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## Happening today

● **CYPRUS PRESIDENT** Nikos Christodoulides, who began his three-day visit to India Wednesday, is set to hold bilateral talks with Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

● **WITH KERALA'S** newly elected MLAs sworn in by pro tem Speaker G Sudhakaran, the Assembly is set to reconvene to elect the Speaker.

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## Business as Usual

By EP UNNY

No hype. You are in one part of Govt where you have to answer objective questions objectively.



## Pulwama attack mastermind Burhan Hamza killed in PoK

Press Trust of India  
New Delhi, May 21

ARJUMAND GULZAR, alias Burhan Hamza, a designated terrorist and the key mastermind behind the 2019 Pulwama terror attack on a CRPF convoy, has been shot dead by unidentified gunmen in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK), officials said here on Thursday. Hamza, who was operating under heavy ISI-vested security, was ambushed in Muzaffarabad. He was critically injured and airlifted to the Combined Military Hospital (CMH) in Rawalpindi, where he succumbed to his injuries, the officials said. The assailants managed to flee the scene before local security forces could intervene, they added.

Originally from Khar in Jammu and Kashmir's Pulwama district, Hamza was once associated with Al Badr, moved to Al Baraq, and maintained a close alliance with Pakistan's espionage agency, the ISI, after

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## TAKES STOCK AT MARATHON MEETING OF COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

# Explore alternative energy sources, PM tells Govt amid West Asia crisis

Says implement reforms with vigour, Viksit Bharat 2047 is a commitment

Vikas Pathak, Harikishan Sharma & Liz Mathew  
New Delhi, May 21

WITH THE crisis in West Asia and the blockade of the Strait of Hormuz straining energy supplies, Prime Minister Narendra Modi Thursday urged the Council of Ministers to urgently explore alternative energy sources, including a push for biogas as a substitute for LPG cooking gas.

The directive came as Modi

addressed a three-and-a-half-hour ministerial meeting shortly after returning from a tour of the UAE and four European nations where the conflict in West Asia and its fallout ranked high in the discussions. The Prime Minister also called upon his government to implement reforms with vigour, underlining that Viksit Bharat 2047 was not merely a promise but a commitment, and stressed the need to focus on the future rather than past



PM Narendra Modi arrives in New Delhi after concluding his five-nation visit, Thursday. ANI

complacencies or regrets.

At the meeting, where key ministries made presentations

»CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

## Supply chains hit, Govt asks industry if local production of 200 petro items possible

Ravi Dutta Mishra & Pratyush Deep  
New Delhi, May 21

THE DEPARTMENT for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), in a meeting with the petrochemical industry, has asked them to "urgently respond" on the scope to indigenise the production of over 200 highly import-dependent petrochemical items, *The In-*

*dian Express* has learnt.

These items cumulatively account for annual imports worth over \$50 billion and the missive from the DPIIT, issued Wednesday, comes amid the West Asia crisis that has caused price and supply related challenges for the industry.

Most petrochemicals listed by the DPIIT are intermediate products that are used in

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## INSTA ACCOUNT MAY BE BLOCKED TOO

# In 'cockroach party' handle, Govt sees a national security threat, asks X to block

Official claims IB flagged concerns, growing traction among young

Soumyarendra Barik & Saikat Kumar Bose  
New Delhi, May 21

THE X handle of 'Cockroach Janta Party', a satirical account opened after Chief Justice of India Surya Kant's remarks about those who "attack the system", was withheld Thursday following a direction from the Centre in the wake of inputs from the Intelligence Bureau (IB) that raised "national security concerns," a senior government official told *The Indian Express*.

The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) asked X to withhold the account under Section 69(A) of the Information Technology Act, 2000, the official said, adding that the input to do so came from the IB.

"MeitY received an input from the IB to block the X ac-

## POLITICS PAGE 5

### COCKROACH JANTA PARTY SHOWS PEOPLE FRUSTRATED WITH GOVT: THAROOR

count of Cockroach Janta Party, citing that it posed a threat to the sovereignty of India. The IB believed that the account was posting inflammatory content through its account, which could have jeopardised the country's national security," the official said on condition of anonymity since such blocking orders are issued under a confidential framework. "In particular, the concern stemmed from the fact that the account's content was gaining traction among young people."

Section 69 (A) of the Information Technology Act empowers the Central government to restrict public access to information in the interest of sovereignty, security, public order or preventing incitement to offences.

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Red Cross workers transport people who died of Ebola in Rwampara, DRC. AP

# Ebola watch: Govt defers Africa & big cat summits, alerts airports

Divya A & Anonna Dutt  
New Delhi, May 21

WITH THE World Health Organization declaring a new Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Uganda "a public health emergency of international concern", the government Thursday issued an advisory for travellers from "high risk countries" entering India. It also announced the postponement of the India-Africa Forum Summit and the first Interna-

## THE WORLD PAGE 14

### EBOLA CENTRE IN CONGO TORCHED AS ANGER OVER OUTBREAK RISES

national Big Cat Alliance Summit which were to be held in New Delhi in the coming weeks.

In a joint statement with the African Union, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said that

after consultations on the "evolving health situation in parts of Africa", the two sides agreed "it would be advisable to convene the Fourth India-Africa Forum Summit at a later date".

"New dates for the Summit and its associated meetings will be finalised through mutual consultations and communicated in due course," the statement said.

India was slated to host the Fourth India-Africa Forum Summit (IAFS-IV) on May 28-31

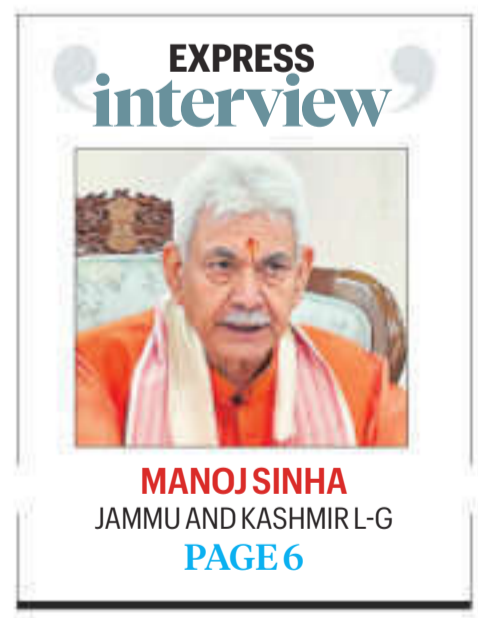
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# Wangchuk to take part in Ladakh talks today: Apex Body Leh to Govt

Basharaat Masood  
Srinagar, May 21

WITH TALKS between the Centre and representatives from Ladakh scheduled for Friday, the Apex Body Leh (ABL) has informed the Centre that climate activist Sonam Wangchuk will be part of its delegation.

This is the first time that Wangchuk, who was released after six months of preventive detention under the National Security Act (NSA) in March,



MANOJ SINHA  
JAMMU AND KASHMIR LG  
PAGE 6

would be part of the dialogue process.

Source said that the ABL has informed the Centre through Ladakh Chief Secretary Ashish Kundra that the Leh body will be represented by three members — Chering Dorjay Lakrook, who is president of the Ladakh Buddhist Association (LBA) and co-chairman of the ABL; Dorjay Stanzin, president of the Ladakh Gopna Association; and Wangchuk, an ABL member.

»CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

## PLAN TO BIFURCATE MINISTRY

# On Govt table: A separate dept in Urban Affairs Ministry only for Delhi

Dept may include Central Vista project, NCR, with own Secretary

Damini Nath & Jatin Anand  
New Delhi, May 21

THE CENTRE is considering dividing the Union Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) into two departments, with one focusing solely on

Delhi and the National Capital Region (NCR), *The Indian Express* has learnt. According to the proposed move, each department will have its own Secretary.

Currently, the ministry functions under one Secretary, after consultations on the "evolving health situation in parts of Africa", the two sides agreed "it would be advisable to convene the Fourth India-Africa Forum Summit at a later date".

"New dates for the Summit and its associated meetings will be finalised through mutual consultations and communicated in due course," the statement said.

India was slated to host the Fourth India-Africa Forum Summit (IAFS-IV) on May 28-31

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## E. EXPLAINED

### Past precedent

In March 1995, the Ministry of Urban Affairs & Employment was split into two departments — Department of Urban Development & Department of Urban Employment & Poverty Alleviation.

## INSIDE

TRUMP: U.S. WILL EVENTUALLY GET IRAN'S ENRICHED URANIUM PAGE 14

NEET LEAK: NTA CHIEF APPEARS BEFORE HOUSE COMMITTEE PAGE 8

● AFTER JUMPING PAROLE, HEMANT MODI LIVED IN PATAN UNTIL 2015, CHANGED HIS NAME TO TWINKLE MUKUND DAVE; BY 2017, HE WAS IN MUMBAI AND AS 'SPANDAN MODI' GOT SUPPORTING ACTOR ROLES

# Gujarat murder convict who did films with Big B, Aamir, Mohanlal held after 12 yrs

Brendan Dabhi  
Ahmedabad, May 21

HE WAS convicted of murder in 2008, and six years later, he jumped parole and vanished.

For a decade or more, Hemant Nagindas Purshottamdas Modi hid in plain sight, seemingly not recognised by anyone — including the millions who watched him in several big-budget films, as well as plays and web series.

On the big screen, Hemant Modi appeared alongside superstars Amitabh Bachchan and

Mohanlal — and also Aamir Khan, Ranveer Singh, Aditya Roy Kapur, and Sara Ali Khan.

And then, his luck ran out. Real-life caught up, cutting short his dream reel life.

On Thursday, the Detection of Crime Branch (DCB) of Ahmedabad City Police swooped on premises near the city's Gheekanta Metro Station. There, they found Hemant Modi, fugitive from justice since 2014 — known in his current world as Spandan Modi, 54-year-old actor.

This is his story, according

to police.

On August 27, 2008, Hemant Modi, his brother Sachin, and five others were convicted of the murder of one Narendra alias Nano Yashwant Kamble. The murder took place on June 15, 2005.

The trial court sentenced all accused to life imprisonment. Hemant Modi was first incarcerated in Sabarmati Central Jail and then transferred to Mehsana Jail. There, he became Prisoner Number 31146.

Six years into his sentence, on July 25, 2014, Gujarat High Court gave Hemant Modi 30



Hemant Nagindas Purshottamdas Modi (right) was sentenced to life for a 2005 murder; 'Spandan Modi', Hemant's new avatar.

days' parole. Prisoner Number 31146 walked out of jail — never to return.

The other six individuals who were convicted with him completed their sentences, and

have since been rehabilitated in society, Police Inspector P M Dhakhada, Investigation Officer (IO) of the case, said.

After jumping parole, Hemant Modi lived in Patan district for a year, until 2015. He then changed his name to Twinkle Mukund Dave, and moved to Ahmedabad. He took up a job in a private company, and accommodation as a paying guest. And then, he decided that his life needed some drama.

He began with the stage, making his way into the theatre scene. He seems to have made fairly rapid progress — by 2017,

he had landed in Mumbai, and had started to land himself small roles as a supporting actor in Bollywood. 'Spandan Modi' had arrived.

According to police, Hemant Modi, alias Spandan, acted alongside Amitabh Bachchan and Aamir Khan in Yash Raj Films' 'Thugs of Hindostan' (2018), alongside Ranveer Singh and Boman Irani in Divyank Thakkar's 'Jayeshbhai Jordaar' (2022), and alongside Aditya Roy Kapur and Sara Ali Khan in Anurag Basu's 'Metro...in dino' in 2025.

He also worked in the Mo-

hanlal starrer 'L2: Empuraan' (2025), and in the upcoming films 'Lahore 1947' starring Sunny Deol, and 'Tu Hai Meri Kiran' starring Sonakshi Sinha.

Police said Hemant Modi also acted in about 20 Gujarati films, the web series 'Taskaree' starring Emraan Hashmi, two Hindi and four Gujarati series, and 17 Gujarati plays including 'Yugpurush' and 'Gandhi Viruddh Godse'. In 2025, however, Hemant Modi returned to live in Ahmedabad, where he was nabbed after someone finally recognised him.

»CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



**EMBRACING PEACE:** Maoists after their surrender before police under 'Operation Navjeevan', in Ranchi on Thursday. PTI

## 27 Maoists surrender in Jharkhand; cops say hunt on for last active Politburo member

Shubham Tigga  
Ranchi, May 21

A TOTAL of 27 Maoists allegedly linked to the banned outfit's last active Politburo member Misir Besra surrendered before the Jharkhand Police Thursday — the largest such mass surrender in the state's history. The Jharkhand Police said that the surrender is being carried out under 'Operation Navjeevan', launched as part of the state government's surrender and rehabilitation policy for Maoist cadres. However, senior Maoist leader and politburo member Besra was not part of the surrender, with police saying efforts are underway to trace him.

Police said the surrendered cadres include top commanders and members associated with the teams of Besra, alias Sagar Ji, and Asim Mandal, active in the Kolhan and Saranda regions. Among those surrendering on Thursday are six Special Zonal Committee Members (SZCM), six Area Committee Members (ACM), and 13 squad members of the banned CPI (Maoist). Two cadres of the Jharkhand Jan Mukti Parishad, a Maoist group active in Gumla, are also surrendering. The cadres surrendered with 17 weapons and nearly 3,000 rounds of ammunition. Officials claimed the Maoists had extensive knowledge of the remote forest and hilly terrain of Kolhan and Saranda and had been active in West Singhbhum and adjoining districts.

CRPF IG Saket Kumar Singh said they will continue to work relentlessly. "I would like to say on this occasion that our work is still not over. The main team of Misir Besra, a Central Committee member carrying a reward of Rs 1 crore, is still outside our reach," he said, adding that according to the information they had received, the number of cadres left with him has now come down to single digits.

"The main team has split into two parts. Around 8-10

## Headless torso in UP: 16-year-old 'killed' by family over relationship

Manish Sahu  
Lucknow, May 21

THE MYSTERY behind the headless torso and limbs found stuffed in a bag on a train at a Lucknow railway station has been solved — the victim was a 16-year-old girl, allegedly murdered by her family after she refused to end her relationship with a man. The Government Railway Police has arrested her 48-year-old father along with two relatives for allegedly killing her in an "honour" crime.

The shocking discovery was made on May 16, on the Chhapra-Gomti Nagar Express that travels from Bihar to Lucknow via Gorakhpur. Once passengers had disembarked the train, the railway staff started a routine check of the compartments and found a trunk and a bag near a washroom in a sleeper coach. Those arrested include the girl's father, an e-rickshaw driver, his elder sister (victim's aunt) and her husband (53, victim's uncle), SP (Railways) Rohit Mishra said.

Police said the accused killed the girl with a gadasa, a sharp-edged agricultural weapon, at their Kushinagar home, dismembered the body and stuffed the parts in a bag and a steel trunk. They went to the railway station, boarded the train arriving from Chhapra, and dumped the trunk and bag near the washroom inside a sleeper

cadres are still with Misir Besra, and a similar number were with Asim Mandal, whose group was involved in an encounter with us the other day," he said. "Earlier, this unit used to operate under a combined command structure, but that command has now broken down completely."

Security forces said that the group has disintegrated, and several members have fled separately — three cadres are with Ravi Sardar, four others have escaped elsewhere, and another four are with Shaluka Kaim. Singh said. "I would like to mention that before this, during our Rutagutu operation on April 27, we had surrounded the entire group for nearly four to five days. Ultimately, taking advantage of the dense forest, they managed to escape. But after the Rutagutu operation, the entire team got scattered and dispersed in different directions."

The Jharkhand Police said anti-Maoist operations are being jointly conducted by the state police, CRPF's CoBRA battalions, and Jharkhand JAGAR forces. Police said that continuous operations, internal exploitation within Maoist organisations and increasing security pressure have pushed several cadres to return to the mainstream. Police data states that so far in 2026, 44 Maoists have been arrested, 29 have surrendered, and 22 have been killed in encounters across Jharkhand.

Officials said that 21 new Advanced Camp Locations (ACLs) and Forward Operating Bases (FOBs) have been established in the Saranda region to strengthen security presence in Maoist-affected areas. Police appealed to the remaining Maoist cadres to give up violence and avail benefits under the Jharkhand government's surrender and rehabilitation policy.

Jharkhand DGP Tadasha Mishra called it a "memorable day for Jharkhand and Jharkhand Police".

coach. The accused admitted that they thought abandoning the body parts on a train would make it difficult for police to identify the victim, police said. "We are searching for the victim's head. The accused had claimed they threw it into a pond; we conducted a search, but could not recover it," Mishra said, adding that during the probe, they examined CCTV footage from railway stations where the train had halted. "At Kushinagar station, we spotted people placing a trunk and a bag inside the train. A team was sent to the area to trace those seen in the footage. With the help of local residents, police later identified the victim's father." The officer said that the father has admitted to the crime. "We will seek police remand of the accused for questioning, and to recover the head," Mishra said.

The father claimed that his two elder daughters had married them they were in relationships with — something he deeply resented. "When he discovered that his third daughter was also involved in a relationship, he had asked her to cut ties with the man, but she refused," a police officer said. An argument broke out between the duo on May 16 after the father allegedly saw the 16-year-old speaking to the man. "As the argument escalated...the father picked up a gadasa and killed her on the spot."

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## Explore alternative energy sources: PM

on reforms, Modi spoke on ease of living, and made clear that new initiatives or reforms should not trouble or harass citizens. The purpose of all reforms should be to ease the lives of citizens, he is learnt to have told the ministers.

The ministries of External Affairs, Agriculture, Forest, Road Transport, Corporate Affairs, Labour, Commerce and Power made presentations about the initiatives they have undertaken. The Cabinet Secretary and the Niti Aayog vice chairperson also made presen-

tations on reforms.

The meeting began with External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar's brief presentation on Modi's five-nation tour, highlighting the outcomes. Thereafter, senior officials from the ministries made presentations. A source said reforms undertaken in the last two years were highlighted. The focus was on reforms, necessary for ease of living, the source said.

It is learnt that the ministers were also apprised about the performance of ministries and

departments on various indicators including disposal of files and public grievances. The top five and bottom five ministries on each indicator were ranked, it is learnt.

The NDA-3 government is set to complete two years in power on June 9.

In his remarks, the Prime Minister is learnt to have reiterated his governance mantra of 'reform, perform, transform and inform'. He asked the ministers and top officials to work towards a developed India by 2047.

## Supply chains hit

packaging, construction, automotive, agriculture, textile and paints. Items like PVC, polyethylene (LDPE, LLDPE), polypropylene, polystyrene, ABS are the backbone of packaging films, pipes, containers and consumer goods. Any supply disruption of these items directly hits FMCG, construction and e-commerce packaging.

The list of items also includes high-value imports ranging from phosphoric acid, ammonia, acetic acid, toluene used in agriculture, food production, and industrial manufacturing, plastics and resins such as polypropylene, polycarbonates and propylene copolymers that go into the production of automotive components, packaging materials, and medical devices.

While the Indian industry and consumers have been relatively shielded by the impact of the West Asia crisis due to the low-cost inventory, the closure of the Strait of Hormuzis depleting the inventory and a more pronounced impact across the industry may be felt if the crisis continues.

Ajay Srivastava, former trade officer and founder of think tank GTRI, said that out of the total imports in the petrochemical industry that is worth \$56 billion,

only a limited set of sectors show meaningful domestic export capability, while a large number of product lines remain heavily import-dependent with negligible exports.

The list of items suggests that India's import substitution strategy cannot rely on a single policy instrument, such as tariffs or PLI schemes. Different categories require very different policy responses depending on the level of existing domestic capability, scale gaps, technology intensity and supply-chain dependence, Srivastava said.

A query mailed by *The Indian Express* to DPIIT did not elicit a response.

The GTRI's analysis of the data showed that imported items of value over \$500 million, such as phosphoric acid, polypropylene, gold compounds, polycarbonates, suspension grade PVC, resin, India's most strategically vulnerable product categories, are extremely high imports with almost no domestic capability. Such dependence may expose India to external supply-chain shocks, geopolitical risks and long-term trade imbalances, he said.

Items such as PVC pipes, polycarbonates (roofing sheets), epoxy resins (coatings, adhes-

ives), and MDI/polyurethanes (insulation foam) are primarily used in housing, commercial real estate, and government infra projects. Similarly, MDI, polyurethanes, carbon blacks (tyre filler), engineering plastics (polyamide/nylon), and isocyanates go into vehicle interiors, tyres and bumpers.

Some of these items are also key raw materials for fertiliser and urea production. These included phosphoric acid, used in fertiliser production and anhydrous ammonia, a feedstock for urea. Items like PET (terephthalic acid), acrylic fibres (acrylonitrile), nylon-6/6,6 (polyamide), and vinyl acetate are used in the garment and technical textiles industry. Similarly, Butyl acrylate, methyl methacrylate, epoxy resins, toluene, xylene, and ethylene glycol feed the decorative and industrial coatings value chain.

Ajay Joshi, a chemical sector expert, said most of these items are crude oil and natural gas derivatives and faced supply chain disruption due to West Asia crisis. While the drive to indigenise chemical production is the right ambition, it faces a structural gap, Joshi said. "You can't localise manufacturing when the feedstock itself is imported. Over 85% of our crude oil is shipped in, and most chemicals we aim to produce domestically are ultimately petroleum derivatives."

somewhere between January and February 2025, they said.

He worked closely with Farooq Qureshi, a former Al Baraq commander whose name has repeatedly surfaced in dossiers linked to narcotics trafficking, counterfeit currency rackets, arms smuggling and cross-border militant operations in the Kashmir Valley.

Hamza maintained close ties with Pakistan's ISI, particularly with an officer identified as Col Rizwan, suggesting deeper intelligence ties and protection, they said.

## Gujarat convict

"Hemant Modi had developed an interest in acting while in college. We have learnt that he may have studied journalism as well. However, he was practising as a junior lawyer and, according to his brother Sachin, had also passed a government exam when the murder took place." Inspector Dhakhada said.

Police zeroed in on the fugitive after getting some "confidential information", Dhakhada said. "Hemant Modi had cut ties with his family, divorced his wife, and left his friends. He had near zero digital presence, and he was not on social media," he said.

"However, it appears that after he came back to Ahmedabad, someone recognised him, leading to the tip to the police. We detained him and compared his characteristics and features to descriptions from the prison, which matched exactly. He ultimately confessed to his actual identity," Dhakhada said.

ture Department and the Minority Affairs and Madrasa Education Department. Sources said schemes providing allowances to imams, muezzins, and purohits, which the Mamata Banerjee government had introduced, and scholarships for minority students would be among those affected.

At the same meeting, the Cabinet decided to cancel the existing OBC reservation list with immediate effect, revising reservation percentages for the backward classes in jobs and government posts and abolishing sub-categories. With this, the government reversed the TMC government's move to include

## Bengal SIR tribunals

sources in Kolkata and Delhi have said that some of the appeals were filed by those who had been included in the rolls through supplementary lists published before the polls, which meant their appeals did not require action.

Of the total disposals, 27%, or 1,777, were from Kolkata North and Kolkata South districts, handled by the tribunal of retired Calcutta High Court Chief Justice TS Sivagnanam, who resigned on May 7, and later cited personal reasons. A total of 51,234 appeals remain pending in the two districts.

The two districts with the highest number of appeals and deletions, Murshidabad and Malda, had just over 100 disposals each as of May 14. Murshid-

abad, with 6,29,392 appeals, had 112 disposed; Malda, with 5,26,215 appeals, had 185. Across the 12 tribunals, 98 appellants appeared in online mode and 21 in offline mode.

EC sources say total disposals now stand at around 10,000. The commission is yet to make public the total number of appeals filed and disposed. During a hearing on April 13, the Supreme Court had noted that 34 lakh appeals had been filed against exclusions and inclusions in the West Bengal electoral rolls.

On February 20, the Supreme Court had taken the unprecedented step of ordering judicial officers to decide on the eligibility of electors in West Bengal, after noting the trust deficit between the Election Commis-

## Cockroach Janta Party

The process is governed by the Information Technology (Procedure and Safeguards for Blocking for Access of Information by Public) Rules, 2009. Blocking orders are confidential.

Although the account has been withheld in India, it is accessible from other locations — it had more than 200,000 followers on X as of Thursday evening. A second government official said that the blocking order was sent to the social media company when the account had roughly around 90,000 followers.

The Instagram handle associated with the user has not been blocked in India yet, and had over 16 million followers Thursday.

"However, it is likely that the Instagram account would also be blocked, and that process is currently underway," the senior official said.

Queries sent to the ministries of Home Affairs and Information Technology, and X did not elicit a response.

"As expected, Cockroach Janta Party's account has been

withheld in India," the platform's founder, Abhijeet Dipke, posted from his account Thursday afternoon. Less than two hours later, he announced a new handle for the platform, Cockroach Is Back, and urged people to join it.

According to X guidelines, any account or post is withheld if the social networking site receives a "valid and properly scoped request from an authorized entity".

"Such withholdings will be limited to the specific jurisdiction that has issued the valid legal demand or where the content has been found to violate local law(s)," it states.

Dipke, 30, is from Pune and says he is currently in Boston.

The satirical account was launched in response to a remark by Chief Justice of India Surya Kant that sparked a row.

On May 15, the CJI pulled up a lawyer who had filed a petition seeking directions to the Delhi HC over the designation of a Senior Advocate, a status he himself was aspiring to. "There are already parasites of

## Wangchuk Dept only for Delhi

The ABL has also told the Centre that the Leh body would bring along its legal advisor, Vikram Hegde, for assistance and advice during the talks.

Sources say that Thupstan Chhewang, whose designation as chairman of the ABL was accepted recently, will not be part of the Leh body.

Chhewang had recently questioned the functioning of the Apex body, saying the talks between the Centre and the Ladakh representatives have hit a dead end. Chhewang, the former BJP parliament member from Ladakh, had also raised questions about the composition of the talks committee. Sources say he was upset about the growing clout of the Kargil Democratic Alliance and the representation given to Muslims in the Apex body. Sources say that to address any grievances among Ladakh Buddhists, the ABL has decided to include Stanzin, a prominent Buddhist figure and president of Gonpa Association, in talks. Stanzin is also a member of the body.

While the ABL representatives are expected to arrive in the national capital on Thursday, the Kargil Democratic Alliance representatives have already arrived in New Delhi for the talks. The KDA would be represented by its chairman, Asgar Karbalai, co-chairman, Sajad Hussain, and member, Ghulam Rasool. "We have not received any agenda for the talks from the Centre, but our agenda is only statehood and the Sixth Schedule," Hussain told *The Indian Express*. "For seven years now, the Centre has been pushing us to the wall and not taking us seriously."

who oversees the Delhi division as well. According to sources, the Delhi division may be upgraded into a separate department, which may include the larger NCR and the ongoing Central Vista redevelopment project.

Government sources said the proposal to create two departments is being actively considered. When contacted, Cabinet Secretary T V Somanathan declined to comment.

The move comes just months after Additional Secretary in MoHUA, D Thara, was empanelled as Secretary in February. She, however, continues as Additional Secretary, handling the key projects of the Central Vista redevelopment, Delhi division and the AMRUT.

Thara, a 1995-batch IAS officer of Gujarat cadre, has been posted in the ministry since 2019, first as Joint Secretary and then as Additional Secretary since 2021. She has handled the Central Vista redevelopment plan since its inception.

Another Gujarat-cadre IAS officer, Srinivas Katikithala (1989 batch), is the current MoHUA Secretary.

The ministry also handles Metro and RRTS projects, Swachh Bharat Mission (Urban), and PMAY (Urban). The National Capital Region Planning Board and National Capital Region Transport Corporation, which is implementing the RRTS projects, also function under MoHUA.

Sources said the proposed tweak is intended to pave the way for the seamless and efficient administration of the Capital. Insiders also pointed out the timing of the move — a little over

sion of India and the then-Trinamool Congress government.

Acting on the court's orders, the Calcutta HC recommended around 700 judicial officers for the task. These officers decided on the eligibility of 60.06 lakh electors flagged by the EC's algorithm for "logical discrepancies" in identity documents submitted during the SIR. Just weeks before the Assembly elections on April 23 and 29, they deleted 27.16 lakh names from the rolls.

