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Happening today

INDIA, AIMING to stay on course for a second title, face Japan in quarterfinals of the Thomas Cup.

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Business as Usual



'GOLI MAARO' REMARK IN 2020

No hate speech offence made out: Top court clean chit to Thakur, Parvesh



BJP leader Anurag Thakur, (right) Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Parvesh Sahib Singh

Ananthakrishnan G

AGREEING WITH the conclusion that "no cognizable offence is made out" against former Union Minister Anurag Thakur and Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Parvesh Sahib Singh Verma, the Supreme Court has cleared the two BJP leaders in a complaint that they delivered alleged hate speeches targeting those protesting the Citizenship (Amendment) Act in Delhi in January 2020.

Dealing with a plea by CPM leaders Brinda Karat and K M Tiwari, the bench of Justices Vikram Nath and Sandeep Mehta upheld the findings of the Delhi High Court which said the remarks of the BJP leaders did not incite communal violence or public disorder.

"Upon a careful consideration of the material placed on record, including the alleged speeches, the status report dated February 26, 2020, submitted

NATION PAGE 6



RUCHIR SHARMA ON BJP DOMINANCE: NO RIVAL ON RIGHT, OPP DIVIDED

THREE YEARS after Haryana began a push for investment opportunities in Tanzania, with regular visits by officials and private delegations, the state government has started identifying nearly one lakh acres in the East African country for its farmers to pursue agricultural ventures.

A senior Haryana government official told *The Indian Express* that after identifying land that can be acquired by the

WEST BENGAL CM TARGETS BJP THE DAY AFTER POLLS

Guard EVM strong rooms, exit polls fixed, Mamata tells party

If attacked, do not retaliate now... we will cross 226 seats: CM to TMC



Ravik Bhattacharya Kolkata, April 30

A DAY after polling concluded in West Bengal and most exit polls gave the Opposition BJP the edge, TMC chief and Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee urged party workers and people of the state to guard strong rooms where Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) are stored, saying she too would stand vigil.

In a video message posted on social media, Banerjee rejected the exit poll projections, saying they had been aired on the "instruction of the BJP" to "demoralise" TMC workers and said her party would cross 226 seats in the House of 294.

Asking TMC workers to remain calm, she said they must not "retaliate right now" if attacked. "I am asking our workers and the general public to guard the strong rooms and

»CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee outside a school in Kolkata which serves as a strong room, Thursday. EXPRESS

High drama in Kolkata: TMC claims tampering of EVMs, poll officials reject charge

Ravik Bhattacharya & Atri Mitra Kolkata, April 30

HOURS AFTER Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee urged her party to guard the EVM strong rooms, there was high drama in Kolkata Thursday night as TMC candidates Kunal Ghosh and Shashi Panja and workers alleged EVM tampering and sat on a dharna at the Khudiram Anushilan Kendra near Netaji Indoor Stadium. BJP candidates too rushed to the spot.

Banerjee, meanwhile,

reached the Sakshat Memorial Girls High School, a strong room for EVMs from her constituency Bhabanipur, at 8.15 pm and remained there until midnight.

Workers of both the TMC and BJP gathered outside the school and there was heavy police deployment there.

Banerjee later said: "I have requested that candidates and election agents be given proper facilities. I was here for four hours. I was here to keep a vigil. Our EVMs are here. At the

»CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

In Bengal, 48 seats showed dip in voter numbers, account for 28% of SIR deletions

10 seats with maximum deletions in S.I.R.

Seats	Votes polled in 2021	Votes polled in 2026	Change in %	Deletions in adjudication
Samserganj	1,88,579	1,55,042	-17.8	74,775
Lalgola	1,90,437	1,79,554	-5.7	55,420
Bhagabangola	2,25,990	2,17,767	-3.6	47,493
Raghunathganj	1,90,478	1,94,238	2	46,100
Metiaburuz	1,96,582	1,79,640	-8.6	39,579
Farakka	1,86,423	1,74,411	-6.4	38,222
Suti	2,16,328	2,20,200	1.8	37,965
Mothabari	1,63,143	1,60,981	-1.3	37,255
Jangipur	1,98,261	2,11,406	6.6	36,581
Ratua	2,19,147	2,31,606	5.7	35,573

Sandeep Singh & Jatin Anand New Delhi, April 30

THE West Bengal elections stood out for two reasons: one, a new criterion of 'logical discrepancies' that deleted 27.16 lakh names from electoral roll, and two, a record turnout of 92.95% which saw 31 lakh more votes polled compared with 2021.

An analysis of the two sets of data throws up 96 seats, which display a telling pattern. In 48 seats, the number of voters this

time was lower than in 2021. These 48 account for 28% of the total 27.16 lakh deletions. This suggests that the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) could have had an impact on the number of voters who turned out.

BJP had won 15 of these 48 seats in 2021.

Of the remaining 246 seats where the number of voters is higher than in 2021, 48 seats polled at least 20,000 more votes. These 48 accounted 42% of the total additional votes

»CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

BRENT CRUDE PRICES HIT \$126/BARREL

Rupee breaches 95-mark amid fresh war concerns, spike in oil prices

Akash Mandal Mumbai, April 30

THE RUPEE fell past the 95-per-dollar mark Thursday on its way to hitting a new all-time low of 95.34-per-dollar as fresh concerns about the war in West Asia propelled global crude oil prices to a four-year high. Having closed at 94.85 Wednesday, the rupee ended Thursday only slightly weaker at 94.92.

Domestic stock markets also behaved similarly, with Nifty and Sensex falling as much as 1.6% during the day before closing 0.75% lower. However, for April as a whole, the two benchmark indices were up 7.8% — the biggest monthly gain in over two years — after falling more than 11% in March.

Investor apprehension weighed heavy Thursday as Brent crude oil prices surged to \$126 per barrel, with worries mounting that the conflict in West Asia could escalate after American news website Axios reported that US President Donald Trump would be briefed on "new plans for potential military action" in Iran.

Market sentiment was also weighed down by cautious commentary by the US Federal Reserve, which late Wednesday left the federal funds rate target range unchanged at 3.5-3.75%.

"The Fed's messaging has

4% fall since Feb-end



FIGURES ARE DAILY CLOSING LEVELS OF RUPEE'S US DOLLAR EXCHANGE RATE. SOURCE: INVESTING.COM

THE WORLD

IRAN THREATENS 'PAINFUL' RESPONSE IF U.S. ATTACKS PAGE 18

certainly turned more hawkish," Madhavi Arora, Chief Economist at Emkay Global Financial Services, said. It is unlikely the central bank "will move on rates until there is greater clarity" on the conflict and evidence that effects of the US tariffs are fading, Arora said.

The rupee is now down more than 4% since the US and Israel attacked Iran on February 28, with Foreign Portfolio

»CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

JAMMU TO SRINAGAR IN LESS THAN 5 HRS

THE TRAIN'S design, said Railways Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw, is significantly different as it can operate even at -10°C. A single train has more than 3,000 semi-conductor chips and is "highly computerised".

THE DAY'S first train service starts from Jammu Tawi at 6.20 am and after 3 stops will reach Srinagar at 11.10 am. At 2 pm, it will leave Srinagar and reach Jammu Tawi by 6.50 pm. The pair will run 6 days a week.

21 SECURITY personnel, including RPF commandos, to provide security. REPORTS: PAGES 9, 15



A Vande Bharat Express crosses the Chenab Bridge for the first time, Thursday after Railways Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw flagged off the 20-coach train service between Jammu and Srinagar. Services for the public will commence on May 2. PTI

DON'T MAKE IT A FIGHT BETWEEN STATE, CITIZENS: SC

AIIMS can't choose for parents: SC refuses to hear plea against ending minor's pregnancy

Amend law to remove time limit in case of unwanted pregnancy on account of rape of minor girl: CJI

Ananthakrishnan G New Delhi, April 30

UNDERLINING THAT an unwanted pregnancy cannot be thrust on anyone, the Supreme Court on Thursday refused to entertain a curative petition filed by the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), contesting the court's earlier decision to allow a 15-year-old rape survivor to terminate her 30-week pregnancy. The court said it "will not allow the institution to choose for the parents".

"This is a case of child rape. The victim will have a lifelong scar and trauma. It is now a fight between the foetus and the child. The child must survive, and she must have a dignified life," observed Chief Justice of India Surya Kant, heading a two-Judge bench which included Justice Joymaya Bagchi.

The CJI also said the Medical Termination of Pregnancy (MTP) Act should be amended to remove the time limit for legal termination of pregnancies arising out of rape of minor girls.

On April 24, another two-Judge bench of Justices BV Nagarathna and Ujjal Bhuyan had allowed the medical termination of pregnancy. AIIMS had then filed a review petition, which was dismissed by the bench on Wednesday. AIIMS then filed a curative petition against the dismissal of the review petition.

Appearing for AIIMS on Thursday, Additional Solicitor General Aishwarya Bhati said the foetus was already 30 weeks old, and waiting for four more weeks would be in the interest of the minor as well as the foetus. "What has to be done is

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In the past, courts allowed Govt stand of carrying foetus to full term

Apurva Vishwanath New Delhi, April 30

IN RECENT cases involving minors seeking termination of advanced pregnancies, even in cases of rape, the Centre has advocated for carrying the foetus to full term followed by adoption, instead of approving abortions beyond the 24-week statutory limit.

The Centre's lawyers and the All India Institute of Medical Sciences

(AIIMS), which is the nodal medical body assigned by the court for abortion cases, have argued that termination of pregnancy in advanced cases is "akin to foeticide".

Additional Solicitor General Aishwarya Bhati made this argument on Thursday, too, in the curative plea filed by AIIMS, pressing for the 15-year-old rape survivor to carry the foetus for "four more weeks" in the interest of the minor as well as the foetus.

While the SC refused to entertain the plea in this case, courts have declined to allow

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In MP, a KBC-winning tehsildar, a flood relief 'scam', and hundreds of farmers in limbo

Anand Mohan J Sheopur, April 30

IN THE August 2021 floods that ravaged Madhya Pradesh's Sheopur district, Jairam lost more livestock than most in his village of Lalitpura: 40 rabbits, 15 chickens, 13 goats, four cows, two buffaloes, and two calves, besides three homes. What he didn't know then was much of the compensation meant for families like his would never



Makand Suman; Dara Singh Meena; Sugreev Kushwaha; and Vishnu Kushwaha say they have all been waiting for government help.

reach them. While the money remains elusive, the case has been

thrust into the limelight once more with the arrest of a tehsildar, Amita Singh Tomar, on

allegations of irregularities. Tomar, a key accused in the case, had gained fame in 2019 after winning Rs 50 lakh on Amitabh Bachchan's *Kaun Banega Crorepati* (KBC).

"We got only Rs 5,000," Jairam's wife, Urmala, alleged when *The Indian Express* visited their home. "Everyone in our family had to take up work; three children dropped out of school. We built a

»CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

SOMVEER GHASOLA FROM BHIWANI DISTRICT HAS ACQUIRED 65 ACRES ON A 99-YEAR LEASE FOR AN EQUIVALENT OF Rs 1.5 CR IN TANZANIA, POINTED OUT AN ACRE IN HARYANA CAN COST Rs 25 LAKH TO OVER Rs 1 CR

Haryana to Tanzania: With help from state govt, farmers bridge the gap

Sukhbir Siwach Chandigarh, April 30

THREE YEARS after Haryana began a push for investment opportunities in Tanzania, with regular visits by officials and private delegations, the state government has started identifying nearly one lakh acres in the East African country for its farmers to pursue agricultural ventures.

A senior Haryana government official told *The Indian Express* that after identifying land that can be acquired by the

state's farmers, "we will verify documentation with the authorities so that they don't face difficulties". "We also plan to sign an MoU with the Tanzanian government to formalise this cooperation," the official said, marking the Haryana government's first overseas initiative undertaken at such a large scale.

On Wednesday, Haryana Foreign Cooperation Minister Rao Narbir Singh chaired a meeting with potential investors keen to explore opportunities in Tanzania and other African countries.



Yogesh Sharma (above), a CA from Haryana, has acquired 160 acres in Morogoro, Tanzania; his mother inspecting the fields EXPRESS

The fertile soil and climatic conditions in Tanzania, as well as cheap availability of land, are

the reasons for Haryana zooming in on the country. Tanzania's location along the Indian Ocean offers direct maritime routes to India and global markets, making agricultural exports more viable.

Somveer Ghasola from Bhiwani district is among Haryana farmers who have already begun leasing land in Tanzania.

Ghasola, who has acquired 65 acres on a 99-year lease for equivalent of Rs 1.5 crore, points out the striking contrast in land prices. "In Haryana, an acre of land can cost between Rs 25 lakh and over Rs 1 crore de-

pending on location," says the 58-year-old.

Officials say the idea to explore options in Tanzania originated with Manohar Lal Khattar as Chief Minister, with his government giving the slogan "Go Global". Following that, Haryana established the dedicated "Department of Foreign Cooperation" to strengthen international partnerships.

Since Tanzania was identified as a lucrative destination, delegations of Haryana officials and interested investors have visited the country regularly. Like Khattar, his successor as

CM, Nayab Singh Saini, has been holding meetings with Tanzanian officials and stakeholders for large-scale farming opportunities.

Earlier this year, a Haryana-Africa Strategic Partnership Meeting was organised at Surajkund in Faridabad.

Ghasola, who fought the 2024 Assembly elections as an Independent from Badhra incidentally and lost, had earlier set up a mining business near Tanzania's capital Dodoma. He bought the 65 acres he owns in 2025 for warehousing initially,

»CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

REVIEW PLEA AGAINST MTP

‘Grave complications’: AIIMS cites condition of child born under similar circumstances

Ananthakrishnan G
New Delhi, April 30

SEEKING RECALL of the Supreme Court’s April 24, 2026, order directing it to carry out medical termination of a 7-month pregnancy, the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) highlighted before the top court the risks associated with Medical Termination of Pregnancy (MTP), citing the condition of a child born after the procedure was done on a minor rape survivor following a Delhi High Court order last year.

AIIMS said the pregnancy in that case was little over 23 weeks and the child was born alive on April 20, 2025. The child which celebrated its first birthday recently “has remained admitted at AIIMS and has suffered, and continues to suffer, severe, life-altering and permanent complications,” the Institute said.

The AIIMS submitted that “In addition to...grave medical complications...the child born alive has, as of date not been accepted by any Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) for care, and the prospects of the child being adopted in future are severely diminished — if not negligible — given the severity and permanence of the child’s conditions.”

The baby weighed “755 grams” which is “critically low, reflecting the consequences of extreme prematurity”, the plea pointed out.

It added, “The child required mechanical ventilation for approximately six to seven months following birth, indicative of critical and sustained respiratory failure from the very onset of extra-uterine life.”

AIIMS said its “team tried to wean the child from ventilator on many occasions and failed due to Tracheobronchomalacia and Bronchopulmonary Dysplasia (BPD) — a severe chronic lung disease directly caused by extreme prematurity — result-

ing in prolonged inability to sustain independent respiration”.

The institute said “the child suffered multiple episodes of sepsis during NICU admission, each constituting a life-threatening systemic infection requiring aggressive medical intervention” and “was diagnosed with Patent Ductus Arteriosus (PDA) and underwent surgical PDA ligation — a significant cardiac surgical procedure”.

It said, “finally, the child underwent tracheostomy on 24.12.2025 (a hole is created in the windpipe of the child and tube is inserted to facilitate breathing) and remains tracheostomised on room air”.

The review plea said “the child is now approximately one year of age and is entirely dependent on tracheostomy care for survival. Care of tracheostomy requires constant medical supervision. The child is at risk of life-threatening complications if the tube gets accidentally blocked or it comes out. Moreover, the child cannot speak.” It “has been diagnosed with Optic Disc Pallor, indicating significant and likely permanent vision impairment.”

AIIMS said “the child has been assessed to have Global Developmental Delay with a current developmental age of only 4 to 5 months — despite being chronologically approximately one year old — indicating severe neurodevelopmental compromise”.

The plea pointed out that “the treating medical team at AIIMS has documented” many “anticipated long-term complications and comorbidities for this child, each expected to persist for the child’s lifetime”.

AIIMS cited this as “real-world, empirical and documented proof” of the risks associated with abortion after the gestational 24-week period, but the SC went on to dismiss the review petition on April 29 and the curative petition on Thursday.

Allahabad HC quashes order saying father can give children’s custody to ‘any person’

Bhupendra Pandey
Lucknow, April 30

A DIVISION bench of the Allahabad High Court has quashed a single-bench order that held that a father had the right to transfer the custody of his minor child to any person, saying that this was “against all canons of law and morality”.

The division bench, headed by Chief Justice Arun Bhansali, was hearing a plea filed by a woman, who had raised objections to her estranged husband handing over the custody of her children, aged 6 and 4, to his married sister, terming it illegal.

In an order on April 3, a single bench of Justice Anil Kumar-X had dismissed the woman’s habeas corpus petition, stating, “...a father, being the guardian of a minor, has every right to transfer de facto the custody of his minor child to any person. Therefore, one of the parents cannot challenge the right of the father in order to have custody of a minor to another person according to his own will and consent.”

The woman, through her two minor sons, challenged the

single-bench order.

Hearing the appeal, a division bench of Chief Justice Bhansali and Justice Kshiti Shailendra stated on April 28, “A perusal of the conclusion arrived at by learned single judge wherein it has been held that a father, being the guardian of a minor, has every right to transfer de facto the custody of his minor child to ‘any person’, cannot be sustained under any circumstance.” It said, “Further finding that one of the parents cannot challenge the right of the father in order to have custody of minors to another person according to his own will and consent also is wholly unsustainable.”

“To dismiss the petition with the observations that the father has the right to transfer de facto custody of a minor child to any person, is against all canons of law and morality and the same, therefore, are required to be set aside,” the bench further added. Quashing and setting aside the single bench order, the division bench restored the habeas corpus writ petition to its original number and remanded the matter back to the single judge.

[FROM PAGE 1 | FULL REPORTS ON WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM]

Mamata

counting centres. I ask all our candidates in 294 seats to individually guard the strong rooms and counting centres. In my area, I will do so. Guard during the day and night. If I can do it, you too can. Stay awake at night during the vigil and in the morning hand over the job to others,” she said.

Banerjee alleged there was a plan to “change the machines (EVMs)” once they are taken out of strong rooms and sent to counting centres. “There should be no negligence on your part,” she said.

She instructed party leaders not to leave the counting table until she holds a press conference on May 4, the counting day. “Also, remember, whatever the count is on the table, they will change it while uploading it to computers. Keep an eye on that, too,” she said, adding, “I will be at the counting hall. All other candidates should also be in the counting hall. You have worked so hard. This you will have to do for Bengal.”

She accused the BJP of “manipulating the exit polls” to keep the market stable. “Since the BJP realised it has lost, it is playing a final game by using the media to discourage our workers. If the truth comes out, there will be a landslide in the share market. Therefore, to keep the share market stable, they did this. They did this in 2016 and in 2021, too. Whatever is shown in the name of exit polls is coming from the BJP,” she alleged.

“The Prime Minister, the

Home Minister, and (BJP) leaders of 19 states wanted to subdue us, but they themselves have been subdued in the voting machines. I assure you, whatever is being shown on TV channels is done through paying bribes or forcefully. This is because we may get 230 (seats). We will cross 226 in 2026,” she said.

She thanked voters for standing in long queues in the heat on polling day. “I am also grateful to our workers who fought hard during the elections. They tolerated atrocities by the Central forces,” she said.

Banerjee alleged that the Central forces and police officers from other states whom the Election Commission had deployed as observers “beat up” people and TMC workers. “Even women and children were not spared. I was awake for two nights as they (Central forces) raided the homes of our workers and leaders. Many of our workers have been arrested so that they cannot be our agents on polling day,” she said.

“Please remain calm and trust your Didi and the people of Bengal. Rest assured, our ‘Maamati-Manush government will be formed again. If attacked, don’t retaliate right now. Stay calm. I will ask the administration not to touch our workers on counting day,” she said. Targeting PM Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah, Banerjee said, “Through Amit Shah’s direct interference, Central forces have been used in the polls by BJP. First, it was the SIR and then the Central forces. People have answered through their votes. The BJP will get the answer on May 4.”

High drama

Netaji Indoor Stadium, we have seen EVMs being opened. So I visited here because I wanted to check. Initially, they stopped us. But later, the RO (returning officer) allowed me to enter. I will ensure that votes are not captured forcibly in a democratic set-up. This is our area. I could have brought thousands here. I did not.” The EVMs are sealed in strong rooms. On May 4, the day of counting, the EVMs will be brought to the counting centres.

The TMC, in a statement on X, accused the BJP of colluding with the Election Commission to tamper with ballot boxes and EVMs and described it as “the murder of democracy in broad daylight”.

The party claimed that CCTV footage showed ballot boxes being opened without the presence of authorised representatives of political parties.

Election officials rejected the TMC charge of tampering of EVMs. CEO Manoj Agarwal said, “Nothing has been done out of the statutory procedure of ECI. The allegation that came is baseless. Even after that, we are seeking a report. If anyone breaches the legal procedure, stern action will be taken.”

Smita Pandey, DEO of North Kolkata, said, “All EVMs are perfectly sealed and closed in the strong room. Their footage can be seen from the CCTV camera installed. In Khudiram Anushilan Kendra, there are seven ACs and one room is for postal ballots. What happened today is the segregation of postal ballots.”

“Our AEROs were doing that segregation process in the corridor of Khudiram Anushilan Kendra. We had already informed all political parties that we were going to do this process from 4 pm. So, this allegation is not correct. After the allegation, we went there with the candidates who protested, showing them everything was according to SOP by EC and there was no breach of strong room. Everything was recorded,” Pandey said.

This was hours after EC introduced a QR-based ID system to strengthen security at the counting centres.

The EC, in a press note, said: “To eliminate the possibility of any unauthorised persons from entering counting centres, the Election Commission of India has introduced a QR code-based Photo Identity Card module on ECINET.”

“A three-tier security mechanism has been prescribed for verification of identity at counting centres. At the first and second tiers, Photo Identity Cards issued by the RO (returning officers) shall be checked manually. At the third and innermost security cordon near the counting hall, entry shall be permitted only after successful verification through QR code scanning,” the EC said. “The new QR code-based Photo Identity Cards will be applicable for the categories of persons authorised by ECI to enter counting centres and halls, which include Returning Officers, Assistant Returning Officers, counting staff, technical personnel, candidates, election agents and counting agents, among others,” the EC said.

Pregnancy

foeticide itself, which is prohibited under the law,” she said.

The bench did not agree. “Unwanted pregnancies cannot be burdened on the woman,” the CJ said, adding that the hospital should keep in mind not just the fate of the unborn foetus, but also the trauma of the minor girl. “Imagine, she is a child. She should be studying now. But we want to make her a mother. Imagine the pain, the humiliation the child has suffered in this.”

The bench said it has to give priority to the choice of the girl’s family. “No, we will not allow the institution to choose for the parents. The parents will choose, the institution will enable the choice,” Justice Bagchi said.

Bhati said the MTP Act had laid down a cut-off period of 24 weeks because of the health risks beyond that. “Please amend your law that in case of an unwanted pregnancy on account of rape of a minor girl, the time limitation will not be there,” the CJ said. “This law should be very organic and it should be alive to the (advancements) in medical science... Also bring a law so that these kinds of trials are over in a week... Attach the property of the accused, give everything to the victim and finish it within a week,” he said, asking why a minor rape victim should suffer the trauma of the trial too.

“Law is not developed through momentary sentiments. Law has to see the whole life before the person. If required to be ruthless, it must become,”

the CJ said.

“What is your parens patriae (a legal doctrine allowing the state to act as the guardian for individuals unable to care for themselves) approach? Give respect to the citizen. Show data to the parents... and if they choose to keep it, then so be it. But if they think that mental health is in jeopardy, they will take a call. Please do not press your curative,” Justice Bagchi said.

“If a curative has to come, it has to come from them (the girl’s parents), not from you. Let us not make it a fight between the State and the citizens,” he said. “It is not for AIIMS to choose for the citizens. It is just to render medical service,” he said.

“Let not the medical personnel, because of their specialised knowledge, become the masters of the will of the people. The people will decide. We are also service providers. As Judges, we cannot decide for the litigant. If a litigant comes to us with a case, even if we know this case has no merit, we have to deal with it as per procedures of law. So do the doctors... they can’t decide for patients,” Justice Bagchi said.

Bhati then urged that the institute be permitted to counsel the parents and return to the court again. The bench said AIIMS was free to counsel, but added that it should be the parents and not the institute, which can come back to it.

The court also interacted with two AIIMS doctors, who cited the example of an earlier MTP to highlight the risk. “Too much focus on the child and not the mother who has gone through such pain,” the CJ said.

Re breaches 95-mark

Investors (FPIs) continuing to leave Indian financial markets due to concerns about how exposed the country’s economy is to higher energy prices.

According to Barclays analysts, the rupee is “one of the more vulnerable currencies to an energy price shock”. “After breaking through the key psychologically important level of 95.0, risks of further INR weakness remain, with potential to hit our 2026 year-end forecast of 96.80 sooner than expected,” Barclays said Thursday.

After selling \$12.7 billion of stocks in March, April has seen FPIs pull out to the tune of \$6.5 billion. So far in 2026, FPIs’ net equity sales have totalled \$20.7 billion — more than the \$18.9 billion they withdrew in all of 2025. Several foreign brokerages, including HSBC and Morgan Stanley, have downgraded their view on Indian equities in recent weeks.

“...what we are witnessing is a textbook reflexive trade — rising oil prices triggering FII (Foreign Institutional Investors) outflows, FII outflows compounding the dollar demand from oil importers, and the combination overwhelming whatever defence the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) is putting up,” said Anindya Banerjee, Head of Commodity and Currency Research at Kotak Secur-

ities. “The RBI is intervening and will continue to intervene. But the central bank’s strategy here is volatility management, not level defence,” Banerjee said.

The rupee breaching the 95-mark marks a reversal of the gains made in late March and early April after the RBI acted to curb speculative bets against the currency. Economists have warned that India’s Balance of Payments — the balance of the trade deficit and capital inflows such as Foreign Direct Investment and remittances — could be in the negative zone for a third straight year in 2026-27 and requires structural solutions.

“Exchange rate cannot be construed a shock absorbing mechanism in perpetuity, as increased levels of uncertainties and volatilities render it to transform into a pass-through mechanism of imported inflation seeping through multiple channels,” Soumya Kanti Ghosh, SBI’s Group Chief Economic Advisor, said in a note Wednesday. “It is thus imperative that a comprehensive set of measures are required given that BoP (Balance of Payments) could be negative for the third consecutive year.”

Ghosh expects India’s Balance of Payments to be (-)\$28 billion in 2026-27.

Haryana to Tanzania

he says. “The land lies along a national highway that connects four to five neighbouring countries. (I realised then) The land here is very fertile and offers immense opportunities for farming.”

Emphasising the math again, Ghasola says: “Depending on quality, land can be leased for Rs 25,000-Rs 50,000 per acre for 99 years, whereas in Haryana, a farmer pays around Rs 50,000 just for a one-year contract. This means that with an investment of Rs 50 lakh, a farmer can lease 100 acres and cultivate crops with good irrigation facilities.”

Among the crops Ghasola has identified as suited for the land are maize, rice, sugarcane, and horticultural crops, and says “the quality of cashew nuts is unmatched”.

“With Haryana farmers’ expertise in mechanized farming,

irrigation, and high-yield seeds, productivity can be significantly enhanced.”

Another Haryana entrepreneur who has invested in Tanzania is Shiv Kumar Kamboj, who has acquired a 20-acre factory site. Kamboj, who is from Yamunanagar district, purchased a core veneer factory from a Chinese national in September 2025, with nearly 50 employees.

“We process eucalyptus wood into core veneer (the inner layer providing strength and stability to engineered wood panels). Despite challenges during the rainy season from December to April, we have already supplied nearly 1,500 tonnes,” he says.

Officials also believe if a large number of Haryana farmers begin farming in Tanzania, it will boost exports of agricultural equipment.

48 seats showed voter dip

polled, but just 2.66 lakh deletions (average 5,548 per seat).

BJP had won 14 of these 48 seats in 2021.

On the deletions front too, the 27.16 lakh votes deleted show huge variation; it ranges from deletion of 74,775 votes in Samserganj to just 71 deletions in

Manbazar. With over 90 per cent voting in both the constituencies, the variation in deletions meant that while Samserganj (96.04%) saw a net decline in 33,536 votes polled (17.8% decline over 2021), Manbazar (91.73) saw a net addition of 20,605 votes polled (rise of 9.6 per cent).

Farmers in limbo

two-room house with loans taken from relatives.”

Official records in Sheopur show 960 farmers were listed as beneficiaries in Badoda tehsil, with a modest Rs 2,40,68,720 allocated after the survey.

Investigators say much of the money never reached the beneficiaries and instead found its way into 127 bank accounts held by people with no connection to flood victims — residents of towns as far as Shivpuri and Manpur, and, in some cases, relatives of patwaris who prepared the compensation lists.

Tomar, who was arrested in March, is among 30 arrested in the case, with police alleging the involvement of a network of revenue officials siphoning money meant for farmers.

Of the Rs 2.4 crore allocated for 960 farmers, less than Rs 30 lakh meant for 133 reached the intended beneficiaries. The rest was allegedly funnelled into unrelated accounts — on average, relief meant for six farmers was pooled into a single account, then withdrawn in careful fragments to avoid detection.

These transactions were allegedly cleared with Tomar’s digital credentials.

Courts allowed Govt stand of carrying foetus to full term

the termination of pregnancy in other cases in the past, allowing the Centre’s stand.

In January 2024, the Delhi HC recalled its order allowing a widow, who was then 32 weeks pregnant, to go for an abortion.

In July 2025, when the Delhi HC allowed abortion for a 16-year-old rape survivor, AIIMS moved an appeal arguing that the termination of a pregnancy at over 27 weeks would be “akin to foeticide”. After the HC’s division bench “suggested” to the minor’s mother to consider the Centre’s stand, it was agreed that the 16-year-old would carry the pregnancy to full term.

On October 10, 2023, AIIMS

had written to the Supreme Court in the case of a 27-year-old married woman seeking to end her 26-week pregnancy. The doctor’s email sought a directive on whether “foeticide” must be performed to give effect to the judicial order allowing termination. After receiving the AIIMS report, the same two-judge SC bench was split on allowing the abortion. One of the judges, Justice Hima Kohli, had asked which court would say “stop the foetal heartbeat”.

A larger three-judge bench then rescinded the order on abortion, observing that “we cannot kill a child”.

However, in April 2024, the

Hate speech

before the trial court, and the reasons recorded by the courts below, we are in agreement with the conclusion that no cognizable offence is made out,” the bench said in its order Wednesday. The petition said that on January 27, 2020, Thakur made a hate speech at a rally, shouting the slogan “desh ke gaddaron ko” and exhorting the crowd to respond with “goli maar saalon ko”.

It also alleged that on January 28, 2020, Verma made inflammatory hate speeches while campaigning for the BJP. It also cited an interview in which he threatened use of force to remove Shaheen Bagh protesters.

The petitioners said they initially approached the Delhi Po-

lice Commissioner and the Parliament Street SHO to seek registration of FIRs against the two leaders. When the police refused to register an FIR, they moved the Rouse Avenue court of Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate (I).

According to the petitioners, their complaint was dismissed on August 26, 2020, by the lower court which held it was not maintainable in law in the absence of prior sanction from the competent authority to prosecute the named accused.

On June 13, 2022, the Delhi HC rejected Karat and Tiwari’s pleas for registration of hate speech FIRs against the two BJP leaders, observing that “the statements were not directed against any specific community nor did they incite violence or public disorder”.

The HC also said that in re-

SC allowed a 14-year-old minor, a sexual assault survivor, to terminate her pregnancy at 31 weeks. The minor had said that she discovered her pregnancy at around 25 weeks. The Bombay HC initially denied termination because it exceeded the 24-week statutory limit, but subsequently allowed it when the state government consented. As the pregnancy progressed to 30 weeks, a hospital in Mumbai, through ASG Aishwarya Bhati, expressed caution and sought guidance, citing the mother’s “changing statements” and the medical risks associated with foeticide via intracardiac injection at such an advanced stage.

The SC allowed the termination, noting the medical advice that though termination of pregnancy at this stage was risky, there was a greater threat to the minor’s life if the pregnancy continued to its full term. The opinion of doctors is crucial since the MTP Act allows termination of pregnancy only on the advice of doctors. Medical termination of pregnancies is allowed up to 24 weeks.

After 24 weeks, the MTP Act requires a medical board to be set up in “approved facilities”, which may allow it only if there is a substantial foetal abnormality.

“The position of law, as crystallised by this Court, is unequivocal. Where information discloses the commission of a cognizable offence, registration of an FIR is mandatory. The police, in such circumstances, have no discretion in the matter, either under the statutory scheme or by way of interpretative latitude,” it said. “Failure on the part of the authorities to perform their statutory duties at the threshold stage not only defeats the legislative intent but also places the ordinary citizen in a position of vulnerability against institutional inaction...”

staff. Tomar joined the MP revenue service in 2003 as a Naib Tehsildar and was promoted around 2011, moving across 25 tehsils over two decades. In February this year, the Sheopur district administration granted sanction to prosecute her for alleged criminal breach of trust, cheating, forgery and criminal conspiracy, as well as under provisions of the Prevention of Corruption Act. On February 11, the Madhya Pradesh High Court cancelled her anticipatory bail.

Public Prosecutor Anurag Sharma, who opposed her anticipatory bail, had said Tomar “defalcated an amount which was required to be transferred to the persons affected by floods”.

In her response before the court, Tomar said she signed only after proper verification. She maintained in court that she was the “procedural endpoint in a chain she did not control”, that she neither handled the financial transactions nor received direct monetary benefit, and that her name did not appear in the original FIR.

Upadhyay said it is the tehsildar’s duty to verify bank account details. Three of them — Ram Avtar, Dheeraj Suman, and Yogesh Gautam — were arrested on April 1, with police alleging some funds were diverted to their accounts.

FIR must then be registered; investigation must follow; a report under Section 173 of CrPC must thereafter be submitted; and it is only at that stage that the question of taking cognizance arises,” the bench said.

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Somnath Yatra, BJP gov't's first such initiative after coming to power in Capital, flagged off

Express News Service
New Delhi, April 30

IN FIRST such initiative by the Delhi government, Chief Minister Rekha Gupta on Thursday, along with Union Culture Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, flagged off a special train from Safdarjung Railway Station in the Capital with 1,400 pilgrims headed to "Somnath Swabhiman Parv" at Gujarat's Somnath temple. Somnath Swabhiman Parv commemorates 1,000 years since the first attack by Mahmud of Ghazni on the Somnath Temple in 1026.



CM Rekha Gupta with Union Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat and Delhi Minister Kapil Mishra during the flag-off ceremony in Delhi on Thursday.

LG: Integrate spiritual tourism with Yamuna redevelopment

New Delhi: Delhi LG Taranjit Singh Sandhu has directed the Delhi Development Authority (DDA) to integrate elements of "spiritual tourism" while redeveloping ghats along the Yamuna, said officials Thursday.

The directions were issued in a recently held meeting by the LG with DDA officials that discussed the rejuvenation and restoration of the Yamuna Bazar and its ghats near Kashmere Gate, officials added.

