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Information, Public Relations & Languages Department, Haryana

India flays 'lethal' action on mariners

Jaishankar raises issue with Rubio who warns against violations in Hormuz

PRAMOD KUMAR SINGH
 New Delhi/Washington

Secretary of State Marco Rubio told External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar that the US will not tolerate any violations of its naval blockade or illegal transport of Iranian oil through the Strait of Hormuz. This message was delivered during a phone call on Friday evening, when Jaishankar strongly protested the deaths of three Indian seafarers in recent US military actions against commercial ships off the coast of Oman.

State Department spokesman Tommy Pigott said Rubio emphasised that all commercial ships should immediately follow US forces' orders to help maintain peace and security in the Strait. Rubio also made it clear that breaking the US blockade or illegally transporting Iranian oil will not be accepted.

These incidents are the first confirmed deaths among merchant sailors since the US began strictly enforcing its naval blockade on Iran in April 2026. This week, three ships with mostly Indian

crews were attacked in the Gulf of Oman near the Strait of Hormuz. The worst attack happened on Wednesday, when US forces hit the Palau-flagged oil tanker MT Settebello. Three Indian crew members died, and the Omani Navy rescued 21 others.

The three who died were Cadet Aditya Sharma from Himachal Pradesh, fitter Shivanand Chaurasia from Uttar Pradesh, and chief engineer Patnala Suresh. On June 8, US forces also turned off another Palau-flagged tanker, MT Marivex, which had 24 Indian sailors on board; all were rescued safely. A third ship with about 20 Indian crew members was targeted around June 11.

The Strait of Hormuz and the Gulf of Oman are at the centre of the current crisis. This narrow waterway carries about 20 per cent of the world's oil trade. According to US Central Command, the ships that were targeted did not follow orders, ignored several warnings, and tried to move Iranian oil against the blockade.



US secretary of State Marco Rubio with External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar File photo

US-IRAN PEACE DEAL TODAY: TRUMP

Washington: US President Donald Trump said on Saturday that a deal to end the war with Iran will be signed on Sunday and the Strait of Hormuz will be "open to all" immediately after that.

"The Deal is scheduled to get signed on Sunday, and immediately after it is signed, the Hormuz Strait is OPEN TO ALL," the President Donald Trump said in a post on Truth Social.

MODI-TRUMP TO MEET DURING G7 SUMMIT: WHITE HOUSE

ASHOKE RAJ ■ New Delhi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will hold a bilateral meeting with US President Donald Trump in France next week on the sidelines of the G7 Summit, the White House has confirmed.

The announcement comes as Prime Minister Modi departed on Saturday for a week-long official visit to

France and Slovakia. In his departure statement, PM Modi emphasised the strong and growing partnership with France.

"France occupies a special place in India's strategic vision. Earlier this year, President Macron visited India, and we elevated our relationship to a Special Global Strategic Partnership," PM

Modi said.

The Prime Minister's visit to France is expected to feature high-level engagements, including the much-anticipated meeting with President Trump. The White House confirmation underscores the importance both nations attach to the India-US strategic partnership amid evolving global challenges.

5 IAF personnel killed in AN-32 crash

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
 New Delhi

An Indian Air Force (IAF) AN-32 transport aircraft crashed on Saturday morning while landing at Jorhat Air Force Station, Assam. Five IAF personnel on board were killed. The co-pilot survived and is receiving treatment. The IAF ordered a court of inquiry to ascertain the cause of the mishap. According to initial reports, the AN-32 aircraft went down within the Air Force Station premises, triggering a fire after the crash.

The personnel who lost their lives in the crash were identified as Squadron Leader Prashant Singh, Flight Lieutenant Shubham Kumar, Sergeant Jitendra Sharma, Agniveervayu Khemaram Kumawat and Agniveervayu Danish Alam.

"An IAF AN-32 aircraft met with an accident during a routine sortie today at approximately 1000h at Jorhat, Assam. Crash site management and initial inquiries are on at this time. IAF deeply regrets the loss of lives and stands firmly with the bereaved families in this time of grief," a post from the IAF stated. Emergency



Security personnel and others stand near damaged remains of a transport aircraft of the IAF that crashed while landing in Jorhat district, Assam

response teams were immediately deployed to the site to control the blaze and assess the situation.

Popularly called old workhorse of the IAF, the Russian origin AN-32 is a rugged, twin-engine turboprop military transport aircraft that serves as the "workhorse" of the Indian Air Force. First built in the Soviet Union specifically for Indian requirements, the IAF operates a fleet of about 100 of these aircraft.

The AN-32 is designed to excel in extreme environments, functioning perfectly in high-altitude airfields and hot tropical climates. It can transport up to 7.5 tons of cargo, 50 passengers, or 42 paratroopers, and it is extensively used for supply drops in remote regions. The last AN-32 crash took place in 2019.

The latest accident comes a little over three months after another major IAF crash in Assam. On March 6, a Sukhoi-30MKI fighter aircraft on a training mission crashed in the hills of Karbi Anglong district after losing radar contact shortly after taking off from Jorhat. Both pilots on board, squadron leader Anuj and flight lieutenant Purvesh Duragkar, were killed in the crash.

PIONEER IN SHORT

ABHISHEK BANERJEE'S HOUSE RAIDED

A police raid before dawn on Saturday increased political tensions in West Bengal. Police, supported by Central Forces, searched TMC MP Abhishek Banerjee's home for several hours. Officials said they were looking for his close aide, who is connected to an alleged financial fraud. Officers from Salboni Police Station in Paschim Medinipur and Kolkata Police led the operation. As they searched for Banerjee's personal assistant, Sumit Roy, a confrontation broke out and lasted several hours.

FULL REPORT ON PS

LT GEN DHIRAJ SETH NAMED ARMY CHIEF

The Government on Saturday announced that Lieutenant General Dhiraj Seth will be the next Army Chief after incumbent General Upendra Dwivedi retires on June 30. Seth is currently the Vice Chief. The incoming Chief is an alumnus of the National Defence Academy, Khadakwasta, and was commissioned into the Armoured Corps in December 1986. Over a distinguished military career spanning nearly four decades, he has had extensive experience across the operational, strategic, capability development and institutional domains.

FULL REPORT ON PS

Govt takes possession of Jaipur Polo Ground



Security personnel stand guard at the entrance of the Jaipur Polo Ground in New Delhi on Saturday PANKAJ KUMAR

RAJESH KUMAR ■ New Delhi

The Land & Development Office (L&DO), under the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, on Saturday took possession of the prime 15.20-acre Jaipur Polo Ground in the Race Course area, located in Lutyens' Delhi. The action follows an eviction order issued on May 20, through which the L&DO sought possession of the land.

The department, however, cited its requirement for a "larger public purpose" without specifying how the newly acquired land would be used.

The takeover was executed less than 24 hours after a city court declined to grant

interim protection to the Indian Polo Association (IPA) against the Centre's order directing it to vacate the ground. Upon taking control, officials installed prominent signage declaring the land as Government property and warning against any unauthorised entry, encroachment, or construction.

The IPA termed the eviction "wrongful, arbitrary and contrary to law", and said it would pursue all available legal remedies to safeguard its rights and interests. According to the IPA, the land originally formed part of the Jaipur Estate in Delhi and belonged to the erstwhile Jaipur royal family.

UP GOVT FORMS SIT IN RAM TEMPLE TRUST ROW

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
 Lucknow

The allegations regarding donations and financial mismanagement of the Ram Temple trust in Ayodhya have stirred a hornet's nest in the politically sensitive Uttar Pradesh, where Assembly polls are due early next year.

Following the direction of Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Saturday, a three-member Special Investigation Team (SIT) was constituted to probe allegations regarding the financial management of the temple trust.

Yogi took cognisance after a request from the Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust.



21-year-old caught impersonating as Brigadier

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
 New Delhi

A 21-year-old man was arrested in Shahjahanpur, Uttar Pradesh, on charges of impersonating a Brigadier. Aryan Verma was apprehended while wearing a Brigadier's uniform and accompanied by others suspected of posing as security personnel. The arrest followed a covert operation conducted by Station Headquarters, Shahjahanpur, in coordination with local veterans.



Aryan Verma was apprehended while wearing Brigadier's uniform PIONEER PHOTO

become a doctor in the armed forces. To support this claim, he is reported to have purchased military uniforms, insignia, and related items from Noida and Gurugram.

According to officials, the operation was carried out on June 12 following two months of intelligence gathering

regarding a suspected impersonator in Shahjahanpur and surrounding areas.

Colonel JS Jaglan, Administrative Commandant of Station Headquarters Shahjahanpur, collaborated with local veterans to verify Verma's identity.

Authorities arranged for Verma to attend a function

at the Shaheed Museum under the pretext of motivating and honouring students. Upon his arrival, he was identified and taken into custody.

Officials stated that he arrived in a Tata Harrier bearing a one-star plate and an Army Headquarters flag. He was accompanied by a driver who carried a Government of India identification card and by two individuals dressed in black, reportedly posing as NSG commandos.

A search of the vehicle and its occupants led to the recovery of a forged Brigadier identification card, an AMC regimental cane, and additional military-style items. Police reported that Verma had also affixed Army insignia to his father's car.

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Classifieds

BEDKHALI NOTICE

I, Jagpal Singh, son of Mangat Singh, resident of House No. 148, Sukhna Colony, Zirakpur (Post Office: Zirakpur, District: SAS Nagar/Mohali), declare that our son Vishal Kumar is out of my control. So I disown from our from his movable and immovable properties anybody dealing with him on risk.

I, Rajkumar Sardana, son of Tekchand Sardana R/o House No. 199, Model Town, Sonapat, Teh. & Distt Sonapat do hereby solemnly declare and state that Vibhor Vohra, son of Shri Praveen Vohra R/o B-15, Tagore Road, Adarsh Nagar, New Delhi and he is my son-in-law. My relationship with him is strained, and he does not heed and obey any of my wishes. Therefore, I hereby disinherit my son-in-law from my all movable and immovable properties. From this day forward, my son-in-law shall have no right over my properties.

We, Satpal (son of Joginder Singh) and his wife Poojeetika, residing at Ward No. 15, Chheka, Tehsil Guhla, District Kaithal, hereby solemnly declare that our son, Deepu, and daughter-in-law, Karamjit Kaur, have become defiant and refuse to heed our counsel. We are disinheriting them from all our movable and immovable property. Anyone entering into any transaction with them in the future shall be solely responsible for the consequences.

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Gagandeep Singh, son of Lakhvir Singh, resident of House No. 24436, 4/A, Police Line, Guru Ki Nagri, Bathinda, declare that in my card bearing No. BFYP50001R of my father name wrongly mentioned as Singh Lachhman. My fathers correct name is Lakhvir Singh.

I, PERMILA DEVI (existing name) W/O No. 3990626P Ex Hav Narinder Singh, resident of H.No. 659/29, Vishal Nagar, District Rohtak (Haryana) declare that I have changed/amend my name spelling in my husband PPO/Disch. Book/Army Records from PERMILA DEVI (existing name) to PARMILA (Correct Name) My correct/actual DOB is 05.07.1976 instead of 03.12.1974 as per my Aadhaar Card & Pan Card. In future I shall may be known as PARMILA. I am hereby written/called as PARMILA (DOB: 05.07.1976) for all work purposes. Vide Affidavit dated 13 June 2026 before Notary Public, Rohtak.

I, Menaka Gautam W/o Rakesh Gupta, Gulab Bhawan, Gandran Lahri, Distt Pathankot (PB) declare that before marriage my name was written as Menaka Gautam and in all documents before marriage has the same name i.e. Menaka Gautam whereas after marriage my name is written as Menka Gautam Gaur. That Menaka Gautam and Menka Gautam Gaur both names pertain to one and the same person i.e. myself. Concerned note.

I, Kuldeep S/o Pritam Singh R/o H.No. 3135, GBP Superia, Derabassi, Distt. SAS Nagar, Punjab, declare that in my Policy my father name is written as Rakesh whereas his correct name is Pritam Singh.

I, Navdip Singh Samra (Holder Indian Passport No. T760308 Issued At Chandigarh) S/O Sudarsh Singh, Vpo. Lohgarh Distt. Mogra, Punjab, India 142042 And Presently Residing At 10705 Pointe Royal Dr Bakersfield, CA 93311, USA I Herby Declare That My Previous Name Was Navdeep Singh Samra. Now, I Have Changed My Name From Navdeep Singh Samra To Navdip Singh Samra With Immediate Effect. All Concerned Please Note.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Sudhir Kumar son of Sh. Ved Parkash resident of H.No. 135, Gali No. 1, New Shiva Ji Colony, Karnal-132001, have a change in my name from son Name Chirag to chirag thola

I, Sudhir Kumar son of Sh. Ved Parkash resident of H.No. 135, Gali No. 1, New Shiva Ji Colony, Karnal-132001, have a change in my Minor daughter Name Hiya Bhalala to Hiya Bholaa.

I, Dharmpreet Singh S/O Bikramjit Singh R/O Village Bhangwan P/o Datedpur, District Gurdaspur, Punjab, India Pin Code 143512, I Have Changed My Name From Dharmpreet Singh To Singh Dharmpreet Please Note. Surname As Singh And Given Name As Dharmpreet.

I, Sukhjith Singh S/O Darshan Singh R/O Vpo. Hakiampur, District Gurdaspur, Punjab, India Pin Code 143511, I Have Changed My Name From Sukhjith Singh To Singh Sukhjith Please Note. Surname As Singh And Given Name As Sukhjith.

I, Rohtas, son of Shri Nihal Singh, resident of House No. 1186A, Village and Post Office Balsemand, Tehsil and District Hisar, Haryana-125001, hereby declare that I have changed the name of my minor son from Harshit to Harshit Laura for all future purposes. In the future, he shall be known and recognized by the name Harshit Laura.

I, Rohtas, son of Shri Nihal Singh, resident of House No. 1186A, Village and Post Office Balsemand, Tehsil and District Hisar, Haryana-125001, hereby declare that I have changed the name of my minor son from Jiten to Jiten Laura for all future purposes. In the future, he shall be known and recognized by the name Jiten Laura.

I, Kamini Sharma W/O Raman Kumar R/O Village-SARTI P.O.SARTI Tehsil Dhar Kalan District Pathankot (Pb) Declare That in My Bank Account No. 8477700114193 PUNJAB GRAMIN BANK Branch Dunaera My Name Wrongly Mentioned Mamta Devi W/O Somraj Instead Of Kamini Sharma W/O Raman Kumar.

I, Renu Devi C/o Amit Kumar R/O #Village Jaidhari, Tehsil Chhachhrauli, Distt Yamuna Nagar have changed my name from Renu Devi to Renu.

I, Aastha Mehta, D/O Shri Devinder Singh, resident of Village Tuhli Jhina, Post Office Chambi, Tehsil Chaupal, District Shimla, Himachal Pradesh, have changed my name from Aastha to Aastha Mehta.

I, Devinder Singh, S/o Shri Roshan Lal, R/o Village Tuhli Jhina, P.O. Chambi, Tehsil Chaupal, District Shimla, Himachal Pradesh, have changed my name from Devinder Mehta to Devinder Singh.

I, Akbar S/o Ahmad Hussain R/o House no- 1/36, Kabri Road, Near ShriRam Mandir, Bharat Nagar, Panipat, Haryana-132103, have changed my name to Akbar Hussain for all future purpose.

I, Ahmad Hussin S/o Badlu Din R/o House no- 306/1, Kabri Road, Bharat Nagar, Panipat, Haryana-132103, have changed my name to Ahmad Hussain for all future purpose.

I, Vishal S/o Rampal R/o House no 1353, Kuldeep Nagar, Kabri Road, Panipat, Haryana-132103, have changed my name to Vishal Sain for all future purpose.

I, Sachchidanand Agrawal S/o Bhagwat Narayan R/o H. No. 28, Vijay Nagar, Orai, Orai Jalaun, Uttar Pradesh- 285001, have changed my name to Sachchidanand Agrawal for all future purpose.

I, Ashish Chhabra S/o Vijay Kumar R/O 539/14 Bhagat Singh Colony, Rohtak - 124001 declare That I have changed my name from Ashish Kumar to Ashish Chhabra for all future purposes.

I, Darshan Manik S/o Lakhmi Chand Manak R/O 238/2 Arjun Gali, Para Mohalla, Rohtak -124001 declare That I have changed my name from Darshan Lal Manak to Darshan Manik for all future purposes.

I, Meenakshi W/o Ajay Kumar Dabra R/O H.No. 24, Tagore Garden, Yamuna Nagar, P.O. Yamuna Nagar, Distt. Yamuna Nagar, have changed my minor son's name from Kavish Dabra to Kaveesh Dabra.

I, Meenakshi Dabra W/o Ajay Kumar Dabra R/O H.No. 24, Tagore Garden, Yamuna Nagar, P.O. Yamuna Nagar, Distt. Yamuna Nagar, have changed my name from Meenakshi Dabra to Meenakshi.

I, Ushman S/o Moh Saleem R/o H.No. 42, Village Mandi, Mandi(133), Yamuna Nagar, have changed my name from Ushman to Mohamad Ushman.

I, Rekha Rani W/o Vinod Kumar R/O Village Lakkari Mai Pratap Pur, Sub Tehsil Pratap Nagar, Tehsil Chhachhrauli, Distt. Yamuna Nagar, have changed my name from Rekha Rani to Rekha Devi.

I, Shivam S/o Pardeep R/O Village Tigr, P.O. Naharpur, Distt. Yamuna Nagar, have changed my name from Shivam to Shivam Rana.

I, Renu Devi C/o Amit Kumar R/O #Village Jaidhari, Tehsil Chhachhrauli, Distt Yamuna Nagar have changed my name from Renu Devi to Renu.

I, Anu Devi C/o Ravinder R/o #53, Lal dwara road, kalindi Colony, Tehsil Jagadhri, Distt Yamuna Nagar have changed my name from Anu Devi to Anu.

I, VALSALA D M/O No. 951452W Hav (Instpsl) DILEEP NATH R. AEC TRG COLLEGE & CENTRE, PIN - 908777, C/o 56 APO. In my son's service record by mistake my Name is VALSALA, while my correct Name is VALSALA D.

I, AISWARYA W/O No.95145452W Hav (Instpsl) DILEEP NATH R. AEC TRG COLLEGE & CENTRE, PIN- 908777, c/o 56 APO. In my husband's service record by mistake my Name is AISWARYA DILEEP while my correct Name is AISWARYA A.

I, REGHUNATHAN F/O No. 95145452W Hav (Instpsl) DILEEP NATH R. AEC TRG COLLEGE & CENTRE, PIN 908777, c/o 56 APO. In my son's service record by mistake my Name is RAGHUNADHAN, while my correct Name is REGHUNATHAN.

I, Sima Pandit W/O No. 15665148W late Sep Chittaranjan Pandit R/O Flat no 111, G-1, PDC, Sec 5, Panchkula, have change my daughter name in army record from Manasi Pandit to Mansi Pandit.

I, Rashpal Sharma F/O JC-524134A Sub Ajit Kumar Unit 11 Dogra, VPO Bakhar, Tehsil Sunderbani, Distt Rajouri (J&K) Pin - 185152. That my name has been wrong entered in my Son Army record as Rish Paul whereas my correct name is Rashpal Sharma.

I, Amit Chhabra, S/o Sh. Sunil Chhabra, R/o 20-21, Sanoli Road, Near Old Subji Mandi, Panipat have changed my minor daughter's name from AARNA to AARNA CHHABRA for all future purposes.

I, Pawan Narang S/o Baldev Raj R/O H.no. 3007 Jawa Palace Near Housing Board Sector 12 Panipat have changed my name from Pawan Kumar Narang To Pawan Narang for all future purposes.

I, Pinki kadyan W/o Anil kadyan R/O H.No. 1195 Near TCM School Nangal Kheri Panipat I have changed my name from Pinki Kadyan to Pinki Rani for all future purposes.

I, Utkarsh S/o Anil Kumar Kaushik R/O 526/6, Ward No. 21, Barahi Road, Bahadurgarh, Hhajiir, Haryana-124507 have changed my name to Utkarsh Kaushik.

I, Jaswinder Kaur W/o JC-569723H Ex Sub Gurbhje Singh resident of Vill. Barnala PO Gurdaspur (PB) 143521. That my husband served in The Mahar Regt from 29-01-1983 to 31-03-2010. I have changed my name from Jasbinder Kaur to Jaswinder Kaur as per Army Records of my husband. Vide Affidavit No. IN-PB56230709842223Y Dt.04-06-2026.

I, Virbal Khan S/O Babu Khan R/o Lapran, Ludhiana, Punjab-141421 have changed my name to Saleem Khan.

I, Inderjeet Randhawa alias Inderjeet Kaur Randhawa D/O Manohar Singh Sidhu W/O Hardyal Singh R/o #536, Sector 8 B, Sector 9, Chandigarh-160009 have changed my name to Inderjeet Kaur.

I, Anshu D/o Purushotam Kumar Bhardwaj R/O Ward 12 Beri Road, Mishran Mohalla, Sampla, Tehsil Sampla, Dist: Rohtak, Haryana-124501 have changed my name to Anshu Bhardwaj.

I, Ashutosh S/O Purushotam Kumar R/O 733/187 Mishran Mohalla Near Beri Marg, Sampla, Tehsil- Sampla Dist: Rohtak, Haryana-124501 have changed my name to Ashutosh Bhardwaj.

I, Ramphal S/O Rama Kant R/O Village Sair, Tehsil Guhla, District Kaithal (Haryana) declares in my matric certificate my name is written as Ramphal Sharma and in my some other documents my name is written as Ramphal Sharma both names are used for the same one person that is me. Kindly consider my name is Ramphal.

I, Santosh W/o Ramphal R/O Village Sair, Tehsil Guhla, District Kaithal (Haryana) declares in my matric certificate my name is written as Santosh Kumari and in my some other documents my name is written as Santosh. Santosh and Santosh Kumari both names are used for the same one person that is me. Kindly consider my name is Santosh.

I, Harsh Kochar S/O Parkash Chand R/O Village Ahaluwala, Jaroda, P.O. Jaroda, Tehsil Jagadhri, Distt. Yamuna Nagar, have changed my name from Harsh to Harsh Kochar.

I, Shretima Gupta W/O Late Anuj Gupta R/O H.No. 823, Sector 17, Huda, Jagadhri, Distt. Yamuna Nagar, declares that my son's name in written as Shivansh Gupta in a LIC Policy no. 47335785 instead of Shivaaya Gupta. His correct name is Shivaaya Gupta as per his Aadhar no. 352970472480. Shivansh Gupta & Shivaaya Gupta both name are one and the same person.

I, Sushant s/o Shri Surinder Kumar resident Ward No. 15, Teh Naraingarh Distt-Ambala Haryana, have changed my name from Sushant to Sushant Oberoi.

I, Sangeet Kumari w/o Raman Kumar residence VTC Ratore, P.O. Hangola Distt- Panchkula Haryana 134204 have changed my name from Sangeet Kumari to Sangeeta Kumari.

I, Suresh legally father of No.15751336F NK Vishal Bhanagude Unit 2 EW Bn C/o 56 APO permanent resident of #229, Honnihalli, Honnihalli-Taluka-Hukkeri, Honnihalli Koninkeri, Distt. Belgaum State-Karnataka-591225 declare That I have changed my name from Suresh to Suresh Nijappa Bhanagude as per my Aadhaar Card vide Affidavit No.IN-PB59048035052567Y dated 12.06.2026 before the court of Bathinda.

I, Shanta legally mother of No.15751336F NK Vishal Bhanagude Unit 2 EW Bn C/o 56 APO permanent resident of #229, Honnihalli, Honnihalli-Taluka-Hukkeri, Honnihalli Koninkeri, Distt. Belgaum State-Karnataka-591225 declare That I have changed my name from Shanta to Shanta Suresh Bhanagude as per my Aadhaar Card vide Affidavit No.IN-PB59047432084954Y dated 12.06.2026 before the court of Bathinda.

I, Kunwari Devi legally mother of No.4091859H HAV Yogesh Kumar Unit 14 Garh Rif C/o 56 APO permanent resident of Vill-Kalun, Khatyuns, Pauri Garhwal State-Uttarakhand-246164 declare That I have changed my name from Kunwari Devi to Kunwari Devi as per my Aadhaar Card vide Affidavit No.IN-PB59192068475483Y dated 12.06.2026 before the court of Bathinda.

I, Meghvati Devi legally mother of No.15722427H NK Sumit Kumar Unit 61 WEU C/o 56 APO permanent resident of Pahansu, Saharanpur, Pahansu, State-Uttar Pradesh-247451 declare That I have changed my name from Meghvati Devi to Meghvati and DOB from 01.01.1962 to 11.01.1962 as per my Aadhaar Card vide Affidavit No. IN-PB58681951149790Y dated 11.06.2026 before the court of Bathinda.

I, Gurmeet Lal Banga, son of Kartar Chand Banga, resident of village Kaslera, Tehsil Nangal, District Rupnagar, state that both the names Kartara and Kartar Chand belong to the same person, i.e. my father.

I, SAJANI (existing name) W/O No. 2864627P Ex NK (TS) Samer Singh resident of Vill & PO Balyana, Tehsil & District Rohtak (Haryana) declare that I have changed/amend my name spelling in my husband PPO/Disch. Book/Army Records from SAJANI (existing name) to SAJNO (Correct Name) My correct/actual DOB is 01.01.1953 instead of 01.07.1955 as per my Aadhaar Card & Pan Card. In future I shall may be known / written/ called as SAJNO (DOB: 01.01.1953) for all work purposes. Vide Affidavit dated 11 JUNE 2026 before Ist Class Magistrate Sampla.

I, Sanjay Kumar S/o Sh. Jagbir Singh R/o VPO Bhambhewa Tehsil Beri Distt. Jhajjar declare that I have to change the name of my minor son from Naman to Naman Ahlawat. All concerned please note.

I, Ashish Kumar S/O Sh Mohan Lal, Service No- 14647345A Rank-Hav, Resident Of Village- Bohka, P.O. Kolana, Rewari, Haryana-123102 Wants To Change My Name Is His Father Part II Order From Ashish Kumar To Ashish.

I, Mohit Kumar S/O Sh Mohan Lal, Service No- 14647345A Rank- Hav, Resident Of Village- Bohka, P.O. Kolana, Rewari, Haryana-123102 Wants To Change My Name Is His Father Part II Order From Mohit Kumar To Mohit.

I, Anjana W/o Kuldeep Kumar r/o H.No. 323/15, Krishna Colony, Safidon Road, Near Kundan Cinema, Jind declare that I have changed my name from Anjana to Anjana Dhawan for all future purposes.

I, Sarabti W/o Om Niwas, House No. 1752, Mauli Jagran Complex, Chandigarh have changed my minor son name from Vansh to Bans

I, Sunil Goyal S/O Jagdish Prasad House No. 171/1, first floor, Shivdialk Enclave, manimajra, Chandigarh have changed my name from Sunil Goyal to Sunil kumar

I, Sukhbir Sahi D/o Jatinder Singh Sahi, House No. 1856, Sector 34-D, Chandigarh have changed my name from Sukhbir Sahi to Sukhbir Kaur Sahi.

I, J. S. Sahi S/o Sant Singh Sahi, House No. 1856, Sector 34-D, Chandigarh have changed my name from J. S. Sahi to Jatinder Singh Sahi.

I, Harpal Singh S/O Guljar Singh R/O village Surwind Tehsil Patthi Distt. TarnTaran hereby inform that Singh is my Surname while Harpal is my given name. Concerned please note.

I, Meenu W/o Mukesh Mittal House No. 874, Near Sarkari School, Mahadev Colony, Panipat, Haryana- 132103, have changed my name to Meenu Mittal for all future purpose.

I, hitherto Known as Shweta Gupta wife of Late Arun Gupta daughter of Ramesh Sakhuja residing at H.No.M-14, Green Avenue, Near Shakti Park, District Amritsar Punjab-143001 have changed my name and Shall hereafter be known as Shweta Sakhuja

I, Rohini Handa W/o Pardeep Kapoor R/o 22, Gali No.4, S.U.S Colony, Bhada Kali Mandir, O/s Gate Khazana, Amritsar have changed my name from Rohini Handa to Rohini Kapoor

I, Pardeep Kumar S/o Shm Sunder R/O H.No.126/9, Chheharta Road, Dhakha Colony, Khandwala, Amritsar have changed my name from Pardeep Kumar to Pardeep Kumar Sharma

I, Varinder Singh S/O Paramjit Singh R/o 151, Focal Point, Mehta Road, Amritsar have changed my daughter's name from Harleen to Harleen Sodhi

I, Varinder Singh S/O Paramjit Singh R/o 151, Focal Point, Mehta Road, Amritsar have changed my daughter's name from Jessica to Jessica Sodhi

I, Rakesh Kumar S/O Yashpal Babbar Resident of 376-A, 100ft Road, Azad Nagar, Amritsar-1, Amritsar. I have changed my name from Rakesh Kumar to Rakesh Babbar. All concerned please note.