On March 10, the SC ordered an appellate mechanism for those aggrieved by the decisions of the judicial officers. On the recommendation of Calcutta HC Chief Justice Sujoy Paul, the EC notified 19 appellate tribunals on March 20. After the court ordered that all those cleared by the tribunals up to 48 hours before polling be added to the rolls, 1,607 names were restored.

society who attack the system, and you want to join hands with them? There are youngsters like cockroaches, who don't get any employment or have any place in (the) profession. Some of them become media, some of them become social media, RTI activists and other activists, and they start attacking everyone," he said.

The remarks triggered an uproar, following which the CJI said it was "totally baseless" to suggest that he had criticised the youth. "What I had specifically criticised were those who have entered professions like the Bar (legal profession) with the aid of fake and bogus degrees. Similar persons have sneaked into the media, social media, and other noble professions as well, and hence, they are like parasites. It is totally baseless to suggest that I criticised the youth of our nation. Not only am I proud of our present and future human resource, but every youth of India inspires me," he said.

Shortly after the CJI's remark, Dipke had criticised it in a post on X. The next day, he announced a platform for all "cockroaches" and shared a link to an online "membership form". This started a social media trend.

a year after the BJP came to power in Delhi after a gap of almost three decades.

"PM Narendra Modi has clearly stated his objective of making New Delhi a world-class Capital. Like the appointment of career diplomat Taranjit Singh Sandhu as the L-G, this, too, is intended as a step to enhance efficient governance through a well-oiled bureaucratic machine, synchronising Delhi's Lok Niwas, and possibly similar authorities in areas falling under the NCR such as Haryana, Noida, Ghaziabad among others, with experts in the Prime Minister's Office," a source said.

"Recently, the party's senior leadership is understood to have pointed out issues related to lack of adequate progress in significant initiatives such as Yamuna rejuvenation. On the other hand, the L-G is said to have been given the go-ahead to intensify efforts at bringing global investment to Delhi's urban and public transportation infrastructure as well as tourism," said a BJP insider.

The Union ministry handling urban development has had two departments in the past.

According to the ministry's annual report for 1995-96, it was renamed as Ministry of Urban Affairs & Employment and bifurcated into two departments — the Department of Urban Development and Department of Urban Employment & Poverty Alleviation — in March 1995.

After that, the ministry saw different iterations over the years, until the current version in 2017, when the Ministry of Urban Development and Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation were merged.

BJP of "destroying" cultural diversity and unity. "Bengal was untouched because it was out of reach. Now, they have started it when in power. Forcibly implementing their politics is a characteristic of BJP," he said.

The imam of Kolkata's Nakhoda Masjid, Maulana Muhammad Shafiq Qasmi, said, "A song of a particular religion should not be imposed on others. Making it mandatory goes against the secular fabric of the country."

RSS joint publicity in-charge for the eastern zone, Jishnu Basu, alleged "those opposing it now are just doing so because of self-interest".

## Woman, minor son stabbed to death at Govindpuri home; Rs 10 lakh missing



Relatives of the deceased mourn them on Thursday. ANI

**Pragynesh**  
New Delhi, May 21

A 40-YEAR-OLD woman and her teenage son were stabbed to death in Southeast Delhi's Govindpuri on Wednesday night, police said, adding that the bodies were found inside their house in Gali No. 10.

Cash worth over Rs 10 lakh and jewellery are said to be missing from the house, officers said.

According to the Delhi Police, a PCR call regarding the incident was received at Govindpuri police station around 1.11 am on Thursday after which a team rushed to the spot. The deceased were identified as Sharda Sahu (38) and her son Kushal (14).

Officers said Sharda had 11 stab wounds, while the boy had seven.

### 'No sign of forced entry'

Police also said that there were no signs of forced entry to the house.

Around 9 pm on Wednesday, a milkman had come and knocked on the door of the house, but no one responded, an officer said. "The milkman then alerted Sharda's husband Vishnu over the phone. However, call records show that Vishnu did not make any call to check on his wife and son."

Police said that Vishnu, a fruit and vegetable vendor, returned home around 12.30 am on Thursday to find the front door "latched from outside". He said he discovered the bodies with multiple stab wounds after entering the house.

"Vishnu said he had taken money from micro-financiers and kept at home," an officer said, explaining the presence of cash at the house. Another officer, however, said that cash worth Rs 2 lakh and more valuables were found inside the house that "were left un-

touched".  
Meanwhile, on Thursday, in front of the ground-floor flat where the deceased lived sat relatives under a white cloth put up like a shade from the porch of the house, hinged on poles.

### Couple adopted teen

Sharda's sister-in-law Manju (39), who is said to be the biological mother of Kushal, claimed Sharda and Vishnu adopted the boy when he was 11-day-old. "They did not have a child even after decades of their marriage. I had two sons. I let them adopt Kushal," said Manju, sobbing.

Manju is married to Dinesh, the elder brother of Vishnu. She said she got to know about the incident around 1 am when her husband got a call from Vishnu.

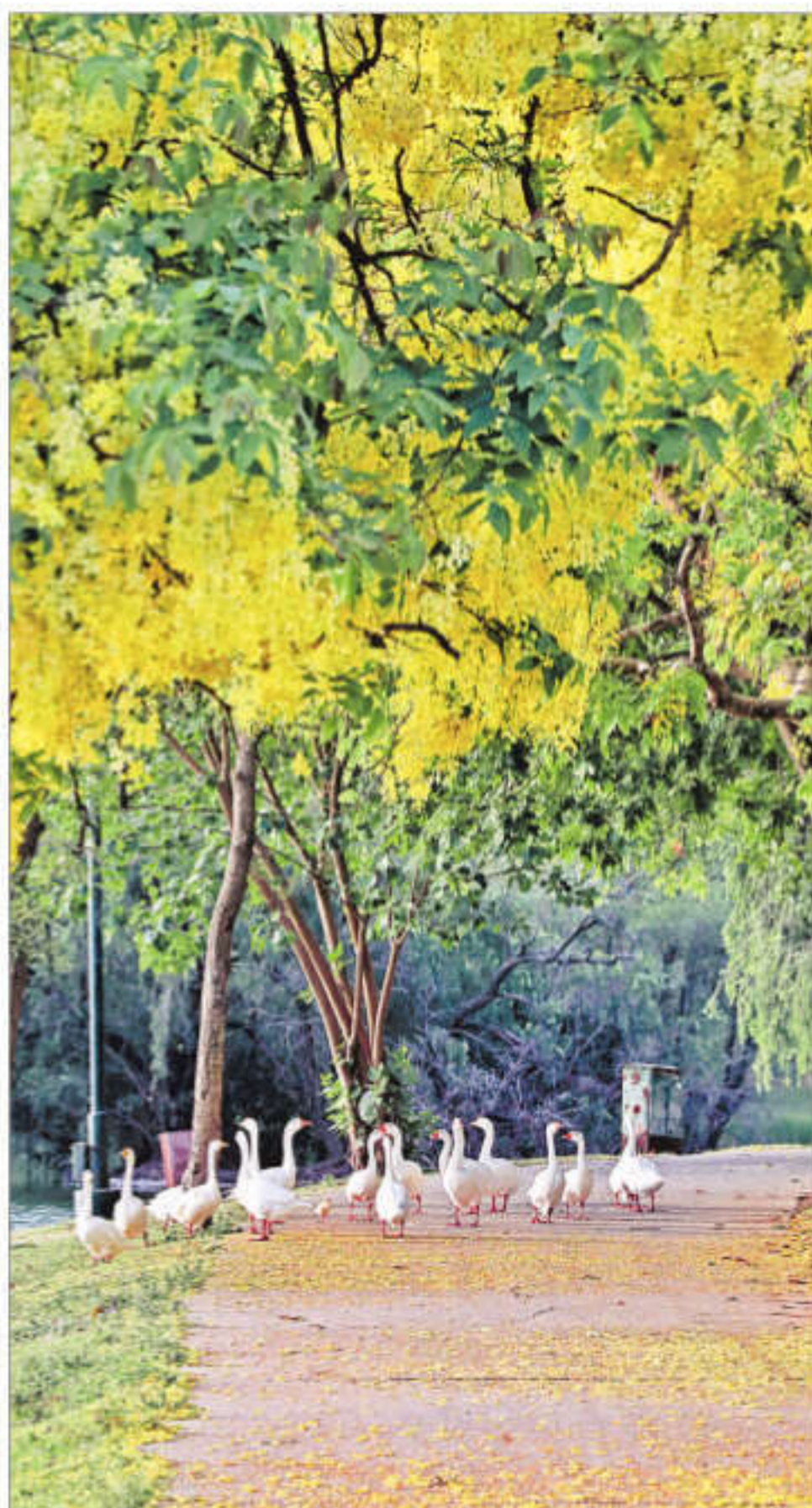
"My son had a word with Kushal merely a few hours back. Kushal asked him to come to meet him that night. Addressing me on the call, Kushal said, 'Chachi, aane do na (Aunty, let him come)'," Manju recalled. She added that she could not meet Kushal frequently, but checked on him. "He loved video games and drawing."

Dev, the husband of Sharda's sister Geeta, said: "Around 1 am, my wife started screaming. 'Meri behen ko maar diya (My sister has been killed)'. The family had been living here since the past 16 years. They never had picked up a fight with anyone in the neighbourhood," said Dev.

A case under BNS sections 103 and 309(6) has been registered in connection with the case, police said.

Vishnu and the ones he took money from are currently being questioned.

The bodies have been sent for post-mortem examination, police said, adding that CCTV footage from nearby areas are also being examined.



## Say geese

Geese pass under Amaltas trees in full bloom at Shanti Van in New Delhi on Thursday. Laburnum or the Golden Shower Tree flowers briefly across the city during May-June. ABHINAV SAHA

## 2020 riots larger conspiracy: Bail to bizman, Khalid plea to be heard today

**Sohini Ghosh**  
New Delhi, May 21

THE DELHI High Court on Thursday granted bail to Salim Malik alias Munna, an accused booked under the UAPA in the 2020 Northeast Delhi riots larger conspiracy case.

A bench of Justices Prathiba Singh and Madhu Jain, which granted bail to Malik, will on Friday hear a plea by co-accused Umar Khalid, seeking interim bail after a trial court declined him relief earlier this week. He had moved HC against the trial court order on Thursday.

On May 19, the trial court had refused Khalid interim bail, which he had sought to observe a death ritual of his uncle and to take care of his mother who is due to undergo surgery. The rejection had come a day after the Supreme Court, while underlining that bail is the rule and jail an exception even in UAPA

cases, expressed "serious reservations" on the decision of one of its own benches in January to deny bail to Khalid in the 2020 Delhi riots case. On Thursday, relying on the very SC judgment from January, Justices Singh and Jain granted bail to Malik, a garment businessman.

Referring to the SC's verdict, the bench observed, "The Supreme Court had categorised one set of accused persons in these matters as the core ideological drivers of the conspiracy and on the other hand, certain accused persons who were described as local level facilitators and also field operators."

Malik had claimed parity in his alleged role with two other co-accused in the case who were granted bail by the SC in January: Mohd Saleem Khan and Shadab Ahmad.

The HC bench, while granting bail to Malik, noted, "...this court is of the view that (Malik's

NEARLY 7.72 LAKH NEW SPOTS HAVE OPENED UP

# Income cap for ration card now Rs 2.5 lakh, applications open

**Express News Service**  
New Delhi, May 21

IN AN effort to bring several low-income families under the food security system in the Capital, the Delhi government has decided to revise the annual family income eligibility limit for ration cards from Rs 1.2 lakh to Rs 2.5 lakh, Chief Minister Rekha Gupta announced Thursday. She also announced that the process of issuing new ration cards has resumed on a large scale from May 15.

In January this year, the government had revised the annual family income cap for availing ration cards from Rs 1 lakh to Rs 1.2 lakh under Delhi Food Security Rules, 2026.

"The aim is to bring more poor and middle-class families under the welfare net. The proposal to revise the annual family income criteria has been discussed at the Cabinet level and has been positive... a final decision will be taken soon," she said. At a press conference, Gupta on Thursday said the government carried out a comprehensive audit of the public distribution system (PDS) that had unraveled large-scale irregularities.

She said that a total of 771,384 ineligible and bogus ration card beneficiaries were identified, out of which, 6,46,123 were found to be above

### • In numbers

	6,46,123	Not under income limit
	6,185	Deceased persons
	23,394	Duplicate ration card holders
	772 lakh	Total new spots created

**Where to apply:** E-district portal [edistrict.delhigovt.nic.in](http://edistrict.delhigovt.nic.in)



**What you need to apply for new ration card:** Address proof, Aadhaar, fresh application, income proof

**ANNUAL INCOME**  
**Rs 2.5 lakh**

Total ineligible beneficiaries  
**7,71,384**  
NOT AVAILED RATION FOR OVER A YEAR  
**95,682**

● Pending applications for new ration cards: **3,72,367**

● Pending applications for inclusion of kin: **99,501**

the prescribed income limit and therefore ineligible for subsidised ration. Another 95,682 beneficiaries had not availed ration for more than a year. In 6,185 cases, the names of deceased persons continued to remain on ration records, while 23,394 beneficiaries were found to be drawing benefits from multiple locations, the CM said.

"With the ineligible names removed, nearly 772 lakh new spots have opened up in the system, paving the way for new eligible beneficiaries to receive ration cards," said Gupta.

The CM said 3,72,367 applications for new ration cards and 99,501 applications for in-

clusion of family members are currently pending. Since applicants' residence, income and eligibility status may have changed over time, applicants will be given an opportunity to apply afresh under the latest eligibility norms, officials said.

Further, the CM said that all ration card-related services, including fresh applications and addition or deletion of family members, have now been shifted online. "People can apply either from home or through nearby facilitation centres," she said, adding that digitisation will bring transparency and accountability.

Urging people to apply,

Gupta said online applications for new ration cards and for adding family members have been opened through the e-District portal ([edistrict.delhigovt.nic.in](http://edistrict.delhigovt.nic.in)) from May 15, 2026.

Applications submitted in the past have also been returned to applicants through their login profiles. Applicants can update and resubmit them with a valid family income certificate and other required documents, said officials.

Gupta said that her government has implemented the Delhi Food Security Rules, 2026, giving effect to the provisions of the National Food Security Act (NFSA), 2013. As part of the reforms, ration distribution has been modernised through extensive use of technology.

"Traditional weighing machines at fair-price shops are being replaced with electronic machines, while biometric authentication has been made mandatory," Gupta said.

Gupta added that earlier, family income details were accepted largely on the basis of self-declarations, allowing ineligible individuals to enter the system while genuine beneficiaries were often left out.

Under the new framework, applicants will have to submit Aadhaar cards, proof of residence, the latest income certificate and Aadhaar details of all family members.



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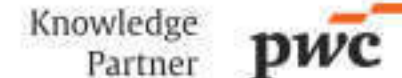
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**Extracts of Statement of Standalone and Consolidated Audited Financial Results for the quarter and Year ended 31.03.2026** (₹ in Lakhs)

Particulars	Standalone					Consolidated				
	Quarter ended 31.03.26 Audited	Quarter ended 31.12.25 Un-Audited	Quarter ended 31.03.25 Audited	Year ended 31.03.26 Audited	Year ended 31.03.25 Audited	Quarter ended 31.03.26 Audited	Quarter ended 31.12.25 Un-Audited	Quarter ended 31.03.25 Audited	Year ended 31.03.26 Audited	Year ended 31.03.25 Audited
Total income from operations	14055.09	18331.95	19875.29	52743.48	56,574.73	14,200.96	18,477.59	19,993.91	53,302.35	57,094.45
Other Income	1014.17	769.10	495.12	495.12	2258.35	984.04	781.80	456.11	2,991.93	2,097.11
Total Income	15069.26	19101.05	20370.41	55835.36	58833.08	15,185.00	19,259.39	20,450.02	56,294.28	59,191.56
Net Profit / (Loss) for the period (before tax, Exceptional and/or Extra Ordinary Items)	3841.25	3869.52	3525.03	11400.54	9968.92	3,794.34	3,842.78	3,478.72	11,250.33	9,762.72
Net Profit / (Loss) for the period before tax (after Exceptional and/or Extra Ordinary Items)	3841.25	3869.52	3525.03	11400.54	9968.92	3,794.34	3,842.78	3,478.72	11,250.33	9,762.72
Net Profit / (Loss) for the period after tax (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary Items)	2877.64	2828.56	2534.79	8402.32	8179.64	2,827.43	2,800.88	2,482.44	8,237.74	7,968.18
Total Comprehensive Income for the period (Comprising Profit / (Loss) for the period (after tax) and Other Comprehensive Income (after tax))	3071.61	2839.87	2426.29	8611.41	7984.87	3,054.99	2,808.78	2,347.44	8,469.70	7,759.38
Paid up Equity Share Capital	8576.94	8576.94	8576.94	8576.94	8576.94	8576.94	8576.94	8576.94	8576.94	8576.94
Reserves (excluding Revaluation Reserve as shown in the Balance Sheet of previous year)				31460.07	25636.59				27,681.73	22,012.00
Earnings Per Share (after extra-ordinary item) (of Rs. 10/- each) (for continuing and discontinued operations)- Basic & Diluted:	3.36	3.30	2.95	9.80	9.54	3.30	3.26	2.89	9.61	9.31

# Includes Net Profit of Continued and Discontinued Operations

**Note:**

1) The above is an extract of the detailed format of Quarterly/Annual Financial Results filed with the SEBI (Listing and Other Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the Quarterly/Annual Financial Results are available on the Stock Exchange(s) Website ([www.bseindia.com](http://www.bseindia.com)) & ([www.nseindia.com](http://www.nseindia.com)) and on the Company's Website ([www.itdc.co.in](http://www.itdc.co.in))

2) The Financial results of the company have been prepared in accordance with Indian Accounting Standards (IND AS) as prescribed under Section 133 of the Companies Act 2013 read with Companies (Indian Accounting Standards) Rules, 2015, as amended.

3) The Above Statement of Financial Results were reviewed by the Audit Committee and approved by the Board of Directors at the meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> May, 2026. Board also recommended dividend of Rs. 2.95 per share subject to the approval of shareholders.

4) Earning per share is not annualized for the quarter ended March 31, 2026, December 31, 2025 and March 31, 2025.

5) The figures for the quarter ended March 31, 2026 are the balancing figures between the audited figures in respect of the full financial year ended on that date and published year to date figures upto the third quarter of the said financial year.

6) Details of shareholders who have not claimed dividend for F.Y. 2024-25, 2023-24, 2022-23, 2018-19 and 2017-18 have been given in the ITDC website under Investor Corner. Further details of shareholders who have not claimed dividend for last seven consecutive years and whose shares have been transferred to the IEPF, have also been given at the ITDC website under Investor Corner. Shareholders are requested to contact immediately for claiming the unclaimed dividend and unclaimed shares, the compliance officer Mr. V. K. Jain at ITDC HQ address, Email: [vkjain@itdc.co.in](mailto:vkjain@itdc.co.in), Mobile No. 9650444533.

7) Figures of the previous reporting periods have been re-grouped/re-classified wherever necessary to correspond with the figures of the current reporting period.

Date : 21.05.2026  
Place: New Delhi

For India Tourism Development Corporation Limited  
Sd/-  
Lokesh Kumar Aggarwal  
Director (Finance) & CFO

## Fight over digital evidence: Twisha's family, in-laws move HC, magistrate court

Anand Mohan J  
Bhopal, May 21

FROM LEAKS of retired judge Giribala Singh's call detail records (CDR), CCTV footage purportedly capturing the last moments of model-turned-actor Twisha Sharma who died following alleged dowry harassment last week to WhatsApp chats and private audio conversions circulating across social media platforms — the investigation into Twisha's death has spiralled into an acrimonious legal fight between the two bereaved families over digital evidence.

While Twisha's mother-in-law Giribala moved a magistrate court on Thursday, her family and absconding husband, Samarth Singh, moved the Madhya Pradesh High Court.

At first, questions were raised after the Bhopal Police did not produce the nylon gym rope allegedly used by Twisha to hang herself at the time of the postmortem examination in AIIMS Bhopal but produced the same a day later. Then, CCTV footage, audio conversions and last calls details also leaked, raising questions over the handling of crucial digital evidence by the police.

In her application before a Bhopal magistrate, Giribala alleged that the DVR system capturing Twisha's last moments "suffered from a technical defect and displayed a date and time approximately 2 days, 2 hours and 20 minutes behind the actual time". It added that this discrepancy was specifically disclosed to the investigating officer at the time of seizure but was never properly documented.

The plea further alleged that investigators failed to carry out mandatory panchnama proceedings while seizing the footage. According to Giribala, the back-up recordings should have been played before witnesses and the individuals visible in the footage should have been formally identified and recorded during the seizure process. "No such proceedings were conducted by the police," the plea claimed.

According to the plea, eight CCTV cameras had been installed at the residence where Twisha was found dead on the



Twisha Sharma and Samarth Singh

night of May 12. The system, connected to a DVR (Digital Video Recorder) was allegedly accessed by the police on May 13 through a technician from the installation firm before being seized by investigators.

Twisha's family, meanwhile, moved HC seeking urgent preservation of CDRs, subscriber records and CCTV footage from AIIMS Bhopal between May 12 and 20, alleging that "influential persons connected to the accused attempted to interfere with both the police investigation and the postmortem process".

The family alleged that Twisha's in-laws allegedly retained effective control over the crime scene for nearly two days before crucial evidence was secured. "The entire crime scene was under the possession and control of both the accused for almost two days," the plea said.

It also questioned how allegedly "doctored CCTV footage" later surfaced publicly if investigators had properly secured the electronic evidence from the crime scene timely then how come doctored CCTV footage were issued by the accused after getting anticipatory bail," the plea stated.

Further, the family claimed that the CDRs could reveal attempts to influence officials. According to the plea, Giribala made "several calls to influential persons due to which entire investigation was influenced and AIIMS had also issued reports with several lapses".

A senior officer said police are focused on apprehending Samarth. "The allegations of mishandling evidence will

then be probed. It's not a substantial issue, as the ligature material and DVR have been seized under proper guidelines despite the delay."

Samarth in his plea before the HC, argued that the sessions court wrongly denied him anticipatory bail despite granting relief to his mother in the same case. Samarth argued that the allegations of dowry demand were inherently doubtful because he and his mother had allegedly transferred more than Rs 7 lakh to Twisha's account. "The WhatsApp chats presented by the complainant are edited and incomplete. The same being tampered cannot be relied upon," the plea said. "More than Rs 7 lakh has been transferred online to the account of Mrs Twisha by the applicant and his mother in a complaint of dowry harassment for almost two days," it added.

"...The entire prosecution story being constructed and built is based on imagination and presumptions," the plea said. The MP Police, meanwhile, issued a Lookout Circular against Samarth, a lawyer, to prevent him from fleeing the country. Moreover, the MP government has initiated an inquiry against Giribala, marking the first formal administrative action initiated by the state against her since the registration of the FIR. Giribala, a retired district judge, currently serves as chairperson of the district consumer commission in Bhopal.

Twisha's family is now expected to challenge the anticipatory bail granted to Giribala before the HC, arguing that the sessions court failed to properly appreciate the allegations of influence over the investigation and postmortem process.

## WE HAVE TO BE READY AND PREPARED FOR FUTURE, SAYS POWER MINISTER

# Delhi power network revamp on cards, peak demand likely to touch 11,000 MW by 2030

Gayathri Mani  
New Delhi, May 21

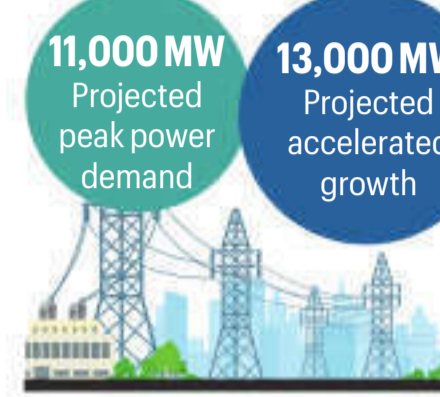
WITH DELHI'S peak power demand expected to touch 11,000 MW in the next four years, the government is working on a comprehensive Delhi Power Master Plan 2030 to strengthen the Capital's power distribution network, reduce power cuts per consumer per year from 3 to 1, bring down average outage duration from 2 hours to 1 hour and minimise transformer breakdowns across the city.

According to an official document, by 2030, with the expansion of the Metro network and push for electric vehicles (EVs) and other facilities requiring power demand, the projected accelerated growth, however, is 13,114 MW.

"Keeping in mind the accelerated growth in power demand, we have to be ready and

### • THE POWER CHART

Total consumers: 57 lakh



### Mission 2030

- Reducing average power cuts per consumer per year from **3 to 1**
- Reducing duration of power cuts from **2 hours to 1 hour**
- Reducing restoration time from **45 mins to 30 mins**
- Cutting transformer breakdowns from **0.53% to 0.25%**

prepared for future considering the expansion of Metro network, upcoming health centres and the government's pushing for EVs and charging infrastructure...The previous government, despite being in power for over a decade, did nothing to upgrade the city's power infrastructure," said the Power Minister Ashish Sood.

He said that under 'Mission 2030', a one year master plan for 2025-26 has already been prepared and another comprehensive plan for the next three years is being made. The revamp plan is estimated to cost around Rs 17,000 crore. "The aim behind the master plan or the 'Mission 2030' is to deliver reliable, economical, safe and

quality power supply to every citizen for 24/7x365 days in the next four years," Sood said.

Explaining the significance of the master plan, Sood said, "Years of underinvestment have impacted reliability, safety and power quality...To address this, we have to upgrade the infrastructure, increase grid capacity to support rising demand, strengthen the distribution backbone and last-mile network."

Sood said in several areas, such as Uttam Nagar, Nangloi, and parts of Trans-Yamuna, wirings old wirings pose big risk. Under 'Mission 2030', the government aims to convert overhead lines to underground ones and High Voltage Distribution Systems to low-voltage ones in priority corridors and modernise operations and deploy non-wire alternations for better solution and public safety.

## Pipeline under repair, heatwave: Hundreds of fish dead in Sanjay Lake as water recedes



Dead fish float in the lake on Thursday. TASHI TOBGYAL

Sophiya Mathew  
New Delhi, May 21

AS DELHI reeled under its fourth straight day of heatwave conditions, Sanjay Lake in East Delhi's Trilokpuri on Thursday turned into a fish graveyard — hundreds of fish floated belly-up in shallow green pools, ducks waded through black slush and large stretches of the lake bed lay cracked dry.

The deaths came amid rapidly receding water levels at the lake, with officials attributing the situation partly to a critical pipeline supplying treated water from Kondli sewage treatment plant (STP) to the lake developing leakages and remaining under repair. Officials also said the prolonged heatwave may have reduced oxygen levels in already stagnant water. "The ongoing heatwave has only worsened the crisis," a government official said. The carcasses included small Gambusia or mosquito-fish, along with larger tilapia- or carp-like freshwater species.

In a written response to *The Indian Express*, the Delhi Development Authority (DDA) said the artificial lake spreads across nearly 187 acres, including a 52.53-acre lake area maintained by it. The lake is also a notified protected forest under the Delhi Forest department.

It added that major restoration and infrastructure works, including toe walls and slope protection works meant to strengthen the lake's embankments and prevent erosion of its banks had been completed, but the responsibility for supplying treated water to maintain

### • Skywatch



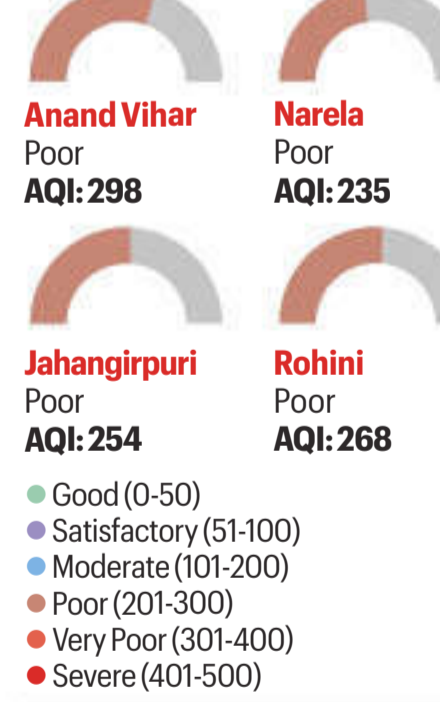
Forecast: May 22, 2026

Mainly clear sky, heat wave conditions at few places  
MAX: 44-46  
6.2°C above normal

MIN: 30-32  
3.3°C above normal

- Sunrise: 5:27 AM (May 23)
- Sunset: 7:09 PM (May 22)
- Moonrise: 10:56 AM (May 23)
- Moonset: 12:36 AM (May 22)

### • AQI Tracker



the level at the lake is on the Delhi Jal Board (DJB). "The DDA has been continuously pursuing the matter with them," it said in the response.

