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**PIONEER IN SHORT**

**RAHMAN TO TAKE OATH ON TUESDAY**

Tarique Rahman will be sworn in as Bangladesh's prime minister on Tuesday after his Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) won 209 of 297 seats in the 13th parliamentary elections. Right-wing Jamaat-e-Islami secured 68 seats, while the Awami League was barred from contesting. Breaking tradition, the ceremony will be held at the South Plaza of the Jatiya Sangsad. President Mohammed Shahabuddin will administer the oath. Earlier, lawmakers will be sworn in by Chief Election Commissioner AMM Nasir Uddin and will also take an oath as members of a Constitutional Reform Council. Rahman, 60, replaces interim leader Muhammad Yunus, who assumed office after mass protests toppled Sheikh Hasina's government in August 2024. Calling for "national unity" and rejecting "politics of vengeance," Rahman said his priorities are economic recovery and good governance. The son of former prime minister Khaleda Zia and late president Ziaur Rahman, he returned from 17 years in London exile two months ago and will hold public office for the first time.

## India will shape solutions for the world: PM at AI summit



PM Narendra Modi during the inauguration of the India AI Impact Expo, at Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE**  
New Delhi

Exploring multiple exhibition pavilions, engaging with start-ups, researchers, and technology leaders showcasing artificial intelligence or AI applications across all the sectors, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday

inaugurated the India AI Impact Expo 2026 summit, at Bharat Mandapam. The Prime Minister also visited various stalls at the venue and spoke with companies as well as startups participating in the expo.

The Expo has over 600 high-potential startups and 13 country pavilions dis-

playing international collaboration in the AI ecosystem. As the first major AI summit hosted in the Global South, the event underscores India's ambition to shape global AI norms while advancing domestic capacity.

Earlier in the day, Modi also said that India stands at

the forefront of AI transformation and its strides in artificial intelligence reflect both ambition and responsibility. However, he also highlighted the role of AI across diverse sectors including healthcare, education, agriculture, governance and enterprise.

Taking to X, PM Modi said, "Being here among innovators, researchers and tech enthusiasts gives a glimpse of the extraordinary potential of AI, Indian talent and innovation." The Prime Minister further said that those participating "would shape solutions not just for India but for the world."

In a post on X, Modi said, "Bringing the world together to discuss AI! Starting today, India hosts the AI Impact Summit at Bharat Mandapam in Delhi. I warmly welcome world leaders, captains of industry, innovators, policymakers, researchers and tech enthusiasts from across the world for this Summit."

CONTINUED ON >> P4



### MODI, MACRON TO INAUGURATE HELICOPTER ASSEMBLY LINE

ASHOKE RAJ ■ New Delhi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and French President Emmanuel Macron will virtually inaugurate the H125 light utility helicopter Final Assembly Line (FAL) on February 17, marking a step forward in India-France ties.

The facility, at the Tata-Airbus plant in Karnataka, will assemble the H125 helicopter for the domestic market and serve export demand from neighbouring countries. The project is being positioned as a boost to India's indigenous aerospace manufacturing ambitions and as a symbol of industrial cooperation between New Delhi and Paris.

CONTINUED ON >> P4

## PM Modi to visit Israel



WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA**  
Jerusalem

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will travel to Israel on a two-day visit from February 25 to 26, sources said on Monday.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu first broke news of Modi's visit while addressing the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organisations on Sunday.

"Parliament address on the anvil. Who's coming here next week? Narendra Modi,"

Netanyahu told the gathering. According to sources, PM Modi's visit is "likely to be short from February 25 to 26", but "its impact is deep given the popularity Modi enjoys not only in Israel but around the world". While the programme around the visit is being worked out, PM Modi is expected to address the Israeli parliament.

This would be his second visit to Israel, the first being in July 2017, which was also the first ever by an Indian Prime Minister to the Jewish state.

**The ByStander**



**THREE PAK INMATES ESCAPE DETENTION**

In a serious security breach, three inmates - including two Pakistani nationals - escaped from the juvenile observation home in Ranbir Singh Pora near the International Border in Jammu after allegedly opening fire on policemen on sentry duty on Monday evening. Police had not issued an official statement till late night, but a high alert was sounded across the region to track down the fugitives. Two personnel - SPO Vinay Kumar and Head Constable Parveen Kumar - were injured in the incident. According to official sources, the escape took place around 5.30 pm when the inmates assaulted the guards and fled from the R S Pura Juvenile Observation Home.

**RAJPAL YADAV GETS INTERIM RELIEF**

In a relief to actor Rajpal Yadav, the Delhi High Court has suspended his sentence in the cheque bounce cases until March 18, allowing him to be released from jail. Justice Swarna Kanta Sharma granted the interim suspension after noting that Yadav deposited Rs 1.5 crore in the account of complainant Murali Projects Pvt Ltd. The court directed him to surrender his passport and not leave the country without permission. He must appear physically or virtually at the next hearing. Yadav had sought suspension citing a family wedding on February 19. The proceedings arose from revision petitions by Yadav and his wife challenging a 2019 sessions court order upholding their conviction in 2018. The magisterial court had sentenced him to six months' imprisonment. In June 2024, the high court had temporarily suspended his conviction, asking Yadav to explore an amicable settlement with the complainant.

## Rajasthan: Seven people burnt alive in factory fire



A firefighter trying to douse a fire at a chemical factory in Bhiwadi. Seven workers were killed in the fire

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA**  
Jaipur

Seven people were burnt alive and two were critically injured in an illegal firecracker-manufacturing factory in the Bhiwadi town of Rajasthan's Khairthal-Tijara district on Monday, officials said. The incident occurred in the Khushkhera-Karoli industrial area in Bhiwadi.

"Seven persons have died in the incident. It was a garment factory but firecrackers were being manufactured inside it illegally," Sumitra Pareek, Additional District Magistrate, said. She said that two people trapped in the factory were rescued. They

were admitted to Delhi's Safdarjung Hospital in a critical condition.

Earlier, officials had said that the fire broke out in a chemical factory.

"The premises was leased out in the name of a garment factory but as per the preliminary report, firecrackers were being manufactured illegally," she said. She said that the police came to know about the incident during a routine patrol, following which a rescue operation was launched immediately.

CM Bhajanlal Sharma instructed district administrations to carry out relief and rescue work immediately.

CONTINUED ON >> P4

## SC lists pleas on bias against women at places of worship

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA**  
New Delhi

The Supreme Court on Monday announced that a nine-judge bench will begin final hearings on April 7, 2026, on petitions related to discrimination against women at religious places, including the Sabarimala Temple in Kerala, and on the scope of religious freedom under the Constitution. The hearings are scheduled to conclude on April 22.

The case traces back to September 2018, when a five-judge Constitution bench lifted the ban preventing women aged 10-50 from entering the Ayyappa shrine. In 2019, another five-judge bench referred the broader issue of gender discrimination in places of worship, including mosques and Parsi Agiarys, to a larger bench. The COVID-19 pandemic delayed proceedings for nearly five years.

Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justices Joymalya Bagchi and Vipul M Pancholi said parties must file written submissions by March 14.

DETAILED REPORT ON >> P7

## Class 10 students must sit for first of the two board exams, says CBSE

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE**  
New Delhi

With the onset of secondary and senior secondary school examinations of the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), the board on Monday noted that it is mandatory for class 10 students to appear in the ensuing first board exam, and those who do not attempt at least three subjects in the first edition will be placed in the Essential Repeat category. The clarification comes after CBSE is scheduled to start with two board exams for class 10 from 2026.

The clarification by the board comes after it received a few requests stating that class 10 students who are not able to appear in the first board exam should be allowed to appear in the second board exam.

"It is mandatory for all the students to appear in the first board examination. All passed and eligible students will be allowed to improve their performance in any of the three subjects out of science, mathematics, social science and languages," said Sanyam Bhardwaj, CBSE



Representative image

ISTOCK

Examination Controller. "Additional Subject will not be permitted after passing class 10, students will not be allowed in stand-alone subjects. Because of any reason if a student is not able to appear in 3 or more subjects in main examination, he or she cannot be permitted to appear in second board exams as per policy. Any request received by CBSE

about this not be responded to," Bhardwaj said.

Board exams for class 10 and class 12 will begin on Tuesday, with over 46 lakh students set to appear from India and abroad.

Class 10 students will appear for the Mathematics exam on Tuesday while Class 12 examination is scheduled for four subjects - B i o t e c h n o l o g y ,

Entrepreneurship, Shorthand (Hindi) and Shorthand (English).

Simultaneously, the CBSE has urged students and all concerned stakeholders not to get misled by rumours of question paper leaks. Over 46 lakh students from India and abroad are set to appear in the exams conducted by the CBSE, according to officials.

## Chaos, swelling crowds, traffic snarls mark opening of India AI Impact Summit

**ABHI SINGHAL/ GYANVI SHARMA** ■ New Delhi

The India AI Impact Summit 2026 opened at Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi to confusion and poor crowd management. As registered convention halls, eager to see demonstrations of AI technologies, unclear instructions created disarray.

Foreign and national speakers were stranded outside in swelling crowds, waiting for the gates to open and for lack of clarity on access. There appeared to be no clear differentiation between individuals holding physical passes and those without them. Members of the media, despite carrying

valid accreditation, were similarly left waiting without guidance.

Many sessions became so overcrowded that people were forced to sit on staircases and even on the floors due to limited seating and unexpectedly high attendance. The heavy security presence, with repeated checks at different buildings and expo areas, further added to the frustration, as attendees had to present their IDs and passes multiple times.

Several attendees, visitors, and invitees were unclear about the summit's central focus on AI's impact and transformative potential, with general visitors more interested in spotting



Visitors at the India AI Impact Summit 2026 in New Delhi

well-known personalities and taking photographs. Further, simultaneous sessions, exhibitions, and parallel events created widespread uncertainty about schedules and venues.

"There was a lot of buzz around AI. I am here to see what it is exactly and how this will change the intelligence of humans," said Sukriti Mishra, a seventh semester AI BTech student from Noida. Dr Kaushal Kant Mishra, and ortho surgeon at Fortis said he was here to learn and see the future of robotic surgery which will be AI enabled in recent future.

Excitement reached its peak during a session featuring popular podcaster Raj

Shamani, as young attendees crowded the hall to take pictures and request autographs. Amid the commotion, a projector screen was accidentally damaged.

Meanwhile, outside the Bharat Mandapam, traffic choked and commuters in Central Delhi had a harrowing experience. Long queues of vehicles and near-zero movement were reported on key arterial routes and transport hubs, including the Delhi-Meerut Expressway near Sarai Kale Khan, the DND Flyway, the Vikas Marg-ITO stretch, Naraina, the Delhi Cantt Metro station area, and the Old Delhi Railway Station-Pul Mithai corridor.

CONTINUED ON >> P4

## New laws to ensure justice within 3 years: Shah

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE  
New Delhi

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Monday said that to further strengthen the Delhi Police, the e-foundation stone laying of the Special Cell's integrated headquarters was carried out.

Built at a cost of about ₹368 crore, the new complex will become the country's most modern centre for tackling narcotics and terrorism. He also announced that foundation stones for 10 New Delhi Police projects were laid, and the first phase of the Safe City Project, built at a cost of around ₹857 crore, was inaugurated.

Addressing the 79th Raising Day Parade of Delhi Police at the Parade Ground in New Police Lines, Shah said the Safe City Project includes a modern Integrated Command, Control, Communication and Computer Centre (C4I). He said the C4I centre has been dedicated to the people of

Delhi and will improve surveillance, response time, and coordination among different units.

Shah also spoke at length about the three new criminal laws and their impact on the justice system. He said that after full implementation of the new laws, the conviction rate in criminal cases across the country will rise to 80 per cent. He expressed confidence that within two years, once the system stabilises, any FIR filed in the country will reach a final decision up to the Supreme Court within three years.

The three laws: the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSs), and the Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam (BSA) replaced the IPC, CrPc, and the Indian Evidence Act on July 1, 2024.

He said a separate chapter has been added for crimes against women and children. Provisions such as e-FIR and Zero FIR now have legal

backing. Forensic visits have been made mandatory in cases where the punishment is more than seven years. The laws also provide for trial in absentia for fugitives who flee the country. Properties of declared offenders living abroad can now be attached.

Shah said community service has been introduced as a punishment for minor offences. He also said that the fight against Maoist violence is in its final phase and expressed confidence that it will end by March 2026.

The Commissioner of Police, Satish Golchha, present at the event, highlighted Delhi Police's achievements over the past year. Golchha said that in 2025, Delhi Police seized 6,144 kg of narcotic drugs. Forty-four properties linked to drug trafficking were seized. Out of these, 29 were demolished after due legal process. A dedicated MCOCA Cell has been set up in the Crime Branch to deal with organ-



Union Home Minister Amit Shah during the 79th Raising Day celebrations of the Delhi Police at the New Police Lines, Kingsway Camp, in New Delhi on Monday

ised crime. Two fugitives were deported in 2025, while 32 others hiding abroad are being pursued.

In the cybercrime domain,

Delhi Police became the first in the country in May 2025 to start automatic registration of financial cybercrime cases involving more than ₹10 lakh.

In November 2025, the threshold was reduced to ₹1 lakh. Such cases are now registered directly at the police station level.

Under Operation CyHawk, conducted in three phases over the past three months, 18,000 suspects were apprehended. Out of them, 3,000 were arrested or bound down. The Commissioner also mentioned that 83 police personnel were injured in the line of duty in the past year.

Crime data shared at the event showed that heinous crimes fell by 8 per cent in 2025 compared to 2024. Robbery declined by 12 per cent, snatching by 17 per cent, burglary by 26 per cent, and extortion by 7 per cent.

The event also marked the unveiling of a 32-foot-tall 3D portrait of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel at the Police Headquarters on Jai Singh Road. A new digital platform for Police Clearance Certificates and Character Verification Reports was also launched. The system allows verification by the Special Branch and delivery of certificates by email within 21 days.

## LG, CM Rekha inaugurate 6-level car parking at Nehru Place

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE  
New Delhi

In a major boost to Delhi's urban infrastructure and traffic decongestion efforts, Delhi Lt Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena, along with Chief Minister Rekha Gupta, on Monday inaugurated a state-of-the-art Multi-Level Car Parking (MLCP) facility at Nehru Place District Centre.



South Delhi MP Ramvir Singh Bidhuri, Vice Chairman of DDA N Saravana Kumar and other senior officials of the DDA were also present on the occasion. Guided by the vision of the Lt Governor, the initiative represents a significant milestone in the ongoing upgradation and revitalisation of Nehru Place. Speaking on the occasion, Saxena stated that "handing over this Automated Multilevel Car Parking Complex at Nehru Place is a matter of great satisfaction."

Speaking on the occasion, CM Rekha Gupta said, "Today is an important day for Delhi. The grand Multi-Level Car Parking at Nehru Place District Centre addresses one of the city's biggest challenges — parking. I truly commend the Lt Governor and the DDA for their dedicated efforts in making this possible in such a short time."



## Delhi Police marks 79th Raising Day; giant Patel mural unveiled

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE  
New Delhi

Delhi Police marked its 79th Raising Day on Monday. The event was marked with a series of initiatives, including the unveiling of a 32-foot-tall 3D portrait of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel at Police Headquarters and the launch of a new digital platform for Police Clearance Certificates and Character Verification Reports.

Commissioner of Police Satish Golchha unveiled the grand portrait of Patel at the headquarters on Jai Singh

Road in the presence of senior officers and personnel. The installation has been mounted on the front glass elevation of the building and stands 32 feet tall on the outer facade. The ceremony was described as a tribute to the "Iron Man" and a moment of pride for the force.

Addressing the Raising Day Parade at Parade Ground, New Police Lines, the Commissioner said ensuring the security of Delhi is a responsibility of national importance. He said Delhi Police draws strength from the guidance and support of

the Ministry of Home Affairs in discharging its duties.

Highlighting enforcement achievements, the Commissioner said that in 2025, Delhi Police seized 6,144 kg of narcotic drugs as part of its drive towards a "Drug-Free India." To weaken drug trafficking networks, 44 properties linked to the narcotics trade were seized during the year. Out of these, 29 properties were demolished after due legal process, he said.

To strengthen action against organised crime, a dedicated MCOCA Cell has been set up within the Crime Branch. The

Special Cell is also pursuing 32 fugitives hiding abroad in coordination with central agencies. In 2025, two such criminals were deported to India from foreign countries.

In the cybercrime domain, Delhi Police became the first in the country in May 2025 to begin automatic registration of financial cybercrime cases involving amounts above ₹10 lakh. In November 2025, the threshold was reduced to ₹1 lakh. Such cases are now registered directly at the police station level, the Commissioner said.

Under Operation CyHawk,

conducted in three phases over the past three months, 18,000 suspects were apprehended. Out of these, 3,000 were arrested or bound down, and 1,000 new FIRs were registered. The Commissioner said 83 police personnel were injured in the line of duty in the past year.

On the occasion, the Commissioner also unveiled a model trophy vitrine at the headquarters reception area to display the "Best Police Station in the Country" trophy. He planted a tree within the PHQ premises as part of an environmental initiative.

**MY MONEY SECURITIES LIMITED**  
CIN : L67120DL1992PLC047890  
Regd. Office : 10-A, UNDER HILL LANE, CIVIL LINES, DELHI-110054  
Email Id : mymoneyviews@outlook.com Contact No. : 011-47087300, 47087455

**INFORMATION REGARDING POSTAL BALLOT/REMOTE E-VOTING**  
Members may kindly note that My Money Securities Limited (the 'Company') will be seeking the consent of its members via Postal Ballot by way of remote e-voting only ('Postal Ballot' or 'e-voting') to transact the business(es) that will be set forth in the Postal Ballot Notice ('Notice'), in compliance of the provisions of Section 110 read with Section 106 and all other applicable provisions, if any, of the Companies Act, 2013 read with the rules made there under, the applicable guidelines/circulars issued by the Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA Circulars), SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015 and any other applicable laws, rules and regulations. In accordance with the applicable MCA Circulars, the Notice will be sent by email only, to the members whose e-mail addresses are registered with the Company/Depository Participants ('DPs')/ Depository Registrar & Share Transfer Agent of the Company. Therefore, physical copies of the Notice, postal ballot form and prepaid business reply envelope shall not be sent to the members for this Postal Ballot. Members shall be requested to provide their assent or dissent through remote e-voting only. The procedure to cast vote through remote e-voting and other related instructions will be provided in the Notice.

The said notice will also be available on the website of the Company at [www.mymoneyviews.com](http://www.mymoneyviews.com) and on the website of NSDL at [www.evoting.nsdl.com](http://www.evoting.nsdl.com) and on the website of BSE at [www.bseindia.com](http://www.bseindia.com).

Members who have not yet registered their email addresses will not be able to receive the Notice. Such members are requested to get their email addresses and mobile numbers registered by following the guidelines mentioned below.

- Members holding shares in physical mode and who have not updated their email address with the company are requested to update their e-mail address by writing to [RA@info@massserv.com](mailto:RA@info@massserv.com) along with copy of signed request letter in Form ISR-1 mentioning the name and address of the member, self-attested copy of PAN card and self-attested copy of any document (eg. Driving license, Election identity card, Passport) in support of address of the member.
- Members holding shares in dematerialized form are requested to register/update their e-mail addresses with their respective DPs.
- In case of queries w.r.t. the aforesaid process, members are requested to write at [info@massserv.com](mailto:info@massserv.com) or [mymoneyviews@outlook.com](mailto:mymoneyviews@outlook.com)

This advertisement is being issued for the benefit of all the members of the Company

By Order of the Board  
For My Money Securities Limited  
Sd/-  
Vikas Singh  
Managing Director  
DIN - 00389194

Date : 14.02.2026  
Place : Delhi

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
Chrome Data Analytics & Media Private Limited  
CIN: U74300DL2011PTC226911  
Regd. Office: C-38, Green Park (Main), New Delhi - 110016

NOTICE is hereby given to the public at large that pursuant to the provisions of Sections 12, 13 and other applicable provisions of the Companies Act, 2013, the Company proposes to shift its Registered Office from the National Capital Territory of Delhi to the State of Uttar Pradesh. The Registered Office is proposed to be shifted:  
From: C-38, Green Park (Main), New Delhi-110016  
To: 1st Floor, C-40, Sector-27, Noida, Gautam Buddha Nagar, Uttar Pradesh-201301  
The petition in this regard is proposed to be filed before the Regional Director (Northern Region), Ministry of Corporate Affairs, New Delhi for approval.  
Any person whose interest is likely to be affected by the proposed shifting of the Registered Office may deliver their objections supported with documents, if any, to the Regional Director (Northern Region), Ministry of Corporate Affairs, New Delhi, within 21 days from the date of publication of this notice.

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
Brickworks Digital Solution Private Limited  
CIN: U64200DL2015PTC284006  
Regd. Office: C-38, 2nd Floor, Green Park (Main), New Delhi - 110016

NOTICE is hereby given to the public at large that pursuant to the provisions of Sections 12, 13 and other applicable provisions of the Companies Act, 2013, the Company proposes to shift its Registered Office from the National Capital Territory of Delhi to the State of Uttar Pradesh. The Registered Office is proposed to be shifted:  
From: C-38, 2nd Floor, Green Park (Main), New Delhi-110016  
To: 2nd Floor C-40, Sector-27, Noida, Gautam Buddha Nagar, Uttar Pradesh-201301  
The petition in this regard is proposed to be filed before the Regional Director (Northern Region), Ministry of Corporate Affairs, New Delhi for approval.  
Any person whose interest is likely to be affected by the proposed shifting of the Registered Office may deliver their objections supported with documents, if any, to the Regional Director (Northern Region), Ministry of Corporate Affairs, New Delhi, within 21 days from the date of publication of this notice.

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
Chrome Digital Media Private Limited  
CIN: U74900DL2012PTC231483  
Regd. Office: C-38, Green Park (Main), New Delhi - 110016

NOTICE is hereby given to the public at large that pursuant to the provisions of Sections 12, 13 and other applicable provisions of the Companies Act, 2013, the Company proposes to shift its Registered Office from the National Capital Territory of Delhi to the State of Uttar Pradesh. The Registered Office is proposed to be shifted:  
From: C-38, Green Park (Main), New Delhi-110016  
To: 3rd Floor C-40, Sector-27, Noida, Gautam Buddha Nagar, Uttar Pradesh-201301  
The petition in this regard is proposed to be filed before the Regional Director (Northern Region), Ministry of Corporate Affairs, New Delhi for approval.  
Any person whose interest is likely to be affected by the proposed shifting of the Registered Office may deliver their objections supported with documents, if any, to the Regional Director (Northern Region), Ministry of Corporate Affairs, New Delhi, within 21 days from the date of publication of this notice.

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
SACHIN SHARMA  
Former Additional District & Sessions Judge, Punjab (Sole Arbitrator)  
Office: R1 E-316, DLF HYDE PARK, Mullanpur, New Chandigarh  
District Mohali-140 901 Email: legal.sachin@yahoo.com In Mobile: 6054555090

**ARBITRATION NOTICE**  
ARBITRATION CASE NO. 07 OF 2026 IN THE MATTER OF ARBITRATION BETWEEN -  
M/S V-Con Integrated Solutions Pvt. Ltd. a company having its registered Office at F-91, Industrial Area, Phase 7, Mohali-160055, Punjab through its authorised person namely Rohit Sharma aged 34 years, son of Sh. Ram Niwas Sharma R/o 18/47, Basant Nagar, Krishan Ganj, New Delhi, PIN 110007. (Aadhar No.9276 5457 7578, Mobile No.9899369267)

Versus  
M/S Online Promotion Way through its Prop. Namely Sh. Pankaj Sehgal having its office at 734 Westend Mall, District Center, Janak Puri, West Delhi, Delhi-110052. (M) 96436 82384  
2nd Address:- M/S Online Promotion Way through its Prop. Namely Sh. Pankaj Sehgal having Corporate Office Address at 4th Office No.410, Jyoti Shikhar, Janakpuri District Center, Janakpuri, West Delhi, Delhi-110058.  
3rd Address:- M/S Online Promotion Way through its Prop. Namely Sh. Pankaj Sehgal having South West Delhi, Delhi, 110018.

The respondent/defendant could not be served in ordinary process. It is ordered that the respondent/defendant should appear in person or through counsel on 07.03.2026.  
Date: 07.02.2026  
Note:- The above notice is forwarded to the Manager 'The Pioneer' for publication.  
Sole Arbitrator

**REGISTRATION OF FIRMS**  
Vidyalaya is inviting registrations from service providers and commercial firms for the supply of various materials and services for the academic session 2026-27, registration form can be downloaded/obtained from the "Latest News" section of the Vidyalaya website: <https://shalimarbagh.kvs.ac.in>.  
Duly filled registration form, along with the required documents mentioned, must be submitted in the school office within 21 days from the date of publication of the advertisement, between 10:00 AM and 2:00 PM, either in person or by post. Please ensure to obtain an acknowledgment of submission to confirm the registration of your firm.  
Principal

**Baha Farid University of Health Science**  
Sadiq Road, Faridkot-151203 Ph. 01639-256232, 256236

**E-Tender Notice**  
Online bids are invited through the e-tendering process for procurement of the following services/items through the E-Procurement portal of the Government of Punjab.  
Last date for submission of online bids of following tender's is 12-23-2026  
1) Providing Outsourced Manpower Services for the Class IV Staff, Mails and Drivers, 2) Providing outsourced manpower services for technical staff such as Computer Operators, Data Entry Operators, Technicians, Mechanics etc. and Nursing Staff as Nursing Support, Nursing sisters, Staff Nurses and AMM etc. 3) Rate Contract for Supply of Printers and Multifunction Printers (MFPs)  
Last date for submission of online bids of following tender's is 05-03-2026  
1) Supply and installation of Synchronized Multiple Visualizer System.  
Note:- Tender Document can be downloaded from <http://eproc.punjab.gov.in> and [www.bhuhs.ac](http://www.bhuhs.ac)  
REGISTRAR  
31/08/12/2025-26/8344 Dated CHD - 16/02/2026

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
Inviting objections/suggestions for approval of the revised building plans for Commercial property Galaxie 91 project, measuring 3.725 Acres (Licence No. 28 of 2009 dated 24.06.2009), located in Sector-91, Gurugram-122505, being developed by M/s Manish Buildwell Pvt.Ltd.  
This public notice is issued to all persons, jointly and severally, who have made bookings or entered into agreements for allotment of shops in the said colony (hereinafter referred to as "allottees"). The earlier approved building plan is now proposed to be revised with respect to specifications/amenities/common area/carpet area/super area etc in the Project.  
Whereas the Office of the Director, Town and Country Planning, Haryana, Chandigarh, is seeking objections/suggestions against the revised building plans, objections/suggestions are hereby invited from all concerned on the proposed changes in the building plan of the commercial project.  
Copies of the earlier approved building plans bearing No. ZP-803/AD (RA)/2017/13022 dated 14.06.2017 and the revised building plan bearing Memo No. ZP-803/SD(RD)/2026/4593 dated 06.02.2026 are available for perusal on the website [www.manishbuildwell.com](http://www.manishbuildwell.com), and at our Corporate Office at 201A-201C, Global Foyer, Golf Course Road, Sector-43, Gurugram-122002, Haryana, for the information of all existing allottees. The same may also be inspected at the office of the Senior Town Planner, Sector-14, Gurugram, Haryana-122001.  
Any objection or suggestion may be submitted in writing at our office and/or at the office of the Senior Town Planner, Sector-14, Gurugram, Haryana-122001, within 30 days from the date of issuance of this notice, i.e., 17.03.2026. Failing this, it shall be presumed that no objection or suggestion has been received regarding the aforesaid changes.  
For M/s Manish Buildwell Private Limited  
Mobile: +91-7337041008

**GOVERNMENT OF HARYANA TENDER NOTICE**

SR. No.	NAME OF BOARD/CORP./ AUTH	NAME OF WORK NOTICE TENDER	OPENING DATE CLOSING DATE (TIME)	AMOUNT / EMD (APPROX.) INRUPEES	WEBSITE OF THE BOARD CORP./AUTH	NODAL OFFICER/CONTACT DETAILS/EMAIL
1	HSIDC	OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE AT HSIDC WATER-WORKS, INT MANESAR (12 MONTHS)	16.02.2026 23.02.2026	Rs. 11.35 LACS	<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	9910728120 la.manesar@hsidc.org.in
2	HSIDC	REPAIRING/PATCH WORK FOR INTERNAL ROADS OF HSIDC PHASE-I,II,III UDOYG VIHAR, AND T.E. GURUGRAM	18.02.2026 24.02.2026	Rs. 41.07 LACS	<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	0124-239841 la.gurugram@hsidc.org.in
3	HSIDC	CLEANING OF SEWER AND STORM LINES WITH THE HELP OF LABOR AND SUCTION MACHINE FOR ATTERONGI ALI TEEES COMPLAINTS IN PHASE -II AT T.E. RAJ	16.02.2026 23.02.2026	Rs. 9.96 LACS	<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	9996161651 ia.raj@hsidc.org.in
4	HSIDC	SWEEPING OF METALLED ROADS IN PHASE-II AT INDUSTRIAL ESTATE RAJ	16.02.2026 23.02.2026	Rs. 9.45 LACS	<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	9996161651 ia.raj@hsidc.org.in
5	HSIDC	PROVIDING JOB AND TRACTOR TROLLEY FOR SHIFTING OF MALBA IM PHASE -1 AND 2 AT INDUSTRIAL ESTATE RAJ	16.02.2026 23.02.2026	Rs. 9.95 LACS	<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	9996161651 ia.raj@hsidc.org.in

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION KINDLY VISIT : [www.buddhynaeprocurement.gov.in](http://www.buddhynaeprocurement.gov.in) or [www.etenders.hry.nic.in](http://www.etenders.hry.nic.in) RO 43052-I-27-7

**GOVERNMENT OF HARYANA TENDER NOTICE**

SR NO.	NAME OF DEPARTMENT	NAME OF WORK NOTICE TENDER	OPENING DATE CLOSING DATE	AMOUNT / EMD (APPROX.) IN RUPEES	WEBSITE OF THE DEPARTMENT	NODAL OFFICER/CONTACT DETAILS/EMAIL
1	PWD B&R, HISAR	SPECIAL REPAIR IN DISTRICT HOSPITAL CHARKHI DADRI IN DISTT. CHARKHI DADRI. (PDG. 500 KVA SERVO STABILIZER ONLY)	12.02.2026 19.02.2026	24.50 LACS	<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	01662225651 pwd-eeed-hissar@hry.nic.in
2	PWD B&R, HISAR	SPECIAL REPAIR TO TESHIL BUILDING AT JUDICIAL COURT COMPLEX AT ELLENABAD IN DISTT. SIRSA (PDG. VARIOUS ELECTRICAL SERVICES ONLY)	12.02.2026 19.02.2026	15.10 LACS	<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	01662225651 pwd-eeed-hissar@hry.nic.in
3	PWD B&R, FATEHABAD	PROVIDING LIFT IN EXISTING JUDICIAL BLOCK AT TOHANA IN FATEHABAD DISTT.	12.02.2026 19.02.2026	7.43 LACS	<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	01667-220120 pwd-eeed-fatehabad@hry.nic.in
4	PWD B&R, GURUGRAM	CONSTRUCTION OF CONFERENCE ROOM AND BIO MEDICAL WASTE ROOM AT CHC GHANGHOLA IN GURUGRAM DISTT	CLOSING DATE 19.02.2026	26.66 LACS	<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	01242322424 pwd-eeed1-gurgaon@hry.nic.in
5	PWD B&R, GURUGRAM	RENOVATION OF COURT NO.13 IN JUDICIAL COURT COMPLEX AT GURUGRAM	CLOSING DATE 19.02.2026	1.45 LACS	<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	01242322424 pwd-eeed1-gurgaon@hry.nic.in
6	PWD B&R, GURUGRAM	PROVISION OF FACILITIES FOR DIFFERENTLY ABLED PERSONS IN JUDICIAL COURT COMPLEX AT GURUGRAM	CLOSING DATE 19.02.2026	16.83 LACS	<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	01242322424 pwd-eeed1-gurgaon@hry.nic.in
7	PWD B&R, GURUGRAM	SPECIAL REPAIR FOR VULNERABLE WITNESS COURT IN COURT COMPLEX AT GURUGRAM	CLOSING DATE 19.02.2026	1.02 LACS	<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	01242322424 pwd-eeed1-gurgaon@hry.nic.in
8	IRRIGATION & WATER RESOURCES DEPARTMENT HARYANA, ROHTAK	CONSTRUCTION OF RCC TROUGH IN REACH RD 1100 TO 1750 OF ROHTAK LINK IN ABADI AREA OF VILLAGE SIMLI + 2 WORKS	CLOSING DATE 23.02.2026	247.80 LACS	<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	9464040970 xensampla@gmail.com
9	IRRIGATION & WATER RESOURCES DEPARTMENT HARYANA, ROHTAK	LAYING UNDERGROUND RCC 900 MM DIA NP3 AND 600 MM DIA NP3 PIPELINE FOR DEWATERING FLOOD WATER FROM CATCHMENT AREA OF ASSAN LINK DRAIN AT OUTFALL RD 24000 (TAIL) WITH CONSTRUCTION OF PUMP HOUSE AT RD 24000 TAIL OF ASSAN LINK DRAIN IN VILLAGE ASSAN DISTT. ROHTAK. + 1 WORKS	CLOSING DATE 18.02.2026	358.22 LACS	<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	9812111077 xenwsdnrtk@gmail.com
10	IRRIGATION & WATER RESOURCES DEPARTMENT HARYANA, ROHTAK	RECONSTRUCTION/CONSTRUCTION OF VARIOUS STRUCTURES FROM RD 82500 TO 124000 OF BHALAUT SUB BRANCH.	CLOSING DATE 05.03.2026	2822.33 LACS	<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	9812111077 xenwsdnrtk@gmail.com
11	IRRIGATION & WATER RESOURCES DEPARTMENT HARYANA, NARNALU	LAYING RCC PIPELINE 1600 MM I/D NP-3 FOR PROVIDING IRRIGATION FACILITIES AND RECHARGING GROUND WATER TABLE IN DOHAN RIVER NEAR VILLAGE KHERKI FROM KM. 27.820/R OF NARNALU BRANCH.	CLOSING DATE 26.02.2026	1345.17 LACS	<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	01282-251214 xen-wsrnr.lrr@gov.in
12	IRRIGATION & WATER RESOURCES DEPARTMENT HARYANA, KARNAL	CONSTRUCTION OF VR BRIDGE AT RD 18430 GHARAUNDA GANDA NALLAH	11.02.2026 18.02.2026	17.86 LACS	<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	0184-2258008 xenindivn@yahoo.in
13	PANCHAYATI RAJ, BHIWANI	COMP. OF IPB FIRMI FROM JAAT DHARMSHALA TO H/O AJIT AT VILLAGE-KURAL, BLOCK-LOHARU, SCHEME-HRDF + 6 WORKS	12.02.2026 18.02.2026	178.22 LACS	<a href="https://etenders.hry.nic.in">https://etenders.hry.nic.in</a>	01664243927 prexeeng.bhw@hry.nic.in

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION KINDLY VISIT [www.etenders.hry.nic.in](http://www.etenders.hry.nic.in) RO 43051-I-27-7

**NOTICE OF LOSS OF SHARES OF GLAXOSMITHKLINE CONSUMER HEALTHCARE LIMITED (Formerly Hindustan Lever Limited (HUL))**  
Regd. Off. Hindustan Unilever Limited, Unilever House, B D Savant Marg, Chakala, Andheri (East) Mumbai - 400 099

Notice is hereby given that the following share certificates of erstwhile GlaxoSmithkline Consumer Healthcare Ltd. (GSKCH) have been reported as lost/misplaced and pursuant to the Scheme of Amalgamation GSKCH has merged with HUL and the Company intends to issue duplicate certificates in lieu thereof, in due course.