I, Shishpal Singh S/O Manpreet Singh R/o VPO Chamaryi Tehsil Ajnala District Amritsar have declare that Shishpal is my Given name and Singh is my Surname

I, Jugraj Singh S/O Buta Singh R/O Village Sarhali Manda, PO & Tehsil Patthi District Tarn Taran have declare that Jugraj is my Given name and Singh is my Surname

I, Seema spouse of No 15505262P Dfr Rkh Pal R/O Gadhil Patti, Near Pakki Chopal, Godhi, Palwal, Haryana-121106 have changed date of birth from 05.04.1991 to 05.09.1991 Vide affidavit No.IN-PB59533102960137Y Dt.13.06.2026 before notary public Amritsar

I, Nupur Patil daughter of No 15479735H Dfr Patil Santosh Shamrao R/O Village Post Minche (Khurd) The Bhudargad Distt Kalhapur, Maharashtra-416223 have changed my name from Nupur Patil to Nupur Santosh Patil Vide affidavit No.IN-PB5953314558907Y Dt.13.06.2026 before notary public Amritsar

I, Sukhwinder Kaur spouse of No JC 434764Y Sub Gurmit Singh R/o 9 Punjab C/o 56 APO have changed my name from Sukhwinder Kaur to Sukhwinder Kaur Vide Affidavit No IN-PB59481348738180Y Dt.13.06.2026 before notary public Amritsar

I, Lalita legally mother of No.17040155W NK Aman Singh Unit 668 Army Avn Sgn (49 RFA Ft) C/o 56 APO presently residing at Vill-Bihara No.2, Teh-Rampur Baghelan, Distt. Satna, State-Madhya Pradesh-485111 declare that in my son's Army record my name was entered as Lalita Singh but my actual name is Lalita as per my Aadhaar Card please correct this error vide Affidavit No.DD225115 and DD225116 dated 09.05.2026 before the court of Satna (MP).

I, Ramandeep Singh S/O Sh. Amrik Singh Bhinder R/O H.No. 1498, Sector-7, Urban Estate, Kurukshetra (Haryana) has changed my name from Ramandeep Singh to Ramandeep Singh Bhinder.

The Buffet Box / Renée Ranchan

A Roof That Waits, A Buffet That Doesn't



Renée Ranchan

One does not return to the mountains merely because they are beautiful — though they are, in that unbothered, almost aloof way that makes you feel both welcome and slightly irrelevant. One returns because something tugs — not loudly, not insistently — but enough to have you packing a bag before you've filled up your car's tank.

My second trip to Shimla in fifteen days had very little to do with leisure. The hills stood as they always do — calm as grazing cattle — but this time, they were also a ledger of unfinished business.

So I had just come back to Shimla — which is where I originally am from — and yet, I could not stay in my own house.

Because Repairs. What begins as “just a little fixing” has a way of growing legs. Before you know it, you are on the roof, balancing on corrugated tin, negotiating with vertigo, wondering — not entirely in jest — whether you have come for a brief visit or to meet your Maker.

Inside, the situation offers little consolation. Nothing quite exists as it should. Things are either dust-veiled, covered, or missing altogether. Paint peeling off walls. A ceiling that make you think a bucket should rest on the floor, just in case.

And yet, it does not feel like being turned away. The house, in its own silent fashion, seems to say — not yet. As though it wishes to gather itself before receiving you

again, to have the honour of roofing you properly. And you, in return, know you will come back — not merely to be there, but to be held by it, as you once were. First the essentials, then the rest. One does not put the cart before the horse, right?!

The house stood where it always had, carrying time rather than resisting it. The corrugated tin roof, once neatly aligned, had weathered more than its fair share — winds that rattled through the night, snow that settled heavily, rain that found its way into corners uninvited. Sheets had shifted slightly, screws had loosened their hold, and there was work to be done — proper work, not cosmetic distraction.

Kulwinder — the contractor — met me with a readiness that quickly unravelled into a catalogue of concerns. The bathroom was too small, the fittings unsuitable, the pipes too elderly. Each sentence seemed to open another door rather than close one. One was gently steered towards conversations with the plumber, the mason, the man who knew how things ran beneath the surface. It felt, at times, like being sent round in circles — polite, but persistent.

Plumbing, as ever, remains a language one listens to, rather than understands. One listens, nods, attempts to follow — and accepts, eventually, that some things reveal themselves only when one turns on the taps...

Still — one persists. There is, after all, a private belief I hold close to: the strength of purpose bullies the impossible into submission.

So, for the moment, I relocate — a charming resort, barely twenty-five minutes away. Close enough to return each day, far enough to recover one's balance.

And then — Breakfast. If there is one thing I will go to bat for, it is this meal. After nearly half a year without household help, where even small routines feel like herding cats, breakfast be-

comes less of an indulgence and more of restoration.

I and my holidaying husband arrive as we believe one should — bathed, dressed, laces tied. The mountain air does the rest — it opens the appetite with an enthusiastic flourish. And what a spread it was!

Not merely ample — excessive, in the most unapologetic way. A table groaning under the weight of choice. Waffles, pancakes, hash browns, baked tomatoes filled with grated cheese. Aloo bhaji alongside puffy puris that would give a birthday balloon a run for its money. Coffee of different countries holding their ground. Juices lined up — watermelon, orange, rhododendron — each with its own tap, quietly waiting to be turned. The apple-beetroot-carrot nectar stands bright and ready.

A bakery counter — muffins, croissants, danishes. A sandwich station. Idli, dosa, sambar. Cereals and porridge. An industrial toaster that could not be more cooperative if it tried. Butter, homemade jam. Everything exactly where it should be! And yet — nobody wants to get up. “Can you bring me toast?” Toast. The toaster is practically waving at you.

There are already eggs. Many eggs. Loyal, waiting eggs.

A gentleman, plate already burdened to the point of collapse, decides that four sunny-side-up eggs are merely a beginning. He does not rise. He signals. The attendant becomes courier, interpreter, intermediary — all in one breath.

Meanwhile, the process slows. Instructions travel second-hand. Something slips. Something returns. And from across the room comes the inevitable refrain —

“How long will it take?!”

Then the small theatre of impatience. A tap on the table. Another, firmer. A foot shifting, then striking lightly. Fingers snapping — not once, but repeatedly. A voice calling

out — “hello” — as though summoning a personal butler rather than addressing a human being already in motion.

The attendants — Saurabh, Aditya, Rohan, Subakshi — move through this remarkable composure. Their name tags sit slightly askew one nearly upturned down, as though fastened in haste at an hour when most are still asleep. Their day began at five. By the time we arrive, fresh as daisies, they have already shouldered the lion's share of the day's work.

You begin to notice what is easy to miss. A step that carries weight. A shoulder that dips. A pause that lingers just a fraction longer than it ought to. And yet — the smile remains. The tone, even. The manner, intact. Training, certainly!

At the egg station, pink slips line the counter, trembling slightly with movement. Orders stack up — Spanish omelette, cheese, masala, no onion, extra chilli, pink salt only, minimal oil. The young chef works steadily, keeping pace as best he can. But when orders are relayed rather than placed, confusion is hardly surprising.

Guests keep drifting in — some in sleepwear that lingered a little too close to the bed it had left behind. Hair untended, faces not quite awake, expressions carrying the residue of sleep.

This is not à la carte. This is not a seven-course procession brought to your table. This is a buffet of 100 plus dishes to bulk up your plate.

You get up! You serve yourself! That is the arrangement!

By the time the restaurant settles — plates cleared cups emptied — the question remains, stubborn as

AAP Government's Days in Punjab Are Numbered, BJP Set to Form Next Government: Haryana CM

PNS ■ Abohar / Chandigarh

Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini on Saturday attacked the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government in Punjab, asserting that its days in power are numbered and that the countdown to its exit has already begun. Citing the BJP's emphatic victory in the Abohar Municipal Corporation elections, he said the result was a clear indication of the political change taking shape in Punjab and expressed confidence that the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) would form the next government in the state.

Stating that Punjab has suffered immensely due to



the drug menace, Saini assured that once the BJP government assumes office in the state, not a single person involved in the drug trade would be spared and allowed to operate. He was addressing the OBC Mahasammelan in Abohar, Punjab.

Punjab BJP President, Kewal Singh Dhillion, former Punjab BJP President, Sunil Jakhar and several senior BJP leaders were present on the occasion.

He launched a strong critique of the Punjab Government's much-publicised 'Yudh Nashian Virudh' campaign, describing it as a complete failure and alleging that the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government was more interested in slogans

and publicity than in delivering results on the ground.

Saini said that the promise of providing Rs.1,000 per month to women had turned out to be nothing more than a political gimmick, pointing out that even the registration process for the scheme had yet to begin. He also accused the Punjab Government of subjecting Abohar to blatant political neglect, saying that allocating merely Rs.5 crore to the Municipal Corporation amounted to an insult to the people of the city. He remarked that the Haryana Government had provided more funds than this even to some of its smallest villages.

Referring to the Punjab Chief Minister, Bhagwant

Singh Mann's claim that 65,000 jobs had been provided in Punjab over five years, Saini said the Haryana Government had provided 55,000 jobs to the youth of Haryana in just one year.

Saini said the BJP has never viewed the OBC community merely as a vote bank but has empowered it through meaningful representation and leadership opportunities. He shared that there are 27 OBC ministers in the Union Council of Ministers under the Prime Minister's leadership and that five BJP-ruled states currently have Chief Ministers from the OBC community. He described this as a matter of immense pride and honour for the entire OBC community.

In daylight murder, masked men riddle pharmacy cashier with 13 rounds in Chandigarh

PNS ■ Chandigarh

Two masked men shot dead a 45-year-old pharmacy cashier in broad daylight in the Sector 11 area here on Saturday.

In CCTV footage of the incident, the two men were standing near the cash counter of the chemist shop. When one of them took out a semi-automatic pistol and fired thirteen rounds at the victim, Janki Das, standing near the cash counter, from very close range. Das was a native of Himachal Pradesh and was currently living in Dhanas here.

The assailants fled from the crime spot on a motorcycle as their third accomplice was waiting outside, the police said. A few other customers are also seen present inside the shop at the time of the incident.

Notably, the main market area of Sector 11 has several chemist shops that see heavy footfall daily, as the place where the incident took place lies adjoining PGMER here.

Briefing reporters outside the incident site, Chandigarh Deputy Inspector General of Police, Sumer Pratap Singh said the incident took place around 2:30 pm. When asked if any extortion and gangster angle was being seen in the incident, Singh said, "Investigations are at a preliminary stage, and it is too soon to say anything, but we are exploring all angles" He said the shop owner had not received any threat, but still we are exploring all angles.

Bhagwant Mann Govt committed to supporting traders, shopkeepers & businesses: Kejriwal

PNS ■ JALANDHAR

Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) National Convener Arvind Kejriwal, accompanied by Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann, on Saturday directly engaged with traders, shopkeepers and business owners during a meeting of the Punjab State Traders Commission (PSTC) in Jalandhar.



Terming small traders as the backbone of the economy, the AAP Supremo said that while previous governments ignored their issues and subjected them to harassment and extortion, the Bhagwant Mann Government has ended such practices and established the PSTC to ensure that even the smallest problems faced by the trading community are addressed promptly and effectively.

Meanwhile, CM Mann said Punjab has broken free from decades of exploitation and misgovernance, ushering in an era of transparent,

Explaining the purpose of the Traders Commission, the AAP Chief emphasised, "To ensure that the voice of a small trader reaches the Chief Minister directly, we created the Punjab State Traders Commission. There is a commission at the state level, district level, and constituency level. Around 800 markets across Punjab, both large and small, have been identified. Meetings have been conducted with traders in all these markets. Whatever demands traders raised, whether exposed electricity wires, broken roads, non-functional streetlights, lack of toilets, lack of drinking water, or any other issue, all those concerns are documented and sent directly to Bhagwant Mann. A dedicated team in the Chief Minister's Office ensures that even the smallest problem is resolved."

Addressing the gathering, CM Mann said Punjab has witnessed a historic shift in governance, where elected representatives are directly

engaging with people and seeking feedback after completing four years in office, something no previous government ever dared to do. "While governments traditionally retreat into official chambers after years in power, the overwhelming affection and appreciation being received from people across Punjab has further strengthened the resolve of the AAP Government to work tirelessly for public welfare," he added.

Describing traders as the backbone of Punjab's economy, he said successive governments ignored their concerns and treated them merely as a source of revenue and political funding. "For decades, small traders and shopkeepers were neglected because nobody bothered about their genuine issues. The Punjab State Traders Commission has been constituted to create a congenial environment for business and ensure that every

legitimate concern of the trading community is addressed promptly," he said.

Highlighting key achievements of his government, Mann said nearly 90% of Punjab households are receiving free electricity, providing major relief to families. He further noted that the Punjab Government took the historic decision of purchasing a private thermal plant in the larger public interest to ensure affordable power for consumers.

The Chief Minister said that when the AAP Government assumed office, canal water reached only around 22% of Punjab's cultivable area, whereas today coverage has increased to more than 80 per cent. "Due to sustained efforts by the government, groundwater levels have improved by two to four metres in several areas, reversing a long-standing trend of depletion," he added.

BRIEFS

TWO LINKED TO JAILED GANGSTER HELD IN BATHINDA; TWO PISTOLS RECOVERED

CHANDIGARH: Punjab Police's Anti-Gangster Task Force (AGTF) has apprehended two individuals and recovered two country-made .32 bore pistols along with five live cartridges from their possession, Director General of Police (DGP) Punjab Gaurav Yadav said on Saturday. Those arrested have been identified as Kuldeep Singh alias Cheema and Abhimaan Singh alias Abhi. Yadav said that preliminary investigation has revealed that both the arrested accused are linked to a criminal network operated by a jailed gangster active in the Ferozepur region. He said that further investigation is underway to establish backward and forward linkages of the network to identify other associates involved. Sharing operational details, ADGP Promod Ban said that a team from AGTF Bathinda was on routine patrolling duty when they noticed two suspicious persons sitting in the bushes on the right side of a slip road at the Cantonment Bypass Ring Road in Bathinda. On noticing the police party, both individuals became nervous and attempted to conceal themselves, he said, while adding that sensing suspicion, police apprehended them and during frisking, illegal weapons along with live ammunition were recovered from their possession.

AAP COUNTDOWN HAS BEGUN, SOONER THAN EXPECTED: WARRING

CHANDIGARH: Punjab Congress president Amarinder Singh Raja Warring on Saturday said that the Aam Aadmi Party government's final countdown had started, sooner than expected and reaffirmed that the party will not touch the double digit mark in the ensuing assembly elections. He also said that the AAP supremo Arvind Kejriwal was daydreaming about Bhagwant Mann becoming the Chief Minister once again, saying, people of Punjab have already had enough and they want to get rid of this government, sooner the better. "Take it in writing from me that what to speak of forming the government, the AAP will not even touch the double digit mark this time and may be it will not be able to find enough candidates to field in these elections", he said in a statement, adding, "over half of their sitting MLAs are just waiting for the right time to jump from the sinking ship". He said that if the AAP leadership believes that it can once again befool the people of Punjab, it was badly mistaken. "You can fool some people some time, some people all the time, all people some time, but you can't fool all the people all the time", he told the AAP leadership.

HARYANA CABINET MEETING ON JUNE 22

Chandigarh: A meeting of the Haryana Cabinet will be held on June 22 under the chairmanship of Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini. The meeting will take place at 11:00 a.m. in the Main Committee Room on the fourth floor of the Haryana Civil Secretariat, Chandigarh, a statement issued here said.

CITCO SWITCHES TO PNG AT THREE HOTELS

Chandigarh: In a step towards environmental sustainability and operational efficiency, Chandigarh Industrial and Tourism Development Corporation (CITCO) has commenced the use of Piped Natural Gas (PNG) at its three flagship properties - Hotel Mountview, Hotel Shivallikview, and Hotel Parkview. The initiative is expected to benefit hotel operations by ensuring a reliable fuel source for kitchens while contributing to a cleaner environment. The move also reinforces CITCO's efforts to modernise its hospitality infrastructure and adopt best practices in energy management. CITCO Managing Director Syed Abid Rasheed Shah, said, "The introduction of PNG in our hotels reflects CITCO's commitment to sustainability and responsible resource management. By adopting cleaner energy solutions, we are not only improving operational efficiency but also contributing towards a greener and healthier Chandigarh. This initiative is another step in our continuous efforts to upgrade infrastructure, embrace environmentally responsible practices, and provide high-quality hospitality services to our guests."

HIMACHAL PRADESH GOVT APPROVES GRAZING POLICY 2026

SHIMLA: The state government has given its nod to Himachal Pradesh Grazing Policy 2026 to reform pastoral governance to align with ecological resilience and economic empowerment to improve the livelihoods of graziers and strengthen the rural economy. The new policy shifts the state away from rigid and static restrictions and introduces a dynamic, science-based approach that views responsible grazing as a tool to sustain grassland productivity, enhance soil carbon stocks and preserve biodiversity, a statement said. "Grazing Policy 2026 reflects our commitment to 'Hariyali bhi, Khushhali bhi'. It protects our pastoral traditions and secures the future of livestock-dependent families, said Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu.

Haryana CS Reviews Preparations for NEET Re-Examination Scheduled on June 21

PNS ■ Chandigarh

Commissioners to ensure foolproof security arrangements at every examination centre and eliminate any possibility of irregularities during the examination. He instructed that timely inspections of all centres be conducted to ensure the availability of electricity, drinking water, sanitation facilities, medical assistance and other essential amenities. He further directed Deputy Commissioners to coordinate closely with officials of the Police, Education, Health and Transport Departments to ensure the seamless conduct of the examination.

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MEGA E-AUCTION SALE NOTICE

ZONAL OFFICE : BATHINDA

PUBLIC NOTICE FOR E-AUCTION FOR SALE OF MOVABLE & IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES

LAST DATE & TIME OF SUBMISSION OF EMD AND DOCUMENTS (ONLINE) ON/BEFORE 27.06.2026 UPTO 04:00 PM

Sale of immovable property mortgaged to Bank under Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest (SARFAESI) Act, 2002 (No. 54 of 2002) Whereas, the Authorized Officer of Punjab & Sind Bank had taken possession of the following property/ies pursuant to the notice issued under Sec 13(2) of the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest (SARFAESI) Act, 2002 in the following loan accounts with our Branch with a right to sell the same on "AS IS WHERE IS BASIS AND AS IS WHAT IS BASIS" for realization of Bank's dues. The sale will be done by the undersigned through e-auction platform provided at the <https://baanknet.com/>

| DESCRIPTION OF MOVABLE/IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|-----------------|--|--|---|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------|----------------------|------------|-----|
| Name of the Branch and Borrower's/Guarantor's | Amount Outstanding | | Details of Property/ies | Reserve Price | EMD Submission Account Details | Date/Time of Inspection of Property | Date/Time of e-Auction | QR Property Photo | QR Property Location | QR BankNet | |
| | Demand Notice Date | Possession Date | | | | | | | | | EMD |
| 1. Maur Mandi M/s Shree Ganesh Jewellers Key Person : Name : Sh. Rajinder Singh S/o Gurdev Singh (Prop.) (Borrower), 1. Sh. Gaurav Sony S/o Rajinder Singh, 2.Sh. Balvir Singh S/o Pritam Singh (Guarantor) | Rs. 7,89,510.80 as on 31.05.2024 + Interest up to date + Litigation & other expenses | 28.02.2024 | Equitable Mortgage of Property 0 Kanal 05 Marla i.e. 5/9 share of 0 Kanal 09 Marla comprised in Khewat Khatoni no. 620/1614 Khasra no. 318/00 min (0-9) bearing Transfer deed no. 834 dated 14.08.2017 registered Maur , property situated at rakba maur kalan as per jamabandi for the year 2013-14 and construction thereon in the name of Rajinder Singh S/o Gurdev Singh Bounded a s: North : 30'-00" Gurmail Kaur W/o Roshan Singh, South : 30'-0" Gurdev Singh, East: 43'-09" Street, West: 43'-09" Avtar Singh S/o Gurdev Singh. | Rs. 20.50 Lacs | A/c.No.80105040070003 Name of Account: NEFT INWARD STP PARKING ACCOUNT IFSC Code: PSIB0008010 | 26.06.2026 10.00 AM to 04.00 PM | 29.06.2026 12.00 PM to 04.00 PM | | | | |
| | | | | Rs. 2.05 Lacs | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | Rs. 0.20 Lacs | | | | | | |
| 2. Bariwala Mandi M/s Pawan Kumar & Sons. Sh. Munish Kumar S/o Pawan Kumar, Ward No. 5, Grain Market, Mandi Bariwala, Tehsil & Distt Sri Muktsar Sahib. | Rs. 37,86,300.05 as on 29.02.2024 + Interest up to date+ Litigation & other expenses | 22.04.2021 | Commercial c u m Residential Property measuring 1884 Sq. ft or 209.33 Sq. Yds as per Title Deed No.304 dated 10.07.2014 for (7Marla 2Sarsa) Khewat No. 645, Khatoni No.823, Khasra No. 296 (0-8), H a d b a s t No. 93, Jamabandi Year 2009-10 situated at Ward No. 5, Grain Market , Bariwala, Teh & Distt. Sri Muktsar Sahib. | Rs. 65.00 Lacs | A/c.No.80105040070003 Name of Account: NEFT INWARD STP PARKING ACCOUNT IFSC Code: PSIB0008010 | 26.06.2026 10.00 AM to 04.00 PM | 29.06.2026 12.00 PM to 04.00 PM | | | | |
| | | | | Rs. 6.50 Lacs | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | Rs. 0.20 Lacs | | | | | | |
| 3. Barnala Manjit Kaur W/o Gurjit Ram, Resident of Bazigar Basti, Harigarh Tehsil & District Barnala (Borrower), Gurjit Ram S/o Vadhwa Ram Resident of Bazigar Basti (Guarantor) | Rs. 6,65,658.22 as on 11.11.2022 + Interest up to date + Litigation & other expenses | 11.11.2022 | Equitable Mortgage of property measuring 17 marlas (17/1832 share of 91 kanal 12 marlas) Comprises in Khewat Khata No. 75/112 (as per Jamabandi for year 2007-08), Khasra No. 17/14/1/7-11 15/21/1-6, 9, 74/9/8-0, 107-12, 12/2/0-12, 13/1/7-15, 17/7-16, 18/8-0, 77/12/17-7, 88/1/12/2-4, 10/8-0, 89/5/1-17, 6/7-12, 7/2-3, 14/2/2-17, 15/1/5-17, village harigarh, Tehsil Dhanaula and District Barnala vide Sale Deed no. 154 Dated 02-05-2016 bounded as under:- East : 65'-0" Ragbir Singh Alias Bhola, West: 65'-0" Bahi 11' Wide, North: 72'-0" Sml Saroj Bala, South: 72'-0" Street 20' Wide | Rs. 17.50 Lacs | A/c.No.80105040070003 Name of Account: NEFT INWARD STP PARKING ACCOUNT IFSC Code: PSIB0008010 | 26.06.2026 10.00 AM to 04.00 PM | 29.06.2026 12.00 PM to 04.00 PM | | | | |
| | | | | Rs. 1.75 Lacs | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | Rs. 0.20 Lacs | | | | | | |
| 4. Raman Mandi M/S BS Enterprises , Prop. Beant Singh (Borrower), Mithi Singh S/o Heera Singh & Jaskaran Singh (Guarantor) | Rs. 10,00,162 as on 30.11.2025 + Interest up to date+ Litigation & other expenses | 05.11.2024 | Equitable Mortgage of residential property measuring 00 kanal 04 marla i.e. 10/59 share of property measuring 01 Kanal 03 Marlas 5.40 Sarsal is equal to 00 kanal 04 marla, Khewat No 757 khatoni no. 1221 Khasra 581 MIN (1-3-5.40) situated at Raman, Tehsil Talwandi Sabo Distt. Bathinda | Rs. 19.45 Lacs | A/c.No.80105040070003 Name of Account: NEFT INWARD STP PARKING ACCOUNT IFSC Code: PSIB0008010 | 26.06.2026 10.00 AM to 04.00 PM | 29.06.2026 12.00 PM to 04.00 PM | | | | |
| | | | | Rs. 1.94 Lacs | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | Rs. 0.20 Lacs | | | | | | |
| 5. Bathinda M/s Mann Chemicals & Oil Mills Partners, 1. Sh. Karamyog Singh Mann, 2. Sh. Kanwar Sikander Singh Mann Gaurantor's : Mr. Hari Singh S/o Harpal Singh | Rs. 1,02,582,381.35 as on 31.08.2025 + Interest up to date + Litigation & other expenses | 02.09.2024 | 1.) Mortgage of immovable property i.e. Complete land and building of residential property bearing MC No.MCB-Z-4-04501 situated at House No. 16588 Harpal Nagar Bathinda measuring 1000 Sq. Yds. = 01 Bighas 0 Biswas Kham i.e. 1/18 share of 18 Bighas Kham comprised in Khata No. 3719/19292 Khasra No. 2127/3/2 min area of Patti Mehna Hadbast No.70 Gali No.2 Harpal Nagar Tehsil and District Bathinda owned by Sh Karamyog Singh Mann (1/2 share) and Sh. Kanwar Sikander Singh Mann (1/2 share) owned vide registered Transfer Deed No.5243 dated 27.09.2017 | 1.) 315.00 Lacs 2.) 285.00 Lacs 3.) 1107.97 Lacs | A/c.No.80105040070003 Name of Account: NEFT INWARD STP PARKING ACCOUNT IFSC Code: PSIB0008010 | 26.06.2026 10.00 AM to 04.00 PM | 29.06.2026 12.00 PM to 04.00 PM | | | | |
| | | | | Rs. 170.79 Lacs | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | Rs. 0.20 Lacs | | | | | | |
| 2.) Mortgage of immovable property i.e. Complete land and building of residential property bearing MC no. MCB-Z-4-04405 situated at Harpal Nagar Gali No 2 Bathinda measuring 1200 Sq Yds = 01 Bighas 4 Biswas Kham comprised in Khata No. 3719/19292 Khasra No. 2127/3/2 min area of Patti Mehna Hadbast No.70 Gali No.2 Harpal Nagar Tehsil & District Bathinda, owned by Sh Karamyog Singh Mann (1/2 share) and Sh. Kanwar Sikander Singh Mann (1/2 share) vide registered Transfer Deed No. 10646 dated 14.03.2018. | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 3.) Mortgage of immovable property i.e. Complete land and building of bounded plot property bearing MC no. MCB-Z-4-04395 situated at near Hotel Sapphire Barnala Bypass Road Bathinda measuring 1940 Sq Yds i.e. 01 Bighas 19 Biswas comprised in Khata No. 3719/19292 Khasra No. 2127/3/2 min area of Patti Mehna (Vaka Rakba Barnala Bypass & Gali No. 2 Harpal Nagar) Hadbast No.70 Tehsil and District Bathinda owned by Sh. Karamyog Singh Mann (1/2 share) Sh. Kanwar Sikander Singh Mann (1/2 share) vide registered Transfer Deed No. 2018-19/23/1/3450 dated 16.11.2018. | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | |

EMD To Be Transferred By Bidders in Their Own Wallet Provided On E-auction Portal i.e. <https://baanknet.com/> By NEFT/RTGS/Challan

Details of Account in Which Remaining Amount After EMD is to Be Deposited Through RTGS/NEFT: A/c Name- NEFT inward STP Parking Account;

A/c Number: 80105040070003 ; IFSC Code: PSIB0008010

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TMC crisis deepens as MP Sudip Bandyopadhyay may join rebels

PRAMOD KUMAR SINGH
■ New Delhi/Kolkata

Senior Trinamool Congress (TMC) MP Sudip Bandyopadhyay arrived in Delhi on Saturday and met Union Minister Bhupendra Yadav, along with rebel MP Satabdi Roy.

This move has fueled speculation that Bandyopadhyay, once seen as one of Mamata Banerjee's closest allies, is joining the party's dissident group. Bandyopadhyay, who represents Kolkata Uttar and was previously TMC's Lok Sabha leader, came to the capital as reports of behind-the-scenes talks surfaced.

Videos of him travelling with Satabdi Roy and entering Bhupendra Yadav's home, the BJP's Bengal in-charge, have spread widely online. This comes just weeks after TMC's heavy defeat in the West Bengal Assembly elections, sparking internal unrest. The current crisis began after TMC's heavy defeat in the April 2026 Assembly elections. The BJP won a landslide, taking 207-208 seats and ending TMC's 15-year rule.

TMC was left with only 80 seats, and Mamata Banerjee lost her own seat. Sudendu Adhikari, who left TMC years ago, became Chief Minister.

The loss revealed serious divisions within the party. Reports highlighted frustration over claims of family control, governance problems, and the rising influence of Mamata's nephew, Abhishek Banerjee.

The rebellion started at the State level.

A fight over the Leader of the Opposition post led to claims that Abhishek Banerjee's nomination letter had fake signatures.



Expelled MLA Ritabrata Banerjee and others filed a complaint, leading to an FIR. On June 3, 58 of TMC's 80 MLAs supported Ritabrata as Leader of the Opposition.

The Assembly Speaker accepted this, letting the rebels set up a parallel group. They said they were still loyal to Mamata but opposed 'family rule.'

