkish international, having played for Turkey's youth teams. Eintracht Frankfurt forward Can Uzun also turned down Germany in favor of Turkey.

Former Hertha Berlin forward Ibrahim Maza, now playing for Bayer Leverkusen, plays for Algeria after appearing for Germany at youth levels. German youth internationals Muhammed Damar and Nicolò Tresoldi are reportedly being courted by Turkey and Italy, respective-

ly, and the Frankfurter Rundschau daily newspaper reported on Sunday that Nuremberg defender Fabio Gruber has chosen to represent Peru. "We're currently checking whether there's a possibility of coaching compensation when players switch national associations," Rettig said. "This issue has not yet been addressed extensively. But coaching must be worthwhile for both sides, the player and the coach."

Germany has long seen players with one or two parents born abroad opt to

represent their country of their roots, while the country has also benefited from immigration as players such as Ilkay Gundogan, Mesut Ozil, Sami Khedira and Gerald Asamoah have contributed to the national team's success.

Cologne teenager Said El Mala was last week called up for Germany's World Cup qualifiers this week and at least 12 players in the latest squad could have chosen to represent other countries. The injured Jamal Musiala chose Germany after playing for England youth teams.



"In Germany 43% of children under five years of age hold dual citizenship. When they're 10 or 12 years older they can decide, do I prefer the (German) eagle or, for example, the (Turkish) crescent moon?" Rettig said.

"We analyzed the squad lists from the under-15s to the under-21s within the federation. The percentage there is significantly higher than the aforementioned 43%. There are age groups in which seven or eight players in the starting 11 have dual nationality.

MP BEAT GOA BY THREE WICKETS IN TENSE RUN CHASE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ Porvorum (Goa)

Middle-order batter Saransh Jain held firm with a solid 82 not out to help Madhya Pradesh beat Goa by three wickets after a tense run chase on the final day of their Ranji Trophy Group B match here Tuesday.

Madhya Pradesh, who had conceded a 97-run first innings lead to Goa, started the final day at 21 for 1 in pursuit of 328, and wickets fell at regular intervals.

Arriving at 176 for 4, Jain anchored the MP run chase with some support from the lower order.

His unbroken eighth-wicket stand of 65 with Arshad Khan (25) turned it around for MP.

Jain hit nine fours in his 132-ball unbeaten innings. Captain Shubham Sharma got 72 off 134 balls, while Harsh Gawli contributed 54.

The other two matches of Group B — Kerala vs Saurashtra, and Karnataka vs Maharashtra — ended in draws. In Pune, Karnataka took three points and Maharashtra one after the drawn match.

Two-tier WTC model unlikely to take off

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ Dubai

The much-debated two-tier World Test Championship (WTC) model is unlikely to take off, and, instead, the International Cricket Council (ICC) might give all 12 full members a chance to play in the next WTC cycle starting from mid 2027.

Currently, nine full members are involved in the WTC matches while Zimbabwe, Afghanistan and Ireland are not part of the elite circle despite having the full member status.

An assessment group led by former New Zealand batter Roger Twose did consider the idea of a two-tier system but did not receive enough backing during ICC's quarterly meeting which was held in Dubai recently.

"There was a discussion on the two-tier system but certain members were not convinced about the model, and it felt that a 12-team system should be tried out because it gives more chances for teams to play against each other," a source close to the development informed.

The resistance to the idea mainly came from Pakistan, Sri Lanka, the West Indies and Bangladesh who



could have started in tier 2 under the mooted two-segment system.

"Even representatives of some of the top boards too were sceptical of the idea as what happens if a top team goes through a phase of struggle and gets relegated to the second tier? It will affect playing chances and revenue alike," he added.

The England and Wales Cricket Board chief Richard Thompson had indicated similar doubts in August.

"We wouldn't want, as England, we may go through a fallow period, and that means, what, we fall into Division Two and we don't play Australia and India?," he had told BBC.

The sentiment also reflected in the general dismissal of the talks on India, Australia and England finan-

cially supporting those teams which are in the lower tier.

The ICC might also consider reviving the Super League concept in ODIs, which was scrapped after the 2023 World Cup.