"While Vasudev Ghat, along with other restored ghats such as Asita, Baansera, and Yamuna Biodiversity Park, has emerged as an eco-friendly, sustainable, and green public space on the floodplains, several other ghats still need to be developed on similar lines by DDA with the cooperation of other departments," Sandhu said.

"Held a detailed discussion with DDA officials on the rejuvenation and restoration of the historic Yamuna Bazar and its ghats. This follows my recent site visit with CM Rekha Gupta where we directed the DDA to prepare a comprehensive plan to revitalize this important heritage stretch," he wrote on X. ENS

Ahead of the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, the then AAP government also added Ayodhya temple in the Yatra and about 4,000 people participated. Since its launch, 84 trains carrying 81,000 people have been sent on such pilgrimages.

THREE YEARS AFTER VARSITY FORMED SIX-MEMBER COMMITTEE TO FRAME POLICIES 'Not feasible': DU won't proceed with policy to regulate social media activities of staff

Vidheesha Kuntamalla
New Delhi, April 30

NEARLY THREE years after it first moved to frame policies pertaining to social media use of its employees, Delhi University has arrived at a conclusion that it cannot proceed further with such regulation, *The Indian Express* has learnt.

In December 2023, the university constituted a six-member committee to frame policies governing the use of social media by its employees. At the time, officials described the move as an effort to ensure "responsible" and "effective" communication within the university community. Teachers, however, warned it risked curbing academic freedom and free expression on campus.

Now, after multiple discussions, the committee has little to show for its mandate. A university official familiar with

the deliberations said that members concluded it was not feasible to draft a policy to monitor social media activities, given that employees operate their accounts in a personal capacity. "Each stakeholder is using social media from their personal accounts. It is not possible for the university to frame a policy to monitor that," the official said.

While the university steps back from regulating its faculty members and staff, one of its most prominent colleges was at the centre of a controversy over disciplining students for what they say online. Hansraj College had recently suspended several students for allegedly "defaming" the institution on social media, prompting protests and raising questions about how universities define and police online speech. The disciplinary action, issued through a series of notices, cited students' posts



Teachers at DU had warned the move risked curbing free expression on campus. FILE

and language on digital platforms as grounds for suspension.

Asked about the apparent contradiction — a university unable to regulate its employees' online presence while its colleges take punitive action against students — the official drew a clear line. "We leave college matters to the college administration," the official said.

At Hansraj College, the suspensions of 11 students — including seven accused of defaming the college on social media and all four office-bearers of the students' union — has, however, now been revoked, marking a partial rollback after days of protests and criticism.

In two notices issued on April 30, the college said the suspensions would be "terminated" following recommendations from its disciplinary bodies. One notice stated that, "based on the observations of the Special Core Sub-Discipline Committee and the subsequent recommendations of the Students' Welfare and Discipline Committee, the suspension... shall be terminated with effect from 10.05.2026." A second notice, referring to earlier orders dated April 20 and April 22, said the action would be withdrawn "with effect from 15.05.2026."

Students have been advised to adhere to the college's standard operating procedures, with a warning that "appropriate proceedings may again be initiated" in case of non-compliance.

The Indian Express had reported on the suspensions in its April 27 edition. In what now appears to have been a precursor to the rollback, Principal Rama Sharma had signalled a review earlier this week. She told *The Indian Express* on Monday that the college had agreed to reconsider two show-cause notices of 11 students allegedly for defaming the college, following student representations. "We are always open for dialogue," Sharma said. "We have considered reviewing these notices and the action to be taken against these 11 students." Sharma told *The Indian Express* on Monday.

Between April 20 and 25, at least 30 students were suspended through five notices, citing reasons ranging from "defaming the College through social media platforms" and "use of derogatory language" to allegations of physical violence and disruption during the annual college festival earlier this month.

Tensions had been building for months. In February, students protested against the use of campus grounds for a private wedding linked to the principal's family. Disputes over fest permissions followed, culminating in clashes during the April 8-9 event, with videos showing chaotic scenes and physical altercations outside the gates.

The rollback does not cover the suspended students on whom a FIR had been registered on April 24 for allegations of criminal trespassing and voluntarily causing hurt.

Why Pink cards may become must for free travel

Gayathri Mani
New Delhi, April 30

EVEN AS the Delhi Transport Corporation (DTC) has issued nearly 5.56 lakh Pink Saheli Smart Cards to female bus passengers in the Capital for free travel since the initiative was launched last month, only about 5-6% of female passengers — roughly 6,000-8,000 — are using the cards at present, according to official data.

The Pink Saheli Smart Card initiative was launched by President Droupadi Murmu on March 2. The move was aimed at replacing the Pink ticketing system — launched by the previous AAP government in 2019 — with Centre's 'One Nation, One Card' initiative through Pink National Common Mobility Card (NCMC) card. It aimed to ensure that only female pas-

Key highlights

- No of Pink Saheli Smart Cards issued so far: 5.56 lakh
- Daily female passenger ridership: 6-7 lakh
- Usage: Only 6,000-8,000 female riders
- Pink Saheli Smart Card likely to be made mandatory for free travelling in buses from July

sengers, aged above 12 who reside in Delhi, could avail the free travel facility.

Chief Minister Rekha Gupta, after the launch, had said that Pink tickets could be used for three months. But a majority of female passengers, according to officials, have not yet switched from Pink tickets.

Officials are now mulling

conducting a survey to identify the reasons behind the low usage and the Saheli cards may be made mandatory for free travel by July.

"The daily average bus ridership is 23 lakh... Of this, 6 to 7 lakh riders are women. But we have observed that the Pink Smart Card is not being used by even 50% of women passengers... This means the remaining continue to travel using Pink tickets," said an official.

With the survey, DTC will try to identify the possible reasons behind the low usage — whether female passengers do not have the card, whether they are from other states, or whether conductors are not asking them to use the card.

Apart from the survey, DTC is planning to carry out surprise checks in buses. "After this, we will make free travelling man-

datory through Pink Cards and gradually discontinue the Pink tickets," said an official, adding that the survey will start in May.

The official added, "Since May and June are peak summer months, the card has not been made mandatory yet, but it will become compulsory from July. Before that, awareness campaigns will be conducted in buses to encourage its use."

The free travel scheme for women in Delhi was launched in 2019 by the then AAP government. Under the previous AAP government's 'Pink Passes' scheme, over 150 crore pink tickets have been sold so far.

The current government has allocated Rs 450 crore for the scheme in the 2026-27 Budget. The process of issuing these cards has been underway since March, and currently it is being done at 58 centres.

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DIP/Shabdarth/Display/14/26-27

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॥ बुद्धम् शरणम् गच्छामि ॥

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रेखा गुप्ता
मुख्यमंत्री, दिल्ली

DIP/Shabdarth/Display/15/26-27

SUNJAY KAPUR INHERITANCE BATTLE

HC to Priya: Can't sell or transfer his assets till doubt over will is cleared

Order a relief for children of Karisma Kapoor who raised doubts over will

Sohini Ghosh
New Delhi, April 30



Sunjay Kapur died last June. FILE

their share of one-fifth of the movable and immovable assets, each.

The children, as well as Sunjay's mother, Rani Kapur, have raised suspicions over the validity of Sunjay's will, as was furnished by Priya following his death in the United Kingdom, on June 12, 2025, after suffering a heart attack during a polo match.

On Thursday, the bench of Justice Jyoti Singh ruled in favour of the two children, disposing of an application in the suit by them, seeking that no third-party rights be created in the assets pending a final decision in the suit. Since suspicions have been raised over the alleged will, Justice Singh ruled, the onus will be on Priya to remove such suspicions, which will be a subject matter of trial.

Only after the alleged suspicious circumstances are removed, shall the document pronounced as Sunjay's will, shall be accepted as his "last will". However, given that the trial may take some time, the court held that "assets should not be dissipated" pending disposal of the suit.

"It is, therefore, imperative that the assets of the deceased

are preserved until disposal of the suit. It needs no reiteration that if the assets are not preserved and dissipate, and if tomorrow (Priya) fails to prove the validity and genuineness of the alleged will at the end of the trial, plaintiffs (Samiara and Kiaan) and (Rani Kapur) will be deprived of their legitimate shares as Class-1 heirs," the High Court underlined.

To this effect, the High Court restrained Priya from alienating, transferring, pledging, liquidating or in any other manner changing the equity or shareholdings in the three Indian companies. The HC also restrained Priya from withdrawing from the provident fund, which was consented to by her. The court further restrained her from alienating the personal effects such as artworks, jewellery and watches, which too was consented to by Priya.

Earlier, Karisma's children had pointed out that some of Sunjay's bank accounts were closed after his death and as per Priya, his bank accounts were a total worth of Rs 1.72 crore despite drawing a salary of Rs 60 crore as salary in a single year from Aureus Investments Private Limited (AIP), which holds 28% shares and is the corporate promoter of Sona Comstar.

Among the late businessman's personal assets, which are a part of the inheritance dispute, are an apartment in New York and another immovable asset in London. Additionally, there is Sunjay's demat and bank accounts, artworks and crypto investments, apart from residuary estate, which also form part of his personal assets.

The HC, however, has made it clear that it does not have jurisdiction to issue any order on the foreign immovable assets.

Dust, hail and darkness



3:00 PM View of a dust storm on the Mehrauli-Gurgaon Road in Delhi on Thursday. VIVEK PRAKASH KRISHNA



3:10 PM A rickshaw puller struggles through a hailstorm in Sunder Nagri, Dilshad Garden, in Delhi. HAQBIJAM CHINGLEMBA



3:15 PM View of the Delhi Vidhan Sabha after rain and a dust storm struck the Capital. AMIT MEHRA

Bodies of 3 boys, ages 8-11, found floating in Dwarka Golf Course pond

Pragynesh & Devansh Mittal
New Delhi, April 30

THREE BOYS — two brothers aged 8 and 11, and another aged 11 — drowned in a pond inside the Delhi Development Authority's (DDA's) Golf Course in Dwarka's Sector 24 on Thursday morning, police said.

The children, identified as Ravi Jaiswal, Veer Jaiswal and Harsh, appeared to have entered the pond for a bath or swim, police said, adding that they might have climbed up one of the trees on the premises. "Ravi and Veer lived in Goyla Dairy area and had come with their friend Harsh.

Their parents claimed that they had been missing since Wednesday night," a police officer said.

"The pond is almost 7-feet-deep and has fences around it,"

an officer said.

The DDA's website says the "Dwarka Golf Course (DWGC) is still under construction" However, people in the area claimed that some do come to play on the course.

"It opens from 8 am. But today no one was allowed inside owing to scheduled maintenance," said a guard. Entry to the course is through a large gate manned by security guards.

Police said a call was received at Dwarka's Sector 23 police station at 7:07 am on Thursday regarding the incident.

Three fire tenders and a police team rushed to the spot. Officers found the bodies of the three children in the water body.

"With the assistance of fire officials, all three bodies were retrieved from the water," DCP (Dwarka) Kushal Pal Singh said.

Officers also found their clothes beside the pond, indicat-

ing that they had likely entered the water to bathe. Preliminary inquiries suggest that the children may have been playing in the water, an officer said.

The bodies have been sent for a post-mortem examination, police said.

In a statement issued after the incident, the DDA said that an inquiry has been initiated.

"The incident at Dwarka Golf Course, in which three children tragically lost their lives, is deeply saddening and unfortunate. Our heartfelt condolences go out to the bereaved families during this difficult time. A three-member committee under Director has been constituted to enquire into the incident and has been directed to submit its report within a week. Strict action, as warranted, will be taken, based on the findings of the enquiry," stated an official response.

• Skywatch



Forecast:
May 1, 2026:
Partly cloudy sky.

MAX: 39-41
1.7 above normal

MIN: 23-25
1.2°C above normal

• **Sunrise: 5:40 AM (May 2)**

• **Sunset: 6:56 PM (May 1)**

• **Moonrise: 6:48 PM (May 1)**

• **Moonset: 5:37 AM (May 2)**

• AQI Tracker



Anand Vihar
Poor
AQI: 229

Bawana
Moderate
AQI: 161



Chandni Chowk
Moderate
AQI: 144

ITO
Moderate
AQI: 132

● Good (0-50)
● Satisfactory (51-100)
● Moderate (101-200)
● Poor (201-300)
● Very Poor (301-400)
● Severe (401-500)

SHORTAGE OF EQUIPMENT

Ghaziabad: Only 22 fire tenders, a single crane for high fires

Neetika Jha

Ghaziabad, April 30

AROUND 9 am on Thursday, when the fire at Gaur Green Avenue in Indirapuram, Ghaziabad had already been raging for 30-45 minutes, the Fire Department of neighbouring Gautam Buddha Nagar district received a request for additional firefighting equipment.

"We rushed two hydraulic cranes and four fire tenders along with our personnel," Pradeep Kumar, Chief Fire Officer of GB Nagar, said.

Several residents of the housing society said on Thursday that even though the Ghaziabad Fire personnel reached fairly quickly — and managed to rescue 10 people trapped in their flats — they were constrained by the lack of sufficient equipment to fight the fire effectively. Videos showed water jets failing to reach the higher floors in the initial period.

Ghaziabad Chief Fire Officer Rahul Pal said the Fire Department has only 22 fire tenders for the whole of the district with an area of about 780 sq km and a population of 4.7 million (2011 Census).

There is only one hydraulic crane that can reach up to 42 metres or about 14 storeys, far lower than many buildings in Ghaziabad city.

Fire officials said the Department has only three water bowser machines, three water



At the site of the blaze in Indirapuram on Wednesday.

mist machines, two foam tenders, two rescue tenders and 19 water tenders of which only one is of 22,000-kl capacity. These vehicles are stationed at five fire stations in Kotwali, Hindon, Loni, Modinagar, and Vaishali Indiranagar, and at six outpost stations.

The Ghaziabad Chief Fire Officer said that effective firefighting depends very significantly on the internal systems of residential societies.

"We are an external system for providing aid, the internal system of every society should be robust," he said.

The CFO also said that the district is in the process of acquiring two hydraulic cranes, each of which can reach up to 101 metres.

Gurgaon: Its only ladder defunct, Fire Dept relies on DLF for blazes at height

Abhimanyu Hazarika
Gurgaon, April 30

IF A fire like the one that destroyed residential apartments in Ghaziabad on Wednesday were to start in a higher floor of a Gurgaon highrise, a privately owned hydraulic ladder — belonging to the real estate group DLF — might have to rush to the rescue.

The Gurgaon Fire Department's only hydraulic ladder has been lying defunct at the DLF Sector 29 fire station for the last year and a half. In any case, the ladder is designed to reach only up to 42 metres — or about 14 storeys. The fire in Ghaziabad affected flats on the ninth to the 13th floors. Dozens of highrises in Gurgaon are taller, the tallest reaching well over 50 storeys.

"That (defunct) ladder has reached the end of its life of around 15 years. It was repaired once it crossed 10 years, and has been lying useless for the past year and a half," Fire Safety Officer Lalit Kumar said.

The DLF ladder, Kumar said, is used for high fires in Manesar and Sohna as well. This 90-metre hydraulic platform can reach up to 27 floors, officials said. "Steps are being taken for the state to have 14 new hydraulic ladders, of which Gurgaon will get two or three," Kumar said.

The Gurgaon district Fire Department has 58 fire tenders distributed across its seven stations — Sector 29, Udyog Vihar, Bhim Nagar, Sector-37, Pataudi, Manesar, and Sohna. There is no

fire station close to the highrises off Dwarka Expressway. "Land transfer and allocation for three new stations in Sector 43, Badshahpur, and Farrukhnagar is in progress," Kumar said.

The Fire Department's fleet comprises six foam tenders, six small tenders, and 25 water bowsters with capacities greater than 5,000 litres. Ten motorcycles, equipped with 40-litre tanks, are used to navigate narrow lanes. This fire-fighting infrastructure is not adequate. In crises, the Department routinely commissions from an additional fleet of 16 tenders and bowsters owned by private entities, officials said.

The Department is also short of manpower. In a district that sprawls over 1,250 sq km and is home to more than 1.5 million people according to government data, there are only about 250 Fire officers and firefighters — half the ideal number, Fire safety officials said. In April and May, when fire incidents peak, Fire staff work 12-hour shifts instead of their usual eight.

The infrastructural and staffing deficits are currently being tested further by a statewide strike by contractual and ad hoc fire staff demanding better work conditions, regularised employment and standardised pay including a Rs-5,000 monthly risk allowance. The strike, now in its third week and seemingly stalemated, has forced the government to temporarily draft police and transport personnel to keep emergency services operational.

Ban on unlawful assembly: Tight security in Noida, Greater Noida for Labour Day

New Delhi: Ahead of the International Labour Day on Friday, Gautam Buddha Nagar Police has invoked Section 163 of the BNS, 2023, banning unlawful assemblies across the district from April 30 to May 8, officials said on Thursday.

The order, officials said, is backed by a massive deployment of over 1,700 police personnel, drone surveillance at over 50 locations, and round-the-clock CCTV monitoring.

This comes in the wake of a protest held in Noida on April 13 staged by thousands of factory workers.

In its official statement, Gautam Buddha Nagar Police said Police Commissioner Laxmi Singh is directing the operation, which covers the entire commissionerate under a structured zonal-sector scheme that will include 11 zones and 49 sectors across the district. The order also read that Noida has been divided into four zones and 16 sectors; Central Noida into three zones and 24 sectors; and Greater Noida into four zones and nine sectors. Industrial zones and key crossroads have also been put under watch. ENS

Zomato delivery agent falls off flyover as car & scooter collide, dies

Father, a farmer, awaits body in native village

Pragynesh
New Delhi, April 30



The damaged vehicles. EXPRESS

TWENTY-FIVE-YEAR-OLD Rajkumar, a native of Jharkhand, had come to Delhi just a week back. He was living in West Delhi's Sagarpur with his friend Mahavir.

On Thursday, he was on his way on a scooter to meet Mahavir to have the morning tea together. But an hour after a phone call with him, he fell off a flyover on Pankha Road after an alleged collision with a car, said police. The 25-year-old was declared dead at a hospital. The car driver, who fled from the spot, is absconding, said officers and efforts to trace him are ongoing.

Mahavir said he and Rajkumar lived in neighbouring villages in Jharkhand. About six years ago, they both left their villages to find work and went to Chennai. "We both started working as security guards. We then moved to Bengaluru. Just a week ago, we came to Delhi

and he got a job in Zomato," Mahavir recalled. "He called me an hour before accident and asked me to come to our regular tea stall. After 30 minutes, I called him and he didn't pick up the call. The next call I got was from the police, saying that he was involved in an accident," he said.

As per Delhi Police, a PCR call was received around 7:35 am to report that a person had fallen from the Dabri flyover. A team found a damaged scooter and a Maruti Swift car on the flyover. Police said the car bears a Delhi registration. The body has been preserved for autopsy. Rajkumar's father, Akshay, is a farmer and a native of Godda district in Jharkhand. He is now awaiting his son's body.

"I don't have the heart to face him. I told him I will take care of him," said Mahavir.

• POLICE SUSPECT REVENGE KILLING; TWO PISTOLS, ONE OF THEM COUNTRY-MADE, FOUND AT THE SPOT

Ex-NSG commando serving life term shot dead in Gurgaon

Express News Service
Gurgaon, April 30

A 55-YEAR-OLD former NSG commando, who was out on parole while serving a life sentence for murder, was shot dead in Kasan village in Gurgaon Thursday morning. The murder, police say, appears to be a revenge killing.

Sundar Fauji walked out of prison on parole on March 29 to attend his niece's wedding. He was serving a life term for the 2018 murder of a former village sarpanch, Bahadur Chauhan,



A CCTV grab captured the incident. EXPRESS

over a financial dispute. According to the police, the

incident took place around 8:30 am today. Fauji was sitting on a

chabutra — a platform often used for socialising — near the local market when Bahadur Chauhan's son, Rohan, and an unidentified accomplice shot him dead, police said.

Eyewitnesses told the police that around five shots were fired. A video of the killing has also surfaced. The killers fled immediately after the shooting.

Police found two pistols, one of them country-made, on the spot. "One of the accused has been identified as Rohan. He is the son of Bahadur, the former sarpanch, murdered by Fauji.

Preliminary investigation reveals this is a revenge killing," said Sunil Kumar, Station House Officer of the IMT Manesar police station.

"Both Rohan and his accomplice are on the run. Multiple Crime Branch teams are trying to trace them," he said, adding that a case had been registered.

Thursday's incident is the latest chapter in a decades-long blood feud in Kasan village that has already claimed several lives.

The body of the deceased has been handed over to the

family after the post-mortem. Four shots were found to have been fired at the scene of the incident," a Gurgaon police spokesperson said in the evening.

The violence is linked to the 2018 murder of the former sarpanch. It had earlier triggered a major shooting on Diwali night in 2021, when heavily armed assailants fired over forty rounds at the former sarpanch's family, resulting in four deaths.

Police records indicate that the 2021 mass shooting was executed to avenge an earlier murder dating back to 2007.



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Delhi (Municipal Corporation of Delhi)

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1st - 15th May

Houselisting
16th May - 14th June

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Online applications are invited for the following AICTE approved Diploma Courses:
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The Entrance test for admission to these courses will be held at Chandigarh and New Delhi, on 05 July, 2026.

The detailed information is given in the "Information Brochure-2026" available on the websites www.istc.ac.in and www.csio.res.in w.e.f. 01-05-2026.

The last date for applying is 03-06-2026. For further information, please contact:
Phones: 0172-2672263 / 2672484 / 2672485 / 2672424 / 2657264
Email: principalistc.csio@csir.res.in

Note: Keep visiting url: <https://career.csio.res.in/istc2026> for regular updates

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TENDER NOTICE NO: 3598/रिफि/2026-27 Dated 30-04-2026

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Name: REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL FOR Selection of Lawyer/ Lawyer Chamber/ Law Firm/Agency for Legal Advisory and Support Services at Ghaziabad Nagar Nigam (GNN)

Ref No.: 3598/Law/2026-27 Date 30-04-2026

Date of Publication of e-Bid notice: 02.05.2026 on e-Tender Portal <https://etender.up.nic.in>

Last date for submission of eBids on e-Tender portal: 22-05-2026, 3:00 PM

Pre Bid meeting Date & venue: 07.05.2026 at 11:00 am. Bidder must email queries to gzb.nagar.nigam@gmail.com by 05-05-2026, 5:00 PM
Venue - Ghaziabad Nagar Nigam, Navyug Market, Ghaziabad, UP

Site for Submission of e-Bids: eTender Portal <https://etender.up.nic.in>

eBid Inviting Officer: Municipal Commissioner, Ghaziabad Nagar Nigam

Date of Opening of Technical eBids: 22-05-2026, 4:00 PM

Date of Opening of Financial e-Bids: To be informed at a later stage

Venue of Opening of eBids: Ghaziabad Nagar Nigam Navyug Market, Opp. Old Bus Stand Ghaziabad-201001 (UP)

Contact addresses: Vishal Gaurav (+91 98100 04089)
Law superintendent, Ghaziabad Nagar Nigam

Consortium: Not allowed

Tender Fee: Rs. 11,800/- + 18% GST to be paid on E-tender website i.e. <https://etender.up.nic.in>

EMD: Rs. 1,00,000/- to be paid on E-tender website i.e. <https://etender.up.nic.in>

Law - In-charge
Ghaziabad Municipal Corporation

GOVERNMENT OF HARYANA
EXCISE & TAXATION DEPARTMENT
PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE FOR INVITING APPLICATIONS FOR THE ALLOTMENT OF WHOLESALE LICENSES OF IMFL (L-1) AND COUNTRY LIQUOR (L-13) FOR THE POLICY YEAR 2025-27 IN ALL THE DISTRICTS OF THE STATE.

The applications are hereby invited for grant of wholesale licenses of IMFL in the form of L-1 and wholesale licenses of Country Liquor in form of L-13 for all the excise districts in the State. The Wholesale licenses of IMFL (L-1) and Country Liquor (L-13) shall be granted to the applicant amongst the retail outlet allottees/licensees of Indian Made foreign Liquor (L-2) and Country Liquor (L-14A) respectively. The L-1 and L-13 licenses shall be granted on the basis of quota contribution of Indian Made foreign Liquor (L-2) and Country Liquor (L-14A) (of the policy year 2025-27), amongst the applicant allottees/licensees of retail zones within an Excise district. The quota contribution for the purpose of grant of L-1 & L-13 licenses shall be calculated on the basis of retail liquor zones allotted as on 04.05.2026 for receiving such applications for grant of L-1/L-13 licenses. The L-1/L-13 license(s) shall be granted only to those eligible applicants who apply for the License(s) within the date fixed/extended by the Excise and Taxation Commissioner, Haryana. The Excise Policy provides that the Excise and Taxation Commissioner may invite applications for such number of L-1/L-13 licenses as he may deem fit. The Excise and Taxation Commissioner may also conduct the process of allotment in multiple rounds of inviting applications.

The number of wholesale licenses of IMFL (L-1) and Country Liquor (L-13) in the district for which the applications are being invited in this round shall be as under:-

Sr. No.	Districts	Number of L-1 (s) to be granted	Number of L-13 (s) to be granted
1.	Ambala	1	2
2.	Bhiwani	1	1
3.	Faridabad	3	2
4.	Fatehabad	1	1
5.	Gurugram (East)	3	2
6.	Gurugram (West)	2	3
7.	Hisar	1	1
8.	Jagadhari	1	1
9.	Jhajjar	2	2
10.	Jind	2	2
11.	Kaithal	1	1
12.	Karnal	2	2
13.	Kurukshetra	2	2
14.	Mewat	1	1
15.	Narnaul	1	1
16.	Palwal	2	2
17.	Panchkula	1	1
18.	Panipat	1	1
19.	Rewari	0	3
20.	Rohtak	1	1
21.	Sirsa	1	1
22.	Sonepat	2	4
TOTAL		32	37

The licenses for wholesale outlets of IMFL (L-1) and Country Liquor (L-13) shall be granted in accordance with the provisions of Haryana Excise Act, 1914, rules framed thereunder and as per the Excise Policy for the year 2025-27. The Excise Policy for the year 2025-27 is available on the official website of the department www.haryanatax.gov.in.

It is also mentioned here that, as per the provisions of Clause 4.2 and Clause 5.1 of the Excise Policy for the year 2025-2027, in case any new licensee or existing licensee wants to apply for L-13/L-1 license after 1st April 2026, 60% license fee will be applicable for the period from 01.04.2026 (or actual date of grant whichever is later) to 31.03.2027.

The application may be submitted in the office of the DETC (Excise) concerned on or before 04.05.2026. The application shall be forwarded by the DETC (Excise) alongwith his recommendation to the Excise and Taxation Commissioner, Haryana, immediately. The quota contribution shall be taken up to 04.05.2026.

VINAY PRATAP SINGH, IAS
Excise and Taxation Commissioner,
No. 44873/HRY Haryana, Panchkula.

भारतीय वानिकी अनुसंधान एवं शिक्षा परिषद
(एनएचएफ, वन एवं जलवायु परिवर्तन मंत्रालय, भारत सरकार का एक स्वायत्त निकाय)
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P.O. New Forest, Dehra Dun - 248006 (Uttarakhand)

विज्ञापित संख्या 02/32-1/महानिदेशक/2026-भा.वा.अ.शि.प.
Advt. No. 02/32-1/Director General/2026-ICFRE

महानिदेशक, भारतीय वानिकी अनुसंधान एवं शिक्षा परिषद के पद को प्रतिनिधित्व के आधार पर सातवें सी.पी.सी. के वेतन मैट्रिक्स का स्तर-17 पर करने हेतु आवेदन आमंत्रित किए जाते हैं। आवेदन प्राप्त करने की अंतिम तिथि 01.06.2026 है तथा अण्डमान निकोबार द्वीप समूह एवं लक्षद्वीप के अभ्यर्थियों के लिये 15.06.2026 होगी।

उपरोक्त पद हेतु इच्छुक अभ्यर्थी भा०वा०अ०शि०प० की वेबसाइट <http://www.icfre.org> में दिये गये विस्तृत विज्ञापन के अनुसार आवेदन कर सकते हैं।

Applications are invited for filling up the post of Director General, Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education on deputation basis in pay level -17 of 7th CPC Pay Matrix. The last date for receipt of application is 01.06.2026 and for candidates residing in Andaman Nicobar Islands and Lakshadweep the last date will be 15.06.2026.

The interested candidates may apply for the aforesaid post as per detailed advertisement available on ICFRE website <http://www.icfre.org>

सचिव, भा०वा०अ०शि०प०
Secretary, ICFRE

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER, MUNICIPAL CORPORATION, GWALIOR (M.P.)
WATER SUPPLY DEPARTMENT

File No. 32/2026x9/1/WS/2026 Gwalior, Date : 28/04/2026
पुनर्मांक 80 अणक 280 **Notice Inviting Tender** दिनांक 30-04-2026
On line tender are invited on behalf of Gwalior Municipal Corporation.

Name Of Work	Probable Amount of Contract	Tender ID No.	Cost of Bid Document & EMD	Last date of purchase online tender dated
वाई क्रमंक 59 में 15 वें वित्त योजनागत 110 एवं 160 मिमी. व्यास की जल प्रदाय पाइप लाइन विद्यमाने का कार्य।	1,33,15,614.77	2026 UAD 503382_1	12,500/- 66,578/-	26.05.2026

Further details can be seen at <http://mptenders.gov.in> Executive Engineer,
Water Supply, Gwalior Municipal Corporation, Gwalior

Government of India
Ministry of Commerce & Industry
Department of Commerce
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No hard copy is required to be sent. For any further query, candidates may approach this office at recruitment-e2@gov.in.

Sd/-
CBC-05101/11/0001/2627 Under Secretary to the Government of India

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF A PERSON ACCUSED
See Section 82 Cr. P.C. / 84 BNSS

Whereas complaint has been made before me that that accused person **Amit @ Baddi S/o Anil Kumar R/o H. No. T-77, Old Nagal, Delhi Cant, Delhi** has Committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in case FIR No. 2423/2025 U/s 317(2)/3(5) BNS, P.S. Hari Nagar, Delhi and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said accused **Amit @ Baddi** cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said accused **Amit @ Baddi** has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant).

Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused **Amit @ Baddi** of case FIR No. 2423/2025 U/s 317(2)/3(5) BNS, P.S. Hari Nagar, Delhi is required to appear before this Court to answer the said complaint on or before 11.06.2026.

By Order
Ms. Moksha Bains
Judicial Magistrate First Class -11
Room No. 31
Tis Hazari Courts, Delhi

DP/5512/WD/2026 (Court Matter)

PUBLIC NOTICE
REWARD ANNOUNCEMENT

Notice is hereby given to the general public that **Shiv Narayan Jha**, an accused person in NCB, DZU Crime No. VIII/41/DZU/2025 under Sections 8, 22, 25 & 29 of the NDPS Act, is absconding and is wanted in connection with a case involving recovery of multiple NRX tablets in Delhi & NCR.

Particulars of the Accused:

- Name: Shiv Narayan Jha, S/o Sh. Tripet Narayan
- Gender: Male
- Age: 44 years
- Address: Flat No. G-8/1701, Nirala Green Shire, Greater Noida West (Noida Extension), P.O. Bsirakh, District Gautam Buddha Nagar, Uttar Pradesh

Reward घोषणा:
A reward of ₹ 5,000/- (Rupees Five Thousand only) is hereby announced for any person who provides credible information leading to the apprehension of the above-mentioned accused. The identity of the informer shall be kept strictly confidential.

CBC 19126/11/0021/2627

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Rajnath meets Italy's Crosetto, sets the course for defence cooperation

Amrita Nayak Dutta
New Delhi, April 30

DEFENCE MINISTER Rajnath Singh on Thursday met his Italian counterpart Guido Crosetto during which a Bilateral Military Cooperation Plan for 2026-27, charting the course for military engagements between the Defence Forces of both countries, was exchanged.

During the meeting, Singh is also learnt to have conveyed India's concerns over transfer of sensitive defence technologies to Pakistan.

A statement issued by the Ministry of Defence stated that both ministers reiterated that the India-Italy strategic partnership is based on shared values of peace, stability, freedom, and mutual respect.

The statement noted that the two ministers also discussed the avenues to further develop mutually beneficial defence industrial cooperation under the Atmanirbhar Bharat programme and Italy's defence cooperation initiative.

"Convergence between both



Defence Minister Rajnath Singh with Italian Minister of Defence Guido Crosetto in New Delhi on Thursday. ANI

the ancient seafaring nations on various key maritime issues was also highlighted including information exchange through Information Fusion Center-Indian Ocean Region, Gurugram," it said.

The centre has information sharing links with 50 nations and multinational/maritime centres, according to its website.

The Italian Defence Minister's visit comes at a time when

the European country is looking to re-enter the Indian defence market.

In February, Italian Defence Major Leonardo entered into a partnership with the Adani Group to establish a fully integrated helicopter manufacturing ecosystem to meet the requirements of the Indian armed forces. The partnership will support the production of Leonardo's advanced AW169M

and AW109 TrekkerM helicopters, aside from phased indigenisation, comprehensive maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO) capabilities, and pilot training infrastructure.

In a post on X, Singh stated that he discussed a wide range of regional and global issues, including the current situation in West Asia, with his Italian counterpart.

In an earlier statement, the Defence Ministry said that defence cooperation between India and Italy gained further momentum after Singh visited Rome in October 2023.

According to the Italian Ministry of Defence, Crosetto also had a cordial meeting with National Security Adviser Ajit Doval.

"The focus was on strengthening the strategic dialogue between Italy and India on key international security issues, with particular attention to stability in the Indo-Pacific, maritime security, freedom of navigation, as well as the protection of energy and commercial routes," it said in a post on X.

'India halted Op Sindoor on its own terms'

INDIA EXECUTED and halted Operation Sindoor on its own terms, despite being fully prepared to sustain a prolonged conflict, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said on Thursday.

Speaking at a defence summit organised by ANI, he also said that the Sudarshan Chakra Air Defence system serves as a prime example of the exemplary application of AI.

On Operation Sindoor, he said, "We targeted, with absolute precision, only those who had perpetrated the attack against us. We did not halt the operation because our capabilities had been exhausted or diminished. We halted it entirely on our own terms."

He said, "We were fully prepared to sustain a prolonged conflict." ENS

Bail to I-PAC head Chandel in money laundering case

Nirbhay Thakur
New Delhi, April 30

A DELHI court Thursday granted bail to Vinesh Chandel, director and co-founder of Indian Political Action Committee (I-PAC), a leading political consultancy, in connection with a money laundering case. The decision came after the Enforcement Directorate (ED) chose not to oppose his regular bail.

The case, linked to an alleged coal-smuggling racket, saw Chandel arrested just as West Bengal prepared for Assembly elections. His arrest sparked a political storm, as the firm advises the ruling Trinamool Congress (TMC) in Bengal. His bail order came a day after polling was completed in the state.

"The ED is not opposing the present regular bail application of the accused...the court may impose conditions upon the applicant while releasing him on regular bail on this case," said Additional Sessions Judge Amit Bansal while orally pronouncing the order.

"It has been submitted that the investigation in the present case has commenced under the present ECIR under sections of the PMLA (Prevention of Money Laundering Act). The learned senior counsel for the applicant has referred to PMLA Section 45 and has submitted that in the present case, the learned Special Public Prosecutor has been given the opportunity to oppose the bail, but he has not done so and hence the twin conditions won't be applicable in this case," he added.