A senior DJB official said, "Treated effluent from Kondli STP is supplied to Sanjay Lake and the pipeline carrying it had

developed leaks some time ago." Repair work, the official added, is likely to be completed shortly.

The incident has revived concerns flagged earlier by the National Green Tribunal (NGT). In a 2022 order, the NGT had noted that Sanjay Lake, located 3-5 km from the Ghazipur landfill, showed high Chemical Oxygen Demand (COD) values, indicating that the water carries a heavy pollution load, which can reduce oxygen availability and make the water hostile for fish and other aquatic life.

The NGT noted local drains and sewage inflows as possible contributors to the deteriorating water quality.

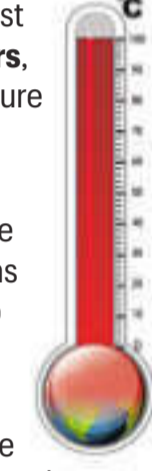
An analysis conducted by Delhi Pollution Control Committee (DPCC) on Kondli STP in April had found outlet samples to be "meeting standards". Yet, the lake on Thursday showed visible signs of stagnation and contamination. In several pockets, the water appeared blackish-green and dark slush lined its edges.

Environmental experts said low water levels during a heatwave may result in pollutants becoming more concentrated. Higher temperatures also reduce the ability of the water to hold dissolved oxygen, while decomposing organic matter and waste consume more oxygen. These conditions can trigger a sudden crash in dissolved oxygen, leading to fish deaths.

Bhim Singh Rawat, a Yamuna and waterbody expert, said several incidents of mass fish mortality had been seen over the past month in the Yamuna upstream of Delhi and in associated waterbodies, includ-

### • SOARING MERCURY

- Delhi saw its warmest night in **May in 14 years**, as minimum temperature settled at **31.9°C**, on Thursday
- Orange alert in place for third day in a row, as heatwave expected to prevail **until May 25**
- Capital recorded a maximum temperature of **43.6°C**, **3.4** notches above normal, on Thursday



## 104-105°F fever, loss of consciousness: Two heat stroke cases in Delhi

Ankita Upadhyay  
New Delhi, May 21

DELHI HAS reported its first two heat stroke cases this season.

In the first case, a 24-year-old man from West Bengal was admitted to Delhi's Ram Manohar Lohia (RML) Hospital on Thursday after he suffered a severe heat stroke while travelling to the national capital by train.

Doctors said the man was brought to the hospital with a fever of 105°F, confusion, and loss of consciousness.

Doctors diagnosed him with heat stroke — a medical emergency caused by extreme heat exposure.

The second patient, a 50-year-old man, was brought to RML Hospital by a police PCR team in an unconscious condition with very high fever.

While Delhi hospitals have not reported any other cases of heat stroke, some hospitals said they have been reporting symptoms of heat exhaustion, cramps and rashes which occur due to excessive heat.

At Safdarjung Hospital, one case of suspected heat stroke was reported on May 18. The patient, treated as per protocols, has recovered. "No death due to heat related illness recorded till date," said Dr Charu Bamba, Medical Superintendent at Safdarjung Hospital.

As per RML's emergency medicine team, the man from West Bengal suddenly developed high fever, altered mental state, and involuntary loss of bladder control or leaking of urine during the train journey. "His condition was critical when he arrived at the hospital," said Dr Ajay Chauhan, Director, Professor of Medicine.

He is now admitted under the Department of Medicine. As for the second case, doctors said the patient's body temperature was 104°F and his condition was critical when he was brought in.

He was later shifted to the medicine department for further care. Doctors said the patient has shown initial signs of improvement.

## HUSBAND, IN-LAW ARRESTED IN DOWRY DEATH CASE

# She came to Delhi dreaming of a city life, was dead in three years

Pragnesh  
New Delhi, May 21

TWENTY-FIVE-YEAR-OLD Veena Kumari had always wanted to live the urban life that a big city like Delhi promised, away from the confines of her village life in Uttar Pradesh's Sambhal.

In December 2022, Veena, who had studied till Class 12, married Raju Singh (27). Next year, when he found work as a field agent for a bank in Karol Bagh, the couple moved to a rented second floor home in West Delhi's Inderpuri along with Raju's brother Rajkumar.

Their flat was cramped — two small rooms on a floor where walls were thin and neighbours lived almost on top of each other. It was not much, but to Veena, it was still the city life she had longed for.

That life ended on Monday.



Veena Kumari

Around 9.55 pm, Veena called her brother Raj. "I am being tortured," she told him, according to her family.

Minutes later, she was dead. Raju claimed she "fell" off the roof of the building. Two days later, he and Rajkumar (22) were arrested in dowry death case.

According to Veena's family, tensions in the marriage had been building for months.

Raju and Rajkumar started passing snide remarks about the "quality" of the "gifts" she got with her, said a police officer.

"We had given some 'gifts'... some cash, a bike... but they wanted a Royal Enfield Bullet as dowry. At the time of Veena's marriage, we couldn't afford it," said Raj who lives in Mehrauli.

By 2025, he said, things took a turn. He alleged Raju and Rajkumar constantly shouted at her and even beat her for dowry. "At one point they asked us to take her home. But we asked our village elders to intervene and threatened to go to the police. After this, Raju's parents apologised," claimed Raj.

Raju said things settled for a short while. But after April 25, when Rajkumar got married — and got a 40-inch LED TV and a Bullet bike from his wife's family — things allegedly worsened again. "Veena said they torture her every day by commenting on how Rajkumar's wife has got all this and she didn't get anything," claimed Raj.

## • FILM'S SOUNDTRACK AND SCORE, COMPOSED BY ILAIYARAJA, HAD REPORTEDLY MARKED HIS 100TH FILM

# 'Copyright with Saregama': HC junks Ilaiyaraaja's plea over *En Iniya Pon Nilave*

Sohini Ghosh  
New Delhi, May 21

IN A setback for singer-composer Ilaiyaraaja, the Delhi High Court Thursday held that he does not hold any copyright over the K J Yesudas hit song, *En Iniya Pon Nilave*, from the 1981 Tamil psychological thriller film *Moodu Paani*.

While acknowledging the Padma Bhushan-awardee's right over the musical component of the song, a division bench of Justices C Hari Shankar and Om Prakash Shukla noted that he does not hold any right

over the lyrics, and that the overall right over the sound recordings in the film lie with the record label Saregama.

In January, Saregama India Limited (SIL) took film distribution company Vels Film International Ltd (VFIL), another company Divo TV Private Ltd, and Ilaiyaraaja to court, alleging copyright infringement of the song. A single judge had then ruled in SIL's favour, recognising it as the owner of the song.

The court had, however, allowed VFIL to use the song in its film *Aghathiya* following Saregama's acceptance of a

license fee of Rs 30 lakh from VFIL, which was producing the film. Ilaiyaraaja had then appealed against the single judge's verdict. The film's soundtrack and score, composed by Ilaiyaraaja, had reportedly marked his 100th film.

Saregama had claimed that since it entered into an agreement in 1980 with *Moodu Paani* producer Raja Cine Arts, it had come into ownership of the sound recordings in the film, including *En Iniya Pon Nilave*, and exercised copyright over the works. Saregama argued in court that "Ilaiyaraaja was not



Ilaiyaraaja

the author of the literary work", on the ground that he is not the songwriter in any case.

Ilaiyaraaja, on the other hand, argued that as the composer of the song, he is its

rightful owner and holds the exclusive right to permit any adaptation of the musical work — a right he said he had granted to the producer of the film *Aghathiya*, VFIL.

It was also Ilaiyaraaja's case that the rights of the producer of *Moodu Pani*, under Copyright Act provisions, did not include the right to adapt the underlying musical work which remained with Ilaiyaraaja, and, thus, Saregama cannot lay claim to it.

Upholding the single judge's order, the division bench opened its verdict, say-

ing, "A song is just a song, a thing of joy to lighten a dreary evening. That is, till it becomes the subject matter of copyright conflict in a court of law, when it suddenly metamorphoses into much more."

Acknowledging that while Ilaiyaraaja holds the right to make any adaptation of the musical work, the lyrics were "no man's land" and Ilaiyaraaja held no right over it.

The division bench held, "Ilaiyaraaja was... entitled to contract with any third party for use or adaptation of the musical work contained in the disputed

song, i.e. the musical component... That right could not, however, extend to doing anything involving the sound recording of the disputed song, or lyrics... Copyright in the sound recording of the disputed song would... vest in the producer of the film... whereas copyright in the lyrics of the disputed song would... vest in the lyricist."

"Ilaiyaraaja's copyright in the musical work contained in the disputed song continues to remain protected... This right was, however, necessarily limited to the musical component of the disputed song — the

music of which Ilaiyaraaja was the composer. It did not extend to the lyrical component of, or the sound recording in, the disputed song," the bench said.

The court held that Ilaiyaraaja could not have "assigned to VFIL the sound recordings in the film *Moodu Pani* either, which would include the sound recording relating to the disputed song *En Iniya Pon Nilave*."

The bench also held that Saregama became the owner of copyright in the sound recordings by way of the 1980 agreement with the producer of the film *Moodu Pani*.

# 'Cockroach Janta Party shows people's frustration with govt'

AS A satirical collective calling itself the Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) captures the imagination of millions online, its meteoric rise has become more than a viral Internet phenomenon. **Congress MP Shashi Tharoor**, in an interview with **ManojCG**, reflects on what the CJP phenomenon reveals about the mood of the country's youth, the failures and possibilities it provides in mainstream politics, among other issues. Excerpts:



**EXPRESS** interview **SHASHI THAROOR** CONGRESS MP

**The Cockroach Janta Party has taken the Internet by storm. It has over 15 million followers on Instagram, surpassing the followers of the BJP and the Congress. How do you see this?**

I think it is a revelation because it confirms to us the extent to which there is frustration and dissatisfaction that the public can express through being able to tap into an initiative like this.

It was obviously a spontaneous initiative but it went viral very quickly and I think it's a very healthy thing in a democracy that people have different ways of being able to express their wishes and something that is satirical, humorous and at the same time deadly serious is an excellent outlet for the frustrations of the youth.

The NEET exam obviously was the straw that broke the camel's back but then you also had, I think, general unhappiness with unemployment, limited possibilities in life, education, everything else, inflation going up and the challenges of coping. And then when NEET (paper leak) happened, particularly those lakhs of children who had spent years preparing for it, must have sort of let go as a major exhalation... For them to suddenly realise they had to go through this all over again must have been shattering.

I understand four young people committed suicide, others are facing mental health problems. It's very serious. I mean obviously the young people are saying we've had enough and I think that to hear that the X handle has been shut down is to my mind disastrous because in a democracy we need outlets. We need to actually have, in any democracy, outlets that will allow people to express their frustrations.

**mean obviously the young people are saying we've had enough and I think that to hear that the X handle has been shut down is to my mind disastrous because in a democracy we need outlets. We need to actually have, in any democracy, outlets that will allow people to express their frustrations.**

**Is it at some level also a reflection on the Opposition — that they are not able to channel all this energy or anger and frustration as you put it.**

That is a very easy thing to say. I love the fact that the media consistently blames the Opposition. Dissatisfaction is very often with, as you know, the circumstances that the government is ultimately responsible for and that's why I think blaming the Opposition is a bit, more than a bit unfair but I agree with you that the Opposition will tap into this.

It sees all these issues now. It sees how people are reacting. I think the Opposition has already made a big issue about NEET and the other issues, the unemployment and inflation are classic Opposition issues that it has been mentioning repeatedly. I would not suggest that there is no chance whatsoever of the Opposition riding the crest of the same wave.

**The recent Assembly elections, particularly in West Bengal and**

stream politics. Rather than it going off into a non-existent political party which is not organised to fight elections, the Opposition's opportunity is to take this discontent and channelise it into mainstream politics, into electoral change and into bringing different results at the ballot box. So, we now have to articulate a message that invites people who feel this way to vote for us.

**The larger message from the satirical collective seems to be that there is disillusionment with the political system itself and that includes both the ruling and Opposition.**

Correct. No, but that is an unproductive frustration because it can't translate into effective results that will improve their lives. Whereas if they work with the Opposition and with political parties in general including the ruling party, they should be able to get results that will actually make a tangible difference in their lives.

(For instance), reform of the NEET. I have seen very quickly some of their manifesto proposals as on their website. Many of these things can be discussed and implemented and what the government won't implement the Opposition can support. There are things that we can do. I mean but there has to be an engagement. The engagement must take place obviously starting with us as the single largest Opposition party.

**Do you think the Opposition's political messaging is not appealing to the youth?**

No, I wouldn't say that. Look, it is not unprecedented that Opposition parties are sometimes not as quick to capture a mood in such an original way as an individual with a satirical bent of mind. Because that's not conventional politics. But by doing what he has done, young Abhijeet Dipke, has also I think shown the way to the rest of us that there is an opportunity waiting to be seized.

## CASE OF MISTAKEN IDENTITY

### SC acquits Sri Lanka man held as 'LTTE member', convicted under UAPA

Express News Service  
New Delhi, May 21

THE SUPREME Court on Wednesday acquitted a Sri Lankan national convicted under the UAPA for being a member of the proscribed terror outfit LTTE, concluding that it was a case of wrong identity.

A three-judge bench of Justices Vikram Nath, Sandeep Mehta and Vijay Bishnoi set aside the July 18, 2024, order of the trial court convicting and sentencing the appellant accused, who, police said, was Sri alias Ranjan. The bench also set aside the April 23, 2025, judgment of the Madurai bench of the Madras High Court upholding the conviction and sentence.

Police had claimed that the appellant, who had a passport bearing the name Ranjan, had confessed he was a part of the second phase of the security detail of LTTE's late chief Velupillai Prabhakaran, who gave him the name Sri in view of his excellent work. He came to India in 2009 and was allegedly trying to revive the terror outfit with assistance from a former compatriot living in Switzerland, said police.

The man handed over 75 cyanide capsules and 60 gms of

chemical GPS-4 used for making cyanide to a co-accused, with specific directions to proceed to Sri Lanka by ferry and hand over the same to another Sri Lankan national, so as to re-organise the LTTE cadres and to eliminate rival Tamil leaders, said police. The appellant, however, contended that though his name was Ranjan, he was not the Sri the police were looking for.

The SC noted the prosecution case on the question of identity rests solely on the oral testimony of two witnesses, Balachandran and Kumar Dharma Kumar, and said their "version... is completely unreliable". Justice Mehta said prima facie, it appears that the duo "who had themselves brought their relatives from Sri Lanka under false identities and were under the scrutiny of the investigating agency, were, by way of a bargain, prevailed upon to implicate the appellant (accused) in the present case as the absconding accused 'Sri'... just in order to give a closure to the case. It is therefore, clearly a case where the appellant has been falsely implicated by being assigned the identity of another person, namely, the so-called absconding accused 'Sri'."

### 'Not allowed to leave home': Mirwaiz and Lone on death anniversary of their fathers

Naveed Iqbal  
Srinagar, May 21

PEOPLE'S CONFERENCE president Sajad Lone and Kashmir's chief cleric Mirwaiz Umar Farooq said Friday that they were restricted from leaving their residences as they marked the death anniversary of their fathers.

Lone was set to visit the Martyrs' Graveyard, Srinagar, to pay his respects to his father, Abdul Gani Lone, and the party had planned a commemoration event at its Handwara office, which was later cancelled.

"I, along with my colleagues at @JKPCOfficial, were to go to the Martyrs' Graveyard today to offer *fateh* for my father Abdul Gani Lone, who was martyred 22 years back on May 21 by terrorists. But police came early

morning and informed me that I have been placed under house arrest," Lone said on Thursday.

Farooq, who also marked the death anniversary of his father, said he had also been restricted to his house since Wednesday evening. "The 21st of May is a painful reminder of one of the darkest days in the history of Kashmir, when people lost their voice with the martyrdom of their beloved leader Shaheed-e-Millat Mirwaiz Molvi Farooq..."

He also termed it "unfortunate and condemnable" that the state prevented people from expressing their sentiments and "paying tributes to their beloved leaders and the martyrs of Hawal". He said that "people are not even allowed to go individually to Mazar-e-Shuhada at Eidgah to offer *fatiha* prayers."

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# 'Complete prohibition': Bengal govt officers barred from sharing information with media

Ravik Bhattacharya  
Kolkata, May 21

THE NEW BJP government in West Bengal has barred its employees and officers from interacting with the media without prior permission, according to a circular issued by Chief Secretary Manoj Agarwal.

In the circular issued on May 19, Agarwal reiterated the existing conduct rules governing members of the All India Services (AIS), the West Bengal Civil Service, the West Bengal Police Service, and other state government employees.

Citing the All India Service (AIS) Conduct Rules, 1968, the West Bengal Service (Duties, Rights and Obligations of Government Employees) Rules, 1980, and the West Bengal Government Servants Conduct Rules, 1959, the circular said the order applies to employees of the state government, autonomous bodies, boards, corporations, undertakings, educational institutions substantially funded by the government, and members of the AIS serving in

connection with state affairs.

"Complete prohibition, except with prior sanction, on the participation or association of any member of the services in any sponsored or privately produced media program or any media program sponsored by the government of India but produced by an outside agency," said the circular.

Later in the day, Rajesh Pandey, Additional Chief Secretary to the West Bengal government, issued another circular clarifying that the provisions applied "ONLY to officers and staff working under regular establishments" of the state government as well as "Boards, Corporations, Undertakings, and other Parastatal organisations, etc." under its control.

Meanwhile, the circular issued by Agarwal also highlighted the "complete prohibition without any government order" on any direct or indirect communication of any document or information with the press by the members of the services. "Complete prohibition, without prior sanction of the government on



West Bengal Chief Minister Suwendu Adhikari greets monks during his visit to Belur Math in Howrah district on Thursday. PTI

any contribution in editing or managing of any newspaper, periodical or any other publication and on any participation in any radio broadcast or writing of any article or letter for any newspaper or periodical by any member of the services," it said.

The circular also imposed a "complete prohibition" on government employees from making any adverse criticism of policies or decisions of the state or Central government through

publications, media interactions, broadcasts, statements, or any other form of communication.

"Complete prohibition on any publication, interaction, utterance, broadcast, contribution in any media, which can lead to straining of the relations of the state government with the Central government or any state government/s or between the Central government and the government of any foreign state/s," the circular added.

## E. EXPLAINED

### Centre to states

The conduct of Central government employees is monitored under two sets of rules: The All India Civil Service (Conduct) rules for all three all-India services — IAS, IPS and IFS; and under Central Civil Service (Conduct) Rules for others. These are generally followed by the state governments for their employees as well, and they also frame such rules for their employees and issue such instructions from time to time reminding their staff about them.

As far as the central government is concerned, conduct of its employees is monitored under the All India Civil Service (Conduct) rules for all three all-India services and under Central Civil Service (Conduct) Rules for other services. These

are generally followed by the state governments for their employees as well, and they issue such instructions from time to time reminding their employees about these rules.

Rules-6 of AIS Rules states, "No member of the Service shall, in any radio broadcast or communication over any public media or in any document...make any statement of fact or opinion— Which has the effect of an adverse criticism of any current or recent policy or action of the Central Government or a State Government; or which is capable of embarrassing the relations between the Central Government and any State Government; or which is capable of embarrassing the relations between the Central Government and the Government of any Foreign State."

These rules, though, further say, "Provided that nothing in this rule shall apply to any statement made or views expressed by a member of the Service in his official capacity and in the due performance of the duties assigned to him."

Bengal: FIR against actors Parambrata and Swastika over 'provocative' posts after 2021 elections

Express News Service  
Kolkata, May 21

AN FIR has been lodged against actors Parambrata Chattopadhyay and Swastika Mukherjee over alleged provocative social media posts made during the 2021 post-poll violence in West Bengal, police said on Thursday. The complaint was filed at Gariahat police station by advocate Joydeep Sen, who alleged that the actors had made remarks on social media that could have incited political violence in the charged atmosphere following the assembly election results in May 2021.

According to the complaint, Parambrata had posted on X, then Twitter, on May 2, 2021, after the TMC crossed the majority mark, "Let today be declared World Threshing Day". Swastika allegedly responded to the post by writing, "Hahaha, let it be".

The complainant alleged that such remarks resulted in an atmosphere of political hostility and violence.



## Friendship Milestones

WHEN UNION Minister of State for Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying S P Singh Baghel met Uttar Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Brijesh Pathak in Lucknow on Thursday, the interaction turned nostalgic as both leaders reflected on their long political association. Baghel recalled that they had earlier worked together as Lok Sabha MPs and later shared time in the Rajya Sabha as well. Baghel pointed out another coincidence from their political journey: when he was serving as MoS in the Union Ministry of Law and Justice, Pathak was handling the law portfolio in the Uttar Pradesh government. Adding a light-hearted touch to the conversation, Pathak joked that even the first letter "P" in the names of their communities — Pal and Pathak — was common between them.

## Pause on Foreign Trips

THE ARMED Forces have begun undertaking austerity measures in line with other departments of the Centre and state governments. One of the decisions is cancellation of pre-scheduled foreign visits by senior officers of the military hierarchy. There will be fewer foreign visits for the time being by senior military officers.

## Leadership Change on Cards

AFTER HIS recent visit to Uttar Pradesh, Lok Sabha Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi is convinced that a change of leadership is required in the state. Gandhi is learnt to have remarked that those who received him at the airport were mostly upper caste leaders and that needs to change. Sources in the party said initially the Congress high command was considering replacing state party chief Ajay Rai, but after his recent health scare, which also drew concern from Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Rai is likely to continue on the post. AICC state in-charge Avinash Pande is likely to be replaced in the next one month, said sources.



## Falta Repoll

Voters show their ink-marked fingers after exercising their franchise during the re-election to the Falta Assembly seat on Thursday. Central forces and West Bengal Police personnel were deployed in large numbers to ensure smooth polling. According to EC, 88.13% of votes were cast. ANI

## RG Kar case: Calcutta HC orders CBI SIT probe into 'hushing-up' charges

Atri Mitra  
Kolkata, May 21

THE CALCUTTA High Court on Thursday ordered the setting up of a three-member Special Investigation Team (SIT) of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) to investigate allegations that there were attempts to "hush up" the RG Kar Medical College and Hospital case, where a trainee doctor was raped and murdered in 2024.

A division bench of Justices Shampa Sarkar and Tirthankar Ghosh instructed the SIT to closely examine the sequence of events from the time the

post-graduate trainee doctor had dinner at the hospital on the night of August 9, 2024, until her cremation the following evening.

The bench also directed the team to submit a detailed report by June 25, when the matter will next be heard.

The bench said that, considering the social ramifications of the gruesome incident, the SIT would look into charges of evidence destruction and allegations made by the medic's parents that there were attempts to downplay the incident.

The CBI joint director (east) will head the SIT, while the

names of the other two members will be finalised within 48 hours.

The case had triggered widespread outrage across West Bengal and among doctors' associations nationwide.

The victim's parents approached the high court seeking a deeper investigation, alleging that more than one person was involved in the crime and claiming there were efforts to downplay the matter in the immediate aftermath.

Earlier, civic volunteer Sanjay Roy was sentenced to life imprisonment for the rape-murder of the trainee doctor.

## AFTER BIHAR POLLS SETBACK

# With move to 'ashram', Prashant Kishor marks new chapter for him and party

Santosh Singh  
Patna, May 21

ON THE outskirts of Patna, beyond the bungalows occupied by Bihar's political elite, a cluster of basic structures, some of them with thatched roofs, near IIT Patna is emerging as the new nerve centre of Prashant Kishor's Jan Suraj Party (JSP).

For Kishor, the move is more than a change of address. Until now, the JSP had been operating from the Patna residence shared by former MPs Uday Singh and N K Singh. On Wednesday, speaking at a party meeting in Darbhanga, Kishor announced that he had shifted to what the party calls the "Jan Bihar Navnirman Ashram", located near Amhara village on Patna's outskirts.

"I shifted my residence on the night of May 19 to the Jan Bihar Navnirman Ashram, the official JSP address near IIT Patna," Kishor said. "I will stay there until the next Assembly elections and until the Jan Suraj Party brings change in Bihar with its own setup."

The new campus, built on leased land, resembles an ashram more than a conventional political office. It consists of mud-and-thatch houses and makeshift structures.

The political strategist-turned-politician had earlier attempted to run party activities from a temporary structure along the banks of the Ganga in



The relocation signals the beginning of a renewed political campaign by Prashant Kishor's Jan Suraj Party

Patna, but the experiment did not last.

The relocation signals the beginning of a renewed political campaign by the JSP, which secured just 3.44% of the vote in the 2025 Assembly polls and failed to emerge as a significant challenger to the established political players in Bihar.

"We had earlier decided to give the new government six months' time," Kishor said. "But now we have decided to restart our activities afresh because only the face of the government has changed, not the problems and challenges before Bihar."

After a party meeting in Darbhanga on Wednesday, Ki-

shor targeted the government of Chief Minister Samrat Choudhary. Referring to reports about expansion work at the Chief Minister's residence, he said: "While migration from Bihar continues unabated, even 25 acres feels insufficient for the new Chief Minister. Huge amounts are being spent on upkeep that could instead be used for pensions for government employees."

Kishor also targeted the government over its promises to women and youth. Referring to the pledge of financial assistance for women, he said the JSP would launch a campaign demanding the implementa-

tion of the government's promise to provide Rs 2 lakh to each woman beneficiary.

"Those who made such promises themselves left power, promoted their own children, and left Bihar's youth to do manual labour," he said, in an apparent swipe at former chief minister Nitish Kumar and the induction of his son, Nishant Kumar, into politics.

On the NEET paper leak, Kishor adopted a sharper tone. "The news is not that the paper leaked; it would have been news if it had not leaked," he said. "When the keys of the vault are handed to the thief, how will corruption and paper leaks stop?"

Even as Kishor attempts to revive momentum around the JSP, the party has faced organisational setbacks in recent months. Several leaders have exited the outfit after the Assembly elections, including singer Ritesh Pandey, who had unsuccessfully contested from Kargahar, Kishor's home constituency.

Former IPS officer Anand Mishra, who had quit the JSP before the elections, is now a BJP MLA from Buxar. More recently, senior JSP leader Y V Giri triggered speculation in political circles after paying what he described as a "courtesy visit" to Chief Minister Samrat Choudhary — a leader Kishor has repeatedly criticised over his educational qualifications and an alleged pending case.

# 'Some ask why India did not push on in Op Sindoor... Look at wars across world'

AS JAMMU and Kashmir battles cross-border terrorism, a growing narco network and the challenge of reviving tourism after the Pahalgam attack, LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR MANOJ SINHA said in an interview with DEEPTIMAN TIWARY that the administration is pursuing a headline security and anti-drug strategy while pushing rehabilitation and public outreach. Excerpts:

same Kashmir where local militant recruitment once ran into three digits... it has come down to single digits. Not a single top commander of known terror groups is alive. Those infiltrating don't survive for long.

**The security spotlight has shifted towards Pir Panjal and the Chenab region. Has Jammu become the principal theatre of militancy in J&K?**

Earlier, our focus was concentrated on Kashmir, so our adversary tried to open a front in Jammu. After some initial setbacks, we strengthened the security grid... The encounters in Kathua, Udhampur and Kishtwar, including the killing of top Jaish commander Saifullah, show that the situation is now under control.

**How serious is the narco-terror nexus in J&K?**

Investigations into several cases, including examination of forward and backward linkages, have made it clear that the network is being run from across the border. In J&K, drug smuggling and terrorism are di-

rectly connected. The money generated through narcotics eventually reaches terror groups... Over the past few years, we have achieved significant control over terrorism. We cannot allow narco-terror networks to reverse those gains.

**What steps are being taken to stop the flow of drugs from across the border?**

We have identified vulnerable border areas. In Kupwara, Tangdhar and Keran are sensitive; in Baramulla, Uri; in Bandipora, Gurez. In the Jammu region, Kathua, because of its proximity to Punjab, along with Samba, Rajouri and Poonch are vulnerable. Some consignments are also coming through courier networks... Drone-dropping is another challenge...