Any person who has a valid claim on the said shares should lodge such claim with the Company at its Registered Office within 15 days hereof.

Name of the holder	Folio No.	No. of shares (Rs.10/- F.V)	Certificate No.(s)	Distinctive No.(s)
Girish Ghai	G00854	25	9849	422971-422995
Girish Ghai	G00854	13	63344	6564981-6564993
Girish Ghai	G00854	50	96819	12391971-12392020
Girish Ghai	G00854	12	35995	4641387-4641398

For ZION Promoters & Developers Pvt. Ltd. K-108, Sarovar Portico, Suraj Kund Road Faridabad (Haryana)-121009

## Delhi records hottest day of year as mercury hits 31.6°C

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE**  
New Delhi

Terrible change in weather for the national Capital, which was supposed to experience winter conditions in mid-February! It has been only 15 days into February, but it feels like summer is already here.

The national Capital witnessed a significantly hot day on Monday, recording the hottest day of the year so far, with maximum temperatures soaring well above seasonal norms, while minimum temperatures remained near or below average.

The Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) said there is going to be no significant drop in temperatures over the next few

days, indicating that we may well be in spring and transitioning into summer. It said temperatures are likely to stay above normal with generally dry, warm conditions through this period, with only a minor chance of light rain or cloudiness rather than major weather changes.

According to the IMD, the Safdarjung observatory, the city's base station, recorded a maximum temperature of 31.6 degrees Celsius, which is 7.2 degrees above normal. The station also noted a sharp 24-hour temperature change of 3.1 degrees, indicating a sudden warm spell affecting the region.

Similarly, Ayanagar recorded a high of 30.4 degrees Celsius, marking a 7.1 degrees Celsius



increase from the seasonal average. Other stations, including Lodi Road, recorded 29.2 degrees Celsius, which is 5.2 degrees higher, and Ridge recorded 28.4 degrees Celsius, which is 5.3 degrees Celsius higher, also reported above-normal daytime temperatures, the IMD said.

According to IMD, the city saw the minimum temperature remain near or below average. While Palam and Ridge recorded minimums slightly above normal at 11.6 degrees Celsius and 11.8 degrees Celsius, respectively, most other stations saw cooler-than-usual nights.

Ayanagar recorded a low of just 9.4 degrees Celsius, which is 1.5 degrees below normal, and

Safdarjung and Lodi Road logged minimums of 10.1 degrees Celsius and 10.4 degrees Celsius, both marginally below the seasonal average.

In recent years, February 2024 was noted as the coldest February in over a decade for Delhi in terms of average minimum temperatures, with the monthly average falling to about 9.3 degrees Celsius, which was lower than any February since at least 2012.

Skymet weather Vice-President Mahesh Palawat noted that Delhi being this hot in mid-February is an unusual phenomenon, as skies are clear due to low wind speed, which leads to bright sunny afternoons and an approaching western disturbance.

## Delhi CM approves ₹3,700 cr for MCD

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA**  
New Delhi

Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta has announced special financial assistance of ₹3,700 crore for the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) to strengthen civic infrastructure and essential public services across the national Capital.

Proposals worth around ₹1,330 crore have been prepared for the financial year 2026-27 for paving and development of roads under the MCD's jurisdiction. These include roads with a width of less than 60 feet, which fall under the Corporation. The fund was released to strengthen road infrastructure, sanitation systems, municipal schools and civic facilities across the city. A major component of the assistance focuses on road infrastructure. The projects cover the construction, repair and strengthening of nearly 1,000 kilometres of roads.

In a parallel effort to modernise sanitation, the Government has approved a long-term project worth around ₹2,300 crore under a 10-year Operational Expenditure (OPEX) model. The initiative aims to improve cleaning systems and reduce dust and waste on city roads.

The move is aimed at making the national Capital cleaner, more developed and pollution-free. The chief minister said the support reflects the Government's commitment to empowering local bodies and promoting decentralised governance. Allocations have also been made under the Chief Minister's Development Fund (CMDf).

The Government expects this to help curb dust pollution, especially during the post-monsoon months of October and November when pollution levels in Delhi usually rise. The Chief Minister has directed officials to ensure that all major road improvement works are completed by September 30, 2026. She asked departments to fast-



**CM unveils ₹1,075 crore projects in East Delhi**

New Delhi: Chief Minister Rekha Gupta on Monday laid the foundation stone for development projects worth ₹1,075 crore in East Delhi. The infrastructure push aimed at easing traffic congestion and tackling chronic waterlogging in the Trans-Yamuna region.

The projects, launched at Ramila Ground in Vivek Vihar, will be executed by the Public Works Department (PWD) and the Irrigation and Flood Control Department. Union Minister of State for Road Transport and Highways Harsh Malhotra was present at the event along with several MLAs and senior leaders from East Delhi.

A key component of the package is the strengthening and improvement of 236 roads at an estimated cost of ₹782 crore. The works are expected to improve traffic flow and ensure safer and smoother commuting for residents. In addition, five-

track administrative procedures and ensure transparency in the tendering process. She also stressed the need for advance planning so that projects are completed on time.

Under the project, 70 additional mechanical road sweeping machines will be deployed. These will operate along with existing machines to increase cleaning coverage. In addition, 1,000 electric litter pickers will be introduced to make sanitation

foot overbridges will be constructed at a cost of around ₹21 crore to enhance pedestrian safety. Under the Irrigation and Flood Control Department, projects worth approximately ₹272 crore will be undertaken. These include reconstruction of 10 drains, improvement of three drains, construction of 24 boundary walls, and development of 18 roads and bridges. The Government said these works will significantly improve rainwater drainage and reduce waterlogging in vulnerable areas.

The CM said strong infrastructure is essential for balanced development in Delhi. She said residents of the Trans-Yamuna region had long awaited proper development of roads, lanes, and drainage systems. "The foundation-laying of projects worth nearly ₹1,075 crore is a historic step towards ending that prolonged wait," she said, adding that the

work more efficient and environmentally friendly. The CM described the initiative as a sustainable step towards pollution control.

In the education sector, an additional ₹50 crore has been approved for the upgradation of MCD primary schools. The funds will be used to improve school infrastructure, upgrade sanitation facilities and modernise classrooms. The aim is to create a better learning envi-

Government is committed to ensuring equitable development across the city.

Taking a swipe at previous Governments, the CM said that if basic issues such as broken roads, open drains, and inadequate public facilities persist after years in power, it reflects administrative failure. She said her Government believes in delivering results rather than engaging in politics. "No part of Delhi will remain deprived of development," she said, emphasising that bridging the divide between the two banks of the Yamuna remains a priority.

The CM said the Government has adopted a new work culture focused on regular monitoring, time-bound implementation, and transparency. She directed officials to ensure that all projects are completed within stipulated timelines and adhere to high-quality standards.

ment for students studying in municipal schools.

Another ₹50 crore has been allocated for the repair and upgradation of community buildings managed by the MCD. Nearly 298 such buildings, mostly located in smaller colonies, are used by economically weaker sections for weddings and social events. The Government said improving these facilities is essential for supporting local communities.

## Sheeshmahal row: Govt seeks progress report on CBI probe

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE**  
New Delhi

The Delhi Government has asked the Public Works Department (PWD) to submit details of all matters related to the residence of former chief minister Arvind Kejriwal and the progress made in them. Last week, several top officials of the PWD and the Delhi chief secretary discussed, in a meeting, the status of the vigilance and CBI cases related to the Government bungalow at 6, Flagstaff Road.

The bungalow was termed a 'Sheeshmahal' by the BJP, alleging that inordinate expenses were incurred in renovating it by Kejriwal, who occupied it at the time.

According to officials, the chief minister's office has also sought details of the progress



of the cases in the last year, the officials suspended in the matter, and whether any action is being taken against retired officials.

"Several officials were suspended in the matter, and some of them retired. The matter is being dealt with by the Central Public Works Department (CPWD). The

Government has sought details, which we are providing," a senior PWD official said.

In 2024, after Kejriwal resigned and vacated the Flagstaff Road bungalow, the PWD conducted a detailed audit of its interiors. The agency has since taken possession of the bungalow from the former chief minister and

Kejriwal's successor, Atishi. In 2022, on the orders of Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena, the vigilance department launched an inquiry into alleged "irregularities and cost escalation in the renovation of the house" by the PWD during the bungalow's revamp.

Later, in 2024, an inquiry was initiated against the PWD officials involved, and some were suspended. Currently, the matter is being probed by the CBI, which took over the case following a complaint by former Leader of Opposition and current Delhi Assembly Speaker Vijender Gupta.

More than ₹33 crore was spent on renovation of the Delhi chief minister's residence as against the initial estimate of ₹7.9 crore, the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) has estimated.

## Delhi Zoo to offer one-day animal adoption from March

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE**  
New Delhi

Animal lovers in the national Capital are in for a treat. They can now celebrate birthdays, wedding anniversaries and other special occasions by adopting an animal for a day, with charges ranging from ₹500 for a small animal to ₹50,000 for a tiger.

According to Zoo Director Sanjeet Kumar, the proposal for short-term animal adoptions is likely to receive approval by the end of this month, and it will be launched in March. A day-long adoption cost has been decided based on the annual adoption rate of each animal.

"If an animal has an annual adoption cost of ₹50,000, the charge for adopting it for a day would be around ₹500," Kumar said.

As per the revised rates, a spotted deer, which has an annual adoption cost of ₹18,000, can be adopted for a day for ₹500. A sloth bear,



with an annual adoption rate of ₹45,000, will also be available for day-long adoption at ₹500, he said.

"The annual adoption rate for a tiger is ₹6 lakh, and its day-long adoption will cost around ₹50,000," Kumar added.

He further said that the zoo is introducing short-term and online adoption options to make the scheme more accessible, especially for those who may not be able to commit to adopting an animal for a full year. The initiative is also expected to help boost visitor footfall

and generate additional revenue, he said.

Under the scheme, adopters will bear costs fixed by the zoo, which will be used towards the animal's food and daily care. Depending on the package chosen, adopters will also receive certificates and photographs as a keepsake.

The zoo authorities also plan to install a digital screen at the main entrance displaying details about the adoption options and information on animals housed at the facility to increase awareness.

## Assembly sets March 6 as final date for Kejriwal on Faansi Ghar

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE**  
New Delhi

The Committee of Privileges of the Delhi Assembly on Monday decided to give a final opportunity to former Chief Minister of Delhi and National Convener of Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) Arvind Kejriwal, Manish Sisodia, Ram Niwas Goel and Rakhi Birla to appear in person and give their statements regarding the *Faansi Ghar* issue. The final appearance is scheduled for March 6.

The Privileges Committee held a meeting to deliberate on the matter after the four individuals submitted written replies requesting an extension of a few days to record their statements. This date has been formalised to ensure the inquiry proceeds without further delay.



Chairperson of the Committee of Privileges, Pradyumn Singh Rajput, informed that Kejriwal, in his written response, sought time to appear on either the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, or 6th of March.

Similarly, Former Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia, Former Speaker Ram Niwas Goel, and Former Deputy Speaker Rakhi Birla also requested a few days' extension, mirroring the timeline suggested by Kejriwal. The Committee noted these requests and formalised the final date to ensure the inquiry proceeds without further delay.

The matter, originally raised by the Speaker of the Delhi Legislative Assembly, Vijender Gupta, concerns the authenticity of the *Faansi Ghar* inaugurated on 9 August 2022 within the Delhi Legislative Assembly premises. The Committee of Privileges was directed to investigate the issue to facilitate a factual and procedural assessment of the circumstances surrounding the inauguration.

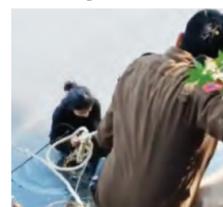
## Woman filming reel falls into drain, rescued

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE**  
New Delhi

A 22-year-old woman was rescued by Delhi Police on Monday after she accidentally fell into an open drain. According to officials, the woman was allegedly filming a social media reel in southwest Delhi's Najafgarh area.

The woman, identified as Bhawna, had reportedly gone near the drain to record a video highlighting garbage dumped in the area when she slipped and fell inside. Police said the incident occurred near her residence. According to a senior police officer, Bhawna was attempting to shoot a video to show poor sanitation conditions and the careless dumping of trash near the drain. While recording the reel, she lost her balance and fell into the drain.

Two police personnel who were present nearby noticed the commotion. Officials said a passing police van heard her cries for help and immediately stopped. By the time help arrived, Bhawna was neck-deep in water. A rope was used to pull her out safely. A video shared by Delhi Police shows one of the officers lowering a rope into



the drain and hoisting her up with assistance from others at the spot.

Police said the woman was rescued without any injuries. She did not require hospitalisation. The officer said the incident serves as a reminder of the risks involved while filming content near unsafe locations. He added that the woman had gone close to the drain edge while focusing

## Man slits sister-in-law's throat, arrested

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE**  
New Delhi

On a busy Monday afternoon in Rohini's Sector-24, the hum of routine life was moving at its usual pace. The day was unfolding like any other. The faint smell of antiseptic lingered in the air. A 27-year-old physiotherapist moved between rooms, focused on her work. Then, sometime around 12.21 pm, everything changed.

A PCR call crackled through the Delhi Police control room: a young woman had been attacked, her throat slit. She was conscious, but bleeding. When police teams reached the therapy centre, panic hung thick in the corridors. The injured physiotherapist had already been rushed to BSA Hospital.

According to investigators, the attacker had walked in disguised as a woman. He wore a wig. He was dressed in feminine clothing. Nothing about him, at first glance, appeared alarming. Police said, it was a calculated disguise, meant to avoid suspicion and recognition.

The man behind the wig was Jai Prakash Yadav, 27, a resident of Najafgarh and a teacher at a coaching

centre. More disturbingly, he was the victim's brother-in-law. Police said he allegedly carried a cutter blade with him. Inside the therapy centre, in a space meant for healing, he attacked her and slit her throat. The assault was sudden and brutal.

There was screaming. Someone rushed forward. Someone else dialled for help. Amid the chaos, the



injured woman remained conscious as she was carried out and taken to the hospital. Doctors at BSA Hospital began treatment immediately. Police said she is undergoing treatment and is currently unfit to give a statement.

Back at the scene, officers launched a search operation. The accused had not managed to escape far. He was found hiding on the rooftop of a nearby building.

Police said he was apprehended there. The cutter blade allegedly used in the attack was recovered from his possession.

During interrogation, Yadav reportedly told police that the attack was driven by revenge. Investigators said he had been embroiled in a dispute with his wife and her family since April 2025. He allegedly claimed that his wife's family had assaulted his mother. Anger had been simmering for months.

The disguise, officers believe, was part of a deliberate plan. He knew he could be recognised. He knew he would stand out. So he tried to blend in.

A case under charges of attempt to murder under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) has been registered at Budh Vihar police station. Forensic teams examined the crime scene. CCTV footage from the therapy centre and nearby streets is being analysed to reconstruct his movements.

For many in the neighbourhood, the most unsettling part is not just the violence, but the deception. A wig. A change of clothes. A familiar face hidden in plain sight.

## Sood inspects 7,400 EWS flats at Bhalswa

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE**  
New Delhi

Delhi's Urban Development Minister Ashish Sood on Monday inspected nearly 7,400 Economically Weaker Section (EWS) flats at Bhalswa. The minister said the Delhi Government will initiate reconstruction and repair work after finding the housing units in a dilapidated condition due to non-allotment.

After reviewing the site, the Minister said the flats were built but not allotted in time, leading to their deterioration. He said the Government has begun a preliminary assessment and technical evaluation of the structures to determine the extent of repairs



and redevelopment required. Sood said the Government is working with seriousness to ensure a dignified and convenient life for residents of slums and informal settlements. He added that the visit was aimed at assessing the ground situation and preparing a roadmap for restoration and transparent allotment of the flats to eligible beneficiaries.

The Minister said Chief Minister Rekha Gupta has remained sensitive to the needs of families living in slum clusters. He said the Government is committed to improving their living conditions and ensuring that children and families get access to better housing and basic facilities.

IN FOCUS

## Opposing Vande Mataram treason, says Yogi

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE  
■ Lucknow

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Monday said "opposing" Vande Mataram and making "insulting remarks" against national symbols was no less than treason. He accused the Samajwadi Party and Congress of misleading people in the name of the Constitution and disrespecting the National Song.

Speaking in the Legislative Council during the Budget Session, Adityanath said the state takes pride in its heritage and believes that development rooted in legacy lays the foundation of a



bright future. However, he said, if anyone glorifies "invaders" who "attacked the soul of India" and tried to shackle its faith for political gains, "the new India and the new Uttar Pradesh will not

accept it." "You see how statements are made in support of anti-national elements or derogatory comments are passed against symbols of national pride. This is nothing short of

treason," he said. Adityanath said the National Song, which was accorded recognition by the Constituent Assembly on January 24, 1950, symbolises India's pride and honour.

He said every Indian has a duty to respect national symbols, including the Tricolour, the national anthem, the national song and national icons. The Centre is celebrating the 150th year of Vande Mataram and recently issued fresh codes related to it.

Adityanath said he was grateful to Prime Minister Narendra Modi for issuing a notification making the National Song mandatory at

public functions, and said opposing Vande Mataram was an insult to the Constitution and its makers, including B R Ambedkar.

"I want to ask the Samajwadi Party and Congress - on one hand you mislead the public in the name of the Constitution, and on the other, your members say they will not stand for Vande Mataram. What does it mean? You want to live in India but have a problem with the national anthem and national song? This cannot be accepted," he said.

Responding to the discussion on the Governor's address, he said 51 members

from across parties enriched the debate with their valuable suggestions and upheld its dignity, and thanked them for their contributions.

"The governor's address is a document outlining the Government's achievements and future action plans, and is constitutionally presented annually in the Assembly by the governor and in Parliament by the President," he said. Referring to the Opposition, particularly the Samajwadi Party, he alleged that the "indecorous and inappropriate conduct" not only disrespected a constitutional office but also amounted to an affront to a woman holding a high post.

## Akhilesh alleges mass deletion of SP supporters names in SIR

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
■ Lucknow

Alleging large-scale irregularities in the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, Samajwadi Party (SP) president Akhilesh Yadav on Monday demanded action against those responsible and sought greater transparency in the process.

Addressing a press conference at the party office here, Yadav said the SP would seek time from the Election Commission and submit a memorandum on Tuesday, urging it to clarify under which rules FIRs should be registered and action taken if anyone is found guilty of wrongdoing.

Questioning why the poll panel had not acted so far,



Yadav asserted that after meeting the Commission, the party would also raise the issue in the Assembly.

The former UP chief minister demanded that the process of deleting names through Form 7 should be initiated only by the booth level officer (BLO) and not from any other source. He also sought that details,

including the Assembly constituency, booth number and the person who submitted Form 7, be made public.

The SP chief also alleged that names of party supporters were being deleted through fraudulent means and that the Election Commission had provided them with "very little" information. He claimed that in Sakaldaha, 16 voters' names were deleted after alleged forged signatures were submitted in the name of an SP MLA. An analysis of those voters would show they belonged to the PDA (backwards, Dalit and minority) communities, he alleged.

Claiming that at booth no 365 in the Babaganj Assembly constituency, nearly 100 votes were

deleted through forged signatures, Yadav read out the names of several voters, their booth numbers and details of the Form 7 applications allegedly used to remove them.

The SP chief said the party had been presenting data for several days regarding wrongful deletions, but no action had been taken so far. He also cited the case of a man named Nandlal, alleging that, though the man used a thumb impression, signatures were obtained from him by BJP workers for filing Form 7.

Yadav questioned whether any action had been taken against officials concerned in the district. Alleging similar instances elsewhere, Yadav claimed

that in Bhojipura, even a booth-level agent of the SP had his vote deleted.

He further alleged that a "secret meeting" of the Bharatiya Janata Party had decided to target constituencies won by the SP and have voters' names deleted there, a plan he claimed was being implemented at the Assembly and booth levels.

He alleged that an unnamed BJP leader had claimed that 3 lakh votes were deleted in Kannauj and that more were to be removed in other districts.

Yadav also alleged that in Ballia's Sikandarpur Assembly constituency, represented by SP MLA Mohammad Ziauddin Rizvi, the MLA's wife's vote had been deleted.

## Education should blend tradition with modernity: Rajasthan CM



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
■ Jaipur

Rajasthan Chief Minister Bhajanlal Sharma on Monday called for the integration of innovation, technology and traditional Indian knowledge into the modern education system, saying the state Government is committed to making higher education more employment-oriented.

Addressing the inaugural session of the All India Institutional Leadership Conclave-2026 at Rajasthan International Centre here, Sharma said education should blend tradition with modernity.

"We need an education system where there is understanding of artificial intelligence along with the knowledge of the Vedas, coding along with Sanskrit, and robotics and nano-technology along with yoga and meditation," the chief minister said.

## HP: Guv shortens speech to Assembly, skips parts

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
■ Shimla

In an unusual move, Himachal Pradesh Governor Shiv Pratap Shukla on Monday concluded his address to the state Legislative Assembly within two minutes, skipping a portion of the speech over what he termed as "comments on a constitutional institution".

Speaking at the start of the Budget Session of the Assembly, the governor said he would not read paragraph 3 to 16 of the prepared speech. "I think there are comments on the constitutional institution from paragraph 3 to 16 and I do not think I should read it," the governor told the House. He noted that the address from paragraph 17 onwards contains Government achievements which would be subject to deliberation upon by the legislators.

Earlier, the governor informed the House that the session has been convened for passing supplementary demands for grants for the year 2025-26, the budget for the financial year 2026-27



Shiv Pratap Shukla

and for important legislative business. The skipped portion of the address focused on the revenue deficit grant (RDG).

However, the 16th finance commission has recommended the abolition of the RDG which is against the spirit of Article 275 (1) of the Constitution," the text read.

The prepared text, which was considered as read, stated, "the Finance Commission has presented combined revenue and expenditure estimates of various States for the award period instead of showing them separately.

## 'She Shakti' concludes at DU, 10,000 students participate

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

The 'She Shakti' programme, organised by the Vasantotsav Committee in collaboration with the Government of Delhi, concluded successfully on Monday at Delhi University (DU), marking a historic cultural milestone.

Held at the University's Multipurpose Hall, the event witnessed the enthusiastic participation of more than 10,000 women students from various colleges of the University, who widely appreciated the initiative.

Featuring Bhajan Clubbing alongside diverse cultural perfor-



mances, the programme presented a unique confluence of spirituality and modern expression.

The core objective of the programme was to provide a positive,

empowering, and creative platform for women—a goal that was achieved with remarkable success.

Senior officials of DU, principals from various colleges, faculty

members, and a large number of students graced the occasion. The distinguished guests openly commended the programme's vision, organisation, and far-reaching impact. The Programme Convener, Dr Neha, Professor at Satyawati College, remarked that 'She Shakti' is not merely a cultural programme but a celebration of women's consciousness, inner strength, and collective creativity.

The highlight of the evening was the performance by Keshavam Band, during which thousands of students were seen swaying joyfully to the rhythm of devotional hymns.

## Three inmates, including two Pakistani nationals escaped

MOHIT KANDHARI  
■ Jammu

In a major incident of breach of security, three inmates, including two Pakistani nationals, escaped from Ranbir Singh Pora juvenile home, located close to the International border with Pakistan in Jammu, after opening fire on policemen on sentry duty on Monday.

Till the time of filing the report, the police authorities had not issued any official statement leading to the escape of two Pakistani nationals from inside the juvenile home. Meanwhile, a high alert has been sounded

by the police to arrest them immediately. The two policemen who sustained injuries have been identified as Vinay Kumar (SPO) and Head Constable Parveen Kumar.

Official sources claimed that around 5.30 pm on Monday, information was received by police that three inmates of the RS Pura Juvenile Observation Home escaped from custody after assaulting and injuring two police personnel deployed on guard duty.

The escaped inmates from Pakistan have been identified as Ahsan Anwar S/o Mohd. Anwar R/o Nankana Sahib, Punjab, Pakistan and Mohd

Sanaullah S/o Mohd. Zaffer R/o Basti Jawawala, Tehsil Dinpur, District Muzaffarabad, Punjab, Pakistan and third local Karanjit Singh @ Gugga S/o Arjun Singh R/o Dablehar, RS Pura.

Official sources confirmed that both Pakistani inmates were shifted to the juvenile home after they were nabbed by the security forces while attempting to cross the International border in 2018.

They were lodged in the juvenile home as they were minors at that time.

Interestingly, the duo continue to stay put in the juvenile home even after turning major.

## MCD passes several key proposals amid protests

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE  
■ New Delhi

The Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) on Monday passed several key proposals related to civic, sanitation and financial matters in its House meeting amid sloganeering by the opposition members.

The corporation passed a resolution providing free cremation at CNG and electric crematoriums for two years on a pilot basis to curb smoke emissions amid deteriorating air quality.

According to the proposal, the move follows directions under the Graded Response Action Plan as Delhi's AQI remains in the poor category. Only 8-9 per cent of cre-



mations in 2023-25 used CNG or electric furnaces, officials said. Currently, ₹1,500 is charged for CNG cremation and Rs 500 for electric cremation per body.

The proposal, estimated to cost ₹2-2.5 crore annually, includes Rs 500 per body for NGOs managing the facilities, officials said. The House also passed a resolution

stating that the MCD may upload Corporation and Standing Committee decisions and minutes on its Website from April 1, 2026, following legal advice under the RTI Act, 2005.

While records since 1958 exist, officials said they are not in a condition to be digitised. The proposal cited the RTI Act's overriding effect

over other laws. The House recommended partial relief to toll tax concessionaires for losses claimed during restrictions imposed for the G20 Summit and later during anti-pollution curbs in November 2023.

For the period spanning September 7, 2023, against a claim of ₹5.49 crore, the panel proposed remission of ₹1.46 crore and sought recovery of Rs 4.03 crore.

For the period November 6, 2023, it cleared Rs 8.22 crore as force majeure relief but rejected ₹3.17 crore claimed towards operational expenses, asking the firm to deposit ₹9.17 lakh. Leader of Opposition Ankush Narang initiated a discussion on the order which increased the financial powers of the

municipal commissioner from 5 crore to 50 crore, alleging that the BJP's deputy mayor hastily passed the agenda and adjourned the House.

"When the ruling party itself holds the mayor, the Standing Committee chairman, and the majority in the House, then what exactly is the compulsion to bypass the elected Standing Committee and House and grant unchecked authority of 50 crore to the bureaucrats," Narang, an AAP councillor, said.

Narang alleged that the incumbents wanted to defang the MCD and hand it over to bureaucratic rule by stripping elected councillors of their powers, and weakening democracy.

## India will shape solutions for the world: PM at AI...

The theme of the summit is "Sarvajana Hitaya, Sarvajana Sukhaya" or welfare for all, happiness for all, reflecting our shared commitment to harnessing artificial intelligence for human-centric progress, he said.

Modi pointed out that AI today is transforming several sectors, including healthcare, education, agriculture, governance and enterprise. The AI Impact Summit will enrich global discourse on diverse aspects of AI, such as innovation, collaboration, responsible use and more, he said. "I am confident that the outcomes of the Summit will help shape a future that is progressive, innovative and opportunity-driven," Modi said. "Thanks to the 1.4 billion people of India, our nation stands at the forefront of the AI transformation. From digital public infrastructure to a vibrant StartUp ecosystem and cutting-edge research, our strides in AI reflect both ambition and responsibility," the prime minister said. PM Modi visited the Jio Intelligence Pavilion at the India AI Impact Summit 2026, where he reviewed AI-powered models and solutions. The Prime Minister also saw live demonstrations of Jio AI Stack, Jio Sanskrit AI, Jio Arogya AI, Jio Shiksha, and Jio AI Home. Reliance Jio Infocomm Limited Chairman Akash Ambani briefed Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Jio's comprehensive AI ecosystem and its role in accelerating digital transformation across sectors.