It was conceptualised in 2020 to give more context to the ODI format, but the 13-team system did not progress as expected.

Many members who attended the ICC meeting felt that the 50-over format is not near extinction but can survive if provided a proper structure to it.

"The reaction and reach of ICC ODI events tell that there is still a place for 50-over cricket. Just that we need to give some context to it, and ensure that top teams and players are involved in it," he noted.

Gill, Jaiswal, Sai clock long net session ahead of SA Test

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ Kolkata

Transitioning from shorter formats to the rigours of red-ball cricket takes time, and India captain Shubman Gill spent close to an hour and a half at the nets, fine-tuning his technique ahead of the opening Test against South Africa, starting here on Friday.

The Proteas arrive high on confidence, having secured a hard-earned 1-1 draw in Pakistan last month in challenging conditions.

Gill, who struck a fifty and an unbeaten century in the two home Tests against the West Indies last month, has been searching for runs in white-ball cricket.

He managed just one score above fifty — a 46 at Carrara Oval — from eight innings across the ODIs and T20Is in Australia.

Now back to leading the Test side, Gill batted with determination at nets and looked keen to regain rhythm after a lean white-ball run.

Before the nets, head coach Gautam Gambhir and assistant coach Sitanshu Kotak were seen having a long chat with him near the High Court end, possibly discussing his approach.

Gill later joined his teammates for slip-fielding drills before padding up alongside Yashasvi Jaiswal for an intense net session.

Starting with spin, he faced Ravindra Jadeja and Washington Sundar, playing



India's Yashasvi Jaiswal with captain Shubman Gill during a training session ahead of the first Test match between India and South Africa at Eden Gardens in Kolkata

PTI

mostly on the ground with occasional sweeps.

Moving to the pace nets, he faced Nitish Kumar Reddy who bowled in tandem with a few local club bowlers as they tested him with seam movement.

A support staff member then used a sidearm to deliver throwdowns from height, giving Gill extra bounce and pace.

After more than an hour in the side nets, he shifted to the central strip for another 30 minutes of throwdowns under the watchful eye of bowling coach Morne Morkel, who himself rolled his arm over to generate sharp pace and bounce.

Fresh from scores of 67 and 156 for Rajasthan in the Ranji Trophy, Jaiswal also had a long stint at the central wicket, facing Morkel and taking throwdowns. The left-hander looked in fluent touch, driving and pulling with assurance.

Another batter to spend significant time at the nets was Sai Sudharsan, who managed just 84 runs in two unofficial Tests for India A against South Africa A.

The team management continues to back him for the number 3 slot, though he is yet to make it his own, with only a 61 against England in Manchester and 87 versus West Indies at home to show

so far in Tests.

His India A teammates — KL Rahul, Jurel, Kuldeep Yadav, Mohammed Siraj — skipped the optional practice after joining the squad only a day earlier after a demanding A series in Bengaluru, which concluded on Sunday.

But there was no such 'break' for Sai who batted with full intensity, facing pacers, spinners, and taking throwdowns at the centre strip. The number 3 position remains a talking point, especially with Dhruv Jurel in prolific form.

There's also speculation that Jurel could feature as a pure batter, with Rishabh Pant set to return to wicket-

Shaheen accepts captaincy after Rizwan stepsdown

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ Rawalpindi (Pakistan)

In an interesting revelation, Pakistan's ODI captain Shaheen Shah Afridi has claimed that he only accepted the captaincy after his predecessor Mohammad Rizwan said he would step down.

"I took this responsibility from the Pakistan Cricket Board after discussing the matter with Rizwan," Shaheen told the media on Monday.

"Rizwan was the only person I had a discussion with and I asked him how he felt about me accepting the captaincy.

"Rizwan decided himself he would make way for me and that is how things worked out," said Shaheen, who was also appointed national T20 skipper in 2023 but was dismissed after just one series in New Zealand.

Shaheen had taken over as the T20I skipper after Babar Azam resigned following Pakistan's poor run in the Cricket World Cup

2023. However, less than six months after the appointment, Shaheen was removed from the post with Babar being reinstated as the captain.

The left-arm pacer had led in only one T20I series — a five-game encounter against New Zealand away from home — in this period.