**You are leading padyatras across J&K against drug abuse. What kind of response are you seeing?**

We began the campaign in Kashmir in 2021. Initially, the focus was on law enforcement and seizures, but we began receiving information that more and more young people, includ-



EXPRESS interview | MANOJ SINHA, LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR, JAMMU & KASHMIR

ing girls, were falling into drug addiction. That is when we decided to work simultaneously on three fronts — disrupting the supply chain, creating awareness and rehabilitation.

For awareness, we created a portal where families can confidentially seek help... More people are now sharing information about peddlers in their localities. The public response has been unprecedented. I have travelled through eight districts in Jammu... Youth, women, religious leaders, academics,

political workers, sports persons... everyone has joined the padyatras. On the enforcement side, since April 11, hundreds of drug peddlers have been arrested, their properties attached and major seizures made. We are now displaying lists of top smugglers in police stations... One small-time smuggler approached an SSP and complained, 'Sir, I was caught with only 30 grams.'

**Critics say the focus is on enforcement, but**

rehabilitation infrastructure remains inadequate.

I admit that we do not yet have enough rehabilitation centres. Expanding such infrastructure overnight is not possible, so we have reserved beds in medical colleges and district hospitals. We also shut down some fraudulent rehab centres. Our aim is to establish rehabilitation centres in every district...

When the baton of the police, the authority of the administration and the cooperation of society come together, results come faster and have a lasting impact. People must understand the damage drug abuse causes to families and society. This battle cannot be won by enforcement agencies alone.

**There has been criticism over demolition of houses belonging to suspected drug peddlers.**

In my public meetings, I repeatedly tell people that if even one innocent person has been wrongly targeted, they should inform us immediately... the responsible officer will face consequences. But whenever I ask people whether our action

is justified, they say it should be even stricter...

**Tourism is recovering, but operators say occupancy is still only around 30-40%... How are you trying to restore confidence after the Pahalgam attack?**

Tourism had reached record levels in J&K in recent years. After the Pahalgam attack, there was naturally a decline, but the sector is now recovering. Many new hotels have come up. In border villages, we promote homestays. Some adventure tourism sites remain shut because infiltrating groups from Pakistan take shelter in forests and mountains... But the Special Operations Group of J&K Police has formed dedicated squads trained for prolonged deployment and jungle warfare in the higher reaches of Pir Panjal to neutralise these terrorists. Nearly 90% of tourist sites are already open, and the remaining ones should reopen by next week...

**J&K Chief Minister Omar Abdullah has argued that terrorism cannot be**

tackled if the elected government is kept out of the security loop. He has also criticised the 'dual authority' arrangement of the CM and LG in J&K.

The administrative framework of Union Territories is not something new in India. I understand the sentiments of people in J&K... As far as security is concerned, the people of the country know what the situation in J&K used to be earlier and how many innocent lives were being lost. I do not want to say much beyond that.

**Young people in J&K often speak about unemployment, drug abuse... Does the administration see these as interconnected challenges?**

I do not subscribe to the theory that unemployment or poverty automatically leads to terrorism. Many parts of the country have far greater poverty than J&K... Unemployment is far higher in other states. Yet people there do not turn towards terrorism.

FULL INTERVIEW ON [WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM](http://WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM)

## Bhojshala case: HC judgment challenged in Supreme Court

Press Trust of India  
New Delhi, May 21

THE MUSLIM side on Thursday moved the Supreme Court challenging a Madhya Pradesh High Court order, which said the disputed Bhojshala complex in Dhar district of the state was a temple dedicated to Goddess Saraswati.

The Hindu community considers Bhojshala a temple dedicated to the goddess Saraswati, while the Muslim side calls the 11th-century monument the Kamal Maulla Mosque. The disputed complex in Dhar is protected by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI). The appeal by the mosque's caretaker, Qazi Moinuddin, has challenged the May 15 order of the HC. In a huge win for the Hindu side, the HC declared that the disputed Bhojshala complex was a temple dedicated to Goddess Saraswati, and the Centre and the ASI can decide on its administration and management.

The HC also quashed an April 7, 2003, order of the ASI that allowed Muslims to offer namaz inside the Bhojshala complex every Friday.

The HC bench hearing the case also said that the Muslim community may approach the Madhya Pradesh government for the allotment of separate land in the district for the construction of a mosque. In its much-awaited verdict, the HC noted that there were indications of a Sanskrit teaching centre and a temple of Goddess Saraswati existing in the Bhojshala complex.

Later in the day, over 1,500 police personnel, supported by drones and CCTV surveillance, were deployed around the Bhojshala in Dhar after the Bhoj Utsav Samiti called upon members of the Hindu community to assemble for a collective *akhand puja* at the complex Friday, claiming it would mark the first such occasion in 72 years. The district administration has appealed for peace and strict adherence to court orders.

# Criticism not a threat to personality right: HC on Chadha plea against online posts

Sohini Ghosh  
New Delhi, May 21

POSTS ON social media alleging that Raghav Chadha had "sold himself for money" lay more in the domain of defamation, the Delhi High Court told the Rajya Sabha MP on Thursday while hearing his plea seeking protection for his "personality rights".

The posts appeared to be a "criticism of decisions taken by him (Chadha) in the political arena", the court observed orally. Justice Subramonium Prasad reserved his verdict on

the specific aspect of interim relief that Chadha was seeking.

Chadha led an exodus of seven MPs of the AAP to the BJP on April 24, triggering fierce criticism from the AAP, including attacks and name-calling on social media.

Expressing his prima facie view that Chadha's suit did not appear to involve a question of personality rights, Justice Prasad, addressing counsel for Chadha Senior Advocate Rajiv Nayar, said orally: "Here it is just criticism...on decisions taken by you in the political arena... Prima facie, they are



MP Raghav Chadha sought removal of AI-generated and deepfake content allegedly circulating against him. FILE

only criticism of political decision... It is an attack or critique."

The court indicated that the objections being raised by Chadha would lie in the ambit of defamation, although his suit has claimed protection for his personality rights. Nayar sought interim relief from the court for the alleged defamatory or objectionable posts flagged by Chadha, arguing, "The story which has gone is that I (Chadha) have traded for money. That can't be criticism."

The court, however, refrained from immediately injuncting the said posts and

content. "There is a difference between commercialisation of personality rights and criticism," the court said.

Chadha has sought the court's relief against various entities who allegedly exploited his likeness, and sought take-down of AI-generated and deepfake content allegedly circulating against him.

In recent years, the Delhi HC has seen a flurry of suits by celebrities, social media influencers, sports personalities, and politicians such as Shashi Tharoor, seeking the protection of their personality rights.



Amid the heatwave in UP's Prayagraj on Thursday. PTI

# At 47.6°C, UP's Banda yet again the hottest place in India: IMD

Press Trust of India  
New Delhi, May 21

SEVERAL STATES across India sweltered under blistering heat on Thursday, with Uttar Pradesh's Banda district again emerging as the hottest place in India at 47.6 degrees Celsius (°C). The India Meteorological Department (IMD) said that "heatwave" to "severe heatwave" conditions prevailed in several places of Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, Uttarakhand, Jammu & Kashmir, Delhi, Punjab and Madhya Pradesh.

As Banda again recorded the highest temperature in India with 47.6°C, the IMD issued a 'Red' warning for the next three days as well as an 'Orange' warning, thereafter, in view of the possibility of heatwave to "severe heatwave" conditions and warm night conditions at isolated places across Uttar Pradesh over the next week.

In view of the "severe heatwave" and continuously rising temperatures in the state, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has directed officials to exercise complete vigilance regarding relief and rescue operations. A 'Red' warning is the highest level of weather alert, meaning "take action".

The Meteorological Centre, Lucknow, said that the absence of an active weather system, enhanced radiational heating due to clear sky and dry weather, and the subsidence of hot winds

associated with an anticyclone over central India in the middle tropospheric levels have aggravated the heat conditions in UP.

Similar conditions prevailed in the neighbouring states of Haryana and Punjab too. Haryana's Sirsa, with 45.8°C, and Punjab's Faridkot, with 45.9°C, turned out to be the hottest places in the two states. Chandigarh braved yet another hot day at 44.2°C, over four notches above normal, the Met said. The maximum temperature at Gurugram was 42°C.

In Punjab, Bathinda saw the maximum temperature at 45.6°C, while Patiala recorded 44.9°C, five degrees over normal. Ludhiana saw temperatures rising to 43°C, four degrees above normal, and Amritsar at 41.5°C.

Heatwave conditions persisted at several places in Himachal Pradesh, with mercury levels staying three to five degrees above normal. Unasizzled at 44.3°C, followed by Neri at 41°C and Sundernagar at 39.9°C. The local Meteorological station issued an 'Orange' alert for thunderstorms, along with lightning, hail and gusty winds for Kangra, Kullu, Mandi, Shimla and Chamba for May 22.

In Uttarakhand, the administration advised children, senior citizens, and outdoor workers to exercise special caution. The weather office warned that temperatures in the plains may exceed 40 degrees Celsius, while hill districts will likely breach the 30°C mark.

# The 'burden' of proof: As chargesheets surge in volume & data, accused seek access to computers

Sadaf Modak  
Mumbai, May 21

IN 2006, some of the accused in the Mumbai serial train blasts case had to approach the court for permission to keep their over 10,000-page chargesheet in their barracks; the overcrowded Arthur Road Jail barely had space for its prisoners.

Twenty years later, the jail still remains crowded, chargesheets have only got longer, and the struggle for space has gone digital. Undertrials across jails are seeking access to computers or laptops to read the electronic evidence against them. From accused in the now-concluded Malegaon 2008 blast case to those booked in the Elgaar Parishad case of 2017-18, several accused have been given permission to use computers, with curbs.

While jail authorities oppose such pleas, citing lack of adequate staff to monitor usage and apprehensions of misuse, courts have been receptive on the grounds that the accused need to access e-data against them. In the terror scare case involving the Ambani residence

Antilia, for example, the NIA submitted in court that it had collected 1,000 terabytes of e-data — equivalent to roughly 10 billion pages of text — including about 39,000 clips of CCTV footage, apart from emails and call data dumps. One of the accused, the dismissed cop, Sachin Waze, sought access to a laptop to go through the same. In jail since 2021, he told the court that he was ready to pay for electricity and Internet charges.

Jail authorities opposed the plea arguing that if Waze was given access, others too would make similar demands, which would be "dangerous". Granting Waze's request, the court said in

## ● CASE OF THE PILING PAPERS

● **Mumbai serial train blasts 2006:** ATS filed a chargesheet running into over 10,000 pages

● **Elgaar Parishad case, 2017-18:** Pune Police filed an over 5,000-page chargesheet; NIA which took over had one spilling over 10,000 pages, including electronic proof

● **Antilia terror scare, 2021:** NIA

chargesheet over 10,000 pages, agency collected 1,000 terabytes of electronic data

● **Delhi riots case, 2020:** Chargesheet running into 20,000 pages, the Supreme Court permitted accused to file copies on a pen drive in a pending appeal

● **Red Fort blast, 2025:** NIA chargesheet ran into 7,500 pages

a May 2024 order: "Admittedly, the data of e-evidence is huge. To go through it, the help of a device like a computer or laptop is necessary." As regards Internet access, the court said the prison need not provide the same. Consequently, Waze was allowed to use a laptop between 11 am and 4 pm daily, under the supervision of jail authorities.

Elgaar Parishad accused Surendra Gadling and Arun Ferreira, who are themselves lawyers, moved court for the use of computers in Taloja Jail, citing the evidence submitted by the NIA against them on a hard disk. While jail authorities opposed the pleas saying there was no

provision for this in the prison manual, the court permitted them to use a computer for an hour twice a week, along with necessary software. Similarly, in 2011, Lieutenant Colonel Prasad Purohit, acquitted in the Malegaon 2008 blast case, was given permission to use a laptop in jail.

In 2008, an orthopaedic surgeon called Dr L Prakash, who was serving time in Puzhal Central Jail in Chennai for alleged cyberporn, invoked habeas corpus while seeking access to a laptop in jail for him and all others who applied for it. Prakash said that while the prison had about a dozen devices in its computer lab for training, he wanted a personal computer. The Madras HC looked into precedents on inmate rights and considered if the use of computers was a fundamental right falling under Article 19. It held Prakash could not be given a personal laptop but directed the jail to allow him access to a computer with supervision.

In 2020, a court in Kochi provided alleged Maoist operative Roopesh access to 45 minutes of Internet per week, to access official websites of SC and other courts, and legal search websites

as he was a law graduate and wanted to represent himself.

Wahid Shaikh, among those accused in the Mumbai train blasts, but later acquitted, and who now fights for the rights of prisoners, says having access to evidence can materially impact a case. "Having access to the chargesheet in our case helped us understand it well, and we could point out the fabrication done by the investigators," he said, adding that this has become even more important now.

One reason for this is the replacement of the IPC with BNSS, under which investigators are required to video-record search and seizure processes — thus increasing the component of e-evidence. At the same time, it's only a small portion of prisoners who are digitally literate. The Prison Statistics of India, 2024, states that 9,064 people across India benefited from computer courses in jails, including 608 in Maharashtra. According to a prison official, if the demand by inmates to access computers rose, "it will be difficult to monitor". "With evidence gone technical, it may come to be that others start filing pleas too."

India abstains on UNGA resolution on ICJ climate 'opinion'

## India abstains on UNGA resolution on ICJ climate 'opinion'

Press Trust of India  
United Nations, May 21

INDIA ABSTAINED from voting on a UN General Assembly resolution calling on countries to comply with their obligations on climate change, voicing concern that the draft "undermines" the "sacrosanct architecture" of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.

The resolution was adopted in the 193-member General Assembly on Wednesday with 141 votes in favour, eight against and 28 abstentions, including by India. India said it had engaged constructively during negotiations on the resolution and clarified its concerns and positions at every stage. "We are therefore disappointed that our concerns were not addressed, despite our best efforts to find common ground," it said.

In the Explanation of Vote, First Secretary in India's Permanent Mission to the UN, Petal Gahlot, said adoption of the resolution by the General Assembly does not create binding commitments for India. "Our obligations arise only from outcomes adopted under the UNFCCC process... India was not in a position to vote in favour of this resolution," she said.

The resolution titled 'Advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the obligations of States in respect of climate change' welcomed the July 2025 unanimous advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) on States' obligations on climate change. It affirmed the importance of the ICJ's advisory opinion as an authoritative contribution to the clarification of existing international law.



## Indian War Memorial in Seoul

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and South Korean Minister of Patriots & Veterans Affairs Kwon Oh-eul during the inauguration of Indian War Memorial at Imjingak Park in Seoul on Thursday. Highlighting the 'enduring legacy' of India's contribution to peace and humanitarian assistance for the Korean Peninsula, Singh said that the shared history and sacrifices of the two nations continue to serve as a strong foundation for the India-Republic of Korea Special Strategic partnership. PTI

## Revolutionary Goans Party chief quits, cites 'internal' rift in letter

Pavneet Singh Chadha  
Panaji, May 21

REVOLUTIONARY GOANS Party (RGP) chief Manoj Parab on Thursday resigned as the party's president, claiming to have "quit active politics forever", citing "internal" rifts and "individual power-centric politics". In his resignation letter sent to the party's general secretary, Parab said that nine years ago, they started a revolution with a dream to fight for Goa and for Goenkars.

"Today, with a very heavy heart, I feel that the same revolution has turned into dirty politics. From internal politics



I'm sorry... My inner voice does not give me permission to play dirty politics, says Manoj Parab

to individual power-centric politics, all this has broken me from within." He acknowledged that as the party chief, "maybe I failed to take necessary actions at the right time". "But one thing I can proudly say is that I

gave my best to create leaders who could challenge the system and fight for Goa fearlessly. My dream was to see Goenkars fighting to save their villages and identity. This gives me satisfaction that the revolution, somewhere, has reached the hearts of the people."

Parab's resignation comes after weeks of simmering tension between two factions in the party. In his letter, Parab alluded to a recent meeting of a faction of party members in Margao, accusing them of trying to "break" the party. "I am sorry that I could not take this ahead. My inner voice does not give me permission to play dirty politics."

## Review CBSE Class 12 evaluation process, Brittas urges Pradhan

New Delhi: Rajya Sabha MP John Brittas on Thursday wrote to Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, expressing concern over the CBSE Class 12 results for 2026, urging an independent review of the evaluation process, the reevaluation framework and technical glitches affecting the answer sheet access portal.

Brittas said anxiety had emerged among students, parents and teachers after the declaration of the results and pointed to a drop in the overall pass percentage. He said the decline has been linked by several observers to the introduction of the On-Screen Marking system. PTI

**Office Of Commissioner**  
**Department of Public Health & Medical Education**  
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# NEET cancelled as exam credibility was impacted, NTA officials tell House panel

Express News Service  
New Delhi, May 21

SENIOR OFFICIALS of the National Testing Agency (NTA) were learnt to have told a parliamentary panel on Thursday that the NEET-UG examination was cancelled because the situation had reached a point where the credibility of the examination was impacted.

The remarks by the NTA officials were made at a meeting of the Parliamentary Committee on Education, Women, Children, Youth and Sports, which is headed by Congress MP Digvijaya Singh.

The panel had summoned top officials of the Education Ministry and NTA officials, including its Director General Abhishek Singh and Chairperson Pradeep Kumar Joshi.

The Committee members from the Opposition parties are learnt to have raised questions regarding the alleged intelligence failure and that it should be viewed seriously. During the meeting, demands were raised from Opposition members for senior NTA officials to take moral responsibility for the alleged leak.

The Opposition leaders and the NTA officials are learnt to have differed on calling the incident a paper leak, with BJP members suggesting that it should be said that the examination was compromised and not that there was a leak.



NTA Director General Abhishek Singh arrives for a meeting on the NEET-UG paper leak row, in New Delhi on Thursday. ANI VIDEO GRAB

The committee also directed the NTA to submit more detailed explanations on the alleged leak. The officials are learnt to have told the panel that steps were being taken to conduct the re-examination in a flawless manner.

During the meeting, demands were raised that senior officials should take moral responsibility. Officials from the Education Ministry informed the committee that the incident was unfortunate.

There were also objections from the panel members during the meeting regarding Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan's comments at a press conference recently that the House committee had members from Opposition parties and that their remarks were written in a

"certain way".

Committee members, including Dean Kuriakose, objected to the minister's statement that the committee was "playing politics".

Last week, while addressing a press conference, Pradhan was asked about the issues that the Parliamentary Standing Committee had flagged in its report last year. Pradhan had said: "I will not go by the opinion of the parliamentary committee. I will go by the recommendation of the Radhakrishnan committee... I will proceed based on facts; we won't talk about assumptions. In political tones... I will respond in Parliament... The parliamentary standing committee has Opposition members. They write in a certain way, you also know that."

## 'Arrested expert also translated botany and zoology questions'

Abhinaya Harigovind & Mahender Singh Manral  
New Delhi, May 21

THE CBI investigation into the alleged NEET-UG paper leak has found that one of the arrested subject experts, Manisha Gurunath Mandhare, was not only involved in setting the question paper but also in translating it, it is learnt.

Arrested last week, Mandhare, a Biology subject expert from Pune's Modern College of Arts, is learnt to have translated questions from both Botany and Zoology sections, giving her access to a wider portion of the paper than previously known.

Another arrested expert, retired Chemistry lecturer P V Kulkarni of Dayanand Junior College in Latur, was reportedly involved in translating the paper into Marathi.

CBI has also found that Mandhare conspired with other co-accused, including Manisha Waghmare and Kulkarni.

"In April 2026, she mobilised prospective NEET examination candidates through Waghmare and conducted special coaching classes for these students at her Pune resi-



Manisha Gurunath Mandhare was not only involved in setting the NEET question paper but also in its translation

dence. Initial investigation has revealed that she got full access to the question papers after she was asked by the NTA to translate selective questions," a source said.

She provided exam-related questions or content to selected students in consideration of "substantial monetary benefits". "She was taken to Pune to disclose all the places where the class was taken by her, where she met Waghmare, and to confront some of the suspected students," the source said.

Apart from English, candidates can write the NEET-UG exam in 12 regional languages.

Sources had earlier told The Indian Express that the National Testing Agency (NTA) has two translators for each of the 12 languages. The subject experts involved in paper setting are also engaged in translation to reduce the number of people who have access to the question paper, sources said.

In its internal probe before the inquiry was handed over to CBI, the agency had found that all Chemistry questions, and some from the Biology section, in the NEET-UG question paper matched with a "guess paper". The NEET paper has 180 questions covering Chemistry, Biology, and Physics.

After subject experts suggest questions, a team of these experts combines them into question papers, and at least two are prepared. These papers are then vetted, solved, and translated before they are sent out for printing.

Mandhare's arrest came a day after the CBI arrested co-accused Prahlad Vital Rao Kulkarni from Pune, identifying him as the source of the NEET-UG 2026 examination paper leaks. NEET-UG, which was held for 22 lakh candidates on May 3, was cancelled last week over allegations of a paper leak.

## • BRIEFLY



BSF's first all-woman mountaineering team celebrates after reaching the summit of Mount Everest on Thursday morning.

NEW DELHI

## BSF women's team scales Mount Everest, sings 'Vande Mataram'

IN A landmark moment for the BSF, its first all-woman mountaineering team successfully reached the summit of Mount Everest (8,848.86 m) on Thursday morning, completing a high-altitude mission that coincides with the Force's Diamond Jubilee and the 150th anniversary of the national song Vande Mataram. The team of M/Ct Kouser Fatima from Ladakh, M/Ct Munmun Ghosh from West Bengal, M/Ct Rabeka Singh from Uttarakhand and M/Ct Tsering Chorol from Kargil scaled the world's highest peak after weeks of acclimatisation and technical climbing. The expedition was flagged off from Delhi headquarters on April 6 by Director General (BSF) Praveen Kumar. Speaking through a radio link from near the summit after the successful climb, Kumar hailed the team's achievement as a shining symbol of the indomitable spirit, professionalism and dedication of BSF personnel. ENS

## Electrician falls to death at Raipur airport

AMID A heatwave in Chhattisgarh, a 28-year-old electrician at the busy Swami Vivekananda Airport in Chhattisgarh's Raipur fell to his death from a 20-foot false ceiling as passengers watched in horror after the heat brought on a dizzy spell. Kuber Chandra Sahu and his colleagues were working on the first floor of the Security Hold Area when he fainted and fell. An official said airport management tried to revive him. "We gave him CPR and also rushed him to a hospital but, unfortunately, we could not save his life," he said. He also admitted that Sahu had no safety harness. "Not even a helmet. The contractor should take these measures," he said. ENS

and landed the aircraft safely at the Delhi airport. All passengers and crew are safe and have disembarked normally, the airline said in a statement. The A320 aircraft was operating the flight AI2802 from Bengaluru to Delhi. "During the aircraft's final approach into Delhi, the cockpit crew received a fire indication from one of the engines. The indication was subsequently confirmed as true," the statement said. PTI

## Shots fired at Cricket Canada chief's house

Unidentified gunmen opened fire at the Surrey residence of Arvind Khosa, the Indian-origin president of Cricket Canada, with the investigators saying it may be extortion-related, according to a local media report. At least five bullet holes were visible in the door and exterior of the house. The house was occupied at the time of the shooting; however, no one was injured, the Surrey police said. Khosa confirmed the shooting but declined to elaborate. This is the third incident involving the targeting of the house of high-level member of Cricket Canada. ENS

## Engine fire scare forces emergency landing in Delhi

AN AIR India aircraft from Bengaluru made an emergency landing at the Delhi airport due to suspected engine fire on Thursday evening, according to sources. The crew followed all standard operating procedures

## SC says courts can hear pending sedition cases provided the accused have no objection

Express News Service  
New Delhi, May 21

FOUR YEARS after it directed that all pending trials, appeals and proceedings with respect to charges framed under IPC's sedition law be kept in abeyance, the Supreme Court on Thursday allowed courts to proceed with hearing of pending cases provided the accused have no objection to the same.

A three-judge bench presided by Chief Justice of India Surya Kant said this while hearing a plea by Kamran, who was convicted in February 2017 under provisions of Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA), Arms Act and for sedition under Section 124A of the Indian Penal Code (IPC). He was sentenced to life imprisonment.

The counsel for the appellant, Kamran, told the bench, also comprising Justices Joymalya Bagchi and Vipul M Pandhori, that his appeal against conviction is pending before the Madhya Pradesh High Court and is not being heard because of the stay imposed by the top court.

Taking note of the submissions, the SC clarified its May 2022 order.

"The petitioner's grievance is that he has no objection if his criminal appeal is heard in entirety, including with respect to the charge under Section 124A. That being so, we clarify para 8(d) of our interim order dated 11.05.2022... to the effect that wherever the accused has no objection against proceeding of the trial, appeal, or any other proceeding where he has been charged under Section 124A IPC also, there shall be no impediment for the Courts to decide such matters on merits and in accordance with law," the bench said in its order.

The court clarified that it had not said anything on the merits of the case.

Hearing petitions challenging the sedition provision under IPC, the SC had, on May 11, 2022, directed that "all pending trials, appeals and proceedings with respect to the charge framed under Section 124A of IPC be kept in abeyance. Adjudication with respect to other Sections, if any, could proceed if the Courts are of the opinion that no prejudice would be caused to the accused."

With this order, the SC put on hold trial in all sedition cases pending before courts across the country until the government completes its promised exercise "to re-examine and re-consider the provisions of Section 124A of the IPC" dealing with the offence of sedition.

## Calcutta HC refuses to stay cattle slaughter notice, asks govt to decide on exemptions

Atri Mitra  
Kolkata, May 21

NOT JUST Refusing to put a stay on the West Bengal government's order regulating the slaughter of cattle in the state, the Calcutta High Court on Thursday left it to the newly formed BJP government to decide on exemptions in view of Eid al-Adha within 24 hours. The Islamic festival of Eid al-Adha, also known as Bakrid, falls next week.

The Division Bench of Chief Justice Sujoy Paul and Justice Partha Sarathi Sen also ordered the state government to amend its May 13 notice by "expressly incorporating that slaughter of animals, including cows and buffaloes, in open public places is strictly prohibited", adding, "Sacrifice of a cow is not a part of the festival of Id-Uz-Zoha and is not a religious requirement under Islam," as decided by the Supreme Court in Hanif Quershi vs State of Bihar.

The High Court was hearing a bunch of petitions over the state government's May 13 notification, in which it had issued a set of guidelines barring animal slaughter without a "fit certificate" from authorities and warned of penal action if the directions are not followed.

Senior lawyer Bikash Ranjan Bhattacharya, appearing for one of the petitioners seeking an exemption under Section 12 of the Animal Slaughter Control Act, 1950, for performing the religious rituals during the festival, submitted before

the court that the law was framed in 1950, when agriculture was dependent on domestic animals, but at present, farming is technology-driven.

He stated that Section 12 of the Act provides for relaxation for religious purposes. Bhattacharya also claimed that there has been a healthy growth in the cattle population over the years in West Bengal.

Opposing it, the state and the Centre's lawyers submitted that the notification imposing certain restrictions was issued as per the provisions of the Act and judgments of this high court in 2018. Another plaintiff's lawyer, Debayani Sengupta, made a plea for a ban on cow slaughter on Bakrid. "Let there be a complete ban on cow slaughter during Bakrid. A monitoring committee should be constituted," she told the court.

On the exemptions sought by a group of petitioners, the High Court said, "...we are inclined to direct that the State shall take a decision... regarding exemption... Considering the fact that the festivals may take place on 27/28th of this month, the State shall take a decision in this regard within 24 hours from the date of communication of this order."

On the plea seeking a complete ban on cow slaughter, the Bench said, "In our opinion, the Act of 1950 takes care of the relief prayed for by the petitioner, and we have no doubt that the State will endeavour to implement the Act and Rules made thereunder in its true spirit."

## STERILISATION, FEEDING SPOTS, DOG POLICY

# How 'NALSAR model' got narrow exception in the Supreme Court

Nikhila Henry  
Hyderabad, May 21

IN THE summer of 2017, NALSAR University of Law on the outskirts of Hyderabad woke up to a dog killing; a mother was poisoned and her four puppies wiped out by unknown people on the campus. The shocking incident gave birth to NALSAR's own campus dog management.