## Chaos, swelling crowds, traffic snarls mark...

Keeping in view the snarls expected over the week, the Central Board of Secondary Examinations has advised students to reach examination centers in advance, airliners have to have warned passengers of possible traffic blockades due to regular movements of high profile dignitaries as well as Heads of several States and have urged travelers to reach the airport using the metro.

Huge billboards around the city have been put up welcoming delegates, speakers and guests. High-profile speakers — from Sundar Pichai of Alphabet, Sam Altman of OpenAI and Dario Amodei of Anthropic — haven't even arrived in the country. Their sessions start not before Wednesday.

India is hosting the AI Impact Summit 2026 in Delhi from February 16-20 at the Bharat Mandapam, which is expected to draw delegates from more than 30 countries, including ministers, senior officials, foreign representatives and members of international organisations.

Delhi Police has deployed more than 10,000 personnel across the city, with nearly 5,000 traffic staff managing vehicular movement, diversions and VIP routes. Police have also issued advisories, urging commuters to plan their travel and keep buffer time during peak hours.

## FROM PAGE - 1

### Rajasthan: Seven people burnt alive in factory fire

He directed Forest Minister Sanjay Sharma to reach Alwar. Sharma later reached the spot after noon and visited the factory. He directed officials to carry out a detailed investigation and to run a special campaign in Bhiwadi industrial area to conduct checking in all the industrial units.

"All the industrial units will be checked in Bhiwadi industrial area. If any violation of compliances is found, action will be taken," he said.

As per the preliminary report, there were more than 20 people inside the factory. As soon as the fire broke out, many workers managed to come out, while nine were trapped. Seven of them were burnt alive. The fire was brought under control after more than one-and-a-half hour. Some skeletons were also recovered.

A CCTV footage also surfaced which shows a loud explosion before the fire.

At the factory, gunpowder, firecrackers, and packing boxes were recovered.

The bodies were severely burnt and many were reduced to skeletons. Body parts were found scattered and the rescue team collected the body parts in polythene bags. Some of the deceased workers were from Bihar.

A forensic team reached the spot to collect evidence. The team has so far taken samples of bones and burnt firecrackers from the factory. Vice President CP Radhakrishnan and Prime

### Minister Narendra Modi condoled the death of factory workers and prayed for the speedy recovery of the injured.

### Modi, Macron to Inaugurate helicopter...

European aerospace major Airbus has described the Indian FAL as part of its long-term strategy to expand the country's aviation ecosystem. The H125, among the company's highest-selling civil helicopters worldwide, is widely used for emergency medical services, disaster relief, tourism, law enforcement, and other utility roles.

The inauguration coincides with engagements around the India-France Annual Defence Dialogue, underlining the strategic dimension of bilateral ties. Defence cooperation has emerged as a cornerstone of the partnership, spanning joint exercises, technology transfer, and advanced platforms.

The development comes as India moves ahead with plans to further expand its fleet of Dassault Rafale jets, reinforcing combat capabilities of the Indian Air Force. The Rafales are produced by Dassault Aviation and already constitute a key component of India's frontline air power. Additional acquisitions are expected to further consolidate defence ties with France.

Officials have emphasised that the helicopter assembly line represents more than a manufacturing milestone. By linking domestic production

with global supply chains, the initiative is expected to create skilled jobs, enhance technological capabilities, and attract further investment into India's growing aerospace sector.

President Macron will be on an official visit to India from February 17 to 19 at the invitation of Prime Minister Modi. During the trip, he will attend the AI Impact Summit and hold bilateral talks in Mumbai. This will be his fourth visit to India and his first to Mumbai.

The two leaders are scheduled to meet at Lok Bhavan in Mumbai at approximately 3:15 PM on February 17 to review progress under the India-France strategic partnership and explore cooperation in areas such as defence, innovation, and emerging technologies.

Meanwhile, Mumbai is gearing up for the high-profile visit with extensive security measures. The Mumbai Traffic Police has announced that Heavy Motor Vehicles (HMVs) will be barred from both northbound and southbound lanes of the Western Express Highway (WEH) from 8 AM to 9 PM on February 17. The restrictions will apply between Vakola Flyover and Dahisar Toll Naka, a crucial arterial stretch serving the city's western suburbs.

Officials said the nearly 13-hour curbs are part of standard VIP security arrangements aimed at preventing congestion and ensuring smooth movement during the visit. However, the restrictions are likely to impact thousands of commuters and commercial transport operators across Mumbai.

## BLO injured in attack by villager in Bengal's Nadia



A booth-level officer (BLO) was seriously injured after being allegedly assaulted by a man during the ongoing SIR exercise in West Bengal's Nadia district, a police officer said. BLO Ali Saheb was attacked when he went to a village in Kaliganj area on Sunday to verify cases of "logical discrepancies" in voter data under the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) exercise.

## Values that define sports also define election processes: CEC

Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Gyanesh Kumar on Monday asserted that the values that define sports including transparency, rectitude and impartiality also define the election processes. The CEC made the comments while inaugurating the Election Commission's annual sports week for 2026 at the Commonwealth Games Sports (CWG) complex.



## Meerut Metro to be India's fastest, to run at 120 kmph



The upcoming Meerut Metro is set to become the fastest metro service in the country, with a maximum operational speed of 120 kmph, significantly cutting travel time across the city, an official said on Monday. The service will operate on a 21 km corridor between Meerut South and Modipuram with 12 stations, covering the entire stretch in around 30 minutes, he said.

## BJP has no courage to face Congress: Imran Pratapgarhi

Congress Rajya Sabha MP Imran Pratapgarhi on Monday alleged that the BJP does not have the courage to face his party in Parliament, apparently referring to the absence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi from the Lok Sabha. "Those who dream of a Congress-mukt Bharat do not have the courage to come to Parliament and face the Congress," he said while addressing the party's Paigam-e-Mohabbat programme in Jaipur.



# MILAN 2026: 72 nations join mega naval drill in Visakhapatnam

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE  
New Delhi

The ten-day mega multilateral naval exercise, 'MILAN', hosted by the Indian Navy, has commenced at Visakhapatnam.

The massive maritime international event, which commenced on Sunday, will see the participation of 72 nations, over 60 warships, and three foreign aircraft. The exercise showcases India's role as a major maritime power, featuring key participants like the US, Russia, Japan, Germany, the Philippines, UAE, South Africa, and various Southeast Asian and African nations.

The Indian Navy has deployed major assets, including aircraft carriers INS Vikramaditya and INS Vikrant, along with Visakhapatnam-class destroyers.

As part of this prestigious

exercise, the Navy inaugurated the MILAN Village on Sunday at the Eastern Naval Command, the defence ministry said on Monday.

The inauguration ceremony was presided over by Vice Admiral Sanjay Bhalla, Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Eastern Naval Command, who formally opened the village for the participating navies and walked around the facilities set up to promote global maritime engagement.

The thoughtfully curated MILAN Village has been conceptualised and created as an experience zone that brings together delegates and naval personnel from over 70 countries in an atmosphere of camaraderie and friendship. It serves as a hub for social and cultural exchanges, enabling engagement beyond professional horizons.

A central feature of the MILAN village is its emphasis on cultural exchange, offering a rich and immersive glimpse into India's diverse heritage and tradition.

The village will host live performances by vocal artists, traditional folk-dance performances and cultural ensembles reflecting the vibrant artistic legacy of India.

The village features a variety of stalls featuring naval souvenirs, handicraft and handloom products. Together, they showcase craftsmanship from across the country. In addition, visitors will be treated to mouth-watering Indian cuisine, offering a diverse range of regional flavours and tastes of India.

In his remarks, the Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Eastern Naval Command, highlighted that "MILAN Village reflects the spirit of camaraderie and cultural



Vice Admiral Sanjay Bhalla, Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief of the Eastern Naval Command, speaking during the inauguration of the MILAN Village as part of Exercise MILAN 2026 at the Eastern Naval Command in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh

connect that complements professional naval engagement. As Visakhapatnam hosts IFR, MILAN and IONS in close succession, this convergence represents a significant moment in India's maritime outreach and coop-

erative engagement with partner navies."

The opening of the MILAN Village also marks the beginning of a broader sequence of engagements and events being conducted at Visakhapatnam by the

Indian Navy. Exercise MILAN 2026 will form a key pillar of India's historic maritime convergence alongside International Fleet Review (IFR) 2026 and the IONS Conclave of Chiefs.

As one of the largest multilateral naval exercises in the Indo-Pacific, MILAN 2026 will bring together navies from across the globe to strengthen interoperability, maritime domain awareness, and collective response capabilities.

The Harbour and Sea Phases of the exercise will focus on complex maritime operations, including anti-submarine warfare, air defence, search and rescue, and cooperative security missions, reinforcing a shared commitment to free, open, inclusive, and rules-based seas.

In the harbour, the programme will feature Subject Matter Expert Exchanges

(SMEE) and the International Maritime Seminar (IMS), enabling dialogue on shared maritime challenges, opportunities and priorities.

For young officers, activities will include cross-deck visits, ship-handling simulator training, Damage Control and NBC simulator training and demonstration of submarine rescue capabilities by a Deep Submergence Rescue Vessel (DSRV).

These engagements will strengthen the collective ability to generate credible and coordinated responses at sea. During the sea phase, participating units will conduct a wide spectrum of operational drills in multinational groupings — carrier operations, seamanship evolutions, weapon firings, anti-submarine warfare, air defence drills and tactical manoeuvres.

As a cultural centrepiece of

MILAN 2026, the MILAN Village embodies the theme "Camaraderie, Cooperation, Collaboration". It symbolises the shared commitment of participating navies for mutual cultural exchange, building bridges of friendship and forging collective maritime partnerships.

The event will feature a Presidential Fleet Review at Sea by the Hon'ble President of India, showcasing indigenous platforms including INS Vikrant (India's first domestically built aircraft carrier), Visakhapatnam-class destroyers, Nilgiri-class stealth frigates, and Arma-class anti-submarine warfare corvettes reflecting India's transformation into a 'Builder's Navy'. The Indian Navy ships would be joined by a diverse congregation of ships from friendly foreign countries, the Indian Coast Guard and the Merchant Marines.

## Andaman & Nicobar Islands citizens stand with students

VIPUL DHASMANA  
Sri Vijaya Puram

In first of its kind protest ever held, the citizens of Andaman and Nicobar Islands observed a day's voluntary closure of civic amenities by keeping away from them, in support of the ongoing protest by students, who for past nine days have been demanding the Andaman and Nicobar Administration that 'Deemed to be University' should not be thrust on them and that they would like their medical, law and engineering colleges to remain affiliated by Pondicherry University, as it had been over the years.

Students protest against 'Deemed to be University' being thrust on them in Andaman and Nicobar Islands have been seeking voluntary closure from citizens, which was a huge success.

Meanwhile, district administration of South Andaman, North and Middle Andaman have issued orders under Section 163 of Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita 2023, stating that the enforcement of a 'bandh' is unconstitutional and illegal as it negatively affects the fundamen-

tal rights of the people. It has directed that no person, association, or organization will assemble in groups of five or more persons at any location to create civic unrest.

"We have not called for any 'bandh' as stated by the district administration," informed the Joint Action Forum Against Deemed University.

"We have requested our supporters to observe voluntary closure thus showing their concern and mutual support towards a democratic and non-violent protest being initiated by students for the benefit of locals who cannot afford to provide a quality education in lesser budget to their children. We have been getting tremendous public support from people from all walks of life, specially the family members of students and their well-wishers, which include almost 80 percent of citizens all over the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, right from northernmost corner of Diglipur in Andaman to the southernmost corner of Indira Point in Great Nicobar Island, stated a member of Joint Action Forum Against Deemed University," added the statement.



## President Murmu urges push to preserve Ol Chiki script



Home Minister Amit Shah met President Droupadi Murmu and presented the 13th report of the Parliamentary Official Language Committee in New Delhi on Monday

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE  
New Delhi

President Droupadi Murmu on Monday said efforts should be made to preserve and promote Ol Chiki, the alphabetic script for the Santhali language.

Addressing a gathering to commemorate the centenary of the Ol Chiki script, Murmu also expressed happiness that the script is growing in the digital medium.

In 1925, Pandit Raghunath Murmu created the Ol Chiki script. Since then, it has become a powerful symbol of the Santhali identity.

It was included in the Constitution's Eighth

Schedule in 2003. In her address, Murmu described India as a "garden of multiple languages", stressing the importance of using one's mother tongue in communication.

She also said efforts should be made to preserve and promote the Ol Chiki script.

Earlier, a military band welcomed Murmu at the venue the Bhim Hall of the Dr Ambedkar International Centre. It first played the national song, 'Vande Mataram', followed by the national anthem, 'Jana Gana Mana'.

A group of folk artistes sang songs in Santhali, followed by a performance by

a troupe of Santhali dancers on a theme that celebrated nature and the cultural diversity of India.

A short film on the genesis and evolution of the Ol Chiki script was also screened on the occasion.

A special postage stamp and a commemorative Rs 100 coin, along with a souvenir on Ol Chikiscript, were also released at the event.

Ol Chiki is the official script of the Santhali language, one of India's prominent tribal languages spoken widely across Jharkhand, Odisha, West Bengal, Assam, and Bihar.

Belonging to the Austroasiatic language family, Santhali has histori-

## MURMU URGES ITS OFFICERS TO SHAPE INDIA'S ECONOMY

New Delhi: Underscoring the time of profound global transformation when new rules are reshaping interaction among nations, President Droupadi Murmu on Monday told the Indian Trade Service (ITS) officer trainees their decisions can shape India's economic trajectory for decades to come and asked them to balance openness with protection of core priorities.

Addressing probationers of the ITS, Indian Audit and Accounts Service (IA&AS) and Defence Aeronautical Quality Assurance Service (DAQA), who called on her at Rashtrapati Bhavan, the President said the service they joined gives them an opportunity to serve the nation through every decision and action during their careers.

She told ITS officer trainees to remember that each policy they implement, each trade barrier they address, each agreement they support, will contribute to India's emergence as a stronger and globally more respected trading partner.

"You have joined the service at the time of profound global transformation. Digital trade, sustainability requirements, and new global rules are reshaping how nations interact. You stand at a unique intersection: where law meets enterprise, negotiation meets strategy, and where your decisions can shape India's economic trajectory for decades to come," the President said.

Asking the probationers to keep national interest as guiding compass and balance openness with protection of core priorities, the President said they will contribute to attracting investment, creating jobs, and fostering environments where Indian businesses can innovate, expand, and compete globally.

"I understand that your training at the Indian Institute of Foreign Trade has given you the analytical sharpness and global perspective essential for understanding today's complex trade environment," she said.

In her address to the officer trainees of the IA&AS, the President said that the impact and value addition of the framework of accountability on the governance system is enhanced when there is synergy between the Executive and Audit institutions.

cally thrived through oral traditions.

The script consists of 30 letters, designed to accurately represent Santhali phonetics. It has two styles 'Chapa' and 'Usara'.

Union Minister for Tribal Affairs, Jual Oram, Union

Culture Minister, Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, and Union Culture Secretary, Vivek Aggarwal, were present at the event.

Murmu also felicitated several persons who worked to promote the Ol Chiki script.

## US top brass visits Western Army Command headquarters in Chandigarh

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE  
New Delhi

US ambassador to India Sergio Gor and Commander of the US Indo-Pacific Command Admiral Samuel J Paparo Jr Monday visited the headquarters of India's Western Army Command in Chandigarh. They were briefed on the capabilities of the command.



However, the envoy's visit to the military formation created a buzz on social media and invited criticism from the opposition, including Congress and Shiv Sena (UBT). Priyanka Chaturvedi of UBT linked the visit to larger geopolitical concerns, suggesting that "India's national strategic interests are now tied to what the US wants India to do". US envoys have earlier visited commands.

She also said "India's history will remember the de-escalation announcement between India and Pak was announced on social media by the US President before Indians got to know from their own Government."

## J&K Assembly complex set for completion next year

MOHIT KANDHARI  
Jammu

A multi-floor under-construction building of the Jammu Kashmir Legislative Assembly complex is slated for completion by the end of next year, more than 16 years after the foundation stone was laid by the then Chief Minister Omar Abdullah in Jammu.

The construction work on the project, which started in August 2011, is likely to be over by October 2027.

In the last 15 years, three Chief Ministers, two governors, and two Lieutenant Governors failed to expedite the completion of the project, exposing the 'work culture' in the region.

On Monday, Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Kumar Choudhary inspected the



ongoing construction work and expressed hope that the project would be completed by October next year.

"If all goes as planned, the 2028 Budget Session is expected to be held in the new Assembly complex. We will ensure that it is completed within the fixed deadline of October 2027," Choudhary told reporters during the

inspection visit. According to the project engineers, the main Assembly hall will have a seating capacity of 130 members, which can be expanded to 142 if required.

They said the multi-story complex will be equipped with a modern firefighting/ alarm system, lifts, digital lighting control system,

FACADE lighting, the most advanced electro-mechanical and sound system LAN, CCTV, PAVA, AV system and solar lights, besides rainwater harvesting and treatment systems. "The complex will also have four galleries with a combined capacity of 400 persons. The two media galleries will accommodate 150 media persons, while the Guest Gallery and the Speaker's Gallery will have a seating capacity of 35 persons each".

Speaking to reporters during the visit, Choudhary said the project had remained stalled for the past seven to eight years with no significant progress.

"The Government has restarted the work with clear directions to complete it at the earliest.

## Government committed to indigenous aero engine development: Rajnath

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE  
New Delhi

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Monday said the Government is committed to the development of aero engines and described the process as an extremely complex endeavour, integrating thermodynamics, material science, fluid mechanics and advanced mechanical engineering.

He made this assertion during his visit to Bengaluru to the Defence Research and Development Organisation's (DRDO) Gas Turbine Research Establishment (GTRE). Rajnath Singh reviewed the status of ongoing projects relating to indigenous military gas



Defence Minister Rajnath Singh during a visit to the DRDO's Gas Turbine Research Establishment (GTRE) facility in Bengaluru

turbine engine development, the defence ministry said. He also visited the exhibition showcasing various indigenous engines and their parts, and witnessed the full after-

burner engine test of the Kaveri engine.

Interacting with the scientists and officials, Raksha Mantri praised GTRE for its efforts towards bolstering

national security through self-reliance, describing the DRDO as the foundation of India's strategic capability. He underscored the critical importance of achieving Aatmanirbharta in aero engine technology in the present rapidly evolving geopolitical landscape, and stated that every effort is being made to prioritise the development of aero engines in India.

Acknowledging the GTRE's efforts in this critical technology domain, Rajnath Singh exhorted the lab to strive and focus on next-generation engines by building a nationwide robust ecosystem, while achieving self-reliance in aero engines.

## States Focus

# Rijiju slams Rahul for disrupting Parliament



### ACTOR VIJAY'S PARTY LACKS POLICY, SAYS TN BJP CHIEF

Tamil Nadu BJP chief Nainar Nagenthran on Monday flayed actor-politician Vijay saying his party lacked a clear-cut policy. Wondering if Vijay's Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam really had any policy to approach the people in the upcoming Assembly election, Nagenthran dared the actor to announce the party's policies. "Does he have any policy? He has written the (word) policy only on paper. Let him explain his party's policies clearly," the BJP leader told reporters. Earlier, AIADMK senior leader and former state minister Dindigul C Srinivasan asked Vijay to face the Assembly election without invoking the names of AIADMK leaders and former CMs: MG Ramachandran and J Jayalalithaa.

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA**  
■ Tawang

Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju on Monday claimed that Congress leader Rahul Gandhi is not interested in the smooth functioning of Parliament, and some NGOs have tutored him that "good days" will come for his party, and that is why he has been stalling the House.

Rijiju also said that the Government is not going to take any more extra steps to "placate" the Congress to defuse the situation in Parliament, as he had made "many attempts" so that the House functions properly, but in vain.

"Rahul Gandhi is not interested in running the House. He is interested in making issues. Rahul Gandhi was tutored by some NGOs that your days won't come. But their days won't come. In the next elections, their tally (in the Lok Sabha) will further go down," he said in an interview.

Rijiju, who is on a visit to his Lok Sabha constituency Arunachal West, said the ruling alliance has no problem with the Opposition stalling the House, as he had made many attempts to defuse the situation, including speaking to senior Congress leader KC Venugopal and a few others. "We are not going to do



anything extra to placate Congress. The Congress is frustrated because the party is losing election after election. They are desperate to change the situation," he said.

The Union minister claimed there was pressure on the Congress from the smaller parties in Parliament to not stall the House

because they lose out their time to speak. "All Opposition is not with the Congress. Smaller parties are not being able to utilise their respective party time. Smaller parties are unhappy with Rahul Gandhi. Some of them have not even signed the motion against the Speaker," he said.

Rijiju said some members of other political parties kept telling him that they wanted the House to function.

Most days of the first part of the Budget Session in the Lok Sabha witnessed disruptions and adjournments after Gandhi was disallowed by the Chair from quoting an article based on excerpts of former Army chief MM Naravane's "unpublished

memoir", which has references to the India-China conflict of 2020.

Eight Opposition members were suspended for the remainder of the Budget Session for unruly behaviour in the House.

The Opposition also moved a No-confidence Motion against Speaker Om Birla for his removal from office, alleging that he had acted in a "blatantly partisan" manner.

The Speaker last week decided to step aside from his role as the presiding officer of the House, hours after the Opposition submitted the motion for his removal from office, alleging that he had acted in a "blatantly partisan" manner.



### MP ANNOUNCES AWARD NAMED AFTER EMPEROR VIKRAMADITYA

The Madhya Pradesh Government has announced the institution of an award of ₹1.01 crore in the name of Ujjain Emperor Vikramaditya, who was known for his valour, justice and public welfare. Chief Minister Mohan Yadav on Sunday also announced a national-level award of ₹21 lakh and three state-level awards of ₹5 lakh each in memory of the legendary ruler of Ujjain.

**TN ASHOK**  
■ Pathanamthitta

On a quiet Sunday afternoon in Pathanamthitta district, the tiny white coffin of 10-month-old Aalin Sherin Abraham was lowered into the earth to the sound of muffled sobs and whispered prayers.

Hundreds gathered — neighbours, strangers, officials — not merely to mourn a life that ended far too soon, but to honour an act of extraordinary generosity: Aalin, declared brain-dead after a tragic road accident, became Kerala's youngest recorded organ donor, her parents consenting to donate her organs so that others might live.

In the days since her death, admiration has poured in from across the state — from health

ministerial tributes to hundreds of locals lining the funeral route. Yet while Aalin's story is one of compassion and selflessness, it also touches on a larger, complex tapestry of medicine, ethics, necessity, and criminality that surrounds the global system of organ donation and transplantation.

#### Aalin's gift

Who received her organs — and what they were: In the aftermath of the accident that claimed her life on February 5, Aalin's parents — Arun Abraham and Sherin Ann John — made an agonising but decisive choice. With the support of the Kerala State Organ and Tissue Transplant Organisation (K-SOTTO), her organs were retrieved with swift



coordination from multiple medical facilities.

#### The organs and how they were allocated

**Liver:** transplanted into a six-month-old infant at Kerala Institute of Medical Sciences (KIMS) Hospital, Thiruvananthapuram — making this baby among the youngest known recipients of a posthumous infant liver donation in the State.

**Kidneys:** Donated

to a 10-year-old girl, Sreya, at Government Medical College Hospital, Thiruvananthapuram.

**Heart Valve:** sent to a cardiac surgery centre at SreeChitraTirunal Institute for Medical Sciences and Technology.

**Eyes (corneas):** entrusted to an eye bank for future sight-restoring procedures. Across the State, surgeons and organ recipients' families have described the transplants as life-changing — or, in the case of organs like the corneas and heart valve, potentially life-saving.

#### When children donate

Global Stories of Infant and Childhood Organ Donation, Aalin's story, while remarkable in its youth, is not entirely

without precedent. Across history and around the world, families who lose children to sudden death sometimes choose to donate available organs — particularly corneas — to reduce suffering and preserve a legacy of hope. One of the better-known historical examples is Janis Anne Babson, a 10-year-old Canadian girl who died from leukaemia in 1961 and whose wish to donate her corneas helped spark broader public awareness of corneal transplantation.

Such cases are rare because infant donation is medically and ethically complex: organs must be viable, the donor must be declared brain-dead according to stringent medical criteria, and consent must come from grieving families. But they underscore

both the possibility and impact of donation even at the earliest stages of life.

#### The ethics and need

Why organ donation matters and why it fails to meet demand: Globally, tens of thousands of patients die each year waiting for organs because of a chronic shortage. Even in countries with robust donation systems — such as the United States or much of Europe — waiting lists vastly outnumber available organs, and waiting times stretch for years. This shortfall has driven ethical debates and legislation promoting donation, including "opt-out" policies in several European Union nations where adults are presumed donors unless they register otherwise.

## Arjuna Awardee Rakesh Kumar misses out on J&K's sportsperson list

**MOHIT KANDHARI**  
■ Jammu

41-year-old paralympian, Rakesh Kumar, recipient of the prestigious Arjuna Award for his outstanding achievements in para-archery, has failed to make it to the provisional selection list for the appointment of Outstanding Sportspersons in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir.

Aggrieved, Rakesh Kumar, has now knocked on the doorstep of Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, raising questions over the evaluation criteria. Speaking to The Pioneer over the telephone, Rakesh Kumar told this correspondent, after the provisional list was released by the Youth Services



and Sports department of the Jammu and Kashmir Government, I wrote a letter to the Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, sharing my deep concern

and disappointment. "My name has not been included in the recently released list of 222 recruitments under SO 12, despite being one of the highest-achieving sportspersons of Jammu & Kashmir," Rakesh Kumar informed the Chief Minister.

"As an Arjuna Awardee, World Number 1 Para Archer, and an athlete who has represented India at the Paralympic Games, World Championships, Asian Games and multiple international ranking tournaments, I have consistently brought honour and recognition to the Union Territory and the nation. It is deeply disheartening that despite fulfilling the highest standards of international sporting excellence, my name

does not find mention in the recruitment list. This raises serious concerns regarding transparency, evaluation criteria and the application of merit in the selection process", para Archer hailing from Katra wrote in his representation to the Chief Minister. Seeking a transparent review of the provisional list, Rakesh Kumar also pleaded. I humbly submit that sportspersons who have achieved at the highest global platforms should not be overlooked. Such omissions not only affect individual athletes but also send a discouraging message to the entire sporting fraternity of Jammu & Kashmir. A transparent review of the provisional list should be immediately ordered.

## LG Saxena orders reopening of 14 tourist spots in J and K

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE**  
■ Jammu

Amid a fresh upsurge in the tourist fallout in the Kashmir valley, especially after the launch of Vande Bharat Express, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Monday ordered the reopening of 14 tourist spots in the Union territory, which were closed in the wake of the Pahalgam terror attack in April last year.

Around 50 tourist spots



were closed down after the terror attack at the Baisaran meadow in Pahalgam on April 22 last year, which claimed 26 lives,

mostly tourists. "After a thorough security review and discussions, I have ordered the reopening of more tourist spots in the Kashmir and Jammu divisions, which were temporarily closed as a precautionary measure," the LG's office said on X. With this, the total number of tourist spots reopened after the temporary closure went up to 26. On September 26, the LG had ordered the reopening of 12 tourist destinations.

## The Pioneer Classified

### CHANGE OF NAME

I, NAGENDRA MOURYA S/o Chandra Deep Ram R/o 00, Gautam Nagar, Pilibhit (Uttar Pradesh) 262122 have changed my name from NAGENDRA MOURYA to NAGENDRA MAURYA for all future purposes.

PD(513)C

I, SATYA PRAKASH MOURYA S/o Nagendra Maurya R/o Flat No. H-4, Plot No.- C-24C, Raj Heights, Shalimar Garden Extension-II, Sahibabad, Ghaziabad (U.P.) 201005 have changed my name from SATYA PRAKASH MOURYA to SATYA PRAKASH MAURYA for all future purposes.

PD(509)C

I, hitherto known as Mahesh, S/o, Shiv Shankar, R/o- E-21 Yadav Nagar, Samaipur Delhi - 110042, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Ratan Chaudhari

PD(510)C

I, Thomas Panicker Jacob S/o Thomas Panicker R/o H.No. 21-H, Pocket A-3, Mayur Vihar Phase -3, Delhi -110096, have changed my name from Thomas Panicker Jacob to Jacob Thomas for my passport and all documents/purpose.

PD(511)C

I, Radhey Shyam, F/o- JC-332312H Sub Maj Anil Kumar Sharma, R/o- Vill & PO- Jeevpur, Teh- Zamania, Dist- Ghazipur, U.P.- 232340, have changed my name from Radhey Shyam to Radhey Shyam Sharma, vide affidavit dated 16/02/2026 before Notary Public Delhi.