Shaheen said Rizwan had assured him of full support. He added that as captain he would back Babar and Rizwan as they were key players in the side with lots of experience.

"I have no ego and I talk to everyone for advice, even our former captains. I don't look at things that happened in the past," he said.

"Everyone has to take responsibility if you want to improve as a team," the 25-year-old said, adding, "You can't keep on saying Babar, Rizwan or Fakhar will do it, it is as a team we have to click and take responsibility.

"As far as Rizwan is concerned, he is Pakistan's top-scorer in one-dayers since



2023. We are trying to back players who are not in form so that they can do well in future matches.

"Babar can falter in one or two matches but he is in good touch and I hope he

will score a hundred soon," he said. Shaheen said that while the PCB had not given him a specific time frame for captaincy, he was looking forward to leading the side in the 2027 World Cup.

All-rounder Shadab Khan likely to join Pakistan squad for tri-series

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ Lahore

Pakistan's experienced all-rounder Shadab Khan could be a late addition to the national squad for the T20 tri-series, also involving Sri Lanka and Zimbabwe, to be played from November 17 in Lahore and Rawalpindi.

Shadab, who has been rehabilitating from a shoulder surgery, appeared in a practice game in Lahore recently and was watched closely by selectors, including Aaqib Javed who is also the head of the National Cricket Academy.

Shadab, who is also tipped to eventually take over as the T20 captain from Salman Ali Agha, played the match after having his final rehabilitation process at the NCA under the supervision of its medical panel.

"Shadab appears to have recovered well from his shoulder injury and could be a late addition for the T20 Tri-



Series," a source close to the selectors said. Young uncapped fast bowler Ali Reza, who is also recovering from an injury, appeared in the match and bowled well.

Reza, a promising Pakistan under-19 player has impressed everyone with his potential during the Pakistan Super League (PSL).

The source said the selectors might ask Shadab to join the team for the ongoing home series against Sri Lanka to get back to full

match fitness under the supervision of the national team management.

He might also be asked appear in a first-class match in the ongoing Quaid-e-Azam Trophy "But the selectors are keen to have him back in the T20 side as soon as possible if he is match fit as he would add a lot of balance to the side and is in line with head coach Mike Hesson's insistence on having all round players in the side," he added.

Hussain advances to pre-quarterfinals; Haohui stuns Advani



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ Doha

Unheralded Indian cueist Hussain Khan scored a thrilling 4-3 win over Australia's Hassan Kerde to enter the men's pre-quarterfinals of the IBSF World Snooker Championships on Tuesday.

The 29-year-old Indian, who came through the first stage qualification, played the important points well to win his match and set up a last-16 meeting with teen sensation Michal Szubarczyn of Poland.

Earlier, India's celebrated three-time champion Pankaj Advani bowed out

of the tournament after losing 1-4 to Deng Haohui.

China's Haohui ran up a quick 3-0 lead in the best-of-seven-frame match. It spurred Advani, who replied with a break of 53 in the fourth to pull one back.

However, the Chinese cueist regrouped quickly to take the next frame and march into the pre-quarterfinals.

In the women's draw, four Indians advanced to the knockout rounds with Ameer Kamani topping Group D with an all-win record to enter the last-eight stage as the second seed.

McIlroy seeks 7th race to Dubai title

ASSOCIATED PRESS
■ London

The Masters to complete the career Grand Slam. A home Irish Open. An away Ryder Cup.

It has been a year of unforgettable, career-defining wins for Rory McIlroy. There's a good chance it will get even better in Dubai this week in the Northern Irishman's final event of the 2025 season.

The number 2-ranked McIlroy will look to be crowned Europe's number 1 player for a fourth straight year when he competes in the European tour's season-ending World Tour Championship starting on Thursday.

If McIlroy holds off Marco Penge and Tyrrell Hatton — the only players in range of overhauling him — he will win the Race to Dubai title for the seventh time in his career and move within one of Colin Montgomerie's record haul. Montgomerie won his season-long points titles — when it was called the Order of Merit — each year from 1993-99 and again in 2005.