Today, the initiative is thriving, as a walk through the 50-acre NALSAR campus shows: docile campus dogs lounging around, loved and protected. "Lazing is the word, because they know they don't have to fight for food," Shubham Dhamelia, a volunteer and co-founder of the WhatsApp group 'We for the Dogs', tells *The Indian Express*.

Such is the measure, in fact, that it led the Supreme Court to carve out a narrow exception in its May 19 judgment on stray dog management, which emphasised public safety and allowed euthanasia of "rabid" stray dogs.

In its ruling, the top court, upon NALSAR University's intervention in the case, allowed educational institutions to run controlled, campus-based stray dog housing initiatives, saying that in the event of any stray dog bite occurring within the NALSAR campus, its Animal Law Centre "shall be liable to face tortious liability for the injury caused to the individual/s concerned". "This Court is of the considered opinion that any framework concerning the management and protection of stray dogs must necessarily be



Student volunteers feed dogs at 6-8 designated spots on campus using university funds

accompanied by clearly defined principles of accountability."

The exception stemmed from the 'NALSAR model' — an initiative that has seen students and faculty come together to protect and manage community dogs on campus. Among these measures are the 'We for the Dogs' WhatsApp group of 80-90 people, an Instagram page called the 'Dogs of Nalsar', and, most importantly, the Animal Law Centre, which began in 2018 and claims to be "India's first research centre on Animal Law and Policy which aims to fill critical gaps by producing robust research and building capacity across a collaborative network across academia, grassroots stakeholders, and government agencies".

The campus has 6-8 designated dog-feeding spots, where some 20-30 student volunteers feed dogs using university funds, while also keeping tabs on their vaccination and steril-

isation. "It's a tight knit community, and each one plays their own role in keeping the campus safe for dogs and humans both," says Dhamelia, who founded 'We for Dogs' with four other students in 2022.

This ecosystem of care and caution emerged through a step-by-step process, says Vivek Mukherjee, head of Animal Law and Policy. "A year after the Animal Law Centre was established, senior faculty members and students started drafting the dog policy, which took shape by 2020-21. Alongside came the census of dogs on campus. We identified that 10-11 dogs were born on campus and should be raised here," Mukherjee says.

This number doubled to 20 during 2021-23, amid the COVID-19 lockdown. "Since then, because of sterilisation and checks across the university boundaries that kept other dogs from entering the campus, the number has remained the same," Mukherjee says.

### The balancing act

A glance at the NALSAR dog policy shows how the university tried to balance human safety with animal protection. The policy mandates that NALSAR's elected student bar council oversee its implementation. A major role of the student and faculty community is "conflict mitigation" — both human-dog and dog-dog.

"The society of volunteers Nalsar Animal Welfare Group shall be responsible for coordinating all matters concerning the animals on campus, specifi-

cally the dogs," it says.

What happens in case of dog bites? Students claim this is prevented to a large extent by ensuring enough food and water for the animals. "Territorial fights among the dogs were minimised as we did the census, sterilised and vaccinated the dog population on campus," says Siddhant, a NALSAR student who also participates in caring for the dogs.

Animal welfare advocates on campus believe the initiative has paid off. One outcome, they say, has been reduced criticism of community dogs. "There are two kinds of people who don't get along with dogs — those who are averse to dogs and others who harm them intentionally. Through sensitisation measures, done annually on campus with the support of the university administration, we have been able to curtail human-dog conflicts of any kind," Dhamelia says.

Meanwhile, students and faculty celebrate a Nepali dog festival, called Kukur Tihar, alongside Diwali to "celebrate the social animals called dogs", says Siddhant.

Mukherjee of the Animal Law Centre believes the court's ruling reflected these measures. "The court has recognised the effort of the NALSAR community in providing a safe haven for both humans and dogs. The court recognises it as an 'experiment' which could be replicated elsewhere," Mukherjee says, adding: "The judgment offers a ray of hope to NALSAR. We hope that if we can do it, other institutions too can do it."

## Modi's gifts for world leaders reflect India's art and heritage

Divya A  
New Delhi, May 21

NOT JUST a packet of India toffee Melody, Prime Minister Narendra Modi also gifted two exquisite garment accessories — a Muga silk stole from Assam and an off-white Shirui Lily silk stole from Manipur — to his Italian counterpart Giorgia Meloni.

Muga silk, known as the "golden silk" of Assam, is a rare textile from the Brahmaputra Valley. It is produced without any artificial dyes. The Shirui Lily silk draws its inspiration from the misty heights of Shirui Kashong Peak in Ma-

nipur. It is named after the rare Shirui Lily, a delicate bell-shaped flower with pale pinkish-white petals that blooms nowhere else in the world. The lily also holds deep cultural resonance in Italy, where it has long symbolised purity, grace and artistic refinement, frequently appearing in Renaissance art.

Queen Máxima of the Netherlands was presented with a pair of Meenakari and Kundan earrings sourced from the royal ateliers of Rajasthan. Uniting two historic art forms — Meenakari (enamelling onto metal) and Kundan (the setting of



The Meenakari and Kundan earrings sourced from the royal ateliers of Rajasthan; Muga silk from Assam. EXPRESS

uncut gemstones in refined gold foil) — the orange and blue pair carried special significance for the Netherlands. While orange honours the Dutch royal

House of Orange-Nassau, blue reflects serenity, openness and the nation's enduring relationship with water.

During his five-nation tour — UAE, Sweden, Norway, the Netherlands and Italy — PM Modi carried a whole range of gifts for world leaders sourced from the length and breadth of the country — displaying artistic skills, heritage and India's soft power.

Norwegian Prime Minister Jonas Gahr Store received a pressed orchid painting and orchid paperweights made of real pressed orchids and ferns from Sikkim, while Norwegian King Harald V was presented with an intricate silver sailboat model, a piece of Tarakasi, the ancient art of silver filigree from

Odisha's Cuttack.

West Bengal and its artistic traditions were also highlighted through a Santiniketan messenger bag gifted to Swedish PM Ulf Kristersson. A selection of works by Rabindranath Tagore were also presented alongside the bag. Tagore shared a special intellectual connection with Sweden through the Nobel tradition and his visits to the country following his Nobel recognition.

UAE President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan was gifted a Rogan painting with Tree of Life, sourced from the state of Gujarat.

EXPANSION FORMALLY BRINGS CONGRESS INTO GOVERNMENT AFTER A GAP OF 59 YEARS

# 7 Dalit ministers, coalition optics: Vijay's TN Cabinet breaks old Dravidian power grammar

Arun Janardhanan  
Chennai, May 21

DAYS AFTER ending nearly six decades of uninterrupted Dravidian bipolarity in the state, Chief Minister C Joseph Vijay on Thursday unveiled a dramatically expanded 33-member Cabinet that attempted to signal what his government wants to look like — younger, socially broader, technologically aspirational and consciously different from the old grammar of Tamil Nadu power.

Beneath the protocol event of the swearing-in at the Lok Bhavan, there was an unmistakable political message: in a state where Dalit assertion has long shaped electoral rhetoric but rarely translated proportionately into executive power, Vijay's first Cabinet expansion prominently elevated multiple leaders from historically marginalised communities into visible administrative positions.

Seven Dalit representatives found place in the ministry, including Arakkonam MLA V Gandhiraj, Sriperumbudur MLA K Thennarasu, Avinashi MLAS Kamali, Rasipuram MLA D Logesh Tamilselvan and Ottapidaram MLA P Mathan Raja. The

ministry also included four women ministers and a notable cluster of first-generation politicians and local organisers who rose through Vijay's fan-club-turned-political-network structure.

The expansion also formally brought the Congress into government after a gap of 59 years, making the Vijay-led administration the state's first coalition government in the post-linguistic reorganisation era.

Governor Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar administered the oath to 23 new ministers, expanding the Cabinet from 10 to 33 members. Congress legislators S Rajesh Kumar and P Viswanathan were inducted as ministers, while the Viduthala Chiruthaigal Katchi (VCK) and Indian Union Muslim League (IUM) will formally join the government in a few days.

The expansion came amid continuing instability in the Opposition AIADMK and growing pressure from allies to keep rebel legislators out of government, a pressure tactic Vijay appears to have accepted for now.

Nearly 15 ministers are understood to have emerged directly from the Thalappathy Vijay Makkal Iyakkam network that



Governor R N Ravi, CM C Joseph Vijay and members of the Cabinet in Chennai on Thursday. PTI

predated TVK's electoral birth. Unlike the technocratic or dynastic recruitment patterns of earlier governments, many of the new ministers are organisers, traders, contractors, small entrepreneurs and district-level mobilisers.

The ministry also reflected a deliberate balancing of regions and communities. The Kongu belt emerged as the biggest beneficiary with nine ministerial berths, including ministers from Avinashi, Kumarapalayam, Erode East, Rasipuram, Salem South, Coimbatore North and Kinathukadavu.

A total of 19 of the state's 38 districts received no representation. Including Vijay, there are at least eight ministers in the Cabinet from Chennai alone.

Minority representation too figured prominently. Alongside Vijay and senior minister Aadhav Arjuna, ministers such as J Mohamed Farvas, A Srinath and N Marie Wilson gave the Cabinet visible Christian and Muslim representation at a time when the TVK continues to frame itself as a secular counterweight in Tamil Nadu politics.

The Congress's entry also altered the optics of the Cabinet considerably. Rajesh Kumar was given Tourism, while P Viswanathan was allotted Higher Education. Their induction completed a turnaround for a party that had spent decades as a "subordinate ally" in Dravidian coalitions.

The expansion carried another message. The government under Vijay would project

itself as future-oriented rather than purely ideological. For the first time in the state, a standalone ministry for Artificial Intelligence, Information Technology and Digital Services was created, with Velachery MLA R Kumar taking charge. Kumar, a businessman and engineering graduate who recently completed a leadership programme at IIM Bangalore, represents the kind of technocratic-administrative face the TVK wants associated with its government.

Senior leader K A Sengottaiyan, who had been given the powerful Finance portfolio just days ago, was abruptly shifted out and redesignated as Minister for Revenue and Disaster Management. Finance was reassigned to newly inducted min-

ister Wilson, a businessman from a prominent family with several educational institutions, who also has a doctorate in management science from JNTU, Hyderabad. Sources said Sengottaiyan sought the Revenue portfolio following which the CM reassigned his department.

Vijay, however, retained direct control over the government's core political architecture. In addition to Home, Police, General Administration, Women Welfare and Municipal Administration, he added Special Initiatives, Poverty Alleviation and Rural Indebtedness to his own charge.

A Srinath, Vijay's long-time friend and former co-actor from Naalaiya Theerpu days, was given the Fisheries department. Kamali, a 28-year-old homemaker who defeated Union minister L Murugan, became one of the youngest ministers in the Cabinet. S Ramesh, the media wing coordinator of the TVK, was allotted Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments.

D Logesh Tamilselvan, son of former AIADMK Speaker P Dhanapal, crossed over from the AIADMK ecosystem to become Minister for Commercial Taxes and Registration.

ONE NEWBORN DEAD, 3 FIGHT ODDS IN INCUBATORS AT MORADABAD HOSPITAL

## A rare delivery, and what comes after: The story of Amina, Alim and their quadruplets

Vidheesha Kuntamalla  
Moradabad, May 21

THE HEARING in the Pune minor's rape-murder case began at a fast track court on Thursday.

The special court allowed an application seeking an identification parade of the 65-year-old accused who allegedly raped and murdered the three-year-old girl at a village in Pune district on May 1. The court also allowed medical tests for a psychiatric evaluation of the accused to assess his mental fitness, police said.

Police filed the application in this regard before the court through special public prosecutor (SPP) Ajay Misar. The court ordered that the identification parade and the medical test of the accused should be conducted before May 28. Police said charges would be framed during the next hearing of this case, to be held the same day.

The court directed the district legal services authority to appoint a lawyer for the accused. The court also ordered that the accused be produced before it with essential security arrangements during the next hearing, so that he can have a face to face interaction with his lawyer before charges are framed. The accused was produced through video conferencing.

On May 16, the police had filed a chargesheet against the accused under relevant sections of BNS and POCSO Act.

As per police records, the victim was a resident of Pune city, but was staying at her grandmother's house at a village in the district. On May 1, while she was playing near a local temple, the accused allegedly took her to a cowshed. He allegedly raped the girl, killed her, and dumped her body in cow dung there.



The team of doctors at TMU with Amina. EXPRESS

Lying on the hospital bed, Amina says: "Everyone wants children after marriage. That's what I wanted too."

Amina's mother had nine children, including a pair of twins. So when Alim and she first came to know after an ultrasound that she was carrying four foetuses, Amina says they were not unduly worried.

But, as they consulted multiple hospitals, the first advice of doctors was "foetal reduction". This involved the termination of one or more foetuses to improve the chances of survival of the others and reduce risks to the mother.

When they came to TMU, nearly 30 km from Sambhal, this is what Professor Shubra Agarwal, the doctor who led the obstetrics and gynaecology team at TMU, also told them. By then, Amina was in the third week of her pregnancy.

"In nearly 12 years of practice, this was the first time I saw a spontaneous quadruplet pregnancy... We advised Amina and her husband that carrying quadruplets till term was extremely difficult," Agarwal told *The Indian Express*.

Agarwal has been with TMU, a private university with a hospital attached, since 2014.

Dr Alka Kriplani, former head of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology at AIIMS, also asserts the "extremely uncommon" nature of spontaneous quadruplet pregnancies. "In my entire career, I have seen only two or three such cases."

Amina says she considered the medical advice, but didn't hesitate after doctors admitted they were not sure of the risks. Even if she chose to terminate one of the foetuses, they said, complications or pregnancy loss regarding the others were possible.

"I wanted to know if there was an injection so that, in the worst-case scenario, at least one baby would not be affected. But nobody could give us that guarantee," she says.

So the couple chose faith instead. "Leave it to God," they told doctors repeatedly. Alim, who runs a small grocery shop with his brother in Obri, earns between Rs 15,000 and Rs 20,000 a month. Theirs is a joint household of five members.

When doctors advised strict bed rest for Amina to ensure there were no risks, Alim started waking up early to cook breakfast before heading to the shop. His sister-in-law helped, as did relatives.

As the pregnancy became physically exhausting, Amina struggled to eat. Her weight dropped. She survived mostly on coconut water, fruits and small meals.

From the fourth month on, doctors stepped up the monitoring to checks every two weeks. Then, when Amina had just finished 26 weeks, she went into labour.

She delivered the first baby on May 9. Soon after, to the surprise of the doctors, her contractions stopped.

Because the remaining three babies were still stable inside separate amniotic sacs and there were appeared to be no infection, doctors attempted what they call "a delayed interval delivery", essentially a medical approach in which labour is temporarily halted to prolong the pregnancy and improve the survival chances of the remaining foetuses.

Five days later, Amina delivered the other three babies.

Dr M P Singh, Dean of Student Welfare at TMU, who also oversees media communications, says it was "the first case of quadruplets" since the hospital was established. "We treated Amina free of cost and have supported her family under the TMU Poshan Yojana by paying her Rs 4,000 (one-time payment)."

Dr Aditi Rawat, the NICU in-charge and consulting neonatologist at TMU, says Amina's babies fall in the highest-risk

category of newborn care: extremely premature and extremely low birth weight babies. "The mortality rate in babies born before 28 weeks and below 900 grams is between 50% and 80%," she says.

One complication is that the babies, given how small they are, cannot yet drink milk. Their lungs, intestines and other organs remain underdeveloped. Nutrition is being administered intravenously, with doctors monitoring oxygen saturation, blood gases, urine output and pulse rates almost hourly.

A fragile Amina spends most of her time on the hospital bed, in a ward with over 10 other patients. Alim sleeps at night outside along with relatives.

As their three babies fight against the odds in incubators, the 28-year-old admits he often debates if they were right in keeping all the four foetuses. "There is fear... Maybe we should have listened. At that time, we only thought positively," he says. But almost immediately, Alim pulls himself together. "Whatever happens, happens for the best. We hope that our children come out safe."

Since Amina was admitted, Alim has gone back to the village only once, to bury their first-born. They were yet to name him or the others, having decided to leave it till after they were at home.

Before that, Alim must face one more thing: break the news to Amina that one of their children didn't make it. He fears she is too weak to deal with the blow. When she demands to see the babies, he leads her to the glass window looking into the NICU — and lets her draw her own conclusions.

## Soon, uniforms a must in colleges & varsities across UP

Maulshree Seth  
Lucknow, May 21

COLLEGE STUDENTS across Uttar Pradesh will soon have to wear a uniform, with the Uttar Pradesh government Thursday announcing plans to make a dress code compulsory in higher educational institutions across the state.

This comes a day after UP Governor Anandiben Patel directed universities and colleges to explore introducing uniforms like in schools.

UP Higher Education Minister Yogendra Upadhyay said as per the directions of the Governor, dress code in universities and colleges would be made compulsory to promote equality, discipline and social harmony among students.

During a review meeting regarding colleges affiliated with Jananayak Chandrashekhar University, Ballia, at Jan Bhawan on Wednesday, the Governor — who is also the Chancellor of State Universities — stressed on the need for uniforms to create a disciplined and positive academic environment.

According to officials present at the meeting, concerns were raised over students roaming in malls and markets during college hours and it was felt that uniforms could help identify such students and encourage discipline and regular attendance.

Speaking about the proposed policy, Upadhyay said efforts would be made to introduce a common dress code in educational institutions "as far as possible" so that students study in a more uniform and disciplined environment.

"Students form a homogeneous class where no discrimination, or sense of high and low should be visible," the minister said. He added that differences in clothing often reflect social and economic inequality, which can create inferiority complexes among some students while fostering a sense of superiority among others.

According to the minister, implementing a dress code would help minimise such distinctions and encourage equality among students.

The minister said the government's objective is to create a "positive, disciplined and cultured" atmosphere in universities and colleges. "Dress code is not merely a symbol of discipline but also a means to strengthen social harmony and equal opportunity," he said, adding that it would help students focus more on education and personality development.

Officials said the arrangement is expected to bring greater uniformity in academic institutions and contribute towards the vision of a "developed Uttar Pradesh and developed India".



The seized arms and ammunition on display at the office of SP Imphal West, on Thursday. PTI

## Manipur: 3 yrs after peace deal, insurgent group found selling weapons

Sukrita Baruah  
Guwahati, May 21

SECURITY FORCES in Manipur recovered 67 weapons, including ones looted from state armouries, from the United National Liberation Front (Pambei), a valley-based insurgent group that the Centre had signed a peace agreement with in 2023. According to police, cadres of the group were engaged in selling these weapons.

Over the course of two days, which included a cordon and search operation at an unauthorised UNLF(P) camp at Lamdeng in Imphal West, joint security forces comprising Manipur Police, Assam Rifles and the CRPF recovered these weapons, said a statement from the Manipur Police. A breakup of these weapons included 27 AK-series weapons, 11 M-series rifles, four 9-mm pistols, and one RPG-7.

According to a senior police officer, this weapons haul includes weapons that had been looted from state armouries during the course of the ongoing

conflict in the state. Around 6,000 weapons had been looted from state armouries during the conflict that began in May 2023.

According to police, they launched a special operation in Lamshang on Wednesday based on "credible information regarding the selling of looted arms and ammunition", during which they apprehended two active cadres of the UNLF(P) with one INSAS LMG and three magazines, as well as fourteen live rounds. "While the arrest was going on, associates of the cadres opened fire at the security forces, resulting in a brief exchange of fire," said a police statement, adding that two more cadres who had fired at the security forces were apprehended as well.

"On preliminary interrogation of the arrested cadres, they disclosed that they had come to sell the seized weapons on the instruction of self-styled Lance Corporal Naorem Bijoy, alias Macha, of UNLF(P). They further admitted to earlier sale of looted arms and ammunition," said police.

KORSNICK, LEADING A U.S. DELEGATION TO INDIA, SAYS SHANTI BILL CREATES CLEARER OPENING FOR PRIVATE SECTOR PARTICIPATION IN THE NUCLEAR FIELD

## 'Countries need energy that are not exposed to fuel-price shocks or geopolitical disruption'

LESS THAN six months after a landmark legislation opened up India's nuclear sector, a high-powered American delegation is visiting the country. The purpose: To take stock of India's nuclear energy landscape and to communicate the American industry's interest.

In an interview with Divya A, President and CEO of the Washington DC-based Nuclear Energy Institute, Maria Korsnick, who is leading the delegation, talks about how India's SHANTI Bill creates a clearer opening for private-sector participation and how N-energy melds with the present scenario where energy security is a key imperative among countries rattled by the Strait of Hormuz crisis and the West Asia war.

Edited excerpts:

**US is having with government and industry leaders in India?**

We are meeting senior government leaders, public-sector institutions and private-sector companies, talking about India's nuclear ambitions, the role private industry can play, and how US and Indian companies can work together in a practical way.

This delegation brings together US companies across the nuclear sector — reactor technology, fuel, engineering, construction, transportation, services, and the supply chain. So, the conversations are not abstract. They are about what it would take to build projects, support India's energy goals, and create long-term industrial partnerships.

India has a strong nuclear foundation of its own. What is exciting now is the possibility of joining that, with the experience of the US nuclear industry.

**How do you think the passage of the SHANTI Bill — allowing private players in the nuclear energy domain — will foster collaboration between India and the US?**

For many years, there has been strong interest on both sides. What has been harder is creating the policy and business environment where companies can actually move forward. The SHANTI Bill creates a clearer opening for private-sector participation. That matters because the US nuclear industry is built around private companies that design, build, finance, operate, service, and support nuclear projects. If India is creating more room for private industry, there is a natural opportunity for US and Indian companies to work together.

And I want to be clear: this is not only about US companies coming to India. It is about part-

**nership with Indian companies that have engineering talent, manufacturing strength, construction capability, and a deep understanding of this market.**

**Are there any apprehensions since the rules have yet to come out? Would mission members from US wait till that point before making any announcements?**

There are no apprehensions. We are here to help identify practical ways for US and Indian companies to work together as the rules are developed. As for announcements, companies will make their own commercial decisions.

**How do you think nuclear energy melds with the present scenario where energy security is a key imperative among**

countries rattled by the Strait of Hormuz crisis and the West Asia war?

This is exactly why nuclear energy matters. Countries need energy that is reliable, that is secure. They need energy that is not exposed every day to fuel-price shocks or geopolitical disruption.

Nuclear energy provides large amounts of electricity around the clock. It is clean, dependable, and the fuel can be managed in a way that gives countries much greater energy security than systems that depend heavily on volatile global fuel markets.

That matters for India. It matters for the United States. It matters for every country trying to power industry, manufacturing, cities, data centres, and economic growth in a more uncertain world. Nuclear energy is not the only answer. But it has to be part of the answer.



MARIA KORSNICK  
CEO, NUCLEAR ENERGY INSTITUTE, WASHINGTON

**The Indian EXPRESS**  
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**RAMNATH GOENKA**  
 IN 1932  
 BECAUSE THE TRUTH  
 INVOLVES US ALL

# Voice from Ladakh is not a demand for privilege, but an appeal to be trusted

**H**OW SAD and ironic that the Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, argues that Ladakh needs more districts rather than a legislature or stronger constitutional safeguards under the Sixth Schedule. It contends that Ladakh's sparse population, strategic sensitivity and financial dependence on the Centre make a legislature unnecessary. Instead, it offers administrative decentralisation through additional districts.

This argument is fundamentally flawed and reveals an impoverished understanding of democracy. Let's break this down. The British Empire argued not too long ago that Indians lacked the maturity and institutional capacity for self-rule. It was against such paternalism that Sri Aurobindo pioneered the ideal of Purna Swaraj — absolute self-governance — rooted in dignity and national selfhood. The British were on the wrong side of history. And yet, after 80 years of Independence, the same argument revives the old colonial logic. Must Ladakh prove once again that they are sufficiently populous, profitable and capable to deserve a voice in the body politic? Does being geographically vast, sparsely populated and strategically located go against deserving a legislature?

The recent announcement of five additional districts — Nubra, Changthang, Sham, Zaskar and Drass — has been celebrated as a major governance reform. Certainly, administrative accessibility matters in a region spread across nearly 59,000 sq km of high-altitude terrain. But districts cannot legislate on land protection, demographic safeguards, ecological preservation,

employment priorities, cultural autonomy, renewable-energy negotiations, education policy or the long-term developmental vision of the region. Districts are instruments of administration. Legislatures are instruments of representation. No amount of administrative decentralisation and convenience can substitute for political agency.

The most troubling aspect of the present discourse is that the Centre itself repeatedly promised constitutional safeguards to Ladakh. After the abrogation of Article 370 and the creation of the Union Territory in 2019, the BJP, in its manifestos for the MP and Hill Council elections in 2019 and 2020 respectively, articulated assurances regarding the Sixth Schedule. Yet once it won on these very manifestos, it went back on its commitments. Can promises made to frontier populations become expendable after elections?

What of the objections themselves? Take the first one — that Ladakh is too strategic a border to be trusted with self-government. Arunachal Pradesh shares one of India's most sensitive borders with China. It is geographically vast, sparsely populated, strategically critical and financially dependent on the Centre. Yet when it was granted full statehood in 1987, India understood that people who feel politically enfranchised and constitutionally respected defend a nation more fiercely. If strategic sensitivity was an argument for empowerment in one Himalayan frontier, by what logic does it become an argument against it in another?

The same applies to much of the Northeast. When Nagaland was granted statehood in 1963, its



GITANJALI J  
ANGMO

population was barely 3.5 lakh. Mizoram became a state in 1987 with a population of roughly 5 lakh. Sikkim entered the Indian Union as a state in 1975 with a population of barely 2 lakh. Arunachal Pradesh had roughly 6 lakh people at the time of statehood. None of these states was financially self-sufficient. Many remain substantially dependent on central transfers even today. India did not tell them they were too small, or too poor, or too remote for a legislature. It understood that you integrate through belonging.

Which brings us to the fiscal objection — the weakest of the three. Ladakh, we are told, cannot generate enough revenue to sustain itself. But since when has fiscal solvency become the price of admission to Indian democracy? India's federal structure is built on redistribution. Even large states depend heavily on central devolution. Uttar Pradesh, the most populous state in the country, draws enormous sums from the Centre through tax devolution, central schemes and grants-in-aid. Bihar, Assam and many other states similarly rely on fiscal transfers to bridge developmental disparities. Several Northeastern states derive between 70 per cent and 90 per cent of their expenditure from central assistance.

The same establishment that calls Ladakh economically negligible, at this very moment, planning to build some of the country's largest energy infrastructure on its land. The renewable project slated for the Pang region of Changthang totals roughly 13 gigawatts of combined capacity,

spread across tens of thousands of acres of high-altitude pastureland. At an investment of approximately Rs 50,000 crore and a potential of Rs 7,000 crore of annual income, it is the arithmetic of a region central to India's energy future. Increasingly, Ladakh is witnessing decisions regarding solar parks, transmission corridors, mining possibilities, tourism expansion and land use. So the real question sharpens: Who negotiates the terms of that transformation? Who decides the land rights, the grazing rights, the ecological limits, the royalty owed to the people whose ground it is, and inter-generational sustainability? That is the work of a legislature — of representatives who answer to the people.

India's greatness was the constitutional imagination to hold staggering difference inside one Union without flattening it — the same imagination that produced the Sixth Schedule in the first place, on the understanding that fragile, distinct frontier places need protections the plains do not. Ladakh is not asking to belong to India less. It is asking to belong more completely.

Sri Aurobindo wrote that freedom is the necessary atmosphere for a nation's soul to grow. The soul of this nation has always been largest at its edges, in the places that chose Bharat and then defended it through cold, hardship and sacrifice. The voice rising from the mountains of Ladakh today is not a demand for privilege. It is an appeal to be trusted with itself.

The writer is founder of Himalayan Institute of Alternatives, Ladakh. She moved the Supreme Court against the detention of her husband, Sonam Wangchuk

The most troubling aspect of the present discourse is that the Centre itself repeatedly promised constitutional safeguards to Ladakh. Can promises made to frontier populations become expendable after elections?

## I want to daydream & write, not parade up the Instagram square



MAITHREYI  
KARNOOR

**S**OMEONE I met at a literary event where I spoke about when I translated asked me if he might continue the conversation online. I agreed, and thought we would exchange email addresses. But he said he would message me on Instagram, where, apparently, we followed each other. I am not on Instagram.