PD(512)C

**Metro Railway, Kolkata**  
Tender Notice for e-tendering is invited by Principal Chief Engineer, Metro Railway, Kolkata for and on behalf of the President of India for the following work: Name of Work: Modification/Renovation of 1st Floor of Administrative Building for Metro Railway Training Academy and allied works including connected works at Dy. CE/Con-1 Office at Naxalpara Garshed of Metro Railway, Kolkata. Approx. Cost of Work: ₹ 32,06,332.90. Earnest Money: ₹ 64,100/- . Completion Period: 06 Months. Date and Time of Closing: 10.03.2026 at 12:00 hrs. The Tender Document and other details can be obtained from the website [www.treps.gov.in](http://www.treps.gov.in). Amendments/Corrigendum, if any, would be hosted on the website.  
Abridged e-Tender Notice No.: Civii-2550-2026 (Open)  
Follow us at: [t.me/metrorailwaykol](https://t.me/metrorailwaykol) [www.facebook.com/metrorailkolkata](https://www.facebook.com/metrorailkolkata)

**GOVERNMENT OF ASSAM**  
**OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, PWD**  
**JALUKBARI TERRITORIAL ROAD DIVISION,**  
**FANCY BAZAR, GUWAHATI-01**

**PRESS NOTICE INVITING TENDER**  
Executive Engineer PWD, Jalukbari Territorial Road Division, Fancy Bazar, Ghy-01, on behalf of Governor of Assam invites bid for 2 (Two) Nos. of works under SDMF for 2025-26 in Kamrup District of Assam amounting to **Rs 3740.45999 Lakhs (approx.)** in Jalukbari LAC in Kamrup District of Assam. Details may be seen in the office of the undersigned from **17.02.2026** during office hours.  
Schemes are not yet sanctioned by the competent Authority. In the event of non sanction of the schemes, the bids may be cancelled and no claim what so ever on this account shall be entertained from the bidders. Sd/-  
**Executive Engineer PWD**  
**Jalukbari Territorial Road Division,**  
**DIPR/CF/PIO/3981/17-Feb-26 Fancy Bazar, Ghy-01**

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
NOTICE is hereby given that Anita Manju Ganotra, Meena Madan, Niru Wadiwa, Shashi Bala, Sonia Sunjea and Veena Kumari (hereinafter called the seller/s) claims to be owner and in possession of Ground Floor Prop. No. 174, in The Dera Ghazi Khan District Refugees CHS Ltd., Tarun Enclave, Pilmur, Delhi-34 (hereinafter called the said property) having inherited the said property after the death of Ishwar Chand Anuja who expired on 30.03.2019, said Ishwar Chand Anuja was the owner of the said property vide Sale deed dated 22.05.1998 reg vide Doc No. 3288, said Seller/s have agreed to sell the said Property to Sumit Gupta And Saurav Gupta & said Sumit Gupta And Saurav Gupta agreed to create a mortgage in favour of our clients IDFC FIRST BANK LTD, Rajendra Place Branch, any person/s having claim against the said Property, or any part thereof, by way of sale, exchange, mortgage (equitable/registered or otherwise), gift, trust, inheritance, lien or otherwise whatsoever, are hereby intimated to notify the same in writing to us with supporting documentary evidence at the address mentioned below within 7days from the date hereof, failing which the claim or claims, if any, of such person or persons will be considered to have been waived and/or abandoned and our client shall proceed with the disbursement of loan and subsequent creation of mortgage in respect thereof.  
Vishal Diwan (Advocate)  
Ho.No.2 (LGF), NRI Complex, N.D-19  
Mobile No. 9818399999

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
UNIT NO. 402, 4TH FLOOR, TOWER-HAPPINESS, BLOCK-B, SIKKA KARMIC GREENS, PLOT NO. GH-01/C, SECTOR-78, NOIDA U.P.  
That our client Anil Kumar Tripathi, proposes to purchase the above said property from Mrs. Alice Mammen, who has assured our client that she is absolute owner in possession of the said property vide Sub Lease Deed No.6331, dated 09.10.2019 having purchased the same from New Okhla Industrial Development Authority & M/s. G.S Promoters Pvt. Ltd. That Original Allotment letter/Agreement dated 25.02.19 issued by builder in her favour is lost for which Lost Article Information Report lodged on 08.02.26 vide No. L.A.R.No.2026000150336.  
Under the circumstances, notice is hereby given to the General Public, Bank/Financial institutions or other person/s, organization/s, companies, government authorities, having any claim, rights, title, or any interest of any nature whatsoever into or upon the said property, is hereby called upon to make the same known, in writing with documentary evidence by registered AD Post to the undersigned at the address mentioned hereinbelow within 7 days of the publication of this notice and in the event no response having been received to the notice, the title of Mrs. Alice Mammen to the said property shall be deemed to be clear of any claim, charge or encumbrance of any nature whatsoever and any subsequent claim shall not bind our client in any manner whatsoever.  
Kumar Armit  
Advocate  
Legal Access  
132A, Anarkali Complex, Jhandewalan Ext. New Delhi

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
Known to all that my client Nitu Alias Neeta Devi owner of 3rd Floor, Property No. C-335, Old C-13 Area 47.76 Sq. Yds. Kharsa No. 812, C-Block, Kuman Square, West Vinod Nagar, Shahdara, New Delhi., and My Client purchase property from Vinod Kumar and he is Purchased from Praveen Kumar Vaish vide GPA, ATS & Will dated 18.03.2015, now My Client wants to sell aforesaid property. And it is informed that any deal with said documents by any person except my said client and said institution regarding said property, shall be deemed as null and void. If any person having any claim, right in said property then he may contact and handover the same and apprise his claim to undersigned within 15 days of this publication.

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

**GOVERNMENT OF ASSAM**  
**OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ENGINEER: PW (HEALTH & EDUCATION) DEPARTMENT:**  
**CHANDMARI, (GUWAHATI-3**

No. Tech-1(H&E)08/2026/1  
**PRESS NOTICE**  
The Chief Engineer (Health & Education), P.W.D. (H&I), Chandmari, Guwahati-3 on behalf of the Governor of Assam, invites online EPC Mode-1 e-tenders in two Bid System (Technical and Financial) on Engineering, Procurement and Construction (EPC) Model-basis from eligible firms / contractors of repute having experience in similar nature of work, for the following works.

Sl. No.	Name of work	Bid value (including 18% GST)	Completion Period	Bid Security	Cost of Bid
1.	Construction of G+2 Academic Building at Doomdooma College. Rupaisidina. Doomdooma	Rs.9,75,28,479.00	18 (eighteen) months	2% of Did value for General Category and 1% of Bid Value for Reserved Category	Rs. 19,600.00
2.	Construction of G+2 100 Bedded Boy's Hostel (G+3 future Provision) at Bir Raghav Moran Govt. Model College. Doomdooma	Rs.8,06,38,511.00	18 (eighteen) months	2% of Hid value for General Category and 1% of Hid Value for Reserved Category	Rs. 16,200.00
3.	Construction of 200 bedded Hostel at Kumar Bhaskar Varma Sanskrit and Ancient Studies University. Nalbari	Rs.16,47,84,351.00	18 (eighteen) months	2% of Bid value for General Category and 1% of Bid Value for Reserved Category	Rs.20,000.00
4.	Construction of Girl's Hostel at Mangaldoi College, Assam	Rs.7,99,26,810.00	18 (eighteen) months	2% of Bid value for General Category and 1% of Bid Value for Reserved Category	Rs. 16,000.00

Details of the bid may be seen at e-procurement website i.e. [www.assamtenders.gov.in](http://www.assamtenders.gov.in). The bidders must be enrolled with the tendering web-portal [www.assamtenders.gov.in](http://www.assamtenders.gov.in). All terms and conditions will be as per the Bidding Documents. The Press Notice will be a part of the Bidding Documents.  
The Bid price may vary at the time of detail tendering for which no claim will be admissible.  
The work will be allotted only after receipt of government approval.

Sd/-  
**Chief Engineer (Health & Education),**  
**PW(H&E) Deptt.**  
**Chandmari, Guwahati-3**  
DIPR/CF/PIO/884/17-Feb-26

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
It is to inform to the public at large that Mrs. Pushpa Devi had acquired Property Bearing No. E16 & E-17, measuring 130 Sq. Yds., out of Kharsa No. 469, Situated in the area Village Siraspur, now Colony Known as E Block, Rana Park, Siraspur, Delhi, vide Conveyance Deed dt. 24.09.2024 (PM Loan) by PDI. Original registered GPA, ATS & Will dated 07.09.2022, now My Client wants to sell aforesaid property. And it is informed that any deal with said documents by any person except my said client and said institution regarding said property, shall be deemed as null and void. If any person having any claim, right in said property then he may contact and handover the same and apprise his claim to undersigned within 15 days of this publication.

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

**GOVERNMENT OF ASSAM**  
**OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ENGINEER: PW (HEALTH & EDUCATION) DEPARTMENT:**  
**CHANDMARI, (GUWAHATI-3**

No. Tech-1(H&E)08/2026/1  
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The Bid price may vary at the time of detail tendering for which no claim will be admissible.  
The work will be allotted only after receipt of government approval.

Sd/-  
**Chief Engineer (Health & Education),**  
**PW(H&E) Deptt.**  
**Chandmari, Guwahati-3**  
DIPR/CF/PIO/884/17-Feb-26

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
Nidha is hereby given on behalf of SHRI MURARI CHAUDHARY AND TRIPURARI CHAUDHARY to inform to the public at large that SHRI MURARI CHAUDHARY AND TRIPURARI CHAUDHARY are purchasing the ENTIRE BUILT UP UPPER GROUND FLOOR RIGHTS WITHOUT ROOFTERRACE (PART OF PROPERTY BEARING NO. 60-B, AREA MEASURING 50 SQ. YDS. (11.61 Sq. Mtrs.), OUT OF KHARSA NO. 388, 389, 390 & 391), SITUATED IN THE AREA OF VILLAGE NAWAODA KHARSA, DELHI STATE DELHI COLONY KNOWN AS BLOCK LEXTN, PART-II, RAMA PARK ROAD, MOHAN GARDEN, UTTAM NAGAR, NEW DELHI-110059 from of Smt. Priya Kumari who Smt. Niranjan Kumar who becomes owner through General Power of Attorney, Agreement to Sell & Will dated 28/03/2016 which were executed by Shri Vibhuti Singh and Smt. Kavita Sharma and same to be financed & mortgaged by Aditya Birla Housing Finance Ltd., So, to comply the requirements of BANK/NBFC, we give this public notice that if any Person having any type of claim/lien/interest, creating mortgage on the said property, may inform in writing, at the address mentioned below, about his objections, within 15 days from today, failing which it shall be presumed that the said property is free from all type of Encumbrances, liens etc.  
Lucem Legal LLP  
N-81, Ground Floor, Saina Tower, Gautam Nagar Near Yusuf Sarai Community Centre, New Delhi-110049  
Contact: 011-40455316 & 41657327

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
Mrs. Kavita has approached ICICI Bank Ltd., Faridabad, Haryana (Bank) to avail a loan for purchase of Property No. 485P (216.70 sq. mtrs.), Sector-46, Urban Estate, Faridabad, Haryana from Mrs. Geeta Agrawal, who has represented that she is the absolute owner of the said property, having inherited from her late husband Mr. Radhey Shyam Agrawal, which is materialized in his name in the records of HUDA on furnishing of No Objection of her son & daughters. If anybody, person, body corporate has any right, lien or claim whatsoever on the said Property by way of inheritance, mortgage, sale or otherwise, then he/she/it may contact the undersigned with documentary proof of claim within 10 days of publication of this notice, otherwise it shall be deemed that either there are no claims or the same have been waived off. No claim or objection shall be entertained thereafter and Bank shall proceed to advance the loan on mortgaging of the said property.  
Amit Kumar, Advocate  
GNA & Associates  
D-28, Jangpura Extension,  
New Delhi-110014.

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**Order Order**

**SC rejects plea over hoardings 'prohibiting' entry of pastors**



Notice Board in Chhattisgarh Villages, prohibiting entry of pastors

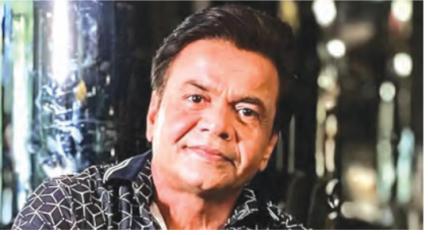
The Supreme Court on Monday dismissed a plea challenging the Chhattisgarh High Court order in a matter pertaining to hoardings which allegedly prohibit entry of pastors and converted Christians in some villages in the State. The High Court had in October last year disposed of two separate pleas seeking removal of such hoardings.

While referring to an apex court verdict, the High Court had observed that installation of hoardings for preventing forcible conversion by way of allurements or fraudulent means cannot be termed as unconstitutional.

A plea challenging the High Court's order came up for hearing before a bench of Justices Vikram Nath and Sandeep Mehta on Monday. Senior advocate Colin Gonsalves, appearing for the petitioner, referred to a separate matter relating to alleged attacks on pastors which is pending before the top court.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta said the plea before the High Court was limited but the petitioner has now added several new facts and documents in the petition filed in the apex court. After hearing the submissions, the bench dismissed the petition.

**Delhi HC orders temporary release of Rajpal Yadav in cheque bounce cases**



In a relief to actor Rajpal Yadav, the Delhi High Court suspended till March 18 his sentence in the cheque bounce cases and permitted him to be released from jail. Justice Swarana Kanta Sharma passed the order after noting that Yadav deposited ₹1.5 crore in the bank account of complainant M/s Murali Projects Pvt Ltd.

"We are granting you an interim suspension of sentence... It is till the next date of hearing," said the judge. Yadav sought suspension of his sentence on the ground of a marriage in his family on February 19. The court directed Yadav to surrender his passport and not leave the country without permission.

The HC further directed Yadav to remain present, either physically or virtually, on the next date of hearing on March 18. The court's proceedings came on revision petitions by Yadav and his wife challenging a 2019 decision of a sessions court, which upheld their conviction by a magisterial court here in the cheque bounce cases in April 2018.

**ED slaps ₹184-cr FEMA penalty against NewsClick, Editor**

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE**  
■ New Delhi

The Enforcement Directorate has slapped a ₹184-crore FEMA penalty against news portal NewsClick and its editor-in-chief, Prabir Purkayastha, official sources said on Monday. The order specifies that the company that owns the portal — PPK NEWSCLICK Studio Private Limited — has been penalised for an amount of ₹120 crore while Purkayastha has been issued the same order for Rs 64 crore of alleged violations, the sources told PTI.

The entities have been found "contravening" the provisions of the Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA) on essentially two counts — misrepresentation of FDI funds apart from misdecla-

ration of services and exports.

A response from NewsClick on the development is awaited.

The ED had first raided the premises of NewsClick NewsClick and its editor-in-chief, Prabir Purkayastha, official sources said on Monday. The order specifies that the company that owns the portal — PPK NEWSCLICK Studio Private Limited — has been penalised for an amount of ₹120 crore while Purkayastha has been issued the same order for Rs 64 crore of alleged violations, the sources told PTI.

The BJP, in 2023, had quoted a New York Times news article to allege wrongdoing by the portal and its promoters. The news article had stated the portal was part of a global network that received funding from American billionaire Neville Roy Singham, who allegedly works closely with the Chinese government media machine.



**DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN AT RELIGIOUS PLACES**

**9-judge SC bench to hear pleas from April 7**

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE**  
■ New Delhi

The Supreme Court on Monday said a nine-judge bench will on April 7 commence the final hearing on petitions relating to discrimination against women at religious places, including Sabarimala Temple, and on the ambit and scope of religious freedom practised by multiple faiths. In September 2018, a five-judge Constitution bench, by a 4:1 majority verdict, had lifted the ban that prevented females between the ages of 10 and 50 from entering the Ayyappa shrine at Sabarimala in Kerala and held that the centuries-old Hindu religious practice was illegal and unconstitutional.

Later on November 14, 2019, another five-judge bench headed by then CJI Ranjan Gogoi, by a majority of 3:2, referred the issue of discrimination against women at various places of worship to a larger bench. The bench had then framed broad issues on freedoms across religions, saying they cannot be decided without any facts of the particular case.

Besides the Sabarimala case, the verdict also referred issues of entry of Muslim women into mosques and dargahs and of Parsi women,



married to non-Parsi men, to the holy fire place of an Agiary, to the larger bench.

On May 11, 2020, another bench held that its 5-judge bench had the power to refer the questions of law to a larger bench for adjudication while exercising its limited power under review jurisdiction in the Sabarimala temple entry case.

After that, the matters could not be taken up for almost five years because of the COVID pandemic, and later, they were not taken up by other chief justices. On Monday, a

bench comprising Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justices Joymalya Bagchi and Vipul M Pancholi said a nine-judge bench will begin hearing the petitions on April 7 and will conclude them on April 22.

The CJ asked the parties to file their written submissions on or before March 14. Solicitor General Tushar Mehta for the Centre said he supported the pleas for review of the Sabarimala verdict that allowed entry of women of all age groups to the hill-top shrine in Kerala.

The bench-appointed lawyer

Krishna Kumar Singh is the nodal counsel for parties supporting the review of the Sabarimala verdict. It also appointed Shashwati Paril as the nodal counsel for those opposing the review of the verdict. "We also deem it appropriate that senior advocate K Parameshwar, along with Shivam Singh, are appointed as the amicus. Singh shall submit the stand taken by all parties before this court," the CJ said.

"The nine-judge bench will begin hearing the Sabarimala review case on April 7, 2026, at 10:30 am. The review petitioners or the party supporting them shall be heard from April 7 to April 9. The ones opposing the review shall be heard on April 14 to April 16. The rejoinder submissions, if any, will be heard on April 21, 2026, followed by the final and concluding submissions by the learned amicus... Which is expected to be over by April 22," the order said.

The bench asked the lawyers to adhere to the schedule. Earlier, the bench read out seven questions it had framed on the scope of religious freedom.

Asserting that it was open to addition and deletion of issues framed, the bench said it would consider: "What is the scope and ambit of right to freedom of religion under

Article 25 of the Constitution of India?"

About the second issue, it said: "What is the inter-play between the rights of persons under Article 25 of the Constitution of India and rights of religious denomination under Article 26?"

The third question is whether the rights of a religious denomination under Article 26 are subject to other fundamental rights apart from public order, morality, and health. "What is the scope and extent of the word 'morality' under Articles 25 and 26 of the Constitution, and whether it is meant to include Constitutional morality?" read the fourth question. The bench said it would also examine the "scope and extent of judicial review," concerning a religious practice as referred under Article 25 of the Constitution.

"What is the meaning of the expression 'sections of Hindus' occurring in Article 25 (2) (b) of the Constitution of India?" read the sixth issue.

The top court said it would examine, as the seventh question, whether a person not belonging to a religious denomination or religious group can question a practice of that "religious denomination or religious group" by filing a public interest litigation (PIL).

**SC questions Centre over transcripts of videos in Sonam Wangchuk detention case**

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE**  
■ New Delhi

The Supreme Court on Monday questioned the Centre about the transcripts of videos submitted by it against climate activist Sonam Wangchuk and said the translations should be precise in the age of Artificial Intelligence.

A bench of Justices Aravind Kumar and PB Varale told Additional Solicitor General KM Nataraj that it wanted actual transcripts of Wangchuk's statements from the government after senior advocate Kapil Sibal submitted that some of the words attributed to the activist were never said by him.

"Mr Solicitor, we want an actual transcript of the speech. What he relied upon and what you say are different. We will decide. There should be an actual transcript of what he says. You may have your reasons."

"At least, whatever he stated, the true translation should be there... Your translation goes on for 7 to 8 minutes, but the speech is for 3 minutes. We are in the era of Artificial Intelligence; precision is at least 98 per cent for translation," the bench observed.

Sibal questioned the translation and said, "Wangchuk continued his strike<sup>ed</sup>, and also continued to provoke youth by taking reference of Nepal<sup>ed</sup>. Where is this line coming from? This is a very



Sonam Wangchuk

unique detention order — you rely on something that does not exist and then you say it is based on subjective satisfaction." Nataraj told the court that there is a department for transcripts and said, "We are not experts in it."

The hearing will resume on Thursday. The Centre had earlier told the apex court that Wangchuk had been examined medically 24 times since his detention and that he was "fit, hale and hearty."

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta told the bench that the grounds on which Wangchuk's detention order was passed continue to exist and that it would not be possible to release him on health grounds.

"We have examined his health

periodically 24 times. He is fit, hale and hearty. He had some digestive issues; he is being treated. There is nothing to worry about, nothing alarming. We can't make exceptions like this."

"The grounds on which the detention order was passed continue. It will not be possible to release him on health grounds. It may not be desirable either. We have given utmost consideration," Mehta told the bench.

The top court was hearing a habeas corpus petition filed by Wangchuk's wife, Gitanjali Angmo, seeking a declaration that his detention under the National Security Act (NSA), 1980, is illegal.

The NSA empowers the Centre and the states to detain individuals to prevent them from acting in a manner "prejudicial to the defence of India."

The maximum detention period is 12 months, though it can be revoked earlier.

Angmo said the violence in Leh on September 24 last year cannot be attributed in any manner to the actions or statements of Wangchuk.

Wangchuk himself condemned the violence through his social media handles and categorically said it would lead to the failure of Ladakh's "tapasya" and its peaceful pursuit of five years, Angmo said, adding that it was the saddest day of his life.

**Court notices against Videocon founder Dhoot, 12 others in bank fraud case: ED**

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE**  
■ New Delhi

The ED on Monday said a Delhi court has issued notices to Videocon Group promoter Venugopal Dhoot and a dozen other entities after taking cognisance of its chargesheet filed in connection with an alleged ₹61,700-crore bank loan fraud linked to financing the company's oil and gas assets in Mozambique. The prosecution complaint (chargesheet) was filed on December 18, 2024 and the special Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) court located at Rouse Avenue took cognisance on February 10, the Enforcement Directorate said in a statement. The court has taken cognisance of the offence of money laundering and has issued notices against the 13 accused, it said.

The accounts of Videocon Industries Ltd (VIL) and its group companies turned NPA (non-performing assets) in 2018 and the banks had filed a total claim of ₹61,773.02 crore including the NPA of ₹23,647.12 crore in respect of SBL (stand by letter of credit) facility, said the ED.

The agency has quantified the "proceeds of crime" in this case at ₹1,136.49 crore. The money laundering case stems from a June 2020 FIR of the CBI.

According to the ED, probe found foreign currency loan facilities availed by the Videocon Group — the SBL facility sanctioned by the



Venugopal Dhoot

SBI-led consortium, the Jupiter facility and the Standard Chartered Bank (SCB) facility — were systematically "diverted" from their sanctioned purposes, which were stated to be development and refinancing of overseas oil and gas assets (in the African country Mozambique).

"The diversion of funds was carried out under the overall control and direction of the promoters of the Videocon Group, with the active involvement of overseas group entities and intermediaries," the agency alleged.

The loan proceeds were allegedly routed through Videocon Hydrocarbon Holdings Ltd (VHHL) and its overseas oil and gas subsidiaries after which the funds were "layered" through a complex web of overseas Videocon Group companies engaged in activities unrelated to oil and gas operations, it said. These

entities included Jupiter Corporation, Venus Corporation, Eagle Corporation, Paramount Global, Quadrant Corporation, Sky Billion Trading and TGDC Guangdong Display Co Ltd.

These funds were routed back to India and utilised for purposes "wholly unconnected" with the sanctioned objectives, including meeting expenses of non-oil businesses, making investments, and creation of personal and corporate assets, said the ED.

The agency found that a "substantial" portion of the diverted funds was "layered" back into India through the books and bank accounts of VIL and its Indian group companies.

"Investigation found that out of the total facility of \$4.54 billion, \$2.02 billion has been diverted by the promoters of Videocon Group for non-intended purposes," said the agency.

**Land-for-jobs scam: Delhi court frames charges against Lalu, wife**

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE**  
■ New Delhi

A Delhi court on Monday formally framed charges against former railway minister Lalu Prasad Yadav and his wife Rabri Devi in the alleged land-for-jobs scam.

Special Judge Vishal Gogne said, "The charge has been framed against accused 1 (Lalu Prasad) and accused 2 (Rabri Devi), to which they have pleaded not guilty and claimed trial."

The matter has been listed on February 27 for further proceedings. On January 29, the judge granted liberty to Lalu Prasad, wife Rabri Devi, sons Tejashwi Yadav and Tej Pratap Yadav, and some others to appear in person between February 1 and 28 for formal framing of charges.

On January 9, the court had ordered framing charges against Lalu Prasad, his family members and others.

It has framed charges in the case against 41 accused persons and discharged 52 others. Out of the 103 accused



Prasad Yadav and his wife Rabri Devi

named in the CBI's chargesheet, five have died.

In his 346-page order, Judge Gogne had said, "The court finds, on the touchstone of grave suspicion, that there existed an overarching criminal conspiracy, mentored by Lalu Prasad Yadav, towards using public employment as a bargaining chip for receiving immovable properties through his wife Rabri Devi, daughters Misha Bharti and Hema Yadav, as well as sons Tejashwi Prasad Yadav

and Tej Pratap Yadav from willing job seekers."

The order had cited the CBI's chargesheet and said there was a strong indication that the close associates of Lalu Prasad, namely Bhola Yadav, RK Mahajan and PC Gupta, probably facilitated, as co-conspirators, the acquisition of these lands in lieu of jobs provided to the nominees of the former railway minister in Group D posts across various railway zones in the country.

**Invitation For Bids (IFB)**

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Assam Skill University Project (ASUP) cum Registrar, Assam Skill University (ASU) ("the Purchaser") invites online bids from eligible bidders for the below mentioned Package at Assam Skill University:

#	Package No.	Package Name	Date of Publication		Deadline for Submission	
			Date	Time	Time	Time
1	GS02/ASU/CMN/079	Equipment for Material Testing, Fluid Mechanics, Hydraulic and Pneumatic Lab	17 February 2026	12:00 Hours (IST)	18 March 2026	14:00 Hours (IST)

Interested bidders may download and submit their bids electronically using the e Procurement portal <https://assamtenders.gov.in/>.

DIPR/CF/PIO/3993/17-Feb-26  
Sd/-  
CEO, ASUP cum Registrar, ASU



## Editor's TAKE

### Global South at the heart of AI future

The AI Impact Summit is not just about technology – it is about who controls the future, and whether that future will be fair, balanced and truly global

As the AI Impact Summit 2026 opened in New Delhi, global attention is focused on the city. For the first time, the future of artificial intelligence is being debated in the Global South. Artificial intelligence has taken the world by storm. It is not just another technology with a limited scope but a revolution that will define the course of human development. Its impact can be compared to the impact of the steam engine in the industrial world or the invention of the wheel that shaped human mobility. It is the most significant development to have emerged in the digital age. Whoever owns it and uses it will be far ahead of others, and this applies to individuals as well as nations. So far, all technical innovations have come from the West. From the Industrial Revolution to the Information Technology age, the West has led the world through its technological innovations, maintaining almost unchallenged dominance over the world. Once again, artificial intelligence is coming from Silicon Valley, which would again make the world dependent upon the Western world. In this context, the New Delhi AI Impact Summit is all about opportunity and inclusivity. For the first time, India and China are inching closer to the West in AI technology; the Summit would indeed go a long way in galvanising Asian nations to take a leap.

As New Delhi hosts the AI Impact Summit 2026 from February 16-20, India is not merely convening a technology conference; it is setting the moral and strategic direction for the world's most powerful new force. The United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres captured this perfectly when he described India as a "very successful emerging economy" and the right place to host a summit that ensures artificial intelligence serves "everybody, everywhere."

This is the first-ever global AI summit in the Global South, and that is historic. Guterres's warning that AI must not become the privilege of the US, China, or a few developed economies underlines why Delhi matters. India, with a vast pool of IT professionals, can make a difference and channelise AI-driven technologies towards sectors where they are most needed - healthcare, agriculture, education, climate resilience, and inclusive growth. All technologies are defined by their end use. Like a knife that can bleed a person to death or save him on an operating table, AI would need to be put to the best use of humanity rather than be used to develop missiles and defence equipment that are more deadly. The summit's core themes – People, Planet, and Progress – speak directly to India's strengths. With its digital public infrastructure, from Aadhaar to UPI, India has already demonstrated how technology can be scaled for social good. Now, by hosting world leaders such as Emmanuel Macron and Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, alongside tech pioneers like Sundar Pichai and Shantanu Narayen, India is bridging geopolitics with innovation. The AI summit can help shape global standards on ethical AI, data protection, algorithmic bias, and workforce transitions – areas where unregulated AI could deepen inequality. The future of AI cannot be written by a few – it must be co-authored by humanity for the common good, else it is not worth it!

## Why new realities demand a fresh start

With the BNP's mandate, both nations can move beyond old baggage and rebuild on shared interests. A reset is no longer optional – it is essential



UMANG KOHLI

India has had great ties with the Hasina Government, but because of geopolitical interference and internal political dynamics inside Bangladesh, the government fell. Now, should the Indian Government keep holding to the legacy of Hasina or move forward, taking into consideration the new reality? Has the time come for India to reset its ties with Bangladesh?

To be fair to the Bangladeshi Army, the forces remained neutral and firm after Hasina was ousted. They have also been able to ensure more or less a fair election. Once the popular vote has been reflected in the mandate, does it not warrant India to reset its ties with the new government?

India does have a trade surplus with Bangladesh and, rhetoric besides, our states in the Northeast can use the Bangladesh ports more effectively. The Indian Army has had close ties with the Bangladeshi Army and that equation needs to be retained. The NDC course in Bangladesh has been attended by many of our top Generals and many Bangladeshi Generals have been trained/educated in India.

Under the Yunus regime, things moved south really fast and it looked like a major "setback" or outright stalemate.

Biggest issues? Border killings kept happening, water-sharing – like Teesta – stayed stuck, and trade talks froze while Bangladesh cozied up to Pakistan and China instead. Yunus even called India's Northeast "landlocked," which did not help. A diplomatic chill set in – no real progress, just bars and restrictions. And then communal violence in Bangladesh made matters worse.

Now, with BNP sweeping the polls, a reset is good for both countries. Obviously, India cannot be handing over Hasina but, at the same time, our bilateral relations with Bangladesh need to come out of her shadow.

### Coordination and Cooperation

- Anti-terrorism: Bangladesh was created on the premise of hope, where Pakistan was to be totally shunted out. However, Bangladesh has hobnobbed with ISI in the last six months, raising fears of a rise in terrorism from their soil. ULFA used Bangladeshi soil for attacks back in the day, before Hasina came to power.

However, some days back, BNP straight-up promised "zero tolerance" for terrorism – no shelter, no support to anyone using the country against neighbours. Tarique Rahman's adviser



**BIGGEST ISSUES? BORDER KILLINGS KEPT HAPPENING, WATER-SHARING – LIKE TEESTA – STAYED STUCK, AND TRADE TALKS FROZE WHILE BANGLADESH COZIED UP TO PAKISTAN AND CHINA INSTEAD**

even said out loud they want stronger counter-terror sharing with India, not isolation. Like, "share evidence, build cooperation."

- Border: Bangladesh has been accusing India of allowing in murderers and India has been complaining about smuggling. Mutual patrols, tech like drones for monitoring, are the way forward.

- Water: Teesta's deal, maybe interim sharing till a treaty, with joint monitoring, is a confidence-building measure.

- Trade: Rather than political mudslinging, both countries need to speed up customs, make more ports, and build rail links. We need to cut red tape and add digital clearance.

- Security: India does not want anti-India groups operating from Bangladeshi soil. Quiet intelligence swaps may help.

Military-to-military ties need to be worked upon. Bangladesh needs to be clearly told that both Pakistan and China are a red flag and they need to stay clear of their military influence.

- People-to-People: Student exchanges, tourism, and cultural fests need to pick up to ensure a reset. Movies and literature bind the two nations too.

- Ensuring Safety of Minorities: Bangladesh

has seen the rise of Jamaat, which has roots in radicalism. Attacks on minorities and temples create a vibe of disharmony between the two nations. Bangladesh would have to be more proactive against such attacks.

### The Pioneer SINCE 1865

- Illegal migration: One of the sour points India has been concerned about. This kind of illegal migration needs to stop immediately and Bangladeshi border outposts should develop mechanisms to do that.

- Bottom Line: Tarique Rahman's team is leaning into "harmony first." From what they are saying – zero tolerance for attacks, quick probes into any flare-ups, and this idea of a multi-faith Citizen Investigation Commission – this is a welcome change from what Yunus offered.

India wants security and no Pakistan drift. Bangladesh needs steady trade. A rail link between Akhaura-Agartala could help. China poking in does not help the India-Bangladesh relationship.

Ties may not become a "golden era" again overnight, but they must head towards a functional, mutually useful relationship. India will push democracy, Dhaka will balance.

The writer is a defence analyst and writes extensively on geopolitics and strategic affairs

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## PICTALK



A kingfisher holds a fish while perched on a tree branch.

PHOTO: PTI



APS MALHOTRA

### 2ND OPINION THE PIONEER

During my corporate career spanning nearly four decades, I have handled a wide array of responsibilities, traversed myriad business environments, worked with leaders of different management styles, and encountered a steady stream of professional and personal challenges. On this long journey, there have been moments of accomplishment and recognition, as well as phases that tested my patience and resilience to the hilt. Looking back now, one posting remains vividly etched in my memory - not because of its duration, but because of the clarity it eventually offered.

During that phase, I reported to a manager who very often faltered on both depth and finesse, whose communication was, on several occasions, unclear and repetitive, whose instructions hovered precariously close to the red

lines of consistency, and whose expectations, more often than not, were difficult to understand. He liked to lay excessive emphasis on monitoring - where one went, how long one stayed, and what one did - especially during outstation assignments. While this approach may have stemmed from a belief in discipline and diligence, for me it created an atmosphere of unease that began to haunt me and eat into my morale, till, slowly but perceptibly, my productivity went into a tailspin. Within me, stress accumulated to dangerous levels, and the workplace, once a source of engagement and purpose, became increasingly demanding. I found myself withdrawing into a shell, focusing more on self-preservation rather than on productivity or gainful contribution. Eventually, recognising the need to pause and regain equilibrium, I went on a sabbatical and stepped back. That period of distance revealed an important truth to me: that professional environments and personal well-being are closely intertwined with each other, and that prolonged emotional strain rarely remains confined to the mind, but also manifests itself in the form of psychosomatic patterns - as happened with me; sadly, some of these bother me even today.