Chandel was held on April 13.

The relief comes just two days after a different sessions judge denied Chandel interim bail. He had sought release to care for his 74-year-old mother, who has dementia.

"While this Court is not insensitive to the medical vulnerability of elderly parents, the material placed on record does not disclose any sudden or life-threatening medical emergency necessitating the immediate presence of the applicant/accused," said Additional Sessions Judge Shefali Barnala Tandon of Patiala House Court in her order dated April 28.

As per the ED, the political consultancy firm was involved in laundering proceeds of crime to the tune of crores of rupees, and the amount detected so far is about Rs 50 crore. Chandel holds a 33 per cent stake in the company. While granting him bail, ASJ Bansal orally read out his bail conditions. "The applicant shall not leave India without permission, he shall furnish his contact number and address and continue accessibility. He shall join the investigation and shall cooperate. He shall not tamper with evidence or influence witnesses."

Top court reserves order on Khera's anticipatory bail plea

Express News Service
New Delhi, April 30

THE SUPREME COURT on Thursday reserved its order on Congress leader Pawan Khera's plea for anticipatory bail in the case in which he had accused Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma's wife's Riniki Bhuyan Sharma of holding multiple passports.

A bench of Justices J K Maheshwari and Atul Chandurkar reserved its decision on Khera's appeal challenging the April 24 order of the Gauhati High Court denying the Congress leader anticipatory bail in the case.

Appearing for Khera, Senior Advocate A M Singhvi said, "The question is need and necessity to arrest... Let me assume I will be convicted ultimately. Why is it (arrest) necessary?" The senior counsel said, "If I cannot seek anticipatory bail with this situation, the very purpose of antici-



Pawan Khera has challenged an HC order denying him bail in a case over his comments on Assam CM Sarma's wife

patory bail is gone." The senior counsel also questioned the High Court terming Bhuyan an "innocent lady", stating that it is a matter to be determined in trial. Justifying the need for custodial interrogation, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for state government, said it was necessary to find out whether Khera had any accomplice or if any foreign elements were involved.

Foreign Secy Misri likely to visit Nepal this month

Divya A
New Delhi, April 30

IN THE first diplomatic outreach to Nepal after the swearing-in of the Balen Shah government a month ago, Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri is expected to visit Kathmandu in the second week of May.

As per sources, dates for the visit are being finalised. The Ministry of External Affairs is yet to make an official announcement in this regard.

Earlier this month, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar had met his Nepalese counterpart Shisir Khanal in Mauritius on the sidelines of the ninth Indian Ocean Conference.

Sources said Misri's Nepal visit may be followed by a high-level visit from Kathmandu in the coming months. During his proposed two-day visit, the Foreign Secretary will seek to understand the priorities of the new government, including on key ongoing projects.

Behind BJP dominance: No rival on Right, Opposition divided, says Ruchir Sharma

Sattwick Barman
New Delhi, April 30

A FEATURE of Indian politics that allows the BJP to remain a dominant force is that the party faces no competition on the Right, author and fund manager Ruchir Sharma has said.

"Anybody who has a right-wing ideology has one party. On the other side, there is so much competition and that vote gets split," Sharma said at the Express Adda in Mumbai on April 28. Sharma, who is the chairman of Rockefeller International and founder and chief investment officer of Breakout Capital, an investment firm focused on emerging markets, was in conversation with Anant Goenka, Executive Director, *The Indian Express*.

Sharma pointed out how in West Bengal, where he recently travelled for about a week during the Assembly poll campaign, Trinamool Congress (TMC) chairperson and West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee enjoys widespread support of Muslims, but faces competition from smaller parties such as the AIMIM and the All India Secular Front, or AISEF, that are "nibbling away (at the TMC's minority votes)". In contrast, "the BJP has no competition; so, that's what I think really makes the politics of this country what it is and what it makes the BJP so dominant—they have no competition on the Right... the BJP doesn't even have a small rightwing party," he said.

While the BJP or its alliance's vote share is never more than 50%, Sharma said that the rest of



Author, fund manager and global investor Ruchir Sharma at Express Adda in Mumbai on April 28. AMIT CHAKRAVARTY

the votes get "split all over the place".

Sharma said development was "one of the six or seven factors" that help a party win elections. He said that in his book, *Democracy on the Road* (2019), he looked at the average growth rates of states in the preceding three to four decades. "We typically found that for states which recorded an average growth rate of more than 8% a year over a five-year term, the chances that the incumbent would get re-elected in that state were 50%. Which is a shocking number, right? That you delivered 8% economic growth over five years and still the chances of you getting re-elected are no different than what they generally are, which is 50-50," he said, adding that the theory that one could win an election on just a development plank got disproved when Chandrababu Naidu got voted out as Andhra Pradesh CM in 2004.

Providing the example of what he saw in his recent West Bengal trip, Sharma said in this

election, "development was not on the table by either side". "When we asked the BJP people, 'Why aren't you talking more about development?', their answer was, 'We want to first make sure people's basic concerns about security are taken care of before we talk about development'. So we can criticise Mamata on development, but the fact of the matter is that it just wasn't an issue we encountered in all our travels."

Sharma said the biggest threat to the Mamata Banerjee government was anti-incumbency and that the election in West Bengal was closer than expected. "There is a 10 percentage point gap (between the two parties)... the gap is going to close... whether that gap can close enough to flip the government is very difficult for us to say. To close a 10 percentage point gap is a very big deal. It's almost like you need a wave to do that. So there's anti-incumbency, but whether that can close a 10 percentage point gap is something we totally struggle with."

Telangana Rakshana Sena — K Kavitha's party has a new name

Nikhila Henry
Hyderabad, April 30

K KAVITHA'S party will be called Telangana Rakshana Sena (TRS), and not what she had announced on the day of its launch on April 25. This is after the Election Commission of India approved the name 'Telangana Rakshana Sena' (TRS) as a political party led by Kalvakuntla Kavitha.

This comes days after Kavitha announced that the party will be called Telangana Rashtra Sena, along the lines of her father's party Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS). The original TRS, which was launched in 2001 by its supreme and former chief minister of Telangana and Kavitha's father K Chandrashekar Rao, is now known as Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS).

Taking to X Kavitha wrote: "Telangana Rakshana Sena (TRS) it is! We will relentlessly work to serve and protect the people of Telangana, as we have done in the last two decades as Telangana Jagruthi". Telangana Jagruthi is a cultural organisation founded by Kavitha in 2006.



Earlier, Kavitha had announced that the party will be called Telangana Rashtra Sena

She added: "In January 2026, following standard EC protocol, we submitted five name choices, and the Election Commission has officially granted our third choice. The only one with the acronym TRS. Destiny, it seems, has a sense of irony."

Kavitha's party must now publish the name in two newspapers for two consecutive days, and the final decision will be taken after considering objections.

When she launched the party last week, Kavitha said on her X handle: "We refuse to back down, come what may; It is time the people of Telangana have their say..."

Buoyed BJP prepares to celebrate, TMC stands guard outside strong rooms

Sweetie Kumari & Atri Mitra
Kolkata, April 30

WEST BENGAL'S political landscape remained sharply polarised on Thursday, as contrasting scenes unfolded at party offices following the conclusion of the second phase of polling in the 2026 Assembly elections.

While BJP workers celebrated buoyed by favourable exit polls, the Trinamool Congress (TMC) struck a note of caution, mobilising cadres to guard counting centres and strongrooms amid allegations of irregularities.

At the BJP's state headquarters in Salt Lake, the mood was unmistakably upbeat. The office bustled with activity as party workers gathered in anticipation of what they believe will be a decisive victory on May 4.

Despite the physically demanding campaign, visitors continued to stream into the headquarters through the day, carrying flower bouquets and boxes of sweets. The festive at-

mosphere was further fuelled by the high voter turnout. The first phase of polling on April 23 had recorded over 92% participation, and party leaders credited this as a sign of public support.

"The enthusiasm among workers reflects the people's mandate," said a BJP functionary at the headquarters, as preparations quietly began for a possible victory celebration.

'Security concerns' in Trinamool

However, in stark contrast, most TMC offices across the state remained either closed or operated only briefly in the evening. Party leaders said this was part of a deliberate strategy to avoid vulnerability following alleged intimidation by central forces.

A senior TMC leader from Bhabanipur claimed that party members were avoiding operating from known offices due to security concerns. "We are planning our strategies from undisclosed locations. Our workers

will move in groups to counting centres and strongrooms with proper planning. No one will leave until the last vote is counted," the leader said.

The heightened vigilance comes after Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee issued a direct appeal to party workers via a video message on social media, urging them to guard strongrooms and counting centres round the clock. "I will ask all our workers and candidates to guard the strongrooms and counting centres. If I can stay awake, you can too. Maintain vigil through the night and ensure the security of the mandate," she said.

She also dismissed exit poll projections as "politically motivated". "There is nothing called neutrality anymore. Exit polls are being used to demoralise our workers. If the actual results come out, it will surprise everyone," she said.

Echoing her concerns, TMC leaders Kunal Ghosh and Shashi Panja staged a dharna outside



TMC's Kunal Ghosh (L) and BJP's Tapas Roy outside a strong room near Netaji Indoor Stadium in Kolkata on Thursday. PARTHA PAUL

the Netaji Indoor Stadium, which serves as a counting centre. They alleged attempts to open ballot units without the presence of representatives from all parties. "Efforts are being made to access EVMs without relevant stakeholders present. This raises serious questions about transparency," they claimed.



Mamata's message

On the ground, TMC workers appeared to be taking these warnings seriously. In parts of south Kolkata, small groups of party supporters were seen coordinating movements and discussing plans to monitor strongrooms. "We trust what Didi has said. Women voters, in particular, have benefited from TMC's

schemes over the last 15 years. We are confident of the outcome but remain cautious," said Pranab Das, a party worker.

Meanwhile, BJP candidates have largely stayed away from the Salt Lake headquarters, choosing instead to remain in their constituencies. Party leaders said this was part of a coordinated effort to monitor strongrooms where EVMs are stored until counting day.

Vendors make hay

Outside the BJP office, the political fervour has also translated into brisk business for local vendors. Biswajit Das, a tea seller who operates a stall near the headquarters, said the election season had significantly boosted his earnings.

"In the past three months, I barely had time to rest. My daily income tripled during the campaign," he said, adding that he plans to close his shop on counting day and return to his native village. A former CPI(M) supporter who now backs the BJP,

Das expressed confidence in the party's chances. "I believe they will form the government," he said.

Supporters from neighbouring districts also made their way to the headquarters, many arriving in advance of the results to express their optimism. "We expect to be here from early morning on counting day, so we are congratulating our leaders in advance as they will be busy on counting day," said Pradipto Ghosh, who travelled from Shyamnagar.


A confident BJP

Inside the BJP camp, preparations for a potential victory are already underway, albeit discreetly. A party insider said arrangements had been made for celebrations, including stockpiling crackers and coloured powder. "If we secure the mandate, the entire area will be filled with celebrations. However, there are strict instructions of not celebrating or planning before the results are out. Our cel-

ebration will begin once the trends are clear," the insider said.

BJP state president Samik Bhattacharya spent the day at the headquarters, reviewing updates and speaking to candidates over the phone. While he refrained from overt celebrations, his confidence was evident. "We are focused on forming the government with a full majority. Celebrations will follow," Bhattacharya told *The Indian Express*.

Commenting on the high voter turnout, Bhattacharya credited both the Election Commission and central armed police forces. "A large number of people came out to vote, and the credit goes to the authorities for ensuring smooth polling," he said. He also addressed perceptions about voting patterns, suggesting that traditional assumptions may not hold this time. "It is not correct to assume that all minority votes go to one party. We also understand the arithmetic and are confident of our position," he added.



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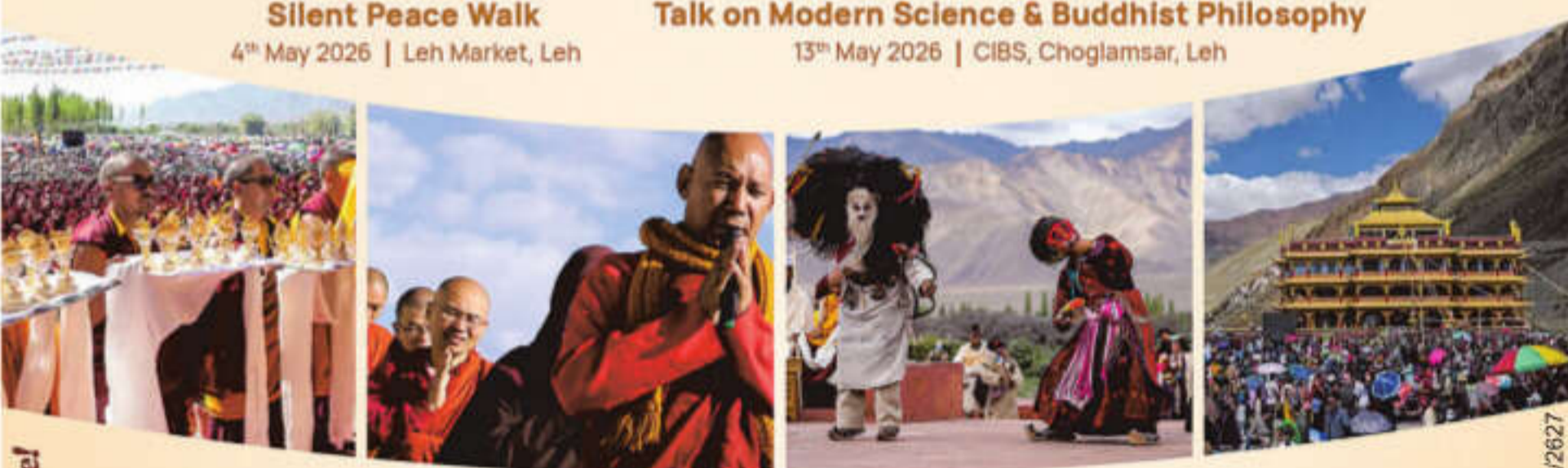
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Vietnamese President Lam on India visit from May 5 to 7

Express News Service
New Delhi, April 30

VIETNAM'S PRESIDENT To Lam is expected to visit India from May 5 to 7, in what will be his maiden state visit after being elected as the President earlier in April.

The Vietnamese president is expected to hold bilateral talks with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and also meet President Droupadi Murmu, the Ministry of External Affairs said Thursday.

To Lam, who also serves as the General Secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam, will lead a high-level delegation of ministers and top executives during his state visit

next week.

The MEA said: "PM Modi will hold wide-ranging discussions with President To Lam across the spectrum of bilateral relations..."

The two leaders are expected to focus on enhancing ties in trade and critical technologies, with a special emphasis on boosting defence cooperation, especially in the maritime domain.

The visit marks the tenth anniversary of the elevation of relations to a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, agreed during PM Modi's visit to Vietnam in 2016, the MEA added.

The Vietnamese president is also expected to visit Bodh Gaya and Mumbai.

MHA updates citizenship rules, tightens norms on dual passports for minors

Minors holding Indian passports can't possess passports of other countries at the same time

Express News Service
New Delhi, April 30

THE UNION Home Ministry on Thursday notified the Citizenship (Amendment) Rules, 2026, introducing electronic Overseas Citizen of India (e-

OCI) cards, fully online applications, and stricter norms on dual passports for minors.

"The rules introduce a fully digital OCI framework, mandating online applications, electronic records, and acknowledgements, while phasing out duplicative physical processes. A new provision allows issuance of electronic OCI (e-OCI) alongside physical cards, signalling a shift toward paperless identity for overseas Indians. Applicants must now consent to sharing biometric data for integration with fast-track immigration programmes, enabling possible automatic enrolment in the future," an MHA official said.

Earlier, OCI processes involved a mix of online and physical submissions, including paperwork and duplicate filing requirements. Now, they also formally codify certain provisions that were earlier followed in practice, but not explicitly written into the rules.

A major update mandates that minors holding Indian passports cannot simultaneously possess passports of other countries, as inserted in a new proviso to rule 3 and this addresses concerns over dual citizenship misuse, though OCI status itself does not confer full citizenship rights.

"These rules may be called the Citizenship (Amendment) Rules, 2026. They shall come into force on the date of their publication in the Official Gazette. In the Citizenship Rules, 2009 (hereinafter referred to as the said rules), in rule 3, the following proviso shall be inserted, namely: Provided that the applicant in such cases shall note that the minor child cannot at any time hold the passport of any other country while also holding the Indian passport," the notification said.

An application for registration as an OCI cardholder under section 7A shall be made in Form XXVIII electronically on the designated online portal.

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An application for registration as an OCI cardholder under section 7A shall be made in Form XXVIII electronically on the designated online portal.

FULL REPORT ON
WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM



The cruise boat is said to have lost balance due to strong winds and high waves triggered by a sudden change in weather. EXPRESS

Four dead, several missing after boat capsizes at Bargi Dam in Jabalpur

Anand Mohan J
Bhopal, April 30

AT LEAST four people were killed and several others remain missing after a cruise boat carrying 35 to 40 passengers capsized in the Bargi Dam area of Jabalpur on Thursday evening, following a sudden storm that triggered strong winds and high waves on the Narmada river.

The incident occurred near Khamaria Tapu (island) in the Bargi Dam area. Sudden adverse weather conditions triggered strong winds and high waves, causing the cruise boat to lose balance, overturn, and gradually sink. At least 18 have been rescued so far, many of them pulled out of the water by local fishermen and first responders. Meanwhile 15-18 people are still unaccounted for, the police said.

"Some 35-40 people were on the river cruise boat when it overturned because of a sudden storm. Four bodies were recovered from the river, while an operation is in full swing to trace and rescue the missing passengers," City Superintendent of Police (Bargi town) Anjul Mishra said.

Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav took cognisance of the incident and directed Public Works Minister Rakesh Singh to reach the site immediately. "The operation by the local administration and rescue forces continues unabated in Jabalpur regarding the tragic cruise accident at the Bargi Dam caused by a severe storm... Efforts are underway to locate those who are missing as quickly as possible. In this hour of crisis, the state government stands in full solidarity with the affected families with complete sensitivity, and every possible assistance is being ensured," Yadav said in a post on X.

PWD minister Rakesh Singh, who reached the site soon after the incident, said an investigation would follow and declined to comment on allegations about whether a weather department warning of a storm was disregarded by the crew.

"This is an unfortunate incident. I was present at the spot. We have rescued at least 15 persons and 4 are reported dead. I have spoken to the Chief Minister and he has announced Rs 4 lakh compensation to the family of the deceased. We are focussing on rescue operations right now and after that we will investigate the case and fix responsibility," the minister said.

On the ground, rescue operations continued late into the night under difficult conditions. Police personnel and State Disaster Emergency Response Force (SDERF) teams were seen moving through the dark waters in motorboats, sweeping the area with torches as they searched for survivors. In some instances, rescuers formed human chains near the banks, while others scanned the surface for any signs of movement or floating debris.

Bodies recovered from the water were brought ashore in inflatable boats, with teams working methodically despite low visibility and choppy currents. Survivors, many in shock, were wrapped in blankets and shifted to safer areas as officials coordinated efforts along the shoreline.

Senior district officials, including the collector and police officers, remained at the site overseeing the operation, which authorities said was being conducted on a war footing. Preliminary inputs point to the sudden storm as the immediate trigger, though officials indicated that a detailed inquiry would examine whether safety protocols, including passenger limits and life-saving equipment, were followed.

Home Ministry asks states to stay alert ahead of May Day protests

Mahender Singh Manral
New Delhi, April 30

THE UNION Ministry of Home Affairs is learnt to have asked all the states and Union Territories to stay alert ahead of nationwide May Day protests planned by trade and farmer unions on May 1.

The MHA's advisory, urging heightened vigilance and precautionary security measures, comes in the wake of a series of worker protests in Noida earlier this month, when workers took to the streets demanding higher wages, reduced working hours and better overtime compensation. Authorities are closely monitoring the situation amid expectations of large turnouts on International Labour Day on Friday.

In an internal communication to all the Chief Secretaries, DGPs and Police Commissioners on Thursday, the MHA is learnt to have informed that central trade unions, barring the Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh (BMS), are likely to mobilise workers on May Day, foregrounding key labour demands and recent

protest-related grievances. "The unions are planning co-ordinated public meetings and processions in industrial areas, state capitals, and district headquarters to press for the withdrawal of the four Labour Codes, an increase in minimum wages, and the unconditional release of workers arrested during recent protests in NCR," a source said.

In a show of broader solidarity, central trade unions have joined hands with the Samyukt Kisan Morcha, appealing to farmers across the country to participate in May Day programmes. The MHA has also pointed out that pro-ultra Left labour outfits may also organise parallel processions in industrial belts, raising concerns over the scale and spread of mobilisation. In view of the planned demonstrations, the MHA has directed to take adequate measures to maintain law and order situation. The advisory calls for heightened security arrangements at industrial clusters, state capitals, and district headquarters to prevent any untoward incidents.



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- निर्माण कामगार मृत्यु व दिव्यांगता सहायता योजना: पंजीकृत निर्माण श्रमिक की दुर्घटना में मृत्यु पर अंत्येष्टि व्यय ₹25,000 एवं परिजनों को ₹5 लाख की सहायता, दिव्यांग होने पर ₹2 लाख से लेकर ₹4 लाख तक की सहायता
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- मानवत्व, शिशु एवं बालिका मदद योजना: 6 लाख+ लाभार्थी
- कन्या विवाह सहायता योजना: पंजीकृत निर्माण श्रमिक की पुत्री अथवा महिला श्रमिक को स्वयं के विवाह हेतु ₹65,000 तथा अंतरजातीय विवाह हेतु ₹75,000 की सहायता

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- श्रमिकों को प्रमाण पत्र एवं टूलकिट वितरण

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Bulandshahr triple murder: Gym trainer dies in encounter

Manish Sahu
Lucknow, April 30

BULANDSHAHR POLICE on Thursday shot dead 32-year-old gym trainer Jeetu Saini, the main accused in the murder of three men that took place on the night of April 25 inside a gym.

The killings had taken place during Saini's birthday celebration after a brawl erupted between two groups over cake smearing that escalated into Saini and his associates allegedly shooting dead three youngsters, all in their 20s. Saini had been absconding since then.

Police had announced a reward of Rs 50,000 for information leading to his arrest.

Superintendent of Police, Bulandshahr, Dinesh Kumar Singh said Saini was a key accused in the murder case. He said the police are continuing raids to find and arrest the remaining suspects.

So far, the police have arrested and jailed five men in the case, including three who were apprehended during earlier encounters.

Rinku Saini and Bharat Saini were arrested on Tuesday after they were injured in an exchange of fire after allegedly shooting at a police team, of-

The deceased has been identified as gym trainer Jeetu Saini. It was at his birthday bash that the brawl that led to the three deaths took place last week

ficers said.

Earlier, three other men were arrested, and one of them was injured in a police shootout after allegedly trying to escape.

The police said Saini was also named in two earlier cases from 2018 and 2023, which included charges of causing death by negligence and violations under the SC/ST Act.

A resident of the Punjabiyan locality, Saini came from a well-off family that owns sweet and garment shops in the Khurja Nagar area. Widely known locally as a regular gym-goer, he also worked part-time as a trainer and was involved in property dealing. His younger brother, Ravi, is also wanted in the same case.

During the encounter, Inspector Mohammad Aslam and Head Constable Mohit Kumar

sustained bullet injuries and were immediately taken to a Community Health Centre along with Saini. The accused was later referred to the district hospital, where doctors declared him dead during treatment. The police said the condition of the injured policemen is stable. Bullets also hit the bullet-proof jackets of Inspector Ramphal Singh and Head Constable Kapil Nain during the exchange of fire.

According to the Bulandshahr police, teams were conducting search operations early Thursday morning to track down absconding suspects when they spotted two men on a two-wheeler on Jhanjhar Road in the Khurja police station area. When asked to stop, the suspects allegedly ignored the signal, opened fire, and tried to escape along an unpaved route.

After a chase, police surrounded the men, who allegedly fired again after being cornered. In retaliatory firing carried out in self-defence, one of the accused was critically injured, while the other escaped under cover of darkness. The police returned fire in self-defence, critically injuring one suspect while the other escaped in the dark, they said.

Robbery accused shoots at SHO, then gunned down

Aiswarya Raj
Dehradun, April 30

A MAN accused of robbery was shot dead by the Dehradun Police in an alleged encounter in the Uttarakhand capital in the early hours of Thursday. The police have alleged that the deceased had shot at the SHO of Premnagar police station, and the encounter was an act of self-defence.

According to the police, the deceased has been identified as Akram, who hails from Shamli, Uttar Pradesh. He had been accused in at least four cases in Dehradun and multiple others in UP. The police have claimed that the man was being chased after he allegedly committed robbery.

SSP Parmendra Dobhal said: "When police pursued them, the accused opened fire on the police team. In the incident, the SHO of Premnagar sustained a gunshot injury. In retaliatory firing carried out by the police in self-defence, one accused was injured".

The accused later died during treatment at the hospital.

The alleged robbery had taken place on the intervening night between Wednesday and Thursday.

Jammu to Srinagar in under 5 hrs: Vande Bharat Express flagged off

Arun Sharma
Jammu, April 30

THE UNION Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw, in what may be described as a historic moment, on Thursday flagged off the first direct Vande Bharat Express between Jammu and Srinagar, providing not only all-weather connectivity between the two capital cities of Jammu and Kashmir, but also reducing the travel time between them to less than five hours.

The train, with 20 coaches, which will operate six days a week from May 2 except Tuesdays, will cover approximately 266 km.

It will leave Jammu Tawi railway station at 6.20 am and reach Srinagar at 11.10 am in a record travel time of 4 hours and 50 minutes. From Srinagar, the train will depart at 8 am and reach Jammu Tawi by 12.40 pm. It will relieve thousands of commuters travelling on the Jammu-Srinagar national highway of the problem of frequent road closures during the rainy season and winter.

It will have brief halts at Katra, Reasi and Banihal railway stations.

Vaishnaw was accompa-



Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw, Union MoS Jitendra Singh, and J&K CM Omar Abdullah flag off the train, in Jammu on Thursday. PTI

nied by Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh and Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, among others.

This is the extended Vande Bharat service as the train with eight coaches is already running on the Katra-Srinagar stretch, which was flagged off by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The decision to increase the number of coaches to 20 was taken keeping in view the overwhelming response from passengers to the already operational train service between Katra and Srinagar. This will

also ease pressure on reservations and reduce the waiting list, especially during the peak tourist season and the upcoming Amarnath Yatra.

With the Vande Bharat Express now operating between Jammu and Srinagar, people across the country intending to visit Kashmir by rail need not travel to Katra, as they can board it at Jammu Tawi railway station itself.

Speaking on the occasion, Vaishnaw said that while strengthening maintenance practices remains key to safety

and security, the next major focus of the Central government is increasing capacity on the Jammu-Srinagar rail corridor through track doubling to enable more train operations. He talked about doubling the Qazigund-Srinagar railway line so that more trains can be run on it.

Pointing out that the Vande Bharat Express on the Jammu-Katra-Srinagar route has emerged as a major success, he said two crore kg of apples have been transported from Kashmir to Delhi. Thirty-two bogies have been booked for cherry, he added. More than five lakh people have travelled on the Vande Bharat between Katra and Srinagar since its inauguration by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, he said. "We are serving Dogri and Kashmiri foods in this Vande Bharat," he said, adding that the train can operate even in minus-10-degree temperatures and its piping is such that water cannot freeze.

"In the last snow season, we tried this train, and accordingly, the new 20-bogie train was modified." He also talked about the use of higher-specification electronics and the installation of 3,000 microchips in the Jammu-Srinagar Vande Bharat.

CHESTER HILLS PROJECT

Himachal DGP orders action against Solan SDM

Saurabh Parashar
Shimla, April 30

IN A dramatic turn of events surrounding the controversial housing project Chester Hills in Solan, Himachal DGP Ashok Tewari instructed DC Solan to initiate disciplinary and vigilance action against Solan SDM Poonam Bansal, following allegations of misconduct, conflict of interest, and suspected benami transactions Thursday.

SDM Bansal is the same officer who, in her earlier capacity, had established violations of Section 118 of the Himachal Pradesh Tenancy and Land Reforms Act, 1972, along with suspected benami transactions by the promoters of the Chester Hills project.

When asked, SDM Bansal said, "Let them carry out the investigation."

According to information, the development comes following a complaint against SDM Bansal and her husband Sunil Kumar Bansal, who is a BSNL employee, moved by a Chandigarh-based Advocate Sanjeev Kumar Birla.

In his complaint, Birla alleged that the couple were indirectly involved in the purchase of two properties in Solan registered on the names of Aarti Nirmohi and Raksha Manta. Birla alleged that Sunil transferred around Rs 40 lakh in the account of Nirmohi when the land deals were being executed.

In his communication to the DC Solan, DGP Ashok Tewari stated, "The material on record... reveals serious and prima facie misuse of official position, conflict of interest, and possible involvement in benami transactions."

HQ District Police, Kupwara, UT of J&K. Email: dpokupwara@jkpolice.gov.in

NO:- CRB/Lookout Notice/2026/23932-50 Dated: 27/04/2026
As intimated by SHO P/S Trehgam vide letter No. 584/5-A/PST/2026 dated 25-04-2026, that accused Yawar Nazir Bhat S/O Nazir Ahmad Bhat R/O Poshpora is involved in case FIR No. 84/2024 U/S 8/21, 29 NDPS Act of P/S Trehgam and is absconding after commission of crime. Despite strenuous efforts, whereabouts of the said accused are not ascertained so far. The Photograph alongwith description roll of absconding accused person is as under:

Description Roll	Photograph
Name:- Yawar Nazir Bhat	
Parentage:- Nazir Ahmad Bhat	
Address:- Poshpora	
Age:- 26 years	
Height:- 5 Feet 7 Inch	
Complexion:- Whitish	
Build:- Normal	
Hair:- Black	
Identification Mark:- Mole on left side face.	

It is therefore requested that a sharp lookout may please be maintained and if traced out or any clue leading to the whereabouts of said absconding accused, immediate information may kindly be shared on the below mentioned Email/phone No's.

Email: dpokupwara@jkpolice.gov.in
PCR Kupwara:- 7051404938
SHO P/S Trehgam: 7051404916
PS Trehgam:- 7051404917

(Syed Al-Tahir Gilani) JKPS
Sr. Superintendent of Police,
Kupwara

DIP/J-1402/26 - DATE 30 APRIL 2026

NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION PLANNING BOARD

(A Statutory Body under Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs, Govt. of India)
1st Floor, Core-4B, India Habitat Centre,
Lodhi Road, New Delhi-110003

APPOINTMENT

Applications are invited from eligible Indian nationals for engagement of one (01) Consultant Grade-I (Technical) and one (01) Young Professional (GIS) in NCRPB on consolidated monthly fee. Details of the vacancies are available on Board's website <https://ncrpb.nic.in>.

Last date for receipt of applications is 15 days from the date of publication of advertisement in the newspaper.



Member Secretary
CBC 44103/12/0002/2627

Heartiest Greetings to all on the occasion of

Buddha Purnnima

May 1, 2026

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There is no liberty if the power of judging be not separated from the legislative and executive powers.
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Likely below-normal monsoon is a warning: India must heed water stress



V ANANTHA NAGESWARAN AND M RAVICHANDRAN

ON APRIL 13, the India Meteorological Department issued its first update for the coming monsoon season. The monsoon season is expected to be mostly below normal. The probability of it being even above normal to excess is almost ruled out. More importantly, many of the rainfall districts will face below-normal rain. Very few areas of the country will receive normal to above-normal rainfall.

This is mainly due to the El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO) effect. El Niño and La Niña are two weather patterns that occur in the Pacific Ocean. They are part of a larger climate phenomenon called the El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO). Both have significant effects on global weather, influencing rainfall and temperatures. El Niño typically leads to reduced monsoon rainfall, while La Niña tends to strengthen the monsoon.

ENSO is expected to set in, in June. But the effect will begin to be felt in July. So, the current expectation is that ENSO will have its effect in the second half of the monsoon season rather than the full monsoon. However, as we write this, ENSO is developing rapidly in the Pacific. It may occur even earlier.

A couple of other minor consolations are the negative correlation between the Northern Hemisphere or Eurasian snow cover and

the rainfall in the subsequent monsoon season. Between January and March 2026, Eurasian snow cover was below normal. That augurs better for the precipitation during the monsoon season. Of course, that has been factored into the seasonal forecast. Second, the IOD — Indian Ocean Dipole — counterpart to ENSO, but in the Indian Ocean, will also be counteracting the effect of ENSO on India's Southwest Monsoon. But IOD is expected to have its effect only in the second half of the monsoon season. This has already been factored into the rainfall assessment.

Another minor relief is that the Super ENSO phenomenon, which has an even greater impact on the monsoon rainfall, is setting in much after India's monsoon season officially ends. So, India's rainfall will not be much impacted by the Super ENSO. It is expected that this year's ENSO phenomenon will have a bigger impact on Southeast Asia, Indonesia and Australia. The ENSO effect usually lasts nine to 12 months.

It will be good to treat this year's ENSO effect as yet another warning sign for the country to get its act together on water. In the past, ENSO occurred once every two to seven years. Now, the gap between two ENSOs appears to have shrunk, and its intensity is also increasing. That is not good news. Second, while India's average rainfall is expected to hold up reasonably well in the years to come, notwithstanding this year's ENSO, at least until the end of the decade, it is widely known that precipitation will become narrower in both spatial and temporal scales. That is, rainfall may have a concentrated geographic footprint and occur in shorter intervals. The occurrence of recent years' rainfall and this year's forecasts also reflect this.

The image of a steady drizzle throughout the day, misty skies and

an atmosphere that lends itself to quiet contemplation and relaxed minds over a cup of chai and a hot samosa or pakora while watching the monsoon rain has given way to concerns about the damage that fast, furious downpours will cause. It is all about deluge and not drizzle. That means taking water management more seriously than we have done so far.

Civilisations have flourished and perished because of water. India has been witness to that itself. Therefore, we will be doing ourselves a big favour if we do not treat water conservation and management as an avoidable luxury but as an existential necessity. There was a sound reason why the rulers of yore created temple tanks, bunds, reservoirs and numerous other water bodies. All these structures enabled the harvesting of rainwater. Now, we have built over them. India has to conserve water more than ever since brief but massive rain deluges do not allow the soil to retain water. Worse, the water runs off too quickly, taking the top and fertile soil with it. Therefore, capturing it is more important than before.

Barely a month before the IMD released its monsoon update, three experts published their book on water. They were not shy of sounding dire. Parameswaran Iyer, Arunabha Ghosh and Richard Damanian, in their book *Water, Nature and Progress: Solutions for a New India*, call for a circular water-economy mission that treats used water as a resource rather than a liability, with realistic targets and financing models. India reuses only 3 per cent of its treated used water, while cities like Singapore meet 40 per cent of their water demand through reuse. The mission proposes staggered targets — 50 per cent treatment capacity by 2028, 100 per cent by 2035, 50 per

cent reuse by 2035 — along with a framework for public-private partnerships that draws on successful models from Surat, Thane, Taiwan and Jordan.

One of the pillars on which India's aspiration of becoming a developed society and economy rests is water. If that pillar is corroded by pollution and the under-appreciation of its role in sustaining civilisations, the edifice will struggle to rise and remain vulnerable to collapse.