The assumption that everyone is on social media must be the predicament of our times. To deny it inspires disbelief. Keeping a low profile in an aggressively "networking" world, for me, isn't as much a sanctimonious choice as an instinct of laziness that lets me daydream. My writing is a byproduct of the dreaming. My ability to be lost in thought has endured constant assault from an early age and, as a hard-won talent, it is precious to me. Networking, which feels like the exact opposite of dreaming, isn't worth losing it to.

Not wanting to network might be a non-pragmatic choice for a participant in what is essentially a capitalistic trade. Being fashionably out of reach of the reader is only afforded to the "A-lister" who "divides his time" between two homes: A swanky Western city, and an ancestral village back in the sweltering homeland that feeds his postcolonial angst. A middling unknown like me without friends and/or enemies in high places and whose books and effigies aren't worth the price of the matchstick in the pocket of the unread reactionary has no choice but to go out dressed in khadi silk, smile a lot, take selfies, seek and give blurbs, exchange gossip, infiltrate coteries, utter well-articulated witticisms, and all but parade in a tutu up and down the Instagram square.

I am not entirely unambitious. I want my books to be read, and maybe, just maybe, someday not have to have a day job in order to indulge my literary vice. But somehow, my natural instinct is to trail off mid-sentence in a conversation, words vanishing from my mouth, and everyone save me moving on to greener signing tables. Then there is the inadvertent poking of the hornet's nest of rivalries. A certain Slovenian novelist I once met oozed charm

and rat-tat-tatted her publishing profile upon first introduction and insisted — without provocation — that writing in any language other than the mother tongue was linguistic treachery. Her enthusiasm dimmed when I didn't gush at her shining successes or applaud her passionate speech. When I asked her casually if she knew a Slovenian translator friend, her smile froze. "You think everyone knows everyone in Slovenia?" she snorted and turned her back to me. I overheard her extracting an invitation to a speaking engagement in Israel from the next personage she had attached herself to.

That is the essence of literary networking. It is aggressive, result-oriented politeness by those who claim to be dreamers. It cannot get any more ironic than that.

To be artless in the world of art may not be the most strategic thing to do. But if there are clouds where you live and your sense of pareidolia is strong, it's easy to face the consequences of your luddite choices with glee.

I have a tiny social-media presence: A locked Facebook account under a pseudonym and 300 friends with whom I share puns, cat videos, and my observations of absurdities. We laugh at how ridiculous everything is, say kind and clever things to each other, and go back to real lives. I have no time or patience to argue with strangers. I may be existing in the proverbial echo chamber, but I am too cynical to want to change other people's minds. I am also smug in my position of "compassion, humour, respect, free speech" where detractors have very little leeway. If I hear of a publishing opportunity, I share it with fellow writers. I'm happy to give advice if someone asks for it. In turn, I feel uplifted and grateful when I receive help. And that is all the friendship and goodwill I need. I think the world would be a better place if everyone — including writers — networked less and dreamed more.

Karnoor is a translator and writer, most recently of the short story collection *Gooday Nagar*, and the Kannada novel, *Hettavara Neralu*

## A divided Opposition is BJP's great strength



RAASHID ALVI

**F**OR 12 years, the BJP has been the dominant political force in India. Despite repeated allegations by opposition parties regarding the misuse of institutions, unfair electoral practices, and abuse of state machinery, the party continues to expand its political influence. It does not hesitate to use every available political tool, including influencing investigative agencies and benefiting from a favourable Election Commission. Why, then, have opposition parties failed to develop a united and long-term strategy against it?

One of the most significant political developments in recent years was the passage of the Chief Election Commissioner and Other Election Commissioners (Appointment, Conditions of Service and Term of Office) Act, 2023. The Lok Sabha passed it amid an Opposition walkout, and the Rajya Sabha passed it the following day. No serious parliamentary obstruction occurred, and even a formal division of the vote was reportedly not demanded. The Act replaced the CJI in the selection committee for Election Commissioners with a cabinet minister, giving the PM decisive influence over the appointments. Section 15A prevents courts from acting against election officials for acts performed in their official capacity. An important question arises: How can free and fair elections be guaranteed under the CEC Act, 2023? The Opposition must consider launching a nationwide movement — similar to the farmers' march — demanding the Act's withdrawal.

The 42nd Amendment of 1976 froze the total number of Lok Sabha seats, based on the 1971 Census, until 2000. The 84th Amendment extended this until the first Census after 2026. The Census process is expected to begin in 2026, and the next nationwide delimitation exercise may take place only after the publication of final data, possibly after 2030. However, the 84th Amendment did not prevent the delimitation conducted in Assam in 2023 under Section 8A of the Representation of the People Act, 1950. Using 2001 Census data, the EC redrew constituency boundaries while retaining the total number of Assembly and Lok Sabha seats. Boundaries were altered in a manner favourable to the BJP.

Perhaps the BJP's greatest advantage is not just its organisational strength, but opposition parties' inability to unite. During the Delhi elections, Arvind Kejriwal ruled out an AAP-Congress alliance, resulting in a split in anti-BJP votes: The BJP secured 45.56 per cent, AAP 43.57 per cent, and Congress 6.34 per cent. Had AAP and Congress contested together, their combined vote share would have crossed 50 per cent. A similar situation occurred in West Bengal, where the BJP secured 45.84 per cent, the TMC 40.80 per cent, CPI(M) 4.45 per cent, and Congress 2.97 per cent.

Opposition parties weaken themselves by refusing strategic alliances and prioritising regional rivalries over national political coordination. It would be prudent for Congress to set up state-specific alliances with regional parties well in advance of elections, rather than attempting last-minute political adjustments. The BJP's dominance may continue not merely because of its own strength, but because of the Opposition's continued inability to act as a coherent and united political force.

The writer is a Congress leader and former MP

During the Delhi elections, Arvind Kejriwal ruled out an AAP-Congress alliance, resulting in a split in anti-BJP votes. Together, their vote share would have crossed 50 per cent

## At UNGA, incomplete climate justice

**I**N JULY last year, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) ruled that countries are "obliged" to "prevent harm from climate change". The verdict has now received the imprimatur of the UN General Assembly. More than two-thirds of UN members, 141, voted in favour of the resolution on Wednesday; eight nations, including the US, said no and 28, including India, abstained. The resolution could change the tenor of the international climate debate — it strengthens the idea that mitigation measures cannot be founded on the principle of voluntarism. It gives vulnerable nations, particularly small island states — among the sponsors of the move — stronger diplomatic and legal grounds to demand action from major emitters.

That said, the resolution does not fully reflect the concerns of developing countries like India, which have always argued that countries with a longer history of industrialisation, accompanied by extractive colonialism, bear greater responsibility for addressing the climate crisis. Transition to green energy systems must take into account the need for economic and social development in countries outside the developed world. The resolution does not adequately recognise this imperative, especially since it is silent on climate finance. Opening the global-warming mitigation plans of countries to legal scrutiny without similar audits of the financial commitments of industrialised countries further undermines one of the already-embattled principles of climate negotiations — common but differentiated responsibilities.

India's abstention should, however, not be seen as a vote against the concerns of the small island states. New Delhi's initiatives such as SAGAR, and projects like the International Solar Alliance, have been sensitive to the anxieties of the countries most threatened by the rising seas. India has also made appreciable progress towards the attainment of its Paris Pact commitments. At the same time, it must remain alert to the growing sentiment among the most climate-vulnerable countries that emerging economies need to do more to reduce their fossil-fuel dependence — debates at the UNFCCC and now the passing of the UN General Assembly resolution show that this stance has the support of several countries in the West. Even as India pushes its justified position in international climate fora, it must stay the course on its green-transition targets. Doing so will be in the interests of the well-being of its people and the competitiveness of its industry.

That is the essence of literary networking. It is aggressive, result-oriented politeness by those who claim to be dreamers. It cannot get any more ironic than that

## Not just a game, in Arsenal they trust

**T**HE IMPORTANT thing about football," the late great Terry Pratchett wrote, "is that it is not just about football". The beautiful game has indeed borne the burden of weighty symbols for almost its entire existence. The 22 men on the pitch have been a metaphor for warring countries; the loyalty and passion of fans have been equated with religious fervour, their excesses seen as a mirror of sectarianism and class divides. It is, perhaps, because of this accumulated mass of metaphors that a piece of fake news following Arsenal becoming Premier League champions — for the first time in 22 years — was so believable that it required clarification from the government.

For a day or so, Arsenal fans in Botswana thought that their revelry had state sanction. Documents that looked like government notices announcing a holiday to celebrate the victory and recognise fans' "passion, loyalty and unwavering support" were shared on social media. The government's official handle had to clarify that the president had not declared a holiday.

Fake news going viral is old news. But the fandom around European and British clubs adds another layer to the football story. What is behind the die-hard loyalty for a club in London, in Gaborone and Gandhinagar? There is no national affiliation, neighbourhood loyalty or social base that binds this community of fans — except marketing and merchandise. Or, perhaps, there are times when football fandom is indeed about football.

## 40 YEARS AGO

May 22, 1986



## Clashes in Sri Lanka

SIX PERSONS, including one soldier, were killed in a major clash between army men and civilians in central Colombo, while armed policemen patrolled the tense area. Another 12 people, including nine civilians and three soldiers, died in clashes as Tamil guerrillas shifted their campaign to eastern Sri Lanka, according to a National Security Ministry spokesman. The raids were seen as an attempt to divert troops engaged in heavy fighting in the Jaffna peninsula, the heartland of the guerrilla movement.

## Political crisis in Kerala

A COMPROMISE formula is being worked

out to resolve the Kerala crisis involving the United Democratic Front ministry led by K Karunakaran after the reshuffle of his cabinet. Karunakaran held a prolonged meeting with Congress (I) Vice-President Arjun Singh and was also expected to meet Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi.

## Terrorists kill 9 in Amritsar

AT LEAST nine persons were shot dead and five others seriously injured when seven to eight jeep-borne terrorists opened fire in the Krishan Nagar area on the outskirts of Amritsar. Deputy Commissioner Ramesh Inder Singh said five terrorists had been captured after a chase and encounter. Four of the injured admitted to hospital were stated to be in

critical condition.

## \$400 m heroin haul

OFFICIALS OF the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI), in their biggest seizure in Delhi, confiscated 44½ kg of pure heroin worth more than \$400 million in the international market and arrested five people, including three Pakistani nationals. Acting on a tip-off, officials intercepted a truck carrying 10 kg of heroin concealed in a secret chamber under the rear mudguards. Interrogation of the driver and cleaner led the DRI team to a house in Mukherjee Nagar in north Delhi, where four people were arrested and another 24 kg of heroin along with seven kg of pearls were seized.



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

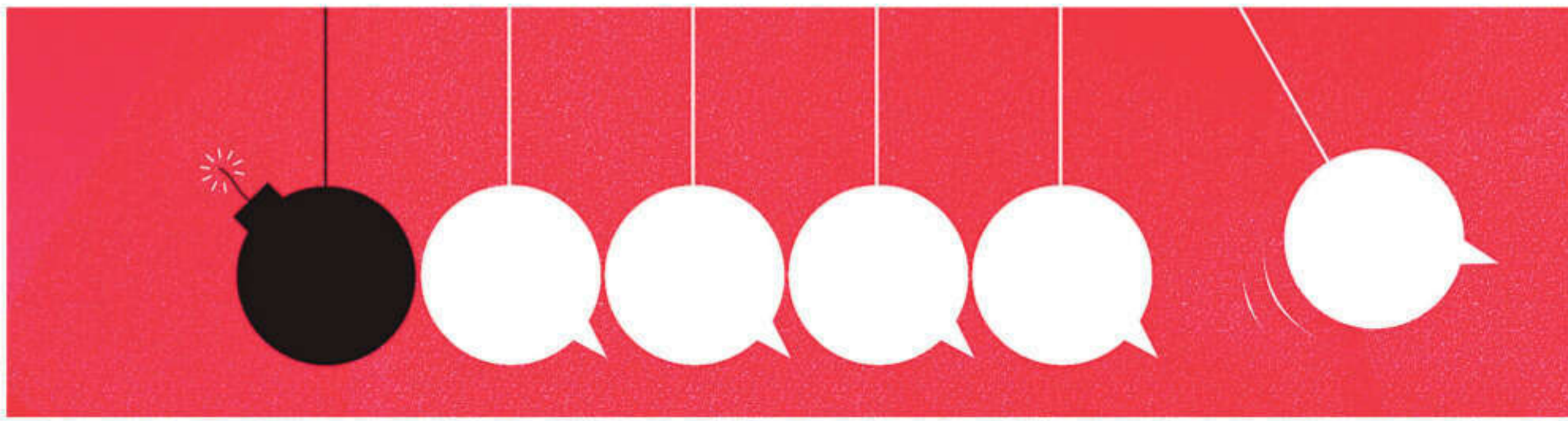


ILLUSTRATION: C.R. SASIKUMAR

RSS's Dattatreya Hosabale has advocated reopening dialogue with Pakistan. Is it the right moment?

## No talks for talks' sake, first set terms



AJAI SAHNI

RSS GENERAL Secretary Dattatreya Hosabale's remark that India should not "shut the doors" on dialogue with Pakistan has triggered predictable reactions. Every cycle of Pakistan-backed terrorism in India is eventually followed by debate over whether "talks" must resume, or whether negotiations merely give Islamabad diplomatic oxygen without securing meaningful change in behaviour or intent.

The problem, however, is not with talks per se. States talk even during wars. The real issue is whether dialogue is embedded within a coherent strategic framework, or whether it degenerates into the ritual of "talks for talks' sake". India's history with Pakistan demonstrates overwhelmingly that the latter has been the dominant pattern. India and Pakistan have sustained one of the longest-running and least productive diplomatic engagements in modern history, from Tashkent and Simla to Lahore, Agra, Sharm el-Sheikh and the composite dialogue process. Pakistan has used negotiations tactically while sustaining strategic hostility through terrorism, proxy warfare and military coercion, with some of the most dramatic peace initiatives coinciding with active, often escalating, terrorism.

The proposition that "we must keep talking" is strategically meaningless unless accompanied by answers to harder questions. What are the objectives? What are the conditions? What leverage does India possess, and what is its understanding of Pakistan's strategic calculus? Above all, how do talks fit within India's larger security doctrine?

Following the Pahalgam massacre and Operation Sindoor, the Indian government publicly declared that "every act of terrorism is an act of war", while simultaneously describing Operation Sindoor as the "new normal". Such declarations are not rhetorical flourishes to be invoked in moments of outrage and quietly abandoned thereafter. If terrorism constitutes an act of war, then the sponsoring state is an active belligerent employing proxy instruments. If retaliatory military action constitutes the "new normal", India has ostensibly moved beyond the earlier framework of strategic restraint.

These formulations potentially represent a profound doctrinal shift. But doctrines cannot coexist indefinitely with contradictory impulses. If India now seeks renewed talks with Islamabad, the obvious question arises: How are such talks reconciled with the "act of war" doctrine? Has Pakistan ceased sponsorship of terrorism? Has there been any demonstrable dismantling of jihadi infrastructure? Has Rawalpindi abandoned proxy warfare? There is little evidence of such a transformation. Indeed, the trajectory of Pakistan-

backed terrorism suggests adaptation rather than abandonment. Pakistan has repeatedly recalibrated its methods in response to Indian and international pressure. Large-scale attacks alternate with calibrated infiltration, targeted killings, narco-terrorism, radicalisation networks, drone-based weapons deliveries and ostensibly deniable local proxies. Tactical fluctuations are repeatedly misread in India as evidence of "peace opportunities" when they are often mere operational adjustments. Crucially, the absence of talks can itself constitute strategic communication. Refusal to negotiate signals that the adversary does not satisfy the minimum conditions necessary for meaningful engagement. No serious strategic community can treat negotiation as a virtue in itself. Negotiations are tools subordinate to policy. Where policy is absent, talks become theatre.

Critics also raise an uncomfortable question regarding Hosabale's remarks: Is any prospective outreach to Pakistan a sovereign strategic choice, or does it emerge under external pressure, particularly from the US? The distinction is critical. If talks emerge from a considered Indian assessment of national objectives, embedded within a larger strategy addressing terrorism, escalation management and the Pakistan-China axis, they may possess coherence. But if engagement is externally induced, security concerns are subordinated to external imperatives.

The Pakistan-China axis fundamentally alters the strategic environment within which any India-Pakistan dialogue must now be evaluated. Pakistan is no longer just a troublesome neighbour pursuing revisionist objectives through asymmetric warfare. It has become an increasingly integrated component of a broader Chinese regional strategy directed against India. Military cooperation, technological integration, intelligence sharing and coordinated geopolitical positioning have deepened steadily. Any engagement with Pakistan divorced from this larger strategic reality would amount to self-deception.

The central weakness of India's Pakistan policy has been the tendency to oscillate between rhetorical maximalism and theatrical diplomacy, without constructing a durable strategic framework. Periods of outrage produce declarations of resolve; external pressure generates calls for talks. What remains absent is clarity regarding desired end states and pathways to achieve these.

There is no virtue in perpetual hostility. But the burden of demonstrating credibility for dialogue rests overwhelmingly on Pakistan's abandonment of terrorism as an instrument of state policy. Until India defines clearly what conditions justify engagement, what costs follow continued sponsorship of terrorism, and how negotiations fit into a broader doctrine confronting the combined Pakistan-China challenge, any return to talks would be just another iteration of a failed and exhausting cycle.

The writer is founding member and executive director, Institute for Conflict Management

## Don't bet on civil society in Pakistan



VAPPALA BALACHANDRAN

ON MAY 12, senior RSS leader Dattatreya Hosabale said that Pakistan's military and political leadership had lost India's confidence, and that

it was time for "civil society to lead the way". He added: "The security and self-respect of a country has to be protected, and the government of the day should take care of it. But at the same time, we need not close the doors. We should always be ready to engage them in a dialogue." He said that trade and commerce and the issuance of visas should not stop, and that cultural affinities between the two countries work in favour of better ties between their civil societies. "Academicians, sports persons, scientists and community leaders should come forward there, as their political leadership and military leadership have developed aversion towards India."

Pakistan has reportedly welcomed this call. Its foreign ministry spokesperson, Tahir Andrabi, told a press briefing in Islamabad on May 14 that "the voices within India calling for dialogue are obviously a positive development". However, my experience in service, and later, does not give me cause to believe that Pakistan's civil society has the clout to push its government towards better ties with India. Civil-society groups in the two countries are bound by the attitudes and policies of the regimes in power — this is especially so with regard to foreign policy.

The overarching power of the Pakistani armed forces makes it especially difficult for India-friendly people in the country's society to take initiatives to further contacts with their neighbour.

The intelligence-fundamentalist-bureaucracy-dominated nation, in fact, pays more heed to the diktats of foreign powers than to the advice of some domestic agents. The process began in 1950 when then-Pakistan PM Liaquat Ali Khan declared that the formation of new political parties in opposition to the Muslim League was "against the interest of Pakistan". The same year, speaking in Washington, he signalled America's growing role in Pakistan's power structure by saying, "If your country will guarantee our territorial integrity, I will not keep any army at all." In 1953, General Ayub Khan went further: "Our army can be your army." Such dependence weakened democratic institutions. Today, army chief Asim Munir dominates Pakistan's politics. Will he encourage meaningful civil-society outreach with India?

My first exposure to India-Pakistan

civil society dialogue came in 2010, when the Centre for Dialogue and Reconciliation invited me to a roundtable comprising representatives of the two countries in New Delhi.

Unable to attend, I sent a note advocating a "peace constituency" between the two societies — this was later published in an Indian national newspaper and endorsed by Pakistani human rights activist I A Rehman, who had attended the meeting.

I participated in their second conclave in New Delhi in May 2010, which was attended by senior Pakistani representatives like former foreign secretary Humayun Khan, former army chief General Jehangir Karamat, I A Rehman and former minister Sherry Rehman, a member of the National Security Committee of Pakistan's Parliament. All of them knew that I was a member of the two-person high-level committee appointed by the Maharashtra government to enquire into the systemic lapses during the 26/11 terrorist attacks in Mumbai.

During a private interaction with General Karamat, I asked him why Pakistan uses militants against India. I reminded him about the two highest level R&AW-ISI meetings in the late 1980s. At that time, General Hamid Gul had told his Indian counterpart that Pakistan was supporting terrorism against India as "it was afraid of its size", and that it was "India's responsibility to instil confidence in a small country like Pakistan". Karamat's reply was typically evasive. He said that politicians from Punjab (Pakistan) were patronising militants to strengthen their political base, but was not clear why the powerful Pakistan army was not able to stop this practice, if it was convinced that it was wrong.

Sherry Rehman's paper, 'Reinventing Dialogue', submitted at the end of the conference, also reflected this chasm. Pakistan's "underclass of taxi drivers, shopkeepers, waiters and launderers is invested in a far more benign counter-narrative of authentic yearning for the neighbour that got lost in the fog of war". But authorities didn't display matching interest, she said.

Last year, the CIVICUS Monitor-World Alliance for Citizen Participation report on Pakistan affirmed the lack of heft of the country's civic society. There may be voices favouring reconciliation in Pakistan but they rarely shape state policy. As long as the army retains overwhelming control over Pakistan's strategic direction, people-to-people engagement is unlikely to be a potent force.

My experience leads me to be sceptical of the suggestion that civil society contacts "will keep doors open for dialogue".

The writer is former special secretary, cabinet secretariat, who was part of the high-level committee to enquire into the 26/11 terror attacks

## The fault line in India, US ties: America doesn't understand 'equal'



SAMIR SARAN

US PRESIDENT Donald Trump's visit to China may not be remembered by posterity as much as Richard Nixon's famous trip in 1972. But it has forced Indians to confront the parallels with what was hitherto considered the darkest chapter of the India-US relationship.

Nixon, like Trump, believed that resetting relations with China was in paramount American interest. Nixon, like Trump, led a White House and establishment that was instinctively unsympathetic to Indian concerns. And Nixon, like Trump, viewed the Pakistani military leadership through rose-tinted glasses. Nobody, not even ordinary Pakistanis, has ever celebrated a Pakistani military dictator more than Nixon or Trump.

But here is what matters: The relationship between India and the United States survived Nixon. It grew and flourished. The partnership is stronger than any one person, even an enormously consequential president. It is greater than any administration, any party, any geopolitical moment. It is beneficial for both and yet it is not definitional for either. We can live without it.

In the past, India navigated a hostile White House, a hostile establishment, and an indifferent American public. Today's position is better, even if the Trump White House returns to overt hostility from its current passive-aggressive demeanor. Large sections of the Washington establishment continue to value the bilateral partnership. People-to-people connections have deepened. And the business-to-business ties of investment, innovation and trade have already demonstrated their capacity to ignore and outlast shifts in capital markets or political fashion.

This is not to minimise divergences that are neither superficial nor personality-driven. A structural faultline has emerged in Indo-US relations. It cannot be papered over. There are, in fact, three faultlines, not one.

India's energy security, its abiding concern in global affairs, is imprinted by American unilateralism and breathtaking double standards on sourcing fuel from Russia. Washington's search for detente with China removes the relationship's strategic ballast. And India has reformed its sense of self: It will, and it must, continue to refuse to play the compliant partner to a whimsical Washington. These are serious, structural disagreements. They deserve to be named as such.

But we must also recognise the institutional convergences that persist. Bilateral military-to-military cooperation. Strands of collaboration under the Quad's umbrella that Trump dislikes and Secretary of State Marco Rubio and Ambassador Sergio Goro seek to cleverly sustain. The INDUS-X defence ecosystem. The TRUST initiative for emergent technology and critical minerals and multiple supply

chain partnerships. All of these receive undiminished official energy, and will continue to do so. And hard words and the 5 per cent tariffs notwithstanding, a trade deal was eventually arrived at. The glue holds. Barely, but it holds.

We should think of this moment as an opportunity. The US-India relationship has always been sold as an inevitable strategic convergence. But until recently, it was something else: Two very different civilisational world-views cohabiting uneasily. What Trump's arrival did was strip away the diplomatic veneer.

New Delhi must respond with open-eyed diplomacy, not open-hearted sentiment. It must engage all strands of thought in the United States, a democracy almost as diverse and complex as ours. Trumpism may outlast Trump — both sides of the aisle asking, if in more polished terms, the same uncomfortable questions the current administration has posed.

The truth is that this president has done us a favour. We can now rework this relationship on more honest, durable terms.

This cohabitation was in many ways an arranged marriage. The two countries were joined together by a panchayat of wise elders: P V Narasimha Rao, Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Bill Clinton, Manmohan Singh, George Bush, and their generations. The arranged-marriage mantras: Ceremony first, compatibility later. For our two nations, the strategic relationship came first. Strategic convergence was supposed to follow.

It didn't. Our worldviews did not converge the way matchmakers anticipated. A philosophical gap, one rooted in our respective democratic cultures, has persisted: India does not understand alliances; America does not understand autonomy.

In any marriage, both partners change, compromise and build a partnership of equals. A relationship between two civilisation-states is no different. The White House cannot write the rules of marriage without co-opting India's distinctiveness. Until Washington accepts that India is an ancient nation with its own immutable timeline and unalterable threat calculus, and not a junior supplicant seeking admission to some charmed circle, this relationship will oscillate between promise and frustration. The fact is, America does not understand "equal".

New Delhi is not holding its breath. As the old order dissipates, India is neither dismantling nor defending it. Foreign policy and strategic autonomy have visibly been very hard work and yet an imperative. To be fair, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his team are rearranging the pieces rather well. India has discovered a new and appropriate proximity and distance to the US, deeper strategic intimacy with the EU, recalibration with Beijing — while engaging Moscow in a dynamic world.

The India-US partnership will endure. It survived Nixon; it will survive Trump. But whether it matures is a different question entirely. The answer depends on one thing alone: America deciding it can accept India on mutually agreeable terms. The Trump White House doesn't understand the question. Perhaps its successor will need to find the answer.

The writer is president, Observer Research Foundation

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Manipur tensions

THE RECENT killings and kidnappings are very worrying. They show that Manipur is once again close to a major outbreak of violence (In Manipur, pull back from edge, build trust', IE, May 21). Even though the new government has appointed leaders from different groups, just giving people government posts is not enough to fix years of anger and hurt. The state government needs to do more than just react after a crisis occurs. It must focus on bringing people together to talk. Right now, the most important tasks are to get hostages back safely, to make sure people can travel without fear, and to start real peace talks.

Krish Bareja, Panipat

### Leak-proofing exams

THE STORY of K J Alphon's, a former senior civil servant, successfully conducting the entrance examinations to professional colleges in Kerala could serve as an inspiration for the authorities that conduct competitive examinations across the country to combat the menace of paper leaks ('Keeping

exams clean: From Kerala, a personal experience', IE, May 21). He made it leak-proof by personal supervision. He did not let anyone clear the test by money power. He ensured that only deserving candidates could get admission in professional colleges. His allowing no one, not even his PS, to have access to information regarding the question-setting and printing press highlights his total dedication to his job.

SH Quadri, Bikaner

K J ALPHONS'S account is a timely reminder that systemic integrity is built on individual decisions made under pressure ('Keeping exams clean: From Kerala, a personal experience', IE, May 21). The paper-leak controversies have shaken public confidence in competitive examinations. Kerala's model — physical copies, district-level sealing, police protection — is not particularly high-tech, but it works because accountability is clear and personal. Decentralised responsibility, reduce digital exposure at vulnerable points, and ensure that officials have the authority and the incentive to act honestly.

K Sakunthala, Coimbatore



OLLY MOHANTA

## Quietly dilkhush, the taste of belonging

IN RECENT months, public debate has repeatedly returned to the meaning of words, how they are used, and how easily familiar expressions acquire new meanings in new contexts. Language, especially in political spaces, rarely stays still. Words travel quickly, gathering associations along the way, sometimes stretching far beyond their original intent. Watching these shifts from a distance, I am reminded that meaning is often less stable in public discourse than it is in private life.

My childhood unfolded across transfers familiar to many defence households, where cities changed but certain markers of familiarity followed. In Bangalore, tucked into

ordinary neighbourhoods, were lyengar bakeries, modest spaces immediately recognisable by the warm aroma of freshly baked bread, sugar and butter drifting past their doors. Among the glass jars of rusks and trays of buns sat a triangular pastry filled with sweetened coconut and cardamom. It was neither quite a paratha nor quite a pie. The outer layer resembled something between bread and memory, firm enough to hold shape, soft enough to yield easily. I did not know its name then. I only knew its taste — gentle, balanced, without excess.