I might have continued to drift on this tumultuous course, had a timely human intervention - in the form of a mentor from an earlier stage of my career - not come to my rescue. Over a period, he discerned a marked shift in my

demeanour, upon which, with empathy, experience, and an intuitive understanding, he reached out to me. He listened without judgement, understood my predicament, and offered support with quiet decisiveness. There was no melodrama, no demonstration of rendering a favour, but only reassurance and direction at a moment when both were needed.

Returning to work under his guidance felt steady and reassuring, and gradually, my confidence was restored. With his encouragement and trust in my capabilities, my performance stabilised, and the remainder of that posting passed smoothly. What could easily have become a prolonged period of disengagement turned into years of consistent contribution and renewed self-belief.

Now, when I reminisce, I realise that the experience reinforced a simple yet powerful lesson for me - that while leadership has the capacity to unsettle and discourage, it also carries within it the power to restore, strengthen, and inspire. The difference lies not in authority, but in compassion and awareness. And for the mentor who helped me regain balance at a crucial juncture, I remain deeply indebted. His intervention shaped my understanding of what humane and effective leadership truly means.

The writer is a corporate professional and an astute observer of everyday life

## Moving through the shadows: A corporate lesson

### The Pioneer SINCE 1865

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### EPSTEIN REVELATIONS EXPOSE GLOBAL NETWORK OF EXPLOITATION

Apropos, "Indian girl was victim of Epstein, files reveal," Feb 16. The latest revelations from the Epstein files have once again exposed the terrifying global reach of a criminal network built around disgraced financier Jeffrey Epstein.

They show how victims and offenders were scattered across continents, protected by money, silence and influence.

The most disturbing detail for Indians is the reported presence of an Indian girl among the victims, reminding us that exploitation does not respect borders, class or nationality.

These disclosures underline how trafficking and abuse operate through international travel, opaque charities, private jets and unregulated social circles that evade scrutiny for years.

They also reveal how institutions failed repeatedly, allowing warning signs to be ignored while survivors were intimidated into silence.

For India, the shock should not fade into momentary outrage. It must strengthen cross-border cooperation, survivor protection mechanisms and digital evidence sharing with global law enforcement agencies. Equally important is building trauma-informed legal processes that prioritise victims over public spectacle.

The horror of the Epstein files lies not only in the scale of abuse, but in the ease with which powerful offenders escaped accountability. Justice must move beyond privilege.

N SADHASIVA REDDY | BANGALURU

### India should lead the AI future

The world's largest Artificial Intelligence Impact Summit is being held in Delhi, which will be attended by 2.5 lakh visitors.

The question is not about whether India can lead the AI revolution but whether business leaders and the government are able to transform our artificial intelligence ambitions and demographic dividend into economic strength.

More than 50 per cent of employees with access to AI use it daily. With India's young workforce being more adaptable and fast learners, there is an immense opportunity waiting to be unlocked.

Corporates will have to reduce the gap between AI literacy and AI fluency by investing in AI integration training.

As far as the potential of AI is concerned, we have not even scratched the surface and use it only at a basic level. It is a matter of concern that while the majority of organisations realise that most jobs will be automated in the near future, they have not redesigned roles around AI capabilities.

All three critical stakeholders – government, Indian Inc., and educational institutions – will have to invest in upskilling to be ready for the creation of newer roles.

BAL GOVIND | NOIDA

### Roads need stricter safety enforcement

"Speed thrills, but kills" is one of the common plaques seen on highways to discourage drivers from overspeeding. It is not as if experienced and expert drivers go overboard at the wheel. Young, inexperienced and, more often than not, immature and licence-less boys and girls run amok on roads.

In India, the legal age for driving light motor vehicles (LMV) – vehicles with gear – is 18 years. Yet, it is extremely common to spot those below 18 years driving as fast as they can on busy roads and highways, posing serious risks to fellow travellers.

A spate of major accidents in cities is attributed to rash and negligent driving by underage drivers. Addition to reckless driving, unhindered access to vehicles, and poor parental guidance and supervision are responsible for the surge in minors taking to the wheel.

Parents and police cannot play the blame game to suit their own ends. Both need to pull up their socks and take stock of the situation before it spirals out of control. Ensuring stricter monitoring at home and on roads is essential to prevent further tragedies. Stronger vigilance at home and on roads is the need of the hour. Preventing underage driving today can save countless lives tomorrow.

GANPATHI BHAT | AKOLA

### Bangladesh must stabilise democracy now

The swearing-in ceremony of the new BNP Government led by Tarique Rehman has been scheduled for Tuesday, February 17. This follows a long struggle after Sheikh Hasina had to step down, followed by the Gen Z agitation against her Government. The interim Government's Chief Adviser, Yunus, selected by the students' leadership, could not manage and miserably failed, rather than creating unrest in the nation.

Now, the newly elected Government is to take oath with a remarkable landslide victory. However, the new Government led by Tarique Rehman has challenges before it, which seem well realised by him.

The Bangladesh First Policy appears to emphasise the welfare of the people of Bangladesh, coupled with regional cooperation by maintaining balanced and stable relationships with India, China, and Pakistan. India has already extended cooperation by deciding to send Om Birla to represent India.

The priority at this juncture is to stabilise and strengthen democratic institutions and address the sluggish economy. Correcting economic instability and restoring peace remain essential for Bangladesh's future.

SUNIL OKHADE | INDORE

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



## Artificial Intelligence is transforming the legal profession

The use of AI in law is thus in the nature of an evolution, rather than a revolution. But make no mistake — AI is already transforming virtually every business and activity that lawyers deal with, some more quickly and dramatically than others, and the legal profession will not be spared from this disruptive change

**FIRST**  
**Column**



**ANOOP BOSE**

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has wormed its way into every conceivable sphere of human existence, and the law is no exception. The legal profession, historically tradition-bound and labour-intensive, is on the cusp of an unimaginable metamorphosis in which AI has the potential to affect the manner in which the legal world would function in the foreseeable future. Very much like email changed the way we do business, AI would become omnipresent — an indispensable tool for lawyers.

The charismatic American President John Fitzgerald “Jack” Kennedy once observed, “Change is the law of life. And those who look only to the past or present are certain to miss the future.” The legal sector was one of the first to adopt AI, with some leading law firms using AI platforms in some form or another since 2005. But the recent alarming headlines and predictions of AI replacing lawyers have no doubt created a feeling of discomfort in the minds of many lawyers, invariably anxious about the future of their profession.

As with many new technologies, there is a cycle of hype at the outset that creates magnified expectations, even though the long-term implications of that technology may be profound and all-embracing. Right now, AI in the legal profession is more of an unfolding opportunity and not a real threat, with pioneering adopters providing more efficient and cost-effective legal services to an expanding portfolio of existing and potential clients.

The use of AI in law is thus in the nature of an evolution rather than a revolution. But make no mistake — AI is already transforming virtually every business and activity that lawyers deal with, some more quickly and dramatically than others, and the legal profession will not be spared from this disruptive change.

The incorporation of AI into a law firm’s systems and operations is a gradual learning process, so early adopters would have a distinct advantage over firms that lag behind in adopting the technology.

As a cover story published in the ABA



**MANY LAW FIRMS ARE DEVELOPING LEGAL BOTS TO ASSIST CURRENT OR PROSPECTIVE CLIENTS IN DEALING WITH A WHOLE HOST OF LEGAL ISSUES BASED ON THEIR OWN CIRCUMSTANCES AND FACTS**

The writer is an internationally reputed senior lawyer practising in the Supreme Court of India and various High Courts and Tribunals in India

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The Pioneer

Journal Magazine, the flagship publication of the American Bar Association, explained, “Artificial intelligence is changing the way lawyers think, the way they do business and the way they interact with clients. Artificial intelligence is more than legal technology. It is the next great hope that will revolutionise the legal profession.”

At this time and for the steadily emerging future, the current AI capabilities only permit computers to approach, achieve, or exceed certain but not all human cognitive functions. While some researchers are feverishly working on developing computers that can match or even overtake the human mind, sometimes referred to as “general intelligence” or “superintelligence”, such an attainment is virtually decades away.

That is why important legal skills based on human judgement, inference, common sense, interpersonal skills and experience would remain beneficial for the lifetime of any lawyer like myself practising today.

While AI has several features for its many different applications, two are

presently most meaningful for legal applications.

Firstly, machine learning constitutes the capability of computers to teach themselves and learn from experience. This means that AI can do more than blindly adhere to what it has been programmed to do but can learn from experience and data to constantly improve its enormous positive capabilities.

Dave Waters, one of the foremost international authorities on AI, observed, “A baby learns to crawl, walk and then run. We are in the crawling stage when it comes to applying machine learning.”

Secondly, AI is increasingly being applied to all major sectors of the economy and society. Many of these applications would create new legal issues for lawyers, such as the legality of lethal autonomous weapons, the liability issues of autonomous cars, financial bots that may run counter to antitrust laws, and the vulnerability of medical robots. But in addition to changing the subject matters that lawyers work on, it

would also transform the way lawyers practise their profession. Instead of wading through piles of papers, lawyers can now deal with terabytes of data and hundreds of thousands of documents.

E-discovery, legal research and document review are getting more sophisticated due to the abundance of data. Many technology companies and law firms are partnering to create programmes that can assist with specific practice areas, including due diligence, bankruptcy, litigation research and preparation, real estate, and other areas. Many law firms are developing legal bots to assist current or prospective clients in dealing with a whole host of legal issues based on their own circumstances and facts. Other groups are developing pro bono legal bots to assist people who may not otherwise have access to the legal system.

Legal decision-making AI is enabling judicial decision-making in a number of ways. A number of online dispute resolution tools are being developed to

completely circumnavigate the judicial process.

Microsoft and the US Legal Services Corporation have joined hands to provide machine learning legal portals to provide free legal advice on civil law matters to people who cannot afford to hire lawyers.

These initial applications of AI to the legal profession mark the early beginnings of what would ultimately turn out to be a radical technology-based disruption to the practice of law.

According to the celebrated American journalist and author Joanna Goodman in her well-known treatise on “Robots in Law: How Artificial Intelligence Is Transforming Legal Services” — “AI represents both the biggest opportunity and potentially the greatest threat to the legal profession since its formation.”

Today, AI represents an opportunity for a law firm or a lawyer to be a leader in efficiency, cost-effectiveness, and productivity, but soon the incorporation of AI into practice would be a matter of keeping up rather than being a leader.

Unfortunately, AI can also negatively impact the legal profession. For instance, AI’s ability to create deepfake technology can spread harmful misinformation and disinformation. Additionally, because generative AI relies heavily on massive data sets, there are also incalculable risks of critical private data ending up in the wrong hands. This is indeed an unhealthy drift of events that must be faced and countered with all the strength at the command of the legal profession!

In conclusion, one thing is certain — there would be winners and losers among lawyers who do or do not absorb AI, respectively.

As one senior lawyer, David Halliwell, attached to the London-based law firm Pinsent Masons LLP, remarked, “Unless private practice lawyers start to engage with new technology, they are not going to be relevant even to their clients.”

The AI train is leaving the station — it is high time to jump aboard.

But here I am emboldened to sound a note of caution by turning to the foreboding words of the renowned American AI researcher, blogger, and exponent of human rationality, Eliezer Shlomo Yudkowsky, “By far the greatest danger of Artificial Intelligence is that people conclude too early that they understand it.”

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## Shouting over Democracy: The death of debates in Indian Parliament



**VK BAHUGUNA**

The Indian Parliament, once heralded as the “temple of democracy,” has increasingly begun to resemble a gladiatorial arena (the term is used metaphorically now for any competitive public space, like a political arena or court battle) where reason goes to die and shouting matches are the only way to combat. The Indian Constitution provides a framework for the smooth functioning of Parliament, specifically empowering presiding officers to deal with unruly disruptions.

While the Constitution lays the foundation for this, the very idea of democracy and freedom of speech is being violated by uproar in Parliament. The recent spectacle of “frivolous disputes” in Parliament has reached the lowest ebb of parliamentary conduct. When the “temple of democracy” becomes a place of “competitive noise,” ordinary citizens lose more than just tax money; they lose faith in the institution itself.

The current disruptions are not a sign of a strong opposition or a strong government; they are a sign of a broken system. The opposition blocks the House because they believe the floor is a platform for protest, not debate. The government passes important legislation in the “din,” ignoring the scrutiny of standing committees. This is not governance; it is shirking one’s duty. Our lawmakers need to ponder over this, especially the Speaker of the Lok Sabha and the Chairman of the Rajya Sabha, and need to take steps to maintain the confidence of the people in Parliament.

There are key constitutional and procedural rules to deal with unruly disruptions in Parliament. Article 118 empowers each House of Parliament to make rules to regulate its business and conduct, thereby maintaining internal discipline. Article 105 deals with the powers, privileges, and immunities of Parliament and its members. It allows the House to punish members for breach or contempt of privileges, including misconduct such as vandalism or violent behaviour, for which they cannot claim immunity.

Article 122 states that the validity of any proceedings in Parliament cannot be questioned in any court on the basis of any alleged defect in procedure, thereby ensuring internal autonomy. If this is the condition, why are our pre-



siding officers allowing such mobocracy in the hallowed building meant for debate and law-making?

Parliament was always meant to engage with and undertake legislative and deliberative business, representing the people of India. In *Sita Soren v. Union of India* (2024), a seven-judge Supreme Court bench ruled that lawmakers (MPs/MLAs) do not enjoy immunity from prosecution for bribery to vote or speak in Parliament or Assemblies, overturning the 1998 *PV Narasimha Rao* verdict. The court clarified that acts of vandalism and violence (disruptions) are not protected by parliamentary privilege, asserting that they violate constitutional, not legislative, norms.

The Supreme Court thus held that legislators who indulge in vandalism and general mayhem cannot claim parliamentary privilege and immunity from criminal prosecution, and that parliamentary privileges and immunities are not “gateways” for legislators to claim exceptions from the law of the land, especially criminal law. Vandalism on the Assembly floor could not be equated with the right to protest by opposition legislators.

Legislators in both the ruling dispensation and the opposition should act within the parameters of the public trust imposed on them to do their duty. They had taken office swearing true allegiance to the Constitution.

They had to uphold the sovereignty and integrity of India and perform the duty imposed on them by the people who elected them. It was definitely not for them to “betray the trust of the people” who elected them to make laws by engaging in wanton destruction of public trust in the Assembly and then claim privilege and immunity from the very process of law. When elected representatives enter the Well, tear papers, and physically obstruct their peers, they are not acting as legislators; they are acting as a mob.

Now, therefore, the time has come, as strong public opinion is building up, for strict disciplinary action by presiding officers—namely the

Speaker of the Lok Sabha and the Chairman of the Rajya Sabha — as well as presiding officers of state assemblies, to exercise the powers vested in them to deal with misconduct under the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business under Rules 373 and 374 in the Lok Sabha and Rules 255 and 256 in the Rajya Sabha. Further, under Rule 374A in the Lok Sabha, the Speaker can automatically suspend a member for a specified period, without any motion, for actions such as entering the Well or shouting slogans. However, this provision is rarely invoked, but people want it as a regular option as they are fed up with such tactics in the name of democracy. For excessive disruptions and unruly behaviour, Parliament can expel members, but this option is seldom exercised.

There is an urgent need to impose financial disincentives and implement a “no work, no pay” rule. If the House is adjourned due to deliberate disruption, the per diem allowance of every member present in the Well should be forfeited. Further, no bill should be passed in an “uproar.” If a bill cannot be debated on the Floor for at least four hours, it must be referred to a Standing Committee for at least 30 days. If a member quotes from an unverified or “disputed” external text, the Speaker’s office should have the authority to remove it from the permanent record unless the member officially produces the document within one hour.

Mahatma Gandhi once warned that if public opinion is not mature, democracy can easily convert into a mobocracy.

In a mobocracy, the crowd has no “mind or premeditation”; it acts in frenzy. This frenzy needs to be firmly curtailed with an iron hand as people are losing faith fast. Let us hope good sense prevails and Indian democracy thrives well.

The writer is former Director-General ICFRE in the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change

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## Climate-literate youth to lead India’s sustainable future



**GAUTAM MOHANKA**

India stands at a critical juncture in its development journey and has to strike a balance between its growth and sustainability commitments. At the forefront of this change is the huge potential that Indian society has in store. With the largest number of youth in the world, it remains to be seen to what extent the Indian government and various stakeholders are able to empower its next generation to take advantage of climate change.

Young people in India are now also taking centre stage in climate change. Whether in international dialogues on climate change or in local movements on environmental resilience, young people are gradually influencing discussions on sustainability and climate change.

There are also reports and initiatives by bodies such as UNICEF on children’s and young people’s contributions towards achieving India’s Sustainable Development Goals and Nationally Determined Contributions on climate change. By involving young people in these activities early in life, a sense of awareness of environmental change, together with a willingness to take action, is being developed.

**Youth at the forefront of India’s green transition**

The significance of youth in the low-carbon transition in India cannot be emphasised enough. Young people are at the forefront of the net-zero transition, leading the cause for sustainable practices in various fields, including renewable energy, waste, agriculture, and climate change. For youth to take up this challenge, there is a need for them to have critical awareness in relation to training. Education, professional training, and non-formal learning are key in building awareness among young people of the required low-carbon skills.

The development of green skills among youth has increasingly been seen as a crucial element both for the growth of the green economy and the development of the economy as a whole. As has been shown in recent debates concerning the education and employment of Indian youth, young people offer the green economy innovation, digital know-how, and the future vision that will drive the sector. The youth’s innovative spirit has led to the development of green businesses and start-ups that have launched revolutionary concepts into the green sector, ranging from clean energy tech-



nologies to the circular economy approach.

Building green skills for a sustainable future. The Indian government is now recognising the need for investment in green skills. Green Skill Development Programmes, for instance, offer training opportunities to young people in areas of importance related to environmental protection, renewable energy, forestry, wildlife conservation, and climate change. In tandem with these, educational syllabi are being increasingly updated to give sufficient importance to training in environmental education, ensuring that learning about climate change is imparted from a young age. This is needed as India is rapidly progressing into a green economy.

Despite this progress, there are still some gaps that need to be filled. There clearly exists a need to align skilling programmes and academic programmes to better equip students in terms of emerging demands in the green economy. Youth educated on climate change models need industry-relevant skills and applied knowledge that could be converted

into jobs and entrepreneurship opportunities. Presently, about 20 per cent of India’s labour force is engaged in green jobs, and this number is forecast to double by 2030. A major opportunity to capitalise on India’s demographic dividend would arise if the younger population is equipped to meet this challenge. The range of green skills required would be broad and would include skills in renewable energy, sustainable agriculture, water resource management, adapting to climate change, and managing waste.

In the years ahead, climate-conscious youth are poised to be the driving force behind sustainable development in India. With appropriate education and skill sets in place, they are destined to take India towards a future that is strong and sound from both economic and ecological perspectives.

**The Pioneer**  
**SINCE 1865**

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Now that India has inked two mega trade deals (call them father, mother, or uncle) with the US and European Union, amid claims of paybacks and profits, and counters of controversies and criticism, it is time to focus on China, and woo Chinese investments. During the trade disruption with Uncle Sam, the elephant decided to shake hands, albeit gingerly, with the dragon. Now, according to media reports, it is time to take a few more concrete steps forward. The much-debated Press Note 3, which was introduced in April 2020 during the pandemic period, and made official approval mandatory for investments from nations that share a land border with India, was aimed to restrict, even stall and ban, the inflow of Chinese money. According to some officials, it is time to somewhat dilute the provisions of Press Note 3. India will not do away with it. It will open the valve to allow small amounts.

One of the mechanisms is to introduce a de-minimis limit (lower thresholds or exemptions) to allow automatic approvals (and not mandatory ones) for small investments. According to a media report, an official said, "We are examining whether there could be any openings to make it faster and easier to get a yes or no on (China's) investments into India. We are examining whether we could have any de-minimis to permit larger funds that have some small element which has come to our attention." While this may exempt low-value and low-stake inflows from the stringent requirements, Press Note 3 will remain in place to act as a strong guardrail against critical, strategic, or sensitive investments. One is not sure how this will work in practice. But the fact remains that there are growing demands to ease the regulations from specific sections within the local business community.

Recently, the electronics sector argued that Indian firms need the freedom and flexibility to form joint ventures with the Chinese. In such cases, the foreign investment can be capped at 26 per cent of the equity, which will make the partners only minority shareholders. For the interested Chinese firms, the stake will provide them with enough powers to have a say in crucial decisions, as per the Companies Act. In this sector, despite claims of huge local manufacturing potential, and grand investment plans, the upstream is controlled by China. It is one of the major suppliers for components, tooling equipment, and process engineering. Indeed, most of the critical components for the much-touted 'Made-in-India' Apple iPhones are imported from China. Indian industry desperately desires Chinese capital and knowhow, even as it realises the need to "ring-fence strategic control" in ventures. Hence, the focus on "measured easing," and not "wholesale liberalisation."

Although Press Note 3 has not been tinkered with, some Indian firms possibly feel that this will happen soon, with when and not in mind. They have, as per media reports, finalised operational, commercial, even financial, agreements, and await formal approvals. This is especially so in cases where minority stakes by the foreigners are involved, and where the inflows are small and incremental. In many cases, the existing ventures, where Chinese investments were cleared, need follow-on or incremental capital, which is stuck in the elaborate, fearful, and apprehensive bureaucratic red tape. The de-minimis rule may help remove the obstacles and bottlenecks for small, low-risk investments, and keep the national security concerns intact. However, some experts argue that a lot of water has flowed under the India-China security bridge since 2020. Given the new geopolitical realities, where neither New Delhi nor Beijing can be aggressive adversaries, despite the trade deals with the US, Press Note 3 has lost its relevance.

In the recent past, several economists have voiced opposition against it. One of them argued that inflow of Chinese capital is more useful and beneficial compared to tariff barriers on Chinese goods. In any case, despite the calls for self-reliance and ban on Chinese goods, actual bans on Chinese apps, and higher duties in some segments, imports from China have grown substantially. The trade surplus rose with China having a huge edge. Some sectors like pharma and electronics, and possibly power, are completely or largely dependent on imports. Chinese capital, contend other experts, can boost Indian manufacturing which, over the years, can reduce imports. As the economist quoted earlier explained, tariffs offer protection in the short-term, and capital inflows create assets for the long term. What India needs is to build local capacities, and not shift sources of imports, say, from China to other nations. In the past, some think tanks argued that a substantial portion of Chinese imports can be sourced from friendly nations.

At the end of day, the trick is to master the strategic needs of the global supply chains and logistics. India needs to ingrain and embed itself in them, and fast. With changes in the global order, and in the post-pandemic period, the present offers immense opportunities. Whatever one may say, the truth is that across sectors such as electronics, electric vehicles, and renewables, "Chinese firms remain dominant players in intermediate goods and production technologies." They are an integral part of the supply chains. Wooing the Chinese can help India.



## Customers, agents blow up cover

Information gaps, low interest among insurance buyers and sellers

Recently, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) issued detailed draft guidelines on mis-selling financial products. The focus was largely on insurance products that were bundled with loans, and sold forcibly, with manipulations and nudges through advertisements, and messaging. From the draft, it seems that the banks and their staff, as sellers, and agents, as their representatives, were the main culprits. However, a recent survey reveals that buyers are as much responsible as the agents (sellers) for the myths and fallacies around insurance. There were knowledge gaps, misunderstanding, and a surprising lack of intent to learn and know on both sides of the table.

Although the survey's sample size is quite low, and includes 300 respondents for qualitative discussions, and 450 for a quantitative survey across 20+ cities, the insights seem intuitive. From the buyer's perspective, the conclusions are depressing. "Buyers miss how premiums, benefits, and risks evolve, which skews expectations, and often leads to disappointment or disputes later.... Many customers do not ask questions: They accept the agent's view, and do not compare alternatives. This leads to incomplete understanding, and a higher chance of disappointment later," states the survey. Let us begin with the time spent before making the purchase decision.

Almost two-thirds of the respondents receive less than an hour of explanation from the agents, which is "too little for multi-years contracts, resulting in incomplete product understanding." Of this percentage, nearly half, or more than 30 per cent of the respondents, get less than 30 minutes of the agent's time. While one can construe this to be the fault of the agents, which it is, the insight brings to light the laziness and complacency on the part of the buyers, who do not wish to spend time to understand the product, and rely too much on the agents.

Buyers' bad destiny with insurance is visible

from the following. A large chunk of the potential or actual policyholders does not know the key differences between the available products. For example, half of the respondents did not understand the variations between ULIPs and endowment policies. This is more surprising because most owned either of the two policies. "They bought insurance purely on the agent's pitch... trusting the presentation rather than the product. The decision was guided by how the numbers (projected returns, bonuses, etc.) were shown... not by what they were actually signing up for," states the survey.

Similarly, the policyholders did not know what total returns, and inflation-adjusted ones mean. This is the difference between nominal gain, the gross value, and real one, or what is left after inflation adjustment. As the survey explains, "An eight per cent nominal return with six per cent inflation translates to a two per cent real return." It adds ominously, "Since the returns shown are typically nominal returns, outcomes are likely to be overestimated." In some cases, real returns may be negative. In other words, the purchasing power of ₹1,00,00,000 received after 15 years is just over ₹40,00,000, or less than half of the amount.

Obviously, as the policy matures, or even during the time it is in operation, buyers tend to feel dismal, frustrated, angry, desperate, and under confident when they realise the bitter truths, and separate the myths from the realities. As the survey shows, 47 per cent later report that the returns were lower than expectations (or original estimations), and almost 40 per cent feel that they were "misled" or "under-informed." Logically, one can blame the sellers. But in the modern marketplace, the overriding mantra, despite the powers of, and need for, stringent regulations and penalties for mis-selling, is still

'Buyers Beware.' It is not surprising that because of such experiences, the trust in agents is low and minimal. Yet, it is ironic that policyholders still depend overwhelmingly on the agents, as mentioned earlier.

Coming back to the survey, less than 15 per cent of the respondents gave the agents the highest ranking of 5. Nearly 50 per cent of the former rated the latter at either 2 or 3. "Overall, trust in agents remains moderate, suggesting that while many customers are not outright distrustful, few demonstrate strong confidence," which reinforces the need for better communication and deeper engagement between the two sides.

Let us peek into the lives and mindset of the insurance agents. To begin with, insurance is a part-time, or second job, for them. Nearly two-thirds of the agents admit that it is a "secondary occupation." According to the survey, "Lack of a fixed timeline, and variability in the level of income are often cited as some of the key reasons for having more than one occupation." Yet, more than 60 per cent of the agents seem satisfied with the 'side' or 'main' income, which implies that the existing commission model may be both "rewarding and sustainable."

Agents, as one knows intuitively, are under pressure from the insurers, especially the large firms. One-third of the agents in the survey admit that "they have had to focus more on their (corporate) targets than on their clients' needs." Almost half of them, therefore, are compelled to "sell specific products (which may be high-premium and, hence, high-commission insurance products) to meet contest targets, either occasionally or always." (Contest refers to "short-term incentive schemes or sales competitions run by the insurers" to achieve internal targets.)

Obviously, in many cases, to sell the more expensive products, which meet the targets and earn higher commissions, the agents need to induce the buyers. Almost 40 per cent of the agents acknowledge that they "pass back part of their insurance commission" to the buyers. This is dangerous as it points to the existence of "rebate-linked inducements... despite regulations against it." Both the agents and buyers cross the legal boundaries. In most cases, the customers are blissfully unaware of the transgression, and confidently and categorically demand that the agents pass on a part of the commissions.

A report by the insurance regulator shows how these two intersecting, yet divergent and stand-alone, trends related to policyholders and policy-sellers impacts the sector. The persistency ratio is as high as 70 per cent in the thirteenth month, or one year after a policy is purchased. But it threateningly drops down to less than 50 per cent in the sixty-first month, or after five years. Since the persistency ratio measures how many policyholders continue paying the premiums, both the drops, and especially the one after five years, signals a huge gap that forces many buyers to give up on the existing policies.

### OUR TAKE



### A Contrarian Investor

## RERA rears its ugly hydra-head

Do real estate regulators help builders, take buyers for a ride?

A few days ago, the Supreme Court made a damning observation against the Real Estate Regulatory Authorities (RERAs), which are set up at the state-level due to the so-called "landmark Indian law" to regulate the sector. The apex court stated that the state-level RERAs, which need to register commercial and residential projects over 500 sq m, and eight apartments or more, respectively, and monitor the plans and progress of the projects, were failures. Instead of helping the homebuyers to get their homes in time, as per plan, and within the original prices, the RERAs benefitted the powerful builders.

Now, a homebuyers' body alleges that RERA authorities act against the interests of the innocent, and often powerless buyers. Over three-fourths of the state agencies do not publish annual reports, or do not keep the information updated, which leads to a huge data gap on how the sector is performing, whether builders are delivering on quality, prices, and schedules. Finally, thanks to the lack of data, experts, homebuyers, and policy-makers are unable to gauge whether the new law has improved the sector, or whether it continues to be plagued by the same problems. It may be "seminal" or "landmark" only on paper.

"Unless we have credible data proving that after RERA the sector has improved in terms of delivery, fairness, and keeping its promises, we are merely firing in the air. Innocent homebuyers will continue to be taken for a ride, this time aided by RERA, which has become a mere badge of honour for builders to sell projects without any consequent responsibility to honour the provisions of the Act," says Abhay Upadhyay, the president of the homebuyers' body that made the charges. "If we... monitor... projects... under RERA without tracking actual completion, we are setting ourselves up for the same disaster."

Reports from some of the states indicate that the builder lobbies have gained because of RERA law, or possibly despite it. It implies that either the Act is not delivering what it promises, or it is irrelevant when it comes to ground-level and foundational realities. In Uttarakhand, for example, experts and observers say that there is rampant construction of new resorts, expansion of existing ones, and new apartment blocks. Most of this is either illegal or semi-legal, and the state-level RERA seems to be on the side of the builders, and against buyers, who may be saddled with non-registered or fraudulent homes.

Like in the past, before RERA law came into being after a dismal state of real estate, a new Government committee may be set up 5-10



years from now to gauge what is wrong with the policies, and implementation. It may conclude that there is a "fresh set of stalled projects, while homebuyers continue to suffer. What matters is not how many projects are registered, but how many are... completed on time with promised facilities and amenities." It is not important how life appears to be good on paper. What is crucial is the ground reality for the buyers.

As the bankruptcy cases under the insolvency law proves, builders, including the reputed ones, rampantly act against the interests of the buyers. Delays, low quality, and consistent and random hikes in prices impact the customers. Only some changes in the insolvency laws now empower the homebuyers to mediate and participate in the resolution plans to kick start the stalled projects. Yet, despite the new plans submitted by new owners, there is no guarantee of

timely deliveries as per the new reworked construction schedules. Buyers are constantly on the back foot, seem to be in a comatose, and unable to act.

Recent figures hint at another looming failure in the sector. The Amitabh Kant Committee Report documented a "staggering backlog of legacy stalled projects: Approximately 4.12 lakh stressed dwelling units nationwide, with 2.4 lakh units concentrated in (Delhi) NCR alone, and an overall project value of Rs 4.08 lakh crore." Thus, things seem to be sliding to the bad old days, when massive failures erupted despite a booming sector in the pre-RERA period. If the state real estate regulators do monitor completion, and ensure it, "we are setting up for the same (past) disaster," states the homebuyers' body.

As a beginner, it points to the RERAs' annual reports, which are vital to "assess

system credibility, but are equally necessary for both the state and central Governments to frame policies, design incentive schemes, and develop tax policy frameworks." The law mandates that the official annual reports need to be published by each state authority, which provides a "comprehensive overview of the authority's functioning." The reports are expected to reveal data about registrations, progress, and completion of the registered projects, apart from complaints and actions against defaulting builders. The idea is to enhance transparency and accountability in the more-opaque and semi-informal sector.