Water is a scarce commodity that will become increasingly so, and its price must reflect that. Right now, that scarcity value is captured by unregulated water tankers. That shows that people are willing to pay a price for water, but they resist paying a water tax to the state because they are not sure of service quality. So, the ability to charge a water tariff follows, rather than precedes, improvements in state capacity and service delivery. But governments across the country cannot provide an assured, reliable water supply, nor can they build the infrastructure to do so without the financial capacity to fund it. Therefore, an honest conversation between the governing and the governed on water pricing and service commitments is overdue.

India is not the only water-stressed society, but, as with every other problem — employment or energy transition, to name just two — the challenge is greater and more urgent for India given its sheer size. Its reactive approach to insidious challenges such as water stress may be both inadequate and too late. This year's likely below-normal monsoon has served us one more warning. We will be helping ourselves if we pay heed to it.

V Anantha Nageswaran and M Ravichandran are, respectively, the Chief Economic Advisor and Secretary, Ministry of Earth Sciences, Government of India. Views are personal

Civilisations have flourished and perished because of water. India has been witness to that. We will be doing ourselves a big favour if we treat water conservation and management as an existential necessity

Vibhajt Bharat: Forcing Mumbai cabbies to speak Marathi



ARVIND P DATAR

THE DIRECTIVE to taxi and autorickshaw drivers to demonstrate their proficiency in Marathi has been mercifully postponed from May 1 to August 15 by the Government of Maharashtra. Apart from the irrationality of this proposal, it is doubtful if it is constitutionally permissible.

Article 19(1)(d) guarantees to every citizen the fundamental right to move freely throughout India. Article 19(1)(e) gives every citizen the fundamental right to reside and settle in any part of India. Under Article 19(1)(g), any citizen can practice any profession or carry on any occupation, trade, or business. These fundamental rights can be restricted only by a law made by the Maharashtra legislature and not by executive instructions. Any restriction also has to be reasonable and in the interests of the general public. Equally important is Article 21, which protects the right to life and has been repeatedly interpreted to include the right to livelihood. Thus, any attempt at such linguistic compulsion may not pass judicial muster.

In the opinion of this writer, neither Maharashtra nor any other state can amend the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988, or make any law that makes it mandatory for a citizen to be able to read and write the regional language as a condition precedent to own or operate a taxi or autorickshaw. A mere amendment to the Motor Vehicle Rules will not do.

This move is also irrational. Where does one draw the line? If taxi and auto drivers must compulsorily know Marathi, can the same restriction be placed on nurses and doctors working in Maharashtra? A Bihari engineer, a Bengali chartered accountant or any white-collar employee can work and settle in Maharashtra with no knowledge of Marathi, but a person from eastern UP who comes to Mumbai to drive an auto because of poverty must have a working knowledge.

The Eighth Schedule has 22 official languages. Any citizen, irrespective of his mother tongue, can carry on his occupation in any part of India. A working knowledge of Marathi can be a condition only when it is indispensable to the job or work

that a person has to do. Maharashtra's move will have adverse national consequences if other states follow suit. There are reports that similar demands are being made in Karnataka. The imposition of such conditions may yield short-term political benefits. But it can have disastrous consequences for the nation.

There is an equal need to moderate the imposition of Hindi. The recasting of our criminal laws without any significant change is an example of the unnecessary use of Hindi. The Indian Penal Code has been renamed Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita and the old sections have simply been re-numbered. The Criminal Procedure Code and the Evidence Act have also been re-named. The titles of the new enactments are incomprehensible to most people in southern India. One cannot forget the anti-Hindi riots that engulfed Tamil Nadu in the late 1960s. And the new laws have not made the slightest difference to the problems that face the criminal justice system.

The first step that former prime minister Lee Kuan Yew took in 1965 was to make English, not Chinese, the official language of Singapore. This was a critical step in securing the economic progress of the small nation. The insistence on only the regional language being used in government schools also requires reconsideration. Knowing English is, unfortunately, necessary, particularly for the youth from underprivileged sections of society, for easier access to better-paying jobs. A combined use of English, Hindi and the relevant state's regional language is the urgent need.

In 1956, Indian states were sadly divided on linguistic lines. Our states must not take decisions that weaken the Indian or Bharatiya identity or make it difficult for people in one state to migrate to and work in another. We have an ambitious plan for a Viksit Bharat@2047. To achieve it, we must not take steps that lead to a *vibhajt* Bharat or divided India.

The writer, a senior advocate, is a Maharashtrian, born in Mumbai, settled in Chennai. He mainly practises in New Delhi

The chronicle of AAP defections foretold



ASHUTOSH

ABOUT TWO-thirds of AAP MPs in the Rajya Sabha, led by Raghav Chadha and Sandeep Pathak, declared that they would merge the parliamentary party with the BJP. This did not surprise me. It was the inevitable result of the kind of people who were promoted in the party at the expense of those who were honest and loyal to the cause of the Anna Movement.

For some time now, AAP has refused to go back to the drawing board. This is not the party we all knew. It was the one party with the character and will to take people along to reinvent the corrupt political system. When AAP forgot its biggest resource was not money, power, or institutions but moral capital, its decline began. To begin with, AAP had attracted brilliant people from all walks of life — social workers, activists, lawyers, diplomats, journalists, corporate managers, software engineers, and doctors. They were successful in their fields and did not need a political party to shine. They joined AAP because they genuinely felt the nation needed to change course to realise its potential. When the country reacted massively to the call given by the Anna Movement to fight corruption, they wanted to be fellow travellers on that revolutionary journey. Unfortunately, this journey could not reach its destination because the movement was led by people without vision.

AAP had criticised traditional parties for their "high command culture". Within, it fashioned a "super-high command" where no leader, minister or office-bearer mattered except one man. The rest were automatons, who were to say and do what they were told. A disconnect between leader and party was inevitable. And whenever a party ceases to be democratic, it turns into a system to further the careers of the chosen ones. These people are smart enough to realise they don't have to be loyal to the party but to the leader. In the last few years, AAP was adorned with such people from top to bottom. They became MPs, MLAs and ministers.

What is most puzzling is that, unlike Narendra Modi, Arvind Kejriwal has the unique knack of losing his closest lieutenants. Chadha was once Kejriwal's blue-eyed boy, put in charge of Punjab and credited with AAP's success in the state. After it formed the state government, he was considered Kejriwal's eyes and ears. But when the party was in trouble and its top leadership imprisoned, he was nowhere to be seen. Similarly, Pathak was once the most powerful person in AAP. The entire party structure was at his disposal. He was also instrumental to AAP's success in Punjab. Another rebel, Swati Maliwal, was a member of Kejriwal's core team even before the Anna Movement. She became a Rajya Sabha MP. Ironically, she parted ways with Kejriwal in the most acrimonious way. All three owed their political careers to one man, but he could not retain them.

AAP has been unable to craft an institutional framework that can deal with the kind of crisis it faces today. The party, and particularly its leader, need to reflect on this failure to build a team.

The writer is co-founder of SatyaHindi and author of Reclaiming Bharat

AAP had criticised traditional parties for their 'high command culture'. Within, it fashioned a 'super-high command' where no leader minister or office-bearer mattered except one man

40 YEARS AGO

May 1, 1986



Bid to flush out terrorists

THE PUNJAB Police and paramilitary forces entered the Golden Temple Complex in Amritsar to clear off "terrorists, separatists and anti-national elements". The swift action led by the Amritsar Deputy Commissioner, Ramesh Inder Singh, and the Senior Superintendent of Police, S S Virk, started with the raiding of the Guru Nanak Niwas, Guru Ram Das Sarai and the Teja Singh Samundri Hall, which were frequented by militants.

House supports temple action

LEADERS of all political parties in the Lok Sabha fully supported the Punjab Government's determined operation to flush out

anti-national "Khalistani" elements from the Golden Temple complex and effectively deal with terrorists. Members greeted with cheers the statement of the Home Minister, P V Narasimha Rao, confirming that the Punjab Police and CRPF had entered the Golden Temple complex and taken into custody some persons. The search for terrorists is continuing.

Chernobyl reactor meltdown

WESTERN SOURCES said they had indications of a meltdown of a second nuclear reactor at the devastated Chernobyl atomic power plant, and several European nations warned their people about the danger from what could be the world's worst nuclear disaster. A US official said news reports of 2,000

deaths in the nuclear accident were credible. He made this remark after studying data relayed from a US spy satellite that overflew the area where the radiation leak occurred.

Delhi Apartment Bill passed

THE LOK Sabha passed the Delhi Apartment Ownership Bill seeking to give statutory recognition of an apartment as a unit of property capable of transfer and for a statutory organisation armed with adequate powers for the management of common areas in multi-storied buildings. The Bill meets the longstanding demand of owners of apartments and flats, both residential and commercial, for the grant of ownership rights in the property.

Task for new Fed chair: Protecting autonomy

THE US Federal Reserve's decision to keep interest rates unchanged in its April meeting was along expected lines. The conflict in West Asia, the consequent dislocations in the energy market and supply-chain disruptions, have led to considerable macroeconomic uncertainty. While committee members have opted to wait in order to gauge the impact of these developments on inflation and growth, what was noticeable was the growing disagreements over the direction of policy. The dissent — one member preferred to lower interest rates, while three others opposed the "easing bias in the statement" — has been the greatest in recent years. This comes at a particularly challenging time for the Fed. The central bank is going through a leadership transition — Jerome Powell's term as Fed chair ends on May 15, and Kevin Warsh, Trump's choice, has been confirmed by a Senate banking committee.

Under Powell, the Fed confronted multiple shocks, ranging from the Covid pandemic to the energy-market disruptions following the Russia-Ukraine conflict and the war in West Asia. During his term, the central bank was criticised for being "behind the curve" and not raising rates fast enough to combat inflation following the pandemic. More recently, Powell and the Fed have also faced a barrage of criticism from US President Donald Trump. In his second term, Trump has been quite vocal in his criticism of the direction of monetary policy. His attempts to pressurise the Fed into lowering interest rates have raised apprehensions over the independence and autonomy of the central bank. It was only a few days ago that the US Justice Department dropped its investigation over the Fed's building renovations — an investigation Powell had framed in the context of "the administration's threats and ongoing pressure".

The leadership change at the Fed — the full Senate vote will be held in May — will be closely watched. Inflation in the US has edged upwards — consumer prices rose 3.3 per cent in March amid the war in Iran. Gas prices are now at \$4.3, up from \$3.18 a year ago. But the demands to ease policy may well continue. The political context is unlikely to change. The challenge before the next Fed chair will, therefore, be to resist political pressure, safeguard the autonomy and independence of the central bank.

He-Man & power amid uncertainty

IN 1977, ahead of the release of what would become the phenomenon that is *Star Wars*, filmmaker George Lucas approached Mattel for a tie-up to produce licensed franchise toys. It refused, the deal went to Kenner, and the rest became history. Mattel's resurrection was engineered three years later by a toy designer, Roger Sweet, and his brainchild, He-Man, a broad-shouldered action figurine with a power sword, on a mission to defend Castle Grayskull and the planet, Eternia, from the evil forces of his uncle and archenemy, Skeletor. His inception story might have rested on a missed opportunity, but with his bulging biceps and ripped abs, He-Man turned out to be "the most powerful man in the universe" through the 1980s. "I always wanted to be a He-Man and never could... I knew almost every guy in the world would love to be a He-Man," Sweet, who died on April 28, at 91, had said in a 2019 interview. Turns out, he was right.

Inevitably, comparisons to *Star Wars* followed but He-Man was gloriously, almost brazenly, a commercial artefact that wore its purpose lightly, moving from toy to television to comics, a hero conjured in the image of what a toy might demand rather than what a tale might require. For entire generations, He-Man defined heroism, even as it circumscribed the emotional vocabulary available to boys, insisting that power lay in invulnerability rather than complexity, that men didn't cry or experience fear.

That idea of masculinity might have been dented, but He-Man's appeal, it seems, is not entirely lost. A new film is slated for this summer, a slice of nostalgia for old acolytes and, perhaps, a question for the uninitiated: In a strife-torn world, what does it mean to be powerful, once the old certainties have worn thin?



DIS/AGREE

THE BEST OF BOTH SIDES

A weekly column, which offers not this-versus-that, but the best of both sides, to inform the debate

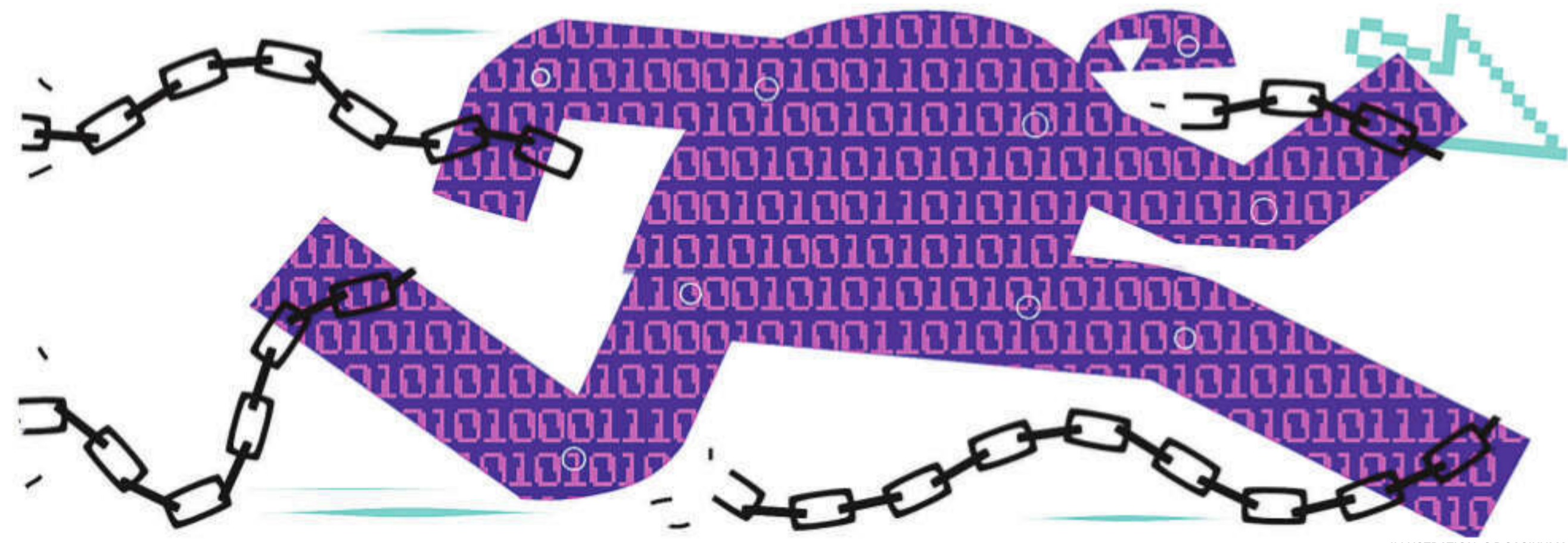


ILLUSTRATION: C R SASIKUMAR

Anthropic's Mythos raises a question: What kind of regulation does AI need?

Now, only damage control is possible



NISHANT SHAH

THE FOUNDING dream of the digital revolution was that of a digital commons. It sounds romantic after we have watched the commons being sliced, packaged, sold, and commodified. And yet, it is a dream I want to hold on to.

There were extraordinary visions of what digital technologies could do if they were built as public infrastructures. Public does not mean free or outside power. The QR code was patented but made publicly usable; Linux, open protocols, and community-maintained code still hold up much of the digital economy. The giant private economy of the internet was powered by infrastructures it did not fully own.

For a long time, however compromised, the digital commons rested on three sides: The people who built and maintained its infrastructures; the publics who used, adapted, contested, and animated its applications; and governments, which were supposed to regulate, safeguard, and hold these systems accountable to collective progress.

Large language models have destabilised all three. These systems are built on public infrastructures, public data, public labour, open technical cultures, and decades of shared digital experimentation. Their governance, however, is black-boxed and negotiated behind closed doors. Their financial logic is no less alarming. Anthropic has announced a \$380 billion post-money valuation. OpenAI has been reported at a valuation of \$852 billion. These valuations do not emerge from settled public trust, social safety, or proven sustainability. They emerge from the conversion of collective dependency into private speculative power.

With Claude Mythos, we are perhaps not only seeing the end of the dream, but its replacement.

Anthropic has made Claude Mythos Preview available through Project Glasswing as a gated research preview, ostensibly to help selected partners find and fix vulnerabilities across critical software systems. Anthropic also says Mythos Preview has already identified thousands of zero-day vulnerabilities. On paper, this sounds like responsibility. In practice, it shows us the problem.

A private corporation, built on public infrastructures, is now deciding who gets ac-

cess to a model powerful enough to find vulnerabilities in the systems on which the world depends.

The question of whether AI regulation should be heavy-handed or with a light-touch has arrived too late. Claude Mythos signals the end of the internet as a public utility, and the shrinking power that governments have in national and global regulation.

Who watches the watchman? Nobody. With Mythos, the watchman who is supposed to identify the vulnerabilities and cracks is also the only one who can protect the system by taking an ethical position. Except Mythos has no sense of ethics. Anthropic might loosely have one, but not enough to stop it from releasing the model, even in limited preview.

Technologies are not tools. They are propositions. They imagine the worlds that cluster around them, and then begin to make those worlds available, profitable, and inevitable. They are not dangerous only when deployed. They can be dangerous in their very existence. We now have the nuclear version of generative AI sitting with us. Not because it will destroy the world tomorrow, but because its existence reorganises the conditions of security, vulnerability, trust, and power. Anthropic might stall this for a while, but others will get there and not perform this limited restraint. Once a capacity exists, it becomes normalised, and we adapt to it.

Regulation and oversight are of little use if they are always playing a chasing game. AI companies have turned regulation into the last line of redress when it should have been the first line of defence.

Asking whether we need more or less regulation to keep people safe is like asking whether regulation can deweaponise a gun. In a world where the gun exists, people will die. Regulation may reduce the damage, but it cannot undo the world that the weapon has already made.

What remains is to ask whether global governance systems can do what regulation can no longer do: Not merely control these technologies, but slow them, refuse them, perhaps force their degrowth. Control might now be a fantasy, as naive as the dream of the digital commons. But there is still a difference between fantasies. The commons asked us to build public power, however imperfectly. This new fantasy asks us to trust the people who broke the world, and then handed us repair as a service.

The writer is professor of Global Media at the Chinese University of Hong Kong and faculty associate at the Berkman Klein Centre for Internet and Society, Harvard University

Better execution, not more restriction



MEGHNA BAL

ANTHROPIC'S MYTHOS has put regulators on high alert. Mythos can identify security vulnerabilities in software systems, help plan attacks against them, and simulate how such attacks could unfold — abilities once limited to a small group of highly skilled humans. The advancement of such AI capabilities heightens the risk of bad actors using them to scale attacks on businesses, institutions, and critical infrastructure.

The Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In) has since issued an advisory on the cyber risks posed by advanced AI systems, acknowledging the criticality of keeping pace with frontier AI cyber capabilities and recommending the reinforcement of baseline cybersecurity measures. The RBI is also discussing with banks the risk posed by such systems. The regulatory alarm should perhaps have come earlier. A 2026 Global Threat Report by cybersecurity firm CrowdStrike indicates that AI-enabled bad actors increased attacks by 89 per cent in 2025 over the previous year. Nonetheless, authorities in India should see this as an opportunity to bolster cyber resilience across the board. The question is: How should they go about it?

First, the government must shore up the security capabilities of smaller entities in critical sectors. While it seems that the government is looking to secure critical infrastructure like banking and telecom, not all entities have the same capacities. While giving evidence before the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Finance, the RBI acknowledged that cooperative banks lagged on security maturity and had been subject to cyberattacks.

Smaller entities like cooperative banks are going to lag on defences because they are resource-constrained. CERT-In's advisory acknowledges this limitation and prescribes a set of instructions for smaller businesses. However, securing such entities does not necessarily require more regulation. One report indicates that cooperative banks find cybersecurity compliance prohibitively expensive. A related issue is trusted vendors. When banks are looking for the lowest-cost option, they also become vulnerable to bad actors posing as cost-effective options.

The solution combines financial support with trusted implementation pathways. The government must create a corpus fund that can be used by smaller entities to strengthen their cybersecurity systems. Such a fund should be paired with a trusted vendor list that they may rely on to scan and secure their systems against threats. Pairing the fund with a trusted vendor list would also reduce the risk of misuse, poor-quality procurement, and malicious actors.

Second, the government must ensure that other areas of regulation do not inadvertently weaken cybersecurity. This requires a review of laws and proposed laws that may increase vulnerabilities in existing systems. The Draft Digital Competition Bill is one example. Broadly, the Bill prohibits mobile operating system companies from imposing restrictions on sideloading, inadvertently expanding the pathways through which malicious applications reach users. Such risks have already manifested in the cooperative banking sector. In 2025, cyber fraudsters made off with Rs 11.5 crore from the Himachal Co-operative Bank by tricking a customer into downloading a malicious application that gave them remote access to his phone, and then using that access to infiltrate its internet banking system.

Third, the government should resist the temptation to respond by restricting access to advanced AI systems altogether. While this does not seem to be on the anvil at the moment, the terms of reference for the recently constituted AI Governance and Economic Group empower it to classify AI use cases into categories such as "deploy", "pilot" and "defer", suggesting that access-based restrictions may become part of India's AI governance toolkit. Such an approach would be counterproductive, and should be avoided. Bad actors are unlikely to be constrained by legal frameworks.

With frontier AI systems like Mythos, what matters is not necessarily the number of weaknesses in a system, but which of those weaknesses can be exploited before they are fixed. This requires a departure from traditional cybersecurity approaches, which tend to treat vulnerabilities as discrete issues and overlook the interconnectedness of digital systems today. Such systems-level thinking must also inform national cybersecurity strategy. Planning must not only focus on large targets, but also address smaller and less apparent vulnerabilities that could serve as entry points into critical systems. India's cybersecurity armour will only be as strong as its weakest link.

The writer is director of the Esya Centre, a think tank based in New Delhi. Views are personal

Buddha Purnima lessons for a troubled world



C P RADHAKRISHNAN

ON THE auspicious full moon day of Chitra Pournami, when temple festivals are being celebrated, I pray that prosperity grows in every home. I am happy to extend my Buddha Purnima greetings to all brothers and sisters.

Among the many gifts Bharat has offered to the world, Buddhism stands foremost. The life and teachings of Lord Buddha continue to illuminate the lives of millions across the globe. Bharat taught the world the importance of self-realisation. The very word "Buddha" means "the awakened one". It is significant that the birth and enlightenment of this great soul, who strove to guide humanity toward self-awareness, fall on the same day.

Prince Siddhartha was raised in luxury. At the age of 29, renouncing his palace, wife, son, and all worldly wealth, he wandered in pursuit of spiritual truth. After six years of intense seeking, he attained enlightenment under the Bodhi tree at Bodhi Gaya, becoming the Buddha. The realisation of the Four Noble Truths and the path of ethical conduct marked the beginning of a new philosophy. Near Varanasi, at Sarnath, he delivered his first sermon to five ascetics. Known as "Turning the Wheel of Dharma", this teaching became the foundation of Buddhism. Over time, many were drawn to his teachings. King Bimbisara of Magadha donated the Venuvana monastery in Rajgir. The wealthy Anathapindika covered the entire Jetavana grove with gold coins to build a monastery. Such acts reflect the deep faith in righteousness that existed in Bharat.

Monasteries taught the Four Noble Truths: There is suffering; desire is the root cause of suffering; by eliminating desire, suffering can be overcome; and by following the Eightfold Path, one can live free from suffering. The Buddha advised: Do not dwell on the past — live in the present. Truthfulness is powerful. The mind is the source of all actions, so cultivate positive thinking. Do not retreat in fear during difficult times. Life's journey is ultimately individual — guide it along a spiritual path. Words can wound, so speak gently. Love and non-violence are essential. Always keep learning.

Tamil literary works like *Manimekalai* and *Kundalakesi* present Buddhist philosophy beautifully. Though many texts are lost, their contributions remain invaluable. "Intoxicating drink that clouds the mind, and the taking of life — the wise, free from delusion, have renounced these, listen: Birth and death, and death leading again to birth/ Are like sleep and waking — this is the truth./ Those who perform righteous deeds attain a noble world/ Those who commit evil deeds fall into deep suffering./ Realising this, the discerning have severed their attachments." Thus, the epic *Manimekalai* explains the essence of

cate that there was a renowned university in Kanchipuram, Tamil Nadu. Universities such as Vikramashila and Odantapuri, along with numerous literary works, showcased the intellectual heights of the nation to the world. Scholars from across Asia came to study at Buddhist universities. The 15-year-long pilgrimage of the Chinese monk Faxian was undertaken specifically for Buddhism. The Chinese monk Xuanzang spent 16 years in Bharat studying at Nalanda and collecting texts before returning. Xuanzang also visited Kanchipuram, where he studied and copied manuscripts.

Moved by compassion for the weakened Buddha after his severe austerities, Sujata lovingly offered him milk porridge, saving his life and giving him the strength to meditate under the Bodhi tree. On Buddha Purnima, we remember her love and kindness by preparing and offering payasam.

"Love is the source of joy, love is the light of the world, love is the greatest power" — these teachings of Buddha remain deeply relevant. I pray that love and peace may flourish across the world.

The writer is the Vice President of India

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Oil games

THE UAE'S exit from OPEC is a culmination of tensions that have been building for years ('Another oil market churn is in the offing', *IE*, April 30). For India, the immediate question is practical — how to position itself to benefit from increased output from the UAE while hedging against volatility caused by Iran's closure of the Strait of Hormuz. Long-term supply agreements and diversified sourcing remain the sensible route. India's energy diplomacy has generally been pragmatic, and this realignment demands more of the same — quiet, interest-driven engagement rather than reactive positioning.

M Barathi, Bengaluru

Promote multilateralism

INDIAN HISTORY is woven with democratic traditions that comprised diverse cultures, profound philosophies, and remarkable contributions to human civilisation, long before such concepts evolved in Western societies ('Trump, Iran and lessons from civilisation states', *IE*, April

30). Today, when the global leadership is defaulting to power blocs and zero-sum thinking, India's legacy can serve as a toolkit for navigating conflict in a fractured world by offering alternative pathways rooted in balance, restraint, and co-existence. The idea of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam can reframe international relations from rivalry to shared responsibility to promote multilateralism.

Vaibhav Goyal, Chandigarh

Keeping up with reality

THE COLUMN captures the dissonance between schooling and teenagers' digital lives ('How to be a good mom in times of new tools, old school', *IE*, April 30). It resembles teaching retired parents online banking while they still insist on updating a physical passbook. Our education system clings to familiarity even as reality shifts. As Pink Floyd's Another Brick in the Wall reminds us, we don't need no education that ignores context. The task is to align learning with lived realities and evolving competencies.

Harsh Pawaria, Rohtak

Indian science has a leadership problem



VIVEK POLSHETTIWAR

INDIA STANDS at an important moment in its scientific journey. It has extraordinary talent, strong institutions, and increasing political commitment toward innovation and self-reliance. Yet there is an uncomfortable reality that many scientists quietly acknowledge: Our scientific ecosystem often rewards visibility more than discovery. Recent controversies surrounding academic claims and announcements are not isolated events. They reveal a structural problem within the ecosystem. Press conferences, social-media announcements, ceremonial launches and headline-friendly claims often receive more attention than the slow, rigorous process that leads to scientific breakthroughs.

This culture is gradually shifting incentives away from difficult, high-risk research toward work that produces quick visibility. India today produces a large number of

scientific publications and has a vibrant community of researchers and students. Yet, when we examine global technological leadership in advanced materials, semiconductors, energy technologies, CCUS or deep-tech manufacturing, India remains significantly behind the US, Europe, and China.

The reason is not a lack of talent. Indian students and scientists perform exceptionally well globally. Many of the world's leading laboratories and technology companies are powered by Indian researchers. The problem lies in the structure of our scientific institutions and the incentives they create. Too often, success in Indian academia is measured through metrics that prioritise quantity over impact: The number of papers published, committees served, or awards collected. The ecosystem is rich in fellowships, medals and recognitions, but far poorer in environments that nurture long-term, high-risk scientific discovery.

Scientific ecosystems ultimately reflect the leadership that shapes them. Visionary leadership can build institutions that change the course of history. India has wit-

nessed this before. In the early decades after Independence, young leaders such as Homi Bhabha and Vikram Sarabhai built institutions like TIFR, BARC and ISRO. They created environments where scientists could pursue bold ideas with confidence.

Today, the challenge is different. Our institutions are larger, our bureaucracy heavier, and global competition far more intense. Leadership requires not only scientific excellence but also administrative courage, the willingness to reform systems that have become slow, hierarchical and risk-averse. Younger scientists within Indian academia possess global experience, strong research records and a deep understanding of emerging scientific fields. Yet, leadership structures often remain static for decades, limiting the infusion of fresh ideas and urgency.

Many scientists across India recognise these problems but often hesitate to speak openly because the system does not always reward criticism or reform. Yet, constructive self-criticism has always been the foundation of scientific progress. Scientists who

have worked within Indian institutions and internationally understand the strengths and weaknesses of our ecosystem. Their responsibility is not only to publish papers but also to help shape institutions that can produce the next generation of discoveries.

Despite challenges, the future of Indian science remains bright. The country possesses a massive demographic advantage. Government initiatives in deep-tech innovation, space technology, and energy transition signal an increasing commitment to scientific progress. What India needs now is alignment between policy ambition and institutional execution. If the government embraces academic reform, increases funding, empowers capable younger leaders and prioritises genuine discovery over optics, India can become a global leader in science and technology. Its scientific history shows what is possible when vision, courage and institutional freedom come together.

The writer is professor of Chemistry at TIFR, Mumbai. In 2024, he received the Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar Award

SAMADHAN SAMAROH

(Supreme Court Action for Mediated Adjudication and Disputes Harmonization Across Nation)



Hon'ble Supreme Court of India has started a novel initiative for amicable resolution of disputes

Special Lok Adalat at Hon'ble Supreme Court of India on 21st, 22nd & 23rd AUGUST, 2026

If you wish to settle your case(s) pending before the Hon'ble Supreme Court, you may contact nearest District Legal Services Authority for getting your case(s) listed in this Special Samadhan Samaroh. Trained Mediators shall hold Pre-Lok Adalat sittings to facilitate the parties in reaching amicable settlement.

The following categories of cases can be taken up in the special Samadhan Samaroh scheduled to be held in the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India on 21st, 22nd & 23rd August, 2026:-

- Labour Matters
- Rent Matters
- Cheque Bounce Matters (Section 138 NI Act)
- Land Acquisition Matters
- Accident Claim Cases (Motor Accident Claims)
- Matter related to recovery of money
- Matrimonial/Family Law/Maintenance related cases
- Criminal Compoundable Matters
- Revenue Matters
- Services related matters
- Other Compensation Matters
- Other Civil Matters

Advocates and parties can access the list of referred cases originating within the jurisdiction of Haryana on the website of Haryana State Legal Services Authority. In case your case is not among the already referred cases, you may have your case referred by submitting the details through the following google form:- <https://forms.gle/woYFFEph7pgi7Q7u7>

Benefits of Samadhan Samaroh

- ☑ Fast & Effective Disposal
- ☑ Mutual Agreement
- ☑ Simple Procedure
- ☑ Final and Binding Decision

For any query you may contact any of the following:-

<p>SUPREME COURT OF INDIA One Stop Centre, Contact No.: 011-23112428, 011-23112528, 011-23116464, 011-23116465, 011-23115652 E-mail: speciallokadalat2026@sci.nic.in</p>	<p>NALSA Contact No.: 011-23382778, 011-23382121, Toll Free No. 15100 E-mail: nalsa-dia@nic.in</p>	<p>HALSA Plot No.9, Sector - 14, Panchkula, Tel. : 0172-2562309, Toll Free No.15100, Website : www.hslsa.gov.in, E-mail : hslsa@hry.nic.in, hslsa.haryana@gmail.com</p>	<p>HCLSC Punjab & Haryana High Court, Chandigarh (www.highcourt.chd.gov.in) secretary-hclsc@phhc.gov.in 0172-2718223 7404257682</p>
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For more information, Advocates & Parties may also contact their nearest District Legal Services Authorities.

Issued in public interest by Haryana State Legal Services Authority, Panchkula.

Ensure no harm to Harbhajan, family, HC directs Punjab govt

Express News Service Chandigarh, April 30

THE PUNJAB and Haryana High Court on Thursday directed the Punjab government to ensure that there is no physical harm to Rajya Sabha MP Harbhajan Singh and his family members when they are in the state. The court issued the direction while hearing a petition filed by Harbhajan who has challenged the withdrawal of security cover provided to him by the state after he, along with six other MPs, recently quit AAP and joined the BJP.



In his plea, MP Harbhajan Singh said protesters defaced his Jalandhar home after his Y-category security was withdrawn on April 25-26

MP's quit the AAP and joined the BJP. Soon after, the Centre deployed the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) for his security in Punjab and Delhi. However, in his petition, Harbhajan has sought restoration of the original security arrangement, arguing that Punjab remains duty-bound to provide adequate protection in view of the prevailing circumstances.

In his plea, he said the withdrawal came amid protests outside his residence in Jalandhar and incidents of walls being defaced with the word "Gaddar (traitor)", contending that the move exposed him and his family to potential risk.

During the hearing, the bench questioned the basis on which the threat assessment was reviewed and observed that ensuring security was the state's responsibility, particularly when a public representative was facing demonstrations outside his home.

The Punjab government defended the withdrawal as part of a routine security review based on updated threat perception, but the court asked it to place its stand on record through a comprehensive affidavit.

A bench of Justice Jagmohan Bansal ordered the state government "to ensure that no physical injury is caused to petitioner or his family members while they are in the State of Punjab".

The court also issued notices to Centre and Punjab government for May 12, the next date of hearing. The court has sought a detailed affidavit explaining the threat perception assessment that led to the abrupt withdrawal of Harbhajan's security cover.

Harbhajan moved the high court after Punjab Police withdrew his Y-category security cover on April 25-26, shortly after he and six other Rajya Sabha

PPCB raids MP Gupta's factory, triggers a row

Raakhi Jagga Ludhiana, April 30

THE PUNJAB Pollution Control Board (PPCB) on Thursday conducted searches at the Trident Group's Dhaura unit in Barnala, sparking a sharp reaction from the BJP, which termed it an act of "political vendetta by misusing government agencies". The factory is owned by Rajya Sabha MP Rajinder Gupta who is also its managing director. Gupta along with six other Upper House members of the Aam Aadmi Party, crossed over to the BJP on April 24.

PPCB officials arrived at the Dhaura factory in the evening to carry out the searches.

While there was no official word on the raid by the PPCB, the Trident Group's Dhaura unit had come under scrutiny in the past as well. In July 2022, farmers affiliated with BKU (Ugrahan) had staged protests alleging water pollution and foul smell emanating from the factory. The Trident had denied the allegations, and no action was taken by the state government then. The Dhaura unit of the factory produces chemicals and has a 310 metric tonnes per day capacity sulphuric acid plant.

Mansarovar yatra: Apply by May 19

New Delhi: The annual Kailash Mansarovar yatra will take place from June to August this year, the Ministry of External Affairs announced Thursday, adding that online applications for the same may be submitted by May 19.