The rift has now reached Parliament. A group of 19-20 TMC Lok Sabha MPs, led by Kakoli Ghosh Dastidar, says it represents the majority of the party's parliamentary wing.

They have written to Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla seeking recognition as a separate group, separate seating, and the right to support the BJP-led NDA from outside without formally merging. Prominent names associated with the rebel camp include Satabdi Roy, Saayoni Ghosh, Yusuf Pathan and others.

The rebels argue that they have crossed the two-thirds threshold needed to avoid immediate disqualification. Under Bandyopadhyay's move is a big setback for the TMC leadership.

As a longtime ally of Mamata, he lends weight to claims that dissent is widespread. However, party loyalists have rejected talk of a split. Leaders like Kalyan Banerjee have accused the rebels of being 'bought' by the BJP and have threatened action under the anti-defection law.

They insist the party is still united under Mamata Banerjee and say the rebels' numbers are exaggerated or based on fake support. The next few days will be crucial.

The Speaker's decision on June 15 could make the parliamentary split official. More high-profile exits could further weaken TMC.

With by-polls expected soon and rebels calling themselves the 'real TMC' and saying they are open to working with the NDA, Mamata Banerjee is facing one of the toughest challenges of her career.

Swift political developments with the TMC have drawn attention in Kolkata and Delhi, with all eyes now on whether Sudip Bandyopadhyay's visit to Delhi marks the beginning.

NDA Govt working towards youth-led development: PM

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday said the NDA Government is strongly working towards youth-led development and one of the "defining features of the last 12 years" has been Indian youth's confidence in pursuing their aspirations.

Modi also said India's youth are making their mark across various sectors, from science and technology to manufacturing, space, semiconductors and drones.

The prime minister said it is heartening to see young Indians contributing to areas that will shape the future of the nation and the world.

"The NDA Government is one that is strongly working towards youth-led development. One of the defining features of the last 12 years has been the confidence



with which India's youth have pursued their aspirations," he said in a post on X. The Modi Government has completed 12 years in power.

The prime minister said through initiatives such as Startup India, Digital India, Skill India and Atal Innovation Mission, an ecosystem has emerged that encourages innovation, entrepreneurship and enterprise.

"Today, India is among the world's leading start-up destinations, and many of these success stories are being scripted by our Yuva Shakti and that

too from smaller towns and villages," he said. Modi further said Indian youth have also brought immense glory to the nation in the field of sports and in numerous international competitions, adding that young Indian athletes have consistently enhanced national pride.

"At the same time, a stronger sporting ecosystem, better infrastructure and greater support for athletes are creating new opportunities for young talent and encouraging them to pursue sports," he said.

Cities key to realising developed India vision by 2047: PK Mishra

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

Indian cities must be economically productive, environmentally sustainable, socially inclusive, technologically advanced and institutionally resilient to realise the vision of a developed nation by 2047, PK Mishra, Principal Secretary to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, said on Saturday.

Addressing the golden jubilee celebrations of the National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA), Mishra said urban development must be at the core of India's transfor-



mation as the country moves towards becoming a developed nation.

"The aspiration of Viksit Bharat is not only to build a larger economy but to build a nation that is more prepared, more inclusive, and more capable of navigating uncertainties with confidence.

"India's development pathway must therefore move beyond resilience towards building adaptive and anti-fragile systems that not only withstand disruptions, but also become stronger through change in the midst of uncertainty," Mishra said.

He also said that as cities remain at the forefront of climate-related stresses, future urban development must focus on proactive planning, nature-based solutions, green infrastructure and sustainable urban systems to build resilient, inclusive and climate-sensitive cities.

India successfully tests indigenous multi-layered BMD system

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

India has successfully demonstrated its indigenous Multi-layered Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD) and achieved a major milestone by engaging the incoming targets. The systems are designed and developed with latest technologies to address the emerging missile threats emanating from distances ranging from 2,000 km to 5,000 km.

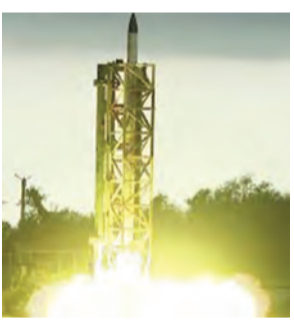
With the latest three consecutive tests on June 10 and 11, India has entered the elite group of nations having BMD capability to engage up to long range Ballistic Missiles including Intermediate Range Ballistic Missile (IRBM).

The other countries have this niche capability include the US, UK, China, France and Russia.

The maiden flight-test of the Naval Anti-Ship Missile-Medium Range (NASM-MR), meanwhile, was also carried out successfully, the defence ministry said here on Saturday.

Giving details, it said the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has successfully demonstrated multiple crucial technologies bolstering the nation's defence capabilities against different types of enemy threats.

Three consecutive flight-tests were conducted on June 10 and 11 to demonstrate multi-layered defence against long range ballistic missiles and anti-ship capability at



medium range. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh congratulated the DRDO on successfully demonstrating these crucial technologies.

"The DRDO has successfully demonstrated multiple crucial technologies bolstering the nation's defence capabilities against different types of enemy threats. Three consecutive flight-tests were successfully conducted to demonstrate multi-layered defence against long-range ballistic missiles and Anti-ship capability at medium range," he wrote on social media.

Rajnath Singh said the successful demonstration have positioned India among a select group of countries with advanced ballistic missile defence capabilities.

"These tests have put India in elite group of nations having Ballistics Missile Defence Capabilities to engage Ballistic Missiles up to ICBMs," he said.

The interceptor missiles are both exo-atmospheric and endo-atmospheric, and would soon be headed for trials as the flight tests were a success, it was learnt.

Emerging technology has altered definition of warfare: Rajnath

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Hyderabad

Asserting that recruits to the armed forces must be mentally prepared for the evolving nature of modern conflict, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Saturday said major powers no longer hold an edge on the battlefield as even smaller forces can inflict significant damage using specialised tactics.

Addressing the Combined Graduation Parade (CGP) at the Air Force Academy at Dundigal near here, Singh also said emerging technologies have altered the very



Defence Minister Rajnath Singh arrives to review and address the Combined Graduation Parade (CGP) at the Air Force Academy in Dundigal, Medchal-Malkajgiri district, Telangana

definition of warfare. "Earlier, it seemed that the big powers had a decisive edge on the battlefield. But

now, comparatively, even small powers can cause heavy losses with their small but dangerous weapons and

new tactics. My purpose in telling you all this is that you should be mentally ready for any form of warfare," he said.

"In contrast to the visibility of soldiers and equipment earlier, many systems such as radars, satellites, drones, sensors and robotics are deployed in modern warfare. Such scenarios are being witnessed now in which traffic systems and CCTVs of adversaries are being controlled," he said.

According to him, the definition of warfare has changed to a great extent. The newly commissioned officers should understand

modern warfare and strategies and adapt, adopt, and, if necessary, amend them.

Underscoring the importance of smart work along with hard work, he said smart nations are carving out a place for themselves in the modern technology landscape.

Noting that IAF serves as a source of inspiration for crores of Indians, he cited the example of astronaut Shubhanshu Shukla and exhorted the officers to uphold the rich legacy of the Force.

Congratulating the women officers commis-

sioned by the Indian Air Force, he said their growing numbers make the IAF even more powerful, balanced and robust, which demonstrates the strength of the inclusive force.

He also wished success to the graduating Vietnamese cadets in their future endeavours, exuding confidence that their training will bolster the friendship between the two countries.

He highlighted the Indian Air Force's success in high-stakes rescue missions and its role in ensuring the safety of foreign citizens during crises.

Congress-led Government in Himachal failed to transform opportunities into achievements: Nadda

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Shimla

Congress-led Government in Himachal Pradesh failed to transform opportunities into achievements despite unprecedented central assistance, Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare JP Nadda said on Saturday.

Interacting with the media persons here, he said that the ruling Congress failed on both fronts of development and good governance and massive public support in the recent local body elections in the State is a clear public referendum against the Congress Government.

Taking a dig at Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh



Union Minister JP Nadda addressing a press conference in Shimla, Himachal Pradesh on Saturday

Sukhu, Nadda said that it appears as though the office of the chief minister itself is being run as 'additional charge,' with the State's actual reins controlled

remotely from Delhi rather than from Shimla.

"Before coming to power, the Congress had raised the slogan of 'systemic change,' and today the State is gripped by an atmosphere of administrative disarray, indecision, and policy chaos," he said.

"There is hardly any other instance in the country where key positions like Chief Secretary and Director General of Police are being managed on an 'additional charge' basis," Nadda said.

Nadda, who is also the Union Chemicals and Fertilizers Minister, pointed out that serious allegations are being levelled against senior bureaucrats and officials are publicly trading accusations, yet accountability is nowhere to be found.

This situation highlights the Congress Government's administrative failure and leadership crisis, Nadda alleged. Listing support rendered to the State by the Centre, Nadda claimed Himachal Pradesh received additional assistance amounting to ₹6,537 under the Special Assistance Scheme, through the NDRF, and for externally aided projects in the 2024-25 financial year.

National Highway projects worth over ₹40,000 crore are currently underway in the State, he said, adding that a record allocation of ₹2,911 crore has been made for the railway sector, and work is progressing on four major rail projects costing ₹13,168 crore.

Kailash Mansarovar Yatra 2026 flagged off in Delhi

ASHOKE RAJ
■ New Delhi

The Minister of State for External Affairs, Pabitra Margherita, on Thursday presided over the flagging-off ceremony of the inaugural batch of pilgrims for the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra (KMY) 2026 at Jawaharlal Nehru Bhawan.

The first group of selected yatis will travel via the Nathu La route and is scheduled to commence its onward journey from Delhi on June 15, 2026. This marks the official beginning of the annual pilgrimage to the sacred Mount Kailash and Lake Mansarovar in Tibet, a journey of immense spiritual significance for devotees of Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, and Bon traditions.

Addressing the pilgrims, Margherita congratulated the yatis on their selection and wished them a safe and spiritually fulfilling journey. He highlighted the Government's continued efforts to enhance the yatra experience, particularly

noting the new acclimatization centres recently inaugurated virtually by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

These facilities are expected to significantly improve the comfort and safety of pilgrims as they prepare for high-altitude conditions.

"The Government of India, along with various Ministries, Departments, and the State Governments of Uttarakhand, Sikkim, and Uttar Pradesh, has been working tirelessly to ensure that this sacred yatra becomes an enriching and memorable experience for all our citizens," the Minister said.

Officials informed that the yatis have undergone comprehensive medical screening, orientation programmes, and training sessions to prepare them for the challenging terrain and high-altitude environment. The Ministry of External Affairs, in coordination with the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) and other agencies, has put in place robust logistical arrangements for the smooth conduct of the yatra.



Lieutenant General Dhiraj Seth to be next Army Chief

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

The Government on Saturday announced that Lieutenant General Dhiraj Seth, will be the next Army Chief after incumbent General Upendra Dwivedi retires on June 30. Seth is currently the Vice Chief.

The incoming Chief is an alumnus of the National Defence Academy, Khadakwasla, and was commissioned into the Armoured Corps in December 1986. Over a distinguished military career spanning nearly four decades, he has had extensive experi-

ence across the operational, strategic, capability development and institutional domains, contributing significantly to the Indian Army's combat effectiveness and long-term transformation.

The General Officer has commanded at every level in diverse operational environments. His command assignments include an Armoured Regiment in the Desert Sector, an Armoured Brigade in the Western Theatre, and a Counter-Insurgency Force in Jammu & Kashmir.

As a Lieutenant General, he commanded the Sudarshan



Lieutenant General Dhiraj Seth, Vice Chief of the Army Staff, is seen. The Government of India appoints him as the next Chief of the Army Staff with effect from June 30, 2026

Chakra Corps, one of the Indian Army's premier strike formations. He subsequently served as General Officer Commanding, Delhi Area, overseeing key national and international military engagements and ceremonial responsibilities.

On elevation to Army Commander, the officer commanded South Western Command and Southern Command, earning the rare distinction of commanding two operational Army Commands and providing strategic oversight across critical theaters for over a period of two and half years.

He has held several key staff and strategic appointments that have significantly influenced operational planning, force management and capability development.

Widely recognised for his contributions to force modernisation, the General Officer has tenanted pivotal appointments in the Strategic Planning and Capability Development verticals of the Army Headquarters, shaping its modernisation trajectory, capability roadmap and long-term force structuring initiatives. His contributions have been instrumental in aligning oper-

ational requirements with emerging technologies and future battlefield imperatives.

An accomplished military professional, Lieutenant General Dhiraj Seth has consistently excelled in professional military education, securing top positions in courses of instruction.

He is a graduate of the Higher Command Course and the National Defence College, and has also attended the prestigious Command & Staff Course in Paris, reflecting his broad strategic outlook and understanding of contemporary military affairs.



States Focus



Strength, not truth, is what world respects: Mohan Bhagwat

RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat on Saturday stressed the importance of strength, saying that if you are strong, "no one will say anything even if you seize Venezuela" — a veiled reference to the US action against the South American nation under former president Nicolas Maduro. Bhagwat remarked while speaking at an event here as part of the RSS centenary celebrations. The RSS chief said Hindus had to become strong to protect themselves, as the world heard only those who had strength. "The world will hear you only if you are strong. It will not hear you if you are true. If you are strong, no one will object even if you tread the path of falsehood. Even if you go and seize Venezuela, nobody will say anything because you are strong. That is how the world is," he said. (PTI)



Industry heads must work with research institutes: Jitendra Singh

There is a need for deeper collaboration among research institutions, industry and startups to accelerate the translation of scientific knowledge into market-ready solutions and national development outcomes, Union minister Jitendra Singh said on Saturday. He said industry leaders should actively engage with research institutions and participate in shaping the country's scientific agenda. "The objective is not merely to generate knowledge but to create technologies, enterprises and solutions that contribute to employment generation, industrial competitiveness and improved quality of life," Singh said. (PTI)

Kerala Police probes VPVV Techno for printing fake US documents in Delhi

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
Kochi/New Delhi

Kerala Police has registered two cases against a Nagpur-based company VPVV Techno Construction Pvt. Ltd for printing fake documents of US defence purchase agreement and US President's approvals on purchasing defence equipment from India. These fake documents were printed from a Press in Ramesh Park, East Delhi by the company promoters Venkita Venkat, Aqueel Ahamed, Police sources said.



Nadu, claiming they got a weapon manufacturing contract from United States worth more than ₹80,000 crore and collected more than ₹750 crore from many investors. The company's other directors Hitesh Kumar, known as Doctor Sahib and Rahul Rajeev Nair, Rajan Pradeep Kumar Prabhakaran and Vinod Rama Warrier Kumar is

also in the police radar for cheating many investors by printing fake US documents. The company promoters claimed that US Government has approved them as "principal developer" of defence equipment to be manufactured from India and exported to US. These directors have created a web of more than 15 benami companies,

mostly registered in Nagpur, said Police.

Kerala Police believes Hitesh Kumar known as 'Doctor Sahib' is the kingpin of this fake company. Police has registered another case against him for gaining anticipatory bail from Kerala High Court using fake identity. Registry is also probing on this incident, said police officers, adding that Venkita Venkat and other accused are now out on bail.

Meanwhile, cheated investors said that they will approach Kerala High Court seeking CBI probe. The fraud by the VVVP and its promoters was tipped off to Indian agencies by FBI. The FBI found that the Nagpur based company has printed "Q Clearance Bag", which is signed by US President from an East Delhi Press, along with many US documents.

Assam Cabinet halts Aadhaar issuance for those above 18 years

TONY DAS ■ Guwahati

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Saturday said the Cabinet has decided that Aadhaar cards would not be issued to those aged over 18 years to ensure illegal immigrants don't acquire the document. In exceptional cases, the District Commissioner will have to send a proposal to the state Government seeking permission for issuing the card, he said at a press conference here after chairing a cabinet meeting. The Government will then decide whether the applicant is eligible for the card, the Chief Minister said.

Remarking that Aadhaar card issuance has reached a

saturation point in the State, Sarma said, "In some districts, it has crossed the 100 per cent mark, and we must ascertain who these people are who are taking the additional Aadhaar cards." The step is being taken to ensure that no illegal Bangladeshis get Aadhaar cards, he said.

Aadhaar cards will, however, continue to be issued to people from the Tea Tribe community, the Scheduled Tribes, the Scheduled Castes and the differently abled, as many are yet to receive the cards. "The ban will, however, be absolute from April 1, 2027, and people from these communities above the age of 18 will also stop receiving it from that date," the Chief Minister said.



Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma addressing a press conference at Lok Sewa Bhawan in Guwahati, Assam on Saturday. PTI

Aadhaar cards, however, will continue to be issued to those below the age of 18.

Sarma had earlier said the State Government would be "very strict" in issuing Aadhaar cards, and it would not be easy to get the docu-

ment in Assam. Last year, he had said the Assam Government was mulling stricter rules for the issuance of Aadhaar cards for adults as part of its efforts to curb illegal immigration from Bangladesh.

The Supreme Court had said in a ruling on May 4 that the issuance of new Aadhaar cards only to citizens up to the age of six years require legislative intervention and appropriate amendments in the existing legal framework.

A bench of Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justice Joymalya Bagchi gave the ruling after hearing a public interest litigation (PIL) seeking direction to the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) to issue new

Bihar's Bawan Buti sarees, Patharkatti stone craft, Pidiya painting get GI tag

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
Patna

Bihar's three distinctive traditional products — Nalanda's Bawan Buti sarees and fabrics, Gayaji's Patharkatti stone craft and Bhojpur's Pidiya painting — have been awarded the Geographical Indication (GI) tag, an official statement said on Saturday.

The statement issued by

or a reputation derived from that origin.

Nalanda's Bawan Buti weaving tradition is an outstanding example of Bihar's ancient textile heritage. This distinctive art involves hand-weaving 52 types of traditional motifs and cultural symbols (butis) onto fabric. The craft primarily developed in and around Baswan Bigha, where weaving families have pre-



the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD), Bihar said that the grant of GI tags to these three products will provide Bihar's handicraft and handloom sectors with a new identity at national and international levels.

It will create new employment and income opportunities for local artisans, weavers, and women's self-help groups, it said.

"Through the joint efforts of the NABARD and the Bihar Government, this significant achievement has been made," the statement said.

The GI tag ensures that no one other than those registered as authorised users is allowed to use the popular product name. A GI is a label applied to goods with a particular geographic origin and characteristics

served this tradition for generations, the statement said.

"Similarly, Gayaji's traditional stone craft is renowned for its excellence and has a history of nearly 300 years. Artisans create idols of Lord Buddha, Goddess Mahagauri, various deities, and other folk figures using locally available black granite stones. It is believed that granite stones from this region were also used in the construction of the Vishnupad temple," it said.

Likewise, Bhojpur's Pidiya painting is a unique folk art form, traditionally created by women during festivals and social occasions. Through natural colours and traditional symbols, this art depicts folk life, family relationships, religious beliefs, and rural culture, it added.

Pharmacy cashier shot 13 times in Chandigarh daylight murder

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
Chandigarh

Two masked men shot dead a 45-year-old pharmacy cashier in broad daylight in the Sector 11 here on Saturday, police said.

In CCTV footage of the incident, the two men were standing near the cash counter of the chemist shop. When one of them took out a semi-automatic pistol and fired thirteen rounds at the victim, Janki Das, standing near the cash counter, from very close range.

Das was a native of Himachal Pradesh and was currently living in Dhanas here. The assailants fled from the crime spot on a motorcycle as their third accomplice was waiting outside, the police said.

A few other customers are also seen present inside the shop at the time of the incident. Notably, the main market area of Sector 11 has several chemist shops that

see heavy footfall daily, as the place where the incident took place lies adjoining PGIMER here.

An eyewitness told reporters near the crime spot that he was sitting outside the shop when suddenly he and some others outside heard the sound of shots being fired.

People shouted "catch them-catch them" as soon as the accused rushed out, but they fired in the air and escaped on the bike, the eyewitness said.

He said despite the 'police naka' (check barrier) being barely a few metres away from where the incident took place, the accused managed to escape from the spot.

After the incident, the chemist's shop in the area downed their shutters on Saturday.

Briefing reporters outside the incident site, Chandigarh Deputy Inspector General of Police, Sumer Pratap Singh said the incident took place around 2.30 pm.



Rahul's approach does not strengthen INDIA bloc: Pinarayi Vijayan

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
Kozhikode (Kerala)

Left veteran Pinarayi Vijayan on Saturday criticised Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, saying his political approach does not strengthen the INDIA alliance and often ends up helping the BJP.

Responding to a question about Rahul Gandhi's reported remark at an INDIA alliance meeting that he would not hug Vijayan due to their political rivalry in Kerala, the former CPI(M) leader said he was not concerned about who hugs whom. "But we all saw the photograph of Rahul Gandhi hugging Narendra Modi. My

objection is not to the act of hugging Modi itself. Rather, his remarks represent a particular political message. It reflects Rahul Gandhi's approach and how he views the INDIA alliance," Vijayan said.

The senior CPI(M) leader said the matter required detailed discussion and that he would not go into it at length now. He said the INDIA alliance had reached a particular stage today.

"It is not only us, but also leaders such as Akhilesh Yadav and Tejaswini Yadav, along with other major non-Congress parties, who raised objections during the meeting and spoke against the Congress position," he said.



He added that people could see where the DMK stands now.

"The current situation has been created by the Congress party's approach, particularly by Rahul

Gandhi's approach. The reality is that this approach does not strengthen the INDIA alliance. As I have said before, it often ends up helping the BJP. Through such actions, Rahul Gandhi is

creating a situation where he effectively becomes a facilitator of the BJP's interests," Vijayan said.

During the Assembly election campaign, both Vijayan and Gandhi had targeted each other in their speeches.

Meanwhile, CPI(M) General Secretary MA Baby said that, given the political and social realities in Kerala, it would not have been possible for Rahul Gandhi to embrace Pinarayi Vijayan.

Baby said that, as CPI(M) General Secretary, he had written to Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on the issue. Portions of the letter were also reported in the media.

"What I pointed out was that, considering the specific political circumstances in different States, it is quite natural that parties within the INDIA bloc may find themselves politically opposed to one another in certain States. The CPI(M) had contributed significantly to the formation of the INDIA bloc, and we recognised this reality from the very beginning," he said.

He said that even when parties criticise one another because of unavoidable political circumstances in particular States, certain standards of political decency and dignity must be maintained.

Abhishek Banerjee's Kalighat residence searched by police before dawn

PRAMOD KUMAR SINGH
Kolkata/New Delhi

A police raid before dawn on Saturday increased political tensions in West Bengal. Police, supported by central forces, searched TMC MP Abhishek Banerjee's home for several hours. Officials said they were looking for his close aide, who is connected to an alleged financial fraud.

Officers from Salboni Police Station in Paschim Medinipur and Kolkata Police led the operation. As they searched for Banerjee's personal assistant, Sumit Roy, a confrontation broke out and lasted several hours. Mamata Banerjee arrived at the scene,

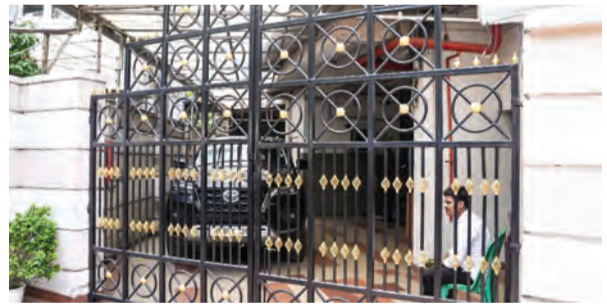
adding to the already tense political situation.

Police were looking for Roy, who is wanted in a financial fraud and land case at Salboni Police Station. Police sources said Roy's phone was last traced to Banerjee's home, prompting the urgent search. When officers arrived, security at the gate resisted, leading to a standoff. Police then broke the locks and searched the house thoroughly into the morning.

Eyewitnesses and party insiders described a tense atmosphere and raised voices during the search. Police did not find Sumit Roy or make any major seizures. Abhishek Banerjee, who was present,

told reporters, "They broke open the locks to search the house. I am not the investigating agency. The agency searched. So, question them, not me," and said he recorded the search. He stayed at the house for much of the operation, talking with police officials and asking for details about the case. His presence was searched at a political event, with a senior leader at his family home during the operation. He said the search followed procedure.

"The operation was based on specific leads, including the last known location of the accused's phone," a district officer said. Roy is accused of financial irregularities and



The residence of TMC General Secretary Abhishek Banerjee during a police operation in pursuit of his close aide in an alleged financial fraud in Kalighat, Kolkata on Saturday. PTI

possible extortion related to electoral promises, with investigators following money trails from a former TMC MLA's interrogation. TMC leaders called the raid a clear

case of political vendetta. Party sources said the raid was meant to intimidate a leader who is already facing several summonses from the CID and Enforcement

Directorate in other cases, including a signature-forgery probe and alleged provocative speeches during the recent elections. "This is not an investigation, this is harassment," a senior TMC member said, pointing to the timing after the party's recent electoral loss.

The raid took place during a time of political unrest in West Bengal. The TMC lost the May 2026 assembly elections, which led to internal disputes, resignations, and public criticism within the party. Abhishek Banerjee, a key leader, has recently faced several investigations. Just days before the raid, the CID questioned him for over five hours.

LG Manoj Sinha urges Kashmiri Pandits to set up industries, institutions in J&K

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
Jammu

The Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha on Saturday called upon distinguished members of the Kashmiri Pandit Community to set up industries, academic and cultural institutions in Jammu Kashmir that will become the immortal story of their heritage and provide opportunities to generations to come. He emphasised that the Kashmiri Pandit Community's contribution is needed across industry, education, arts and spirituality.

Addressing the Global Kashmiri Pandit Conclave at Srinagar, LG Manoj Sinha said the return of the Kashmiri Pandit community

reflects that after 2019, a new Jammu and Kashmir has been born.

"The strength of this new Jammu Kashmir reflects your resolve. It's hope reflects your vision. Jammu Kashmir, which witnessed the massacres, pain, and displacement of the Kashmiri Pandit community, has been transformed into a centre of reconstruction by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The conclave was attended by distinguished personalities of the Kashmiri Pandit community from India and abroad to celebrate the community's journey of resilience, renaissance, and return.

LG Sinha said, "I often say that history is written by those who rise

again after suffering and confronting countless challenges. Having earned global recognition, you are now returning to your roots. This dignified return is also the resolve of the Prime Minister. I salute your courage. I honour your steadfastness. I appreciate your achievements, and I express the commitment that together we will ensure a future brighter than the past and that the pride of the Kashmiri Pandit community will shine again for the welfare of all humanity."

Speaking on the occasion, the Lieutenant Governor said the Global Kashmiri Pandit Conclave celebrates the community's patience and resilience and honours their achievements and, above all, lays



the foundation for the return of the community members.

"A moment of transformation is here. Those once uprooted from

their homeland return, and this homecoming is the truest victory. The presence of business leaders, corporate heads, technology entre-

preneurs, and cultural icons sends a powerful message of confidence in the peace of Jammu Kashmir, and trust in the administrative stability under Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Sinha said, the journey of the Kashmiri Pandit Community has been scarred by genocide, exile and struggle. The world once witnessed their wounds and now triumph. The community chose a different path. They refused to be defined by wounds and struggle. Instead, they transformed that pain into strength," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor also observed that the world remembers the 1990s, when the Kashmiri Pandit community faced unimag-

inable brutality and endured massacres and, overnight, families were forced to leave everything behind and live in exile in their own country.

"Lives marked by pain and struggle gave the Kashmiri Pandit community only two choices—despair or rebuilding. They chose creation, rebuilding and selfless service and in doing so, the community made history. Carrying the weight of a massacre, they never turned away from their purpose.

Today, I am proud that the Kashmiri Pandit community is celebrated for reaching new heights of success. The world honours their talent, leadership, and contributions to humanity," the Lieutenant Governor said.



The Modi years takeaway is a compounded governance philosophy

HITESH JAIN

When Prime Minister Narendra Modi was sworn in for a third consecutive term on June 9, 2024, the ceremony attracted a usual pageantry of commentary. The opposition made comparisons to Nehru, questioned the Prime Minister's mandate, attempted to poke holes in electoral propriety and debated coalition arithmetic. What received less attention was the democratic significance of the moment. India had, for the first time in decades, returned the same leader to office three times in a row. This return had not occurred as a result of the absence of an opposition, but through the persistence of electoral preference.

This is a reality that was and remains one that is worth sitting with. India is not a country that hands out political longevity with ease. Recent elections, fought ferociously across states, are a burning example of this. India has always had a restless electorate, combine this with a now-raucous press, a federal structure that distributes power restrainedly and a democratic culture that has on several occasions punished incumbent leaders who confused being in office with life-long entitlement. What results is a battleground that very few would dare to enter, let alone repeatedly, and with the intention to conquer. For any leader to survive this environment for over a decade, that too while attempting historic, one may even say audacious, structural reforms, warrants a justification that goes beyond

just personality or effective communication.

When examined carefully, it is clear that the explanation lies in governance.