Yet, seven large states such as Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Himachal Pradesh, and West Bengal never published a single annual report. Nine other states such as Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, and Telangana discontinued the publications. States need to use specific clauses of the RERA law to take actions against the regulators. In fact, the homebuyers body urges the introduction of a new section in the Act to empower the central Government to "remove any authority or its members if... directions are not obeyed." This is urgent because, as mentioned earlier, three-fourths of the authorities do not have proper data.

However, these seem puny or small in comparison with the charges hurled by the Supreme Court. Recently, according to a media report, Chief Justice Surya Kant said that "RERA has accomplished nothing concrete beyond providing benefits to defaulting builders." He added that the "time has come to shut down RERA." Other reports indicate that the chief justice was categorical that it would not mind if this was done, as the law has failed to deliver the goods. This is not the first time that real estate law has come under the radar of the court.

In September 2024, a two-judge bench that included Justice Surya Kant said that RERA was a "haven" for retired civil servants. "We do not want to talk about RERA. It has become a rehabilitation centre for former bureaucrats who have sabotaged the entire scheme of law." A year later, another two-judge bench expressed concerns over RERAs, and asked the states to ensure infrastructure, resources, and expertise. It wanted a legal expert or consumer advocate to be included in each RERA. It wanted the regulator to do project-related due diligence.

## Efforts on to operationalise India, UK FTA in April

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
New Delhi

India and the UK are making a "genuine" effort to see if the bilateral free trade agreement can be operationalised in April this year, Commerce Secretary Rajesh Agrawal said on Monday.

India and the UK, on July 24, 2025, signed the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) under which 99 per cent of Indian exports will enter the British market at zero duty, while tariffs on British products such as cars and whisky will be reduced in India.

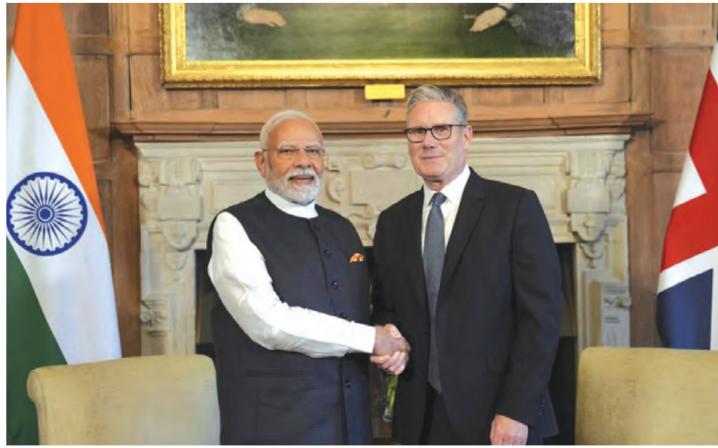
The pact needs approval from the UK parliament before it is implemented.

In India, the Union Cabinet approves such agreements. After it gets approved by the

British parliament, it will be implemented on a mutually agreed date.

"I think both sides are working to operationalise it as fast as possible. As some stories have come in the news that it may get operationalised in April, we are making an effort towards that. But I don't know whether that is the date or it will happen beyond that. But we are trying. Our genuine effort on both sides is to see if we can meet the April deadline," Agrawal told reporters here.

**INDIA-MERCOSUR TRADE PACT:** Agrawal said that there is a joint trade committee under the existing preferential trade agreement (PTA) and the committee meetings are happening. "Under that, we are trying



to finalise the scope of an expanded preferential trade agreement.

Both sides are wanting to expand the preferential trade agreement between India

and Mercosur. And the teams are engaged in deciding on what would be a scope for

this future expansion," he said. He expressed hope that the exercise could be completed in the next few months.

Mercosur is a trading bloc in Latin America, comprising Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay and Paraguay.

The India-Mercosur PTA came into effect on June 1, 2009. This PTA has limited coverage and contains only 450 tariff lines or products.

Both sides are looking at expanding the scope of this pact to a full-fledged agreement.

Brazil President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva will undertake a five-day visit to India beginning February 18 to hold wide-ranging talks with Prime Minister Narendra Modi and participate in the AI Impact summit.

**INDIA-ISRAEL FTA:** The secretary said that the two countries have signed the terms of reference (ToR) to formally start talks for a free trade agreement (FTA). It was inked in November last year.

"We are into negotiations with Israel.

When asked if some progress can be achieved in the FTA during the visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Israel later this month, he said "I personally don't see an outcome in terms of FTA in the next few months. It will take some time. But we are working fast".

Modi is likely to travel to Israel on a two-day visit from February 25 to 26.

The ToR include market access for goods by eliminating tariff and non-tariff

barriers, investment facilitation, simplification of customs procedures, increasing cooperation for innovation and technology transfer, and easing norms to promote trade in services.

**INDIA-CANADA FTA:** He said that the two countries are engaged to finalise the ToR for a free trade agreement.

"Both sides are engaged on it and we are progressing," he said.

The two countries were earlier negotiating a trade pact but it was paused by Canada in 2023.

Now they have decided to resume talks from the beginning as a lot has changed on the global trade front during these two years.

The ToR outline the scope and modalities of a proposed trade pact.

## Rupee closes at 90.66 against US dollar

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
Mumbai

The rupee settled flat at 90.66 (provisional) against the US dollar in a range-bound trade on Monday, as positive momentum in domestic equities was offset by a strong US dollar in the overseas market.

According to forex traders, lower crude oil prices supported the local unit, while foreign fund outflows limited its movement.

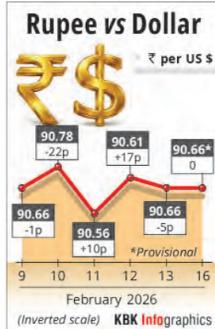
In the interbank foreign exchange market, the rupee opened at 90.63 against the US dollar and moved between an intraday high of 90.61 and a low of 90.72 during the session.

The domestic unit closed the session at its previous closing level of 90.66 (provisional) against the greenback. On Friday, the rupee depreciated 5 paise to settle at 90.66 against the US dollar.

Jateen Trivedi, VP Research Analyst — Commodity and Currency, LKP Securities, said that the rupee traded largely flat as market participants remained cautious, while recovery in the secondary market after a weak opening helped stabilise the currency.

"The broader tone remains range-bound, with immediate resistance placed near 90.25 and support seen around 90.90. Unless there is a decisive break on either

side, the rupee is likely to continue trading within this consolidation band," Trivedi said. According to Anuj Choudhary, Research Analyst, Mirae Asset Sharekhan, "Investors may now watch out for housing market and GDP data from the US this week. USD-INR spot price is expected to trade in a range of ₹90.30 to ₹90.90." Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges



the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading 0.09 per cent higher at 96.91.

Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, was trading 0.47 per cent lower at \$67.43 per barrel in futures trade.

On the domestic equity market front, Sensex climbed 650.39 points or 0.79 per cent to settle at 83,277.15, while the Nifty jumped 211.65 points or 0.83 per cent to 25,682.75.

## Markets rebound on buying in power, banking stocks

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
Mumbai

Equity benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty rebounded sharply by nearly 1 per cent on Monday, driven by strong buying in power, banking, and financial stocks.

Snapping its three-day decline, the 30-share BSE Sensex jumped 650.39 points, or 0.79 per cent, to close at 83,277.15.

The 50-share NSE Nifty advanced 211.65 points, or 0.83 per cent, to settle at 25,682.75.

PowerGrid emerged as the top gainer in the Sensex pack, rising 4.45 per cent, followed by HDFC Bank, Axis Bank, NTPC, ITC, Asian Paints, Bajaj Finserv, Bharti Airtel, Adani Ports, Tata Steel, Kotak

Mahindra Bank, Reliance Industries and State Bank of India.

On the other hand, Tech Mahindra, Maruti Suzuki India, Bajaj Finance, Trent, Mahindra & Mahindra, Titan, Infosys, ICICI Bank, and UltraTech Cement were the laggards.

"After a range-bound opening, domestic markets edged higher, supported by renewed buying interest in banking and power stocks. The power sector gained on expectations of sustained demand momentum. At the same time, improved loan growth and stable asset quality bolstered confidence in banks," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Investments Ltd, said. In global markets, a



continued decline in the US 10-year yield following benign inflation data strengthened expectations of a Fed rate cut later this year, with investors now closely awaiting the

upcoming Fed minutes for further direction.

"Meanwhile, stability in the rupee and range-bound crude oil prices ahead of US-Iran talks are offering additional support to domestic

equities," Nair said. The broader Asian markets ended on a mixed note.

Hong Kong's Hang Seng benchmark rose 0.52 per cent, while Japan's Nikkei 225 index slipped 0.22 per cent.

Markets in China and South Korea remained closed for the Lunar New Year holidays.

European markets are trading higher in mid-session deals. US equities ended on a mixed note on Friday.

Foreign institutional investors sold equities worth ₹7,395.41 crore on Friday, while domestic institutional investors purchased stocks worth ₹5,553.96 crore, according to the exchange data.

Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, fell 0.24 per cent to \$67.59 per barrel.

## UPI most-preferred mode for transactions now: Report

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
New Delhi

UPI has emerged as the most preferred mode of transaction, surpassing cash transactions, and there is a need for targeted interventions to strengthen RuPay debit card usage, particularly in rural and semi-urban areas, a report said.

The Department of Financial Services (DFS), Ministry of Finance, released a report titled "Socio-Economic Impact Analysis of the Incentive Scheme for Promotion of RuPay Debit Card and low-value BHIM-UPI



(Person-to-Merchant) transactions" during the Chintan Shivir held on February 13-14, 2026. The socio-economic impact analysis is based on an extensive primary survey

covering 10,378 respondents across 15 States, including 6,167 users, 2,199 merchants, and 2,012 service providers, representing the key stakeholders of India's digital pay-

ments ecosystem along with in-depth secondary research. The evaluation indicates a significant and sustained increase in the adoption of digital payments across diverse socio-economic segments.

Among surveyed users UPI has emerged as the most preferred mode of transaction, accounting for 57 per cent, surpassing cash transactions at 38 per cent, primarily due to ease of use and instant fund transfer capability.

Digital payments now dominate everyday transaction behaviour, with 65 per

cent of UPI users reporting multiple digital transactions per day, as per the report.

The report identifies the need for targeted interventions to strengthen RuPay debit card usage, particularly in rural and semi-urban areas.

Recommendations include focused merchant enablement programmes, promotion of low-value transactions through solutions such as UPI Lite, and continued investment in connectivity, digital literacy, and fraud risk mitigation, the finance ministry said in a Statement.

## Pacts with US, EU open \$400 bn opportunity for agriculture sector: Official

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
New Delhi

Trade agreements with the US and the 27-nation bloc European Union (EU) have opened up an opportunity of \$400 billion for India's agriculture sector, an official said on Monday. At present, India's agricultural exports to the US stand at \$2.8 billion, while imports are only \$1.5 billion.

Overall, India's imports of agri goods are worth \$35



billion, while exports are valued at \$51-52 billion, and the figures are increasing.

"Through these trade agreements, we have opened up markets worth \$400 billion — EU and US combined. We are opening up a big opportunity for our agri sector," the official said.

The sector is important as opposition parties are raising serious concerns over the impact of the trade deal with the US on Indian farmers.

In any free trade agreement, India has not granted any duty concessions on sectors such as dairy, poultry and cereals.

## Retail market expected to double to ₹210-215 lakh crore in 2035: Report

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
Mumbai

India's retail market is expected to more than double to ₹210-215 lakh crore in 2035 from ₹90-95 lakh crore in 2025 as the country continues to outperform major global economies and is on track to become the world's third largest economy, according to a report released on Monday.

As India's retail sector enters its next phase of growth, success will favour those who combine clarity of focus with disciplined execution and AI-led transformation, as per the report — 'Winning Codes for Retail 2035: Capturing



the ₹200 Trillion Prize' — released jointly by Boston Consulting Group (BCG) and the Retailers Association of India (RAI) at the Retail Leadership Summit 2026.

Retailers who embrace structural change across

disciplined execution are critical to delivering a differentiated customer value proposition and sustaining profitable growth, the report stated.

The findings underscore the increasingly complex and context-driven nature of consumer decision-making, alongside the growing influence of technology, especially artificial intelligence, in shaping every stage of the shopper journey, it said.

The report calls on retailers to reassess traditional assumptions, deliver sharply differentiated value propositions, and embrace AI as a catalyst to fundamentally redesign the retail organisation.

consumer engagement, operating models, and talent will be best positioned to capture disproportionate value in the journey towards a ₹200 lakh crore retail market, it said.

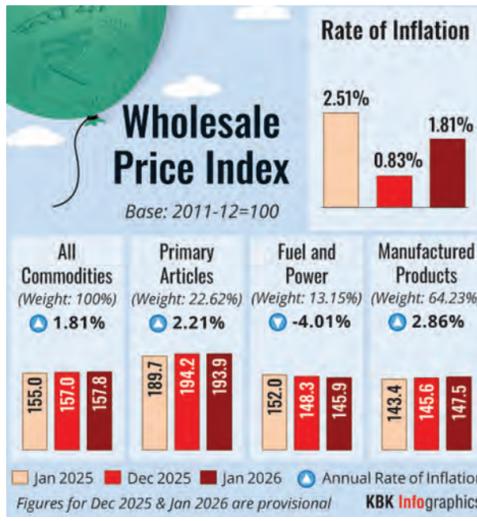
Explicit trade-offs and

## Wholesale price inflation rises to 1.81% in January

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
New Delhi

Wholesale price inflation extended upward momentum for the third straight month, at 1.81 per cent in January, driven by an uptick in prices of food, non-food articles, and manufactured items on a month-on-month basis, Government data showed on Monday.

Wholesale Price Index (WPI)-based inflation was 2.51 per cent in January last year, while in the previous month (December 2025), it was 0.83 per cent. "Positive rate of inflation in January 2026 is primarily due to increase in prices of manufacture of basic metals, other manufacturing, non-food articles, food articles, and textiles, etc," the industry ministry said in



a statement. According to WPI data, inflation in food articles was 1.55 per cent in January as against deflation of 0.43 per cent in December.

In vegetables, inflation was 6.78 per cent in January as against deflation of 3.50 per cent in December.

In the case of manufactured products, WPI inflation inched up to 2.86 per cent, as against 1.82 per cent in December. Non-food articles category inflation spiked to 7.58 per cent in January, against 2.95 per cent in December. Negative inflation, or deflation, continued in the fuel and power sectors, at 4.01 per cent in January, as against 2.31 per cent in December. The country's retail inflation inched up to 2.75 per cent in January, data released last week showed.

## Snapdeal fined ₹5 lakh for selling toys violating BIS standards: CCPA

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
New Delhi

The Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) has imposed a penalty of ₹5 lakh on e-commerce platform Snapdeal for selling toys that do not comply with mandatory Bureau of Indian Standards certification, violating the Toys (Quality Control) Order, 2020. A final order against Snapdeal (Ace Vector Limited) has been issued after taking suo-motu cognizance of the matter, CCPA Chief Commissioner Nidhi Khare said.

The CCPA has also issued notices to other e-commerce entities including Amazon and Flipkart, along with sellers such as Stallion

Trading Company and Electronics Bazar Store, she said.

Besides the penalty, the CCPA has directed Snapdeal to ensure future compliance by guaranteeing that no non-compliant BIS standard toy is listed, hosted, or advertised on its platform.

The platform has also been asked to prominently display contact numbers, e-mail addresses, and Grievance Officer details to facilitate prompt consumer redressal.

The Toys (Quality Control) Order, 2020 became mandatory with effect from January 1, 2021, making BIS certification compulsory for all toys sold in India.

The investigation revealed that non-compliant toys



continued to be sold on Snapdeal despite claims of delisting, with listings available as recently as December

2025. The platform earned fees of ₹41,032 from sales of these toys through just two identified sellers — Stallion

Trading Company and Thriftkart.

The CCPA found several critical lapses: many product

listings lacked essential information such as the manufacturer's name, address, and mandatory BIS certification numbers.

The platform's due diligence was deemed "inadequate" as it relied solely on seller self-declarations without independent verification.

Khare said the Snapdeal defended itself by claiming it acts as a "marketplace e-commerce entity" similar to a physical shopping mall.

However, the CCPA categorically rejected this analogy, noting that the platform exerts "substantial control" over transactions by managing promotional sales like "Toofan Sale" and "Deal of the Day", tagging

products with quality assurances such as "great quality at best price", and controlling logistics, refunds, and replacement schemes.

The authority observed that the shift from caveat emptor (let the buyer beware) to caveat venditor (let the seller beware) places the burden of ensuring product safety on both the seller and the facilitating platform.

The CCPA noted that when asked to provide a guarantee for the sale of BIS-compliant toys on its platform in future, Snapdeal failed to give a categorical undertaking that non-compliant toys would not reappear.

Under Section 2(10) of the Consumer Protection Act, 2019, toys that do not conform to compulsory standards are liable to be held "defective". Failure to comply with these standards constitutes misleading advertisement and unfair trade practice under the Act.

The Consumer Protection (E-commerce) Rules, 2020 stipulate that no e-commerce entity shall adopt any unfair trade practice in the course of business on its platform.



## India hosts world's first major AI summit

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE  
New Delhi

The India AI Impact Summit 2026 commenced on Monday at Bharat Mandapam, marking the first time that a global convening of this scale on Artificial Intelligence AI is being organised in the Global South. The five-day Summit from 16-20 February 2026 will witness participation from over 100 Government representatives, including more than 20 Heads of State and Government and 60 ministers and vice ministers, along with over 500 global AI leaders comprising CEOs, founders, academicians, researchers, CTOs and philanthropic organisations.



Visitors walking past a large digital installation showcasing robotic automation during the India AI Impact Summit 2026 at Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi on Monday

The Summit will bring together the Heads of State and Government, ministers, global technology leaders, eminent researchers, multilateral institutions and industry stakeholders to deliberate on the role of AI in advancing inclusive growth, strengthening public systems and enabling sustainable development.

global cooperation and India's vision for inclusive and responsible AI.

A major highlight of the Summit, the three flagship Global Impact Challenges — AI for ALL, AI by HER, and YUVAI — will culminate in the announcement of their finalists and the Grand Finale showcase. Designed to advance inclusive, responsible and development-oriented artificial intelligence, these challenges were launched to accelerate scalable, high-

impact AI solutions aligned with national priorities and global development objectives.

Together, they attracted over 4,650 applications from more than 60 countries, reflecting strong international participation and reinforcing India's emergence as a credible global hub for responsible and scalable AI innovation.

Following a rigorous multi-stage evaluation led by domain experts, pol-

icymakers and industry leaders, the top 70 teams across the three categories have been selected as finalists. They will present their solutions during the Grand Finale and Awards Felicitation Ceremony on 16 and 17 February at Bharat Mandapam and Sushma Swaraj Bhawan. The finalists will engage with policymakers, industry leaders, investors and academia, while gaining recognition and ecosystem support to scale their innovations nationally and globally.

According to the Ministry of Electronics & IT, the Research Symposium on AI and Its Impact, being organised in partnership with the Indian Institute of Technology Hyderabad on 18 February, serves as the principal academic platform of the Summit.

The symposium has received around 250 research submissions from Africa, Asia and Latin America and is being graced by HE Alar Karis, President of the Republic of Estonia; Ashwini Vaishnav, Union Minister for Electronics and Information Technology; and Jitin Prasada, Union Minister of State for Electronics and Information Technology.



A visitor walks past a display panel featuring a robotic hand at the India AI Impact Summit 2026 at Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi on Monday

### AI resources access to medical students



**New Delhi:** The Government is looking to provide access to e-books and AI resources to medical students to help them hone their skills better, with the first phase of the initiative covering around 57 medical colleges in the smaller towns and rural areas, according to a senior Health Ministry official.

Speaking at the AI Impact Summit here, Deputy Director General (Medical Education) B Srinivas stated that students from medical colleges in remote areas find it challenging to access e-books and good technical materials, including this AI material. "So the Government is thinking of using the leverage of AI to reach out to these students."

In the National Medical Library we have started the process of securing the e-books and the digital clinical material, and we are doing it right now in around 57 Government medical colleges across the country," Srinivas said. The Government is looking to scale up the initiative in a gradual manner, he added. "We are in the pipeline to also include the private medical colleges later on. But since the budget is coming from the Government, we are right now concentrating only on the Government institutions," he said.

### AI in road, transport to help curb accidents



**New Delhi:** There is a lot of scope for AI integration in the road and transport industry to help avoid accidents and check issues of vehicular pollution, a Government official said on Monday.

Measures such as a vehicle-to-vehicle communication system and adding driving-in-school curriculum can help in this direction, Pankaj Aggarwal, an officer in the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, said while speaking at the India AI Impact Summit in the national capital.

During a panel discussion on 'AI for Road Safety: Data-Driven Solutions for Enhancing Road Safety in India', he said AI can play a big role in avoiding accidents and reducing fatalities.

Data indicates that speeding is the first problem among traffic rule violations, he said. So, capturing proper data with the help of AI and providing the same evidence without human intervention can be of help as whatever data today is recorded by a police person is "not the actual data as there are many other offences which contribute to the accident."

### AI boosting efficiency; risk of weakening human accountability a challenge

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
New Delhi

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is boosting efficiency and reshaping the way work is done, but gaps in the education system and the risk of weakening human accountability pose serious challenges, leading voices from global financial institutions cautioned on Monday.

Speaking at a panel discussion at the AI Impact Summit 2026, Sriyay Ghosh, a senior executive at Temasek, said that AI will enable employees to use their time more productively and add 20 to 30 per cent more value in their work. "This is a potential for us to move up the value chain in everything we do... I can move up 20-30 per cent value chain of humanity because I can use my time productively," he said.



However, he cautioned against weakening human oversight as machine-led decision-making becomes more prevalent. "What I'm worried about is dilution of human accountability because there will be a lot of decisions which will be taken by agents, machines, but human accountability has to stay. I hope we don't dilute accountability while we think about opportunities in productivity while moving up the value chain," Ghosh said.

Mahindra & Mahindra's Bhuvan Lodha said AI has the potential to eliminate drudgery of the work and significantly enhance individual efficiency, but flagged concerns over the readiness of the education system. "The drudgery of the job goes away. Personal productivity becomes 10X of who you are because you are using AI's working framework. What's worrying is our education system is yet to catch up," Lodha said.

### AI adoption requires commitment, will not just happen by drift: Nageswaran

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
New Delhi

Chief Economic Advisor V Anantha Nageswaran on Monday said AI adoption cannot just happen by drift and requires a clear commitment to aligning technological adoption with mass employability.

In a virtual address to the AI Impact Summit 2026, Nageswaran said countries need to move decisively by strengthening foundation or education, high quality skills, expanding labour-intensive service sectors, and removing the regulatory bottlenecks. Adopting AI requires



**The window is open still, but it is not indefinite. We must act and act now**  
V Anantha Nageswaran  
Chief Economic Advisor

a collaborative approach, he said, adding that it has to be a 'Team India' effort, including the private sector and academics, as well as policymakers. "The window is open still, but it is not indefinite. We must act and act now," he said.

"For India, it is not a debate about the future of work, it is a decision about the future of growth and social stability," Nageswaran said. "With foresight, institutional discipline, and relentless execution, India can become the first large society to demonstrate true human abundance," Nageswaran said.

### Cautions on use of AI tools, says Jitin Prasada

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
New Delhi

Union Minister Jitin Prasada on Monday urged caution in the use of AI tools, saying misinformation generated through artificial intelligence has the power to undermine democratic systems.

Speaking at a session in the AI Impact Summit here, the Minister of State for Electronics and Information Technology also said artificial intelligence (AI) can significantly enhance learning for students and teachers, but it must not be treated as a shortcut that weakens critical thinking or curiosity.



Union Minister Jitin Prasada

He underlined that AI cannot replace teachers and its risks in education must be carefully addressed. "If you don't get into digital literacy, then you have the vulnerability of falling to cyber threats. Cyber security is such a big issue, and AI deep fakes misinformation."

And a country like India, which is truly democratic, and elections are happening all around the year, be it at the central level, State or municipality. But if there's kind of misinformation using AI, it has the power to derail democracies.

"It has the power to change people's minds in the wrong fashion, and once a decision has been taken, as far as the vote goes, it could be so counterproductive, because you people have voted on false information. So we and the Government have that challenge as well," he said.

### AI quietly rewriting grammar of cinema

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
New Delhi

Artificial Intelligence is quietly rewriting the grammar of cinema — and for filmmakers chasing scale and spectacle, the future is already playing out before the first camera rolls.

AI now allows creators of big-impact films to almost watch their movies before a single frame is shot, actor Rana Daggubati said on Monday, underscoring how the technology is reshaping storytelling from the ground up. What once lived only in imagination or rough storyboards can now be visualised in striking detail — scenes blocked, worlds built, action choreographed — long before production begins. For large-scale cinema, that shift is transformative. It compresses uncertainty, sharpens creative decisions and gives filmmakers a near-finished window into



their own vision. But, as AI tools become more accessible, Daggubati drew a clear line between users and builders. The next big divide in the industry, he suggested, will not be between those who adopt AI and those who resist it — but between those who build intellectual property on top of these tools and those who merely use them.

### WORLD



David Lammy, UK deputy PM  
THIS SUMMIT IS AN IMPORTANT MOMENT IN DETERMINING HOW WE CAN WORK TOGETHER WITH OUR INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS TO UNLOCK THE FULL BENEFITS AND POTENTIAL OF AI



Kanishka Narayan, UK minister  
THE BIG ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE LABORATORIES MAY BE FOUND IN THE US AND CHINA, BUT INDIA AND BRITAIN CAN BECOME THE BEST PLACES IN THE WORLD FOR THE ADOPTION OF AI



Bipul Sinha, CEO of Rubrik  
I HAVE BEEN A HUGE PROPONENT OF THE INDIA-US RELATIONSHIP BECAUSE THE US HAS THE TECHNOLOGICAL KNOW-HOW, TECHNOLOGY IP AND TECHNOLOGY SCALE. INDIA HAS A HUMAN SCALE. INDIA HAS A 1.4 BILLION POPULATION AND A YOUTH POPULATION. A TREMENDOUS GROWTH RATE OF A LARGE ECONOMY



Visitors at a stall during the India AI Impact Summit 2026 at Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi on Monday

## FROM THE WORLD

### SINGAPORE

#### Indian-origin man jailed

An Indian-origin man has been sentenced to five months in jail for using criminal force towards a woman with the intent to outrage her modesty, according to a media report on Monday. The court heard that Om Kumar Rai, 42, had pleaded guilty to the charge. The Straits Times reported that the victim's name and the incident's location were redacted from court documents. Rai, sentenced on Friday, approached the 22-year-old woman in the early hours of June 17, 2025. Rai claimed that he was her father's workmate and tried to strike up a conversation with her. According to the prosecution, Rai then took the woman to a secluded place on the pretext of talking and then molested her. The woman pushed him away and escaped. She later told her parents about the incident.

## USA

### Obama shuts down alien buzz

Former US President Barack Obama said he did not see evidence that aliens "have made contact with us," after sending social media abuzz by saying aliens were real on a podcast over the weekend. During a lightning round of questions with podcast host Brian Tylor Cohen, Obama was asked, "Are aliens real?" "They're real," he answered, continuing: "But I haven't seen them." "On Sunday night, the former president released a statement on Instagram, appearing to clarify what he meant by his comments that have since gone viral. "I was trying to stick with the spirit of the speed round. Statistically, the universe is so vast that the odds are good there's life out there. But the distances between solar systems are so great that the chances we've been visited by aliens is low, and I saw no evidence during my presidency."

# Tarique to be first male PM in 35 years in Bangladesh

ASHOKE RAJ ■ Dhaka

In a defining moment for Bangladesh's political trajectory, Tarique Rahman is set to take oath as Prime Minister today, becoming the country's first male head of government in 35 years.

His elevation follows a resounding electoral victory by the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), marking a historic transition in a nation long led by two formidable women leaders. The swearing-in ceremony will be held at the Southern Plaza of the Jatiya Sangsad (Parliament) in Dhaka. The oath will be administered by President Mohammed Shahabuddin, formally sealing the constitutional transfer of power after the general election. Senior political leaders, foreign dignitaries, diplomats, and civil society representatives are expected to attend the high-profile event amid tight security across the Capital.

Rahman's ascent signals the end of an era in Bangladesh politics that, since 1991, had been dominated exclusively by two women — his mother Khaleida Zia and longtime rival Sheikh Hasina. Zia, a BNP stalwart, became the country's first female prime minister in 1991 and served multiple terms. Hasina, leader of the Awami League, went on to become the longest-serving prime minister in Bangladesh's history, holding office across successive mandates beginning in 1996 and later in 2008, 2014, 2018, and 2024.

For more than three decades, the political rivalry between the two leaders shaped national discourse and governance. Rahman's swearing-in thus represents not only a leadership change but also a generational shift in Bangladesh's power structure. According to the Electoral Commission, the BNP-led alliance secured 212 seats in Parliament, comfortably surpassing the 77 seats won by the Jamaat-e-Islami-led alliance. The decisive mandate underscores public appetite for political change.

Rahman's return to power marks a remarkable comeback. He returned to Bangladesh in December 2025 after spending 17 years in exile in the United Kingdom, far removed from Dhaka's turbulent political landscape. He will take charge from an interim administration headed by Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus, which governed the country following a student-led uprising that brought Sheikh Hasina's tenure to an end in August 2024. Ahead of the ceremony, Rahman pledged to prioritize economic revitalization, institutional reform, and democratic strengthening. "This victory belongs to the people of Bangladesh," he said, promising inclusive development and national unity.



In a notable diplomatic outreach, the interim government invited leaders from 13 countries, including India, China, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Malaysia, Brunei, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Maldives, and Bhutan. India will be represented by Om Birla, Speaker of the Lok Sabha, along with Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri. Prime Minister Narendra Modi was invited but is unable to attend due to prior commitments.

India's Ministry of External Affairs said Birla's participation reflects the "deep and enduring friendship" between the two nations and reaffirms India's commitment to democratic values shared with Bangladesh. Security has been heightened as thousands of BNP supporters gather near the parliament complex, celebrating what they describe as the dawn of a "new chapter" in the country's history. As Tarique prepares to assume office, Bangladesh stands at a pivotal crossroads — closing a chapter defined by decades of female leadership and stepping into a new political phase shaped by renewed expectations, generational change, and a strong electoral mandate.

Iran's top diplomat met with the head of the UN nuclear watchdog agency on Monday, ahead of a second round of negotiations with the United States over Tehran's nuclear program. Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi met with Rafael Grossi, director-general of the International Atomic Energy Agency, and said he would also meet with Foreign Minister Badr al-Busaifi of Oman, which is hosting the US-Iran talks in Geneva on Tuesday. "I am in Geneva with real

ideas to achieve a fair and equitable deal," Araghchi wrote on X. "What is not on the table: submission before threats." Iran open to compromise in exchange for sanctions relief. On Sunday, Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister Majid Takht-Ravanchi signaled that Tehran could be open to compromise on the nuclear issue, but is looking for an easing of international sanctions led by the United States.

# Bangladesh's Chief Adviser Yunus bids farewell to staff, army chief

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Dhaka

Bangladesh's outgoing Chief Adviser of the interim Government, Muhammad Yunus, on Monday bid farewell to officials and employees at his office, a day ahead of the oath-taking ceremony of the new cabinet.

Following the speech, Yunus participated in a photo session with all those serving at his office, State-run Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha quoted his spokesperson as saying.