Years later, I would learn that it was called dilkhush. But I had carried the small astonishment of that bakery shelf in Bangalore with me wherever we moved. For me, it symbolised stability and belonging. Like many foods that belong to regional cultures, dilkhush was neither extravagant nor heavily advertised. It travelled instead through fam-

ilarity, repetition, neighbourhood presence, and the trust of everyday consumption.

Food often performs this social function. It binds communities without announcing that it is doing so, creating shared reference points that make places feel less distant. Taste becomes small but enduring archive of belonging. Mobility, on the other hand, rearranges this sense of belonging. Across India, countless lives unfold through migrations, transfers, postings and outstation opportunities. Each move requires adjustment, but it also produces unexpected continuities. Everywhere we went, I sought out local bakeries in search of the flaky goodness that spelt comfort for me. Dilkhush felt like home when nothing else did.

It is striking how something as ordinary as a food memory can illuminate larger ideas about continuity and belonging. At a time when public language is often preoccupied

with defining who belongs and on what terms, the small pastry from a neighbourhood bakery travelled across decades and regions almost perfectly intact in memory.

Policies and public institutions undeniably shape the direction of a country. Yet the experience of living in a society is sustained just as much by quieter forms of recognition, familiar flavours, shared references and everyday certainties. What endures in collective memory are the things that continue to affect how people live, move, access opportunities and experience dignity.

The triangular pastry from a Bangalore bakery may appear insignificant in the larger vocabulary of nation-building. Yet, its persistent presence across decades suggests, it is often the ordinary that remains the most dependable.

Mohanta is a Delhi-based writer

# Lawrence gang member behind Pune mall firing: Cops

Chandan Haygunde  
Pune, May 21

A PROBE by the Pimpri Chinchwad police revealed that a member of the Lawrence Bishnoi gang, Kuldeep alias Kashish, who is currently in jail in the sensational Sidhu Moosewala murder case, allegedly gave instructions through a social media account to open fire at A J Furniture mall in Punawale last week.

Police arrested three persons from Haridwar in Uttarakhand in the recent firing case. They were identified as Parveen Ramnivas (22), Pankaj Kuldeep (21) and Sagar Ajaypal (21), all hailing

from Haryana. A court on Thursday remanded the trio to police custody till May 28 for further probe.

Two youngsters on motorcycles had allegedly fired bullets at AJ Furniture Mall on Aundh Ravet BRTS Road in Punawale area of Pimpri Chinchwad around 9.15 pm on May 16. Soon after, an audio clip and screenshot of a Facebook post claiming that the firing was done by members of the Lawrence Bishnoi gang went viral.

Jagdish Bishnoi, owner of AJ Furniture Mall, lodged the FIR in this case at Ravet police station in Pimpri Chinchwad, in the early hours of May 17.

# Women in law: 'Each generation carries forward courage of those who came before'

At her book launch, Jaising points to SC revisiting own position in Umar Khalid case as sign of course correction from within the institution itself

Express News Service  
New Delhi, May 21



Senior Advocate Indira Jaising

SISTERHOOD IN the legal profession is very important as a conscious intellectual and professional commitment to ensuring that access does not end with individual achievement, Justice BV Nagarathna of the Supreme Court said on Thursday.

She was speaking at the launch of senior advocate Indira Jaising's book *The Constitution Is My Home: Conversations on a Life in Law* at the India International Centre in New Delhi.

Tracing the generational arc of women in law, Justice Nagarathna, who delivered the keynote, said each generation had been made to prove something the one before could not take for granted. "With each successive generation, the burden becomes a little less," she said, adding, "but each generation carries forward not only its own ambition but also the accumulated courage of the women who came before them."

On solidarity within the profession, Justice Nagarathna said that men in law had long benefited from net-

works of familiarity and recommendation. Women had entered without those networks, which made sisterhood not a slogan but a necessity, she pointed out.

Jaising, in conversation with journalist Sreenivasa Jain, said the Constitution had given her a sense of belonging that geography never could. On gender justice, she said the record of the courts remained deeply uneven. "Women are more honoured by our courts in their deaths," she said, pointing out that a woman approaching the court for protection is often labelled as misusing the law.

The book, in conversation with Ritu Menon and published by HarperCollins India, traces Jaising's six decades in law.

In a read-out address, Chief Justice of India Surya

Kant said the Constitution's "reach extends far beyond formal legal spaces, and its influence is ultimately measured in the lives of citizens and in the character of our democracy." He added that the "Constitution is not simply a legal text governing society from a distance. It is the shared framework within which our shared aspirations are articulated, negotiated, and realised."

"Constitutionalism represents something broader and more enduring; it reflects the idea that public power operates within a carefully designed arrangement of values, responsibilities, and institutional relationships. It is this underlying design that enables governance to remain both effective and accountable."

Speaking on the state of constitutional democracy, Jaising said that all governments had, at various points, tried to shake the foundations of the Constitution. But what's different about the present, she said, is that the transformation is taking place without amending the written text. "During the emergency, it was the Constitution itself that was used to oppress the general

public.... It's much easier to find a written text, a written document to challenge it. What's happening now is without changing the written text, every other form of transformation is happening... and which is why it is so much more difficult to deal with," she said.

She pointed to recent developments, including the SC revisiting its own position in the Umar Khalid UAPA bail matter, as signs of course correction from within the institution itself. The problem, she said, was that benches had not been following a three-judge SC judgment, authored by the current CJ, holding that prolonged detention without a fair trial was impermissible. She rejected the framing of her work as dissent altogether. "It is the ruling parties which are dissenting from the Constitution of India, not us. We are claiming the right to affirm the Constitution of India," she added.

Jaising called for a stronger, organised bar as the primary check on judicial conduct and for transparency in collegium proceedings. She said that the three sitting women Chief Justices of High Courts should be elevated.

# Suvendu aide murder: CBI makes another arrest from UP

Manish Sahu  
Lucknow, May 21

THE CENTRAL Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has arrested another person in connection with the killing of West Bengal Chief Minister Suvendu Adhikari's personal assistant, Chandranath Rath, from Uttar Pradesh's Ballia, sources said.

They added that the agency suspects that the car used in the crime was also purchased from the same district.

The suspect has been identified as 28-year-old Naveen Singh, a resident of Ballia. It is learnt that his name surfaced during the questioning of another Ballia resident, Raj Kumar Singh, who was arrested from Varanasi two days ago.

"The CBI, which is investigating the Chandranath Rath murder case, arrested Naveen and recovered a weapon from his possession. He has been taken to Kolkata for further questioning," a senior police officer in Ballia said. According to officers, the central probe agency suspects that a group of youth from UP may be involved in the crime. Sources said during preliminary investigation, the agency learnt that the vehicle—a silver hatchback—allegedly used by the assailants in the attack was purchased from a Ballia resident a few days before the murder.

Police said it was also found that this local resident had bought the car just a month ago. The agency is now trying to trace the buyer and establish the chain of possession of the vehicle allegedly used in the crime.

**NORTHERN RAILWAY**  
**E-NOTICE INVITING TENDER**

TENDER NOTICE No: 230-Elect-RSO-201-2026-27, Dt. 19.05.2026  
For and on behalf of President of India, Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer (RSO), Northern Railway, Delhi Division, New Delhi invites 'E-Tender' in prescribed tender form for the following work:

- Name of the work with its location: Provision of clean, dry silica sand as per specification AAR-M-916-51 and filling of the sand in the sand boxes of Diesel/Electric locomotives at NDLs, DL, ANVT & TKD outfits for a period of 24 months.
- Approx. Tender value (Rs) Rs. 78,09,801.60 (including GST).
- E.M.D (Rs) Rs. 1,56,200.00/-  
Note:-Online payment made available on IREPS website.
- Date & Time of tender opening (immediately when tender submission ends): 10.06.2026 at 11.00 Hrs.
- Website particulars where complete details of tender documents can be seen: www.reps.gov.in 1712/2026

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

**समाहरणालय, मधुबनी**  
(मद्यनिषेध एवं उत्पाद विभाग)  
—अल्पकालीन आम नीलामी सूचना—  
(बिहार मद्यनिषेध एवं उत्पाद अधिनियम, 2016 (यथा संशोधित अधिनियम-2018/2022) के तहत जब्त एवं राज्यसात वाहनों की नीलामी की सूचना)

एलाद द्वारा सर्वसाधारण को सुविधा किया जाता है कि वेसे वाहन जिन्हें बिहार मद्यनिषेध एवं उत्पाद अधिनियम, 2016 (यथा संशोधित अधिनियम-2018/2022) के तहत पुलिस एवं मद्यनिषेध विभाग, मधुबनी द्वारा जब्त किया गया है तथा समाहर्णालय—सह-जिला दण्डाधिकारी/अन्य अधिकरण न्यायालय, मधुबनी द्वारा राज्यसात किया गया है, को विभागीय पत्रांक-809, दिनांक-03.02.2026 में विदे हुए निर्देश के आलोक में नीलामी निम्न सूची के अनुसार नीलामी कर्ता द्वारा अधीक्षक मद्यनिषेध कार्यालय, मधुबनी में दिनांक-10.06.2026 को 11:00 बजे पूर्वाह्न से की जायेगी। आवेदन जमा करने की अंतिम तिथि दिनांक-08.06.2026 को अधीक्षक मद्यनिषेध कार्यालय में कार्यालय अथवा एक होगी। उक्त तिथि से शेष बचे वाहनों की नीलामी विभागीय आदेश-809, दिनांक-03.02.2026 (SOP) में विदे गये निर्देश के आलोक में वाहनों के लिये निर्धारित न्यूनतम मूल्य में क्रमशः 10-10 प्रतिशत कम करते हुए नीलामी की जायेगी। अग्रहन राशि बैंक ड्राफ्ट/नगद के रूप में ही स्वीकार किये जायेंगे। बैंक ड्राफ्ट अधीक्षक मद्यनिषेध, मधुबनी के पदनाम से स्वीकार्य होगा।

नीलामी क्रमवार	आवेदन की तिथि	नीलामी तिथि	नीलामी हेतु मूल्य	कहाँ देखा जा सकता है
द्वितीय एवं पंचम नीलामी	08.06.2026	10.06.2026	निर्धारित मूल्य	समाचार पत्र एवं जिला के वेबसाइट www.madhubani.nic.in
उपरोक्त नीलामी के परवान रसीद बंदी बचे वाहनों की नीलामी	प्रत्येक सोमवार, शिबोरी सोमवार को सरकारी बंदी होने पर अगले कार्यदिवस को	प्रत्येक बुधवार, शिबोरी बुधवार को सरकारी बंदी होने पर अगले कार्यदिवस को	वाहन मूल्य के 10 प्रतिशत कम करते हुए तब तक नीलामी की जायेगी, जब तक की वाहन नीलाम न हो जाय।	जिला के वेबसाइट www.madhubani.nic.in

### दिल्ली

#### द्वितीय नीलामी

क्र०	अधिकरण वाद संख्या	शिपान/यान का नाम	वाहन का प्रकार	वाहन का निबंधन संख्या	मॉडल वर्ष	निर्धारित राशि जिस पर नीलामी की जाती है	अग्रहन राशि	वाहन स्वामी का नाम एवं पता
01	54/24	Aneriya Sangram 24/24	1-10 Car	DLC163— NIL Actual No- DL7CJ-4763 MALAMS1388M234464 GAHG8M655671	2009	81000	20250	करल चन्द फे-नम्बर वन कुमुद सां-4142 गली-फे-18/1/4 शाहि मोहल्ला, सीधे नगर, दिल्ली, पिन-110031
02	82/24	Ladaniya 135/24	Motorcycle	DLUS8N-8587 MO2DSF22SPK84216 JBUSKS1173 Actual No- DL4SN-8587 MO2DSPA22SPK84216 JBUSKS1175	—	9000	2250	—
03	110/24-25	Phulparas 50/23	Sentro Car	BR12-4169 MALAAS1HRAM505134 G4H4D06060 Actual No- DL4CS-0935	2004	55350	13838	शिवानंद कुमार फे-नम्बर वाद सां-48 नरेश वाली गली, पाना-साहू दिल्ली, पिन-110016
04	20/25	Jaynagar 40/25	Motorcycle	DL3SCW-2650 MBLHA10AGEGF11 MBLHA10AGEGF11425 NALUENEGF1435 HALGENEGF14935	2014	10800	2700	प्रकाश कुमार झा फे-नम्बर का सां-48-308/4, स्क्रीन बी, वैजपुर, दिल्ली, पिन-110044
05	34/25	Jaynagar 62/25	Scorpio	DL3CS-0973 MAITB28SL62867198 BS6AB17896 Actual No- MAITB28SL62867198 DL4SDV-1030 MBLHANW238R95570 MBLHANW238R95570 HA11E8R919027 Actual No- DL4SDV-1030	2006	170100	42525	शमशेर खान फे-नम्बर का सां-48-61 तखाना बिहार, दिल्ली
06	35/25	Jaynagar 59/25	Motorcycle	DL3SCW-2650 MBLHA10AGEGF11 MBLHA10AGEGF11425 NALUENEGF1435 HALGENEGF14935	2014	55800	13950	रमेश कुमार फे-नम्बर वाद सां-2-1/14 रक फे-28/2, सिह नगर, दिल्ली, पिन-110041

क्र०	अधिकरण वाद संख्या	शिपान/यान का नाम	वाहन का प्रकार	वाहन का निबंधन संख्या	मॉडल वर्ष	निर्धारित राशि जिस पर नीलामी की जाती है	अग्रहन राशि	वाहन स्वामी का नाम एवं पता
07	48/24	Aneriya Sangram 08/24	Motorcycle	DL58F-3274 JH2GF98159 MD2A74823G6F47818	2016	11183	2796	अमित मुखर्जी फे-निम्बर मुखर्जी सां-80 1/31, टॉप वॉलर, पाना नॉव दिल्ली, पिन-110045
08	100/24	Jaynagar 230/24	Motorcycle	BR32BA-2559 Actual No- DL35DA-4571 ME4UC733AHT118145 JCT1E10948620	2017	9673	2418	बी एन प्रमन सिंह फे-नम्बर सिंह सां-80 फे-31, शाहि कंप, मडी गिरेवा, मडी, नू दिल्ली-110047
09	37/23-24	UAKHA 244/23	Motorcycle	DL3AT-4996 BSKAAFO0341 BSKAAE18902	2005	6284	1571	अरुण प्रताप सिंह फे-नम्बर सिंह सां-संभार गिरा, फे-338, नू दिल्ली
10	132/24-25	Lauka 195/23	Motorcycle	DL95F-3335 MBLHANR8MHS5568 H4JAGQMH1159 Actual No- BR32CA-8434	2019	14940	3735	संजय कुमार फे-नम्बर वाद सां-फे-सिकरौली, पाना-बुधिया, पिन-847227
11	135/24	Deodha 77/22	Motorcycle	DL3SCW-2650 Actual No- MBLHANW238R95570 JADGEGF34132	2015	8640	2160	शमशेर खान फे-नम्बर का सां-48-15/26, सी-ब्लॉक 77फैट रोड, प्रेम नगर-11 किरी कुलुमन, दिल्ली, पिन-110086

**अधीक्षक मद्यनिषेध मधुबनी**  
विस्तृत सूचना [www.state.bihar.gov.in/prdbihar](http://www.state.bihar.gov.in/prdbihar) पर भी देखी जा सकती है।  
**समाहर्ता मधुबनी**  
नशे से बचने का है एक ही उपचार, दृढ़ संकल्प और परिवार से प्यार

**BANARAS LOCOMOTIVE WORKS, VARANASI-221004**  
Bid No.: E-08/2026-2027 E-TENDERS Date: 19.05.2026

E-tenders are invited for & on behalf of the President of India for the supply of following items. Only E-tender will be accepted for which vendors must have Class-III Digital Signature and registrations on IREPS. The details of tenders are in the following sequence. S. No., Tender No., (Due Date), Description and quantity.

- 06260099A, (15.06.2026), Complete Control Cubicle SB-2 Part No. 29178174, 112 Set., 2. 06261858, (18.06.2026), Main Transformer 7775 KVA, Part No. 29731057, 147 Nos., **Bid No. E-08/2026-27 Date: 08.05.2026**, 3. 06261046, (02.06.2026), Complete Control Cubicles SB 1, Part No. 29178669, 214 Set., **Bid No. E-08/2026-27 Date: 11.05.2026**, 4. 06261016, (08.06.2026), Dynamic Braking Fan Assembly, Part No. 17451759, 106 Nos., **Bid No. E-08/2026-27 Date: 15.05.2026**, 5. 02261395, (12.06.2026), Cylinder Test Valve Assembly, PL No. 16241137, 5687 Nos., **Bid No. E-08/2026-27 Date: 18.05.2026**, 6. 09285004, (24.06.2026), Supply, Retrofitment and commissioning of BRUSHLESS DC MOTOR BASED CAB MOUNTED COMPACT HVAC (COOLING CAPACITY 1.75 TR) FOR DIESEL ELECTRIC LOCOMOTIVE to, PL No. 18050116, 200 Nos., **Bid No. E-08/2026-2027 Date: 13.06.2026**, 7. 10251269D, (28.05.2026), Development Tender for Gasket, PL No. 16170313, 30 Nos. The details of above tenders are available on website [www.blw.indianrailways.gov.in](http://www.blw.indianrailways.gov.in) and [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in).

PROBLWIS-08 PCMM  
f x o /blwvaranasi वेबसाइट: [www.blw.indianrailways.gov.in](http://www.blw.indianrailways.gov.in)

**DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL & FISHERIES**  
**RESOURCES, BIHAR, PURNEA**  
**PURNEA SEMEN STATION**  
Govt. of Bihar A UNIT OF BIHAR LIVESTOCK DEVELOPMENT AGENCY  
Advert. No.- 03/ 2026-27

**URGENT - TENDER FOR WHITE WASHING AND PAINTING WORK OF VARIOUS BUILDINGS AT PURNEA SEMEN STATION**

Purnea Semen Station, Purnea is a Unit of Bihar Livestock Development Agency, Dairy, Fisheries and Animal Resources Department, Government of Bihar. We are looking to carry out repairs and repainting of buildings under our campus. In this regard sealed tenders are invited from vendors/ Contractors for "WHITE WASHING AND PAINTING WORK". Bidder should have experience in supply & services at govt. offices will be given preference. The bid must be in two bid system i.e. Technical and Financial in two separate sealed envelopes duly super scribed with "TECHNICAL BID" and "FINANCIAL BID" and name of firm. Both the sealed envelope is to be put in bigger envelope duly sealed and super scribed with "OFFER FOR WHITE WASHING AND PAINTING WORK".

SL NO.	SCOPE OF WORK	RATE IN PER SQUARE FEET (Should be filled by Bidder)	WORK COMPLETION PERIOD
01.	REPAIRING, CLEANING AND APPLYING PAINT AT INTERIOR AND EXTERIOR of All buildings at Purnea semen station. Work including: • Putty work, Distempering, Wall colour Paint & Metal Paint.	FOR WALL PAINT FOR METAL PAINT	Within 60 days.

**NOTE: All required material and consumables should be provided by Purnea semen station.**  
You are requested to quote your lowest rates with GST, payment terms of delivery and any other tax for the same on or before 04:00 PM, 20/06/2026 through our website and Post at our following address:  
**General Manager,**  
Purnea Semen Station,  
NH-31, Maranga, Purnea, Bihar – 854303.  
**PR- 003803 (Animal & Fish) 2026-27**  
For further details please visit : [www.state.bihar.gov.in/prdbihar](http://www.state.bihar.gov.in/prdbihar)

**नशे से बचने का है एक ही उपचार, दृढ़ संकल्प और परिवार से प्यार**

**कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय**  
**भवन निर्माण विभाग, भवन प्रमंडल सीवान**  
**राष्ट्रीय स्पर्धा ई- निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना**  
सिर्फ ई- निविदा पद्धति के अनुसार वेबसाइट ([www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in](http://www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in)) पर ई-निविदा सूचना संख्या-02/ET/BCD/SIWAN/2026-27

- विद्यापनदाता का नाम एवं पता
- निविदा आमंत्रित करने की तिथि
- निविदा कागजात प्राप्त करने (हाउस लॉड करने) की अंतिम तिथि एवं समय
- निविदा जमा करने (अपलोड करने) की अंतिम तिथि एवं समय
- निविदा बिकी का स्थान
- प्री ब्रीड विटिंग का तिथि एवं स्थान
- तकनीकी बीड खोलने की तिथि एवं समय
- वित्तीय बीड खोलने की तिथि
- कार्य की विवरण

कार्यपालक अभियंता, भवन प्रमंडल, सीवान

दिनांक 20.05.2026

दिनांक 03.06.2026 से 25.06.2026 को 15:00 बजे तक।

दिनांक 25.06.2026 को 15:30 बजे तक।

केवल वेबसाइट ([www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in](http://www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in)) पर

1. दिनांक 10.08.2026 को 11:00 बजे जमीन अधिपता, भवन अंचल, एचएर का कार्यालय

2. दिनांक 17.08.2026 को 11:00 बजे मुख्य अभियंता, एचएर उपमहान भवन निर्माण विभाग, बिहार पटना का कार्यालय

दिनांक 27.08.2026 को 15:00 बजे केवल वेबसाइट ([www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in](http://www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in)) पर तकनीकी बीड खोल जायेगा। तकनीकी बीड में सफ्त निविदादाताओं के वित्तीय बीड को खोलने की कार्यवाही की जायेगी। जिसकी सूचना संबंधित को दे दी जायेगी।

तकनीकी बीड निमादनोपरांत

क्रमा सं०	कार्य का नाम	प्राकलित राशि (रुपये में)	अग्रहन की राशि (रुपये में)	परिमाण विषय का मूल्य (रुपये में)	ऑनलाईन बेट्टान भवन का देय राशि	कार्य समाप्ति की तिथि
1	Construction of Staff Quarter A Type (G+3), B Type (G+3) and C Type (G+3) One Block Each in premises of Sub Divisional Court, Maharajanji	10,58,83,000.00	20,58,830/-	10,000/-	as per site	12 Month

निविदा की विस्तृत जानकारी [state.bihar.gov.in/prdbihar](http://state.bihar.gov.in/prdbihar) से प्राप्त की जा सकती है।  
**कार्यपालक अभियंता भवन प्रमंडल, सीवान**  
PR- 003844 (BCD ) 2026-27  
**नशे से बचने का है एक ही उपचार, दृढ़ संकल्प और परिवार से प्यार**

**NORTHERN RAILWAY**  
**NOTICE FOR E-AUCTION**

Senior Divisional Commercial Manager/FS, Delhi Division, Northern Railway, in terms of Railway Board letter no. 2022/TC(FM)/10/04 dated 13.06.2022, invites bids through e-Auction ([www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in)) for the contract of Parking cum management of vehicles (as per their type and class as mentioned in the additional special conditions) and Stacking of Parcels at Hazrat Nizamuddin Railway Station (NZM) towards Bhogal Side, near Platform No.1, Okhla End with area measuring of 930.74 square meters for a period of five years, through E-Auction in IREPS module as per detail and schedule given below:-

**S.No. 1 Date & time of e-Auction 05.06.2026 at 11:00 hrs. Assets to be auctioned** The contract of Parking cum management of vehicles (as per their type and class as mentioned in the additional special conditions) and Stacking of Parcels at Hazrat Nizamuddin Railway Station (NZM) towards Bhogal Side, near Platform No.1, Okhla End with area measuring of 930.74 square meters for a period of five years through E-Auction in IREPS module

**Important notes:** 1. For more information, requirement and various aspects regarding these e-Auctions, interested bidders are advised to visit <https://www.ireps.gov.in/n/him/helpdesk/learning> centre.html. (E-Auction leasing section). 2. Earnest Money Deposit (EMD): 10% of the total contractual bid value to be deposited online during the auction. EMD of the successful bidder will be retained as Security Deposit. 3. Railway Administration reserves the full and absolute rights to short terminate these contracts at any point of time and/or for taking any decision regarding the discontinuation/continuation of these contracts with modified/additional terms and conditions depending upon the situations. 1722/2026

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

**JHARKHAND BIJLI VITRAN NIGAM LIMITED**  
(CIN: U40108JH2013SGC001702)  
Regd. Office:- Engineering Building, HEC, Dhurua, Ranchi-834004.  
fax # 0651-2400483 e-mail : [cesp.jseb@rediffmail.com](mailto:cesp.jseb@rediffmail.com)/  
[gmsp.jbvn@rediffmail.com](mailto:gmsp.jbvn@rediffmail.com)

**CANCELLATION NOTICE**

Due to some unavoidable circumstances NIT No. 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95/PR/JBV/N L/2026-27 is hereby cancelled.  
PR No. 379876

व्यक्ति एवं संप्रति में उल्लां बचाव। कृपया अपनी शिकयती को टॉल फ्री नं० 1800 345 6570 पर दर्ज करायें।

Sd/-  
**PR 380437 Jharkhand Bijlee Vitran Nigam Ltd(26-27)D**  
Dy. General Manager Purchase

**Deptt. of Water Resources, Government of Odisha**  
**"e" Procurement Notice**  
**No. ACEDC-CTC-07/2026-27**

- Name of the Works: Total 01(One) no. Drainage work.
- Estimated cost: Rs. 814.52 lakh
- Period of Completion: 18 (Eighteen) months
- Date and time of availability of bid document in the portal: From 11.30 hours of Dt. 25.05.2026 to 18.00 hours of Dt. 08.06.2026.
- Last date/time for receipt of bids in the portal: 18.00 hours of Dt. 08.06.2026
- Name and address of the Officer inviting Bid: Additional Chief Engineer, Drainage Circle, Gandarpur, Cuttack-753003. e-mail id:- [sedrainagecirclect@gmail.com](mailto:sedrainagecirclect@gmail.com)

Further details can be seen from the e-Procurement portal of Odisha Government <https://tendersodisha.gov.in>. All information, notices, addendum, corrigendum, cancellation notice etc. if required, will be published in this portal.

Sd/-  
**Additional Chief Engineer Drainage Circle, Cuttack**  
OIPR-32001/32518/1/26-27/0005

**e-Procurement Cell**  
**OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, SPECIAL WORKS DIVISION, BUILDING CONSTRUCTION DEPARTMENT, Ranchi**

**e-Procurement Notice**  
(Very Very Short Notice):  
**Tender Reference No:- BCD/EE, Special Works Div, BCD, Ranchi/10/2026-27 Date:-19.05.2026**

क्र० सं०	कार्य का नाम	प्राकलित राशि	कार्य पूर्ण करने की अवधि
1	Annual Maintenance Contract of Electrical, Plumbing, Fire Fighting System, DG Set, CCTV, Lift and Parking System Operation, STP, Hot Water System and Deployment of Security Guard at New Jharkhand Bhawan, Bangla Sahib Road, New Delhi for the Period:June,2026 to May,2027	Rs. 2,38,52,350.00	12 (Twelve) Months

i	वेबसाइट पर निविदा प्रकाशन की तिथि	28.05.2025
ii	बिड प्रॉपरि के लिए अंतिम तिथि / समय	04.06.2026 को अपराह्न 1.00 बजे
iii	निविदा खोलने की तिथि /समय	05.06.2026 को अपराह्न 1.00 बजे
iv	निविदा प्रकाशित करने वाले कार्यालय का नाम एवं पता	e-Procurement Cell, Office of the Executive Engineer Special Works Division Building Construction Department, Ranchi
v	प्रोक्वोरमेंट पदाधिकारी का सम्पर्क संख्या	8092415503
vi	ई-प्रोक्वोरमेंट सेल का हेल्पलाइन संख्या	8092415503

Note:- Cost of bidding document (Non Refundable) & Bid Security Shall be payable on online through <http://jsharkhandtenders.gov.in>  
Any Change can be on Website <http://Jharkhandtenders.gov.in>  
Any Other information can be on Website <http://Jharkhandtenders.gov.in>

PR 380407 (Building) 26-27 (D)

Nodal Officer, e-Procurement Cell, Office of the Executive Engineer, Special Works Division Building Construction Department, Ranchi.