Prime Minister Modi's tenure as India's leader will historically be characterised by the fact that he led the government to choose a more challenging path, even when it faced the constant temptation of resting on electoral victories and avoiding hazards in order to safeguard political futures. The tendency to give in to such temptations would be classified as a rational political strategy, given that it does not meddle with the status quo. This is, however, also the reason why so many developing countries stay developing for so long.

Thus, what distinguished the past decade in India was the sustained willingness to attempt reforms in domains that had resisted change for generations. These reforms, while argued to be politically profitable in the short term, were timely and essential because the cost of their deferral was becoming near catastrophic. Direct benefit transfers to citizens eliminated layers of intermediaries that had been funneling public resources for decades. The push for financial inclusion through Jan Dhan accounts brought millions of citizens into the formal economy. The construction of rural sanitation infrastructure at large addressed a public health crisis that India had long acknowledged, consciously ignored and consistently failed to resolve, given the monumen-



tal effort that would be required to effect change.

These reforms were not glamorous. They were overwhelmingly domestic and thus did not attract the kind of international attention that other economic reforms, such as liberalisation in 1991, had gained. Their core architecture, however, remains common. These reforms identified foundational failures, sought to build the institutional capacity required to address them and executed these ambitions at a scale that actually resulted in outcomes. The ability to not only foresee a vision, but importantly, to see this vision to its end, whether through delivery or coor-

lined. India thus built a digital public infrastructure that most developed economies are still trying to retrofit into their systems.

Prime Minister Modi's focus on digital governance deserves particular attention, given that it represents the acceptance of the developing world. India's UPI payments infrastructure and the 'India Stack' are models that are now studied by researchers and policymakers across the globe. The Aadhaar biometric identity system, despite all the debates it generated about privacy and exclusion, created a foundational layer that made other key interventions, such as subsidy delivery, welfare targeting and tax compliance, more efficient and stream-

lined. India thus built a digital public infrastructure that most developed economies are still trying to retrofit into their systems.

Our robust digital public infrastructure is of importance also because it systematically challenged the deeply seated notion that large, complex democracies, struggling with poverty and institutional fragility, cannot execute technologically sophisticated systems at scale. Prime Minister Modi's vision for India's digital infrastructure is evidence against that assumption. Through these innovations, possible only with political will, bureaucratic coordination across ministries and sustained investment over years,

India finally benefits from a temporary, technologically adept model of governance that previous administrations shunned as being too grandiose for a country like India.

India's repositioning on the global stage is another significant reform. The country has shifted from a posture of relative passivity in international affairs to one of strategic calculation, thus balancing sparring countries and challenging international affairs with considerable diplomatic sophistication. Resultantly, India now projects a form of soft power that enhances the idea of India as a model for the Global South. Whether one agrees with the Government's foreign policy or not, it is unarguable that its approach represents a coherent strategic vision.

If there are any takeaways from the Prime Minister's tenure, it is that politics, at its best, is not a job. It is a vocation that demands unfailing commitment to people, ideas and the stubborn willingness to change lives. What separates this vocation from a mere occupation is precisely what is often overlooked in assessments of Prime Ministerial tenure. This is the importance of consistency. The Prime Minister's governing philosophy and belief that the State's job is to build systems that deliver and ensure development is one that has compounded over time. This consistency is a thread that runs across the Government's efforts, whether to reform foreign policy, ensure women's empowerment, effect infrastructure delivery, carry out education reform or allow

financial inclusion to better the livelihoods of marginalised communities.

Longevity in office is not, by itself, a virtue. India has no shortage of leaders who occupied office for extended periods and left behind only decaying institutions, suppressed oppositions and economies that worked for a chosen few. The test is thus not duration, but the transformation that any duration brings about. By that measure, the question to ask of Prime Minister Modi's time in office until now is whether India emerges from it with stronger institutional capacity, broader economic participation and a more credible position in the world than it entered with?

Any naysayer would be left with little option but to answer in the affirmative. Despite a seemingly uneven record, as is reasonably expected after a decade of complex and often deficient governance in a country of India's scale and diversity, the Government's attainment of improved infrastructure, digital inclusion and favourable global positioning, remains undisputed. For a country that spent decades watching its potential outpace its execution, these changes represent a fundamental shift that has altered India's permanent trajectory.

History will record years. What matters more is who believed in India and who strived to ensure that those years translated into a transformation story.

The writer is Managing Partner at Parinam Law Associates

Sitharaman visits New Mangalore Port; reviews infrastructure



Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman offers prayers at Sri Hosa Marigudi Temple in Udipi district, Karnataka on Saturday

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
Mangaluru

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Saturday visited the New Mangalore Port and reviewed its operations, infrastructure and ongoing activities.

She is on a two-day visit to Karnataka and is scheduled to

be in Bengaluru on Sunday. "Nirmala Sitharaman visited the New Mangalore Port in Panambur, Mangaluru, and reviewed its operations, infrastructure and ongoing activities. The port plays a vital role in Karnataka's trade, logistics and coastal development," her office posted on X. She later interacted with

representatives of trade bodies, MSMEs and industry in Mangaluru, according to her office.

Member of Parliament Brijesh Chowta, Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs Chairman Vivek Chaturvedi, and CBIC member Yogendra Garg were also present on the occasion, it added.

Ex-RCom official Gautam Doshi sent to 5-day ED custody

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
New Delhi

A Delhi court on Saturday sent former Reliance Communications (RCom) senior executive Gautam Bhaillal Doshi to five days of Enforcement Directorate custody in a money laundering case linked to the alleged diversion of loan funds worth over ₹40,000 crore.

Special Judge Gaurav Rao was hearing the agency's plea seeking Doshi's custody for 14 days. Doshi was produced at the judge's residence at around 8:15 am after he was arrested and taken to Delhi from Bombay on transit remand.

In its order, the court said, "Considering the submissions of ED, the nature of the allegations and to unearth the complete conspiracy as well as establish the complete fund trail, their recovery, role of other individuals involved, I deem it fit to



grant 5 days' custody of the accused to the ED."

The ED had sought 14 days' custodial interrogation of Doshi under provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), contending that his custody was required to unearth the "complete conspiracy" behind the alleged diversion and layering of loan funds.

After hearing arguments from both sides, the court remanded Doshi to ED custody till June 18.

According to the ED, the investigation has revealed a fund trail involving diversion of loan funds from Reliance ADA Group entities to foreign remittances, offshore companies and foreign bank accounts.

The agency alleged that loans availed from banks were not utilised for their intended purposes and were instead invested in mutual funds and transferred to group companies.

The ED told the court that

Doshi occupied a position of "substantial authority and control" within the Reliance ADA Group and was closely associated with its financial, corporate and offshore operations.

It is alleged that Doshi functioned as one of the Group Managing Directors of the Reliance ADA Group, was a director of Reliance Telecom Ltd during the relevant period and also served as a member of its audit committee.

The probe agency further claimed that key information relating to financial operations was regularly escalated to Doshi and functioned under his supervision.

"The investigation so far has established a fund trail showing diversion of loan funds from RAAG to foreign remittances, foreign banks and offshore companies. The funds so availed from certain banks were not utilised for the intended

purpose," the court said.

Seeking his custody, the ED said Doshi needs to be confronted with seized emails, electronic records, financial documents and witness statements to identify the ultimate beneficiaries of the alleged proceeds of crime and trace domestic as well as overseas assets.

The defence opposed the ED's remand plea, arguing that no justifiable grounds existed either for Doshi's arrest or for granting custodial remand.

Senior defence counsel submitted that Doshi had cooperated throughout the investigation and had appeared before the agency after recording his statement under Section 50 of the PMLA on January 27 this year.

The defence also cited Doshi's advanced age — around 74 years — and his medical ailments while opposing the ED's demand for 14-day custody.

Ranchi airport posts ₹87.56 cr net profit in FY 2025-26 as passenger traffic hits 27 lakh

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
Ranchi

The Birsa Munda Airport generated a net profit of ₹87.56 crore in the 2025-26 financial year, while passenger traffic reached 27 lakh during the fiscal, its director Vinod Kumar said on Saturday.

He said the airport's remarkable progress in passenger traffic, amenities, financial performance, and infrastructural development reflects the economic progress of Jharkhand. "In FY 2023-24, the airport earned a profit of ₹49.21 crore, which increased to ₹64.60 crore in FY 2024-25. It further rose to ₹87.56 crore in the financial year of 2025-26. This achievement



reflects continuous improvement in operational efficiency and revenue generation capacity," Kumar said. About passenger traffic,

he said the airport handled about 27 lakh passengers in 2025-26, a significant increase from 6.5 lakh in 2014-15. "This growth symbolises

the flourishing economic activities, trade, tourism, and improved air connectivity in Jharkhand," Kumar added. Several important devel-

opment projects have been completed at the airport in recent years, which include the construction of a new air traffic control (ATC) tower, installation of DVOR and ILS systems, apron expansion, passenger boarding bridges, expansion of the security area, and modernisation of passenger facilities.

"These projects have further strengthened the airport's capacity, safety, and operational efficiency," its director said. Kumar said the airport will organise 'Yatri Suvidha Divas' on June 15.

A series of programmes will be organised to promote passenger convenience, public awareness,

social responsibility, environmental conservation, and the enrichment of local culture on the occasion, he said.

To promote environmental conservation, a tree plantation and sapling distribution drive will also be conducted.

"To showcase Jharkhand's rich cultural heritage, folk dances, local art, and handicraft exhibitions will be organised. Painting and quiz competitions will be held for children, while blood donation camps, free health check-up camps for passengers and stakeholders, and free eye check-up camps for taxi and auto drivers will also be organised," Kumar added.

Coal Minister Reddy seeks probe into missing SCCL coal



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
New Delhi

Union Coal Minister G Kishan Reddy has written to the Telangana government, flagging reports that 40 lakh tonnes of coal worth about ₹1,600 crore is missing and urging an urgent inquiry to ascertain the facts and safeguards at Singareni Collieries Company Ltd (SCCL), already strained by unpaid dues of over ₹51,500 crore.

In a letter dated June 10, 2026, to Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy, the Union Minister said that "a news item published across various newspapers relating to the disappearance of 40 lakh tonnes of coal worth ₹1600 crore, resulting in significant financial loss to the company."

"Given SCCL's current financial position due to unpaid dues exceeding ₹51,500 crore from the Telangana Government, these allegations could further hamper the financial stability of SCCL."

The Singareni Collieries Company Ltd (SCCL) is jointly owned by the Government of Telangana and the Centre on a 51:49 equity basis. Reddy said that such

allegations, if not examined with alacrity and if not addressed promptly, may undermine SCCL's financial position and impede its future growth and sustainability.

"I therefore urge that the facts in the matter be ascertained and inquired into urgently to assess whether the alleged irregularities have an element of truth and also to see whether there are adequate safeguards mechanisms and internal controls for effective functioning of SCCL," Reddy said in the letter.

The minister said that while conducting the assessment, the State should consider deploying technology-based monitoring tools and instituting periodic reviews to detect weaknesses early and address them promptly.

He added that such measures would close systemic gaps, prevent recurrence, and bolster SCCL's efficiency, transparency and credibility.

The minister also sought the chief minister's personal intervention to ensure the smooth operation of the company and safeguard the welfare of all personnel engaged with SCCL, directly or indirectly.



The Federation of Bengal Hoteliers (FBH) warmly welcomed Dr Sankar Ghosh, Minister in Charge of Tourism, Government of West Bengal at Bagdogra Airport upon his arrival from Kolkata after assuming office. FBH President Krishnendu Choudhury and Assistant Secretary Ujjal Ghosh were present to receive the minister. During the interaction, Dr Ghosh assured the Federation of the Government's full support for hoteliers and all stakeholders of tourism service providers

Trust only true currency for insolvency professionals: Official

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
New Delhi

Corporate Affairs Secretary Gaur Mukherjee on Saturday emphasised the importance of the code of conduct for insolvency professionals and said their financial intellect will be useless if there is no "ethical anchor".

Trust is the only true currency, and the Code of Conduct under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) is non-negotiable, she said.

The secretary was speaking at the convoca-



Corporate Affairs Secretary Gaur Mukherjee

tion ceremony of 6th Batch of Post Graduate Insolvency Programme (PGIP) and a conference on a decade of insolvency reforms in the national Capital.

The course is offered by

the Indian Institute of Corporate Affairs (IICA).

"All your financial intellect, your intellect and strategic thinking are completely useless if you don't have an ethical anchor," Mukherjee said.

According to her, the spirit of IBC is important, and the insolvency professionals should never misrepresent facts.

IBC provides a framework for a market-linked and time-bound resolution of stressed assets. The Code is implemented by the Corporate Affairs Ministry.



FROM THE WORLD

CONGO

Clashes erupt in Kinshasa

Violent clashes erupted in Congo's capital, Kinshasa, during a rally against a proposed constitutional change that opponents say could pave the way for President Felix Tshisekedi to seek a third term. The demonstration, organised by the Opposition coalition C64, was dispersed by police with tear gas after protesters clashed with pro-Government supporters outside Parliament. Congo is plagued by multiple crises, including an Ebola outbreak and an escalation of the decades-long conflict with the Rwanda-backed M23 rebels, one of more than 100 armed groups vying for control in the eastern provinces. Tshisekedi, 62, has been in office since 2019, and is due to complete his second five-year term in 2028. He has said he would be willing to seek a third term if approved by voters in a referendum.

CHINA

US scholar held for spying

An American scholar who writes about Myanmar and Chinese foreign policy was arrested by authorities in China on suspicion of spying, China's foreign ministry said. The scholar, Min Zin, was suspected of "engaging in espionage activities that endanger China's national security," said China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokesman Lin Jian. It is uncommon for Beijing to arrest a U.S. citizen on national security allegations. The case comes just a month after U.S. President Donald Trump met with Chinese President Xi Jinping in Beijing as the two countries aim to reset a tumultuous relationship. A Burmese activist who knows Min Zin said he disappeared June 3 after going to Kunming, in China's Yunnan province, for a conference. The activist, who spoke on condition of anonymity out of fear of Government retribution and arrest, said Min Zin had visited China multiple times before.

US-Iran peace deal may be finalised within 24 hours: Pak

SAJJAD HUSSAIN ■ Islamabad

Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Saturday said a US-Iran peace deal could be finalised within the next 24 hours, raising hopes of a diplomatic breakthrough after months of conflict and negotiations. "We are closer to a peace deal than ever before. With finalisation likely expected in the next 24 hours, Pakistan is preparing for the electronic signing of the peace deal immediately after, followed by technical level talks next week," Sharif said in a post on X. He thanked the US and Iran for their "ongoing commitment" during the negotiations and expressed appreciation for support from coun-



A woman walking past an anti-American mural on the wall of the former US Embassy, now a museum in Tehran, Iran. AP

tries in the region. "We are confident that this historic peace deal will form a strong foundation for lasting peace," he said in the post in which he tagged US President Donald Trump, Vice President JD Vance, Secretary of State Marco Rubio, Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkani and the country's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi. There was no immediate confirmation from the White

House or Iranian authorities regarding Sharif's latest assertion on the timing of the agreement. Sharif's remarks came a day after he said the US and Iran had agreed on the text of a peace deal and that Pakistan was working closely with both sides to finalise the next steps. "Setting aside the noise, we can confirm that a final, agreed upon text of the peace deal has been reached and Pakistan is now working closely with both sides to finalise the next steps," he had said on Friday. Earlier, Araghchi had suggested progress in the negotiations, saying the "Islamabad Memorandum of Understanding has never been closer". "Pending its

finalisation, the media should refrain from entering speculation about its content. In line with our responsible and transparent approach, all details will be shared with the public in due course," Araghchi said in a social media post, without providing further details. Iranian officials have indicated that an agreement is close, but have also said the memorandum of understanding remains under review. Trump said on Friday that the United States was close to signing a deal with Iran to wind down the conflict and that a memorandum of understanding could be signed in the coming days. Meanwhile, Vance cautioned against what he

described as "a lot of fake information" circulating about a potential deal. "The Iranians are not receiving any cash, and no funds are being released for simply signing a deal or attending a meeting," Vance said in a social media post. He said on Friday economic benefits for Iran would depend on it fulfilling its obligations under the proposed arrangement. "This deal has the potential to remake the region and lead to lasting peace," Vance said, while urging caution over unconfirmed media reports and anonymous social media claims. The conflict, which began on February 28, has rattled global markets, tested regional alliances and inten-

sified diplomatic efforts to secure a negotiated settlement. Pakistan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs separately said in a post that Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar spoke with Swiss Foreign Minister Ignazio Cassis on Saturday. According to Islamabad, the two ministers welcomed what they described as encouraging progress towards "an understanding between Washington and Tehran" and "expressed hope that ongoing efforts would contribute to peace and stability in the region". Pakistan has emerged as a key mediator in the US-Iran negotiations, facilitating contacts between Washington and Tehran and hosting diplomatic efforts aimed at ending the conflict. (PTI)

Lebanese troops withdraw from southern base amid Israeli advance

BASSEM MROUE ■ Beirut

The Lebanese army on Saturday withdrew its troops from a base in a southern Lebanese village after Israeli troops advanced in an area nearby, a military official said. The departure from the army barracks in Kfar Tebnit came as the Israeli military issued an evacuation warning for about 20 locations, including the southern city of Nabatiyeh and nearby villages. Lebanon's State-run National News Agency reported airstrikes on Saturday on different villages near Nabatiyeh, including one that killed two people in Deir al-Zahrani. It added that Nabatiyeh was subjected to artillery shelling on Saturday. A senior Lebanese military official told The Associated Press that the Lebanese army moved its forces from the Kfar Tebnit barracks following an incursion by Israeli forces into the area. The official, who did not elaborate, spoke on condition of anonymity in line with regulations. Israeli troops were likely trying to capture the strategic Ali Taher hill on the edge of Kfar Tebnit that overlooks large parts of Nabatiyeh and some of the roads that link the city with nearby villages. Israeli troops held the Ali Taher hill for 18 years until they withdrew from Lebanon in May 2000.



Tebnit came a day after Pakistan's prime minister said that the United States and Iran have agreed to wording of an agreement aimed at ending their war in the Middle East and that mediators are working with both sides to finalise a deal. Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi told Iranian State TV on Friday that both sides were working toward signing an initial agreement declaring an end to the war "on all fronts, including Lebanon."

Senior Hezbollah official Hussein Haj Hassan told Al Jazeera TV that they have been informed by Iranian officials that Lebanon will be part of a future ceasefire deal between the US and Iran. Iran is Hezbollah's main backer, supplying the group with different types of weapons over the past four decades as well as billions of dollars. Attacks by Israel and Hezbollah have continued despite a ceasefire that went into effect on April 17 and was renewed several times but remains a ceasefire in name only. Israel continues to occupy large swaths of southern Lebanon while battling Hezbollah fighters, causing civilian casualties and damage to infrastructure. Hezbollah, which is not part of the ceasefire agreement between Israel and Lebanon, has launched frequent rocket and drone attacks. The latest Israel-Hezbollah war began on March 2, when Hezbollah fired rockets into northern Israel two days after the US and Israel began their attacks on Iran. More than 3,700 people have been killed in Lebanon in the latest fighting, according to the Lebanese Health Ministry. Also, 30 Israeli soldiers and a defence contractor have been killed in or near southern Lebanon, and two civilians have been killed in northern Israel, according to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office. (AP)

Trump accuses Iran of attacking Indian ships

SAGAR KULKARNI ■ Washington

US President Donald Trump accused Iran of carrying out drone attacks against Indian ships leaving the Strait of Hormuz, describing the alleged action as "totally unacceptable", while Tehran rejected the charge as "baseless". Three vessels with Indian crew came under attack off the Oman coast this week. One of them resulted in the death of three Indian seafarers on Wednesday. "Their (Iran's) totally rebuffed Drone attack last night against Indian Ships leaving the Hormuz Strait is TOTALLY UNACCEPTABLE," Trump claimed in a post on



Truth Social on Friday. In the same post, Trump also accused Iran of leaking the terms of the peace deal to the media that had nothing to do with the points under discussion. Iran vehemently rejected Trump's allegation. "The US president's accusation against Iran regarding an Indian vessel in the Strait of Hormuz is simply base-

less," the Iranian Embassy in India said in a social media post late Friday night. "It is an attempt to divert public attention from the brutal fact that the US has attacked 3 Indian vessels in less than a week and killed 3 innocent Indian sailors. That's pathetic!" it said. Trump's remarks came after India summoned the Charge d'Affaires of the US Embassy in New Delhi to protest against US attacks on commercial ships carrying Indian nationals near the Oman coast. India has described the attacks on commercial vessels as "deeply worrisome" and it has strongly taken up the matter with the US. (PTI)

China opposes US move to list top firms as military companies

ASSOCIATED PRESS ■ Beijing

China said on Saturday it firmly opposed the US adding several prominent Chinese businesses to its list of military companies, and that the move ignored the consensus reached during US President Donald Trump's summit with Chinese leader Xi Jinping last month. The Pentagon on Monday added several non-state-owned Chinese companies, including electric vehicle maker BYD, tech giants Alibaba and Baidu to its list that seeks to identify Chinese companies it deems to have ties to the Chinese military, preventing them from landing US defence

garded the overall interests of bilateral economic and trade relations, continuously generalised the concept of national security, and abused state power to unjustifiably suppress Chinese enterprises," the spokesperson added. BYD, Alibaba and Baidu said earlier there's no basis to include them in the list. Trump in mid-May visited Beijing in a much-anticipated summit with Xi. The two leaders agreed to boost economic ties between the countries, including China's purchase of more US agricultural products and Boeing jets, and the setting up separate boards of trade and investment.

Ukrainian drone strike kills 1 in southern Russia

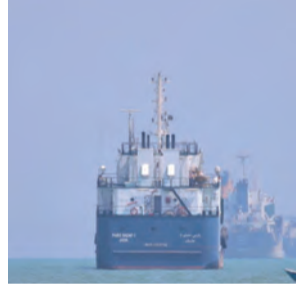
ASSOCIATED PRESS ■ Kyiv

A Ukrainian drone attack killed one person and injured three in Russia's southern Krasnodar region, local officials said Saturday, as part of Kyiv's campaign of strikes on military and energy targets deep inside Russia. Drone debris sparked a fire at a sea terminal, local Gov Veniamin Kondratyev said. He did not give details, but Russian news outlets reported that a Black Sea export terminal transporting terminal crude oil, petroleum products and liquefied gas in the village of Volna was damaged. Ukraine's General Staff did not comment on the Krasnodar strike Saturday, but said that its forces had hit an oil



preparation and pumping station overnight in Russia's Volgograd region, as well as Russian-occupied areas in Ukraine's Donetsk and Zaporizhzhia regions. The attack comes after Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said

long-range missiles had hit the facility in Cheboksary, in the Chuvashiya region, more than 900 kilometres from the front line. More than four years since the start of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, the more than 1,000-kilometre front line has remained largely static as swarms of drones hinder advances. As a result, both sides have increasingly relied on long-range strikes. Last week, Russian President Vladimir Putin vowed to strengthen air defences after Ukrainian attacks set ablaze an oil terminal in St Petersburg and also hit a nearby naval base, casting a cloud over a showcase economic forum in his hometown.



It said US forces downed all of them in recent hours, and traffic flow through the strait continues unimpeded. "The international trade corridor remains open for transit," the CentCom said. The CentCom said US forces continue to strictly enforce a blockade against Iran, redirecting 139 compliant commercial ships and disabling nine non-compliant ships. In the past week, at least three ships with Indian seafarers onboard have been targeted by US forces, resulting in the deaths of three mariners. India lodged a strong protest with the US, asserting that such lethal actions against commercial ships were not justified.

17 people killed by gunmen in northwestern Nigeria

DYEPKAZAH SHIBAYAN ■ Abuja

Gunmen killed at least 17 farmers and wounded at least 13 others as they worked in their fields in northwestern Nigeria, a local official and a resident said. The attack occurred on Friday in the town of Goron Namaye in the Maradun area of Zamfara state. No group has claimed responsibility but attacks by armed gangs have increased in recent months. "The farmers were working on their lands when the bandits suddenly attacked and killed 17 of them," Shehu Musa, a resident of Maradun, told The Associated Press on Saturday, adding that the wounded were being treated at a hospital. The attack was a result of the refusal of the Zamfara state



Government to negotiate with the gunmen, Sanusi Dosara, chairman of the Maradun local Government, said in a statement. Dosara appealed on Government forces to dismantle the Bayan-Ruwa enclave in the Maradun forest, where the gunmen were hiding. On Thursday, gunmen abducted 39 people in Magamin Diddi, a community in Maradun, while residents were meeting with the parents of a suspected bandit leader in an effort to negotiate peace and address kidnappings. An insurgency in northeastern Nigeria, coupled with ransom kidnappings, has killed thousands of people and displaced millions over the years, according to the United Nations, despite repeated promises by President Bola Tinubu to curb the crisis. (AP)

11 Indian sailors convicted; ship fined \$5.3 million for cocaine trafficking in Nigeria

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Lagos

Eleven Indian sailors have been convicted and their merchant vessel fined \$5.3 million by a court in Nigeria for cocaine trafficking. They were arrested around six months ago by operatives of the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) for allegedly importing 31.5 kilograms of cocaine from the Marshall Islands into Nigeria through the Apapa seaport in Lagos, the agency said in a statement on Thursday. The master of the vessel and 10 other crew members were convicted under the NDLEA Act by Justice Joseph Chukwujekwu Aneke, it said. The vessel was ordered to pay restitution of \$5.3 million to the Nigerian Government. The three principal officers were directed to pay \$100,000 each, while the remaining



crew members were ordered to pay \$50,000 each. Each defendant was also fined 100,000 Naira. NDLEA Chairman Brig Gen Mohamed Buba Marwa (ret'd) said the conviction sent a "resounding message" to drug trafficking networks that "Nigeria is no longer a safe corridor for cocaine or any other illicit substance," the NDLEA statement read.



1 killed in Texas mass shooting; gunman dead

SEEMA HAKHU KACHRU
Houston

One person was killed and 10 others injured in a mass shooting in Texas, where the suspect was later found dead following a standoff with law enforcement, authorities said.

The shooting took place in the West Texas oil city of Midland. After receiving emergency calls about the active shooting, officers arrived at the scene, only to be ambushed by the shooter, who unleashed a heavy volley of fire at them, as well as at bystanders and civilian motorists.

Multiple officers were pinned down behind their patrol vehicles and had to be rescued using an armoured



vehicle. The suspect subsequently retreated and barricaded himself inside an abandoned veterinary clinic.

The Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) officially identified the gunman as 45-year-old Victor Mata Villarreal, a fugitive actively

wanted for the attempted capital murder of a peace officer following a separate high-speed shootout with police earlier in the week.

Following the shooting, a multi-agency force implemented lockdowns and shelter-in-place orders for

neighbouring commercial properties. Eyewitnesses described a chaotic scene, reporting hearing over 40 gunshots and observing heavily armed tactical units move into position.

After an intense, multi-hour tactical standoff, law enforcement deployed remote drones and tactical robots where the suspect had barricaded himself.

Villarreal was located deceased inside the clinic in the afternoon.

No law enforcement officers were injured during the operation, police said. During an official briefing later in the day, Midland Mayor Lori Blong said that law enforcement deployed specialised robotic units and surveillance drones

inside the structure, utilising live internal footage to locate and confirm that the shooter was dead.

Late Friday, the City of Midland officially identified the sole civilian fatality as 62-year-old Edward Randall Scott, a resident of Midland and a long-time municipal employee. Ten other people suffered injuries during the shooting spree. Hospital briefings confirmed that five victims have been discharged, four are stable following surgery, and one remains in critical condition.

Reacting to the shooting, Texas Governor Greg Abbott issued an official statement extending condolences and backing local first responders. "Cecilia and I are deeply

saddened by the senseless act of violence in Midland," Abbott said.

"We are praying for the victims, their families, and the entire community.

I have been briefed on the matter and commend the swift response from the Midland Police Department, Department of Public Safety and all assisting law enforcement agencies."

According to regional authorities, the immediate active threat had ended; however, the jurisdiction was transitioning into a multi-agency forensic and investigative phase led by the Texas Rangers to determine the suspect's exact timeline and motive. (AP)

Women injured after shark attack at Sydney beach



ROD MCGUIRK Melbourne

A 3.5-metre (11-foot) shark critically injured a woman off a popular Sydney beach on Saturday, and she managed to grab onto a lifeguard's paddleboard before they made it to shore.

The 35-year-old suffered serious leg and arm injuries in the attack at 11:15 am off Coogee Beach, a police statement said.

"I saw the shark come out of the water, and just the size of it shocked me," lifeguard Charlie Verco told Sydney's The Sunday Telegraph newspaper. He was in the area on his 5.5-metre (18-foot) paddleboard and was the first rescuer to the scene.

"I kept paddling towards her, and the shark took her underwater, and I was going, 'What do I do now?'" A couple of seconds later, she popped up again," Verco said. He said

the woman was too weak to climb onto the board, but he managed to grab her by the arm, and they headed toward the beach. Other bystanders reached the pair and helped them back to shore. An off-duty hospital doctor, Ian Ferguson, was spending the morning at the beach with his young family when he said he heard screaming and saw a "big cloud of blood in the water." Ferguson and others applied tourniquets to her wounds after she reached the beach. She had a 30-centimetre (12-inch) wide bite on her thigh, the flesh had been removed, and bone was exposed, Ferguson told the newspaper. She had a similar wound to her arm, he said.