The pilgrimage, happening via two routes - Lipulekh Pass in Uttarakhand and Nathu La Pass in Sikkim, is being organised by the MEA in coordination with the Chinese government.

The MEA said in a statement that 10 batches, consisting of 50 pilgrims each, may travel via each route. A website kmy.gov.in has been opened for accepting applications for the pilgrimage, and the entire process has been digitalised, the MEA said. It added that interested applicants may visit the website and select either both routes indicating priority or only one route. The last date for registration is May 19.

ENS

NORTHERN RAILWAY (E-Auction Notice)

Sr. Divisional Commercial Manager/PS, Northern Railway, Delhi Division invites bids through e-Auction through IREPS (<http://ireps.gov.in>) for the allotment of Deluxe Pay & Use Toilet Contracts on ROMT & MOT Basis, at following Railway Stations/Locations:

E-Catalogue No.	Date & Time of bidding	Railway Stations/Locations/Sites
PayUse-4-2026	18.05.2026	Hazrat Nizamuddin (NZM) 03 Sites, Delhi (DLI) 01 Site, Anand Vihar (ANVT) 01 Site, Delhi Sarai at 12:00 Hrs. Rohilla (DEE) 01 site, Patel Nagar (PTNR) 01 Site & Panipat 01 Site (PNP) Total 6 Sites.

Website particulars where complete details of E-Auction can be seen : <https://ireps.gov.in/>

All contractors who intend to participate in the e-auctions conducted through E-Auction Leasing module of IREPS should fulfill following mandatory requirements before they can submit their bids:

- Registration on IREPS for E-Auction Leasing module -Active IREPS User Account for E-Auction Leasing Module.
- Payment of One Time Registration Fee; Current Account in State Bank of India; Integration of SBI Bank Account with IREPS Account; Lien Marking of Funds; Updation of Turnover Details. -A new mechanism namely Virtual Account Number (VAN) has been introduced now for E-Auction Leasing module, which can be used by the bidders as an alternative to Lien Marking Mechanism. The bidders are free to switch between Lien Marking Mechanism (if activated) and VAN mechanism at any point of time, before entering the bidding room. VAN mechanism does not require the bidder to have a current account in State Bank of India. The users are free to transfer money from any of their existing bank accounts in any bank to their VAN account, which enables them to participate in IREPS E-Auctions. -Contractors who do not have IREPS account for any module of IREPS can submit their online request for registration by clicking on New Vendors / Contractors (E-Tender/ E-Auction Leasing) link on IREPS Home page.

Railway Authority to contact, in case of any query : Divisional Railway Manager's Office, Commercial Branch, State Entry Road, New Delhi-110055. Email: sanitationcell@gmail.com. Tel: 011-23743084

No.: 7PUB/TN/Pay&UseToilets/Auction/2022 Dated: 30.04.2026 1460/2026

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TENDER NOTICE

Sealed tenders are invited for Establishment of Indigenous Security Operation Centre (SOC) and Indigenous Network Operation Centre (NOC) at SLDC, Madhya Pradesh alongwith its Operation and Maintenance against Tender Specification No. LDET-11/2025-26 which is due for opening on 27.05.2026. The cost of tender document is Rs. 23,600.00. For further details & downloading of tender document, please visit our website www.mprtransco.nic.in, www.mptenders.gov.in, www.sldcpnindia.in.

//SAVE ELECTRICITY//

M.P. Madhyam/125569/2026 ASSISTANT ENGINEER (LD:E&T)

कार्यालय परियोजना प्रबंधक, यूनिट-18 कन्स्ट्रक्शन एण्ड डिजाइन सर्विसेज उत्तर प्रदेश जल निगम (नगरीय) (3090 सरकार का उपक्रम)

मकान सं.-7बी/108, बीडू विहार मडगोला योजना सं.-4, भाग-2 (निकट संधिधान साहित्य वाटिका, चन्द्रशेखर आजाद पार्क के सामने), दिल्ली रोड, मुरादाबाद-244103
E-mail: pm18mbd@gmail.com

पत्रांक- 971/एम-18 / 212 दिनांक: 30.04.2026

ई-निविदा सूचना

उत्तर प्रदेश जल निगम (नगरीय), की ओर से अयोधस्ताशरी द्वारा Construction of Govt. Inter College, Bhaguwala, Bijnor (Toilet blocks for boys and girls) अनुमानित लागत ₹16.92 लाख, हेतु दिनांक 01.06.2026 की अपरान्त 16:30 बजे तक ई-निविदाएं आमंत्रित की जाती हैं। उक्त कार्य हेतु ई-निविदा प्रपत्र दिनांक 02.05.2026 से दिनांक 01.06.2026 के मध्य उत्तर प्रदेश सरकार की e-procurement की वेबसाइट <https://etender.up.nic.in> से डाउनलोड किये जा सकते हैं तथा ई-निविदा दिनांक 02.06.2026 को अपरान्त 13:30 बजे कार्यालय परियोजना प्रबंधक, यूनिट-18, सी. एण्ड डी.एस., उ.प्र. जल निगम (नगरीय), मुरादाबाद में खोली जायेगी। ई-निविदा प्रपत्र का मूल्य ₹2000.00+GST (18%) अतिरिक्त देय होगा। निविदा की किसी भी शर्तों को परिवर्तित करने तथा निविदा को बिना कोई कारण बताये अस्वीकृत करने का अधिकार विभाग के पास सुरक्षित रहेगा। निविदा से सम्बन्धित विस्तृत विवरण विभाग की वेबसाइट www.cdsupjn.org एवं प्रोक्वोरमेंट पोर्टल <https://etender.up.nic.in> पर उपलब्ध है। समस्त शुद्ध पत्र (Corrigendum) <https://etender.up.nic.in> पर ही अपलोड किये जायेगे, इन्का पृथक से कोई प्रकाशन नहीं किया जायेगा। निविदादाताओं को सलाह दी जाती है कि वे उक्त वेबसाइट का समय-समय पर अवलोकन करते रहे।

कार्यालय परियोजना प्रबंधक, यूनिट-18 कन्स्ट्रक्शन एण्ड डिजाइन सर्विसेज उत्तर प्रदेश जल निगम (नगरीय) (3090 सरकार का उपक्रम)

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E-mail: pm18mbd@gmail.com

पत्रांक- 975/एम-18 / 216 दिनांक: 30.04.2026

ई-निविदा सूचना

उत्तर प्रदेश जल निगम (नगरीय), की ओर से अयोधस्ताशरी द्वारा Construction of Govt. Girls Inter College, Suawala, Bijnor (Library room) अनुमानित लागत ₹14.25 लाख, हेतु दिनांक 01.06.2026 की अपरान्त 16:30 बजे तक ई-निविदाएं आमंत्रित की जाती हैं। उक्त कार्य हेतु ई-निविदा प्रपत्र दिनांक 02.05.2026 से दिनांक 01.06.2026 के मध्य उत्तर प्रदेश सरकार की e-procurement की वेबसाइट <https://etender.up.nic.in> से डाउनलोड किये जा सकते हैं तथा ई-निविदा दिनांक 02.06.2026 को अपरान्त 13:30 बजे कार्यालय परियोजना प्रबंधक, यूनिट-18, सी. एण्ड डी.एस., उ.प्र. जल निगम (नगरीय), मुरादाबाद में खोली जायेगी। ई-निविदा प्रपत्र का मूल्य ₹2000.00+GST (18%) अतिरिक्त देय होगा। निविदा की किसी भी शर्तों को परिवर्तित करने तथा निविदा को बिना कोई कारण बताये अस्वीकृत करने का अधिकार विभाग के पास सुरक्षित रहेगा। निविदा से सम्बन्धित विस्तृत विवरण विभाग की वेबसाइट www.cdsupjn.org एवं प्रोक्वोरमेंट पोर्टल <https://etender.up.nic.in> पर उपलब्ध है। समस्त शुद्ध पत्र (Corrigendum) <https://etender.up.nic.in> पर ही अपलोड किये जायेगे, इन्का पृथक से कोई प्रकाशन नहीं किया जायेगा। निविदादाताओं को सलाह दी जाती है कि वे उक्त वेबसाइट का समय-समय पर अवलोकन करते रहे।

कार्यालय परियोजना प्रबंधक, यूनिट-18 कन्स्ट्रक्शन एण्ड डिजाइन सर्विसेज उत्तर प्रदेश जल निगम (नगरीय) (3090 सरकार का उपक्रम)

मकान सं.-7बी/108, बीडू विहार मडगोला योजना सं.-4, भाग-2 (निकट संधिधान साहित्य वाटिका, चन्द्रशेखर आजाद पार्क के सामने), दिल्ली रोड, मुरादाबाद-244103
E-mail: pm18mbd@gmail.com

पत्रांक- 972/एम-18 / 213 दिनांक: 30.04.2026

ई-निविदा सूचना

उत्तर प्रदेश जल निगम (नगरीय), की ओर से अयोधस्ताशरी द्वारा Construction of Govt. Adarsh Inter College, Afjalgarh, Bijnor (Multipurpose Hall & Library room) अनुमानित लागत ₹50.67 लाख, हेतु दिनांक 03.06.2026 की अपरान्त 16:30 बजे तक ई-निविदाएं आमंत्रित की जाती हैं। उक्त कार्य हेतु ई-निविदा प्रपत्र दिनांक 04.05.2026 से दिनांक 03.06.2026 के मध्य उत्तर प्रदेश सरकार की e-procurement की वेबसाइट <https://etender.up.nic.in> से डाउनलोड किये जा सकते हैं तथा ई-निविदा दिनांक 04.06.2026 को अपरान्त 13:30 बजे कार्यालय परियोजना प्रबंधक, यूनिट-18, सी. एण्ड डी.एस., उ.प्र. जल निगम (नगरीय), मुरादाबाद में खोली जायेगी। ई-निविदा प्रपत्र का मूल्य ₹2000.00+GST (18%) अतिरिक्त देय होगा। निविदा की किसी भी शर्तों को परिवर्तित करने तथा निविदा को बिना कोई कारण बताये अस्वीकृत करने का अधिकार विभाग के पास सुरक्षित रहेगा। निविदा से सम्बन्धित विस्तृत विवरण विभाग की वेबसाइट www.cdsupjn.org एवं प्रोक्वोरमेंट पोर्टल <https://etender.up.nic.in> पर उपलब्ध है। समस्त शुद्ध पत्र (Corrigendum) <https://etender.up.nic.in> पर ही अपलोड किये जायेगे, इन्का पृथक से कोई प्रकाशन नहीं किया जायेगा। निविदादाताओं को सलाह दी जाती है कि वे उक्त वेबसाइट का समय-समय पर अवलोकन करते रहे।

OFFICE OF THE RESIDENT COMMISSIONER GOVT. OF MADHYA PRADESH, MADHYA PRADESH BHAWAN PLOT NO. 29 C-D, JESUS & MARY MARG, CHANAKYAPURI, NEW DELHI-110021

Phone No. 011-26772001, 2002

Dated: 29.04.2026

TENDER NOTICE

Online tenders are invited on behalf of the Resident Commissioner, M.P. Bhawan, New Delhi for Annual Supply of Flowers at Madhya Pradesh Bhawan 29 C-D, Jesus & Mary Marg, Chanakya Puri, New Delhi - 110021 :-

S. No.	NIT No.	Appx. Cost	EMD	Cost of Tender Document	Last Date and time of submission	Date and time of opening of Technical Bid	Date and time of opening of Financial Bid
1	06/April/Flower/MPB/2026 (Annual Supply of Flowers at Madhya Pradesh Bhawan 29 C-D, Jesus & Mary Marg, Chanakya Puri, New Delhi - 110021)	₹ 10.00 Lakh	₹ 30,000	₹ 500	21.05.2026/ 03:00 PM	22.05.2026/ 03:00 PM	01.06.2026/ 03:00 PM

Above tenders are invited in single stage two envelope systems (Technical bid & Financial bid) through e-Tendering website www.mptenders.gov.in or www.mpbhawan.gov.in in the prescribed proforma from interested parties/Registered Firms/Registered Companies/Reputed Organizations/Agencies.

Addl. Resident Commissioner
M.P. Bhawan, New Delhi

G- 12248/26

Shah in Ladakh for historic darshan of Buddha's relics

Press Trust of India
Leh, April 30

UNION HOME Minister Amit Shah on Thursday held a meeting with Ladakh Lieutenant Governor V K Saxena and senior officials of the UT to ensure that people can have darshan of the sacred relics of Lord Buddha for the next two weeks without any inconvenience.

In a message on X, Shah, who reached Leh on Thursday, said that Friday will be a historic day for Ladakh when people can have darshan of the sacred relics of Lord Buddha on the auspicious occasion of Buddha Purnima. "I consider myself fortunate that I, too, will have the rare opportunity tomorrow to have darshan of these holy relics. To ensure that these sacred relics are easily accessible for darshan by the people of Ladakh over the next two weeks, I held a meeting today with the Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh and the concerned officials in this regard."

The relics were brought to Leh from Piprahwa in Uttar Pradesh in a special IAF aircraft on Wednesday by Drukpa Thuksey Rinpoche and Khempo Thinlas Chosol from the Matho Monastery. Excavated from Piprahwa (ancient Kapilvastu), the relics will be displayed at Jive Tsal, Choglamsar, from May 2-10. The relics were accorded a ceremonial reception on their arrival in Leh. The relics refer to ancient sacred remains and associated objects linked to Gautam Buddha, which were discovered at Piprahwa, an archaeological site in UP near the Nepal border.

Could it have too many tigers? Why MP faces this question & what are the answers

Jay Mazoomdaar
New Delhi, April 30

PARTLY THANKS to its tiger recovery rate outpacing the national average over the last decade, Madhya Pradesh faces a unique problem: Could it have too many tigers? With numbers pushing the 1,000-mark, the state has approached the Dehradun-based Wildlife Institute of India (WII) to assess how many tigers its forests can hold.

After reforms triggered by the Sariska wipeout in 2004, tigers are rising nationally. According to quadrennial estimation reports, the country's tiger numbers increased by 65% between 2014 and 2022, from 2,226 to 3,682. In the same period, MP saw a 155% jump, from 308 to 785. The trend, say state officials, has held good since. But more tigers also means more conflict.

Across India, people killed by tigers increased from 224 during 2014-2019 to 418 in the next six-year cycle of 2020-2025 — a rise of 87%. MP has fared better than conflict hotspots of Maharashtra (Tadoba) or UP (Pilibhit). But retaliatory killings of tigers by electrocution to avenge loss of livestock, along with attacks on humans, are on the rise, prompting the question: how many tigers are too many for MP.

Carrying capacity

With other factors, like availability of water, absence of poaching etc, remaining un-

MP has seen fastest rise in numbers in the country, even as shrinking natural corridors hamper dispersal



Following a slew of reforms triggered by the Sariska wipeout in 2004, tiger numbers have been rising nationally. FILE

changed, the size of a forest's tiger population depends on the availability of prey animals, says Dr Rajesh Gopal, former chief of

Project Tiger and the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA). In the simplest of calculations, it's the total annually replenishable biomass of prey species divided by a tiger's annual feed requirement.

Prey animals differ in weight but a ballpark estimate shows that a prey base of around 350 ungulates (hoofed animals) is required to sustain a single tiger. "Since X number of prey can sustain only Y number of tigers, surplus tigers will either die fighting one another; or, more likely, be pushed out to the buffer areas or disperse — ideally to other forest areas — especially in the case of

males," says wildlife biologist Milind Pariwakam. "When such tigers succeed, they re-colonise new areas. Or they die trying."

Rapid development of road, rail and irrigation infrastructure, coupled with large-scale mining and deforestation, have broken much of central India's forest connectivity. The result: the 'surplus' tigers cannot move safely between forests, leaving them exposed to people and situations of conflict.

Surplus management

But, restoring forest connectivity via natural dispersal is a long-term solution. That is why, say experts, knowing carrying capacity is much simpler than finding a solution for the surplus tiger population. "Translocation or assisted dispersal where natu-

ral corridors are missing and forest connectivity is broken is being tried out in some states. But there are not many good forests with sufficient prey animals for supporting a good number of tigers," points out wildlife biologist Dr Dharmendra Khandal.

WII director Dr Gobind Sagar Bharwaj says habitat restoration is the way to go. "Attention is understandably on the tiger and other mega fauna. But we have to secure the primary resources for the food chain to hold. The health of our grasslands determines the prey base and ultimately tiger numbers," he says. Pariwakam points out that vast areas in MP, Jharkhand and Odisha support very few tigers at the present and, if restored, can potentially absorb the surplus from the tiger-rich forests.

Desired number

The bigger the tiger base in an area, the higher the numbers of dispersing tigers. That is why managers look beyond the arithmetic of carrying capacity, to negotiable desired numbers. "Besides prey base, many other factors — cultural, economic, political — determine the size of a tiger population. Some use terms such as social carrying capacity. I call it the desired number of tigers at one place," Dr Bhardwaj says.

That threshold, it appears, has been breached. Post-Sariska, improved protection from poachers, and active management, such as waterhole creation, medical intervention

etc, have helped the tiger realise the full potential of prey-rich tiger reserves. Curiously, wild ungulates are increasingly not the mainstay of that prey base.

The cattle crisis

In recent years, domestic cattle have emerged as a major component of the tiger's diet across India. In MP, for example, researchers linked 47% of Bandhavgarh's tigers to livestock kills last year. Researchers sampled 737 kills in Rajasthan's Sariska tiger reserve between 2016 and 2018. Of those, buffaloes contributed 44%, followed by cows (22%), Sambar deer (12%), goats (11%), Chital (4%) and Nilgai (2%). A recent study in Ranthambore found that domestic animals formed nearly 40% of the biomass consumed by tigers. While cattle have proliferated everywhere since the ban on cow slaughter came into effect, said a senior MP forest official, their presence inside tiger reserves has specific implications.

"Outside the reserve, cattle predation involves a much greater risk for tigers (from humans). Inside, tigers are better protected from retaliation for feeding on cattle. Moreover, cattle are often the only option for tigers outside the reserve. Inside, they also have wild prey to feed on. So, abundance of cattle outside tiger reserves fuels conflict. Inside tiger reserves, it fuels tiger numbers," he says.

FULL REPORT ON
WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM

• BRIEFLY



Baramulla MP Abdul Rashid Sheikh alias Engineer Rashid with his ailing father at SMHS hospital in Srinagar on Thursday. SHUAIB MASOUDI

JAMMU AND KASHMIR

Jailed MP Engineer Rashid meets ailing father after interim bail

BARAMULLA MP Abdul Rashid Sheikh alias Engineer Rashid met his ailing father in Srinagar on Thursday, days after being granted interim bail in a terror funding case. Rashid, who has been lodged at the Tihar Jail in Delhi since 2019, was granted interim bail by the Delhi High Court on April 28. After landing at the Srinagar airport on Thursday, the MP was taken straight to Shri Maharaja Hari Singh Hospital to see his father. He broke down upon meeting his father amidst scores of supporters who accompanied him to the hospital. While granting him interim relief for a week, the Court stated in its order that at least two police officers will accompany him at all times. ENS

2 sisters found dead near beach in Kanyakumari

TWO SISTERS, who had recently arrived in Kerala from the US, were found dead in Kanyakumari on Thursday. They were identified as Meera Philip (35) and Annie Philip (32), both natives of Kidangoor, by their family members in Kottayam. Their bodies were recovered from Vavathurai beach in Kanyakumari, and sent for post-mortem, police said. ENS

14-yr-old injured while playing hockey, dies later

A 14-YEAR-OLD girl died after she was struck by a hockey ball during a practice training session at a private school in North Goa Thursday morning. The incident happened when the girl, a student of class 9, was playing hockey during a training session at the school ground. Preliminary probe suggests it was an accidental death, and further probe is on, police said. ENS

Bengaluru rain toll rises to 10; electrocutions, hospital wall collapse expose safety lapses

Express News Service
Bengaluru, April 30

THE DEATH toll from Wednesday's heavy rain spell in Bengaluru rose to 10 on Thursday, with three more deaths being reported — two due to electrocution and one caused by a structure collapsing during the storm.

These fatalities come a day after seven people were killed in a wall collapse near Bowring Hospital. Several members of a family lost their lives after a compound wall collapsed following continuous rain. The wall is reported to have given way due to waterlogging and weakened structural stability, trapping those nearby under the debris.

Other incidents were reported from different parts of the city. In Yarab Nagar, a student identified as Syed Sufiyan, 17, died after coming into contact with a live electric source. According to family members, Sufiyan, who had recently passed his First PUC examination, had stepped out during the rain to park his motorcycle when electricity allegedly leaked from a nearby pole. He collapsed on the spot. His body was later shifted to Bowring Hospital for post-mortem examination. Police have launched an investigation.

Raghu, a 35-year-old from J D Maraslum, died of electrocution near Sarakki bus stop close to Vega City Mall on Banner-



A worker puts damp books for drying in Bengaluru on Thursday. PTI

'Bookworm' suffers major losses

Bengaluru: Bookworm, Bengaluru's popular independent bookstore, also bore the brunt of heavy rainfall and hailstorm.

About 4000-5,000 books worth several lakhs were damaged due to flooding at the bookstore located on Church Street. "Due to heavy rain in

Bengaluru, we lost 4,000-5,000 books," Bookworm wrote in an Instagram post.

After Bookworm's social media post highlighting the loss, several readers and visitors expressed concern and offered to help, contribute and support the store. PTI

hatta Road. It occurred around 8.25 pm amid heavy rain. Preliminary reports suggest a possible electrical leak.

In Chamarajapet, Manjunath died after a cement block fell on him. According to initial information, the structure may have been weakened by rain, leading to the collapse of a part of the building.

"We have registered cases in all three incidents and are investigating the exact cause. Necessary action will be taken based on our findings," a police officer said. The incidents have raised concerns about infrastructure safety during heavy rain, including exposed electrical lines, waterlogging, and weakened structures.



Shilpa Rao at Expresso

Singer Shilpa Rao (right) in conversation with renowned chef Suvir Saran and Suanshu Khurana (Senior Assistant Editor, The Indian Express) at Expresso in Mumbai on Thursday. SANKHADEEP BANERJEE

Odisha man with sister's remains: State govt says 'bank was negligent'

Sujit Bisoyi
Bhubaneswar, April 30

DAYS AFTER a tribal man carried his sister's skeleton remains to a local bank in Odisha's Keonjhar district, ostensibly to prove she had died, the state government said its initial probe found "negligence on the part of the bank officials".

"The CCTV footage of the incident that the district collector and I watched for over an hour suggests negligence on the part of the bank officials. As there is no audio version of the

CCTV footage, we are not able to determine the nature of the conversation, but the body language of the bank officials suggests they are at fault," Sangram Keshari Mohapatra, revenue divisional commissioner (RDC), northern division, said.

The incident came to light on Monday after Jitu Munda (59), from Dianali village went to the Malliposi branch of Odisha Gramen Bank with his sister's remains, having exhumed them, to withdraw her savings of Rs 19,300, prompting a government probe. Mohapatra said Jitu

took the step after returning "aggrieved" from the bank.

"What we came to know is that Jitu Munda was present in the bank from 11.26 am to 11.58 am. During this time, he met the bank manager twice and also reached out to other staff — the cashier and the bank mitra. As he returned aggrieved, he took the step," he said. The RDC said bank officials knew both Jitu and his sister, Kalra, as they had visited together multiple times. Their last visit was on December 26, a month before Kalra's death, when they withdrew Rs 500.

• BEING DISOWNED BY FAMILY LED TO 18-YEAR-OLD WOMAN'S ALLEGED MURDER STAYING UNDETECTED FOR OVER THREE DECADES

Man suspected of killing wife in 1992 is alive: Gujarat Police

Brendan Dabhi
Ahmedabad, April 30

A DAY after a Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL) team and Crime Branch personnel found fragments of bone, teeth and hair at a depth of 20 feet in a septic tank under a derelict, abandoned home in the Vatva area of Ahmedabad, believed to be the last remains of 18-year-old Farzana alias Shabnam, who was suspected to have been strangled to death 34 years ago in 1992, the primary suspect in her "murder", her husband, Shamsuddin Khedawala, has been traced by police.

This is a major development in the case as the Crime Branch had earlier been led to believe that Shamsuddin was dead. A

senior officer, however, confirmed to The Indian Express Thursday that Shamsuddin had been living incognito and that his family had allegedly lied to the police to shield him from the inquiry into the three-decade-old case. Farzana is suspected to have been killed and buried in the septic tank of a house in Vatva by her husband and three others.

ACP Bharat Patel of the Ahmedabad Crime Branch said, "We believe that at least four people were involved in Farzana's murder. These include her husband Shamsuddin Khedawala, his elder brother Iqbal Khedawala, his friend Abdul Kareem and the then house owner Salyabibi. Of these four suspects, while Shamsud-



An excavator on the premises of the house, Wednesday. BHUPENDRA RANA

din and his brother Iqbal are alive, Abdul and Salyabibi are deceased." On the events of the suspected crime itself, ACP Patel said, "One night, Shamsuddin and Farzana went to stay in Salyabibi's home as part of the conspiracy. Imran and Abdul kept the khaarkuva (septic tank)

ready. After Farzana went to sleep, she was strangled to death and buried in the septic tank and it was then filled over and Abdul Kareem even plastered the house to hide the evidence."

The ACP said, "We learnt an eyewitness had reached the spot at the time of murder and he saw

the crime. He was threatened with death if he mentioned it anywhere else. Since he was scared and because he did not know Farzana, he kept quiet about it for more than three decades." There was neither a missing person report nor an investigation into her disappearance more than 34 years ago — in 1992, or since. At least till February this year, when the Crime Branch opened an inquiry into her possible murder after claims of "curses, ghosts, apparitions and visions" led to police deeming it necessary to at least take a cursory look into the family.

This has now turned into a full-blown investigation against multiple suspects, including Farzana's husband Shamsuddin Khedawala, his elder brother

Iqbal Khedawala, his friend Abdul Kareem and the owner of house number 10 — Salyabibi — for conspiracy, murder and destruction of evidence as well as criminal intimidation of a possible eyewitness. The FIR will be filed after the FSL reports confirm the remains found under the house were indeed that of Farzana by comparing it with the blood of her sibling, a brother who was traced to Mumbai.

Meanwhile, the inquiry has answered one crucial question. How did Farzana's disappearance and suspected murder remain undetected and unreported for over three decades? The answer, it turns out, was her alleged profession and the eventual "banishment" from the family that disowned her.

Express News Service
New Delhi, April 30

THE MOVE by the Haj Committee of India to raise Haj airfare by Rs 10,000 per pilgrim saw a sharp reaction from political leaders, with AIMIM chief Asaduddin Owaisi terming it "exploitation" and demanding the withdrawal of the circular on the increase.

Union Minister of Minority Affairs Kiren Rijiju, though, said that the increase was due to the global rise in Aviation Turbine Fuel prices. He said the airlines had, in fact, sought a "steep hike" of Rs 30,000-40,000 per pilgrim but through negotiations, the increase was restricted to just Rs 10,000. The differential airfare has to be deposited by pilgrims by May 15, said the circular. Owing to the conflict in West Asia, the Haj Committee, which comes under the Union Ministry of Minority Affairs, has issued a circular saying that an additional amount of Rs 10,000 will be borne by the pilgrims as differential airfare.

Owaisi, who is an MP from Hyderabad, said that this amount is being asked for "despite collecting Rs 90,844 per pilgrim a couple of months ago departing from Mumbai Embarkation Point". He said, "This is almost double the prevalent rates for individual travellers. Are pilgrims being punished for going through the Haj Committee? This is just exploitation and nothing else. Most pilgrims are not wealthy, they save money for years to be able to go to Haj. This is not a luxury for them. The circular must be withdrawn immediately, and the pilgrims must be refunded the money taken from them."

Speaking to The Indian Express, Congress Minority Affairs Department Chairman Imran Pratapgarhi said that "forcing" an additional Rs 10,000 collection on Haj pilgrims right before their journey is "utter injustice". "When the full fare was already fixed in advance, why was this increase imposed at the very last moment?" asked the Rajya



AIMIM chief Asaduddin Owaisi questioned if the pilgrims were being punished for going through the Haj Committee

Sabha member, who is planning to meet Minority Affairs Minister Rijiju and Civil Aviation Minister Kinjarapu Rammohan Naidu to raise the issue.

In a statement, the Union Ministry for Minority Affairs said that it "shared the concerns of every pilgrim who saves for years to perform Haj".

The ministry said, "The facts: Airlines demanded USD \$300-\$400 per pilgrim due to the sharp rise in Aviation Turbine Fuel prices caused by the ongoing Middle East crisis — a global emergency beyond any government's control. After extensive negotiation and due consultation with stakeholders, the Ministry of Minority Affairs approved a one-time revision of only USD \$100 per pilgrim, irrespective of embarkation point — a saving of USD \$200-\$300 per pilgrim compared to what airlines originally sought."

The ministry said that this was "not exploitation" and that it was, rather, "the government absorbing pressure and protecting pilgrims from a far larger burden". Rijiju said that amid a sharp global rise in Aviation Turbine Fuel prices, driven by ongoing geopolitical tensions, airlines sought a steep hike of \$300-\$400 per pilgrim. "We also can't blame Airlines for the rise in Aviation Turbine Fuel price. Through negotiations, we ensured the increase was restricted to just \$100, saving each pilgrim a significant amount. The decision was taken transparently, in good faith, to ensure no disruption in the Haj 2026 operations," Rijiju added.

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If there are questions of current or contemporary relevance that you would like explained, please write to explained@indianexpress.com

CLIMATE

One heatwave is over, but more may be on the way

With rain expected to be subdued, particularly during second half of monsoon, India could face long periods of intense heat this year



AMITABH SINHA

LIGHT TO moderate rainfall on Wednesday and Thursday brought an end to a week-long spell of heatwave in most parts of north and central India, the first of the season. And another spell of heatwave is unlikely for the next two weeks at least, according to the latest forecast by the India Meteorological Department (IMD).

But that might only be a temporary relief. There are indications that the temperatures might remain high this year, not just in the summer months but even extending into the monsoon season, and thereafter. That may mean several such spells of heatwaves could be possible in the coming months. With rain expected to be a little subdued, particularly during the second half of the monsoon season, India could be facing prolonged periods of intense heat this year.

Heatwave zones

Summers have always been very warm in most parts of India, but heatwaves are very specific conditions defined by the India Meteorological Department (IMD). If the maximum temperature of a place gets at least 5°C higher than normal, and this condition is reached at least two days in succession, the place is said to be experiencing a heatwave. If the temperature gets warmer than normal by 7°C, a severe heatwave is declared.

A few other things are factored in before declaring a heatwave, particularly whether the place is located in plains or mountains and whether its normal temperature is below 40°C or higher. But the main idea is the same. Heatwave is a condition where the temperature of the place gets unusually, and uncomfortably, higher than the normal. The thresholds defined by IMD are specific to India and are not universal definitions of heatwave.

Heatwaves in India occur mainly during the March to June period, though sometimes they do extend further into the monsoon season as well. In 2023, some parts of the country experienced heatwave conditions even in February, a month in which there is not even a provision to de-

Heatwave days in worst-hit meteorological subdivisions

REGION	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
West Rajasthan	6	58	3	29	33
East Madhya Pradesh	0	34	13	26	10
Vidarbha	2	18	11	11	8
West Madhya Pradesh	2	42	4	24	7
East Rajasthan	4	28	0	23	21
Odisha	3	11	24	37	7
East Uttar Pradesh	0	33	11	33	8
Haryana, Chandigarh and Delhi	2	37	5	30	11
Saurashtra and Kutch	12	25	4	16	15
West Uttar Pradesh	2	28	5	32	5

States reporting highest heat-related deaths

STATE	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Punjab	38	90	110	91	130
Uttar Pradesh	176	117	50	35	130
Telangana	107	156	98	43	62
Bihar	64	215	53	57	78
Maharashtra	128	159	56	37	90
Andhra Pradesh	97	128	50	22	47
Jharkhand	42	88	23	33	47
Odisha	40	84	13	15	38
Haryana	56	46	23	14	27
Madhya Pradesh	15	33	7	2	27

SOURCE: PARLIAMENT QUESTIONS

clare a heatwave.

There are two areas where heatwaves are common in India: one, the northwestern and central part extending into Bihar and Jharkhand, which is known as the core heatwave zone; and two, the eastern coast comprising Andhra Pradesh and Odisha. The physical mechanisms causing heatwaves in these two areas are different, though related.

In the core zone, heatwaves are caused mainly by persistent high-pressure conditions in the upper atmosphere that force the air to sink downward. This sinking leads to compression of the air, warming it significantly.

Over Andhra Pradesh and Odisha, heatwaves are primarily a result of the prevention of the normal sea-breezes from coming over to the land by unusual westerly or northwesterly winds blowing from the hot landmass in north and central India.

In general, the frequency and intensity of heatwaves is higher in the core zone, though historically, both Andhra Pradesh and Odisha have reported a disproportionately large number of heatwave-related deaths. On an average, a heatwave lasts between 4 and 8 days.

The southern peninsular India, as well as the northeastern part, have so far remained largely unaffected by heatwaves, though long-term climate projections suggest that this might not remain the case in the future. A 2023 report by IMD on heatwaves and cold waves cited studies that have suggested that southern India could be experiencing severe heatwaves by the end of this century. These studies also suggest heatwaves have been becoming more frequent and intense in the last half century, and their

average duration is also on the rise.

El Niño linkage

Several studies have shown that there was a strong linkage between the frequency and severity of heatwaves in India and the El Niño phenomenon in the eastern Pacific Ocean. In general, there is a greater chance of prolonged and severe heatwaves occurring in India during an El Niño phase. The opposite happens with the La Niña phase.

El Niño and La Niña are opposite phases of El Niño Southern Oscillation, a large ocean-atmospheric interaction that occurs over the equatorial Pacific Ocean, off the coast of South America, and influences weather events worldwide. During El Niño, the surface waters in this part of the Pacific Ocean get unusually warm.

In India, the El Niño phase is most commonly associated with a tendency to suppress rainfall, while the La Niña phase tends to induce more rains. But El Niño is also linked to stronger heatwaves in India. This is relevant for the current year because an El Niño event is under development, and is likely to mature between May and July. It is because of this that IMD has predicted a below-normal monsoon rainfall this year.

Most forecasts about this El Niño suggest that this event will gain in strength and persist through the rest of the year. This means that its influence in causing heatwaves could be felt next year too. Historically, the frequency and severity of heatwaves in India have been found to be more than average in the year immediately succeeding an El Niño event.

"The time series of frequency, duration and maximum duration clearly indicate a correlation between El Niño events and

heat waves over India. It is clear that most of the years with above average heat wave activity over India are the years following El Niño events," the 2023 IMD report noted.

Heatwave as disaster

As many as 23 states in India are now affected by heatwaves. Each one of them, and hundreds of cities, now implement a heat action plan during summers. These plans are mainly about implementing solutions like making cool water available at public places, creating shelters and shaded places, revising the school, college and office timings, distribution of hydrating solutions, and halting non-essential outdoor activities, including construction, at least during peak hours. These plans have had varying degrees of success.

Still, hundreds of people die every year due to heat-stroke and other heat-related diseases, and thousands fall ill. These numbers are widely considered to be under-estimates, because not all such cases are reported.

Incidentally, a heatwave is not yet considered a notified disaster under the Disaster Management Act in India. The Sixteenth Finance Commission, which submitted its report last year, recommended that both heatwaves and lightning be included as notified disasters.