McIlroy is tied on six with the late Seve Ballesteros, and remains committed to tailoring his schedule so he can



play as many events on the European tour as possible while also working the PGA Tour calendar.

"There's a wonderful heritage to this tour. I think with the fractured nature of the men's professional game at the minute, this tour needs all of its stars to step up and play in the big events," McIlroy said.

"I understand that I am one of those people and I want to do my utmost to help in whatever way that I can."

McIlroy said he was the happiest he has felt in a long

time, on and off the golf course. He attributes some of that to stepping away from the wrangling at boardroom level brought about by the emergence of the Saudi-funded LIV Golf breakaway circuit. From being the face of strident anti-LIV criticism, McIlroy is back to being just a golfer.

"I have a clear head and I'm out of all the political stuff in golf, basically, and I can just focus on playing and playing where I want to and making myself competitively happy by playing in the

tournaments that I want to play," he said.

"And then having more time to make myself personally happy with doing the things I want to do away from golf. Travelling with my family and showing my daughter different parts of the world and doing things like that I think is a very nice place to be in life."

McIlroy leads the Race to Dubai standings. He is around 767 points ahead of second-placed Penge and around 1,720 points ahead of third-placed Hatton. There are 2,000 points on offer for the winner at the Earth Course. A win obviously guarantees McIlroy the title, as would finishing second alone. For Penge — a three-time winner on the tour this year — to overhaul McIlroy he either needs to win and hope McIlroy finishes worse than second alone, or finish in a tie for second and for McIlroy to be down the leaderboard.

Hatton needs to win to stand any chance of an unlikely title.

Penge's breakthrough season has already seen him lock down one of the PGA Tour cards on offer for the top 10 players in the Race to Dubai standings who are not otherwise exempt.

Yamal, Mbappé, Ronaldo near 2026 World Cup



ASSOCIATED PRESS
■ Paris

Spain and Lamine Yamal, France and Kylian Mbappé plus Portugal and Cristiano Ronaldo are close to confirming their places at the 2026 World Cup.

Erling Haaland's 12 goals so far have Norway even nearer to sealing the team's first World Cup qualification since before he was born, and edging Italy toward the playoffs where the four-time champion was shockingly eliminated in the past two editions. Germany also risks not advancing directly as a European group winner.

The Germans have a possible showdown game on Monday against Slovakia in Leipzig. World Cup qualify-

ing duties after recovering from his injury.

Jurel, who averages 47.77 in Tests and notched his maiden ton against the West Indies, has been in red-hot form in first-class cricket, scoring three centuries in his last five games, including twin hundreds in the second match against South Africa A.

Among pacers, only Jasprit Bumrah turned up, keeping it light with spot bowling at two stumps for about 15 minutes, targeting the off stump.

In a relaxed mood, he also batted briefly and spent time interacting with teammates.

Bumrah had light strapping on his right knee but bowled under the supervision of Gambhir and Morkel.

Overall, only seven players turned up for the optional practice session, as the likes of Pant, Jurel, Rahul, Siraj, Kuldeep, Akash, Devdutt Padikkal and Axar Patel skipped.

After nearly three hours of training, the team's think tank — Gambhir, Kotak, Morkel, and Gill — gathered at the centre wicket for a long pitch inspection.

Morkel and Gill checked the firmness before summoning curator Sujan Mukherjee for a 15-minute discussion. Judging by their expressions, the management did not appear entirely pleased with the surface. The pitch, which has not been watered for a week now, appeared dry and brown with light grass patches.

South Africa Tests crucial for WTC cycle: Siraj

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ Kolkata

Indian pacer Mohammed Siraj is confident of putting up a strong show against defending World Test Championship (WTC) winners South Africa in the "crucial" Test series beginning here on Friday.

India, currently third in the WTC points table, drew their away series in England before beating the West Indies at home earlier in the cycle.

South Africa, on the other hand, began the defence of their WTC title with a 1-1 draw in an away Test series against Pakistan.

"This series is crucial for the new WTC cycle, especially since South Africa is the defending champion. While they drew 1-1 with Pakistan, we're confident from our own good form, we created a positive environment, performed well in England, and won against the West Indies," Siraj said on JioStar.