Bangladesh's Chief of Army Staff Gen Waker-Uz-Zaman also paid a farewell visit to



Yunus on Monday. Yunus is going to end tomorrow, following the swearing-in ceremony of the new Government led by Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP).

# Top Iranian diplomat meets UN nuclear watchdog in Geneva

ASSOCIATED PRESS ■ Geneva

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Iranian FM Abbas Araghchi met with Rafael Grossi

# Jaishankar discusses deepening ties with Canadian counterpart in Munich

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Munich

Minister of External Affairs S Jaishankar and his Canadian counterpart Anita Anand discussed "deepening cooperation" and "partnership opportunities" between the two countries on the sidelines of the Munich Security Conference ahead of Prime Minister Mark Carney's likely visit to India next month.

This marks the fifth meeting between the ministers since September 2025, reflecting the growing momentum in the Canada-India relationship, a statement issued by Global Affairs Canada (GAC) said on Sunday. "Was great to sit down

and catch up with FM @AnitaAnandMP of Canada. India-Canada ties continue their steady progress," Jaishankar posted on social media after the meeting on Saturday. The two ministers discussed deepening cooperation in several areas, including energy, technology, and trade. "Good to see my Indian counterpart Minister @DRSJaishankar to discuss the Canada-India relationship and the work ahead to advance our shared interests," Anand posted on social media. Anand noted India's importance as a partner for Canada as the two ministers shared technological benefits and significant partnership opportunities for businesses,



Minister of External Affairs S Jaishankar meets Canadian counterpart Anita Anand

industries and workers of both countries. "Canada remains committed to constructive engagement, and I look forward to continuing our efforts in India," she added. The ministers also underscored the substantive progress made on the joint roadmap for Canada-India relations announced in October 2025.

They emphasised their commitment to strengthening ties through the implementation of roadmap priorities as well as expanding and diversifying Canada-India trade in support of economic resilience and stability.

The India-Canada relations hit rock bottom following then prime minister Justin

Trudeau's allegations in 2023 of a potential Indian link to the killing of Khalistani separatist Hardeep Singh Nijjar.

India had dismissed Trudeau's accusation as "absurd". In October 2024, India recalled its high commissioner and five other diplomats after Ottawa attempted to link them to the Nijjar case. India also expelled an equal number of Canadian diplomats.

However, Liberal Party leader Carney's victory in the parliamentary election in April last year helped in beginning the process to reset relations. Both sides have already posted their high commissioners in each other's Capitals.

# Fireworks shop explosion in China kills 8



ASSOCIATED PRESS ■ Sydney

An explosion and fire at a fireworks shop in eastern China has killed eight people and left two others with minor burns ahead of the Lunar New Year, authorities said.

The Sunday afternoon blast in a village in Jiangsu province was caused by a resident setting off fireworks improperly near the store, the Donghai county Government said in a statement. It did not provide further details on what happened. Setting off firecrackers at midnight on the Lunar New Year is a tradition in China, but many places have banned fireworks in recent years, at least in part because of air pollution. They may make a comeback in some places after some Governments eased their bans last year. The Lunar New Year, also known as the Spring Festival in China, falls on Tuesday. It will mark the start of the year of the horse in the Chinese zodiac. Following Sunday's explosion, the Ministry of Emergency Management urged all regions to strengthen the supervision of the production, transportation, sales and use of fireworks to prevent future accidents.

# Rubio meets Hungary PM in Budapest

MATTHEW LEE/JUSTIN SPIKE ■ Budapest

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio was in the Hungarian Capital on Monday for meetings with Prime Minister Viktor Orban and his Government during which they plan to sign a civilian-nuclear cooperation agreement heralded by US President Donald Trump.

Trump has been outspoken in his support for the nationalist Orban in the Hungarian leader's bid for reelection in two months. Orban and his Fidesz party are facing their most serious challenge in the April 12 vote since the right-wing populist retook power in 2010.

The stop in Hungary's Capital follows Rubio's visit



to Slovakia on Sunday, after he previously attended the Munich Security Conference in Germany.

Led by Euroskeptical populists who oppose support for Ukraine and vocally back Trump, Slovakia and Hungary represent friendly territory for Rubio as he pushes to shore up energy agreements with both

Central European countries. Widely considered Russian President Vladimir Putin's most reliable advocate in the European Union, Orban has maintained warm relations with the Kremlin despite its war against Ukraine while currying favour with Trump and his MAGA movement.

## GOVERNMENT OF ASSAM OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ENGINEER: PW (HEALTH & EDUCATION) DEPARTMENT: CHANDMARI, GUWAHATI-3

No. Tech-I(H&E)/08/2026/2

### PRESS NOTICE

The Chief Engineer (Health & Education), P.W.D. (H&E), Assam, Chandmari, Guwahati-3 on behalf of the Governor of Assam, invites bids from the eligible contractors having experience in similar nature of work for the following work:

Sl. No.	Name of work	Bid Value (including GST @18%)	Completion Period	Bid Security	Cost of Bid
1.	Vertical Extension of Pub Kamrup College Girl's Hostel (18 Nos. of Room of 50 Bedded Capacity)	Rs. 1,07,88,193.00	8 (Eight) months	2% of Bid value for General category and 1% of Bid Value for reserved Category	Rs.2,200.00

Details of the bid may be seen at e-procurement website i.e. [www.assamtenders.gov.in](http://www.assamtenders.gov.in). The bidders must be enrolled with the tendering web-portal [www.assamtenders.gov.in](http://www.assamtenders.gov.in). All terms and conditions will be as per the Bidding Documents. The Press Notice will be a part of the Bidding Documents. The Bid price may vary at the time of detail tendering for which no claim will be admissible. The Work will be allotted only after receiving Government approval.

Sd/-  
Chief Engineer (Health & Education),  
PW(H&E) Deptt.,  
Chandmari, Guwahati-3

DIPR/C/PIO/885/17-Feb-26

### NORTHERN RAILWAY TENDER NOTICE

The Dy. Chief Electrical Engineer/Const./Northern Railway, DRM Office, New Delhi-110001 invites e-tender under One Packet System for the under noted work:-

1. Name of work and location	"Design, supply, Erection, Testing, commissioning & modification work of 25 KV single phase ac for work of 2/4 Lane ROB's in lieu of Lxing over DLI Divn 1. L-Xing 568 & 576 over NDL-S-PWL Section 2. L-Xing 36脾 near Gannaur over Delhi-Ambala section 3. L-Xing 47C near Khukrana over Jind-Panipat Section
2. Completion period of the work	12 months
3. Approx cost of work	Rs. 66,23,608.80/-
4. Earnest Money amount (to be deposited Online)	Rs.1,32,500/-
5. Date & time for submission of E-tender and opening of tender	Tenders may be uploaded up to 15.00 hrs on date 10.03.2026 on IREPS web site i.e. <a href="http://www.ireps.gov.in">www.ireps.gov.in</a> . The bidders can participate in the e-tender, the tender will be opened at 15.00 hrs soon after closing of uploading of Tenders on 10.03.2026.
6. Detailed Tender Document	The detailed e-tender notice and tender document is available on <a href="http://www.ireps.gov.in">www.ireps.gov.in</a> . Above tender document will be available for submission of offer on IREPS web site i.e. <a href="http://www.ireps.gov.in">www.ireps.gov.in</a> from 24.02.2026 to 10.03.2026. All other terms and conditions in respect of above tenders are given in tender document. The detailed tender notice also can be seen on the Notice Board of the above office.

Tender No. 344-R/Dy.CEE/C/NDL/S/2025-26 Dated: 16.02.2026 519/26

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

### NORTHERN RAILWAY TENDER NOTICE

The Sr. DME/Diesel, Northern Railway, Diesel Loco Shed, Tughlakabad for and on behalf of President of India invites e-tenders for the following work The tender will be accepted online only in the prescribed tender document.

Subject	Description
Name of work	"Complete body cleaning, Cyclonic filters cleaning in 3-phase Electrical Locomotives and Complete body cleaning, MIO type side body filters cleaning in conventional Electrical Locomotives at Diesel Shed Tughlakabad for 02 years."
Place of work	Diesel Shed, Tughlakabad, New Delhi-110044
Completion Period	02 Years
Approximate cost of work	Rs. 11,70,900/-Including GST (Rupees Eleven Lakh Seventy Thousand Nine Hundred Only)
Amount of Bid Security	Rs. 23,400/- (Rs. Twenty Three Thousand Four Hundred only)
Technical Eligibility Criteria	As per clause 10 of tender form (second sheet) of Tender Document.
Financial Eligibility Criteria	As per clause 10 of tender form (second sheet) of Tender Document.
Website to download and upload e-tender document	<a href="http://www.ireps.gov.in">www.ireps.gov.in</a>
Due date & time of uploading of Tender by tenderer	07.03.2026 upto 12:00 Hrs
Date & Time of Tender opening	07.03.2026 after 12:00 Hrs
Date & Time of Tender opening	07.03.2026 after 12:00 Hrs
Validity of offer	60 days from opening of tender.
Allocation	05-0511-32

Tender Document can be downloaded from Indian Railway website [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in). For details of work experience, scope of work and terms & conditions please see Tender document. Tender Notice No. DSL-TKD-Filter-OT-RT-26 dated 13.02.2026 513/2026

Serving Customers With A Smile

### NORTHERN RAILWAY PUBLIC NOTICE

#### REGARDING BIS LICENSING FOR IMPROVEMENT BED LINEN ITEMS

Northern Railway is planning to float tenders for the following improved bed linen items. BIS license holders who will satisfy the eligibility of the tender will be eligible for these tenders.

S.No.	Item	BIS Standard	Remark
1.	Bedsheets	IS:18739:2024 or latest	Variety No. 03
2.	Pillow Covers	IS:18739:2024 or latest	Variety No. 03
3.	Blanket Cover	IS:18739:2024 or latest	Variety No. 02
4.	Bath Towel	IS:7056:2024 or latest	Variety No. 02
5.	Hand Towel	IS:7056:2024 or latest	Variety No. 02
6.	Blanket	IS:12848:2024 or latest	Type 02
7.	Pillows	IS:18930:2024 or latest	Type 01

All prospective manufacturers/OEMs are advised to approach BIS and obtain the requisite BIS license for the above items, to ensure their eligibility for participation in these tenders. This notice is issued for wide publicity and information of all concerned.

516/2026 -Issued in public interest

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

### AXIS BANK LTD. RETAIL LENDING AND PAYMENT GROUP (LOCAL OFFICE/BRANCH):

AXIS HOUSE, TOWER-2, 2ND FLOOR, E-14, SECTOR-126, NOIDA EXPRESSWAY, JAYPES GREENS WISHTOWN, NOIDA-201301, U.P.

AXIS BANK LTD., 3RD FLOOR, GIGAPLEX, NPC - 1, TTC INDUSTRIAL AREA, MUGALSAN ROAD, AIROLI, NAVI MUMBAI - 400708, REGISTERED OFFICE: "TRISHUL", 3RD FLOOR OPP. SAMARTHESHWAR TEMPLE LAW GARDEN, ELLISBRIDGE AHMEDABAD - 380006.

#### E-AUCTION SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTY

E-AUCTION SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE ASSETS UNDER THE SECURITIZATION AND RECONSTRUCTION OF FINANCIAL ASSETS AND ENFORCEMENT OF SECURITY INTEREST ACT 2002 (READ WITH PROVISIO TO RULE 8(G) OF THE SECURITY INTEREST (ENFORCEMENT) RULE, 2002.

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the above described vehicle is hypothecated to the secured creditor, the physical possession of which has been taken by the Authorized Officer of Secured Creditor will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is" and "Whatever there is" on 18.03.2026 for recovery of Rs. 13,31,941/- (Rupees Thirteen Lakhs Thirty One Thousand Nine Hundred Forty One Only) dues as on 18.12.2025 with future interest and costs due to the secured creditor from Mr. Saurya Gautam, (Applicant) Please refer the appended auction schedule for necessary details:-

KNOWN ENCUMBRANCES (IF ANY) NIL

RESERVE PRICE (IN RS.) Rs. 2,78,800/- (Rupees Two Lakh Seventy-Eight Thousand Eight Hundred Only)

EARNEST MONEY DEPOSIT (IN RS.) Rs. 27,880/- (Rupees Twenty-Seven Thousand Eight Hundred Eighty Only) through DD/PO in favor of Axis bank Ltd. payable.

BID INCREMENTAL AMOUNT Rs. 10,000/- (Rupees Ten Thousand only)

LAST DATE, TIME AND VENUE FOR SUBMISSION OF BIDS / Floor, 1-14, Sector-126, Noida Expressway, Jaypes Greens Wishtown, Noida-201301, U.P. addressed to Mr. Mukesh Singh

DATE, TIME AND VENUE FOR PUBLIC E-AUCTION On 18.03.2026, between 11:00 A.M and 12:00 Noon, with unlimited extensions of 5 minutes each at web portal <https://www.banksauctions.com> e-auction tender documents containing e-auction bid form, declaration etc., are available in the website of the Service Provider as mentioned above.

DETAILS OF THE HYPOTHECATED SECURED ASSETS TAKEN POSSESSION ARE AS UNDER:- Vehicle bearing Reg. No.-UP16CF8989 having the Chassis No. - MEHSR5GMR004263 and Engine No. -H4KAG01E003322 with RENAULT-RENAULT CAT C- DUSTER- RENAULT.

For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please refer to the link provided in the secured creditor's website i.e. <https://www.axisbank.com/auction-retail> and the Bank's approved service provider M/S C1 India Private Limited at their web portal <https://www.banksauctions.com>

The auction will be conducted online through the Bank's approved service provider M/S C1 India Private Limited at their web portal <https://www.banksauctions.com>.

For any other assistance, the intending bidders may contact Mr. Mukesh Singh, Mobile. No. +91-9654288041 & 991114215 Authorized officer of the Bank during office hours from 10 A.M. to 4:30 P.M. Date- 17.02.2026, Place- DELHI

Sd/- (Authorized Officer), Axis Bank Ltd.

## PROSPECT

Silver falls 2% to ₹2.5 lakh/kg; gold advances ₹700 per 10 gms



Silver prices declined by 2 per cent to ₹2.5 lakh per kilogram, while gold increased by ₹700 per 10 grams in the national capital on Monday. According to the All India Sarafa Association, the white metal depreciated by ₹5,000, or 1.96 per cent, to ₹2,50,000 per kilogram (inclusive of all taxes) from ₹2,55,000 per kg on Friday. However, gold of 99.9 per cent purity advanced by ₹700 to ₹1,59,200 per 10 grams (inclusive of all taxes) from the previous close of ₹1,58,500 per 10 grams. "Silver began the week on a softer note, as investors booked profits after the weekend's rally. However, ongoing central bank purchases, heightened safe-haven demand amid the correction in tech and AI stocks, and a weaker dollar index have helped cushion the downside," Gaurav Garg, Research Analyst, Lemnon Markets Desk, said. In the global market, spot silver fell nearly 1 per cent to \$76.94 per ounce, while gold slipped \$40.10, or 1 per cent, to \$5,003.01 per ounce.

"Gold edged lower on Monday, as a modest recovery in the US dollar and a lack of follow-through buying weighed on precious metals," Saumil Gandhi, Senior Analyst - Commodities at HDFC Securities, said.

He noted that trading activity remained subdued, with Chinese markets closed for Lunar New Year holidays. Chinese participants have played a key role in recent volatility, particularly in silver, and their absence contributed to thinner market conditions.

Kaynat Chainwala, AVP Commodity Research, Kotak Securities, said traders are now focused on key macro data releases, including the US Federal Reserve's preferred inflation gauge - the Personal Consumption Expenditures (PCE) price index, due on February 20, which could shape rate-cut expectations for June.

She added that the Federal Open Market Committee meeting minutes, US advance GDP data for December, and flash PMI readings from major economies will also be tracked for further direction.

## IDFC FIRST Bank launches Hello Cashback Credit Card



IDFC FIRST Bank launches Hello Cashback Credit Card, a fixed-deposit-backed offering designed to make credit more accessible for digitally savvy customers, especially young adults aged 18+ with online-first and UPI-led spending habits. The card enables customers to begin building their credit history while benefiting from a strong and clearly differentiated cashback proposition on everyday digital payments.

Hello Cashback features a powerful tiered cashback structure, offering 5 per cent cashback on online spends above ₹10,000, 3per cent cashback on online spends up to ₹10,000, and 1per cent cashback on in-store, contactless, and UPI transactions. Uniquely, the 1per cent cashback also extends to essential categories such as utilities, education, and insurance. The card is priced at a joining fee of ₹1,000 and an annual fee of ₹1,000, with the joining fee waived until March 31, 2026, and the annual fee waived on annual spends of ₹2,00,000 in the previous year, making it a compelling combination of rewards, access, and credit building.

# Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla's diplomatic outreach to Bangladesh



RUP NARAYAN DAS

The decision of Government of India to depute Speaker of Lok Sabha Om Birla to represent India in the swearing-in ceremony of the newly elected Bangladesh Government after the electoral victory of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) in the general election augurs well for the bilateral relationship between the two courtesies and in particular between Parliaments of the respective countries.

In the general election BNP secured two-third majority in the 300 member Parliament and its Chairman Tarique Rahman, the son of Khalida Zia, is poised to be appointed as the Prime Minister of Bangladesh. It is thoughtful on part of the newly elected Government of Bangladesh to have invited Prime Minister Narendra Modi among 13 world leaders for the historic occasion.

The overture to India is well received by New Delhi. Due to the ongoing AI summit which India is hosting, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and External Affairs Minister Dr S. Jaishankar are unable to participate in the swearing-in ceremony. Twenty world leaders including President of France Emmanuel Macron, President of Brazil Luiz Inacio Lula de Silva and Prime Minister of

Netherlands Dick Schoof are participating in the conference.

Ever since Prime Minister Modi came to power in 2014, he has been emphasising on South Asian solidarity. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has already congratulated Mr Tarique Rahman who will be sworn in as the new President of Bangladesh. Prime Minister in his telephonic conversation hoped that Mr Tarique Rahman would be able to fulfil the aspiration of the people of Bangladesh. Political unrest in Bangladesh in recent years has seriously derailed peace, prosperity and development in the country which also affected the bilateral relationship between the two countries.

India not only has a physical contiguity with Bangladesh, but also a historical and civilizational, and cultural convergence. There has been healthy Parliamentary contact and interaction between the two countries which, however, suffered a setback during the political unrest in Bangladesh.

The visit of Speaker of Lok Sabha who occupies an exalted position in the warrant of precedence is poised to reset the relationship between the two countries, their people and their Parliaments. Ministry of External Affairs in a press note said that the visit underscores the deep and enduring between the peoples of India and Bangladesh reaffirming India's steadfast commitments to democratic values that bind the two countries.

In recent times Speaker Lok Sabha has been quietly pursuing Parliamentary diplomacy as an adjunct of foreign policy. Only in last December he hosted the Commonwealth Speakers and Presiding Officers Conference

which was participated by Presiding officers from Commonwealth Parliaments including the Secretary General of Commonwealth Parliament and President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU).

The CSPOC was a successful event which was addressed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in the historic Samvidhan Sadan. A significant highlight of the conference was the slew of bilateral meetings and interactions in which Speaker Lok Sabha Om Birla participated with his peers along with senior Parliamentarians including Dr Shashi Tharoor. The emphasis on Global South was the flavour of the Conference.

The nomination of Om Birla, amid speculation that the Vice President, External Affairs Minister, or another senior Cabinet member might attend the ceremony, is both timely and significant. As the Jatiya Sangsad enters a crucial phase of formation and newly elected Members of Parliament prepare to take their oath, his presence conveys solidarity between the two democracies at a pivotal juncture. With the political process and the reconstruction of parliamentary democracy gaining momentum, such high-level parliamentary engagement carries the promise of strengthened institutional cooperation and reinforced democratic continuity.

It underscores the importance both nations attach to parliamentary diplomacy as a vital pillar of bilateral relations, while affirming respect for Bangladesh's sovereign constitutional journey. By engaging at the level of presiding officers, the visit emphasises the central role of legislatures in ensuring stable

and accountable governance, thereby fostering goodwill, mutual trust, and deeper legislative collaboration between the two neighbouring democracies.

The role of the Presiding officers in promoting Parliamentary diplomacy is not widely known. The Speaker of Lok Sabha Om Birla ever since he occupied the constitutional position has been leading umpteen number Parliamentary Delegations abroad and has also participated in IPU and CPA conferences along with the Deputy Chairman of Rajya Sabha Harivansh. Mr Birla has injected fresh momentum to Parliamentary diplomacy in recent years. Besides the CSPOC, earlier in 2003, he successfully hosted the G-20 Presiding Officers Conference in New Delhi in the wake of India's Presidency of G-20. Mr Birla in 2018 hosted the India-Russia Inter-Parliamentary Commission.

The Commission is an important institutional mechanism between the two countries. He also participated in the 11th BRICS Parliamentary Forum in June last year which was held in Brasilia in Brazil. India is hosting the BRICS conference this year and Speaker Lok Sabha will also host the BRICS Parliamentary Forum later this year. He has also strengthened Parliamentary Friendship Groups as an adjunct of foreign policy to supplement and complement the role of the executive. It is indeed a matter of speculation if there will be any fresh initiative to revive the South Asia Speakers and Presiding Officers Conference during his visit to Dhaka.

The writer is the Consulting Editor of The Journal of Parliamentary Information and former senior fellow of the Manohar Parikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses

# NTPC named in TIME's Best Asia-Pacific Companies 2026 list

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE  
■ New Delhi

NTPC has achieved a significant global milestone with its inclusion in the prestigious TIME Asia-Pacific's Best Companies of 2026 list, announced on 11 February 2026. This List is published by TIME in partnership with Statista, a leading international provider of market and consumer data and rankings, said a Press release.

The "Asia-Pacific's Best Companies of 2026" ranking is a comprehensive analysis aimed to identify the top performing companies in the Asia-Pacific region. The ranking focuses on three key dimensions: Employee Satisfaction, Financial

Performance, and Sustainability Transparency (ESG). NTPC's inclusion in this elite list reflects its strong, well-rounded performance and its steadfast commitment to excellence across all these parameters.

Aligned with its Vision to be the world's leading power company, accelerating India's growth and energy transition, NTPC continues to deliver reliable, affordable, and sustainable energy solutions. Driven by innovation, operational agility, and a strong sense of responsibility, the company remains committed to powering the nation's progress in an economical, efficient, and environment-friendly manner. NTPC's philosophy firmly recognises



that its core business of power generation is deeply intertwined with social advancement and environmental stewardship.

This prestigious recognition stands as a testament to NTPC's relentless pursuit of excellence and its growing stature as a formidable force on the global stage. It celebrates the unwavering dedication, passion, and collective efforts of the entire NTPC family, whose shared vision and commitment continue to propel the organisation towards new heights of success.

The honour also reaffirms NTPC's unique and people-centric "People before PLF (Plant Load Factor)" philosophy. The company has consistently set benchmarks in

human resource development and management through continuous process improvement, nurturing a caring, inclusive, and learning-oriented workplace. By prioritising employee well-being, fostering engagement, and aligning progressive people practices with strategic business objectives, NTPC has created a meaningful, collaborative, and empowering employee experience.

This global recognition by TIME further strengthens NTPC's position as an employer of choice and a leader in sustainable growth, reinforcing its role in shaping a brighter, cleaner, and more resilient energy future for India and the world.

## Guwahati to host grand 87th CRPF parade on February 19

TONY DAS  
■ Guwahati

In a historic first for the gateway to the Northeast, Guwahati is set to witness a grand display of valour and military discipline as the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) prepares for its 87th CRPF Parade Day at the Sarusajai Stadium on February 19. The event marks a significant homecoming for the newly appointed Director General of the CRPF, GP Singh. The former Assam Director General of Police (DGP) will return to the State in his new role to preside over the prestigious parade.

The main event on February 19 will feature eight elite marching contingents, including the Rapid Action Force (RAF), Commando Battalion for Resolute Action (CoBRA), and dedicated women's units. Attendees can expect adrenaline-pumping stunts by the CRPF 'Daredevils' motorcycle team and demonstrations of traditional Indian martial arts.

To build momentum for the grand finale, the force has initiated a series of pre-event



public displays across the city. On February 16, a Yoga session and Band display were held at the Brahmaputra River Heritage Centre. The celebrations will continue on February 17 at the Kumar Bhaskar Varma Setu with a high-octane motorcycle show followed by a musical performance by the CRPF brass band.

## Himanta inaugurates Assembly secretariat building, digital museum

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE  
■ Guwahati

Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Monday inaugurated the new Assam Legislative Assembly Secretariat Building, a Digital Museum and the Artificial Intelligence-powered digital information system 'ALISA - AI for Legislative Intelligence System of Assam' within the premises of the Assam Legislative Assembly.

The 17-storey Secretariat Building, including the ground floor, has been equipped with state-of-the-art facilities. Spread over approximately 8,000 square metres, the building will be operated through a centralised Building Management System (BMS), enabling control of electrical



and other technical installations on different floors from a single location.

The Digital Museum has been designed with multiple galleries showcasing the pivotal role of the Assam Legislative Assembly in shaping the State's political landscape, significant milestones in Assam's democratic journey and the contributions of distinguished leaders in strengthening the State's democratic, social and cultural fabric.

Among those present on the occasion were Assam Legislative Assembly Speaker Biswajit Daimary, Deputy Speaker Numal Momin, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Chandra Mohan Patowary, Public Health Engineering Minister Jayanta Mallabaruah, Tea Tribes and Adivasi Welfare Minister Rupesh Gowala and Union Minister of State for External Affairs Pabitra Margherita, along with several other dignitaries.

## Lekang SC wins 21st Capt Jintu Gogoi Memorial Football trophy

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE  
■ Duliajan

Amidst thunderous applause, patriotic fervour and an electrifying atmosphere, the Grand Finale of the 21st Capt Jintu Gogoi, Vir Chakra Memorial Football Tournament was held at Nehru Maidan, Duliajan, on 14 February 2026. The prestigious tournament was conducted by the Red Shield Gunners under the aegis of Spear Corps, drawing enthusiastic participation from the local community and football lovers across the region.

The summit clash between Lekang Sports Club and Barekuri FC delivered a spectacle of high-intensity football, marked by speed, skill and unyielding determination. Both teams displayed exceptional teamwork and competitive spirit, reflecting



the high standards that defined the tournament throughout its journey. The final score stood at draw 1-1 after extra time then Lekang Sports Club won in penalties by 5-4, bringing weeks of spirited competition to a memorable and fitting conclusion.

The ceremony was graced by Lt Gen Abhijit S Pendharkar, UYSM, AVSM, YSM, General Officer

Commanding, Spear Corps. The proud parents of Capt Jintu Gogoi, Vrc, were also present, lending profound emotional resonance and solemn dignity to the occasion. Their presence served as a poignant reminder of the supreme sacrifice of a brave son of Assam whose legacy continues to inspire generations.

The evening unfolded as a vibrant celebration of

Assam's rich cultural heritage. Local artists enthralled the audience with captivating performances that beautifully showcased the traditions, colours and spirit of the region. Adding to the grandeur were stirring displays by Indian Army personnel, reflecting impeccable discipline, precision and esprit-de-corps. A major highlight of the ceremony was the inspiring Torch Run, symbolising valour, sacrifice and the enduring legacy of Capt Jintu Gogoi, Vir Chakra. The ceremonial flame stood as a powerful emblem of courage and unity, igniting a renewed sense of patriotism and youth inspiration among all present.

In his address, the General Officer Commanding, Spear Corps commended the participating teams for their discipline, teamwork and

exemplary sportsmanship. He reaffirmed the Indian Army's steadfast commitment to youth empowerment, nation-building and strengthening the civil-military bond through sports and community outreach initiatives. Paying rich tribute to Capt Jintu Gogoi, Vir Chakra, he emphasised that the hero's courage and devotion to duty remain a beacon of inspiration for the nation's youth.

The tournament once again served as a meaningful platform to honour a gallant hero of Assam while fostering camaraderie, sportsmanship and enduring bonds between the Indian Army and the local community. It reinforced mutual trust, shared pride and collective resolve towards building a stronger and united nation.

## Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar

### Short Term E-Tender Notice

Short Term E-Tenders are invited for the purchase of Coffee Table Book, Seven Flex Real Time PCR Machine, Biosafety Cabinet (BSL 2), IT Enabled Smart Classrooms, RFID and Library Software, Refrigerators, Supercritical CO2 Dyeing Machine, Bench Top Powder X-Ray Diffractometer, Computers, NCRS for TV Studio and Tractors be submitted online latest by 3/03/2026 upto 4:00 p.m. Detailed information can be obtained from website [www.eproc.punjab.gov.in](http://www.eproc.punjab.gov.in). Any corrigendum/Addendum related to these e-tender will be uploaded, if required, on Punjab Govt. website: [eproc.punjab.gov.in](http://eproc.punjab.gov.in)

Director of Research  
2426/12/2025-26/8339 Dated CHD :- 16/02/2026

Manual/ e-tenders are hereby invited for the purchase and supply of following items:-		
Sr. No.	Name of Work/Item	Period/Tentative Qty
1.	For Verka Head Office, Chandigarh Manual tender for Selection of agency for content creation, audit and maintenance of Verka official website (www.verka.coop).	02 Years
2.	For Verka Patiala Dairy Hiring of deep freezer (cold store) for storage of white butter.	One Year
3.	For Verka Bhatinda Dairy a) Feeding of rice husk into boiler (manpower), transportation of husk from yard to boiler, cleaning of fire pit & removal of ash outside the premises. b) Pest Control Services.	One Complete Job Annual/ One Complete Job
4.	For Verka Ludhiana Dairy Outsourcing of operation and maintenance activities of boiler and air-heater section	One job/ section
5.	For Verka Ferozepur Dairy Hiring of Swift/ Brezai/ Bolero or its equivalent for The Ferozepur district cooperative milk producers union limited	02 No's
6.	For Verka Hoshiarpur Dairy Labour contract for loading/unloading of milk products (SMP/WMP, Dairy Whittener, white butter, ghee, etc.) and empty tins, cartons, jars etc.	One Year
7.	For Verka Amritsar Dairy Purchase of:- i. Conduction Lid Film. ii. Pest-O-Flash Flung insect Control. iii. Polypropylene PP bottles cap 180ml with caps. iv. Corrugated tray for PP bottles cap. 180ml. v. Shrink Sleeve rolls for PP bottles cap. 180 ml	Annual 200 Annual Annual Annual
8.	For Verka Hoshiarpur Dairy Supply of:- i. Rice Husk ii. Fresh cut firewood	1000 MT 500 MT

NOTE:  
1. For complete details regarding above tender (NIT), please visit our website i.e. [www.verka.coop](http://www.verka.coop) & e Tendering portal i.e. [eproc.punjab.gov.in](http://eproc.punjab.gov.in).  
2. Corrigendum, if any, will be uploaded on website only.

1018/12/2025-26/8372 General Manager (Purchase)

## BRIEFLY

### Mental resilience visible after SA heartbreak: Afghanistan coach



Afghanistan head coach Jonathan Trott on Monday said he has noticed a clear shift in his team's mental resilience after they bounced back from a heartbreaking defeat against South Africa to register their first win of the T20 World Cup. Afghanistan had suffered a double Super Over loss to South Africa but responded with a five-wicket victory over the UAE to keep their slim Super Eights hopes alive. "UAE played really well, and we were under pressure, but that's the pleasing thing for me as a coach. What I'd like would have been a lot easier, yes, but at the end of the day, when you come out on the right side of pressure situations, like we were, having the history of the last game, I've certainly seen a shift," Trott told reporters. "We've lost tight games like that, and then after that, it's very much been hard to put back the confidence. I see a bit of an improvement in the resilience, cricketing-wise, but also mentally."