The victim was taken to a rugby field near the beach, from where she was flown by helicopter to a hospital. Police described her condition as critical. (AP)

21 terrorists killed by Pakistani forces

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA Peshawar

Security forces killed 21 terrorists in a series of intelligence-based operations in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province in northwest Pakistan over the last three days, the military's media wing said on Saturday.

Among those killed in North Waziristan district over the last 72 hours were four ring leaders belonging to Fitna-al-Khwarij, wanted for their involvement in numerous terrorist activities, including killing of security forces' personnel and innocent civilians, the media wing said.

Fitna-al-Khwarij is a term that the state uses for the banned Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP).

"A total of 48 khwarij have been killed since last week in the highly skilful and precise operations," a statement from the media wing said. Weapons and ammunition have also been recovered



from those killed, it said. Sanitisation operations would continue to eliminate remaining holed up terrorists in the area under the relentless Counter Terrorism campaign by security forces and law enforcement agencies.

In late May, security forces killed 11 terrorists in the Datta Khel area of North Waziristan and in June first week, after a suicide attack was foiled

in Miranshah, section 144 was imposed in that area.

According to the Pakistan Institute for Conflict and Security Studies (PICSS), after two consecutive months of improvement, Pakistan's security situation deteriorated sharply in May 2026, driven primarily by escalating terrorist violence in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan.

1 dead, 22 injured as storm collapses church tent in Virginia

HALLIE GOLDEN New York

A large tent collapsed during a Virginia church's 20th anniversary celebration on Friday evening, killing one person and injuring nearly two dozen others, officials said.

Heavy rain, lightning and strong winds tore through Moneta, a small community about 200 kilometres southwest of Richmond, as the EastLake Community Church was holding an outdoor service, Shelley Basinger, a spokesperson for Bedford County, said in a statement.

The group was in the process of leaving the event tent when it collapsed, according to Abbey Johnston, acting chief of Bedford County Fire and Rescue. Eleven people were taken to the hospital and 11 others had minor injuries and were treated at the scene, Basinger said.

"Initially, I'm told it was a very chaotic scene, trying to account for the individuals," Johnston told reporters. Officials rushed to rescue everyone inside the tent behind the church and move them to safety as the strong thunderstorm raged on, she said.

Troy Keaton, the non-denominational church's senior pastor, said he had just walked up to the stage to tell the group to go to their cars when a gust of



wind picked up the tent.

"Sadly one of our dear brothers suffered a fatal injury," he said in a statement on social media. "Our hearts are broken for his precious family."

The tent had seating for 1,500 people, according to officials, but it was not immediately clear how many were inside when it collapsed.

No details were provided about the conditions of the people in the hospital.

Officials are gathering evidence as they investigate the collapse, Johnston said. The tent had passed an inspection by the county's building inspections division three days earlier, according to Basinger. Governor Abigail Spanberger said her team has been in close contact with the response crew on the ground.

"I am praying for the EastLake Community Church and all who are impacted, and we will continue to support the community during this difficult time," she said in a statement on social media. (AP)

Congressman Thandor condemns anti-India rhetoric in Texas

SAGAR KULKARNI Washington

US Congressman Shri Thandor condemned anti-India rhetoric in Frisco, a city in Texas, asserting that immigrants have made the US stronger.

According to reports, speakers at a public hearing made references to the "Indian takeover" of Frisco and the targeting of the Indian-American community during debates on immigration and H-1B visas.

"This is a disgusting act of hate. Racism has no place in our country," Thandor, a Congressman from Michigan, said. Recently, a video of a man tearing the Indian flag in Frisco also went viral on social media.

"I came to America in search of the American dream. I was lucky enough to get an education, build businesses, create thousands of good jobs, and now serve my community in Congress," Thandor said in response to the anti-India rhetoric in Frisco and other parts of Texas. (PTI)



India, Nepal discusses rail connectivity

SHIRISH B PRADHAN Kathmandu

India and Nepal have held discussions on cross-border railway links, including passenger train services on the Janakpur-Ayodhya section, and bilateral cooperation in the sector, an official statement said.

The discussions between the two countries were part of the 10th Project Steering Committee and the 8th Joint Working Group meetings held here on June 11 and 12, the Indian Embassy in Kathmandu said.

The standard operating procedures for the commencement of passenger train services on the



Janakpur-Ayodhya section was one of the focus points during the engagement between the two sides.

Nepal's Janakpur — believed to be the birthplace of Lord Ram's wife Sita — is 220 kms southeast of Kathmandu and about 500-odd km east of Ayodhya and devotees from both sides visit the two places regularly in

large numbers. The meetings also discussed the Final Location Survey (FLS) report of Raxaul-Kathmandu broad gauge railway link; the implementation of the Jaynagar-Bijalpura-Bardibas and Jogbani-Biratnagar broad-gauge railway lines being developed with Indian assistance, the Embassy statement said. (PTI)

US Congress honours late Indian-American tech leader Sivaramakrishnan Somasegar

SAGAR KULKARNI Washington

The US Congress paid tribute to Indian-American entrepreneur late Sivaramakrishnan Somasegar for his contributions to the growth of Microsoft and the technology sector in the US.

Somasegar, popular as 'Soma' among colleagues, passed away on May 19, at the age of 59. "Soma was an incredible technologist, entrepreneur, leader, and friend in our Community," Suzan DelBene, Congresswoman from Washington state's first district, said in the US Congress



earlier this week. Born and raised in southern India, Soma came to the United States to attend Louisiana State University.

In 1989, he began his

career at Microsoft and played a critical role in Windows NT, one of the most important projects in the company's history.

"Through his remarkable management skills, dedication, and work ethic, he rose to senior leadership at Microsoft, ultimately serving as Senior Vice President until 2015," DelBene said, recalling her time with him at Microsoft. She said after leaving Microsoft, Soma devoted himself to supporting the next generation of entrepreneurs as a managing director at Madrona Venture Group, where he guided countless startups

and helped strengthen the region's innovation ecosystem. "Beyond his professional achievements, Soma was deeply committed to his community. As the proud cofounder of the Seattle Orcas, he helped bring professional cricket to the Pacific Northwest and shared his love of the sport with many in our region," she said.

"Mr Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honouring and remembering Soma's remarkable legacy. His family, friends, and colleagues will cherish his kindness and wisdom for years to come," DelBene said. (PTI)

Senate Democrats block bipartisan bills to counter US President's Trump

STEVEN SLOAN Washington

President Donald Trump's name remained on the facade of the Kennedy Center early Saturday despite a court-ordered deadline to remove references to Trump from the building and other aspects of the iconic performing arts venue's operations.

Scaffolding was erected around a section of the building that includes Trump's name, but shortly after midnight, the Kennedy Center asked a judge to extend the deadline until noon Eastern Time on



People waiting for President Donald Trump's name to be removed from the John F Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington

Saturday because of thunderstorms that had swept through the Washington area, causing a delay.

In the filing, the Kennedy Center offered assurance that

the "removal work is presently ongoing" and would "conclude in the early hours of the morning." A few hours later, workers begin covering the scaffolding with tarps. (AP)

US military strike killed leader of Tren de Aragua gang with help from Venezuela, says Trump

WILL WEISSERT Washington

President Donald Trump said that a "swift and lethal kinetic" US strike has killed Hector Rusthenford Guerrero Flores, whom he called "the infamous leader" of the Tren de Aragua gang.

Tren de Aragua has been labelled by the United States as a terrorist organisation. Guerrero Flores was charged in a New York federal court with racketeering conspiracy and other crimes, including lending support to terrorists in crimes that stretched more than a decade, authorities announced in December.

Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth posted on X that the strike occurred earlier in the week on a Tren de Aragua compound in Venezuela. US Attorney Jay Clayton

said at the time that the gang is responsible for countless acts of violence, extortion and drug trafficking in North America, South America and Europe. Trump nominated Clayton to be director of national intelligence.

The US State Department had offered rewards of up to \$5 million for information leading to Guerrero Flores' arrest.

In a post on his social media site, Trump wrote, "Tren de Aragua terrorists no longer have safe haven in Venezuela or anywhere else and, under my leadership, we will find these vicious murderers and drug lords anytime, anyplace, and send them to the depths of hell where they belong." Trump's post referred to Guerrero Flores by his alias, "Nino Guerrero." Hegseth said, "The operation underscores the shared

US and Venezuelan commitment to take the fight to narco-terrorists and deny them any safe haven in our hemisphere."

Venezuela's ministry of communications did not immediately respond to a request for comment on the operation.

Trump has taken a series of extraordinary actions against the gang, including a series of strikes on small boats his administration has accused of smuggling drugs to America. At least 207 people have been killed in boat strikes by the US military in the eastern Pacific Ocean and Caribbean Sea since the Trump administration began targeting those it calls "narcoterrorists" in early September.

Trump and administration officials have consistently blamed Tren de Aragua for being at the root of the violence and illicit drug



dealing that plague some US cities. The president spent months repeating the claim — contradicted by a declassified US intelligence assessment — that Tren de Aragua had operated under Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro's control. The US whisked Maduro out of Venezuela to face

US drug charges in January.

Tren de Aragua originated more than a decade ago at an infamously lawless prison with hardened criminals in Venezuela's central state of Aragua. The gang has expanded in recent years as millions of Venezuelans migrated to other Latin American countries or

the US in search of better living conditions. Guerrero Flores returned to the prison in Aragua for murder and other convictions in 2013, when Venezuela's crisis began as corruption, mismanagement and a drop in crude prices wrecked the oil-dependent economy. Guerrero Flores and a few other inmates saw a profitable opportunity as the Government neglected prisons.

They assumed control and administration of the prison, establishing a system that controlled the entire inmate population through force and extortion. Over time, they transformed the facility into a sort of city that included a zoo, baseball field, casino and restaurants. Guerrero Flores had his own lavish suite.

The size of the gang is unclear. Countries with large populations

of Venezuelan migrants, including Peru and Colombia, have accused the group of being behind a spree of violence in the region. Still, unlike other criminal organizations from Colombia, Central America and Brazil, Tren de Aragua has no large-scale involvement in smuggling cocaine across international borders, according to InSight Crime, a think tank that tracks crime across Latin America.

In Venezuela, gang leaders have long been known to participate in various illegal activities.

Trump campaigned for a second term promising to crack down on immigration and crime. While polls show his favorability ratings have sagged on his handling of the economy, immigration remains Trump's strongest issue, according to the AP-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research. (AP)



Crochet sheds its past

Crochet feels like a living heirloom. Once a quiet domestic ritual, this handmade craft now boldly commands modern runways and bustling markets

SAKSHI PRIYA

Is crochet still in vogue? It is a question that sounds almost absurd when you picture the steady click of metal hooks defining the lazy afternoons of our childhoods. We all share memories of watching our nanis or mothers loop brightly colored yarn into patterns, often dismissing it as a quiet domestic routine. But look where we are now. That exact old school habit has somehow landed right in the middle of high fashion. We are way past those chunky, overly bright festival looks from the seventies. This new wave of the craft is wonderfully clean and surprisingly sharp, bringing a subtle, unforced elegance to daily outfits. Anyone watching those stunning woven designs dominate Balmain's Spring Summer 2026 runway can immediately see exactly how far the aesthetic has



evolved. The intricate threadwork proved a cultural shift where luxury is no longer about factory perfected monotony. It is an active craving for the raw, irregular touch of human hands. You see this exact same change happening right here on the crowded streets of New Delhi. It is popping up all over Janpath market, Dilli Haat, sitting perfectly inside the boutique shops of Shahpur Jat, and taking over practically every online store you scroll through. Inside shop 80B at Janpath Market, Siddharth Saini handles these threads with a grounded reality. He notes that the pieces filling his shop begin simply as raw, natural raffia. Artisans crochet this fiber entirely by hand, slowly working the material into the structured totes, everyday slings, and delicate clutches on display. "Crochet is different, crochet is hand," Saini says about pieces that take his sources a day or two to complete. He has sustained this business for eight years, leaning on a loyal clientele. To hear him speak is to understand the fragile survival of artistic communities. We routinely witness the forced silence of traditional masters, leaving brilliant

creators with zero stage left to stand on. But Saini's steady sales reveal a deeper truth. People are exhausted by the soullessly uniform. They want a tangible piece of the maker. That craving crosses over into our homes, where woven throws soften modern architecture. But the most fascinating corner of this revival lives on our screens. Social media artists everywhere are sculpting botanical arrangements from yarn, turning a traditional craft into a digital economy. "People are buying them in bulk for Valentine's Day and birthdays now," notes one creator online. Buyers want the gesture of a flower, but hate watching a costly bouquet wither into trash. This stays. It introduces a beautiful paradox into modern romance. Is the fragile life of a real rose a profound statement of love, or does the hand spun blossom carry more emotional weight? Human affection might fade, but that yarn rose sits on a dresser for decades, untouched by time. So, we return to where we started. **Is crochet still in vogue?** Without a doubt, it is everywhere. Look around and you see it woven into everyday life. You spot it dangling as quirky key-



An outdoor rack displays stunning handmade crochet tops. The front piece highlights intricate navy and white geometric patterns, perfectly finished with long, elegant tassels that drape beautifully from the bottom hemline.

A bustling street stall displays an array of bohemian woven crafts. Intricate macramé mirrors with sweeping fringes hang alongside vividly coloured crochet dreamcatchers, highlighting local artistry.

chains on college backpacks, or in those breezy tops girls wear to Sunday cafes. It's the sturdy bags you see people carrying on their metro commute, and even those familiar woven mats sitting on our dining tables. We've basically dusted off this age-old skill, slapped a 'vintage' label on it, and completely reinvented how it fits into our world today. This craft never actually left us. It just quietly changed shape and stayed a permanent part of our culture. Crochet is doing incredibly well, holding onto the threads of our past and weaving them perfectly into the present.

YARN WONDERS



Crochet flowers



Crochet doll



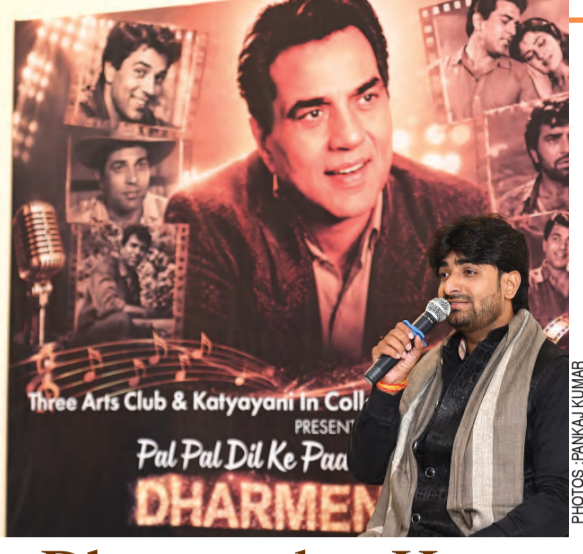
Crochet Bag Accessories



Crochet EarPods Cover



Chrochet baskets



Dharmendra: Hero of hearts

TEAM VIVA

Music easily pulls a room full of people back in time. That is exactly what happened at Gurugram's Eternal Oasis when the opening lines of "Pal Pal Dil Ke Paas" filled the hall. It was an evening about Dharmendra. Writer-director Nidhikant Pandey painted an intimate portrait of a young boy from Punjab who fought to find his place in Bombay — a man who built his career through grit, devotion to his family, and genuine humility. A man who showed up, who loved his family, who never changed even when everything around him did. The script looked way past his handsome features and shy smile. Instead, it highlighted how hard the actor actually worked to make a name for himself, his deep love for his family, and his completely genuine nature. Singer Devanand Jha handled the music for the evening. With Adhir Das on the tabla and Jeetu Nadaan on the keyboard, Jha hit every note of those golden-era



tracks, getting the whole auditorium to sing along. Any strict theatre rules went entirely out the window when Pandey grabbed a mic to sing "Yeh Dosti." The auditorium suddenly felt like a loud, crowded living room party. Producer Sohaila Kapur even stood up from the front row to sing along, bringing a fantastic burst of unplanned joy to the stage. For Eternal Oasis founder Umesh Mathur, hosting this event felt like a perfect milestone for the center. Following packed houses in New Delhi and Canada, this staging ended with a roaring standing ovation. It proved that a true artist never fades; they live permanently inside millions of devoted fans' hearts, a reminder that the legend of Dharmendra remains a deeply personal, beating rhythm for us all.

A TIMELESS MUSICAL TRIBUTE HONORING THE LEGEND, DHARMENDRA'S ICONIC JOURNEY



Summer blooms on our balconies

Indian summers crush us. Make your balcony a cool sanctuary with heat-surviving plants

TEAM VIVA

Every year, Indian cities buckle under relentless heat. Summers here are brutal. They were never meant to strip away joy and color. Even in the fire, plants survive. Flowers bloom like crazy. Urban architecture makes it harder. Not every plant can handle trapped heat inside concrete walls. But a few will survive. They will thrive.

The Snake plant is stubborn. Neglect it and it still thrives. It stores water and tolerates intense heat. The ZZ plant and Aloe Vera work well in modern apartments that turn into furnaces. If you want lush tropical height, the Areca Palm delivers. The Money plant cascades down.

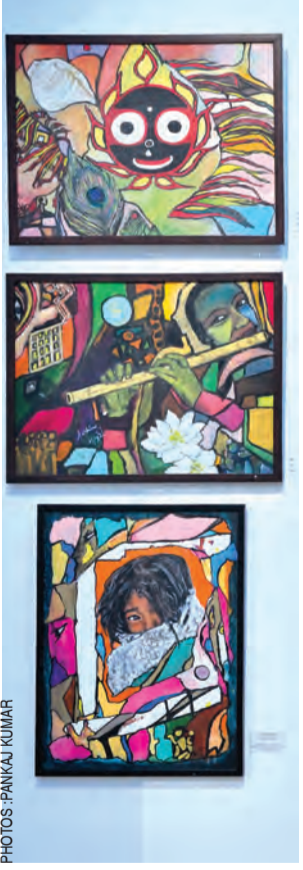


It softens sharp walls and purifies the air around these concrete spaces. Then come the flowers. Mogra, that sweet Arabian jasmine, heats up humid evenings with heavy perfume and pulls you right back to childhood nights. Bright Bougainvillea pinks and bold Hibiscus faces cheer everything up and keep your balcony full of life. Watch a new leaf unfurl. Catch that scent on a hot breeze. Nature waits for nobody. It pushes through cracks and grows wild in brick and steel. Growing these plants



BALCONY GARDENS COOL CONCRETE HEAT, BRING NATURE BACK, TEACH PATIENCE, AND HELP YOU LIVE THROUGH INDIAN SUMMER

When forced silence breaks out



PHOTOS: PANKAJ KUMAR

SAKSHI PRIYA

There is a quiet ache in being unseen, a feeling Aashima Mehrotra tackles head on in *Vanchana Ek Vritaant*, currently running at New Delhi's India Habitat Centre. Society often ignores its true talents, leaving gifted creators with zero stage left to stand on and forcing a silence on masters of their craft. Mehrotra channels this exact sense of cultural and personal loss, but refuses to let the narrative end in despair. Working with encaustic painting is stubbornly difficult. Heating beeswax and pigment requires intense patience, yet she handles it beautifully, sealing raw emotion into thick, tactile layers. Her central figure is a woman carrying the heavy weight of social exclusion. But rather than breaking under the pressure, this protagonist hardens into a symbol of fierce endurance. UNMAAD surrounds you in deep crimson. It is the messy, fevered feeling of desire, where ecstasy and unrest tangle together. Then you move to STEPS TOWARDS FUTURE and everything changes. There is something Christopher

Moore said about how kids see magic because they look for it, and that is what this acrylic piece does. It is stubborn about its optimism, wide eyed and real. The thematic range pushes even further. *Desires* maps out the chaotic intersection of personal ambition and societal expectations. Meanwhile, *Banaras* and *Circus 2* take you somewhere else entirely. Through the alleys of memory and imagination, she has turned everyday moments into stories that stick with you. Doing all this while working a demanding government job is serious work. Her work forces you to confront what you've been overlooking. The exhibition's on until June 15th. It works on you in a way that goes beyond the paintings themselves. There is something in here about loss and how it can open you up to something new.



Union Cabinet Minister for Culture and Tourism Gajendra Singh Shekhawat admires the artwork alongside contemporary visual artist Aashima Mehrotra during the inauguration of her solo exhibition at the Visual Art Gallery, India Habitat Centre, New Delhi



CINEMA



PHOTO: PANKAJ KUMAR

JATTA 4 RETURNS WITH AI LAUGHTER

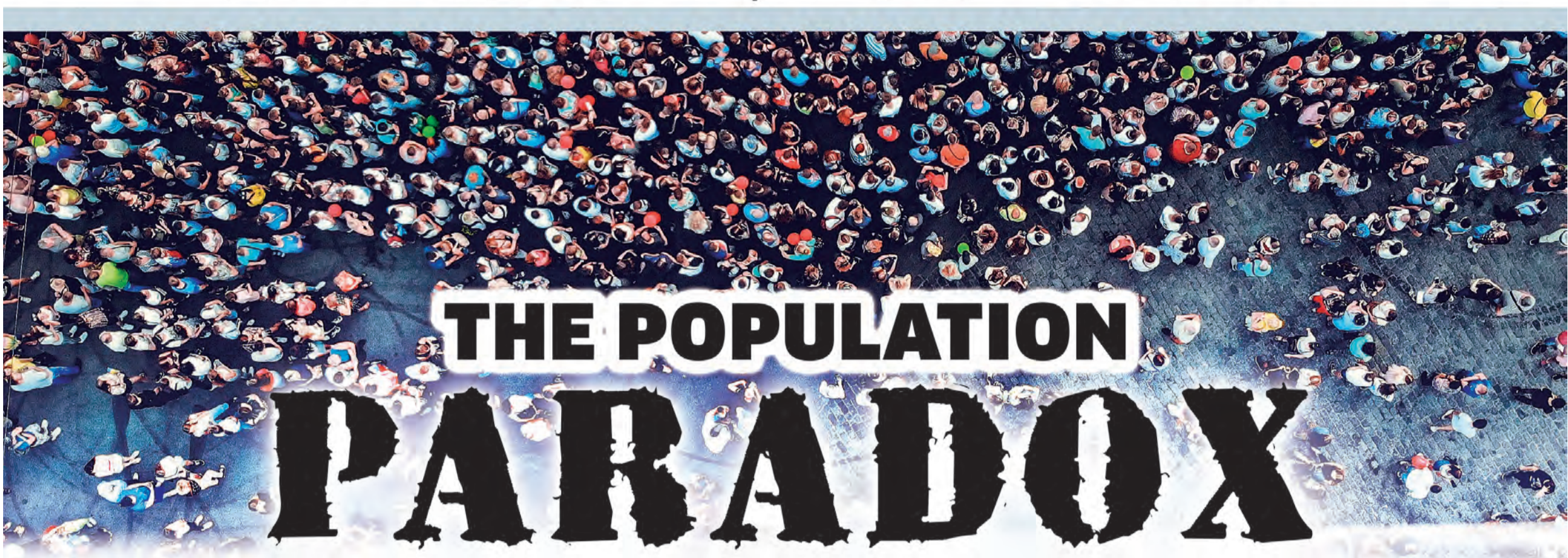
TEAM VIVA

The laughter returned to Delhi this week, but it carried grief too. At the grand press conference for *Carry On Jatta 4*, Punjabi cinema's biggest comedy franchise, the cast spoke openly about loss, legacy, and the stubborn joy of making people laugh. Gippy Grewal, the franchise's driving force, recalled how the first film survived on friendship and grit: "When this film came to me, I really loved its script. We did not have a big budget, so I took help from my friends, formed a team, and produced the film myself." The team faced a harder test for part four: the death of Bhalla Sahab, a franchise cornerstone. "We felt it would be impossible to continue without him," Gippy said. "No one could replace his contribution." Yet they found a way - using AI to recreate a brief on-screen presence, after clearing it with Bhalla's family. Sargun Mehta, who entered the industry because of this film, called it "a proud and special moment." Binu Dhillon promised "non-stop laughter," while Pukhraj Bhalla's debut - as Bhalla Sahab's son - added deep emotional weight. The film hits India on June 26. Comedy survives. So does memory. So here's the real question for you: when a franchise honors its past with technology and heart, does it strengthen the story or blur the line? Let the audience decide.

AGENDA

Population, when unchecked, goes on doubling itself every 25 years or increases in a geometrical ratio
— Thomas Malthus

Chandigarh
June 14, 2026



India faces a new demographic challenge as fertility rates fall below the replacement level of 2.1. While slower population growth may ease pressure on resources and public services, a sustained decline could bring serious economic consequences. An ageing population, a shrinking workforce and rising dependency ratios may strain healthcare and pension systems while weakening economic growth. Policymakers must now focus on boosting productivity, supporting families, increasing workforce participation and preparing for an older society

India's demographic advantage is waning rapidly



URVASHI PRASAD
Former Director, NITI Aayog

India's National Family Health Survey-6, released last week, confirmed what demographers have observed for a decade: India's total fertility rate has remained at 2.0, fractionally below the replacement level of 2.1. On the surface, this appears to be a milestone — population stabilisation, a maturing society and a demographic transition that is broadly complete. Look closer, however, and the picture is more complicated, more urgent and more consequential for policymakers than the headline suggests.

A country of two demographic realities

India is not experiencing a single demographic transition. It is experiencing several, at different speeds and in different directions, with radically different implications for planning and governance. Tamil Nadu's total fertility rate stands at 1.7 in NFHS-6 — the only southern state to record a decline from NFHS-5. Kerala remains at 1.8. Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka each record 1.8, while Telangana stands at 1.9. These states reached replacement fertility decades ago: Kerala in 1988, when the national TFR was still 4; Tamil Nadu in 1993; and Andhra Pradesh in 2004. Meanwhile, Bihar's fertility rate declined from 3.0 in NFHS-5 to 2.7 in NFHS-6. Uttar Pradesh and Jharkhand stand at 2.2. Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh are at 2.1 — at or just above replacement level — and both recorded slight increases from NFHS-5. This is not a uniform national transition. It is a southern transition that was completed two to three decades ahead of the Hindi heartland. The implications for delimitation, resource allocation, social security design and healthcare planning are profound.

The ageing South — a present challenge, not a future one

For South India, the ageing challenge is not approaching. It has arrived. Kerala's elderly population is projected to reach 20 per cent by 2026, against India's national average of 12 per cent — a demographic age structure that has taken developed countries decades to navigate, arriving in Kerala within this decade. A region built on a young, edu-

cated, mobile workforce now confronts rising elder dependency, and healthcare systems designed for infectious diseases are increasingly managing chronic conditions instead.

NFHS-6 makes this compounding visible in precise terms. Kerala has 46.7 per cent of women aged 15-49 who are overweight or obese — among the highest of any major state, alongside Andhra Pradesh at 47.9 per cent and Tamil Nadu at 44.2 per cent. These are the same states with the oldest populations. An ageing demographic carrying a high NCD burden — rising diabetes, cardiovascular disease and hypertension — requires hospitals and primary care oriented towards geriatric and chronic care, not the maternal and infectious disease architecture that served the last generation. Home healthcare is emerging as a partial response, but the trained caregiver workforce required to sustain it at scale remains inadequate. This trend will not remain confined to the South. NFHS-6 shows NCD risk factors rising nationally — rural men's high blood sugar at 19.7 per cent, and women's obesity climbing in every region. As other states develop, the question is whether their health and social security systems will be ready.

Did social investment drive fertility decline — or vice versa?

A common assumption is that states became richer and then chose smaller families. The evidence tells a more instructive story. Kerala's fertility transition is the counterintuitive case. The state achieved sub-replacement fertility in the late 1980s without the economic growth that typically accompanies it. Kerala's industrial base was weak, unemployment was high, and per capita income was modest when it crossed the replacement threshold.

What drove the transition was sustained social investment — female literacy, accessible healthcare and women's empowerment — not wealth. Social development drove fertility decline, which then reinforced economic development by expanding women's workforce participation and reducing household dependency burdens.

The broader pattern holds: where female education is higher and healthcare access more equitable, fertility rates are lower — consistently, across all communities and regions. South India did not become more developed and then have fewer children. It invested in its people — particularly its women and girls — and that investment produced development and demographic stability.

The demographic dividend: A closing window

India's demographic dividend — the economic advantage of a large working-age population relative to dependants — began around 2005. The window is projected to last until around 2055, peaking near 2041. The Economic Survey 2018-19 estimated that India needs to generate 55-60 lakh jobs every year over the next decade, at a labour force participation rate of 60%, to absorb new workforce entrants. The dividend converts into a drag if those entrants are undereducated, unhealthy or unable to find productive employment.

The window is at its widest now — investment in school quality, vocational training, primary healthcare and women's workforce participation must be the priority of this decade, not the next.