In practical terms, this will enable the state governments to use the money in their State Disaster Response Funds to provide relief and assistance to people affected by heatwaves and lightning. This was a long-pending demand of the states, considering rising instances of heatwaves in India and increasing expenses in implementing the heat action plans.

HEALTH

Why SC is looking at the way brain death is certified

Anonna Dutt
New Delhi, April 30

THE SUPREME COURT on Tuesday said it will seek expert opinion from AIIMS doctors on whether there is a need to conduct tests such as electroencephalogram (EEG) and angiogram to declare someone brain dead. The bench was hearing a petition alleging that patients who may not be brain dead are declared so to facilitate organ donation.

What is brain death?

Brain death is an irreversible condition where all activities of the brain, including automatic functions such as breathing controlled by the brain stem, cease. The patient continues to survive — and breathe — with the help of life support systems such as ventilators. These patients, most of whom would have suffered severe injuries that cut off oxygen supply to the brain, are for all intents dead and cannot be revived. As they die while being on life support — which keep their blood pumping — they make for good candidates for organ donation.

Why do we need to declare people brain dead?

Declaration and certification of brain death is essential for deceased organ donation, where organs and tissues such as kidney, liver, heart, and eyes are donated to undisclosed, unrelated recipients. While India is a global leader when it comes to the absolute number of transplant surgeries, most of these involve organs donated by living relatives. These procedures are getting safer, but they still hold risks for a healthy donor. This risk can be done away with when using deceased donor organs.

Despite the fact that nearly 1.5 lakh people die due to traumatic brain injuries and another 50,000 due to stroke every year — both categories of patients who qualify as brain dead donors — only 1,100 persons actually donate organs. India's rate of deceased donation, while on the rise, continues to be very low at 0.77 per million population. On the other end of the spectrum is Spain, which sees 48 deceased donations per million population.

What is the protocol for declaring brain death?

The current guidelines by the apex regulator National Organ and Tissue Transplant Organisation (NOTTO) requires a four-member hospital board to declare that a patient's brain function has irreversibly ceased at least twice with an interval of 12 hours. This board has to determine and note in writing what was the illness or accident that led to the condition, and whether there could possibly be any reversible causes. They also have to note whether spontaneous breathing has ceased, whether the patient's pupils react to light, whether their eye moves to the opposite side when their head is turned (just like a doll's eyes would), whether they have any response to pain, and whether they have a gag reflex, among others.

"The current guidelines require various bed-side tests for the declaration of brain death. It does not specify the need for tests such as EEG or angiogram," said Dr Manjari Tripathi, head of neurology department at AIIMS Delhi.

What is EEG and angiogram? What does it tell us?

An EEG test essentially looks for the electrical signals in the brain using several small electrodes attached to the head. For a brain dead patient, this test would show that there is no electrical activity in the brain. An angiogram uses contrast dyes and X-rays to check the blood flow in the brain. While the bed-side tests can indicate brain death, these two tests are more conclusive.

There are, however, challenges to utilising these tests for determining every brain death. Two experts, on condition of anonymity, said that using these tests would mean that smaller hospitals would never be able to declare a person brain dead; therefore, the already low number of deceased donations would go down further.

What are the challenges in brain death certification?

One of the challenges is the lack of knowledge even among physicians, which leads to several patients never being officially declared and asked to be organ donors.

An AIIMS study last year found that more than half of doctors — including neurosurgeons, neurologists, and critical care specialists who are usually included in the certification process — did not receive any training on brain death certification at the time of their graduation.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Reliable link, shorter trip: Promises of direct Jammu-Srinagar train

Arun Sharma
Jammu, April 30

RAILWAY MINISTER Ashwini Vaishnaw on Thursday flagged off the first direct Vande Bharat Express from Jammu to Srinagar, which will not only provide all-weather connectivity between the UT capitals but also reduce travel time. It takes 6.5 to 7 hours to travel by car via the Jammu-Srinagar national highway (NH44), which can be closed for days due to landslides during rain and snowfall. With the train, the journey will be completed in just under five hours.

Vande Bharat's schedule

The train with 20 coaches will operate six days a week from May 2 (except Tuesdays). This is an extended operation, as the Vande Bharat Express with eight coaches has been operational on the Katra-Srinagar section since June 2025.

The extended train will depart from Jammu Tawi railway station 6.20 am and reach Srinagar at 11.10 am, covering a dis-



tance of around 266 km. From Srinagar, the train will depart at 8 am to reach Jammu Tawi by 12.40 pm. With brief halts at Katra, Reasi and Banihal stations, it will ease pressure on vehicular traffic on NH44 and provide relief to thousands of daily commuters.

Feat of engineering

Moving through deep gorges and densely

Long road to trains

The Himalayas are young, and the geologically unstable Shivallik Hills and Pir Panjal mountains lie in the seismically most active Zones IV and V.

The terrain is difficult and sees heavy snowfall, and it presented serious challenges in constructing bridges and tunnels.

forested valleys in the backdrop of the Shivalliks, Pir Panjal and the Himalayas, the electrically propelled engine-hauled Vande Bharat covers various engineering marvels.

The 111 km-long Katra-Banihal stretch includes 27 tunnels and 49 bridges, including the world's highest Rail Arch Bridge over the Chenab River, and India's first cable-stayed rail bridge over Anji Khad. While the Chenab bridge is 35 m higher than the Eiffel Tower, the bridge over Anji Khad has at its heart an inverted Y-shaped pylon or bridge pillar that climbs 193 m above its foundation, which is more than double the height of the Qutub Minar.

The rail line passes through India's longest tunnel, measuring 12.77 km, connecting Khari with Sumbur. It also includes the country's second and third-longest tunnels.

Challenges and innovations

More than 205 km of motorable roads were built for Rs 2,000 crore to transport heavy machinery, construction material, and workers to construction sites.

In view of the challenges faced in constructing highly complex tunnels and huge bridges in unstable mountainous terrain, railway engineers devised a novel tunnelling method to prevent any structural problems.

With heated windshields, advanced heating systems and insulated toilets, the train remains operational and comfortable for passengers through the year. Its piping system is such that the water supply cannot freeze even at -10 degrees Celsius temperatures. During winter, a snow-clearing locomotive moves ahead of the train. Seismic dampers have also been installed to absorb tremors in this high-risk seismic zone.

The railway line has also provided the people of Kashmir a means to transport commercial goods such as apples, dry fruits, pashmina shawls and handicrafts to other parts of the country in the shortest possible time and at a much lower cost. While more than five lakh people have travelled via the Vande Bharat between Katra and Srinagar so far, nearly two crore kg of apples have been transported from Kashmir to Delhi.

POLICY

How Ambedkar laid the foundations of India's modern labour legislation



EXPERT EXPLAINS
RITESH JYOTI

THE AUTHOR IS A MASTER'S STUDENT AT AZIM PREMJI UNIVERSITY. HE WORKS WITH BAWs.IN, A LIBRARY OF AMBEDKAR'S WORKS.

BHIMRAO "BABASAHEB" Ambedkar, the architect of the Constitution and independent India's first Union Law Minister, began his political journey by organising the Independent Labour Party to address the issues of the labouring classes in colonial India. But his concerns went beyond material conditions. For him, labour must be able to live a life that allows the development of their human, cultural and spiritual potential.

In 1942, nearly a month before the launch of the Quit India movement, Ambedkar was appointed as the Labour Member in the Viceroy's Executive Council, where he intro-

duced a slew of pathbreaking legislation for the welfare of labour or the working classes. This included reduction of working hours from 12 to eight, maternity benefit for women workers, provident fund for employees, paid leave and dearness allowance, compulsory recognition of trade unions, housing and medical facilities for workers, employee state insurance, and many more.

Ambedkar's experience as the Labour Member (1942-46) is reflected even in the making of the Constitution, particularly on the provisions related to labour. For instance, through Article 39, the Constitution directs the State to design policies to ensure "adequate means to livelihood for all its citizens, and equal pay for equal work for both men and women".

Through Article 43, it directs the State "to secure, by suitable legislation or economic organisation or in any other way, to all workers, agricultural, industrial or otherwise, work, a living wage, conditions of work ensuring a decent standard of life and full enjoyment of leisure and social and cultural opportunities".

Most importantly, the Constitution actively seeks to eliminate the glaring economic inequalities by stating "that the owner-

ship and control of the material resources of the community are so distributed as best to sub serve the common good; that the operation of the economic system does not result in the concentration of wealth and means of production to the common detriment".

A watershed moment

In the colonial era, particularly after the World Wars, industrialisation began to expand in the Global South, pushing vast masses out of agrarian, feudal set-ups into a labour-driven capitalist economy.

This was also a time when little attention was given to the interests of labour. Against this backdrop, Ambedkar's contributions to labour legislation marked a watershed moment for the Indian labour movement. During his tenure as Labour Member, India set important benchmarks in labour rights and moved towards meeting global standards for protections that workers are entitled to.

Also, in 1942, a Tripartite Labour Conference was held in New Delhi — the first of its kind in India's history — where government, employers and employees came together to discuss their problems.

As chairman of the conference, Ambedkar ensured that labour and management

came face-to-face as equals. The conference marked a new phase in the relationship between industry and labour, laying the foundation for the evolution of labour policy.

The conference also aimed at the formulation of a uniform labour code and raised concerns about placing it in the Concurrent List. As Ambedkar noted, if there was no central legislation, each province might frame its own laws "by allowing Provincial considerations to dominate over considerations of general and national importance".

These conferences took place regularly between 1942 and 1946.

Ambedkar's efforts also led to the formation of the Labour Investigation Committee in early 1944. This first-of-its-kind fact-finding body examined critical aspects of labour life such as wages, working conditions, housing, and broader social realities, creating an evidence-based framework for future social security policies.

Labour welfare measures

Ambedkar's experiences during his 1943 visit to Chota Nagpur to see the lives of mine workers translated into policy some years later. A Bill he introduced in the Central Assembly (as the Lower House of Parliament

was called during British rule) led to the establishment of the Mica Mines Labour Welfare Fund in 1946 to support welfare measures for workers in the mica mining industry. This led to similar welfare funds created for workers in other industries.

Another key amendment followed in 1946, when Ambedkar pushed for a provision requiring mine owners to provide separate bathing facilities for male and female workers. He framed it as a matter of not just hygiene but dignity.

Even before becoming a Labour Member, Ambedkar had been raising the issue of maternity benefits in the legislature, arguing that women must not be forced to choose between livelihood and birth. The Maternity Benefit Act of 1929 reflected these efforts and stood as one of his earliest interventions on the issue, even before such protections were widely taken up at the international level. This framework was strengthened through amendments in 1943 and 1945, which clarified benefits and expanded both the duration of leave and wage support, especially for women working in mines.

Ambedkar's legacy

Through amendments to existing laws,

new protections for women workers, and measures around compensation and welfare, Ambedkar laid the foundation for a more inclusive labour policy. These efforts did not just address immediate concerns but set the ground for future legislation on health, maternity benefits, and protection against industrial accidents.

Major changes were brought through amendments to the Factories Act, addressing long working hours and the absence of basic welfare measures for workers. At the same time, he ensured that this reduction would not lead to any cut in wages or dearness allowance. While India earlier had longer working hours, the new framework moved towards the global norm of a 48-hour workweek.

Ambedkar's untiring efforts to secure these safeguards for labour in the pre-independence legislations and in the Constitution bears testimony to the champion of labour rights in him. But despite this, he was clear about one thing: labour rights cannot survive on reforms alone. He believed that to sustain the rights they have achieved, they must have representation in politics.

FULL REPORT ON WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM

Government of Jharkhand, Rural Works Department
JHARKHAND STATE RURAL ROADS DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (JSRRDA)
 3rd Floor, F.F.P. Building, Dhurwa, Ranchi 834004

NOTICE INVITING TENDERS
 (National Competitive Bidding Through e-Procurement)

eTender No.- 09/2026-27- Ranchi, Dated: 30.04.2026

The undersigned on behalf of Government of Jharkhand invites item rate bids through e-Procurement from the eligible bidders registered* in appropriate class with any State/Central Government/State/Central Government Organization for construction and maintenance for five years of the works (List of schemes shall be displayed in the website pmsgstendersjhr.gov.in) of Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojna PM-JANMAN (Batch-II & III, 2025-26).

Sl. No	District Name	Block Name	Package No.	Re-Package No.	Road Name / Bridge Name	Road/Bridge Length (Kms/m)	Construction Cost (Rs. in Lakh)	Maintenance Cost (Rs. in Lakh)	Total Cost (Rs. in Lakh)	Earnest Money (Rs. in Lakh)	Time period (in Months)
1	Chatra	Hunter Ganj	JH02MARS113	JH-02-PMJANMAN-II-CHA-01/2025-26	L021-Chatra hara to chakala vaya dhamdhama	6.19	576.52	56.16	1097.65	22.00	18
			JH02MARS112		L022-REO road kurkheta to birhor tola birhori	2.609	255.26	24.3			
			JH02MARS103		CONSTRUCTION OF HL BRIDGE AT CH-4625 ON Bami to Bhitha	34.260m	184.32	1.09			
2	Chatra	Kunda	JH02MARS109	JH-02-PMJANMAN-II-CHA-02/2025-26	L022-Kunda lawalong road to Ganjutola	2.9	283.73	29.07	878.23	18.00	18
			JH02MARS101		CONSTRUCTION OF HL BRIDGE AT CH-800 ON Ashidari RD to biga tola	45.370m	226.53	1.41			
			JH02MARS102		CONSTRUCTION OF HL BRIDGE AT CH-1125 ON Ashidari RD to biga tola	15.110m	146.8	0.55			
3	Dumka	Jama	JH05MARS205	JH-05-PMJANMAN-II-DUM-01/2025-26	L023-Bahrudih Reo Road to sarsariya santhal pahariya tola	0.685	65.45	3.63	654.6	13.00	15
			JH05MARS206		L026-Meghi ghteali to Paharia tola	0.888	81.34	4.68			
			JH05JAN-ITG-001		L027-Tapsi baghmara tola to kamudumaria rd	1.088	104.25	4.4			
4	Dumka	Gopikand er	JH05MARS210	JH-05-PMJANMAN-II-DUM-02/2025-26	L025-Jolo PCC road to Champa tola Road	1.704	153.79	0.9	589.19	12.00	15
			JH05MARS204		L026-Dhundapahari tola to Kundapahari Reo road	1.302	120.09	11.04			
			JH05MARS201		L023-Rasnala REO road to sarabindh Road	1.664	153.71	11.21			
5	Garhwa	Bhandaria	JH07MTC055	JH-07-PMJANMAN-II-GAR-01/2025-26	L030-PMGSY Road Parro To Parro Village	1	88.16	10.26	1060.86	22.00	15
			JH07MTC042		L027-PMGSY Road To Bargarh Village	2.1	189.09	19.84			
			JH07MTC043		L029-PMGSY Road To Lidki Village	0.9	84.12	9.77			
6	Garhwa	Bhandaria	JH07MTC022	JH-07-PMJANMAN-II-GAR-02/2025-26	L031-PMGSY Road Sinjo To Sinjo Village	1.5	137.16	15.16	790.07	16.00	15
			JH07MTC063		L026-PMGSY Road Rodo To Rodo Village	1	94.69	10.64			
			JH07MTC031		L021-PMGSY Road To Ghaghra	3.31	320.43	30.78			
7	Garhwa	Bhawanat h-pur	JH07MTC035	JH-07-PMJANMAN-II-GAR-03/2025-26	L022-PWD Road Roksi tola To Kailan	1.7	166.23	15.99	759.77	16.00	15
			JH07MTC065		L025-REO Road To Barwari	2.55	233.39	23.25			
			JH07MTC046		L023-PWD Road Township To Arsal	3.5	322.49	32.37			
8	Garhwa	Chinia	JH07MTC056	JH-07-PMJANMAN-II-GAR-04/2025-26	L035-Ranicheri To Ranicheri Village	0.8	77.57	8.69	794.96	16.00	15
			JH07MTC049		L033-PMGSY Road To Masri Alias Masra Village	0.7	67.83	8.05			
			JH07MTC044		L025-PMGSY Road To Kudrum Village	4.8	435.01	39.54			
9	Garhwa	Dandai	JH07MTC021	JH-07-PMJANMAN-II-GAR-05/2025-26	L024-PWD Road Bolwa Tikar To Raro Village	2	186.49	17.81	755.69	16.00	15
			JH07MTC034		L025-PWD Road Pokharia Korwa Tola To Jhosar	0.8	74.82	8.68			
			JH07MTC028		L025-PMGSY Road To Tendra Alias Dhurki	1.1	105.4	11.61			
10	Garhwa	Sadar	JH07MTC053	JH-07-PMJANMAN-II-GAR-06/2025-26	L021-NH-43 Anras Ghati To Nawadih Village	1	89.52	10.23	594.95	12.00	12
			JH07MTC054		L022-PWD Road Bhadua To Bhadua Village	0.8	69.27	8.36			
			JH07MTC032		L021-PMGSY Road High School To Gobardaha Village	4.5	383.06	34.51			
11	Garhwa	Ramkanda	JH07MTC016	JH-07-PMJANMAN-II-GAR-07/2025-26	L022-PMGSY Road Baiyria To Baiyria Village	1.2	113.88	11.49	845.1	17.00	18
			JH07MTC025		L023-PMGSY Road To Cheto Village	1	93.53	10.09			
			JH07MTC037		L024-PMGSY Road To Kasmar Village	0.7	64.33	7.57			
12	Godda	Boarijore	JH09JAN2ACP005	JH-09-PMJANMAN-II-GOD-01/2025-26	L021-PMGSY Road Kerawa To Sangbarwa Alias Chhapardaga	0.7	65.93	8.92	534.09	11.00	15
			JH09JAN2ACP004		L021-NH-43 Anras Ghati To Nawadih Village	1	89.52	10.23			
			JH09JAN2ACP001		L021-PMGSY Road High School To Gobardaha Village	4.5	383.06	34.51			
13	Godda	Poraihat	JH09JAN2ACP002	JH-09-PMJANMAN-II-GOD-02/2025-26	L040-NADGODA TO GARGAWAN ROAD TO CHARCHARIYA	1.7	159.59	12.61	413.12	9.00	15
			JH09JAN2ACP008		L021-JHILUA MUKHIA PATH SE SANGARH	2.2	209.36	13.965			
			JH09JAN2ACP007		L023-RAGHUNATHPUR ROAD TO MALPAHARIA	1.12	107.39	8.49			
14	Gumla	Bishnupur	JH10MARS203	JH-10-PMJANMAN-II-GUM-01/2025-26	L030-Samandri to Upperlodhpath via lodhpath	5.8	560.65	60.13	1391.28	28.00	18
			JH10MARS202		L031-Jahupmore to Jahup	0.736	69.13	5.63			
			JH10MARS201		L032-Ambakona to Barpath	1.903	180.18	13.71			
15	Jamtara	Kundhit	JH12JAN-XCL-001	JH-12-PMJANMAN-II-JAM-01/2025-26	L026-Khukhradih to Bhelwadih	4.813	454.87	46.98	530.84	11.00	15
			JH12JAN-XCL-002		L024-NAGRI TO BALIASULI PAHARIYATOLA	1.025	84.91	5.56			
			JH12JAN-XCL-003		L025-AAMDUBI TO JANARDHANPUR	2.6	235.92	15.12			
16	Koderma	Jainagar	JH13MARS102	JH-13-PMJANMAN-II-KOD-01/2025-26	L021-Kharkopa PMGSY Road to Garai	1.548	143.27	13.11	156.38	4.00	12
			JH14JAN-XCL-008		L023-PWD ROAD TO SIRSI	9.465	875.11	73.4			
			JH14JAN-XCL-006		L021-MAIL REO ROAD TO INJOYKHAR	4.07	393.56	30.78			
17	Latehar	Chandwa	JH14JAN-XCL-001	JH-14-PMJANMAN-II-LAT-01/2025-26	L021-REO ROAD TO CHUTWAG PAHARIYA TOLA	1.75	160.56	11.48	424.34	9.00	15
			JH14JAN-XCL-002		L022-NH-99 TO DAMODAR PARHAIYA TOLA	2.28	222.65	15.14			
			JH14JAN-XCL-003		L023-NH-75 TO LAT DAG	3.2	295.84	27.14			
18	Latehar	Chandwa	JH14JAN-XCL-004	JH-14-PMJANMAN-II-LAT-02/2025-26	L024-REO ROAD TO SERAK	1.24	118.19	7.65	284.61	6.00	12
			JH16JAN-XCL-002		L026-CHHOTA BOSKROM TO PAHARIYATOLA	1	87.58	7.32			
			JH16JAN-XCL-003		L027-PAKODIH TO BURUTOLA	0.875	73.71	6.26			
19	Latehar	Chandwa	JH16JAN-XCL-004	JH-16-PMJANMAN-II-PAK-01/2025-26	L028-PAKUDIH SCHOOL TO PAHARIYATOLA	1.135	105.47	7.91	595.48	12.00	15
			JH16JAN-XCL-005		L029-DOMARCHIR TO PAHARIYATOLA	1.5	146.85	9.81			
			JH16JAN-XCL-006		L030-NIPANIYA TO PAHARIYA TOLA	0.66	53.99	3.48			
20	Latehar	Mahua-tand	JH16JAN-XCL-007	JH-16-PMJANMAN-II-PAK-02/2025-26	L032-TILJHARI TO PAHARIYA TOLA	1	84.19	8.9	824.52	17.00	15
			JH16JAN-XCL-008		L056-Simlong Singarsi PWD Road To Simlongpahar	1.35	132.21	2.71			
			JH16JAN-XCL-009		L059-Chhotasurajanga Bichphar R.E.O Road To Barajara	3.92	355.18	27.88			
21	Pakur	Amrapara	JH16JAN-XCL-010	JH-16-PMJANMAN-II-PAK-03/2025-26	L065-Pipra road to Ganduparta	3.25	280.25	26.3	972.65	20.00	15
			JH16JAN-XCL-011		L067-Simatjori Dhasipahar Road To Chhotakambhidhoni pahar	3.5	293.49	21.76			
			JH16JAN-XCL-012		L076-Sakala School to Kesripahar	2.3	201.89	16.61			
22	Pakur	Littipara	JH16JAN-XCL-013	JH-16-PMJANMAN-II-PAK-04/2025-26	L085-Chitlapharm Drajmat Road To Jitalpur	1.2	112.28	6.89	751.33	16.00	15
			JH16JAN-XCL-014		L062-Pakariya BT Road to Barganwaphar	3.2	296.54	23.18			
			JH16JAN-XCL-015		L023-PMGSY Road Bhelai Baramasia to Bhelai Mal pahariya	2.815	252.1	12.34			
23	Pakur	Maheshpu r	JH16JAN-XCL-016	JH-16-PMJANMAN-II-PAK-05/2025-26	L030-Pwd road Sahargaram to chiganon malpahariya	2.7	249	12.75	1001.71	21.00	18
			JH16JAN-XCL-017		L031-Pwd road to pakripada malpahariya	2	167.44	14.28			
			JH16JAN-XCL-018		L032-REO road to birkitti phariya tola	0.6	37.38	6.05			
24	Palamu	Bishrampur	JH17JAN2ACP021	JH-17-PMJANMAN-II-PAL-01/2025-26	L025-Wanshakti aarapur reo road hatai to pachghara tak	4.455	411.21	38.71	1001.71	21.00	18
			JH17MTC020C		Construction of H.L. Bridge over Sinjo Nala at ch-1550m in L022-Itko Panchayat Sachivalay to Sinjo R	44.760m	265.46	3.01			
			JH17MTC01B		Construction of H.L. Bridge over Thika Nala at ch-2280m in L023-Khumbhi Khurd More To Theki Road	52.600m	280.29	3.03			

26	Palamu	Chainpur	JH17JAN2ACP002	JH-17-PMJANMAN-II-PAL-03/2025-26	L039-Chainpur Hutar rcd road muslim tola via durga mandap narayan	4.4	401.65	27.94	761.19	16.00	15
			JH17ACP-B03		HL RCC Bridge over Ghargharia River at CH 0-600 of Chainpur Hutar Rcd road Hutar to muslim tola via	40.640m	232.06	2.01			
			JH17JAN2ACP019		L021-pokhraha garu rcd road to house of umesh sing parahiya	1	96.84	0.69			
27	Palamu	Chainpur	JH17JAN2ACP012	JH-17-PMJANMAN-II-PAL-04/2025-26	L041-Ramkanda Daltonganj rcd road to Hira	2.41	234.67	12.5	813.27	17.00	15
			JH17ACP-B14		HL RCC Bridge over Jhimalwa Kusum River at CH 2-400 of Ramkanda Daltonganj rcd road to Hira	40.640m	278.93	2.51			
			JH17MARS BR11		Construction of HL Bridge at CH-3200 M on Road Nawadih sungal to korwa tola vi	51.330m	282.95	1.7			
28	Palamu	Chainpur	JH17JAN2ACP011	JH-17-PMJANMAN-II-PAL-05/2025-26	L043-Ramkanda Daltonganj rcd road to Hira to karna via Temari	4.175	354.68	31.74	649.59	13.00	15
			JH17ACP-B13		HL RCC Bridge over Sukradih River at CH 2-400 of Ramkanda Daltonganj rcd road hira to Karna via Te	40.640m	260.6	2.57			
			JH17JAN2ACP003		L040-Chainpur Hutar rcd road chando to bhauraha via khurha	1	97.54	4.45			
29	Palamu	Chainpur	JH17JAN2ACP005	JH-17-PMJANMAN-II-PAL-06/2025-26	L044-Chando Parsa khad reo road Barwa khad to Ghasi tola	0.65	61.91	3.79	507.28	11.00	15
			JH17ACP-B07		HL RCC Bridge over Dhanal Nala River at CH 0-320 of Chando parsa khad reo road Barwa khad to Ghansi	60.640m	336.45	3.14			
			JH17JAN2ACP006		L045-Daltonganj Ramkanda RCD Road bori school to Dasratha tola	3.5	333.65	24.84			
30	Palamu	Chainpur	JH17MARS BR04	JH-17-PMJANMAN-II-PAL-07/2025-26	Construction of HL Bridge at CH-200 M on Road RCD Salatuwa to cutting korwa tola	32.310m	207.1	0.98	566.57	12.00	15
			JH17ACP-B08		L042-Pachlewa babhandih reo road pachlewa to kharwa mahal damar	2.6	238.63	9.69			
			JH17ACP-B09		HL RCC Bridge over Kanti Jharra River at CH 1+550 of Pachlewa Babhandih Reo road Pachlewa to Kharwa	20.640m	152.75	1.98			
31	Palamu	Chainpur	JH17ACP-B09	JH-17-PMJANMAN-II-PAL-08/2025-26	HL RCC Bridge over Piprahi Nala River at CH 2-200 of Pachlewa Babhandih Reo road Pachlewa to Kharwa	40.640m	258.35	2.6	664	14.00	15
			JH17JAN2ACP013		L028-kalaphar main road to thekahi	1.565	137.35	10.38			
			JH17JAN2ACP012		L027-sirha village via sibandih to narawata	2.65	220.45	19.18			
32	Palamu	Panki	JH17MARS BR01	JH-17-PMJANMAN-II-PAL-18/2025-26	L023-Salomdiri chowk reo road to Baghmari	0.67	60.69	5.98	566.77	12.00	18
			JH17MARS BR102		Construction of HL Bridge at CH-825 M on Road Mukta to Rengai Via Hoio	51.330m	286.2	1.7			
			JH17JAN2ACP017		Construction of HL Bridge at CH-4200 M on Road Mukta to Rengai Via Hoio	30.220m	211.23	0.97			
33	Palamu	Panki	JH06JAN2ACP005	JH-06-PMJANMAN-II-JSR-01/2025-26	L021-MAKRI PWD ROAD TO SAWARTOLA	1.81	141.44	10.42	530.39	11.00	15
			JH06JAN2ACP012		L024-Sirkadih to savartola	0.6	52.42	0.32			
			JH06JAN2ACP003		L023-Dhusra to savartola	0.74	59.31	0.35			
34	Purbi Singhbhum	Dumaria	JH06JAN2ACP011	JH-06-PMJANMAN-II-JSR-02/2025-26	L022-Morabandi BT Roadto Bankati savartola	4.075	338.67	22.58	511.66	11.00	15
			JH06JAN2ACP010		L022-Pwd road to savartola	0.98	85.19	8.36			
			JH06JAN2ACP004		L023-Namosol to savar tola	0.6	52.66	4.2			
35	Purbi Singhbhum	Dumaria	JH06JAN2ACP008	JH-06-PMJANMAN-II-JSR-03/2025-26	L025-Burudih school to kajrikocha savartola	0.75	65.31	7.92	417.62	9.00	18
			JH06JAN2ACP007		HIGH LEVEL BRIDGE OVER LOCAL NALA AT CHAINAGE 6-700 IN BHOMARPANI TO BHITAR AMDA ROAD.	17.150m	106.3	2.48			
			JH06JAN2ACP006		HIGH LEVEL BRIDGE OVER LOCAL NALA AT CHAINAGE 8-730 IN BHOMARPANI TO BHITAR A MDA ROAD.	17.150m	108.92	2.48			
36	Purbi Singhbhum	Dumaria	JH06JAN2ACP004	JH-0							

TRUMP IS SLATED TO RECEIVE A BRIEFING ON PLANS FOR A SERIES OF FRESH MILITARY STRIKES, REPORTS AXIOS

Khamenei says country will protect its nuclear and missile capabilities

Jon Gambrell
Dubai, April 30

IRAN'S SUPREME leader said Thursday that the Islamic Republic will protect its "nuclear and missile capabilities" as a national asset, likely seeking to draw a hard line as US President Donald Trump seeks a wider deal to cement the shaky ceasefire now holding in the war.

Ayatollah Mojtaba Khamenei, speaking in a written statement read by a state television anchor as he has since taking over as Iran's supreme leader, struck a defiant tone, insisting the only place Americans belonged in the Persian Gulf is "at the bottom of its waters" and that a "new chapter" was being written in the region's history.

However, his remarks come as Iran's oil industry has begun to be squeezed by a US Navy blockade halting its oil tankers from getting out to sea.

Meanwhile, benchmark Brent crude for June delivery reached as much as \$126 a barrel in trading on Thursday as Iran maintains its chokehold



Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Mojtaba Khamenei

on the Strait of Hormuz, the narrow mouth of the Persian Gulf through which a fifth of all crude oil and natural gas traded passes.

All this is putting additional pressure on the world's economy as Trump likely weighs how to respond. "By God's help and power, the bright future of the Persian Gulf region will be a future without America, one serving the progress, comfort and prosperity of its people," Khamenei said in the statement, read like all others since he reportedly was wounded in the February 28 attack that killed his father, the 86-year-old Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. AP

Iran threatens 'painful' response if US attacks

Humeyra Pamuk & Tala Ramadan
Washington, Dubai, Islamabad, April 30

IRAN SAID on Thursday it would respond with "long and painful strikes" on US positions if Washington renewed attacks, and also reasserted its control over the Strait of Hormuz, complicating US plans for a coalition to reopen the waterway.

Efforts to resolve the conflict have hit an impasse, with a ceasefire in place since April 8 but Iran still blocking the strait in response to a US naval blockade of Iran's oil exports, the country's economic lifeline.

US President Donald Trump is slated to receive a briefing on Thursday on plans for a series of fresh military strikes on Iran to compel it to negotiate an end to the conflict, a US official told Reuters.

"We've seen what happened to your regional bases, we will see the same thing happen to your warships," Aerospace Force



A man holds a flag with pictures of the former and current supreme leaders of Iran, in Tehran on Thursday. REUTERS

Commander Majid Mousavi was quoted by Iranian media.

In a sign the US was also envisaging a scenario where hostilities cease, the State Department cable invited partner countries to join a new coalition called Maritime Freedom Construct (MFC) to enable ships to navigate the strait.

"The MFC constitutes a critical first step in the establishment of a post-conflict maritime security architecture for the Middle East," said the cable, which was due to be delivered orally to partner nations by May 1.

France, Britain and other countries have held talks on contributing to such a coalition

but said they were willing to help open the Strait only when the conflict ends.

Lebanon issue

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi and Lebanese Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri held a phone call on Thursday to discuss developments in Lebanon and the region, as well as the Islamabad negotiations process.

Araqchi said halting Israeli attacks on Lebanon formed part of the Iran-US ceasefire understanding and would remain a key issue in any future process, according to his Telegram account.

Mediator Pakistan was trying to avoid escalation while the US and Iran exchange messages on a potential deal, a Pakistani source said on Wednesday. Iran's latest offer for resolving the war would set aside discussion of its nuclear program until the conflict is formally ended and shipping issues resolved. REUTERS

BRIEFLY

UNITED STATES

J Craig Venter, who decoded the human genome, dies at 79



Scientist & entrepreneur J Craig Venter

J CRAIG Venter, a scientist and entrepreneur who raced to decode the human genome, died on Wednesday in San Diego. He was 79. His death was announced by the J. Craig Venter Institute, a nonprofit research organization founded by Venter and based in San Diego and Rockville, Maryland. The institute said in a statement that Venter had been hospitalized recently for side effects from cancer treatment. In the 1990s, Venter, a risk-taker and intense competitor, made a bold move when he decided that the Human Genome Project, a \$3 billion government program for decoding the human genome, was moving slowly enough that he could enter the race late and beat it with a much faster method. NYT

SINGAPORE

Indian-origin woman, 2 others fined for protest

AN INDIAN-ORIGIN woman was among three Singaporean activists, fined USD 2,341 each on Thursday for organising a procession outside the Presidential Palace to show solidarity with Palestine, local media reported. The High Court overturned the acquittal of the three women, Malay-origin Mossammad Sobikun Nahar, 26, Siti Amirah Mohamed Asrori, 30, and Indian-origin Annamalai Kokila Parvathi, 37, accused of organising the procession on February 2, 2024. The Straits Times reported. AP

MYANMAR

Former leader Suu Kyi moved to house arrest

MYANMAR'S DETAINED former leader Aung San Suu Kyi has been moved to house arrest, state media reported on Thursday, over five years after the country's military ousted a civilian government led by the Nobel laureate and imprisoned her. Suu Kyi, 80, has been detained by the junta since and her whereabouts have been unclear amid a deadly civil war that was triggered by the February 2021 coup that has engulfed much of the impoverished Southeast Asian nation. REUTERS

Charles, Camilla bid farewell to the Trumps as US state visit ends

Turnaround in US-Britain ties

Reuters
Washington, April 30

BRITAIN'S KING Charles and Queen Camilla began wrapping up their four-day state visit to the US with a very quick stop by the White House to bid farewell to President Trump on Thursday.

The official reason for the royal trip was to mark the 250th anniversary of the US winning its independence from British colonial rule, cueing multiple wry jokes from Charles in speeches to Washington's elite about being on the losing side of the American Revolutionary War. But it was also designed to



President Donald Trump and First Lady Melania Trump greet Britain's King Charles III and Queen Camilla at the White House on Thursday. AP

mend what Charles called in Tuesday's state dinner with Trump an "unbreakable bond" and "indispensable alliance" between the two countries, lately strained by the UK, alongside other European allies, declining to join the two-month-old US-

Israeli war against Iran. It seemed to work. Trump told reporters how fond he was of his "great friend" Charles after their dinner: "When you like the king of a country so much, it probably helps your relationship with the prime minister."