Trott said there is still room for growth, but was pleased with the progress.

"Sure, there's a lot of work still to be done, and that's going to be exciting to watch, but I'm really pleased the guys can come away, and we can go off to Chennai really excited about playing a proper game against Canada with a bit of confidence."

### Loss against SA won't have any bearing: Glenn Phillips



New Zealand all-rounder Glenn Phillips on Monday said the defeat against South Africa will have no bearing ahead of their final match against the bottom-placed Canada, as the Kiwis look to seal a Super Eights berth from Group D. New Zealand are currently placed second with two wins from three games behind South Africa, who are through to the Super Eights with six points. The Kiwis will look to address the frailties exposed by South Africa in the seven-wicket defeat and reaffirm their status as title contenders and Phillips feels that defeat shouldn't necessarily be looked upon as the "be-all end-all of learnings". "You look at games of T20 cricket and there's small margins between winning and losing. South Africa were very good in all facets of the game the other day. On our day as well, we've taken (on) South Africa, well, in different formats," Phillips said.

## Scotland eye Nepal scalp

DEVARCHIT VARMA ■ Mumbai

Scotland's fate hinges on the outcome of another Group C clash but the Richie Berrington-led side would nevertheless look to make the most of the opportunity of taking on a struggling Nepal team in the T20 World Cup here on Tuesday.

A victory for England against Italy on Monday afternoon in Kolkata would be enough for Harry Brook's side to join the West Indies in the Super Eights and knock Scotland out of the race from Group C.

But Scotland, who had joined the competition in dramatic circumstances not long ago, would like to think they would still be in charge of their destiny by the time they take the Wankhede Stadium field for a prime-time clash.



Despite having a better Net Run Rate, Scotland (0.359) are placed third since they have only two points to show in three matches behind England (-0.143), who have four points.

While they lost heavily to England and the West Indies, Scotland dealt a similar treatment to Italy winning by 73 runs.

Against a struggling Nepal outfit, Scotland would not

only fancy their chances but also look to better their NRR, especially if the on-song Italians spring a surprise on England.

But if this turns out to be their final appearance in this T20 World Cup, the Scots would want to sign off with the high of a win. For that, they would still need more consistent performances from both batters and bowlers.

Nepal's reputation and confidence have both taken a severe hit with crushing losses to Italy (by 10 wickets) and the West Indies (9 wickets).

For a team which made an inspirational start against England, losing the last-ball thriller by a mere four runs, Nepal's fight has clearly petered out on the biggest stage where they look overwhelmed. (PTI)



### Will make nation proud, Super 8s or not: Rashid

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ New Delhi

Afghanistan's fate in qualifying for T20 World Cup Super Eights stage is not in their hands even after beating UAE here on Monday, but captain Rashid Khan said his team wants to make the country proud with its brand of cricket even if it makes an early exit from the tournament.

After Afghanistan's five-wicket win over UAE, South Africa made it to the Super Eights from Group D with six points from three matches.

New Zealand, currently with four points from three matches, can seal the second spot from the group if they beat Canada on Tuesday in Chennai.

In that scenario, Afghanistan — currently on two points from three matches — will exit from the tournament even if they defeat Canada in their last group match on February 19 in Chennai.

"Hoping for the best. Yes,

(we) still have a little bit of hope, we can make it to the next stage and we just need to come up with a positive mindset (against Canada)," Rashid said at the post-match presentation. "Next game, you never know, it's a T20 game, we'll have to come up with a good brand of cricket. Even if we don't make it to the next round, we want to play with the same brand of cricket and make the country and our people proud and happy."

The star spinner is happy that his side at least opened account in the tournament after suffering a heart-breaking loss to South Africa in a game that was decided in the second Super Over.

"Happy to finish with a win, it's important to have points in a T20 World Cup. To restrict them (UAE) under 160 was a good effort, we pulled things back, but we didn't do well in the first 10 overs. That's been a problem for us in all the games and something we need to work on," he said.

## Fearless Kishan took the game away from us, says Pakistan coach Hesson

G UNNIKRIISHAN ■ Colombo

Pakistan head coach Mike Hesson said "fearless" Ishan Kishan's marauding fifty was the difference between his side and India, and urged his players to rally after the heavy defeat in the marquee clash of the T20 World Cup.

Led by Kishan's aggressive 77 off 40 balls, India trumped Pakistan by 61 runs in a Group A match here Sunday night to seal a Super Eight berth.

"I think he's fearless. He's able to score on both sides of the ground. So, he's not just



committed to the leg side. We know he's incredibly strong there, but he can reverse. So, if you've got spin, especially

in the power play, it can be a challenge," Hesson said in the post-match press conference.

True to Hesson's words,

Kishan scored 66 runs off 37 balls against Pakistan slow bowlers, spoiling their spin-heavy strategy on a slow Premadasa pitch.

Hesson admitted that Kishan's approach unsettled his spinners.

"I think the fact that he's in a rare vein of form, applied a lot of pressure to our spinners and probably took them away from the basics, which the pitch was actually doing a lot when we bowled nice and slow and into it, but outside of that, no one really scored better than a run a ball. (PTI)

## Zimbabwe look to beat Ireland with maiden Super 8s berth in sight

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Pallekele (Sri Lanka)

On a high after a stunning win over former champions Australia, Zimbabwe would look to continue the momentum against a tricky Ireland side and grab the chance to book a maiden Super Eight berth in the T20 World Cup on Tuesday.

A win over Ireland will take Zimbabwe to six points and they will continue their unbeaten run, though a Super Eight spot from Group B will still not be guaranteed. Australia — currently on two points from two matches — and Sri Lanka (on four points from two matches) can still reach to six points.

Zimbabwe's final group match is against hosts Sri Lanka on February 19 in Colombo. In that scenario, the net run rate (NRR) would be the deciding factor.

If Zimbabwe reach the Super Eight, that will be the first time they will progress to the stage in seven attempts. The African nation has been clinical in the tournament so far.

Their three pacers Richard Ngarava, Blessing Muzarabani and Brad Evans ripped apart the Oman batting line-up with three wickets each, bowling the opposition out for just 103 in their opening match in Colombo.

Their batters, led by Brian Bennett (48 not out), needed



just 13.3 overs to chase down the target for an eight-wicket win.

Zimbabwe then emerged

as the giant-killers of the tournament, posting 169 for 2 against Australia before shooting the opposition out

for just 146 for a 23-run win. Opener Bennett led the batting show for Zimbabwe once again with an unbeaten

64 while Muzarabani and Evans were on the money with four and three wickets respectively.

While Australia are a depleted side in this tournament marred by injuries, beating a top team like them will be a huge psychological boost for Zimbabwe going into Tuesday's match against Ireland.

The team management would be looking for Bennett to continue his top form. Other batters like opener Tadiwanashe Marumani, Ryan Burl and captain Sikandar Raza were in good touch in the match against Australia and they would also look to carry that in the Ireland match.

## Arsenal routs Wigan 4-0

ASSOCIATED PRESS ■ London

Arsenal enjoyed a 4-0 rout of Wigan as five Premier League teams avoided upsets to reach the fifth round of the FA Cup.

Third-tier struggler Wigan was overwhelmed against the Premier League leader in front of a 60,000 crowd at Emirates Stadium, with all the goals coming in the first half.

Forwards Noni Madueke, Gabriel Martinelli and Gabriel Jesus were on the scoresheet along with Jack Hunt's own-goal as he tried to cut out a cross from Bukayo Saka. Big-money summer signing Eberechi Eze set up two goals for Arsenal, which won the last of its record 14 FA Cups in 2020. Wigan won the FA Cup for the first and only time in



2013, beating Manchester City 1-0 in the final, but was relegated from the Premier League in the same season.

Premier League teams Fulham, Leeds, Sunderland and Wolverhampton joined the Gunners in the last 16.

## Leipzig's Champions League hopes hit by Wolfsburg

ASSOCIATED PRESS ■ Berlin

Leipzig's Champions League hopes took a blow in a 2-2 draw with lowly Wolfsburg in the Bundesliga on Sunday. It could have been worse for the Red Bull-backed club with Brajan Gruda salvaging the draw in the 89th minute and Leipzig goalkeeper Maarten Vandevoortdruiving Christian Eriksen's effort from the last kick of the game.

"It's a bitter result for us. We wanted three points," Gruda said. Leipzig dropped to fifth, two points behind Stuttgart and just a point above Bayer Leverkusen with 12 rounds remaining. Only the top four qualify for Europe's premier club competition.

Wolfsburg moved a point above the relegation zone. Mohamed Amoura broke the



deadlock for Wolfsburg early in the second half after Adam Daghighi surged past Max Finkgrafe and Nicolas Seiwald before laying the

ball back. Amoura fired inside the far post. The otherwise excellent Wolfsburg goalkeeper Kamil Grabara gifted Leipzig a way back

with a kickout that went straight to Gruda, who laid it off for Yan Diomande to equalise in the 70th.

Wolfsburg substitute Mattias Svanberg restored his team's lead eight minutes later, but Gruda replied in the 89th to salvage a point for Leipzig after its German Cup exit to Bayern Munich.

Leipzig hosts second-place Borussia Dortmund next weekend, when Stuttgart plays bottom side Heidenheim and Leverkusen visits Union Berlin.

A late penalty from Alexis Claude-Maurice was enough for Augsburg to beat Heidenheim 1-0 in Sunday's early kickoff.

Bayern leads by six points after 22 rounds, but will have to play the next games without injured captain Manuel Neuer, who picked up a calf injury in Saturday's win over Werder Bremen.



## Rayo Vallecano stuns Atletico Madrid

ASSOCIATED PRESS ■ Madrid

Struggling Rayo Vallecano upset Atletico Madrid 3-0 in La Liga in a stunning win watched by only around 5,000 people because of a protest by Rayo fans.

It was Atletico's second consecutive Spanish league loss but came only three days after it had routed Barcelona 4-0 in the first leg of the Copa del Rey semifinals at home. Coach Diego Simeone rested some of his regular starters after Thursday's match against Barcelona.

The result dropped Atletico to fourth place, behind Villarreal, Barcelona and Real Madrid, which won 4-1 at Real Sociedad on Saturday. Atletico trails Madrid by 15 points after 24 rounds. Barcelona can retake the lead and move one point ahead of Madrid if it wins at Girona on Monday.

"It feels like we've given up in the league," Atletico goalkeeper Jan Oblak

said. "We can't lose games like this and play like this. It's going to be difficult to compete this way. You can't choose games, you always have to play at your best, you have to win, and I get the feeling we're not doing that."

Someone did not agree with Oblak's comments that appeared to suggest it was a mistake to rest players.

"The team isn't choosing games," Someone said. "We competed poorly, and when you compete poorly, the opponent plays better than you and beats you." Rayo, which hadn't beaten Atletico in 19 straight games since 2013, moved out of the relegation zone with the victory, which ended a four-game losing streak for the team in all competitions. The match was played at Butarque Stadium, home of second-division club Leganes in Madrid, because the field at Rayo's Vallecas Stadium remained in poor condition after the grass had to be fully replaced. Rayo's

home game against Oviedo last weekend had to be postponed on short notice because of the field condition.

Rayo fans have been upset with club president Raul Martin Presa and called for a boycott of the game against Atletico. Hundreds of Rayo fans protested outside Vallecas Stadium hours before Sunday's match at Butarque, chanting and showing banners calling for Presa's resignation.

Rayo players, along with Spain's players' association, had complained about the conditions being offered by the club to the squad. About 5,300 fans attended the match at Butarque, which had many empty seats. Butarque holds about 12,000 fans in southern Madrid. Rayo's previous last league win was 2-1 against Mallorca in January. "We always prefer to have the fans close to us, but we respect their decision," Rayo defender Andrei Ratiu said.

## Napoli fights back twice in 2-2 draw with Roma

ASSOCIATED PRESS ■ Naples

Donyell Malen scored his second brace in a row for Roma but host Napoli twice came from behind to salvage a 2-2 draw in Serie A.

The result kept Napoli in third place, three points ahead of Roma after 25 rounds. Leader Inter Milan beat fifth-place Juventus 3-2 on Saturday for its sixth straight win in all competitions, increasing its gap to rival AC Milan to eight points. Napoli is three points behind AC Milan, which has a game in hand.

Malen, the Dutch forward who signed on loan from Aston Villa in the winter



transfer window, also scored twice in Roma's 2-0 win against Cagliari on Feb. 9.

Malen opened the scoring Sunday in the seventh minute, then converted a 71st-minute penalty kick in Roma's only two attempts on target.

## Omarzai's all-round heroics seal win for Afghanistan over UAE

**AMIT KUMAR DAS** ■ New Delhi

All-rounder Azmatullah Omarzai delivered a match-winning performance, claiming four wickets before smashing an unbeaten 40 to guide Afghanistan to a five-wicket victory over United Arab Emirates in their must-win T20 World Cup clash on Monday.

The win opened Afghanistan's account in the tournament and kept their slim Super Eight hopes alive in Group D. It also confirmed South Africa's place in the next round as they occupy the top spot with six points, followed by New Zealand in second place and Afghanistan in third. UAE slipped to fourth.

Omarzai led the bowling

effort with superb control of line and length, returning figures of 4 for 15 from his four overs as UAE posted 160 for 9, built around Sohaib Khan's well-crafted 68 off 48 balls.

In reply, Afghanistan suffered early setbacks as the in-form Rahmanullah Gurbaz (0) and Gulbadin Naib (13) departed cheaply, leaving them at 41 for 2 at the end of the Powerplay.

Ibrahim Zadran steadied the innings with a composed 53 off 41 balls, striking six boundaries and a six to anchor the chase. After his dismissal, Darwish Rasooli (33) and Omarzai combined to steer Afghanistan home, reaching 162 for 5 in 19.2 overs. The chase briefly grew tense when Zadran holed



Afghanistan's Azmatullah Omarzai and Mohammad Nabi celebrate the win during the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2026 cricket match between Afghanistan and UAE at Arun Jaitley Stadium in New Delhi

out to Muhammad Waseem off Muhammad Arfan, who also produced a peach of a delivery to remove Sediqullah Atal earlier.

With 61 required from 36 balls, Rasooli counterattacked with two fours and a six, adding 43 runs off 26 deliveries with Omarzai before being bowled by Junaid Siddique.

Needing 17 off the final two overs, Omarzai shifted gears, launching Muhammad Jawadullah into the stands before an inside edge raced to the boundary, reducing the equation to four runs in the final over, which Afghanistan completed without further alarm. Earlier, Sohaib stitched together a 57-ball 84-run partnership for the third wicket

with Alishan Sharafu (40 off 29) to rebuild the innings after the early setbacks.

However, Afghanistan clawed back with a cluster of wickets in the middle overs, leaving UAE at 121 for 6 in the 16th over.

Sohaib added another 31 runs with Haider Ali before Omarzai returned to dismiss him in the 19th over, completing his fourth wicket.

Omarzai was rewarded for mixing his line and length as he struck early, removing last match's hero Aryansh Sharma for a four-ball duck.

Skipper Muhammad Waseem (10) tried to push the pace hitting two boundaries before being trapped in front by Mujeeb Ur Rahman as UAE slipped to 13 for 2.

UAE's batters handled the Afghan spinners effectively during the Powerplay, punishing loose deliveries. Sharafu struck two boundaries off Mujeeb as UAE raced to 55 for 2, before launching Rashid Khan for a six to bring up the half-century stand.

However, Ziaur Rahman, who came in for left-arm quick Fazalhaq Farooqi, and spinner Noor Ahmad proved expensive.

Rahman conceded 16 runs in his opening over, with Sohaib striking three boundaries.

Noor too endured a tough spell, being hit for two sixes by Sohaib over cover and mid-wicket as UAE progressed to 93 for 2 in 10 overs. (PTI)

## Axar Patel: How India's 'everyday hero' silently killed Pakistan's chase

**G UNNIKRISHNAN** ■ Colombo

Axar Patel stood with his hands stretched, a smile beaming across his face. He just had Pakistan batter Usman Khan stumped by Ishan Kishan by a mile for 44.

The dismissal reduced Pakistan to 73 for five, signalling a realistic end to their chase of 176 in the high-voltage T20 World Cup match on Sunday. From a match perspective, the left-arm spinner's celebration was perhaps triggered by the realisation that he had all but ended Pakistan's hopes.

But it could also have been something deeply personal.

Usman had smashed Axar for six boundaries in his 34-ball innings, including back-to-back fours on two occasions.

However, the critical moment of his dismissal was hardly dramatic.



India's Axar Patel celebrates with teammates after taking the wicket of Pakistan's Babar Azam during an ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2026 cricket match between India and Pakistan, at R Premadasa Stadium, in Colombo, Sri Lanka

the one at the Premadasa, shrewd variations of length stemming out of his sharp observatory powers makes him a formidable customer.

Axar pulled his length back by just that bit, preempting Usman's shimmy. The Pakistan wicketkeeper batter could only swish in hope and Kishan did the rest with ease from behind the stumps.

Axar explained his method. "Basically, what was happening on the wicket, the odd ball was skidding a little more, and some other balls were spinning more. When we came to bowl in the second innings, I realised that the new ball was skidding a little more," Axar said in the post-match press conference.

"So the plan is to observe what the batsman wants to do, in which area he wants to target me. After that I change my line or length. And

the second dismissal (Usman) happened when he was stepping out. So I again went for my length. So, yeah, I plan like that," he added.

A few minutes earlier, Axar also snapped an edgy 16-minute stay of Babar Azam.

Sensing the Babar's growing impatience, the 32-year-old slipped in a fuller delivery on the off-stump and the former Pakistan captain took the bait.

A wild slog sweep intended to release the mounting pressure ended in Babar losing his stumps.

"He has always been a kid with a big heart. His biggest asset is his ability to observe, and put those observations into practice. He clearly knows what are his strengths and what are his limitations. It is a good quality to have for sportspersons," tells Amrisha Patel, childhood coach of Axar. (PTI)



## Pakistan lost the game in first innings itself: Waqar

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA** ■ New Delhi

Pointing out Pakistan's tactical errors in the 61-run loss to India, pace legend Waqar Younis said the side was out of the high-profile T20 World Cup clash the moment Suryakumar Yadav's men reached 175 after being invited to bat.

Speaking on Star Sports, Younis said Pakistan didn't stand a chance after India posted the stiff target in Colombo on Sunday night.

"Pakistan lost the game in the first innings. Once India reached 175, the game was out of Pakistan's reach. The ball was spinning, and Suryakumar Yadav was smart with his bowling changes," Younis said.

When you look at how much spin Pakistani bowlers got, I don't think they used them as well as India did. But the game was over in the first innings because India scored too many runs.

"We always knew Pakistan's batting is not great. But if India had scored 140 or 150 instead of 175, things might have been different," he added. India rode on a blazing

40-ball 77 by opener Ishan Kishan and some handy contributions in the middle order to post the imposing total. In reply, Pakistan folded for 114 in 18 overs.

"He (Suryakumar) gave the new ball to Hardik Pandya up front. Jasprit Bumrah was outstanding as always, attacking the stumps, swinging and seaming the ball. It was very difficult for Pakistan after that. Salman Ali Agha allowed that to happen by not introducing Usman Tariq early.

"Tariq was superb, taking a wicket and conceding just 24 runs. We have been talking about him for weeks. But he was held back for too long. By the time he got the ball, Ishan Kishan had already done the damage. That is where the match was lost," he explained. Former India captain Sunil Gavaskar credited Suryakumar for having situational awareness.

"He has led from the front. In the match against USA, when India were in trouble at 77 for 6, Surya bailed the team out and here against Pakistan, when he came out to bat, India were at 88-2 and then he batted till the 19th over, scoring 32 runs.



## Sri Lanka secure a berth in Super Eight

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA** ■ Pallekele (Sri Lanka)

Opener Pathum Nissanka on Monday turned a tricky chase into a walk in the park, his belligerent 52-ball 100 powering Sri Lanka to an eight-wicket win over Australia and securing their place in the Super Eights here.

Set a record target of 182 at this venue, Sri Lanka rode on Nissanka's unbeaten knock and Kusal Mendis's 38-ball 51 to complete the task in 18 overs and leave Australia's qualification hopes hanging by a thread.

Pavan Rathnayake remained not out on 28 off 15 balls.

Nissanka smashed 10 fours and five sixes during his match-winning knock.

Australia will now need to win by a massive margin against Oman in their final match and rely on both Sri Lanka and Ireland to beat Zimbabwe to have any sort of outside chance whatsoever. In fact if Zimbabwe manage to beat Ireland on Thursday, then Australia will be knocked out even

before meeting Oman in their last group league game.

Earlier, Mitchell Marsh and Travis Head blazed away to explosive fifties before Sri Lanka rallied to bowl out Australia for 181.

Coming back into the playing XI after missing the team's first two matches of the tournament due to an injury, Marsh got into the act straightaway, clobbering 54 in 27 balls.

Head was equally brutal during his 29-ball 56, as the opening duo added 104 runs in less than nine overs to set Australia up for a 200-plus total.

But the Sri Lankans did much better in the back 10, with leg-spinner Dushan Hemantha (3/37 in 4 overs) emerging as the most successful bowler for the home team. The last four wickets fell for only six runs.

In the chase, Sri Lanka copped an early blow when Kusal Perera failed to connect properly with a Marcus Stoinis ball and ended up slicing it to the deep backward point fielder.

## Babar faces heat: Livid ex-Pak players demand his axing after India debacle

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA** ■ Karachi

Under-performing batting star Babar Azam found himself in the line of fire after Pakistan's 61-run loss to bitter foes India in a T20 World Cup match as several former players in the country demanded his sacking alongside some other seniors.

Former captain Babar, senior spinner Shadab Khan and pace spearhead Shaheen Shah Afridi failed to come good in the lop-sided contest in Colombo on Sunday night. While the Pakistani bowling was taken apart by young opener Ishan Kishan (77 off 40), their



batters were foxed by the combined might of India's top pacers and spinners.

"If it was in my hands, I would not pick Babar, Shadab and Shaheen again in the T20 team. They have had plenty of chances to

come through for Pakistan but failed again yesterday," former captain Shahid Afridi said.

Afridi said it was time to groom younger players in the format. While Shaheen was hammered for 31 runs

in two overs, Babar was cleaned up by Axar Patel for five while attempting a slog even though his team was three down for 13 runs in a steep chase of 176.

Former skipper and batting great Javed Miandad was not even willing to speak elaborately on the loss but acknowledged that Pakistan's cricket team has been unable to fight when put under pressure.

"Bhai bade matches main hi players ko character dikhana padta hai, woh hamare players nahi dekha paye (In big matches, players have to show character. Unfortunately our players didn't show that character)," he said.

## Nepal players need to be put under pressure for performance: Coach Nick



**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA** ■ Mumbai

Nepal coach Nick Pothas believes the country's players need to be put under more pressure going forward for tangible improvements and urged them to avoid repeating mistakes from the last two matches when they play their final T20 World Cup game against Scotland in Mumbai on Tuesday.

Nepal made a sparkling start to their T20 World Cup campaign with a last-ball finish in a narrow loss to England, but their performances have nosedived since, losing heavily to Italy and the West Indies by 10 and nine wickets respectively.

"If we're going to improve Nepal cricket, we need to have

an infrastructure below. Teams only get better when there's pressure on players to perform. I'm not sure what there exists in Nepal, but players need to feel like they're under pressure to perform in order for your cricket to improve," Pothas told reporters ahead of the Group C match.

Pothas said there is lot of skill in the dressing room but the pace of learning is not as fast it should be.

"Unfortunately, what we aren't doing is we're not learning fast enough as a group. Leading into the Scotland game, all we want to see guys do is compete, but not make the same errors we're making repeatedly. That's the important part.

"We're a very energetic side, a very passionate side with a great following that have come to watch us play so we'd like to give that following something to remember this World Cup by," Pothas added.

The former South African wicketkeeper-batter said exposure to conditions and situations outside their comfort zone has also affected Nepal's performances.

"We're expecting the players to learn quicker, (but) now what makes that a little bit more difficult is exposure to various conditions and exposure to high-level cricket," he said.

"For these players, a lot of their cricket is played in Nepal where the wickets suit their style of play and you can get

away with not executing quite as much because of the standard of the cricket. When you come to a World Cup, you don't get away with that kind of thing."

Pothas admitted Nepal will need a more robust structure in domestic cricket in order to make the national side stronger.

"That's a conversation to be had with (Cricket Association of Nepal's secretary) Paras (Khadka) as to how we structure the side," he said. "One thing I will say is that I've been on three different assignments with Nepal and in every one of those assignments, we've had two managers in the change room and they've been different managers."

## NZ eye Super 8 berth, end to powerplay woes

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA** ■ Chennai

New Zealand will look to address the frailties exposed by South Africa and reaffirm their status as title contenders by sealing a Super Eight berth when they face bottom-placed Canada in their final Group D fixture of the T20 World Cup here on Tuesday.

Having played a five-match T20I series in India just before the World Cup, the Black Caps entered the



tournament fairly acclimated to subcontinental conditions. Comfortable and the United Arab Emirates only strengthened their belief.

However, the Kiwis received a reality check

against a formidable South African unit. The seven-wicket defeat exposed weaknesses in every department, particularly with the bat.

New Zealand's powerplay struggles have been a recurring concern, with early wickets disrupting momentum and leaving the middle order to do the repair work.

Rachin Ravindra's form is another big worry for the side as the all-rounder, who is a crucial cog in New Zealand's top order, has

failed to convert starts.

With the Super Eights approaching, the team management will hope he rediscovers his rhythm quickly.

With the ball, New Zealand failed to make early inroads against South Africa.

"We couldn't quite get that sort of 200 total that we wanted to get to. I think we'll put our hands up and say we weren't as good as we could be with the ball as well," New Zealand batter Darryl Mitchell said after the loss to South Africa.

## Australia add Steve Smith as replacement of Josh Hazlewood

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA** ■ Pallekele

Senior Australia batter Steve Smith was on Monday approved as replacement for the injured pacer Josh Hazlewood, hours before his side's must-win T20 World Cup match against Sri Lanka.

Smith thus becomes the 15th member of the injury-hit Australia squad.



"Smith is named as a replacement for Hazlewood, who is now officially ruled out from participating in the

tournament due to a calf injury. The team's medical staff had hoped to have him fit in time to feature in the latter parts of the tournament but were unsuccessful," the ICC said in statement.

Smith had earlier been flown to Sri Lanka as cover for skipper Mitchell Marsh, who missed Australia's opening two matches due to a testicular injury.

नई दिल्ली, मंगलवार, 17 फरवरी 2026

अब राजनीति नहीं, नतीजों का वक्त: मुख्यमंत्री रेखा गुप्ता ने विपक्ष को घेरा

1075 करोड़ की परियोजनाओं की शुरुआत

पूर्वी दिल्ली के लिए खोला सड़काना
पायनियर समाचार सेवा। नई दिल्ली



जल निकासी और बाढ़ नियंत्रण पर बड़ा फोकस

सिंहवाड़ एवं बाढ़ नियंत्रण विभाग के तहत भी कई आराम कायम किए जा रहे हैं। इसमें 10 नालों का पुनर्निर्माण, 3 नालों का समूह, 24 बाउंड्री वॉल का निर्माण और 18 सड़कों का पूरा का निर्माण शामिल है। इन परियोजनाओं पर खर्च 272 करोड़ रुपये बरखा होगा। इन कार्यों के पूरा होने के बाद ही जल निकासी और बाढ़ नियंत्रण का काम शुरू होगा।

अब नतीजों का वक्त: मुख्यमंत्री रेखा गुप्ता ने विपक्ष को घेरा। उन्होंने कहा कि सरकार का काम है विकास करना और नतीजों को दिखाना। उन्होंने कहा कि सरकार का काम है विकास करना और नतीजों को दिखाना। उन्होंने कहा कि सरकार का काम है विकास करना और नतीजों को दिखाना।

दिल्ली की मुख्यमंत्री रेखा गुप्ता ने सोमवार को मंत्रिमंडल बैठक में विधानसभा के सदस्यों को संबोधित करते हुए कहा कि सरकार का काम है विकास करना और नतीजों को दिखाना। उन्होंने कहा कि सरकार का काम है विकास करना और नतीजों को दिखाना।

के विधानसभा के सदस्यों को संबोधित करते हुए कहा कि सरकार का काम है विकास करना और नतीजों को दिखाना। उन्होंने कहा कि सरकार का काम है विकास करना और नतीजों को दिखाना।

बहन के प्रेमी को हत्या गिरफ्तार, मेरठ की जानी नरेंद्र में फेंकी थी डेडबॉडी

नई दिल्ली। जनपट्टी थाना क्षेत्र में अपनी शहीदशुद्ध बहन के प्रेमी को हत्या करवा कर नतीजों को दिखाने के लिए नरेंद्र में फेंकी थी डेडबॉडी। नतीजों को दिखाने के लिए नरेंद्र में फेंकी थी डेडबॉडी। नतीजों को दिखाने के लिए नरेंद्र में फेंकी थी डेडबॉडी।

टोपी माने के विवाद में हुई थी छात्र की हत्या

एतैतहसिक महाशिवरात्रि भजन जैमिंग नाइट में हजारों ने भाव-विभोर

पायनियर समाचार सेवा। गुडगांव

दिल्ली में हुए टोपी माने के विवाद में छात्र की हत्या। एतैतहसिक महाशिवरात्रि भजन जैमिंग नाइट में हजारों ने भाव-विभोर। पायनियर समाचार सेवा। गुडगांव

धर्म की मजबूती के लिए हर परिवार साल में एक बार धार्मिक स्थलों की यात्रा करने: प्रेमजी

हिंदू धर्म संकीर्ण पूजा पद्धति नहीं जीवन जीने की एक कला है: श्री प्रकाश दास जी महाराज

पायनियर समाचार सेवा। गुडगांव

हिंदू धर्म संकीर्ण पूजा पद्धति नहीं जीवन जीने की एक कला है: श्री प्रकाश दास जी महाराज। पायनियर समाचार सेवा। गुडगांव



संगठित हिंदू समाज ही समर्थ भारत की नींव: आशीष गुप्ता

पापद आशीष गुप्ता ने अपने संबोधन में कहा कि नागरिक कर्तव्यों और पारिवारिक संरक्षण पर जोर देते हुए उन्होंने कहा कि लोकतंत्र का लयात्मक रूप को बढ़ावा देना ही हमारा धर्म है। संगठित हिंदू समाज ही समर्थ भारत की नींव है।

पेंशन, राशन और रोजगार के मुद्दों पर कांग्रेस का पैदल मार्च, राष्ट्रपति के नाम सौंपा ज्ञापन

पायनियर समाचार सेवा। फरीदाबाद

जिला कांग्रेस कमेटी के अध्यक्ष बजरंग कौर ने बताया कि कांग्रेस पार्टी के सदस्यों को राशन और रोजगार के मुद्दों पर पैदल मार्च का आयोजन किया जा रहा है।



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खिंचे चले आगे की शान 6 बजे गंगा

आयुक्तिका का हाथ समाज और हजारां लोगों के मन में फिंक का न्यार उभारना। पायनियर समाचार सेवा। नई दिल्ली

एतैतहसिक महाशिवरात्रि भजन जैमिंग नाइट में हजारों ने भाव-विभोर

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शीला माता मंदिर में पांच हांग चैत्र मेरु

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Public notice regarding a property dispute involving Mrs. Alice Manoj Gandhi and others. The notice mentions a plot of land in Sector 17, Noida, and details the legal proceedings and the parties involved.

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Advertisement for 'The Pioneer Classified' featuring a 'CHANGE OF NAME' notice for Nagendra Mourya S/o Chandra Deep Ram R/o 00, Gautam Nagar, Pilihoth (Uttar Pradesh) 262122. The notice states that the name has been changed to Nagendra Mourya to all future purposes.

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