According to UNFPA's India Ageing Report 2023, India's elderly population will more than double by 2050 — from around 153 million to 347 million.

CONTINUED ON >> P12

Population growth: Contradictions & challenges



ARUN KUMAR SHARMA
Former Professor, IIT Kanpur

The central argument of this article is that despite declining fertility, as evidenced by NFHS data released last month, there is no threat of a declining population, at least for the next two to three decades. The real and immediate challenges of population trends come from a lack of investment in human capital and continuing differentials in fertility by region, religion, caste and class. The population of India in June 2026 is 1,475,693,542 (Worldometer, internet). This estimate is based on projections made by the UN. With this population size, India ranks first among all countries. As much as 17.79 per cent of the world's population lives in India. With a comparatively smaller share of the world's land area, India is one of the most densely populated countries in the world, with a density of 497 per km², which still seems likely to benefit from a

further reduction in the population growth rate.

It must be pointed out that this large population is still growing at the rate of 0.87 per cent per year, or more. The growth rate summarises the current status of the birth rate, death rate and net migration rate (immigrants minus emigrants). Sample Registration System data (SRS Bulletin 2026) show that in 2024 the difference between the birth rate and death rate in India was 11.9 per thousand population. Since the net rate of international migration in India (-440,456) is rather negligible, SRS figures suggest that India may still be growing at a rate of 1.19 per cent per year. For a developing country, this places a great burden on resources.

In May 2026, the fact sheet of the National Family Health Survey (NFHS-6) was released. It refers to the survey year 2023-24. The report shows that the Total Fertility Rate (TFR) of India has remained at 2.0 and, during the period between 2019-21 and 2023-24, it has not changed at all. In some instances, such as in the state of Jammu and Kashmir, it has actually increased. Demographically, a TFR of 2.0 indicates that if the present age-specific fertility rates remain unchanged, then an average woman is likely to produce 2.0 children in her lifetime. For technical reasons, a TFR of 2.1 is considered to be the "replacement level fertility", ie, a level that would lead to zero population growth only in the long run. However, due to a relatively younger age distribution, even at this level of TFR the overall population continues to grow for a generation or more, a phenomenon known as demographic momentum. Ironically, the Indian population presents a contrasting case of "below-replacement fertility" with a high rate of population growth, and both issues have to be tackled simultaneously.

The decline in fertility rates is caused by several factors. Some important ones are rising aspirations, improvements in socio-economic status, a decline in the infant mortality rate, and government policies aimed at meeting the unmet need for family planning. The latest data (NFHS-6) suggest that there has been an all-round improvement in socio-economic conditions, infant mortality has declined to a rather low level (around 24 per thousand live births), there has been an improvement in child mortality, and the government is committed to providing birth-control facilities to all those who do not wish to have an additional child or who wish to have a child after some interval. According to NFHS-6 data released last

month, 91.5 per cent of people have access to family planning methods if they want to stop childbearing or wish to have a child after some gap. Yet, even today, 20.1 per cent of women and 15.9 per cent of men marry below the legal minimum age of marriage. We need to act on this. Readers must be told that although overall fertility has moved below the replacement level, TMFR (fertility among married women) still requires intervention.

Although a population size above the optimum level leads to diseconomies of scale, the present scenario has some advantages too. Since the proportion of the elderly population (aged 60+ or 65+) has only recently begun to increase, while fertility started falling sometime in the late 1970s, from 2005 onwards we

TILL 2050 INDIA WILL HAVE DEMOGRAPHIC DIVIDEND, AFTER THAT DEMOGRAPHIC WINDOW WILL CLOSE AND INDIAN POPULATION WILL BECOME OLD

have had a situation in which the proportion of young people is declining but the proportion of older people has not yet increased significantly. In demographic language, this is called the demographic dividend. Until 2050, India will have the advantage of a demographic dividend, ie, a high proportion of people in the labour force. After that, the demographic window will close and the Indian population will become old, as is the case in most developed countries. Only then will it become stationary. Economists say that to reap the benefits of the demographic dividend, we need to invest in skill development among young people and make economic investments in creating jobs for them. Countries that lack economic and human capital but have a higher proportion of people in the labour force face a demographic nightmare, not a demographic dividend. Thus, a more pertinent question is: how do we prepare for an ageing population while still benefiting from the demographic dividend?

Moreover, there are many other challenges posed by population trends in India. There are significant differences in TFR by region, religion, caste and class. NFHS-6 data have not yet been analysed, but NFHS-5 data showed that states such as Uttar Pradesh and Bihar have much higher TFRs than southern states, especially Kerala. The political issue of people's representation is linked to the delimitation of seats based on the 2011 Census data.

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INDIA'S POPULATION CONTROL ATTEMPTS

Coercive Measures (1970s)

THE EMERGENCY: During the 1975-1977 Emergency, the Indian government implemented a forced sterilisation campaign under which over 8 million men and women underwent vasectomies and tubectomies. The backlash was severe. Since then, no federal government has attempted to repeat forced sterilisation.

Shift to Voluntary Family Planning (1990s - 2010s)

NATIONAL POPULATION POLICY (NPP) 2000: The government replaced forceful targets with the National Family Welfare Programme, which was redesigned to prioritise maternal health, child survival, and voluntary family planning choices.

MISSION PARIVAR VIKAS: Rolled out to focus on the 146 highest-fertility districts in states like Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. It widened the contraceptive basket (adding injectables and postpartum IUCDs) and compensated acceptors for loss of wages.

State-Level Incentives and Disincentives

TWO-CHILD NORMS: Several states (Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh, and Uttar Pradesh) enacted policies barring individuals with more than two children from contesting local government elections or receiving certain state benefits.

RECENT REVERSAL: Some states are rolling back these two-child policies—such as Andhra Pradesh and Rajasthan—recognising that declining birth rates could lead to future economic and demographic challenges.

Demographic Realities & Current Focus

THE "NORTH-SOUTH" DIVIDE: States in the south (Kerala, Andhra Pradesh) have fertility rates well below replacement (around 1.4 to 1.8), causing local anxieties about an aging population. In contrast, northern states (eg, Bihar) still have slightly higher fertility due to lower female literacy.

INDIA'S JOURNEY TO BECOMING THE WORLD'S MOST POPULOUS COUNTRY

India's population has more than quadrupled since gaining Independence in 1947, growing from approximately 34 crore (340 million) people to over 147 crore (1.47 billion) in 2026. This monumental growth has reshaped the nation's economy, resources and governance, making India the world's most populous country. The growth trajectory can be divided into three distinct historical phases

Phase 1: The 'Population Explosion' (1951-1981)

HIGH FERTILITY, CRASHING MORTALITY: Independence brought massive investments in public health, sanitation, and food security through the Green Revolution.

THE SURGE: While the birth rate remained high, the death rate dropped sharply.

RAPID GROWTH: The population grew from 36.1 crore in 1951 to 68.3 crore in 1981, nearly doubling in just three decades.

THE PEAK: The decade of 1961-1971 recorded the highest decadal growth rate in India's history at 24.8 per cent.



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PHASE 2: DECELERATION (1981-2011)

FLATTENING THE CURVE: Driven by rising female literacy, economic development, and robust national family welfare programmes, the annual growth rate peaked and began a steady decline.

THE BILLION MILESTONE: Despite a slowing percentage growth rate, the absolute population base was so large that the country crossed the 1 billion mark in 2001.

THE 2011 CENSUS: The population was officially recorded at 121 crore, showing a dropped decadal growth rate of 17.7 per cent.

PHASE 3: STABILISATION & REGIONAL ASYMMETRY (2011-PRESENT)

BELOW REPLACEMENT LEVEL: According to recent National Family Health Surveys (NFHS-5), India's Total Fertility Rate (TFR) has dropped to 2.0 children per woman. This sits below the standard population replacement level of 2.1.

TWO SPEEDS OF GROWTH: Clear regional divides have emerged. Southern states (like Kerala and Tamil Nadu) reached stabilisation early and are dealing with an ageing demographic. Conversely, northern states (like Bihar and Uttar Pradesh) drive the current expansion due to a massive base of young adults.

THE DEMOGRAPHIC DIVIDEND: India is currently at a unique economic vantage point with a median age of approximately 29 years, meaning 68 per cent of its population is of working age.

"WE ALL SUPPORT A RULES-BASED INTERNATIONAL ORDER, RESPECT FOR SOVEREIGNTY, TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY, AND PEACEFUL RESOLUTION OF ALL ISSUES"
— NARENDRA MODI

Trump tests the soul of the Quad



KRIPA NAUTIYAL

When the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue — commonly known as the Quad — was revived in earnest in 2017, it was hailed as one of the most consequential strategic architectures of the 21st century. A coalition of four like-minded democracies — the United States, India, Japan and Australia — bound by shared values and a common concern about China's growing assertiveness in the Indo-Pacific, the Quad was meant to be the geopolitical cornerstone of a free and open maritime order. By 2021, it had been elevated to leaders' summits, producing ambitious agendas on vaccine distribution, climate, critical technologies and maritime security. The euphoria was genuine. The ambition, enormous. The question today is whether that promise has quietly been allowed to slip away.

Under President Donald Trump's second term, the Quad has not been abandoned outright, but it has been treated with a studied indifference that has done considerable damage. Since his return to the White House in 2025, Trump has refused to participate in a leaders' summit, leaving the Quad negatively impacted and degrading its geostrategic value. That single fact — the absence of the American President from the high table of the very grouping his own first term helped resurrect — speaks volumes about Washington's current strategic priorities.

A summit that never was

The most visible casualty of this neglect was the 2025 Quad Leaders' Summit. The summit was expected to take place in late 2025 with India as the host and President Trump in attendance, but ultimately did not happen, primarily due to heightened tensions between the US and India. Trump's decision not to attend appears to have had both policy and personal reasons. On the policy side, he demanded that New Delhi agree to a new US-India free trade agreement as a deliverable before his visit.

The consequences rippled far beyond a missed photo opportunity. Trump's snub was a setback not only for the Modi government but also for the wider partnership committed to a "free and open Indo-Pacific", with the Quad now risking a loss of momentum. And as if to underscore the perverse priorities at play, Trump chose to visit Beijing rather than New Delhi, sending a message that shook the confidence of all three Quad partners simultaneously.

Tariffs as strategic wrecking balls

Perhaps no single policy has done more damage to the Quad's internal cohesion than Trump's sweeping tariff offensive against America's own allies. Trump imposed a 25 per cent tariff on Indian products, and an additional 25 per cent penalty tariff for India's purchases of Russian oil. For a partnership built on mutual respect and shared strategic purpose, these were not just trade measures — they were acts of strategic self-harm. Indian exports to the US fell by 37 per cent between May and September 2025, dropping from \$8.8 billion to \$5.5 billion over that period. A string of unexpected provocations from the White House vapourised New Delhi's trust in the United States.

Australia fared little better. Australian Trade Minister Don Farrell expressed Canberra's disappointment at Trump's imposition of a 10 per cent tariff, even though the United States has a trade surplus with Australia, calling the levy "unjustified". Japan, meanwhile, faced a 24 per cent tariff on its exports. The irony is



galling: the United States was simultaneously demanding strategic alignment from its Quad partners while economically penalising them. Trust, once eroded, does not recover quickly.

The collateral effects were predictable. Indian Prime Minister Modi signed a long raft of new bilateral agreements with Japan, and his defence minister did likewise with Australia — suggesting that the non-US members of the Quad were quietly hedging, building resilience within the grouping independent of Washington. Modi's conspicuous bonhomie with Xi Jinping at the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation summit, described by Xi as a "Dragon-Elephant Tango", was a pointed signal of how far Indian strategic patience had been stretched.

The China paradox

Here lies the central paradox of the Trump administration's approach to the Quad. The grouping exists primarily, albeit tacitly, as a mechanism to balance China's growing power in the Indo-Pacific. The Quad received only a single passing mention in Trump's National Security Strategy unveiled in late 2025, a marginalisation that would have been unthinkable two years ago. Beijing has noticed.

China's assessment of the Quad has evolved from viewing it as a potentially unified anti-China coalition to seeing it as a structurally uneven alignment held together primarily by concern over China rather than by deep internal unity, with Beijing increasingly doubting whether the four countries share the same long-term strategic vision or level of commitment. The redeployment of US forces and warships from the Asia Pacific to the Middle East has further deepened unease within the bloc. When Washington moved troops from Japan to the Middle East, Tokyo saw it as a removal of a direct check on Chinese power at a time when Beijing is conducting large-scale military activity in the region. The Quad's strategic logic rests on the credibility of American commitment. Every step that erodes that credibility gifts Beijing a strategic dividend.

Rubio's New Delhi visit: A lifeline or a band-aid?

It was in this context of accumulated mistrust and organisational drift that US Secretary of State Marco Rubio's recent visit to New Delhi in late May 2026 — the first visit by a sitting Secretary of State after assuming office — assumed outsized importance. The Quad Foreign Ministers' Meeting on May 26, 2026 did produce tangible outcomes, and Rubio's tone was notably constructive. He was emphatic that the Quad must evolve from what he termed a "talk shop" into a genuine "partnership of action".

On maritime security, the most immediate strategic frontier, the announcements



SINCE HIS RETURN TO THE WHITE HOUSE IN 2025, TRUMP HAS REFUSED TO PARTICIPATE IN A LEADERS' SUMMIT, NEGATIVELY IMPACTING THE QUAD AND DEGRADING ITS GEOSTRATEGIC VALUE

were substantive. Rubio announced the launch of the Indo-Pacific Maritime Surveillance Cooperation Initiative, which will leverage each Quad country's maritime surveillance capabilities in the Indo-Pacific to enhance information sharing, and the expansion of the Indo-Pacific Maritime Domain Awareness Initiative, which provides near-real-time commercial maritime domain awareness data to countries throughout the Indo-Pacific. Rubio also confirmed that India would host the next edition of the Quad at Sea mission, a joint coast guard exercise aimed at improving maritime coordination among partner nations.

The coast guard dimension is particularly significant. India agreed to host the next iteration of the Quad-at-Sea Mission, which brings together coast guards from all four nations aboard a single vessel. This is a deliberate effort to give the Quad a non-militarised, practical face. The Indo-Pacific Maritime Surveillance Collaboration was described not as the militarisation of the Quad, but as a practical effort to share commercially available but expensive surveillance technologies with Indo-Pacific countries that currently lack access to them. Other outcomes included a Quad Critical Minerals Initiative Framework and a joint statement on Indo-Pacific energy security — all areas where practical cooperation can yield real regional dividends.

Will it be enough?

The honest answer is: not by itself. The ministerial-level meeting and the maritime initiatives are welcome, even necessary. But they cannot substitute for leadership-level political will from Washington. The lack of a leaders' summit under the second Trump administration, and lingering challenges in the relationship between the US and Indian governments, has left many observers uncer-

tain about the future of the Quad in a new era of geopolitical upheaval.

It was resurrected in 2017 precisely because the threat environment demanded it. This time around, the primary reason for potential decline would be more worrisome: Washington may no longer be a reliable strategic partner in the international system. That is a categorically different problem from the hesitancy of 2008. An alliance weakened by external pressure can be rebuilt; one hollowed out by the unreliability of its anchor power faces a more fundamental crisis of purpose. The Quad's three non-American members — India, Japan and Australia — have shown remarkable resilience, deepening bilateral ties among themselves and continuing to invest in the grouping even as Washington has been distracted. The Quad countries collectively account for about one-third of global GDP and nearly two billion people — a coalition with enormous latent potential. But potential, without the sustained political will of the world's foremost military and economic power, remains frustratingly latent.

The path forward

The Rubio visit and the New Delhi ministerial meeting have bought the Quad time. The maritime surveillance initiative is the right kind of practical, non-provocative cooperation that builds habits of interoperability and trust. The coast guard mission, in particular, signals that the Quad can operate meaningfully below the threshold of military confrontation — precisely the grey zone where China has been most active. But the Quad's partners need more. They need a leaders' summit. They need a US administration that does not treat tariffs on its own strategic partners as an acceptable instrument of coercion. They need Washington to consistently signal that its commitment to a free and open Indo-Pacific is not contingent on trade concessions or domestic political calculus.

The window is not yet closed. The four Quad nations remain united by a common vision for a free and open Indo-Pacific, underpinned by robust economic and energy systems. That vision is genuine and shared. What is missing — conspicuously, dangerously — is the American President's willingness to show up for it. Maritime surveillance initiatives and coast guard exercises matter. But in the final analysis, alliances are sustained not by technocratic deliverables alone, but by the signal they send to rivals and partners alike: that the great democracies of the Indo-Pacific stand together, at every level, and mean it.

The Quad is not yet dead. But it is being tested in ways its architects never anticipated — not by the adversaries, but by the indifference of its indispensable partner.

(The writer is a retired Additional Director General of the Indian Coast Guard)

FROM AGENDA COVER

India's demographic dividend is...

By 2046, the elderly will outnumber children under 14. One in five Indians will be over 60 by mid-century. The population aged 80 and above will grow by 279 per cent between 2022 and 2050, predominantly widowed women with significant care needs. The pension, healthcare, and long-term care infrastructure does not yet exist at adequate scale. Building it requires investment now, from a productive workforce now.

Japan's cautionary lesson

Japan offers the most instructive international reference. With nearly 30 per cent of its population aged 65 and older, Japan faces acute labour shortages across key sectors. Automation, flexible work, extended retirement ages, and immigration reform have partially compensated but not reversed the demographic drag. The IMF's assessment of Japan's experience is unambiguous: early adjustment for pensions, healthcare, and long-term care is critical. Countries that delay until demographic pressures are fully visible in daily life have already waited too long.

India has an advantage Japan did not: time. But South India's trajectory — Kerala's ageing profile, Tamil Nadu's sub-replacement fertility extending over decades — places it closer to Japan's position than national aggregate figures suggest. What

Japan experiences today, India's southern states will face within a generation.

What the evidence points toward

Several countries have experimented with financial incentives to raise birth rates. South Korea's TFR fell to 0.72 in 2023 despite decades of sustained spending — the lowest fertility rate recorded anywhere in the world. The evidence is consistent: incentives alone have not reversed structural fertility decline. The drivers of low fertility — female education, workforce participation, urbanisation, and the rising cost of child-rearing — are structural, not addressable through cash transfers at the margin. The more durable policy approach, grounded in India's history, is threefold. First, invest urgently in the quality and productivity of the working-age population India has — through public health, education, and skills — to fully realise the demographic dividend while the window remains open. Second, begin building the geriatric care, pension coverage, and chronic disease management infrastructure that South India already needs and the rest of India will require within two decades. Third, address the legitimate concerns around political representation that the fertility divergence creates through considered institutional design, ensuring states are not penalised for social progress that has benefited the nation.

The fertility debate raises important questions about India's demographic future. The answers lie in investing in the health,

education, and economic security of the people already here and in the policy architecture that converts a young, capable population into lasting national prosperity.

The writer is senior Fellow, Pahe India Foundation and Former Director, NITI Aayog

Population growth: Contradictions &...

Likewise, Muslims have the highest value of mean number of children (4.8) and Jains and Sikhs the least (2.0 and 2.5 respectively). So, the proportion of Muslims in the overall population of India is going to increase further and that of Jains and Sikhs is going to decrease. This explains why between 2001 and 2011 censuses Muslim population grew by 24.6 per cent while Jain population grew only by 5.4 per cent. There is evidence to believe that the 2027 census would not repeat the same experience. Since the modern politics world over is now based on identity, such facts will have critical implications for democratic politics.

The population does not grow at the same rate among different regions, religions, and classes. There is predictably an inverse relationship between fertility, and caste, status and class. USSR once faced the same situation (high fertility among Asian Muslims and low fertility among European Christians) and in spite of their commitment to communism, they decided to go for regionally

differentiated population policy. We need to learn from them. India requires reducing regional and social class demographic disparities in fertility and family planning practices.

Besides, India needs to manage urban sprawl and the ensuing infrastructure needs. In the beginning of the previous century only one-in-ten Indians lived in urban areas and the overall population was fluctuating. In year 2026, 37.61 per cent of the Indian population is living in urban areas. Sociologically, even the remaining rural population is subjected to high degree of "urbanism". Consequently, the absolute population of urban areas is growing very fast and it will deteriorate the quality of urban infrastructure further.

In sum, the fear of declining population in India is only a myth. The urgent need is to reduce fertility further in those regions and sections of society where TFR continues to be high and prepare for bigger challenges such as demands to be created by ageing of population, lack of capital, fertility differentials, and urban expansion. A universal policy to incentivise fertility for the whole nation or a whole state would further aggravate the differentials and any such attempt on the part of the state must be critiqued carefully.

Anun Kumar Sharma is first professor in India to develop online courses on population and sociology and taught demography in IIT Kanpur. He is also a member of the Editorial Advisory Board of the ISS Journal Sociological Bulletin

WEEKLY MOON SIGN FORECAST | 14-20 JUNE

Steady Foundations, Meaningful Conversations and Renewed Confidence

Dr Shanker Adawal
Astrologer, Author & Researcher

This forecast is based on your Moon Sign (Janma Rashi), which often reflects day-to-day emotional and instinctive patterns more closely than general Sun-sign readings.

Weekly Overview

The week opens with the Moon in Taurus, encouraging steadiness, practical thinking and a measured pace. As the Moon moves into Gemini, conversations, movement and exchange of ideas gather momentum. Midweek brings the Moon into Cancer, increasing emotional awareness. By the weekend, Leo energy encourages confidence, visibility and self-expression.

Aries (Mesh): The week begins with attention turning toward finances, priorities or practical responsibilities that may have been pushed aside recently. A steady approach will produce better results than quick decisions. As the week progresses, conversations become more important and useful information may arrive through ordinary interactions. Midweek may bring greater emotional involvement in family or personal matters. By the weekend, confidence improves and creative energy returns.

Taurus (Vrishabh): With the Moon beginning the week in Taurus, there may be a stronger desire to move at your own pace rather than responding to outside expectations. People around you may seek your opinion or support. Midweek encourages communication, planning and movement, making it easier to resolve pending matters. As the Moon enters Cancer, attention may shift toward relationships and emotional understanding.

Gemini (Mithun): The opening days may feel quieter than expected, encouraging observation rather than immediate action. Once the Moon enters Gemini, activity naturally increases and discussions begin moving forward. This can be a useful period for meetings, learning and reconnecting with people. Midweek may bring greater emotional sensitivity than usual, particularly where family or close relationships are involved. By the weekend, clarity improves and confidence gradually returns.

Cancer (Karka): Friendships, social circles or group activities may attract attention early in the week. Some conversations could help you see a situation differently. Midweek becomes more significant as the Moon enters Cancer, increasing emotional awareness and strengthening intuition. You may find yourself paying greater attention to personal needs and long-term emotional priorities. By the weekend, communication becomes more direct and practical.

Leo (Simha): Professional matters or responsibilities may occupy your attention during the opening phase of the week. Others may look to you for guidance or direction. Midweek encourages networking, planning and broader discussions, particularly where future goals are concerned. As emotional matters gain importance later in the week, maintaining balance between work and personal life becomes necessary.

Virgo (Kanya): The week opens with a constructive tone, supporting learning, planning and practical progress. You may feel encouraged to look beyond immediate concerns and focus on longer-term objectives. Midweek brings useful exchanges and opportunities to clarify misunderstandings. Emotional matters may require more attention as the week moves forward.

Libra (Tula): Shared responsibilities, financial planning or unresolved practical matters may require attention at the beginning of the week. A calm and organised approach will help reduce pressure. Midweek supports communication and cooperation, making it easier to reach common ground with others. As emotional awareness increases later in the week, professional matters may become linked with personal expectations.

Scorpio (Vrishchik): Partnerships and one-to-one interactions may become an important theme during the opening days. Some situations may require understanding rather than immediate judgment. Midweek supports movement, communication and practical discussions that help bring greater clarity. Emotional matters may feel stronger once the Moon enters Cancer, encouraging reflection on personal priorities. By the weekend, attention shifts toward professional responsibilities, where confidence and steady effort are likely to bring positive results.

Sagittarius (Dhanu): Routine matters and daily responsibilities may shape the beginning of the week. This is a useful period for bringing structure to unfinished tasks. Midweek introduces greater movement and flexibility, making it easier to adjust plans where necessary. Emotional sensitivity may increase during the Cancer phase, particularly in matters involving trust or expectations. By the weekend, perspective broadens and enthusiasm returns. Travel, learning or future planning may attract attention.

Capricorn (Makar): The opening days support creativity, personal interests and meaningful engagement with people who share your outlook. Midweek brings a practical focus on responsibilities, organisation and communication. As the week progresses, relationships and partnerships may require greater attention, especially where expectations differ.

Aquarius (Kumbh): Home, family matters or personal comfort may influence decisions during the early part of the week. A steady pace will be more productive than trying to do everything at once. Midweek supports movement, communication and fresh ideas, particularly in work-related matters. As emotional awareness increases later in the week, routine responsibilities may feel heavier than expected. By the weekend, relationships and cooperation become more important. Listening carefully may help avoid unnecessary misunderstandings.

Pisces (Meen): The week begins with discussions, planning and practical movement. You may find yourself dealing with several small matters at the same time, requiring flexibility and patience. Midweek encourages useful communication and clearer thinking. As the Moon enters Cancer, creativity, intuition and emotional understanding become stronger. This can be a supportive period for personal interests and meaningful connections.

"EVERY TIME YOU EAT OR DRINK, YOU ARE EITHER FEEDING DISEASE OR FIGHTING IT"
— HEATHER MORGAN

MAHARANA PRATAP JAYANTI

Remembering valour through the cuisine of Mewar



**ANIL
RAJPUT**

Maharana Pratap Jayanti is a remembrance of courage, honour, and the unbending spirit of Mewar. In the civilisational memory of Bharat, Maharana Pratap occupies a place of rare reverence because his life was shaped not by comfort or compromise, but by duty towards his land, his people, and his inherited values. He belonged to the Sisodia Rajput house of Mewar, a lineage that carried within it the ideals of sovereignty, sacrifice, restraint, and dignity. His name continues to evoke the rugged hills of the Aravallis, the soil of Haldighati, the loyalty of Chetak, the sacrifice of warriors, and the moral strength of a ruler who chose hardship over submission. His Jayanti, therefore, is more than an occasion of public tribute. It is a moment to reflect upon the ideals of self-respect, courage, and cultural pride that continue to inspire generations. These values also find reflection in the culinary traditions associated with the land of Mewar, where simple yet nourishing foods, shaped by a demanding landscape and a spirit of self-reliance, stand as reminders of the resilience and fortitude that Maharana Pratap came to embody.

Born in 1540 at Kumbhalgarh, Maharana Pratap inherited a kingdom that stood at the heart of one of the most difficult political periods in medieval Indian history. While Kumbhalgarh is not associated with one exclusive ceremonial dish, its location within the Mewar landscape allows the remembrance to be naturally connected with the sturdy grains, preserved foods, rustic breads, and nourishing preparations of the wider regional kitchen of Mewar and Rajasthan. Mewar was not merely a territory to be ruled, but a sacred responsibility to be protected. At a time when imperial expansion tested the autonomy of many kingdoms, Maharana Pratap refused to place convenience above honour. The Battle of Haldighati, fought in 1576, became the defining episode of his life, not only because of its military intensity but because of what it came to represent. The remembered story of the wounded Chetak carrying his master to safety, Jhala Maan's sacrifice, the support of the Bhil communities, and the continued resistance from the forests and hills of Mewar all became part of a larger memory of resilience. Maharana Pratap Jayanti honours this inheritance through processions, floral tributes, cultural programmes, and gatherings, yet the remembrance becomes deeply personal when it enters the home through food.

The occasion does not carry one fixed ritual menu followed uniformly across households, yet its spirit finds natural expression in the food culture of Mewar and the wider culinary traditions of Rajasthan. Rajput kitchens carried a distinctive balance of austerity and refinement. They fed warriors, families, travellers, guests, and communities in a landscape where heat, distance, scarcity, and mobility shaped daily life. Food in this tradition was never merely indulgence, but nourishment that sustained strength, hospitality offered with dignity, and memory preserved through practice.

Among the most iconic dishes associated with Rajasthan is dal baati churma, a preparation that

carries the character of the land. The baati is made from wheat flour kneaded with ghee, salt, and sometimes semolina or carom seeds, shaped into firm balls, and baked until the outer layer becomes crisp while the inside remains dense and nourishing. Once cooked, the baati is cracked open and enriched with ghee. It is served with panchmel dal, prepared from a combination of lentils such as moong, chana, urad, masoor, and toor, simmered until soft and tempered with cumin, asafoetida, garlic, red chilli, turmeric, and coriander. The sweet companion, churma, is made by crushing baati with ghee, jaggery or sugar, cardamom, and nuts. Together, the three create a meal that brings together grain, pulse, fat, and sweetness in a form that is both celebratory and sustaining.