Trump says US may reduce troops in Germany amid feud with Merz

Associated Press
Washington, April 30

PRESIDENT DONALD Trump on Wednesday leveled a new threat against NATO ally Germany, suggesting he could soon reduce the US military presence there as he continues to feud with Chancellor Friedrich Merz over the US-Israel war against Iran.

Trump made the threat after Merz earlier this week said that the U.S. was being "humiliated" by the Iranian leadership and criticized Washington's lack of strategy in the war. Trump has also repeatedly railed against NATO for the alliance's refusal to assist the U.S. in its two-month-old war.

"The US is studying and reviewing the possible reduction of Troops in Germany, with a



German Chancellor Merz

determination to be made over the next short period of time," Trump posted on social media. Merz had said Wednesday that his personal relationship with Trump remained "as good as ever," but he had "had doubts from the very beginning about what was started there with the war in Iran."

During his first term in the White House, Trump also moved to cut US troops in Germany because he said the

country spent too little on defence. In June 2020, Trump announced he was going to pull out about 9,500 of the roughly 34,500 US troops who were then stationed in Germany, but the process never actually started.

The US has several major military facilities in the country, including the headquarters for US European Command and US Africa Command, Ramstein Air Base and Landstuhl Regional Medical Center, the largest American hospital outside the US.

Merz met with Trump at the White House in March, just days after the US and Israel began their bombardment of Iran. At the time, Merz told Trump that Germany was eager to work with the US on a strategy for when the current Iranian government no longer exists.

UK raises national terror threat level after the stabbing of two Jewish men

Associated Press
London, April 30

THE UK government on Thursday said that the country is facing an antisemitism emergency and pledged to increase security for Jewish communities after a string of arson attacks and a double stabbing that have sparked fear and anger among Jews.

The country's official threat level from terrorism was raised from substantial to severe after Wednesday's stabbing attack in London. This means intelligence agencies consider an attack highly likely in the next six months. PM Keir Starmer said that his government "will do everything in our power to stamp this hatred out" after two Jewish men were seriously injured in a stabbing in north London.

Mamdani's advice to Charles: Give priceless 'Koh-i-Noor' back to India

Jeffery C. Mays
New York, April 30

HOURS BEFORE greeting King Charles III in lower Manhattan on Wednesday, Mayor Zohran Mamdani was asked about the royal visit during a news conference in the Bronx.

The mayor quickly distanced himself, saying that he would be attending a ceremony at the Sept. 11 memorial "alongside a number of other elected officials" and that would be the extent of his interaction with the king. But what would he say to Charles if they were to have a private meeting?

"I would probably encourage him to return the Koh-i-Noor Diamond," Mamdani said.

The mayor's decision to invoke the 105.6-carat diamond — taken from an 11-year-old Indian prince in the 1840s when India



Britain's King Charles III interacts with New York City Mayor Zohran Mamdani during a visit to the 9/11 Memorial. REUTERS

was a British colony and presented to Queen Victoria — was in character. Mamdani was born in Uganda, also once part of the British Empire, to Indian parents who have helped to shape his political views. His father,

Mahmood Mamdani, is a leading scholar of anticolonialism. His mother, Mira Nair, is an award-winning filmmaker whose movies have examined the colonial experience. India has lobbied for the diamond,

part of the crown jewels in the Tower of London, to be returned. Mamdani is also the city's first democratic socialist mayor, and he has said his goal is to uplift the city's working-class residents. "The mayor," said Joe Calvello, his spokesperson, "is generally opposed to the idea of a king." It's not the first time that Mamdani has weighed in on international politics.

The mayor, a staunch opponent of the Israel-Hamas war in the Gaza Strip and a supporter of Palestinian rights, said before winning the mayoralty that he would call for the Police Department to arrest PM Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel if he came to New York City. Mamdani did greet Charles at the memorial, where they exchanged pleasantries and where the king and Queen Camilla left a bouquet of flowers. NYT

Chinese minister to Rubio: Taiwan 'biggest risk' in ties

Reuters
Beijing, April 30

CHINA AND the U.S. should prepare for "important high-level exchanges", Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi said in a call with US Secretary of State Marco Rubio on Thursday, while warning the Taiwan issue is "the biggest point of risk for relations."

"The Taiwan issue concerns China's core interests," Wang told Rubio, adding that the US should "keep its promises and make the right choices in order to open up new space for China-US cooperation and make due efforts for world peace", an official summary of the call released by Wang's ministry showed.

The phone conversation came weeks before an expected mid-May summit between Trump and Xi Jinping in Beijing.

CHARLES LIEBER, ARRESTED IN 2020 FOR LYING ABOUT CHINESE PAYMENTS, WAS CONVICTED IN 2021; HE SERVED MINIMAL PRISON TIME AND MOVED TO SHENZHEN IN 2025 TO LEAD CHINA'S BRAIN-INTERFACE RESEARCH

Convicted former Harvard scientist rebuilds brain computer lab in China

David Kirton
Shenzhen, April 30

AN AMERICAN scientist convicted of lying to US authorities about payments from China while he was at Harvard University has rebuilt his research lab in Shenzhen to pursue technology the Chinese government has identified as a national priority: embedding electronics into the human brain.

Charles Lieber, 67, is among the world's leading researchers in brain-computer interfaces. The technology has shown promise in treating conditions such as ALS and restoring movement in paralyzed patients. But it also has potential

military applications: Scientists at China's People's Liberation Army have investigated brain interfaces as a way to engineer super soldiers by boosting mental agility and situational awareness, according to the US Defense Department.

Lieber was found guilty by a jury and convicted in December 2021 of making false statements to federal investigators about his ties to a Chinese state program to recruit overseas talent, and tax offenses related to payments he received from a Chinese university. He served two days in prison and six months under house arrest, and was fined \$50,000 and ordered to pay \$33,600 in restitu-

tion to the Internal Revenue Service. During the case, his defense said he was suffering from an incurable lymphoma, which was in remission, and he was fighting for his life.

Three years after he was sentenced, Reuters has learned that Lieber is now overseeing China's state-funded i-BRAIN, or the Institute for Brain Research, Advanced Interfaces and Neurotechnologies, with access to dedicated nanofabrication equipment and primate research infrastructure unavailable to him at Harvard. The lab is an arm of the Shenzhen Medical Academy of Research and Translation, or SMART.

"I arrived on April 28, 2025



Charles Lieber leaves federal court in Boston. FILE/REUTERS

with a dream and not much more, maybe a couple bags of clothes," Lieber said of his move to China at a Shenzhen government conference in December.

"Personally, my own goals are to make Shenzhen a world leader."

Lieber, through an assistant, declined an interview request, citing "current commitments."

He didn't respond to written questions from Reuters.

SMART last year appointed Lieber as an investigator, according to a post on i-BRAIN's website dated May 1, 2025.

In 2011, Lieber was named the world's top chemist of the preceding decade in a set of scientific rankings published by Thomson Reuters, the parent of Reuters. Some analysts say Lieber's ability to reconstitute his laboratory after a federal criminal conviction for lying about his ties to China shows how U.S. safeguards on technology with potential military uses haven't kept pace with Chinese government efforts to acquire it. That concern is amplified because of Beijing's military-civil fusion strategy, whereby civilian scientific resources and research are shared with the military.

"China has weaponized against us our own openness and our own efforts for innovation," said Glenn Gerstell, a nonresident senior adviser at the Center for Strategic and International Studies and former general counsel of the U.S. National Security Agency from 2015 to 2020. "They've flipped that and turned it around against us, and they're taking advantage of it."

The Chinese Ministry of Science and Technology and the defence ministry didn't respond to questions about China's development of brain-computer interfaces. SMART and i-BRAIN also didn't reply to requests for comment about their research and the recruitment of Lieber. In Shenzhen, i-BRAIN in February installed a deep ultraviolet lithography system made by semiconductor-equipment giant ASML (ASML:AS), opens new tab, according to the lab's website. The Dutch company's machines print the tiny circuits essential to cutting-edge chips. At Harvard, Lieber used shared lithography equipment at the university's Center for Nanoscale Systems. The center serves more than 1,600 users annually, according to its website. REUTERS

AFTER MARCH ORDER ASKED PIPED GAS CONSUMERS TO GIVE UP LPG CONNECTIONS

Households with both LPG, PNG connections under govt scanner

Sukalp Sharma
New Delhi, April 30

AN ASSESSMENT is underway to identify households that are currently holding both liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) and piped natural gas (PNG) connections, following a March 14 government order that barred household consumers from holding both types of gas connections.

The order was among the measures announced by the government to encourage households to increase PNG use and reduce pressure off of LPG supplies, which have been badly hit due to the West Asia crisis. Despite the order having been in effect for one-and-a-half months now, only about 43,000 PNG consumers have so far surrendered their LPG connections.

The government expects the number of consumers holding both connections to be much higher, and the assessment is being done to get an accurate estimate of such consumers, a senior Petroleum Ministry official said Thursday.

"It is a low number and we expect it to be more. The government has issued an order as per which it is not advisable to have both the connections...An assessment is being made to see how many people are there who have both (PNG and LPG) connections. Only after that some

decision can be taken on this," said Petroleum Ministry Joint Secretary Sujata Sharma. She did not elaborate on what could be the next steps to better enforce the order.

In a notification issued on March 14, the ministry amended the Liquefied Petroleum Gas (Regulation of Supply and Distribution) Order, 2000, under the Essential Commodities Act.

The changes made it mandatory for consumers with PNG connections to surrender their domestic LPG connections. The notification also prohibited public sector fuel retailers and their distributors from giving out LPG connections as well as cylinder refills to consumers who already have PNG supply.

This move is among a series of measures intended to reduce India's high import dependency for LPG, which has led to a major supply disruption due to the West Asia war and the consequent closure of the critical maritime chokepoint of the Strait of Hormuz. Another notification issued by the Petroleum Ministry in March made it mandatory for households with access to PNG connectivity, but still using LPG, to shift to PNG within three months or lose their LPG connections as well.

Such measures, the government expects, will help free up LPG supplies from areas that have PNG connectivity, allow-



The Centre has also urged the states to help expedite the expansion of PNG network across the country. REUTERS

ing those volumes to reach consumers in areas that currently don't have PNG infrastructure. Some city gas distribution (CGD) companies have also announced incentives like some volumes of free gas and waiver of connection charges to encourage consumers to sign up for PNG connections.

The Centre has also urged states to help expedite PNG network expansion, and has even offered additional commercial LPG allocation if they take certain specific measures in this regard. India depends on imports to meet 60% of its LPG require-

ment, and 90% of the imports come from West Asia via the Strait of Hormuz, where vessel movements have all but come to a halt. While India's natural gas supplies have also been hit, the situation is significantly better than in the case of LPG. India's reliance on imports for natural gas is around 50%, and 55-60% of LNG imports come through the Strait of Hormuz. In the most vulnerable consumer segment—households—India has a huge LPG consumer base with 33.3 crore domestic connections.

FULL REPORT ON
WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM

Centre cuts windfall tax on diesel & jet fuel exports

New Delhi: The government has significantly reduced the export duties on diesel and aviation turbine fuel (ATF), or jet fuel, in line with the price fluctuations in the international market.

According to a Finance Ministry notification, the duty on diesel exports for the first fortnight of May has been slashed to Rs 23 per litre from Rs 55.5, while on jet fuel exports, the levy has been reduced to Rs 33 per litre from Rs 42.

The export duty on petrol continues to be nil.

The export levies, or windfall gains taxes—in the form of excise duties—were imposed from March 27 with the objective of ensuring adequate availability of these fuels in the domestic market by disincentivising exports amid a major price difference between domestic and international markets. Global oil and fuel prices have surged due to the West Asia war.

The export duties are revised on a fortnightly basis, and this is the second revision. ENS

'India needs to elevate itself on value curve to attract foreign investors'

THE INDIAN economy needs to resolve its structural challenges to become a more attractive destination for foreign investors even though valuations in the domestic stock market are now in line with their fair value, **Vinay Paharia**, chief investment officer at PGIM India Asset Management, the Indian subsidiary of US-based financial services major Prudential Inc, told **Akash Mandal** in an interview. Edited excerpts:

Equity markets have been confronted with one negative event after another. How do you navigate such times to outperform others?

First and foremost, I think that the thought process that equity should deliver high returns at all points is a myth. It is a volatile asset class. There are times when returns are high, which means they (equity markets) are running ahead of fundamentals. There are times when returns are low, which means they might be running behind fundamentals.

Now, it should not ultimately devolve into a circus by focusing on temporary performance. When you drive a car in one lane, the other lane moves faster. When you move to the other lane, this starts moving faster. Thus, the myth of outperformance in a very short period of time is something we should stay clear of.

What about FIIs? Could they return to India, especially as other emerging markets have seen higher flows and returns in the recent past?

Yes, there are other markets that have become attractive, because of which a lot of money did flow to other markets. That reiterates the theory that if there is a potential for returns



VINAY PAHARIA
CHIEF INVESTMENT OFFICER AT PGIM INDIA ASSET MANAGEMENT

to be made, then money will flow there. And the same rule applies for India too. You can never predict when, but whenever it happens, it can have a meaningful impact on the performance of the stock market.

PGIM has a fairly wide global network with access to executives operating across the globe. There are a few things that we can distill from our discussions. First, the relative attractiveness of India went down about a year-and-a-half back simply because India's valuations had reached a premium compared to many other Asian markets. Second, the underlying fundamentals had improved across many of the other Asian markets. On top of that, India's high dependence on crude oil imports is obviously a near-term concern.

Thus, while some of these concerns are temporary, others are structural. The temporary concerns are transient. Structural concerns need to be addressed, and I think they are being addressed over a period of time.

What are some of these structural challenges?

I think India needs to invest more in research and development. We have seen how India's core advantage was white-col-

lar professionals in the IT sector, which is now expected to be a little bit more of a challenge since much of this work can potentially be done by AI. So, India needs to elevate itself on the value curve. There is work happening on that.

In addition, there are other things that the government is trying to address.

For example, the semiconductor mission ensures that India moves in the direction of manufacturing and participates in the value chain. So, many of these changes are happening on the ground gradually, and I'm sure investors will take notice of them.

The market direction has been determined primarily by geopolitical events in the past few months. Will this continue or will the focus shift to corporate earnings?

It is very difficult to predict what the market will do in the near term. But what can we do as investors? We cannot react to things that bring potential returns in our favour. So, as a fund house, we went out and clearly highlighted to our investors at one point of time that this is a fantastic opportunity to buy. We have never done that over the last three years. About 10-15 days back, we had put out a note that said this is a great time to buy simply because large caps are trading at a meaningful discount to their fair value, small caps are trading very close to their fair value, and mid-caps are at a very modest premium to their fair value, which means the potential return has gone up.

There have been many crises in the past and their impact definitely needs to be discussed. But they have a very near-term impact. And investors should take advantage of the fluctuations in the market.

FULL INTERVIEW ON
WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM

HUL reports 24% jump in Q4 profit, but flags near-term volatility

ENS Economic Bureau
New Delhi, April 30

Despite reporting its fastest growth in three years in Q4, FMCG giant Hindustan Unilever (HUL) has flagged near-term volatility from the West Asia conflict.

The company not only faces a fresh challenge of balancing price hikes and volume growth but broader issues related to rural demand and forecast of weak monsoon also have to factored in.

In Q4, rural growth was ahead of urban growth, though the gap between the two is shrinking, the company said.

HUL reported a nearly 8% revenue growth in Q4, driven by a 7% underlying sales growth led by volumes (at 6%), a key indicator of real consumption rather than price-led expansion. This marks a notable shift from previous quarters where growth was more muted and often supported by pricing actions.

"We have seen a sequential step-up in growth, driven by decisive actions and a clear focus on volume-led growth," Priya Nair, CEO and Managing Director, HUL, said, adding that the company expects FY27 to be better than FY26.

"Our focus remains on staying competitive and protecting consumers despite some recalibration between volume and price," she added.

The latest numbers suggest that the company's strategic pivot toward volume-led

Q4 REPORT CARD

RURAL GROWTH was ahead of urban growth, though the gap between the two is shrinking

HUL REPORTED 8% revenue growth in Q4, driven by a 7% underlying sales growth led by volumes, a key indicator of real consumption rather than price-led expansion.

THE LATEST numbers suggest that the company's strategic pivot toward volume-led growth and sharper execution is beginning to pay off.

growth and sharper execution is beginning to pay off.

Margins are likely to remain within the guided range of 22.5-23.5% in the ongoing fiscal. In Q4, margins came in at 23.5%, at the higher end of the guidance, but constrained by rising input costs, analysts said.

But the Street is clearly not enthused with HUL's post-results commentary on FY27, with the stock tanking over 4% intra-day on Thursday, given that GST tailwinds have been reversed with the company taking price hikes (2-5%) recently in home-care and personal care due to the Iran war.

Inflation, say analysts, remains a visible concern in the foreseeable future. The company saw the full benefit of these tailwinds in Q4, as Q3 was marred by GST-led trade challenges. FE

HAM projects: Road Ministry tightens bidding regulations



Bidders will have to give an undertaking declaring they have not been involved in any 'catastrophic failure'. REUTERS

Dheeraj Mishra
New Delhi, April 30

IN A move to create deterrence against construction related failures, the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) has introduced stricter disqualification norms for Hybrid Annuity Mode (HAM) projects to prevent "catastrophic failures" caused by construction defects.

The circular, dated April 29, extends provisions earlier applied to Engineering, Procurement, and Construction (EPC) projects to HAM contracts as part of the ministry's broader push to strengthen quality in national highway development. HAM is a variant of the public-private partnership model, where the government pays 40% of the project cost during construction and the balance 60% as annuity payments over

the operations period. According to the modified provision, the bidder with a record of catastrophic failure of any highway structure due to construction defects within the past two years from the bid due date may face disqualification in HAM project tenders. The clause applies to both ongoing and completed projects.

During the evaluation criteria, minus 30 marks is allocated against catastrophic failure, which would have impacted project and quality substantially, leads to loss of lives and lasting damage to road structure requiring re-construction.

According to MoRTH, catastrophic failures are defined as collapse of any bridge or flyover or underpass, embankment or pavement failure causing loss of serviceability of pavement, collapse of launching girder or staging leading to loss of life during

SAFETY NET

HAM IS a variant of the public-private partnership model, where the government pays 40% of the project cost during construction and the balance 60% as annuity payments over the operations period

THE BIDDER with a record of catastrophic failure of any highway structure due to construction defects within the past two years from the bid due date may face disqualification

THE CLAUSE applies to both ongoing and completed projects.

construction period, collapse inside of the tunnel or human beings trapped for more than 72 hours during construction and failure of Pavement Quality Concrete (PQC).

The Ministry has directed that modified provisions should be incorporated into all ongoing and future HAM bid documents. Along with this, bidders will now be required to submit a undertaking declaring that neither they nor any consortium member has been involved in any catastrophic failure from construction defects during the specified period.

In the last three years, major deficiencies in National Highway stretches have been reported for 67 projects. Currently in cases of damages to the highway structures, the actions are taken against defaulting agencies. FULL REPORT ON
WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM

Centre slashes Vi's AGR dues by Rs 23,600 crore

New Delhi: In a major relief to the debt-laden Vodafone Idea, the government has cut its adjusted gross revenue (AGR) dues by about Rs 23,600 crore, or nearly 27%, to Rs 64,046 crore as of December 31, 2025, following a reassessment by a department of telecommunications (DoT)-appointed panel.

In a regulatory filing on Thursday, the company said the DoT had communicated that the committee tasked with reviewing AGR liabilities has finalised the recomputed dues at the lower figure, down from the earlier frozen amount of Rs 87,695 crore.

The revised payment schedule is back-loaded. The company will pay a minimum of Rs 100 crore annually over four years from FY32 to FY35, with the balance to be cleared in six equal installments between FY36 and FY41, which will be Rs 10,608 crore annually.

The AGR dues for FY18 and FY19, which were finalised following a September 2020 Supreme Court order, will not be reopened. FE

BRIEFLY

FDI in India may cross \$90 bn in 2025-26: DPIIT

New Delhi: The total foreign direct investment (FDI) in India has crossed \$88 billion during April-February FY26, and it is likely to reach \$90 billion in the last fiscal, a top government official said on Thursday. DPIIT Secretary Amardeep Singh Bhatia said that the government has taken a series of measures to attract FDI. He said that during April-February 2025-26, inflows have crossed \$88 billion. PTI

FinMin asks banks to adopt MuleHunter AI tool of RBI

New Delhi: Financial Services Secretary M Nagaraju on Thursday asked banks to adopt the MuleHunter AI tool developed by RBI at the earliest for timely identification and prevention of mule accounts involved in financial cyber frauds. During a meeting he also advised State Level Bankers' Committee to sensitise the State Police Authorities about the steps taken by the banks for prevention of cyber financial frauds and undertake greater public awareness initiatives, the Department of Financial Services said in a post on X. PTI

StanChart to sell bulk of Indian credit cards to Federal Bank

Bengaluru: Standard Chartered will sell a portfolio of 450,000 Indian credit cards to Federal Bank, it said on Thursday, as the London-listed lender shifts focus to wealth business in India. StanChart, which earns most of its revenue in Asia, Africa and the Middle East, had about 640,000 credit cards in India as of March, according to the latest regulatory data. REUTERS

Samsung chip profit jumps almost 50-fold

Seoul: Samsung Electronics on Thursday reported record quarterly profit driven by a 49-fold jump in chip income, saying it expects a severe supply shortage to deepen next year as clients spend on AI, driving up prices of its memory chips.

A boom in the construction of AI data centres has spurred Samsung and chipmaking peers to allocate production capacity to advanced chips that Nvidia uses in its so-called AI accelerators. "Based solely on the demand currently received for 2027, the supply-to-demand gap for 2027 is set to widen even further than in 2026," Kim Jaehune, a Samsung memory chip business executive, told analysts on its post-earnings call. REUTERS

ALL FOUR OF THE US TECH GIANTS THAT REPORTED RESULTS SIGNALLED THAT SPENDING ON ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE WILL NOT SLOW DOWN

Google Cloud pulls ahead as Big Tech' AI bet swells to \$700 bn

Reuters
Bengaluru, April 30

ALPHABET'S BLOWOUT cloud growth has reset expectations across major tech companies, leaving investors to recalibrate which firms are delivering the clearest returns.

All four of the US tech giants that reported results on Wednesday signalled that spending on artificial intelligence would not slow down, with combined outlays now set to surpass \$700 billion this year, up from around \$600 billion previously.

Alphabet shares jumped more than 6% in premarket trading on Thursday, while Meta stock fell nearly 9%.

Amazon shares rose 2.6%, while those of Microsoft dipped 1.8%. The reactions underscore a growing divide as the biggest tech companies pour record sums into AI infrastructure, with investors increasingly rewarding those that are translating spending into clear revenue growth.

Amazon and Microsoft both reported faster growth in their cloud-computing revenue in the March quarter at 28% and 40%, respectively.

But those paled in comparison to Google Cloud's 63% revenue surge, its best growth yet, which was far above estimates of 50.1%. CEO Sundar Pichai said Google's AI tools for large



Google Cloud posted 63% revenue surge, outpacing other tech giants Amazon and Microsoft. REUTERS

businesses had become Google Cloud's primary growth driver for the first time, vindicating Alphabet's decision to turn its

vast research capabilities into commercial gains. To be sure, Google's cloud business is much smaller than those of

Amazon and Microsoft and has only in the past several quarters started to contribute meaningfully to Alphabet's overall revenue. Meta also beat quarterly revenue expectations but warned of potential losses from a global backlash surrounding children's safety on social media, adding to pressure from its ballooning AI spending.

Analysts and investors believe Google is scooping up a large chunk of new computing demand thanks to its AI tools for businesses and powerful custom chips that have attracted customers like Anthropic. Pichai said Google had started selling its AI chips, which compete with Nvidia's

semiconductors, directly to some customers.

"It is capturing new workloads for the most part—sometimes from companies new to cloud, often additional workloads from customers of other clouds who want to be less dependent on a single cloud provider or who like Google data, analytics and AI offerings," said Lee Sustar, principal analyst at Forrester. Pichai said cloud growth could have been higher were it not for the capacity constraints on computing power that have sparked Big Tech's spending spree. To overcome those shortages, the company bumped its annual capital spending forecast.

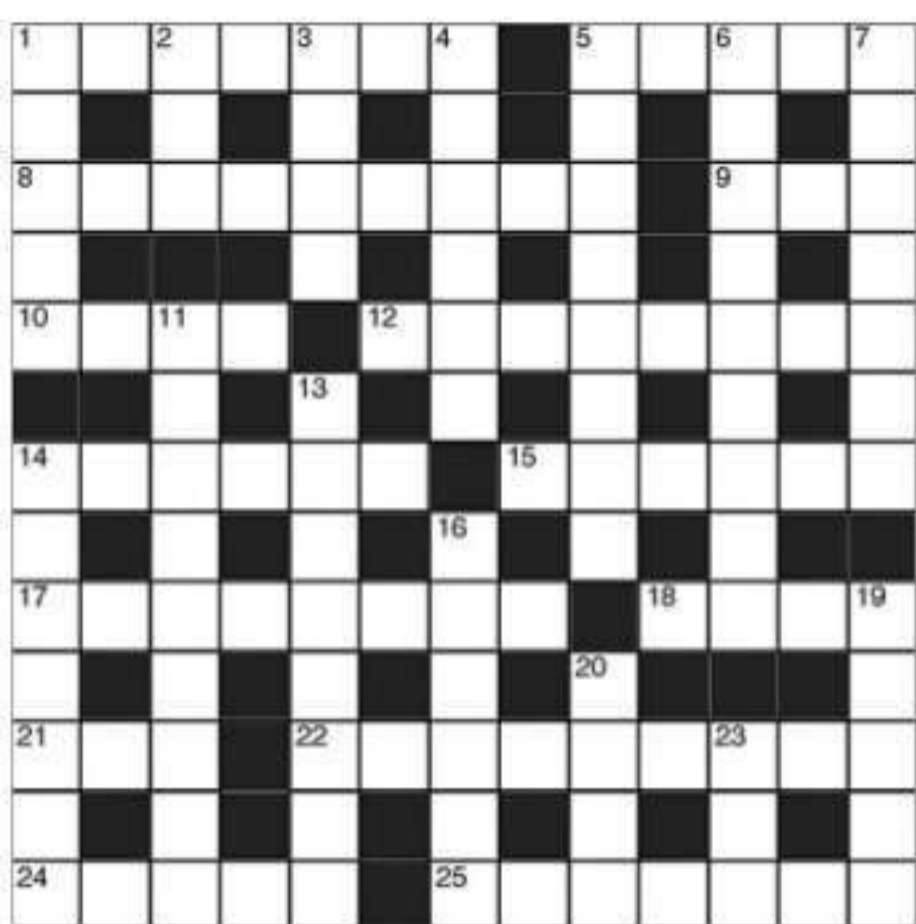
MARKETS

Sensex 76,913.50 -582.86 -0.75%	NIFTY 23,997.55 -180.10 -0.74%	Gold ▲ ₹1,54,800	US Dollar ▲ ₹94.92
		Silver ▼ ₹2,42,700	Oil ▲ \$116.52

NOTE: GOLD, SILVER RATES AS PER ALL INDIA SARAFI ASSOCIATION GOLD PER 10G, SILVER PER 1KG; CRUDE OIL (INDIAN BASKET) AS OF APRIL 29, 2026

CROSSWORD

5977



ACROSS
1 Bill will be paid for this (7)
5 Go on to higher things (5)
8 It holds on when certain confusion is about (9)
9 Three-figure cover (3)
10 Welshman's platform (4)
12 Bet a long striding gait is natural to it (8)
14 This train may be held up by an attendant (6)
15 Licence needed for every thousand it appears (6)
17 Emancipated worker's carte blanche (4,4)
18 We bear it (4)
21 Initially when to expect a letter from Greece (3)
22 Article with which I'm in full agreement (9)
24 Pen has the French way of writing (5)
25 Sailor and his girl were attached to Brer Rabbit (3,4)
DOWN
1 Moved fast when account got in the red (5)
2 Able to start Canadian and finish American (3)
3 A Russian ruler was one taking the lead (4)
4 He should honour his agreement to the letter (6)
5 Went round the bend trapped? (8)
6 There's no end of cats here (4,2,3)
7 It's no good by all accounts (3,4)
11 I can time railway route (9)
13 A block destined for hot water (4,4)
14 They polish the shock absorbers (7)
16 First-class student? (6)
19 Some found needlessly lying in a cunning way (5)
20 The last carriage (4)
23 She's in peak form in Crete (3)

SOLUTIONS CROSSWORD 5976 ACROSS: 1 Lacrosse, 5 Flop, 9 Nurse, 10 Lancers, 11 Gamesmanship, 13 On tape, 14 Leaden, 17 Rediscovered, 20 General, 21 Token, 22 Took, 23 Prudence DOWN: 1 Long, 2 Current, 3 Overexposure, 4 Salome, 6 Leech, 7 Postpone, 8 Uninterested, 12 Not right, 15 Doeskin, 16 Poplar, 18 Dingo, 19 Once

JUMBLED WORDS

Given below are four jumbled words. Solve the jumbles to make proper words and move them to the respective circles below. Select the letters in the shaded circles and jumble them to get the answer for the given clue.

___ will always be ___, regardless of lack of understanding, disbelief or ignorance. (S...S) - W. Clement Stone (same word twice)

FUYRT ACMPSPU
ISXYT AEMRMH

SOLUTIONS: Truth will always be truth. Regardless of lack of understanding, disbelief or ignorance. - W. Clement Stone

OVER THE HEDGE

BY MICHAEL FRY & T LEWIS



CALVIN & HOBBS

BY BILL WATTERSON



MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG

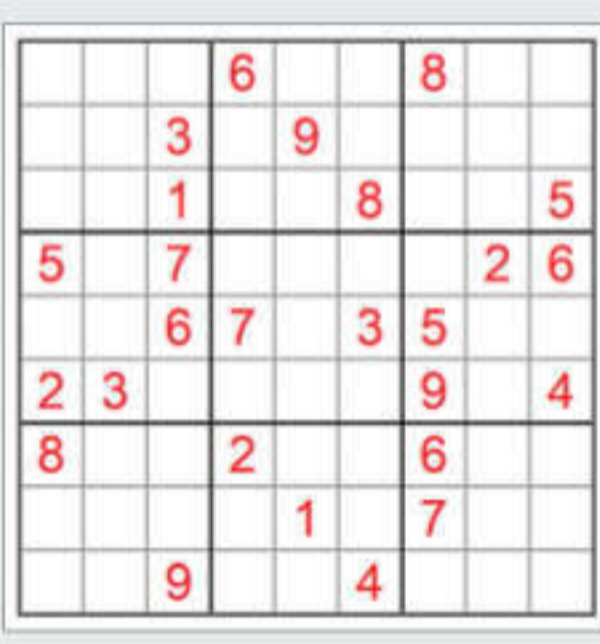


DIFFICULTY LEVEL 3S INSTRUCTIONS

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from 1 to 9 must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

DIFFICULTY LEVEL

1s = Very easy; 2s = Easy; 3s = Medium; 4s = Hard; 5s = Very Hard; 6s = Genius



SOLUTION SUDOKU 6304



NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY

OPEN TENDER NOTICE (Through e-Tender)
No. 35245472C Date: 27.04.2026
On the behalf of President of India e-Tenders are invited by the Dy. CMMI/GSD/NWR, Jodhpur 1. Name of item: Roof Mounted AC package unit (as per RDSO's Specification, No: ELPS/SPEC/AC/03/Rev-2 with amendment no-1& 2 for SGAC Coaches along with control panel (as per RDSO's Specification, No: ELPS/SPEC/AC/04/Rev-03 with amendment no:1) 2. Approximate Cost of Items: 6195000/- (Rs Sixty One Lac Ninety Five Thousand only); 3. Earnest Money to be deposited: 123900/- (Rs One Lac Twenty Three Thousand Nine Hundred only); 4. Last date and time for Submission of e-tender Before 25.05.2026 14:25. Opening of e-tender: After 25.05.2026 14:25. 5. Web site from e-tender forms can be obtained: www.ireps.gov.in; 6. Address of the NIT issuing Office: Office of Dy. Chief Material Manager/GSD NWR, Jodhpur 342001 (Rajasthan); Note: 1. Manual offers are not allowed against this tender, and any such manual offer received shall be summarily rejected. 2. Cost of tender document & EMD online through e-transfers i.e. through payment gateway facility on the IREPS website. 620-PS/26 Follow us at NWRRailways NWRRailways

HIMACHAL PRADESH STATE ELECTRICITY BOARD LIMITED (A STATE GOVERNMENT UNDERTAKING)
Registered Office: Vidyt Bhawan, HPSEBL, Shimla-171004 (H.P.), CIN: U40109HP2009SGC031255
GST NO: 02AACCH4894EHBZ, PHONE no: 0177-267168 (Office and Fax) Website/Email: www.hpseb.in /cepm@hpseb.in
NOTICE INVITING TENDER (Tender invited through e-mode-cum-reverse auction only)
Himachal Pradesh State Electricity Board Limited (HPSEBL) invites e-mode cum reverse Tender for replacement and upgradation of the existing Firewall with Next Generation Firewall along with MFA based Remote Access VPN at Vidyt Bhawan Complex of HPSEBL, Shimla.
Technical bid will cover information relating to all aspects other than the price quoted and Financial bid will only cover the price quoted in the given Performa in this tender document. The detailed information is as below:-
TABLE: Tender Document (in ₹), Tender Document Cost (including GST @ 18%) (₹), Date of Pre-bid meeting, Start date & time of bid purchase, End date & time of bid submission, Opening date of Part-of bid
NOTE: The detailed terms and conditions along with Tender documents can be viewed and downloaded free of cost at website https://www.hpTenders.gov.in. No. 0204/2026/2027/HP

GUJARAT URJA VIKAS NIGAM LTD
CIN U40109GJ2004SGC045195
ISO 9001:2015 Certified Company
Sardar Patel Vidyt Bhawan, Racecourse, Vadodara 390007
PBX: (0265) 2310582-86, www.guvnl.com
NOTICE INVITING TENDER
Gujarat Urja Vikas Nigam Limited (GUVNL) vide RfS No. GUVNL / 250 MW / Wind (Phase XI) dated 30/04/2026 invites Tender for procurement of power through Competitive Bidding (followed by reverse auction) from 250 MW grid connected Wind Power Projects (Phase XI) to be set up anywhere in India with an additional 250 MW capacity under 'Green-shoe Option'. For tender documents (RfS and Draft PPA) and further details please visit www.guvnl.com and https://www.bharat-electronicstender.com. The last date of Online bid submission is 26/05/2026.
Date: 01/05/2026
General Manager (RE)

HIMACHAL PRADESH PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT CORRIGENDUM
The critical dates and time as called vide this office Tender Notice No. PW/SR/JT/Publication/2026-27-826-30 dated 22.04.2026 for online Tenders are hereby extended as below due to some Administrative/Technical reasons.
TABLE: Sr. No., Description, May be read as under
1 Starting date for downloading bid 15.05.2026 at 11:00 AM instead of 30.04.2026 at 11:00 AM.
2 Deadline for submission of bid 22.05.2026 at 09:00 AM instead of 08.05.2026 at 09:00 AM.
3 Deadline for submission of bid 22.05.2026 at 11:00 AM instead of 08.05.2026 at 11:00 AM.
All other terms & conditions will remain un-changed.
Executive Engineer, HPPWD Division, Seraj at Janjhiti
No. 0726/2026/2027/HP

SOUTH CENTRAL RAILWAY
Follow us on @SCRailwayIndia Details of the Tender Notices of S.C Railway can be seen on our website: www.scr.indianrailways.gov.in
e-Tender No. G/C/PCET Leasing/2026-27/01, Date 30.04.2026
For and on behalf of the President of India, the Senior Divisional Commercial Manager, Guntakal Division, South Central Railway conducts e-Tender through https://www.ireps.gov.in from the Indian nationals above the age of eighteen years and Companies / Firms registered in India on closed end e-Tender.
TABLE: Sl. No., E-Tender No, Category, Locations in catalogue, Date of Closing Tender, Closing Time
1 PCET-2026-27-01 Leasing of PCET RU-SNL-RU 21.05.2026 15:00
Interested parties and contractors to take note of this and go through the user manual download through the learning centre (User manuals) link available in the left navigation bar of the home page of IREPS site to understand e-Tender procedure and participate. And for further clarifications, bidders may approach office of Senior Divisional Commercial Manager, South Central Railway, Guntakal.
Sr. Divisional Commercial Manager, Guntakal

MUTHOOT FINCORP LTD. | GOLD AUCTION NOTICE
Regd. Office: Muthoot Centre, TC No 27/3022, Punnem Road, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala, India - 695001. CIN : U65929KL1997PLC011518, Ph: +91 471 4911400, 2331427.
Notice is hereby given for the information of all concerned that gold ornaments pledged with under mentioned branches of the company for the period upto 30.06.2025 & All other 6 months tenure gold loans up to 30.09.2025 and EMI gold loans due up to 31.03.2026. Also those gold loans where interest is due and not paid up to 31.03.2026 are also included in this auction. Which were overdue for redemption and which have not been redeemed so far in spite of repeated notices will be auctioned on 05.06.2026 from 10 am onwards.
Auction Date: 05.06.2026 - BAREILLY DISTRICT - PRIYADARSHANI NAGAR-BAREILLY: 2455001362, 2455001487, 2455001488, 2455001496, 2455001513, 2455001515, 2455001550, 2455001552, 2455001563, 2455001604, 2455001679, 2455001680, 2455001723, 2455001759, 2455001791, 2455002117, 2455002144, 2455002161, 2455002169, 2455002202. Auction Date: 05.06.2026 - MORADABAD DISTRICT - RAMPUR ROAD-MORADABAD: 2572000978, 2572001012, 2572001098, 2572001151, 2572001163, 2572001166, 2572001208, 2572001302, 2572001304, 2572001309, 2572001311, 2572001334, 2572001340, 2572001348, 2572001377, 2572001410, 2572001435, 2572001442, 2572001443, 2572001494, 2572001511, 2572001512, 2572001554, 2572001562, 2572001579, 2572001601, 2572001676, 2572001677, 2572001685, 2572001693, 2572001735, 2572001752, 2572001770, 2572001787, 2572001826, 2572001854, 2572001969, 2572002025, 2572002203, 2572002205, 2572002207, 2572002304, 2572002316, 2572002325, 2572002355, 2572002384, 2572002432, 2572002521, 2572002566, 2572002579, 2572002583, 2572002621, 2572002630, 2572002662, 2572002668, 2572002690, 2572002694, 2572002698, 2572002699, 2572002908. Auction Date: 05.06.2026 - RAMPUR DISTRICT - BILASPUR RAMPUR: 4415000564. RAMPUR: 2732000879, 2732000883, 2732001098, 2732001128, 2732001137, 2732001139, 2732001152, 2732001175, 2732001182, 2732001269, 2732001284, 2732001417, 2732001493, 2732001500, 2732001527, 2732001553, 2732001555, 2732001750, 2732001768, 2732001974, 2732002091, 2732002199, 2732002204, 2732002243, 2732002385, 2732002436, 2732002485, 2732002500, 2732002509. Auction Date: 05.06.2026 - SHAJAHANPUR DISTRICT - SHAJAHANPUR: 4555000010, 4555000057. Auction will be conducted at respective branches. please note if the auction does not get completed on the same day due to any reasons, the same will be conducted on 16.06.2026 at 10.00 am onwards at BAREILLY DISTRICT - PRIYADARSHANI NAGAR-BAREILLY: FIRST FLOOR, MOHINI TOWER, A-25/26 - PRIYADARSHANI NAGAR (NEAR RAM JANKI MANDIR), ABOVEHDFC BANK PRIYADARSHANI NAGAR BRANCH, BAREILLY, UTTAR PRADESH - 243122. The bidders are requested to produce photo id card ,Pan card .The successful bidder should transfer the money through RTGS. MUTHOOT FINCORP LTD

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON

See Section 82 Cr.P.C.
Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused Rohit @ Acchu, S/o Rajender, R/o L-232, Raghuraj Nagar, New Delhi has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in case FIR No. 122/2021, U/s 356/379/411/34 IPC, P.S. Hari Nagar, New Delhi and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said Rohit @ Acchu cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said Rohit @ Acchu has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant). Proclamation is hereby made that the said Rohit @ Acchu accused of FIR No. 122/2021, U/s 356/379/411/34 IPC, P.S. Hari Nagar, New Delhi is required to appear before this Court to answer the said complaint on or before 09.06.2026.
By Order - Ms. Moksha Bains
Judicial Magistrate First Class-11, West DP/5565/WD/2026 Room No. 31, Tis Hazari Courts, Delhi

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON

See Section 82 Cr.P.C.
Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused Jagannath, S/o Dina Nath, R/o H.No. 7031, Gali No. 2, Mata Rameshwari, Nehru Nagar, Tank Road, Delhi has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in case FIR No. 570/2015, U/s 498A/406/354/34 IPC, P.S. Sadar Bazar, Delhi and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said Jagannath cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said Jagannath has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant). Proclamation is hereby made that the said Jagannath accused of FIR No. 570/2015, U/s 498A/406/354/34 IPC, P.S. Sadar Bazar, Delhi is required to appear before this Court to answer the said complaint on or before 01.06.2026.
By Order - Ms. Manya
Judicial Magistrate First Class Mahila Court (Central-02), Room No. 273 DP/5661/N/2026 2nd Floor, Tis Hazari Courts, Delhi

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON

See Section 84 Bhartiya Nagar Suraksha Sanhita
Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused person Rinku S/o Kalicharan R/o Dinesh ka Makan, VPO Pooth Khurd, Delhi has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in case FIR No. 369/2019 U/S 33 Delhi Excise Act at P.S. Shahabad Dairy, Delhi and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said Rinku cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said Rinku has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant). Proceeding u/s 84 Bhartiya Nagar Suraksha Sanhita has been initiated in the case. Proclamation is hereby made that the said Rinku accused of FIR No. 369/2019 U/S 33 Delhi Excise Act at P.S. Shahabad Dairy, Delhi is required to appear before this Court to answer the said complaint on 09.06.2026.
By Order: Ms. Bharti Beniwal,
Judicial Magistrate First Class-06 (North), Court No. 114, Rohini Courts, Delhi. DP/5602/ON/2026

ROYAL STARS

BY GEORGIA NICOLS

ARIES (MAR 21 - APR 20): Because your communications with others are grounded and realistic today, not only is this a great day for discussions with others, it's also an excellent day for writers, who will see creative ways to express themselves. Tonight: Check your finances.
TAURUS (APR 21 - MAY 21): Financial and business affairs are favoured today because you'll be realistic about issues and pay attention to details. Whatever you do might attract money or earnings to you. Tonight: Be reasonable.
GEMINI (MAY 22 - JUNE 21): Today you want to live up to your duties and obligations in a relationship. This is an excellent day to sit down with a loved one and talk about what you expect from each other. The real deal. Tonight: Work.
CANCER (JUNE 22 - JULY 23): This is a friendly, sociable week, and today in particular, some of you might explore a secret love affair or a hidden relationship with someone of an age difference. This might involve a boss, because your ambitions are obvious right now. Tonight: Socialise.
LEO (JULY 24 - AUG 23): Today you might be attracted to someone older. Or you might act like a guide or a mentor to someone who seeks counsel from you. A love relationship between someone of an age difference also might occur today. Tonight: Relax at home.
VIRGO (AUG 24 - SEP 23): You make an excellent impression on parents, bosses and people in authority today. They see you as someone who is willing to accept the duties and obligations that others expect you to fulfill. You have charm and grace today. Tonight: An important discussion.
LIBRA (SEP 24 - OCT 23): Today, your ruler Venus is dancing beautifully with Saturn, which will help you study and learn. It will also give you the patience and attention to detail to make travel arrangements. You might meet someone from another culture. Tonight: Check your money.
SCORPIO (OCT 24 - NOV 23): Financial discussions and talks about inheritances, will go well. People will be reasonable and willing to deal with practical matters. No one will overlook details. Romance with someone older could be passionate and memorable. Tonight: Show respect.
SAGITTARIUS (NOV 24 - DEC 22): This is a solid day to discuss the reality of an emotional relationship or any relationship that is very close to you. You will arrive at an understanding of mutual expectations. Define some boundaries. Speak up about what you want. Tonight: Solitude.
CAPRICORN (DEC 23 - JAN 20): Your co-workers will be helpful. Not only will your work flow easily, you also might see ways to improve the appearance of your workplace. A work-related romance, especially with a boss or someone older, might begin. Tonight: Friendships.
AQUARIUS (JAN 21 - FEB 19): Romance with someone of an age difference is very likely. All romantic discussions will deal with the practical aspects of the relationship — time, place, cost, shared responsibilities, shared expenses, that sort of thing. Tonight: You're respected.
PISCES (FEB 20 - MAR 20): You might redecorate where you live today in a way that shows a commitment to where you are living. Whatever you do, you will do with great care and discipline and be thorough about procedures and details. You know what you want. Tonight: Explore and learn.

Parag fined for vaping in dressing room, action against team expected



RR captain Riyan Parag. PTI

Devendra Pandey
Mumbai, April 30

THE BOARD of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has fined Riyan Parag 25 per cent of his match fee and handed him one demerit point for vaping inside the dressing room during Rajasthan Royals' IPL 2026 clash against Punjab Kings in Mullanpur on Tuesday.

"Riyan Parag, Captain, Rajasthan Royals, has been fined 25% of his match fee and has also accumulated one Demerit Point for breaching Level 1 of the IPL's Code of Conduct for Players and Team Officials during Match No. 40 of the TATA Indian Premier League (IPL) 2026 against Punjab Kings," the BCCI said in a statement.

The statement added that Riyan was found to have breached Article 2.21 of the IPL's Code of Conduct, which relates to 'conduct that brings the game into disrepute.'

"The incident occurred during the second innings when Riyan was seen using a vape inside the dressing room. Riyan admitted to the offence and accepted the sanction imposed by the Match Referee, Amit Sharma," the board said.

Visuals of the incident, captured during the live broadcast, went viral and triggered widespread debate. The BCCI added it 'is also exploring other options to initiate proceedings for stringent action against the erring team, its officials and player/s to ensure that the reputation of IPL remains intact'.

However, an official said they will first seek an explanation from Parag. "We will be seeking an explanation from Riyan on this issue, as vaping is not allowed. Depending on his explanation, the IPL will take further course of action," the BCCI official told *The Indian Express*.

The clip is believed to have been recorded during RR's 223-run chase, shortly after Parag's dismissal. While the fine and demerit point have been imposed, the matter remains under internal review.

The 24-year-old has endured a modest season so far, scoring 117 runs in nine matches at an average of 14.63 and a strike rate of 124.47, with a highest score of 29. He is yet to register a half-century this season.

Parag took over as RR captain from Sanju Samson, who moved to the Chennai Super Kings in a trade involving Ravindra Jadeja and Sam Curran. He was among the franchise's five retained players ahead of the November 2024 mega auction, alongside Yashasvi Jaiswal, Dhruv Jurel and Shimron Hetmyer.

TITANS RISE

Holder's all-round show catches defending champs RCB off guard

Captain Shubman Gill blazed, Jos Buttler blitzed, but all-rounder's night was something else entirely

SYNOPSIS: GT grind down RCB as Holder's many hands dismantle the visitors, while Gill and Buttler's Powerplay blitz set up a comfortable chase.

Sriram Veera
Mumbai, April 30

GUJARAT TITANS did not win this game with one moment. They won it with accumulation — Shubman Gill's 43 in 18 balls, Jos Buttler's four sixes in the Powerplay, Rahul Tewatia's calm at the death, and through it all, Jason Holder standing on the field, arms aloft, slowly turning to the crowd.

Royal Challengers Bengaluru, dismissed for 155 — their first all-out of the season — never recovered from the middle-over carnage that Holder and Rashid Khan visited upon them. GT knocked off the target in 15.5 overs, winning by four wickets.

Rabada's revenge

Kagiso Rabada had conceded five fours in his first over. The ball had gone past cover point, through mid-off, over mid-on, to deep backward point, and between cover point and extra cover. Virat Kohli's bat had found every gap. Then, in the second over, Rabada came short and quick around middle and leg. Kohli advanced. The pace hurried him, the bounce hand-cuffed him. The shape left his body before the bat came down, and the top edge found Rashid at mid-wicket, running back and tumbling to take the catch.

Kohli walked off for 28 off 13.

Rabada watched him go, with fiery eyes. One over of Kohli at his most fluent, and one ball from Rabada that asked a question the footwork couldn't answer.

The Barbadian

Barbadian Jason Holder arrived at this game as a bowler. He left it as something else entirely. The Rajat Patidar catch was the one that needed explaining. The batsman had pulled Arshad Khan to the right of deep square leg — Holder rushed across, Rabada converging too before pulling out at the last instant. Holder lunged to pouch it, but did the ball touch the ground as he went down?

Did he use the ball itself to push himself back up, pressing it into the turf? Holder's fingers were under it, or they weren't. RCB believed one thing. The third umpire something else.

These are the millimetres that matches turn on, and this one turned GT's way.

It didn't stop there. The very next over, Holder the bowler drew Jitesh into a drive outside off, the thick outside edge flying into Buttler's gloves. One contested catch, one clean wicket, two RCB batsmen gone in eight deliveries.

Then Tim David whipped Rashid hard and flat to mid-wicket — Holder pounced it, sharp hands to his right, barely a step to spare. Krunal Pandya flicked to the same spot two overs later, and Holder simply waited. In the 14th, a scrambled-seam delivery, Shepherd pulled straight to deep midwicket. Holder stood there, arms aloft, slowly turning to the crowd. Five contributions. One man.

He had not so much fielded



GT's Jason Holder celebrates the dismissal of RCB's Jitesh Sharma. PTI

● IPL table

Teams	M	W	L	PTS
PBKS	8	6	1	13
RCB	9	6	3	12
SRH	9	6	3	12
RR	9	6	3	12
GT	9	5	4	10
CSK	8	3	5	6
DC	8	3	5	6
KKR	8	2	5	5
MI	8	2	6	4
LSG	8	2	6	4

M: MATCH; W: WIN; L: LOSS; PTS: POINTS

as dismantled.

Rashid's stranglehold

Rashid's figures read 2 for 19 from four overs. The numbers don't quite capture the weight of his performance. With Devdutt Padikkal threatening to drag RCB toward something respectful in the 14th over, Rashid pushed one through quicker on middle, a good skidder. Padikkal

rocketed back, got into a tangle, and edged onto his pads, and the ball ricocheted onto the stumps.

Romario Shepherd had hit Rashid for two sixes in the same over. Rashid answered with a wicket off the next ball. That is what he does — absorbs the blow, then lands his own.

It was Rashid who finished the match in the chase. He flat-batted a length delivery over extra-cover on the bounce, and the game was done. Kohli walked across and wrapped his arms around him.

Powerplay blitz

Gill announced himself in the first over, lofting Bhuvneshwar Kumar over extra-cover and holding the pose. Then Josh Hazlewood arrived and Gill took 24 off the over — cuts, lofts, a punch square that split two fielders, Hazlewood watching on with a resigned wry smile.

Gill's ended with a good catch: Bhuvneshwar full, Gill making room, drilling it straight to Kohli at cover, who reverse-

cupped near his neck and flung the ball into the turf mouthing a "come on". Forty-three off 18, four fours, three sixes. Gill walked off, head back, knowing. Buttler picked up where Gill had left off. Three sixes off Suyash Sharma in three balls, fielders as spectators. Bhuvneshwar finished him the same way he finished Gill — full, on leg-stump, pad in the way, leg-stump gone. Thirty-nine off 19. GT were 92 for 3. Tewatia, unhurried, saw them home.

When GT wobbled in the chase, Holder stepped out to bat at 111 for 5. He hit Shepherd over long-on for six, rotated the strike quietly to keep Tewatia going, and departed for 12 with the target nearly done. Some evenings belong entirely to one person. This was one of them.

BRIEF SCORES: RCB 155 all out in 19.2 ovs (Padikkal 40, Kohli 28; Arshad Khan 3/22, Rashid Khan 2/19) lost to GT 158/6 in 15.5 ovs (Gill 43, Buttler 39; Bhuvneshwar Kumar 3/28) by four wickets.

'Fair wickets will result in sponsors pulling out'

Express News Service
Mumbai, April 30

ON A night Sunrisers Hyderabad chased down 243 with eight balls to spare, their spin bowling coach Muttiah Muralitharan had a simple message for bowlers struggling in IPL 2026: accept it, and adapt.

"It's very difficult for a bowler because these days every team has an opening pair that doesn't care about in or out, they just go after the bowling," Muralitharan said at the post-match press conference. "When we used to play, about 40 to 50 runs was a good score with one wicket losing in six overs, now the average is 70 to 80."

The shift, he said, was as much about mindset as skill. He pointed to uncapped 23-year-old Salil Arora's no-look six off Jasprit Bumrah as the clearest example. "Even a good bowler goes for a six, even Bum-

rah goes for one or two balls. When a new boy Salil hits a six, it's unbelievable — you don't think someone with the calibre of Bumrah comes and a young boy will hit a six because he will think about how am I going to survive Bumrah. But nowadays, no — how am I going to hit a six, that's their approach. Confidence levels are gone up because people have showed this is the way to play the modern game and youngsters are following that."

He was equally candid about spin bowling's structural problem — that young spinners were no longer being taught to turn the ball. "They only try to bowl quicker, and not try to spin it. Because they are not getting that ability from a younger age, you can't come to Under-19s and try to spin the ball because their muscle memory is already there. When you are age of 10, 11, 12, try to



"If we give fair wickets, the spectators will say it's become boring... It is a big business at the moment, sponsors and everything, so you will lose the sponsors and interest of the people if you change it."
MUTTIAH MURALITHARAN

spin — we need to spin to beat the bat. But if you can't spin, you see in training how batters face throwdowns and hit sixes. It looks like a throwdown bowler bowling at you."

Asked how he or Shane Warne would have fared on today's pitches, Muralitharan was blunt. We would have turned the ball, but we would have not made a big dent. We could have got one or two wickets, maybe they would have scored 40 runs easily. I have played about 170 T20 games, but at that time the power hitting wasn't as great as now. Nowadays, 50 runs is a great deal for a spinner, 40 runs means you've bowled well. The game has changed, we can't compare the eras."

On whether the IPL could or should strike a better balance between bat and ball, Muralitharan was realistic. The tournament, he said, was built for

entertainment — and entertainment meant boundaries.

"I don't think pushing the boundary ropes, when the ball is flying over the ropes everywhere, will change things. If we give fair wickets, the spectators will say it's become boring because the T20 followers want entertainment, so they want to see the fours and sixes. That's why the tournament is built like that. It is a big business at the moment, sponsors and everything, so you will lose the sponsors and interest of the people if you change it."

The arms race, he said, would simply continue. "Sunrisers started this and now everyone is adapting. Bowlers will go back from this tournament and figure out how to contain. They will come up with something, and the batsmen will find something else — this is the way the modern cricketers are going."

● BRIEFLY



McLaren's Lando Norris waves to fans in Miami. REUTERS

McLaren take F1 to the fans with Miami street show

MCLAREN SHOWED off their Formula One heritage with a deafening display of title-winning cars driven by champions past and present on the streets of Miami on Wednesday. Reigning champion Lando Norris and teammate Oscar Piastri joined double champions Mika Hakkinen and Emerson Fittipaldi in thrilling the fans ahead of what would have been a 1,000th grand prix celebration but for conflict in the Middle East. The cancellation of April races in Bahrain and Saudi Arabia as a result of the Iran war means the milestone will now be marked officially in Monaco in June. REUTERS

Indian men fight back to pip Slovakia

INDIAN MEN STAGED a spirited comeback to edge past Slovakia 3-2 in a Group 7 tie at the ITTF World Team Table Tennis Championships, Slovakia drew first blood as Lubomir Pistej, ranked 149, used his experience to beat Manush Shah, ranked No. 51, in a five-game opener 11-8 5-11 8-11 5-11 6-4, handing his side an early lead. India responded through their highest-ranked paddler at 42, Manav Thakkar, who beat Jakub Zelinka. PTI

Haryana win women's Under-17 title

HARYANA STAMPED their authority at the U17 National Wrestling Championships, topping both women's Wrestling and Freestyle events, while Services Sports Control Board topped in Greco-Roman format in the three-day meet that concluded on Thursday. Haryana secured the Women's Wrestling title with 215 points and added the Freestyle crown with 205 points. The SSCB, dominated Greco-Roman, with 136 points. PTI

Zaragoza goalkeeper suspended

ZARAGOZA'S ARGENTINE goalkeeper Esteban Andrada was given a 12-match suspension for punching an opponent in a second-division soccer game in Spain this weekend. Andrada was also suspended for one more match for a red card he was shown before the punch. The game was in its final minutes when Andrada shoved Huesca defender Jorge Pulido to the ground when he approached the Argentine goalkeeper. AP

Vonn unsure about returning post crash

LINDSEY VONN is still recovering physically and emotionally from her frightening crash at the Winter Olympics. For now, the tough decisions about the future can wait. She has undergone eight surgeries after suffering a complex left leg fracture in the women's downhill skiing race on Feb. 8. "I just don't want to jump to any conclusions or even speculate on what I might do," Vonn said. "I may retire. I may never race again." AP

Mainoo signs five-year contract

MANCHESTER UNITED midfielder Kobbie Mainoo signed a five-year contract on Thursday to June 2031. The England international's future was in doubt a few months ago when he was struggling to hold down a first team place under former coach Ruben Amorim. But Mainoo has been a pivotal figure in United's resurgence in the second half of the season and was recalled by England ahead of the World Cup. AP

SAI's financial support to cueists

THE SPORTS Authority of India (SAI) has sanctioned financial assistance for India's participation in the just-concluded IBSF World Men's Billiards Championship in Ireland, backing the 2026 edition World Champion Sourav Kothari, multiple-time world champion Pankaj Advani and coach Ashok Shandilya. SAI approved a total expenditure of approximately Rs 6.46 lakh to the Billiards and Snooker Federation of India (BSFI). PTI

● CLASS ACT

Klaasen finds his tempo before teeing off to become dependable enforcer

Venkata Krishna B
Chennai, April 30

WHEN HEINRICH Klaasen is sitting in the Sunrisers Hyderabad dugout there's a phase when he exudes a particularly relaxed air. That's when openers Abhishek Sharma and Travis Head are batting together, when most viewers are at the edge of their seats.

But it's the period when the South African picks up clues on how to go about when his turn comes. "If they keep pumping, you can go from ball one," he says.

However, when Klaasen is in the middle, he tends to drift away from it and rely on a blueprint he has prepared while working with former South Africa all-rounder Albie Morkel.

That blueprint is all about giving himself 10 deliveries or so, not to get the hang of conditions, but to find his tempo —

the key ingredient in his batting — then the bat-swing and the hip position.

"Those two (Head and Abhishek) go at 16 an over and then you are walking at 3 and struggling. I'm 6 off 4 and feel pressure. Then I go to that blue print," Klaasen explains in the *Sias du Plessis* show.

In those 10 deliveries, he ensures a couple of boxes are ticked. "It is all about getting off strike and taking the pressure off. Dot balls in this format just kills you. It puts you under a lot of pressure," he says.

There is another important factor he keeps an eye on. "When you are at it, ensure you are two hits away from a 200 strike rate. Or if you are under pressure, it is just one hit away from being at 140-150. That's a small game plan, but it keeps me calm."

There's a game in Kolkata a couple of years ago that Klaasen



Heinrich Klaasen is second on the run-scorers' list with 414. PTI

recalls. It was a rare evening when every element he lists out went missing when he walked in with Hyderabad needing

three-four times," he says. But he doesn't panic because "My technique changes every day, just to get that rhythm and feel. Sometimes, you stand the way you train and it just doesn't feel nice. You change it again. So it's 100 per cent a feel thing."

It is these small elements that make Klaasen one of the most destructive batsmen. In a Sunrisers batting line-up that's not short on firepower, it is the 34-year-old who is the backbone. An early collapse, losing way in the middle, or in need of a strong finish — whatever the

situation, it's Klaasen who they dial for help.

"In a Sunrisers batting line-up that's not short on firepower, it is the 34-year-old who is the backbone."

three-four times," he says. But he doesn't panic because "My technique changes every day, just to get that rhythm and feel. Sometimes, you stand the way you train and it just doesn't feel nice. You change it again. So it's 100 per cent a feel thing."

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Keeping it simple

On Wednesday at the Wankhede when they lost three wickets in the space of six deliveries, Mumbai Indians sniffed a comeback. But Klaasen, with an unbeaten 65 off 30 ensured the chase of 244 was done and dusted with eight deliveries to spare.

In the middle, Klaasen's approach is simplified. It is a process that he has worked a lot on with Morkel.

It starts with finding the position at the crease, from where he can get the bat swing right every time. All of this means, unlike most other power-hitters, Klaasen doesn't go deep in the crease or crouch low to get the elevation.

"It is about bat swing," he tells Kumar Sangakkara in *Sky Cricket Masterclass*.

"It is just about low full tosses, basically from shin height to all the way up. Hit a couple of them, when it feels good, go to the extreme — how hard you can hit it. For me, it's about working on the crease line, almost trying to hit a slogsweep every time. That will give you elevation, you don't have to go deep for it every time. It's your back knee just staying there and then you finding your swing path to create your angle."

Having chosen to play from the crease, Klaasen doesn't rely much on bat-speed or footwork. Like most power-hitters, he seldom charges down, but even here he prefers to work around his strengths. It is where Morkel puts a lot of emphasis on.

"We work on trying to stay as neutral as possible. And then for me, your left leg needs to get out of your way. If it's nice and

full, it gets your hands the freedom to go. And it is short, you can still anchor it and hit. I base the majority of my weight on my back leg. That's my anchor position and that's where all the power comes from. And then just keep my hip connected."

Having retired from international cricket, Klaasen is a globetrotting T20 batsman these days.

While the call to leave the Proteas set-up wasn't easy, particularly when he was at his peak, the IPL gives him a high. There is more responsibility. More expectations.

"When you walk in and they start chanting your name, I get goosebumps. And when you start pulling it off, the crowd goes crazy. It is a good feeling that you keep on chasing in the IPL. It comes with a lot of pressure. It's not possible in all the games. But it's what you play for."

Arsenal, Atletico play 1-1 draw in a cagey first leg

Reuters
Madrid, April 30

ATLETICO MADRID and Arsenal traded penalties on Wednesday as Julian Alvarez's second-half spot kick cancelled out Viktor Gyokeres's first-half goal to earn the two sides a 1-1 draw in a Champions League semi-final first leg that simmered more than it sizzled.

After Tuesday's nine-goal thriller between Paris St Germain and Bayern Munich in the first semi-final in France, the Metropolitan was treated to a far more tactical affair, although the home crowd did their best to provide some early theatre by greeting the teams with an avalanche of toilet paper thrown from the stands on to the pitch.

Atletico enjoyed more possession early on but handed Arsenal the lead in the 44th minute when Gyokeres was brought down by David Hanco inside the box.

The Sweden striker struck the penalty firmly past Jan Oblak to send Arsenal in ahead at halftime.

Atletico equalised in the 56th minute after the VAR spotted a Ben White handball inside the box from Marcos Llorente's shot. Alvarez fired the resulting penalty into the top left corner beyond David Raya.

Antoine Griezmann rattled the crossbar a little later while Arsenal were awarded a late penalty that was overturned by the referee after a VAR review.

"We gave it a go. We went behind early on from a penalty that I thought was a bit dubious. We had chances to win it but it will all be decided in the second leg. They defend very well and have some very quick players up front," Atletico captain Koke told Movistar Plus.

"We failed to finish off the game with the chances we had. We hope the match in London isn't our last in the Champions League this season," the skipper added further.

THOMAS CUP 2026

India faces singles triple threat in semis against Chinese Taipei

Taiwan's Chun-Yi would pose the sternest challenge; Lakshya has enjoyed recent success against Chen

Shivani Naik
Mumbai, April 30

THE SPECTRE of Lin Chun-Yi hangs on the India vs Chinese Taipei Thomas Cup 2026 quarterfinals tie on Friday. Known to Indians as the man who defeated Ayush Shetty in the finals of the Badminton Asia Championships, and to many in Delhi as the winner of the India Open Super 750, Chun-Yi is an All England champion, and the next in line of Taiwanese titans in the making.

As India were drawn to play Taiwan, the immediate concern was the second Men's Singles, which will once more pit Ayush against Chun-Yi.

Fast court conditions

Given the fast court conditions and his results this year, he threatens a blowout for Ayush Shetty. But Chun-Yi did not play in the Sweden and Korea tie (which Taiwan lost 2-3), before turning up against Denmark where he went down to Magnus Johannesen 17-21, 21-16, 21-19 in the 3-2 win, putting a question mark on his fitness.

One thing that this immediately does is allow Lakshya Sen to put his head down, move under the radar, with the pressure pivot on Ayush. Logically, Taiwan would stick with their highest ranked World No 6 Chou Tien Chen against Sen. They are 4-4 in head to head, but Sen hasn't lost to the 36-year-old since 2024, and beat him at Olympics. Tien Chen also went down to Anders Antonsen in the group game.

A slightly bold move would

As India were drawn to play Taiwan, the immediate concern was the second Men's Singles, which will once more pit Ayush against Chun-Yi.

be to push Chun-Yi to first singles, given he leads Sen 5-0. However, the enigmatic shuttler's injury status is a shadow hanging over Taiwan.

Chun-Yi's massive turnaround from a fast paced Super 300 serial winner to registering the big wins, came, as pointed out by the 'Get Better at Badminton' youtube channel thanks to changes in his split-step footwork pre-loading that sharpened his defense.

The young Taiwanese men's singles crowd loves their attacking style, but were found wanting in defense - a gap that Chun-Yi plugged. But his form has been sketchy here, and Ayush Shetty might spot an opening. Taiwan is a throwback to a happier point in Indian badminton history. India had lost in both MSI and MD1 four years ago to Taiwan, on the way to the Thomas Cup title they won. As such, that group tie was a catalyst to the triumph back in 2022.

However, they beat hosts Denmark thanks to their singles depth and sturdy doubles. Coach Vimal Kumar predicted a better showing from Lakshya Sen, after his loss to China. "Lakshya was very close against Li Shi Feng—he



Ayush Shetty (L) has a score to settle against reigning Asian champion Lin Chun-yi. BADMINTON PHOTO



had his chances in the first game, and with a bit more control at key moments, it could have gone his way. As we head into the knockouts, Lakshya has the ability to give us a strong start, and this team certainly has the potential to go deep in the competition," he said after the China tie.

Taiwan's first doubles Chiu Hsian Chieh and Wang Chi-Lin were good enough against Denmark, while the second doubles of Liu Kuang Heng and Yang Po Hsuan, had picked a point too in the 3-2 win.

The problem for India is Taiwan has Lee Chia Hao, a strong singles player, waiting on the bench having played two ties

earlier, to shuffle their matchups. The shuttler who has been playing MS3 and quietly delivering wins is Chi Yu-Jen.

Kiran George is 2-0 against the World No 21 while Pranjoy too has beaten the third singles player. Srikanth is 2-2 against Lee Chia Hao, having won the last two times. Kiran George is 3-3 too, but has lost the last two times. However, given Pranjoy's experience, and the manner of him playing China MS3 Lu Guang Zu, his temperament can come in handy. India have a headache in picking their third singles though - given how the matchups could turn out.

Taiwan's strength has been

doubles, technically astute, speedy and loving the big occasions. But Satwik-Chirag have a score to settle from 2022, and finishing problems to deal with from two days ago, and will need to pull one point for India to advance.

Hari-Arjun will need to back themselves and see this as an opportunity to deliver a surprise, to cement their position as India's No 2 pair.

Chou Tien Chen and Lin Chun-Yi are Top 8 stars, but this quarterfinal isn't your usual Triple-singles Play. India's ability to bounce back from a set down in every match, even from 0-2 margins, will be tested by Taiwan.

India's Asian Games bid gets backing from continental body

Mihir Vasavda
Mumbai, April 30

THE OLYMPIC Council of Asia (OCA) welcomed India's bid to host the 2038 Asian Games in Ahmedabad, while confirming that an evaluation committee will soon visit the city to assess its readiness.

In a statement issued after its Executive Board meeting in Sanya, China, on Wednesday, the OCA said it had "welcomed the official bid submitted by the Indian Olympic Association to host the 2038 Asian Games in the city of Ahmedabad," marking a significant step in India's push to stage another major multi-sport event.

The OCA added that its Executive Board also "addressed a number of strategic matters concerning the future of the sports movement in Asia," even as India's proposal emerged as a key highlight of the discussions.

It is likely that the 2038 edition will be moved to 2039 as the OCA is set to shift the Asian Games to odd-numbered years to align with the Olympic cycle. The Asiad will be held a year before the Olympics, with the 2030 edition likely to be deferred to 2031 and 2034 to 2035. For many sports, the Asian Games will also double up as Olympic qualification events.

OCA President Sheikh Joaan bin Hamad Al Thani and members of the Executive Board noted that they "commended India's ambitious vision to host the continent's premier sporting event," while also expressing "their appreciation for Ahmedabad's bid to stage this Asian sporting celebration that brings together the continent's finest athletes."

The committee is expected to visit Ahmedabad in the coming months for a comprehensive on-ground review. According to the OCA, the delegation will assess "the city's sports



Swimming stadium at Veer Savarkar Sports Complex, Ahmedabad. FILE

venues and facilities, operational and logistical plans, infrastructure readiness, and allocated budget" before preparing a detailed technical report.

That report will be submitted to the Executive Board and discussed at its next meeting, scheduled in Nagoya, Japan, in September, on the sidelines of the Asian Games.

India's expression of interest in hosting the 2038 Asian Games comes amid an aggressive push to position itself as a global sporting hub. After bidding for the 2036 Olympics and securing the 2030 Commonwealth Games, the country has now turned its focus to the continental showpiece.

The Indian Olympic Association (IOA) had earlier written to the OCA formally expressing its interest. IOA chief executive Raghuram Iyer confirmed the development, stating that the body is "in touch with the OCA" and keen on bringing the Games to India.

The 2038 edition is currently the next available slot on the Asian Games calendar, with upcoming editions scheduled in Japan (2026), Qatar (2030) and Saudi Arabia (2034). Apart from India, South Korea and Mongolia have also shown interest in hosting the event.

As part of the formal process, the continental body has decided to move to the next stage of evaluation.

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