Gatte ki sabzi, an iconic dish of the region, is prepared by kneading gram flour with spices, curd or oil, rolling the dough into cylinders, boiling them, and then simmering the pieces in a curd-based gravy fragrant with chilli, coriander, cumin, and turmeric. A richer festive variation, Govind gatte or shahi gatte, is often prepared by stuffing the gram flour dumplings with khoya, paneer, dry fruits, or nuts before cooking them in a creamy gravy. Ker sangri, one of Rajasthan's most distinctive dishes, combines desert berries and beans that are soaked, boiled, and cooked with mustard oil, red chilli, amchur, turmeric, coriander, and sometimes raisins. Its tangy and earthy flavour carries the wisdom of arid lands, where preservation and resourcefulness became essential to sustenance.

The breads served with these dishes deepen the connection with the soil of Rajasthan. Bajra roti, made from pearl millet flour, is shaped by hand, cooked on a hot griddle, and often finished over flame before being brushed with ghee. It is earthy, strong, and closely tied to rural food culture. Missi roti, prepared with wheat flour and gram flour, is flavoured with cumin, ajwain, chilli, coriander, and sometimes onion, making it a fragrant companion to curd gravies and dry vegetables. Makki roti also appears in seasonal meals and is often enjoyed with ghee, jaggery, or robust curries. These breads remind us that the food of Mewar was not confined to royal courts alone but was also rooted in fields, homes, camps, and journeys, where nourishment had to be practical and wholesome. Rajasthanian kitchens also transformed stored ingredients into preparations of remarkable flavour. Papad ki sabzi is made by simmering roasted or fried papad in a curd gravy tempered with cumin, asafoetida, red chilli, and coriander. Mangodi ki sabzi, prepared from sun-dried lentil dumplings, is cooked with onion, tomato, curd, and spices until the dumplings soften and absorb the flavour of the gravy.

Rabodi ki sabzi, made from dried sheets prepared with maize, buttermilk, or lentil mixtures according to local practice, carries the imprint of preservation, patience, and regional skill. Rajasthanian kadhi, made from curd and gram flour, is slow-cooked with turmeric, fenugreek, mustard seeds, and dried red chillies, and is sometimes enriched with pakoras for a festive meal. These dishes reveal a culinary tradition that knew how to prepare for uncertainty without losing refinement. Festive snacks add warmth to gatherings held around Maharana Pratap Jayanti. Pyaaz kachori, with its flaky crust and spiced onion filling, is prepared by stuffing dough with slow-cooked onions, fennel, coriander, chilli, and amchur before deep frying it until crisp. Mirchi vada, made with large green chillies filled with spiced potato and coated in gram flour batter, brings

heat and boldness to the table. Kalmi vada, prepared from soaked and coarsely ground chana dal mixed with spices and herbs, is fried until crisp outside and grainy within. Moong dal pakori, served with garlic chutney, green chutney, or curd, adds another familiar note of hospitality. These dishes create conversation, welcome guests, and allow remembrance to unfold through shared food.

Rajput cuisine also includes a proud non-vegetarian tradition shaped by royal kitchens, martial life, travel, and the need for bold, nourishing food. Laal maas remains one of Rajasthan's most celebrated meat dishes, prepared with mutton, curd, garlic, whole spices, and deep red chillies, especially Mathania chillies where available. Its heat and colour give it a distinctive personality. Safed maas offers contrast through a pale and rich gravy made with curd, cream, cashew, poppy seeds, cardamom, pepper, and sometimes almond paste. Maas ke sooley brings a refined grilled character, where meat is marinated with curd, ginger, garlic, spices, and tenderising ingredients before being roasted or grilled until smoky and succulent. From the lake-influenced culinary traditions of Rajasthan, machhli jaisamandi brings another regional dimension, with fish marinated in green herbs, ginger, garlic, coriander, and mint before being cooked into a lively preparation. Together, these dishes reflect the range of Rajput culinary heritage, from intensity and strength to elegance and restraint.

Sweets complete the commemorative table by bringing warmth, affection, and celebration to the meal. Ghevar, made from a thin batter of flour, ghee, and water poured into hot ghee to create a honeycomb disc, is soaked in sugar syrup and often topped with rabri, saffron, and nuts. Malpua, prepared from flour, milk, fennel, and sometimes khoya or banana, is fried and dipped in syrup before being served with rabri. Mohanthal, made by slowly roasting gram flour in ghee and setting it with sugar syrup, cardamom, and nuts, carries the depth of a traditional sweet prepared with patience. Besan chakki or besan barfi adds a dense, fragrant sweetness that suits ceremonial meals and family gatherings. The sweeter side of Rajasthan also includes dishes that feel close to household memory. Lapsi, prepared by roasting broken wheat in ghee and cooking it with



jaggery or sugar, cardamom, and dry fruits, is simple, festive, and deeply comforting. Churma laddoo transforms crushed baati or roasted wheat flour into round sweets bound with ghee and jaggery, often enriched with nuts and poppy seeds. Mawa kachori, filled with sweetened mawa, nuts, and cardamom, fried until golden, and dipped in sugar syrup, adds a more indulgent Rajasthanian note. Rabri, made by reducing milk slowly until thick and layered, may be served on its own or with malpua and ghevar. Balushahi, crisp outside and soft within, completes the sweet section with the slow craft of traditional Indian confectionery.

The beverages that accompany such a meal are most meaningful when they remain rooted not only in Mewar's climate and memory, but also in the wider food culture of Rajasthan. Bajre ki raab or bajre ki raabdi, made with pearl millet flour and buttermilk or curd, reflects nourishment, pastoral life, and desert wisdom. It may be served warm or in a cooling form according to season and household practice. Imli ka amlana brings a tangy Marwari note through tamarind,

black salt, pepper, cardamom, and mint, refreshing the palate after rich food. Makhaniya lassi, especially associated with Jodhpur, offers a thicker and more indulgent drink with its creamy curd base and festive sweetness. Kanji vada,

made with fermented mustard-flavoured water and lentil vadas, brings sharpness, digestion, and regional character to a heritage spread. Khatti chaach, seasoned with roasted cumin, salt, and herbs, remains one of Rajasthan's most honest expressions of everyday cooling wisdom, balancing the weight of ghee-rich meals while reflecting the practical intelligence of the region.

Across households and communities, these dishes may appear in different combinations, yet they carry the same message of remembrance. A simple meal of dal baati churma, ker sangri, gatte ki sabzi, bajra roti, and lapsi can become a dignified vegetarian tribute. A more elaborate spread may include laal maas, safed maas, maas ke sooley, or machhli jaisamandi, reflecting the martial and royal dimensions of Rajput food culture. Community gatherings may serve kachoris, vadas, sweets, and chaach, while families may prepare only a few dishes and still preserve the spirit of the day. The importance lies not in abundance alone, but in the meaning attached to the meal. When elders explain why bajra mattered, why preserved foods were valued, why ghee carried strength, why hospitality was linked with honour, and why Maharana Pratap chose hardship over surrender, cuisine becomes a form of education.

Ultimately, I believe the cuisine associated with Maharana Pratap Jayanti is far more than a regional spread. It is a living reminder of the values that shaped Mewar and continue to inspire Bharat. The dishes of Rajasthan carry stories of courage, discipline, resourcefulness, hospitality, and pride. They remind us that cultural memory survives most powerfully when it is lived within families, taught to children, and carried forward through ordinary acts of preparation and sharing. In preserving these culinary traditions, we preserve not only recipes but also the dignity of Rajput hospitality, the resilience of Mewar, and the spirit of a ruler who placed honour above comfort. It therefore becomes our collective responsibility to ensure that Maharana Pratap Jayanti continues to live not only in public tributes and historical memory, but also in kitchens where food is prepared with reverence, served with pride, and passed on to future generations as an inheritance of courage, culture, and civilisational strength.

(The writer is Secretary, Cuisine India Society)

Scoop without the guilt

TEAM AGENDA

Summer heat crushes us, but this homemade healthy ice cream brings joy without the guilt. Chef Ayushi Jain, Chef de Cuisine of Bakery and Pastry at IICA New Delhi, shares a refreshing recipe that captures the season. It is cooling, light, and made with real ingredients you can trust.



BANANA AND PEANUT ICE CREAM

| INGREDIENTS : | QUANTITY |
|------------------------------------|----------|
| Peanut butter (Sugarfree) | 65 gm |
| Banana (frozen) | 3 no. |
| Cinnamon | 1/8 tsp |
| Milk | 80 ml |
| Roasted chopped peanuts (Optional) | 40 gm |
| Vanilla essence | ½ tsp |

METHOD

1. Freeze sliced bananas for at least 5 hours. Blend with milk, cinnamon, vanilla essence and peanut butter until smooth and creamy.
2. Pour the mixture into a freezer-safe container and fold in the chopped peanuts
3. Cover and freeze for 9-10 hours, or until set.

CHEF'S TIPS

- Use very ripe bananas for natural sweetness and a creamier texture. ● Storage: Store frozen for up to 2 weeks in an airtight container ● Serving: Allow the ice cream to stand at room temperature for 5-10 minutes before scooping for the best texture.

MANGO ICECREAM



CHEF'S TIPS

- Use ripe mangoes for the best flavor, Safeda mangoes work particularly well.
- Before blending, ensure the dates have softened sufficiently for a smooth texture.
- Storage: Store frozen for up to 2 weeks in an airtight container.
- Serving: Allow the ice cream to stand at room temperature for 5-10 minutes before scooping for the best texture.

INGREDIENTS

| | |
|------------------|--------|
| Almonds | 10 gm |
| Cashews | 10 gm |
| Dates (seedless) | 20 gm |
| Chopped Mango | 160 gm |
| Milk | 270 ml |
| Oats | 15 gm |
| Fox nut | 15 gm |

QUANTITY

| | |
|------------------|--------|
| Almonds | 10 gm |
| Cashews | 10 gm |
| Dates (seedless) | 20 gm |
| Chopped Mango | 160 gm |
| Milk | 270 ml |
| Oats | 15 gm |
| Fox nut | 15 gm |

- QUANTITY**
- Almonds 35 gm
 - Cashews 35 gm
 - Dates (seedless) 40 gm
 - Coco powder 15 gm
 - Dark couverture chocolate 80 gm
 - Oats 10 gm
 - Foxnut 15 gm
 - Almond Milk/ milk 270 ml
 - Salt A pinch

METHOD

1. In a bowl, combine almonds, cashews, dates, oats, salt and cocoa powder.
2. Add warm milk and soak for 15-20 minutes.
3. Transfer the mixture to a blender and blend until smooth.
4. Pour into a freezer-safe container and mix in the chopped dark chocolate.
5. Cover and freeze for 9-10 hours, or until set.

Where heritage & spices meet fine dining



GYANESHWAR DAYAL

In a Delhi-NCR dining scene increasingly dominated by trendy cafés and pan-Asian eateries, Masaldani stands out as a confident celebration of Indian cuisine. Located on the third floor of Central 50 in Sector 50, Noida, the restaurant opened in early 2026 and has quickly earned a reputation among diners seeking authentic regional Indian food served in an elegant fine-dining setting. The menu takes guests on a culinary journey across six distinct regions of India - Punjab, Rajasthan, Lucknow, Hyderabad, Bengal and South India. Rather than offering token representations, Masaldani showcases dishes that stay true to their roots while being presented with refinement and care.

Among the standout offerings is the Dal Makhani, rich, smoky and slow-cooked to perfection. The Awadhi

Biryani reflects the subtle elegance of Lucknow's royal kitchens, with fragrant rice, delicate spices and tender meat. Equally impressive is the fiery Laal Maas from Rajasthan, which balances heat and flavour with remarkable finesse. Diners have also praised the restaurant's mutton chapli kebab and a creative avocado preparation with peas and hara channa, highlighting the kitchen's ability to innovate without compromising authenticity.

The restaurant's interiors complement its culinary vision. Inspired by India's spice traditions, the décor features warm earthy tones, tasteful lighting and understated references to Indian heritage. The ambience is sophisticated yet welcoming, making it suitable for both intimate dinners and family celebrations. Generous spacing between tables adds to the sense of comfort and exclusivity.

Service is another strong point. The staff are attentive and knowledgeable without being intrusive. Several guests

have specifically commended team members for their professionalism and hospitality, noting that the service significantly enhanced their dining experience.

What makes Masaldani particularly appealing is its clear sense of identity. It does not attempt to follow fleeting food trends or cater to every palate. Instead, it remains firmly committed to showcasing India's rich culinary traditions through carefully crafted dishes, quality ingredients and thoughtful presentation.

In a competitive Noida restaurant landscape, that focus sets it apart. The generous portions, consistent quality and warm hospitality make it a place diners are eager to revisit. For anyone who believes Indian cuisine deserves the same fine-dining recognition accorded to the world's leading culinary traditions, Masaldani is a welcome addition and a destination well worth experiencing.

FROM SMOKY DAL MAKHANI AND FRAGRANT AWADHI BIRYANI TO FIERY LAAL MAAS, THE RESTAURANT OFFERS A REFINED FINE-DINING EXPERIENCE THAT HONOURS TRADITION WHILE EMBRACING INNOVATION



Do this instead of struggling to detach

The mind keeps dwelling on what people said or did and these things keep you bound to the cycle of cravings and aversions

GURUDEV SRI SRI RAVI SHANKAR

Why do you want to get over attachment? It is because you know it causes pain, and then you want to get detached. If it didn't bring you pain, you would never think of getting rid of attachment. Attachment gives pain because there is ignorance.

The mind keeps dwelling on what people said or did and these things keep you bound to the cycle of cravings and aversions. Detachments simply drop once Viveka rises in you. Do not try to get out of attachment. Your struggle to get out of attachment will make you more miserable. Instead, learn to be centered. Expand your understanding of life and of this creation. Then you will see that you do not need to make an effort to get rid of attachment. It will automatically go away. Young children are so attached to cotton candy. If you keep a sweet before them, they just want to grab and eat it. But when they grow older, the craving for sweets and toys drop off by itself. They do not have to make an effort to get detached from sweets.

Detachment is a very natural happening. When maturity blossoms in you, an expansion begins to dawn within you; that is when you stop getting stuck and entangled in small petty things in life.

Otherwise, when you are not well versed in detachment, if someone ill-treats or insults you, you get so hurt, you keep holding the grudge in your heart for a long time, sometimes even for months together. You tell yourself, 'I am never going to forget how that person treated me'. What is the use of getting stuck in petty things? Why do you want to harm yourself with such thoughts? We do this so often, and many times, we feel proud about keeping a grudge in our mind. This is foolishness. Here we need some Viveka.

Viveka is having the ability to differentiate between what is short-term and what is long-term; what is temporary and what is permanent; what is sustainable and what is perishable; and what is changing and what is unchanging. One needs to know this differentiation or discrimination. The lack of this sense of discrimination causes misery.

How does one develop Viveka? You need to expand your vision. Immerse the mind in spiritual knowledge. Know that everybody, every human being is like a bubble in the water. How long do we live on Earth? Just look at your own life. Suppose you live on this planet for 80 years. In that span, you will spend around 40 years sleeping. Don't think that the next 20 to 30 years is long enough. They will pass in a blink of an eye. Even our clothes have more shelf life than our body. The shoes we are wearing will last for more years than our body. We never pay attention to these hard facts of life. After the next 30 to 40 years, where will we be? What is life? Who are we? These questions should arise in us and when they do, that shows that our intellect is maturing. When we wake up and realise this fact, our whole life appears to be a dream. Life is going by very fast. Clouds come in the sky but how long do they stay? Know that everything is temporary, ephemeral. That is Viveka.

We get caught up in small things and bring misery both to ourselves and to others around us. You should observe



"THE REAL ART IS TO CONTINUE TO BE IN THE SPIRIT OF CELEBRATION YET ATTEND TO ALL THE DETAILS AND FIX WHATEVER NEEDS FIXING"

— GURUDEV

and accept that different people have different ways of talking, behaving, different approaches to doing things and expressing themselves. Do not think that because of this they do not have any love in their heart. It is just that you may not be able to see it, or that they may not be able to express it in a proper way. Just look at things from the other's perspective.

Bring a small shift in your way of thinking. Just know that when someone says something hurtful or mistreats you, they do it out of stress and ignorance. They are hurt somewhere within and that is why they behave like that. Why are you trying to hurt yourself because of the wounds they carry within? You need to expand your mind and see things from a broader perspective.

You can win over everyone and every situation with love. The key to a happy life is based on how we handle our own mind. This is why we all must regularly practice our *sadhana* (spiritual practices). You do not need to become a scholar to live this knowledge. Just meditate for a while every day. Implement and imbibe the knowledge in your life. You must learn how to calm your mind and relax, for a few moments every day. You will become happy and also bring happiness to the lives of others around us.

Detachment and attachment go hand in hand. Attachment is not bad in itself. Viveka or the knowledge of discrimination helps you decide when to be detached and when not to. Unless you detach, you cannot sleep. Unless you detach from other things, you cannot focus on one particular thing. When you focus on one thing, you are detached from everything else. For example, you practice attachment and detachment in the matter of eating. Suppose if you are too attached to eating, it may lead to compulsive overeating. And then, consider sleeping disorders like insomnia. Insomnia is also a result of lack of detachment. If you don't detach your mind from activities you had performed in the day, you cannot sleep at night. And when you wake up, you need to detach yourself from your resting position. So, attachment and detachment are part and parcel of life. When there is no detachment or very little detachment in

life, that can lead to problems.

Detachment and attachment also play a role in romantic relationships. Why do you think so many intimate relationships end? It is like two lines focusing on each other. And at some point, they would cross each other's paths. If you police your partner too much, and are only focused on each other, it is like the lines crossing each other and moving away. But if both the partners have a single goal of doing something big and something good, then it is like two parallel lines that can go on forever.

Viveka develops in a state of deep rest. When one has had a good rest and becomes free from stress, the intellect sharpens. One can never have an expanded vision of life if they are stressed. A stressed mind is always caught up in small, insignificant things. When you are de-stressed, your intellect shines, and it frees itself from prejudices. When there is no prejudice of any kind, no distraction in the mind, and the consciousness is cheerful, *Viveka* awakens. When you practice meditation, *Viveka* awakens within you, and it offers you a clear vision.

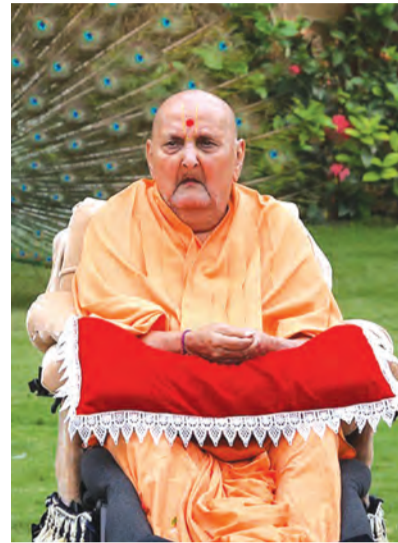
When you inculcate a clear vision, you see life as a game. You move through it by accepting and accommodating people and things. You realise the fact that nothing is static. Anybody can change at any time. Hence, it is futile to hold on to judgements. This is when you build the ability to embrace life in its totality, with all its colors, and with all its flaws.

Then, you gradually realise that everything is perfect the way it is. The understanding that all is perfect this moment will allow you to celebrate with hundred percent involvement. Does this mean that you also accept what is not perfect, and be complacent about everything? Certainly not.

The real art is to continue to be in the spirit of celebration yet attend to all the details and fix whatever needs fixing. This is how enlightened people act and behave. Take right actions wherever they are needed and know that all will be taken care of by a higher power. In this way, you will not be a source of complaints. You will turn into a source of joy. You will be manifesting the joy that you are.

Ancient Wisdom Through an Ancient Language in Modern Times

The fragrance of flowers, the call of peacocks, the glow of sacred fires, and the sound of Sanskrit mantras at dawn, Sarangpur feels less like a place and more like a forgotten chapter of India's spiritual past brought to life. Here, amidst a living gurukul tradition envisioned by Pramukh Swami Maharaj, ancient wisdom continues to inspire modern minds



DR SWAMI GYANANANDDAS

The road to Sarangpur winds through the quiet countryside of Gujarat. At first glance, Sarangpur appears to be just another small Indian village, unassuming and far removed from the bustle of modern cities. Yet, as one enters the vast campus of the BAPS Swaminarayan Mandir, the atmosphere changes dramatically. A sense of serenity descends. The air seems calmer, the pace slower, and the surroundings imbued with a timeless grace.

My visit to the BAPS Swaminarayan Sanskrit Mahavidyalay felt less like entering an educational institution and more like stepping into a living chapter of India's ancient heritage. Towering trees lined the pathways. Colorful flowers bloomed in carefully tended gardens. Peacocks, the national bird of India and affectionately known in Sanskrit as *saranga*, from which Sarangpur derives its name, wandered freely across the campus, their calls mingling with the chants of sacred verses. *Sadhus* in saffron robes, devotees engaged in *seva*, and young students dressed in traditional attire moved purposefully through the grounds, creating a scene that seemed transported from the era of the ancient gurukuls.

There was something profoundly moving about witnessing Sanskrit, not as a subject preserved in books, but as a living language spoken, studied, discussed, and cherished. The environment evoked the spirit of the Vedic age, where learning was not merely the accumulation of information but a holistic process of intellectual, moral, and spiritual refinement. In a world increasingly shaped by screens and algorithms, the experience was both refreshing and inspiring.



At the heart of this unique environment stands the BAPS Swaminarayan Sanskrit Mahavidyalay, an institution dedicated to preserving and advancing India's classical knowledge traditions. Established in 1973 as the Yajñapurusa Sanskrit Vidyalay, the Mahavidyalay has grown into a respected center for Sanskrit scholarship, attracting students from across India and around the world. Here, ancient wisdom is not treated as a relic of the past but as a living source of insight capable of enriching contemporary life.

The Mahavidyalay offers rigorous training in Sanskrit scriptures, philosophy, literature, linguistics, and traditional knowledge systems. Its purpose is not merely to produce scholars who can interpret ancient texts, but individuals capable of communicating their timeless relevance to modern society. Students immerse themselves in the study of sacred works while developing the analytical, linguistic, and research skills required for academic excellence.

A distinctive strength of the Mahavidyalay lies in its comprehensive language programme. Alongside Sanskrit, students receive training in Gujarati, Hindi, and English, enabling them to engage with a broad range of scholarly resources and communicate effectively across cultural and academic contexts. The curriculum emphasises all dimensions of language learning: reading, writing, listening, speaking, and critical interpretation, under the guidance of experienced instructors.

The institution's affiliation with Shree Somnath Sanskrit University enables qualified students to pursue undergraduate, postgraduate, doctoral, and diploma programs. Through its online learning initiatives, students from around the world can also access structured

Sanskrit education, extending the reach of this ancient language far beyond the boundaries of Sarangpur.

Research and academic engagement form an integral part of life at the Mahavidyalay. Regular *Sambhasana* seminars provide students and researchers with opportunities to present their ideas, participate in debates, engage in scholarly discussions, and refine their communication skills. These forums cultivate critical thinking while preparing students for the demands of academic research and public presentation.

Many students go on to present papers at national and international conferences, where they interact with leading scholars and contribute to contemporary discussions in Sanskrit studies and related disciplines. Such experiences strengthen their research abilities, broaden their intellectual horizons, and prepare them to participate confidently in global academic discourse.

The Mahavidyalay also welcomes visiting researchers, professors, and scholars from universities and research institutions across the world. Their presence enriches the academic environment and exposes students to diverse perspectives and emerging opportunities in Sanskrit studies internationally. For many young scholars, these interactions become windows into a global network of research, collaboration, and lifelong learning.

Yet, what leaves the deepest impression on a visitor is not simply the Mahavidyalay's academic excellence, but the divine atmosphere that envelops the entire campus. At dawn, some students gather to perform *yajna* or *mahapuja*, their resonant chanting of Vedic mantras filling the air with a sacred energy. As evening descends over Sarangpur, the echoes of *dhun*, *stuti* and *aarti* linger in the air. Watching young students perform *seva* with remarkable devotion, one feels transported centuries back to the ancient gurukul.

Thus, the Mahavidyalay emerges as a remarkable embodiment of Pramukh Swami Maharaj's vision: a sacred bridge connecting the wisdom of ancient India with the needs of the modern world, ensuring that the light of Sanatan values continues to illuminate generations to come.

(The writer Dr Swami Gyanananddas is a dedicated follower of the Swaminarayan tradition and has earned a PhD from MS University)

Religion and Atheism: Two Sides of the Same Coin

SADHGURU

On a certain day, Gautama, the Buddha, was sitting in a congregation of his disciples, and a man came. He was a great *bhakta*, or devotee, of Rama. All his life, he did, "Rama, Rama, Rama." Nothing else; his life was Rama. He not only went to the temple, but he also built many temples for Rama. But as age was passing away, a little doubt had come. He knew God existed, but he also saw many people who did not believe in God living well. They were enjoying all the pleasures of life and living more happily than he was.

He thought, "Suppose there is no God, my whole life will go to waste." So, he wanted to know, and there was an enlightened being here; this was the opportunity. But after being recognized as a great devotee, how could he come and ask whether there is a God or not? So, early in the morning before the sun had risen, he stood in the shadows and asked the question, "Is there God?" Gautama looked at the man and said, "No." There was a big relief in the disciples because this turmoil was on in everyone's mind. Many a time, they had posed this question to Gautama, but whenever such questions came, Gautama just became silent and never answered. For the first time, he said an emphatic "no," and there was a big relief.

In the evening, another man came. He was a *charvaka*. *Charvakas* are out-and-

out materialists; they do not believe in anything that their two eyes cannot see. This man had proven to thousands of people that there was no God. But then, age was passing away, and a little doubt had come, "Suppose there is a God? I have proved to everyone that there is no God. What if he is there? When I die, will he leave me? And anyway, people say God is very vengeful." So, a little fear had come.

He came in the evening after the sun had set, and once again, standing in the shadows, asked the same question, "Is there God?" Gautama looked at the man and said, "Yes." Once again, there was turmoil among the disciples. In the morning, he had said, "No God," and they were all happy. In the evening, he said, "There is God." Again, there was trouble. What was the idea anyway?

The idea was to destroy all belief. Because belief means you do not know. If you know something, you do not have to believe it; you simply know it. And belief systems are of different kinds; they can be theistic or atheistic. One believes there is God, another believes there is no God, but there is no difference between the two; both believe something that they do not know.

Essentially, a belief system comes from a basic problem that you are not sincere enough to admit that you do not know. If you want to seek something, the first and foremost thing is that you realize that you do not know. When you see this, the



longing to know arises, and seeking follows. Then there is a possibility of knowing.

"I do not know" is a tremendous possibility. The moment you kill it with some kind of belief that is convenient for you, you are destroying all possibilities of knowing. I want people to remain in a way where they come to terms with, "What I know, I know. What I do not know, I do not know." Then seeking will start, and a whole spiritual process can be set forth.

Somewhere, at some point, all religions started as a spiritual process. But in their eagerness to organize, they lost the fundamentals of it. Religion is an inward step. It is a very intimate and personal process.

your liberation, and God is just one more tool to find your ultimate liberation. The purpose is to create reverence in a person. What you worship is not important. It is not about whether you like something or dislike it. It is just that you learn to bring reverence into your life. The object of reverence is irrelevant. If you make reverence the quality of your life, then you become far more receptive to life. Life will happen to you in bigger ways.

So, in indigenous cultures, religion was never juxtaposed against the state. In the past, religion was far more important to people than it is now, but still, there were no theocratic states; the ruler had his religion, and the subjects had the freedom to follow theirs. There was no conflict because people did not look at religion as an organized process. Today, organization is coming in even in Eastern cultures because of the examples of very ambitious and conquering religions that came from outside.

These days, politicians are openly and proudly calling themselves "Hindu leaders," "Muslim leaders," or "Christian leaders." Once this is the situation, religion becomes a matter of number games and another disguise for politics.

Religion can be made into a deep science, the most fantastic science, because it is an inner science. The quality of your life and the quality of the world simply depend on how you are within yourself, not on how external situations

are. Every religion has emphasized that the only place to seek is within, not somewhere else.

Once you are on an inward process, you are in no one's way. There is no room for conflict, harmony is the only way you can be. So, religion is fundamentally aimed at making you experience that everything—the whole life process—is a part of you. When you experience everything as a part of you, harmony is the only way you can be. There is simply no other way to be. That is the basis of all religion.

And when inner turmoil stops, there will be no turmoil in society. Naturally, it will stop. Addressing the inner turmoil is a much wiser thing to do than trying to pacify social situations; that can be done for immediate purposes, but the fundamental solution is always within.

When a person has a sense of completeness within themselves, then they will be in harmony. And a true revolution is only when man is willing to change himself. "I am willing to change," this revolution will bring harmony.

(Ranked amongst the fifty most influential people in India, Sadhguru is a Yogi, mystic, visionary and a New York Times bestselling author. Sadhguru has been conferred the Padma Vibhushan by the Government of India in 2017, the highest annual civilian award, accorded for exceptional and distinguished service. He is also the founder of the world's largest people's movement, Conscious Planet. Save Soil, which has touched over 4 billion people)



BRIEFLY

England left with solitary football after training equipment theft



The England football team was dealt a telling blow after almost all of its training equipment, including players' boots and manager Thomas Tuchel's tactical gear, was reportedly stolen ahead of its World Cup opener against Croatia. "The Football Association (FA) is trying to ascertain what was stolen, with balls and boots among the items feared to have been taken, after vehicles transferring equipment to their Swope Soccer Village base in Kansas City were broken into," the BBC reported. The report also stated that police officers, who are in touch with the FA, are investigating the matter. According to information received, two arrests have been made in connection with the incident. "We are investigating a possible theft of equipment from a team vehicle that arrived in Kansas City with items missing this evening. The investigation is ongoing," a spokesman for Kansas Police was quoted as saying by the website. (PTI)

Christie extends Bournemouth contract by three years



Scotland midfielder Ryan Christie is staying with Premier League club Bournemouth. The 31-year-old Christie signed a three-year contract extension through the 2028-29 season, Bournemouth announced Saturday ahead of Scotland's opening game in the World Cup. "Ryan has made a hugely important contribution to the football club since arriving here and we're delighted he has signed a new contract," said Tiago Pinto, the club's head of soccer operations. "He is a key part of the leadership group in the dressing room and has consistently shown his value to the team through his performances, experience and commitment." Christie has made 177 appearances across all competitions for Bournemouth, scoring 10 goals and setting up 17 more since joining from Celtic in August 2021. Last season, Christie made 26 Premier League appearances, scoring against both Crystal Palace and Manchester United, to help Bournemouth finish sixth - its best-ever finish and enough for its first qualification for European competition. "With the World Cup coming up, it felt like the perfect time to sign before heading away for that, and now I can fully focus on the future," Christie said in the team's announcement. Scotland, back in the World Cup for the first time in 28 years, faces Haiti on Saturday night in Massachusetts. (AP)

Sindhu's title wait prolongs with semifinal loss in Australia Open

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
Sydney

Double Olympic medallist PV Sindhu's wait for a BWF title continued as she bowed out in the semifinals of the Australian Badminton Open after a straight-game defeat to top seed Akane Yamaguchi of Japan, here on Saturday. The former world No. 1, who got a third seed here, put up a spirited fight in the opening game and even held a game point before going down 20-22, 12-21 to the world No. 3 Japanese in a 43-minute contest.

With Sindhu's exit, India's campaign in the tourna-



ment also came to an end in the BWF World Tour Super 500 tournament.

Sindhu matched Yamaguchi shot for shot in a closely-fought first game.

Both players enjoyed runs of six consecutive points each, but the Indian failed to convert her game point as Yamaguchi held her nerve to

US open its home WC with win over Paraguay

ASSOCIATED PRESS
Inglewood (USA)

Folarin Balogun scored twice in the Americans' historic three-goal first half, and the US opened its first home World Cup in 32 years with its biggest win in the tournament, a dynamic 4-1 victory over Paraguay.

Christian Pulisic had an assist in a stellar first-half playmaking performance for the Americans, who enthralled their Southern California fans with an aggressive attack while streaking to a 3-0 halftime lead - the team's largest in any World Cup game.

Gio Reyna dipped another goal in the rying moments of



second-half injury time, giving the Americans four goals in a World Cup match for the first time.

The US scored only three goals combined in its four matches at the Qatar World Cup four years ago, and it had never scored more than three in a World Cup match. But the

Americans were a team transformed while playing in new coach Mauricio Pochettino's more creative system in front of a passionate, star-studded Los Angeles crowd of 70,492.

Mauricio scored in the second half for Paraguay, but La Alborroja fell too far behind early in their first World Cup

match in 16 years. After the US went ahead on an early own-goal created by Pulisic's playmaking, Balogun scored in the 31st minute and again in the fifth minute of first-half injury time.

The New York-born, London-raised striker made his World Cup debut with the first multigoal performance from a US player in the tournament since 1930. Balogun chose to represent the US three years ago instead of staying in the English system, where he likely would have struggled to make the Three Lions' roster - and the 24-year-old Monaco professional has swiftly provided the top-level striker play historically lacking on US rosters.

FOLARIN BALOGUN SCORES 2 FOR US IN WORLD CUP DEBUT

Inglewood: Folarin Balogun could have played for any one of three countries. He chose the United States, and it paid off with a splashy World Cup debut on home soil. The 24-year-old striker scored two goals as the Americans opened with a 4-1 victory over Paraguay on Friday night in front of a rabid and star-studded red, white and blue-clad sold-out crowd of 70,492 at SoFi Stadium.

"I visualised my debut in the World Cup scoring, but the reality did surpass that," Balogun said. "A very

dreamy night." With retired England captain David Beckham looking on, Balogun became the first U.S. player to score multiple goals in a World Cup game since 1930. Back then, Bert Patenaude scored all three goals in a 3-0 U.S. win over Paraguay, the first hat trick in World Cup history.

"The kid's insane," teammate Christian Pulisic said. "He's lethal right now. We're really lucky to have him." Balogun was born in the New York City borough of Brooklyn to Nigerian parents. (AP)

Spain back at full strength against Cape Verde

TALES AZZONI
Guadalajara (Mexico)

Spain will have a full squad available for its World Cup opener against Cape Verde on Monday with forward Victor Munoz returning to training a day after Lamine Yamal and Nico Williams also were back.

Spain was hit by injuries late last season and had to adjust its preparations in the run-up to soccer's biggest tournament. Mikel Merino and Fabian Ruiz also dealt with injury setbacks before returning to the squad. One player who did not make it in time was Barcelona midfielder Fermin Lopez, who has a fractured foot. The biggest concern



for Spain had been with Yamal, the young Barcelona winger who injured his left hamstring in a Spanish league game in April.

The 18-year-old Yamal is expected to lead the team as

it tries to win its second World Cup title. Spain won soccer's greatest prize in South Africa in 2010, when Yamal was 2 years old.

Williams hurt his hamstring while playing for Athletic Bilbao in a league match in May. Both Williams and Yamal were out for the season with their clubs as they focused on recovering in time for the World Cup.

Munoz, who returned to practice on Friday, sustained a muscle injury while playing with Osasuna in May.

Spain coach Luis de la Fuente probably won't use Munoz, Yamal and Williams from the start against Cape Verde on Monday in Atlanta.

They are more likely to be fully fit for Spain's second game against Saudi Arabia on June 21, also in Atlanta. The team's final group match will be against South American powerhouse Uruguay on June 26 in Guadalajara, Mexico. (AP)

Ronaldo wants Portugal focused on good start

TALES AZZONI
New York

Portugal traveled to the United States with Cristiano Ronaldo saying the team needs to focus on getting off to a good start instead of thinking ahead about contending for its first World Cup title.

The Portuguese are among the favorites at the expanded 48-team tournament and the 41-year-old Ronaldo will be playing in his sixth World Cup, the most ever alongside rival Lionel Messi of Argentina.

"It is important to get off to a good start, do well in the first and second matches and then finish first in the group," Ronaldo told reporters in Portugal before the team's departure. "Then

we go match by match, but not with the expectations of winning it all. It has to be step by step. A good start is the most important thing."

Portugal will play its opening Group K match against Congo on Wednesday in Houston. The team then faces Uzbekistan on June 23, again in Houston, and finishes the group stage against Colombia on June 27 in Miami.

Ronaldo said it will be further in the tournament, "when things get tighter and the psychological and physical fatigue" come into play, "that we will know who the real champions are."

This is Portugal's ninth World Cup appearance. The team finished third in 1966 and fourth in 2006 - when Ronaldo made his World



Cup debut. In 2022, Portugal reached the quarterfinals but was upset by Morocco 1-0. Ronaldo, who now plays in Saudi Arabia after spending most of professional career with Real Madrid and Manchester United. "But there are factors that we can't control. Winning or losing, which is the most important thing, depends on many factors." (AP)

World Cup title. "It's a very good generation of players," said Ronaldo, who now plays in Saudi Arabia after spending most of professional career with Real Madrid and Manchester United. "But there are factors that we can't control. Winning or losing, which is the most important thing, depends on many factors." (AP)

Mexico coach's youth gamble sparks victory in opening match

CARLOS RODRIGUEZ
Mexico City

Mexico's dire performance at the last World Cup in Qatar served as a wake-up call for this year's event. The message was clear: El Tri needed new players if it wanted a different ending on home soil in 2026.

Four years after the national soccer team's disappointing group-stage exit - Mexico's earliest World Cup finish since 1978 - coach Javier Aguirre's youthful gamble is already showing promise.

El Tri opened this year's tournament with a convincing 2-0 victory over South Africa, fielding seven players who were making their



World Cup debuts - including forward Julian Quinones, who scored the first goal in only the ninth minute of the match. "We worked hard on our mental game so the size of the stage wouldn't affect us, and we were able to get

off to a good start," said midfielder Erik Lira, another player making his debut on soccer's biggest stage.

The 26-year-old Lira played a crucial role in the victory, forcing a key turnover that directly led to Mexico's first

goal. In addition to Quinones and Lira, Aguirre handed World Cup debuts to Alvaro Fidalgo, Raul Rangel, Israel Reyes, Brian Gutierrez, Armando Gonzalez and teenage sensation Gilberto Mora. Defender Johan Vasquez, who traveled to Qatar but didn't see any playing time, also made his tournament debut.

"It's the happiest day of my life. From the moment we walked out of the tunnel, Mateo (Chavez) and I felt like crying," said Gonzalez, who came on as a second-half substitute. "You dream about it as a kid, you imagine it, you see it on TV, but to actually make your debut is incredible." Fidalgo, a Spanish-born playmaker who became a

naturalised Mexican citizen earlier this year, echoed that pride.

"I can't describe it, maybe I'll be able to in a while. I don't think I'm fully aware of it yet," Fidalgo said. "I'm just happy to be playing my first World Cup match, and to do it with Mexico is a source of pride and an honor. From here on out, we're on the upswing."

With this rejuvenated core, Mexico will target a second victory when the team faces South Korea on Thursday in Guadalajara.

The Mexicans currently lead Group A on goal difference over the South Koreans, who opened their tournament with a 2-1 win over the Czech Republic.

Brazil coach faces more pressure than nation's president: Alisson

RONALD BLUM
East Rutherford (USA)

Alisson Becker feels for Carlo Ancelotti, the Italian expected to bring Brazil a record sixth World Cup title.

"His position perhaps has more pressure than being the president of the country," the Selecao's top goalkeeper said. Brazil is unbeaten in 20 World Cup openers since 1934, winning 17 going into Saturday night's match against African champion Morocco. Having conquered the globe with Pele, samba soccer and canary yellow jerseys, Brazil was once the nation others emulated.

No more. Brazil hasn't won the title since 2002 and has moved past the quarter-

finals just once since, a humiliating 7-1 defeat to Germany in the 2014 semis on home soil in Belo Horizonte.

"We're here to try to change history, try to put Brazil back to where it never should have left, which is at the top," striker Vinicius Junior said Friday through an interpreter. "We are at the same level as the other major teams." Morocco became the first African nation to reach the World Cup semis, losing 2-0 to France four years ago. The Atlas Lions won their continent's title controversially in January - they lost 1-0 to Senegal but were awarded a 3-0 forfeit victory because the Lions of Teranga left the



field for 15 minutes during stoppage time in protest of a penalty kick awarded to their opponent.

Brazil is ranked sixth in the world and Morocco seventh. "In modern football, there is no - how we say? - small-

time team," Ancelotti said through an interpreter. "They are definitely up to the task."

In their one World Cup meeting, Brazil won 3-0 in the 1998 group stage behind goals from Ronaldo, Rivaldo

and Bebeto. "We all respect Brazil. Some people say it's not the Brazil of before. Well, it's still Brazil," Morocco captain Achraf Hakimi said through an interpreter. "They're passionate. They love football. They have great qualities. They really want to win this World Cup."

En route to the title during the 1994 World Cup in U.S., Brazil became famous for the baby-rocking goal celebration by Bebeto, joined by teammates Romario and Mazinho. Ancelotti wouldn't mind more prancing. "It's not banned to dance in the new regulations of FIFA. This is not forbidden," he said. "They want to optimize the time of play, but you can still celebrate and dance." (AP)

Shooter Manu Bhaker calls Jaspal Rana's death an irreparable loss

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
New Delhi

Ace Indian shooter Manu Bhaker on Saturday described the death of her mentor Jaspal Rana as an "irreparable loss," as the country's shooting fraternity mourned the untimely demise of one of the sport's most revered icons.

Rana, one of India's finest pistol shooters who successfully transitioned into coaching, guided Manu to her historic twin bronze medals at the 2024 Paris Olympics. He died at the age of 49 after battling cardiac complications. Rana was serving as the



high-performance coach of the Indian pistol team at the time of his death.

His illustrious competitive career spanned more than 15 years, with the crowning

achievement coming at the 2006 Asian Games, where he produced a sensational haul of three gold medals and a silver, while also equalling the then world record.

In a brief two-word post in Hindi on social media, Manu shared three photographs of herself with Jaspal and wrote, "Apurniya Kshati" (irreparable loss).

Manu, who is currently in Dehradun attending the national camp, was also present when Rana's mortal remains were brought to the city. On Friday evening, she was seen sitting alongside his father, N.S. Rana, and other family members.



Gill leads India to seven-wicket win over Afghanistan in 1st ODI

BHARAT SHARMA
■ Dharamsala

Pacer Gurnoor Brar impressed on his international debut before captain Shubman Gill played a regal knock to set up India's seven-wicket win over Afghanistan in the rain-hit series opener on Saturday. The game marked the start of India's preparations for the ODI World Cup in 2027, and the hosts ended up ticking most boxes after persistent rain delayed the game by four and 15 minutes and cut the game to a 25-over-a-side contest. Rahmanullah Gurbaz made a high-quality 102 off just 51 balls while debutants Brar and Harsh Dubey took three

wickets each as India bowled out Afghanistan for 194 after opting to field. Gill (84 not out off 66) carried his splendid form across three formats to help India ease to the target in 22.5 overs. KL Rahul (39 not out off 19) also played his part well considering the situation with his cameo, including a classy six over extra cover off Zia Ur Rahman. Gill's opening partner Rohit Sharma (16 off 16) was run out after Gill turned down his call for a risky single in the sixth over of the run chase. With his form and fitness in focus, Rohit was not at his best, but he did come up with a drive on the up and six off his trademark pull shot.



India's captain Shubman Gill, right, greets Afghanistan's Ibrahim Zadran after winning an ODI cricket match between India and Afghanistan in Dharamsala, Himachal Pradesh

Ishan Kishan (34 off 22) looked good in his ODI comeback at number three before being outdone by a Rashid Khan googy. Gill got the majority of his majestic boundaries against the spin trio of Rashid Khan, Mohammed Nabi and AM Ghazanfar after beginning with a soothing cover drive off pacer Zia Ur Rahman. Gill also took his Gujarat Titans teammate Rashid Khan to the cleaners, with six overs mid-wicket standing out. Not much time was lost once the skies cleared up, thanks to the recently installed subair drainage system here. Gurbaz, a proven performer in T20 cricket, came out to bat

in the shortened game with a clear mindset, something he attributed to rival coach Gautam Gambhir's tips after the one-off Test in Mullanpur. For the record, Gurbaz was an important member of the KKR side that won IPL in 2024. The ball was doing a bit in the air early on, but Gurbaz went on the offensive from the word go, cutting Arshdeep for a four before stepping out to dispatch the left-arm pacer down the ground for a maximum. The 6 feet 5 inch tall Brar (3/27 in 4.5 overs), who had been a net bowler with the Indian team for a long time prior to getting his ODI cap from captain Shubman Gill on Saturday, consistently

clocked 145kmph plus in his first over and got the ball to shape away. His first couple of balls swung away from a full length before pulled his length back to induce an error from opener Ibrahim Zadran who mistimed his aerial hit to be caught at mid-off, giving the Punjab fast bowler instant success in international cricket. Afghanistan were reduced to 16 for two when Arshdeep had Sediqullah Atal trapped in front off a ball that did not do much. It became 26 for three when Rahmat Shah mistimed his pull off Arshdeep to be caught by another debutant Harsh Dubey running back-wards from his mid-wicket position. (PTI)

Pakistan skipper Fatima Sana survives injury scare



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ Birmingham

Pakistan captain Fatima Sana had an injury scare during the team's practice session on Saturday afternoon ahead of their Women's T20 World Cup opening game against arch-rivals India. Fatima was hit on her right shin when a low bowler's back-drive from opener Ayesha Zafar hit her flush on the knee. She was in considerable pain and hobbled out of the ground with support from physio and fellow players. However to Pakistan team's relief, Fatima confirmed at the pre-match press conference that the hit wasn't a serious one and she is available for Sunday's game. "It was just a normal shot from Ayesha and I was hit below knee. But I think it is good now," Fatima told mediapersons. Fatima though did not come back for the remainder of the session and the Pakistan team management was tight-lipped over her injury status.

BCCI not to intervene over foreign player availability in IPL

BHARAT SHARMA
■ Dharamsala

The BCCI has no plans to act as a bridge between overseas players and their respective teams over their availability for the IPL despite concerns being raised by franchises in the recently concluded edition. The BCCI has a ban in place for foreign recruits who pull out of the tournament after being bought in the auction but player availability over the two-month long IPL still remains an issue. The likes of Josh Hazlewood, Pat Cummins and Mitchell Starc were not available for the first half of the tournament due to niggles. Delhi Capitals were adversely impacted by Starc's

absence in the first half. After their play-offs campaign, Rajasthan Royals head coach Kumar Sangakkara had expressed his frustration over Sam Curran playing the T20 back home in the UK after ruling himself out of the IPL due to an injury. Punjab Kings co-owner Mohit Burman had said that BCCI and other boards need to align better on availability of foreign recruits. "We were told that Sam Curran had a season-ending injury, but I think I saw him playing for Surrey for two or three games now. So that was disappointing," Sangakkara had said. However, BCCI feels the contentious issue needs to be sorted between the player and his franchise as



"they are the custodians of the players." The Board also thinks the two-year ban in place for last minute withdrawal is a strong enough deterrent and the players are free to make their individual choice in consultation with the franchise. To put things in perspective, Archer made himself available for the entire tournament despite the ECB wanting to manage his workload, PTI has learned. No need for massive hike in auction purse. The current auction stands at Rs 125 crore but the players' contracts still can't compare to the ones in European football or NFL. The BCCI is open to a gradual increase in the future but is against a significant hike. It fears that more money at teams' disposal can lead to irrational bidding, like it happened in the case of Chris Morris back in 2021 when he became the league's costliest recruit at the time. It is worth mentioning that the players get match fees also (Rs 7.5 lakh per game) and get additional sponsorship during the tournament over and above their contractual fee. **Post 2027, starting early in March best option** The BCCI plans to increase the number of games from 74 to 94 from the 2028 season onwards and that would require a bigger window. (PTI)

Suthar strikes thrice on Warwickshire debut in County Championship



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ Scarborough

Fresh from a memorable Test debut for India, left-arm spinner Manav Suthar made an immediate impact in county cricket, claiming three wickets on his Warwickshire debut against Yorkshire on day two of the County Championship Division One on Saturday. Suthar, who was named 'Player of the Match' for his seven-wicket match haul in India's one-off Test against Afghanistan earlier this week, returned with 3/85 from 21 overs as Yorkshire were bundled out for 469 in 110.4 overs an hour into the opening session on day two. The 23-year-old opened his county account by dismissing Yorkshire number 3 Sam Whiteman for 55 shortly after the batter completed his half-century on the opening day. He removed opener William Luxton, trapping him leg-before to end a marathon knock of 167 off 261 balls, at the fall of the day. Suthar then added the wicket of George Hill adding

to the Yorkshire's collapse from 386/6 overnight to 469 all out inside 15 overs. Suthar has been signed by Warwickshire for the next two rounds of the ongoing County Championship and is also likely to play against Somerset at Taunton next week. The Rajasthan spinner had struck in his very first over in Test cricket and finished with 6/33 in the first innings before adding 1/29 to the second as India won the one-off Test against Afghanistan by an innings and 300 runs. Suthar earned his India call-up after a string of strong domestic performances for Rajasthan, with 136 first-class wickets at an average of 24.89. **Unadkat shines** Meanwhile, veteran India left-arm pacer Jaydev Unadkat continued his stint with Sussex, producing figures of 4/29 in 14.2 overs against Glamorgan for 155 in 51.2 overs. Unadkat had rejoined Sussex after signing a two-year deal with the county in 2024.

Women's T20 WC: India eye strong start against Pakistan

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ Birmingham

A well-balanced India will need openers Smriti Mandhana and Shafali Verma to fire from all cylinders against a tricky Pakistan to make a bright beginning to their campaign in the ICC Women's T20 World Cup on Sunday. Led by Harmanpreet Kaur, India are looking to add a second global title to their showcase after winning the 50-over version last year, and the head-to-head stats heavily favours them against cross-border rivals. India enjoy an overwhelming 13-3 lead in the shortest format, and, in fact, their previous meeting was in 2024 T20 World Cup in



Dubai, which India won by six wickets. From that day, India have grown into a more consistent and robust white ball unit, which is reflected in their ODI World Cup victory, and almost the same squad will lead India's quest for a T20 crown. India have been in reasonable form too in the run-up to the event. They have beaten Australia (2-1) and England (3-2) away from home, while drubbing Sri Lanka (5-0) at home,

underlining their all-weather abilities. However, they also received timely wake-up calls during their defeats to South Africa (4-1) and England (2-1) in away series. **Runs from openers mandatory** It revealed the need for India to have a stronger opening alliance between vice-captain Mandhana and her partner Shafali. After an 82 against the Aussies at Adelaide in February, Mandhana's next six outings produced 13, 12, 37, 0, 32 and 8. Shafali offers a similar story. After her 64 against South Africa at Johannesburg, the right-hander could only make 9, 4, 2, 22 and 11 in the next five

innings. India will require them in full flow against a Pakistan attack led by their effervescent skipper Fatima Sana. Sana has been in brilliant form of late as she averages over 50 with the bat and less than 25 with the ball in the last year or so. The 24-year-old had blasted the fastest fifty in the Women's T20Is off just 15 balls against Zimbabwe recently in Karachi, and she is certain to give some worries to the Indian bowling unit which does not have injured Amanjot Kaur and Kashvee Gautam. But Harmanpreet has returned to form with a couple of fifties against South Africa and England, which will be a big boost to the middle-order.

England crush Sri Lanka in Women's T20 World Cup

ASSOCIATED PRESS
■ Birmingham

England launched its home Women's Twenty20 World Cup in style by crushing Sri Lanka by 87 runs at Edgbaston. After making the highest total in tournament history — 219-1 — with 105 not out by opener Danni Wyatt-Hodge, England dismissed Sri Lanka for 132 on Friday. Left-arm pacer Freya Kemp took a career-best 4-21 including three wickets in one over that reduced Sri Lanka to 92-8. But it was England's record-setting batting that shone on a sunny evening in



front of 14,865 fans. Wyatt-Hodge and Amy Jones, who was pushed up the order to open, combined for 100 inside 10 overs. Jones was dropped on 12

ODI World Cup win showed India can cross the line: Muzumdar

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ Birmingham

India's long-awaited ODI World Cup triumph last year has reinforced the belief that the team can finally get over the line in a global tournament, said head coach Anil Muzumdar as Harmanpreet Kaur and Co begin its quest for a maiden Women's T20 World Cup title. India ended years of heartbreak by lifting the 50-over World Cup at home last year, having previously finished runners-up in the 2005 and 2017 ODI editions and the 2020 Women's T20 World Cup. Muzumdar said the historic triumph has instilled confidence within the squad ahead of its campaign opener



against Pakistan on Sunday. "It's a completely different format, isn't it? I mean, yes, we won the World Cup but that was in the ODIs, this is a brand new format. So, I guess we are really looking forward for it," Muzumdar said when asked if there is extra pressure on the team. "One thing I can assure you that we would take a lot from that World Cup getting into this tournament because we know for a fact

that we will cross the line." The Indian team has spent more than three weeks in the UK, including a three-match T20I series against England, and Muzumdar feels the players have adapted well to the conditions. "As far as acclimatisation is concerned, we've had three weeks over here now. We came on 23rd of May and we've got used to it now." Muzumdar also hailed Yastika Bhatia's return after the wicketkeeper-batter missed last year's ODI World Cup because of a serious knee injury suffered during the team's preparatory camp in Visakhapatnam. "I think it was very unfortunate that Yastika missed out on the previous World

Cup. It was just on the last day, last minute, probably the last over that was bowled in that camp." The left-hander has made a successful return to the T20I setup after more than two years away and has impressed at number 3, providing India with a valuable left-handed option in the middle order. "It was really unfortunate that in the last minute she had to miss out. It was a huge injury and the way she has come back, the way she has

fought her way back in this team, it just tells you a little bit of an insight of how this team reacts to challenges. I think Yastika is a good example of that," Muzumdar said. On India's bowling resources, Muzumdar said the side is no longer solely dependent on spin despite it remaining a traditional strength. "Definitely, it (spin) has been our biggest strength. But if you look at this team, we have got eight quality bowlers.

The day you're not allowed to celebrate winning a Test is dark day: Swann

ANKIT SHRESTHA
■ Dharamsala

Former England spinner Graeme Swann has questioned ECB's imposition of midnight curfew on players, and termed Ben Stokes a victim of the culture more interested in policing than celebrating an achievement. Skipper Stokes landed in controversy after footage emerged from the post Lord's Test victory celebrations at a nightclub, where he and teammate Gus Atkinson were caught in a melee involving Saracens academy rugby player Toota Auvaa. Swann, however, believes the focus has been misplaced, immediately after England outsmarted New

Zealand by 115 runs. "My thoughts are very mixed on this. The fact that there's a curfew put in place is... I'm a former player. You will never, ever convince me that a curfew is a good thing. It's ridiculous that they even did that in the first place," Swann told PTI. The former off-spinner said enforcement of curfew was done without taking the dressing-room realities into account. "I understand why they did it, because they're trying to paint a good picture to other people, to a PR side of it. That doesn't work. I think they'll learn a lesson, the ECB, from that, that we shouldn't have done that at all," he said. According to Swann, the ECB would have



been better served discussing team culture rather than imposing such blanket restrictions. "We should have come out, sat down and actually talked about what we're going to do as a culture and make sure we're moving forward. "But just to put a midnight curfew after winning a Test match, the day you're not allowed to celebrate winning a Test match for your country is a dark day," he said. Swann made it clear that

the issue lies with the rule rather than the player. "I don't think Ben Stokes has done anything wrong here, other than go against a rule that shouldn't have been implemented in the first place." While criticism of Stokes has centred on his responsibilities as captain, Swann was reluctant to pass judgement on the cascading events. "I don't know the story, what happened. No one knows the story. So, I'm not even going to comment on that." Instead, he returned to what he sees as the more fundamental issue. "Like I say, he celebrated winning the Test match. I have no issue with that whatsoever. I do have a massive issue with the team curfew

at midnight after winning a Test." The 47-year-old believes that players should be treated as adults and trusted to exercise common sense. "Before a Test, fine. You shouldn't drink before or during a game. As a professional athlete, you shouldn't be doing that. But that doesn't need writing down on a piece of paper for me." Swann also expressed concern over the growing culture of surveillance around professional athletes, questioning the motivations of those who filmed and circulated footage of England players. "Think of it from another angle. Think of who recorded that and think of who sent it to a newspaper trying to make money." (PTI)

स्वच्छता अभियान
नगर निगम यमुनानगर

स्वच्छता अभियान के लिए अपील

- साफ-सफाई को आदर : अपने घर, कार्यस्थल और आस-पास के क्षेत्र में साफ-सफाई बनाए रखें। अपने कचरे को हमेशा कुड़ेदान में ही डालें।
- सिंगल-यूज प्लास्टिक का बहिष्कार : पर्यावरण को नुकसान पहुंचाने वाले सिंगल यूज प्लास्टिक का उपयोग न करें। इसके बजाय कपड़े या जूट के थैलों का इस्तेमाल करें।
- सार्वजनिक स्थानों को स्वच्छ रखें : सड़कों, पार्कों, बाजारों और पर्यटन स्थलों पर सफाई न फैलाएं। अगर आप कहीं बाहर जाते हैं, तो अपने साथ कचरा न फैलाएं और दूसरों को भी इसके प्रति जागरूक करें। घरे का कूड़ा कचरा नगर निगम के वाहन को ही दें, सड़क पर न डालें।
- जल संरक्षण और कचरा प्रबंधन : गीले और सूखे कचरे को अलग-अलग कुड़ेदानों में डालें ताकि उनका वैज्ञानिक तरीके से पुनर्चक्रण (Recycling) किया जा सके, साथ ही, पानी को बर्बादी न दें।
- दूरियों को प्रतिष्ठित करें : स्वच्छता को केवल सरकार का काम न समझें, बल्कि इसे एक जन-आंदोलन बनाएं, अपने परिवार, दोस्तों और पड़ोसियों को साफ-सफाई के फायदों के बारे में बताएं। देश की प्रगति और अच्छे स्वास्थ्य के लिए स्वच्छता बहुत जरूरी है। आइए, एक कदम स्वच्छता की ओर बढ़ाएं और अपने देश को गर्व के साथ स्वच्छ और हवा-भरा बनाएं।

पॉलीथीन को न और बैग को हां

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