FUEL PUMPS RUNNING OUT OF STOCK FASTER THAN USUAL IN SOME POCKETS

## Bulk fuel buyers shift to OMCs' retail pumps, driving demand

Sukalp Sharma  
New Delhi, May 21

FUEL DEMAND, particularly that of diesel, is seeing a surge in certain pockets as a large number of bulk fuel consumers have shifted to public sector oil marketing companies' (OMCs) retail outlets.

The move was driven by a wide price gap between retail prices — still below market rates — and the market-linked bulk prices, according to the government.

On top of that, certain private sector fuel retailers are retailing the fuels at higher prices than the OMCs, leading to additional pressure on the latter's network as consumers are preferring to buy from them.

These shifts are a major reason behind the OMCs' retail outlets running out of fuel stocks faster than usual in some areas, leading to dry-out-like situations, according to industry sources.

There have been reports from various parts of the country of some retail fuel bunks running out of stocks. Industry sources said the problem gets amplified when a supply constraint at one retail outlet leads to rumours of shortage, and consumers start panic-buying from other out-

lets as well.

The visible migration of a large number of bulk consumers to OMCs' retail stations, combined with higher agricultural season fuel demand, has led to a demand growth of 20% to 30% in some localised areas, according to Petroleum Ministry Joint Secretary Sujata Sharma. "The price difference between diesel for bulk sales and that available at petrol pumps is Rs 40-42 per litre," she said.

Only a fraction of the price hike has been passed on for the retail petrol and diesel sales by the OMCs in the backdrop of the global oil and fuel price surge due to the West Asia crisis. The price hikes have been much higher in the bulk and industrial segments.

While the OMCs, being government-owned, have kept prices artificially lower, some private sector retailers have hiked retail fuel prices.

The three OMCs — Indian Oil, Bharat Petroleum, Hindustan Petroleum — have a combined share of 90% in the fuel retail market.

While fuel production and supply at the national level remains stable, these factors are leading to regional imbalances and last-mile logistical challenges for the OMCs to main-

### ● SUPPLY STRAIN

**SOME PRIVATE** sector fuel retailers are selling the fuels at higher prices than OMCs, leading to additional pressure on the latter's retail network

**THESE SHIFTS** are a major reason behind OMCs' retail outlets in some areas running out of fuel stocks faster than usual, leading to dry-out-like situations

**THE PROBLEM** gets amplified when a supply constraint at one retail outlet leads to rumours of



shortage in the area, and consumers start panic-buying from other outlets as well

tain 24x7 supplies, particularly in tier-II and tier-III cities, and rural and remote areas.

While retail pumps usually sell fuel to two-wheelers and cars, bulk and commercial buyers like state road transport corporation buses, trucks, and diesel-powered telecom towers get their supplies from designated points.

"Petrol pumps generally have stocks of two to three days, and if they see 20-30% growth in demand, they may temporarily face some issues... after all, there are last-mile logistics issues (as well)," Sharma said, adding that the OMCs are closely

monitoring the situation on a real-time basis and taking necessary action. Some state and district administrations have also issued formal requests or directives for bulk consumers to use designated bulk supply points rather than retail petrol pumps.

The second-largest fuel retailer Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL) said that while metropolitan centres continue to be adequately supplied, special operational focus has been placed on "maintaining seamless supplies across tier-II, tier-III and remote markets, where localised demand spikes

and precautionary buying tendencies have been observed in recent days".

According to BPCL, between May 1 and May 20, its petrol sales volumes rose 16.4% year-on-year (y-o-y), while diesel sales surged 16.7%, reflecting super-normal growth.

The provisional data from the Petroleum Ministry showed that nationwide petrol consumption was higher by 6.4% in April on a y-o-y basis, while diesel consumption was 0.3% higher.

"BPCL's integrated supply chain network — comprising refineries, terminals, depots, transport logistics and retail outlets — continues to operate efficiently, supported by round-the-clock monitoring and enhanced coordination between regional teams and field operations," BPCL said, adding that additional measures have been initiated to augment supplies in high-demand regions.

These measures include enhanced tanker movement planning, depot-level inventory optimisation, and continuous monitoring of retail outlet replenishment cycles.

The other two OMCs have also implemented similar measures, it is learnt.

FULL REPORT ON [WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM](http://WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM)

## West Asia war pushes up bond yields, raises spectre of RBI rate hike

Akash Mandal  
Mumbai, May 21

YIELDS ON Indian government bonds have risen sharply in recent weeks in the wake of the war in West Asia due to the strain on public finances as expenditure mounts for things such as fertiliser subsidy and loss of revenue from the cut in excise duty on petrol and diesel, among others.

The government issues bonds to raise funds to bridge its annual fiscal deficit, or the mismatch between its receipts and expenditure.

On Thursday, the most actively traded Indian government bond closed at 7.11%, up a massive 45 basis points (bps) from 6.66% on February 27. Bond yields have risen across the world, from the US to Japan, to multi-year highs as fears of rising inflation unnerved investors that central banks may start raising interest rates.

Bond yields move in the opposite direction to prices. Rising bond yields are a sign of investors expecting higher interest in the future.

In India, opinion has begun to shift that the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) Monetary Policy Committee may start raising the policy repo rate as early as next month — the rate-setting panel will announce its decision on June 5 — with the rupee's non-stop fall seen as becoming a consideration for monetary policy, something the central bank has repeatedly said in the past is not the case.

### ● RATE HIKE VIEW

Opinion has begun to shift that the RBI's rate setting panel may start raising the policy repo rate as early as next month

On Thursday, Standard Chartered economists revised their prediction for Indian interest rates, saying they now expect the RBI to start increasing the repo rate by 50 bps to 5.75% over the June and August policy decisions

On Thursday, Standard Chartered economists revised their prediction for Indian interest rates, saying they now expect the RBI to start increasing the repo rate by 50 bps to 5.75% over the June and August policy decisions. If there is no hike in June, the repo rate could be raised by 50 bps in August, they said.

"We also see a risk of additional 25-50 bps of hikes in FY27 if inflation turns out to be higher than we expect due to continued pressure from commodity prices and INR weakness," economists Anubhuti Sahay and Sauro Anand said in a note.

It is worth recalling that the MPC had cut the repo rate by 125 bps in 2025. And markets seem to think that a similar turnaround is in the offing.

"For India, four-five rate hikes have been priced in by the OIS market over the next year. Markets are forward-looking, so they will react to conditions that they see maybe around six months ahead," Gaura Seng-

upta, Chief Economist at IDFC First Bank, said. OIS, or Overnight Index Swap, is a type of interest rate derivative used by financial market players to hedge the interest rate risk they face and is an indicator of interest rate expectations.

However, Sengupta said the rise in OIS rates does not necessarily mean the RBI will increase the repo rate in June as inflation is still subdued and that some of the movement in OIS rates is hedging-related. "If you're long on bonds, you use OIS to cut your risks," she said.

According to Sankar Chakraborti, MD and Chief Executive of Acuite Ratings and Research, the rise in Indian bond yields is "largely a reflection of a 'global contagion' rather than a definitive bet on domestic tightening". "The current market behaviour suggests a defensive hedge against extreme 'tail risks' rather than a high-conviction bet that the RBI will immediately raise rates, especially as the central bank remains wary of stifling private investment," he added.

Even though retail inflation, which the central bank is mandated to target, has been subdued so far, inching up only slightly in April to 3.48% from 3.4% in March, producers are beginning to feel the heat from the war. In April, wholesale inflation surged to a 42-month high of 8.3% and economists expect these input price pressures to be soon passed on to consumers. FULL REPORT ON [WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM](http://WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM)

SEBI MOVES TO CURB VOLATILITY

## New price discovery mechanism for IPOs, re-listed companies

ENS Economic Bureau  
Mumbai, May 21

THE SECURITIES and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has proposed significant changes to the price-discovery mechanism for initial public offerings (IPOs) and re-listed companies during the pre-open call auction session.

The move aims to address concerns over distorted pricing and excessive volatility in newly-traded stocks.

In a recent consultation proposal, SEBI said the current mechanism for determining the base price of re-listed shares often results in artificially low valuations, leading to abnormal trading patterns once the stock enters regular market session.

It noted that multiple representations from market participants highlighted weaknesses in the existing dummy price band mechanism and the methodology used for fixing base prices in re-listed securities. Under the revised framework, SEBI has proposed that the latest traded price used for determining the base price of a re-listed stock should not be older than six months.

In cases where no recent trading data is available, exchanges may rely on valuation certificates issued by independent valuation agencies to determine a fair reference price.

SEBI observed that the current practice frequently suppresses genuine price discovery.

As a result, stocks often face intense buying pressure immediately after listing or re-list-

ing, repeatedly hitting upper circuit limits in the normal trading session. This, the regulator said, also triggers Additional Surveillance Measures imposed by exchanges to curb volatility.

Highlighting the issue, SEBI cited an instance where nearly 90% of buy orders placed during the call auction session of a re-listed stock were rejected because they fell outside the prescribed price bands. Such restrictions, according to the regulator, undermine efficient market functioning and prevent fair participation by investors.

At present, if a company's trading suspension has been revoked after more than one year, the base price for the call auction session is determined using either the book value calculated within the previous six months or the face value of the share, whichever is lower.

In most cases, this results in a starting base price of just Rs 10, regardless of the firm's actual market potential or underlying value. SEBI said the revised framework seeks to ensure that the base price of re-listed securities better reflects their present financial and business value.

It added that exchanges should adopt a more realistic methodology based on updated book value assessments and independent valuation metrics.

It clarified that no changes have been proposed for the base price mechanism applicable to IPO shares, where the issue price will continue to serve as the reference price. FULL REPORT ON [WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM](http://WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM)

### ● INDIA'S BANKING, FINANCE GCC ECOSYSTEM

India's GCC ecosystem has scaled to 2,117 centers, generating \$98.4 bn in revenue as of FY26, said a Nasscom-Zinnov report. But as AI drives corporate restructuring, heads may start rolling.

#### GCC landscape in India

GCCs are offshore units established by MNCs for strategic functions for the parent enterprise, leveraging Indian talent, cost and operational efficiencies

23.6 Lakh

The size of installed GCC talent pool in the country

1200+

The number of Indian GCCs with native AI/Machine learning (ML) capabilities

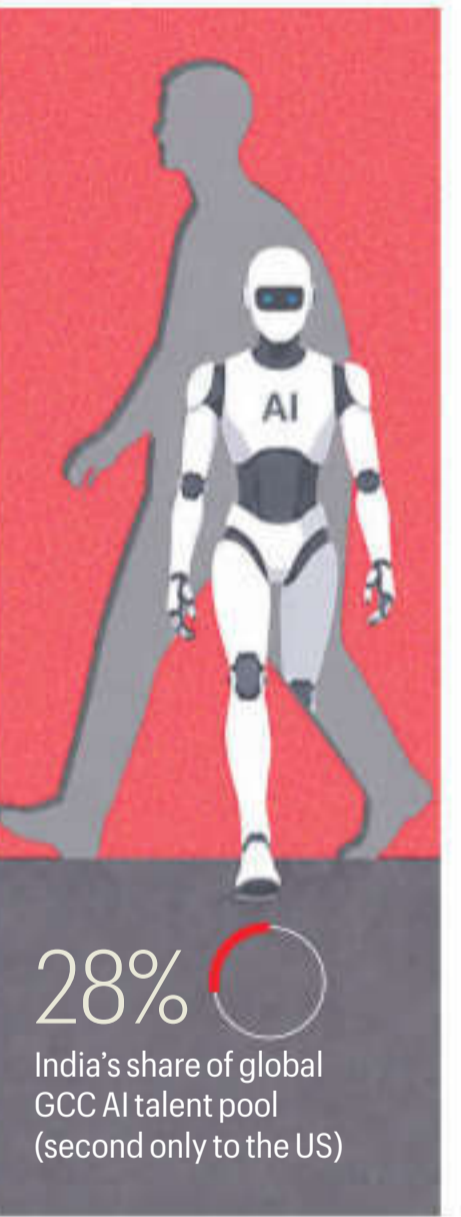
20-25%

Overall GCC headcount held by BFSI sector in India, per Quess Corp

2.5 Lakh

Dedicated AI/ML professionals in India's GCC ecosystem

SOURCE: REUTERS, NASSCOM-ZINNOV REPORT



28%  
India's share of global GCC AI talent pool (second only to the US)

#### From back-office to AI-led job cuts

● Evolving past basic back-office tasks, India's GCCs now handle high-value functions

● However, with Standard Chartered set to cut over 7,000 jobs globally to replace 'lower-value human capital' with tech, these roles may take a hit

● The lender said the cuts will hit its back-office centres in Chennai and Bengaluru

#### Inside India's megahubs

● JPMorgan Chase employs over 55,000 people across software engineering, product development, data analytics, AI while Citi employs over 33,000 staff across Chennai, Pune, Bengaluru, Mumbai

● Wells Fargo has over 30,000 people in business, finance, tech. American Express runs 4 centres in Gurugram, Mumbai, Bengaluru, Chennai for cybersecurity, data analytics, risk management

## Centre considering more steps to contain rising CAD, says Goyal

Mukesh Jagota  
New Delhi, May 21

AFTER TAKING a series of steps to curb precious metal imports, the government is now set to announce more measures to prevent the current account from running into a big deficit.

"Several steps are under consideration. Various arms of government are working as a team. The situation is quite

challenging globally, but we have the confidence and the courage of conviction that we'll come out winners, even in this challenging time," Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said on Thursday, when asked what more measures the government could take to contain the current account deficit (CAD) and arrest the rupee's slide against the dollar.

He did not elaborate on the

plans, but said the Centre has no further plans to curb non-essential imports. "We have made an appeal to all citizens to be more conscious about their spending on products which are import-dependent. And I think it's just very natural that every Indian who trusts Prime Minister Modi has taken cognizance of that, and is helping the country in every small or big way with their own actions," FE

## Maruti Suzuki to hike prices across models by up to Rs 30K from June

Press Trust of India  
New Delhi, May 21

CAR MARKET leader Maruti Suzuki India (MSI) on Thursday said it will hike prices of its vehicles prices across models by up to Rs 30,000 from June 2026 citing inflationary pressures and adverse cost environment.

"For the past few months, the company has been making continuous efforts to mitigate the cost impact to the extent possible through cost reduction measures," the company said.

The exact quantum of change will vary from model to model, it said.

MSI currently sells a range of vehicles from entry level S-Presso to premium utility vehicle Invicto priced between Rs 3.49 lakh and Rs 28.7 lakh (ex-showroom).

### ● BRIEFLY

#### Fino Payments Bank CEO to step down

**Mumbai:** India's Fino Payments Bank said on Thursday Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer Rishi Gupta has sought voluntary early retirement, months after he was arrested under the country's goods and services tax law. Gupta said he wants to explore new avenues outside the lender, without disclosing further details. REUTERS

#### Rupee shored up by firm RBI intervention

**Mumbai:** The Indian rupee rose Thursday, its first day of gains in two weeks, after the RBI shored up the currency through firm intervention, while a media report that policy options including a potential rate hike are being weighed for its defence also helped. It closed at 96.20, up 0.6% from its close at 96.82 in previous session, its best one-day gain in two weeks. The central bank deployed a familiar intervention strategy on Thursday. REUTERS

#### ITC posts profit uptick on tax-led price hikes

**Bengaluru:** ITC posted a marginal rise in quarterly adjusted profit Thursday, as price increases in its core cigarette business cushioned some of the impact of a tax hike and an Iran-war-led rise in raw material costs. Prices of key raw materials like edible oil, soap noodles and packaging inputs rose sharply towards the end of the March quarter, the company said, due to supply chain disruptions and logistical challenges. REUTERS

#### DRI seizes 3 lakh e-cigarettes worth Rs 120 cr

**New Delhi:** The Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) has seized 3 lakh electronic cigarettes/vapes worth Rs 120 crore in its crackdown operation against a smuggling racket across Maharashtra, Gujarat, Delhi and West Bengal, the finance ministry said Thursday. These prohibited e-cigarettes were found to be sourced from China in every instance and imported concealed in items like furniture and metal chair parts, the ministry statement said. PTI

● FILING REVEALS \$4.28 BILLION QUARTERLY LOSS; STARSHIP DELAYS OR COST OVERRUNS COULD THREATEN AI, SATELLITE EXPANSION & OVERALL GROWTH

## SpaceX IPO bets \$2 tn on Musk's ambitious rockets-to-AI vision

Reuters  
Bengaluru, May 21

INVESTORS BUYING into SpaceX's nearly \$2 trillion IPO are making a high-stakes wager that CEO Elon Musk can turn a fast-growing satellite business into something far bigger, using an unproven rocket to unlock an ambitious push into AI.

Musk has grown SpaceX into the world's largest rocket business by launching thousands of Starlink internet satellites and pioneering reusable rockets that have transformed the economics of space.

But the company is seeking to be valued not just on those laurels but on the juggernaut it might become if Musk's ambi-

tious bets to colonize Mars, put data centers in space and become a leading AI company pay off.

At the heart of those bets is an assumption that a set of events will unfold in the right order, with each step unlocking the next level of funding and expansion: Starlink will generate the cash to bankroll the next-generation Starship rocket, Starship will slash launch costs to expand the market, and that expanded market will ultimately support the new AI business, currently a money guzzler.

"The risk isn't whether SpaceX is a real business; it clearly is," said Josh Gilbert, analyst at eToro, a trading platform where



Musk has repeatedly turned high-risk engineering bets into dominant businesses. REUTERS

the stock will be available on the day of debut.

"The risk is whether a \$1.75

trillion valuation adequately prices in the execution challenges that come with being

part rocket company, part internet provider, part AI venture, and very much driven by the vision of one individual."

SpaceX is testing investor patience with huge losses it disclosed in its initial S-1 IPO filing on Wednesday: \$4.28 billion in the three months ended March 31, an eightfold increase from a year earlier. Those losses alone will force investors to rely less on traditional metrics to value SpaceX, and more on the belief that Musk will execute what he has pledged.

#### In Musk investors trust

From building a trillion-dollar EV company that helped drive a global shift to clean cars to leading SpaceX as

the first private firm to fly NASA astronauts, Musk has repeatedly turned high-risk engineering bets into dominant businesses, fuelling investor belief that even his most ambitious SpaceX assumptions may be achievable.

"You are not going to justify a \$1.75 trillion or \$2 trillion valuation for SpaceX using traditional fundamental metrics alone," Rainmaker Securities co-founder Greg Martin said in a video call. "Many investors... believe SpaceX could become a \$5 trillion to \$10 trillion company over time."

SpaceX will join a small group of firms valued at \$2 trillion, most of which have steady revenue and strong profits.

### ● MARKETS

Sensex 75,183.36 -135.03 -0.18%	NIFTY 23,654.70 -4.30 -0.02%	Gold ▼ ₹1,58,538	US Dollar ▼ ₹96.20
Silver ▼ ₹2,64,679	Oil ▼ \$108.86	NOTE: GOLD, SILVER RATES AS PER INDIA BULLION AND JEWELLERS ASSOCIATION DATA GOLD PER 10G, SILVER PER 1G; CRUDE OIL (INDIAN BASKET) AS OF MAY 20, 2026	

## IRAN IS BELIEVED TO POSSESS ABOUT 900 POUNDS OF HIGHLY ENRICHED URANIUM

# US will eventually get Iran's enriched uranium: Trump

**Pak pushes to get peace talks back on track; Munir may visit Tehran**

**Reuters**  
Dubai, Washington, May 21

PRESIDENT DONALD Trump vowed on Thursday that the US will eventually recover Iran's stockpile of highly enriched uranium despite comments from Iran that it will not hand over the material.

"We will get it. We don't need it, we don't want it. We'll probably destroy it after we get it, but we're not going to let them have it," Trump told reporters at the White House.

Iran is believed to possess about 900 pounds of highly enriched uranium, which Trump says was buried by US and Israeli airstrikes nearly a year ago.

Iran's Supreme Leader has issued a directive that the country's near-weapons-grade uranium should not be sent abroad, two senior Iranian sources told Reuters.

Meanwhile, Pakistan stepped up diplomacy on



A child plays at the beach, with vessels in the Strait of Hormuz visible, near Bandar Abbas in Iran on Thursday. REUTERS

Thursday to hasten US and Iran peace talks. Pakistan's Army Chief Asim Munir will decide on Thursday whether to travel to Tehran for mediation, sources told Reuters.

Pakistan's interior minister was in Tehran on Wednesday.

"We're speaking to all the various groups in Iran to

streamline communication and so things pick up pace," said one of the sources. "Trump's patience running thin is a concern, but we're working on the pace at which messages are relayed from each side."

Iran's ISNA news agency said Munir would travel to Tehran on Thursday for consultations. The

text being discussed in Tehran is on the general framework, and some details and confidence-building measures as guarantees, the agency said.

Trump said on Wednesday he was willing to wait for Tehran's response but was also ready to resume strikes. "Believe me, if we don't get the right answers, it goes very quickly. We're all ready to go," Trump said. "It could be a few days, but it could go very quickly."

Iran's Revolutionary Guards have warned that renewed attacks will trigger retaliation beyond its region.

Iran submitted its latest offer to the US this week. Tehran's descriptions suggest it largely repeats terms Trump previously rejected, including demands for control of the Strait of Hormuz, compensation for war damage, lifting of sanctions, release of frozen assets and the withdrawal of US troops.

Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister on Thursday restated Tehran's claims to sovereignty over the Strait.

In a legal commentary, Kazem Gharibabadi said Iran could adopt "practical and proportionate measures" to protect its security and maritime safety, citing international law.

## Israel departs hundreds of Gaza flotilla activists after backlash

**Associated Press**  
Tel Aviv, May 21

THE ISRAELI government said Thursday that hundreds of flotilla activists who attempted to breach Israel's naval blockade of Gaza have all been released and deported. Outrage abroad over the activists' treatment prompted several countries to summon Israeli envoys to hear their concerns.

The Israeli Foreign Ministry said in a statement that "all foreign activists" from the flotilla had been deported. They were being flown out of Israel from a civilian airport near the southern Israeli city of Eilat, according to the Legal Center for Arab Minority Rights in Israel, or Adalah.

The group said one participant, Zohar Regev, who holds Israeli citizenship, was released following a court hearing in the southern city of Ashkelon on charges of illegal entry into Israel and unlawful stay. Regev has taken part in previous flotillas to Gaza. Two Italian citizens who had been detained by Israel returned home Thursday, saying they had been beaten and mistreated.

The allegations were "false and entirely without factual basis," said Zivan Freidin, a spokesperson for the Israeli Prison Service.

## Ebola centre torched in Congo as anger over outbreak flares

**Associated Press**  
Bunia, May 21

PEOPLE SET fire to an Ebola treatment center in a town at the heart of the outbreak in eastern Congo on Thursday after being stopped from retrieving the body of a local man, a witness and a senior police officer said, as fear and anger grow over a health crisis that doctors are struggling to contain.

The arson attack in Rwampara reflects the challenges of health workers trying to curb a rare Ebola virus by using stringent measures that might clash with local customs, such as burial rites. The disease has been spreading for weeks in a region lacking in health facilities and where armed conflict has displaced many people.

The dangerous work of burying suspected victims is being managed wherever possible by authorities because the bodies of those who die from Ebola can be highly contagious and lead to further spread when people prepare bodies for burial and gather for funerals.

That policy can be extremely unpopular with victims' families and friends, who aren't given the chance to bury their loved ones.

The center in Rwampara was burned by local youths who became angry while trying to retrieve the body of a friend who had apparently died of



Flames and smoke rise from an Ebola treatment center in Rwampara, Congo, on Thursday. AP

## Family of US Ebola patient moved to isolation ward in Berlin hospital

Berlin: The family of a US citizen who contracted Ebola in Democratic Republic of Congo, where an outbreak of a rare strain of the virus has killed over 130 people, has been admitted to an isolation ward at the Berlin hospital where he is being treated.

The German health ministry said in a statement on Thursday that the wife and four children of the patient "were brought to Germany on a special flight and are considered close contacts."

The ministry did not say whether any of the family members were infected with Ebola or showing symptoms. REUTERS

Ebola, according to a witness who spoke to *The Associated Press* by telephone.

"The police intervened to try to calm the situation, but unfortunately they were unsuccessful," said Alexis Burata, a local student who said he was

in the area.

Deputy Senior Commissioner Jean Claude Mukendi, head of the public security department, said it was due to youths who didn't understand the protocols required for burying suspected Ebola victims.

## A hardline Iran general is key player in negotiations with US

**Associated Press**  
Dubai, May 21

AS NEGOTIATIONS with the United States hang in the balance, a hard-line Iranian general linked to attacks at home and abroad over the past decades is believed to have seized a place near the centre of power.

Brig Gen Ahmad Vahidi, who heads Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard, has become a major player in formulating Iran's tough stance in negotiating a possible end to the war with the US, experts say.

He is believed to be part of a

small clique in direct contact with Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Mojtaba Khamenei, who remains in hiding after being wounded in the February 28 Israeli strikes that killed his father, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

Like everything in Iran since the war began, who ultimately controls decision-making remains uncertain. As people within the upper ranks of Iran's theocracy vie for power, they can gain or lose favour quickly.

Vahidi himself wasn't seen publicly for months after February 8, weeks before the war began, until Thursday, when Ira-



Brig Gen Ahmad Vahidi. FILE

nian newspapers carried images of the general meeting with Pakistan's interior minister in Tehran, who carried a message regarding negotiations with US. A longtime veteran of the ruling system, Vahidi helped shape

Iran's support of militant groups across the region, is accused of a role in the 1994 bombing of a Jewish centre in Argentina, and in 2022 led domestic security forces in a bloody crackdown on protesters.

Elevated to Guard commander this year after his predecessor was killed early in the war, he leads the most powerful force in Iran, with its arsenal of ballistic missiles and its fleet of small boats threatening Persian Gulf shipping.

"Vahidi and members of his inner circle have likely consolidated control over

not only Iran's military response in the conflict but also Iran's negotiations policy," the Washington-based Institute for the Study of War said.

Iran's war strategy has been to keep a stranglehold on the Strait of Hormuz, blocking oil and gas exports and causing a global energy crisis.

At the same time, it has struck hard against oil facilities, hotels and infrastructure in Gulf Arab nations. In negotiations, it has held out against US demands that it surrender its stock-

pile of highly enriched uranium, betting that it can outlast the US in the ongoing standoff and that President Donald Trump will be reluctant to resume outright war that could bring greater damage to America's Gulf allies.

That likely reflects Vahidi's confrontational style. "He comes from that mindset of unending revolution, unending resistance," said Kenneth Katzman, a senior fellow at the The Soufan Group, a New York-based think tank.

Vahidi believes "the US needs to be challenged at every turn," said Katzman. NYT

### • BRIEFLY

#### NEPAL

## A record 274 climbers scale Mount Everest in a single day



Mount Everest as seen from the base camp in Nepal. FILE

HUNDREDS OF climbers scaled Mount Everest in a single day, setting a new record with 274 successful ascents, officials said Thursday. The climbers took advantage of the clear weather on Wednesday, said Rishi Ram Bhandari of the Expedition Operators Association Nepal. It was the highest number of climbers to reach the summit on a single day from the popular route on the southern face of the peak, which is located in Nepal. Earlier this week, veteran mountain guide Kami Rita Sherpa scaled the peak for the 32nd time, breaking his own record. His closest competitor, Pasang Dawa Sherpa, scaled the peak for the 30th time this week. Also, Lakpa Sherpa scaled Everest for the 11th time, topping her own record. AP

#### NIGERIA

## \$363mn meth cartel busted; kingpin, 10 held

NIGERIA'S ANTI-drug agency said it had dismantled a methamphetamine syndicate in the largest seizure of its kind in the country, seizing drugs and chemicals worth about \$363 million and arresting 10 suspects, including three Mexicans. The agency said on Wednesday that coordinated raids on a farm in Ogun state and linked properties in Lagos state, southwest Nigeria, uncovered an industrial-scale clandestine laboratory and yielded 2.4 tons of methamphetamine and chemical materials. The agency said the scale of haul highlighted a shift by cartels towards setting up production bases in Nigeria. REUTERS

#### TAIWAN

## Three face probe over Nvidia chip smuggling case

AUTHORITIES IN Taiwan are investigating three people on suspicion of using forged documents to smuggle computer servers containing advanced Nvidia chips to China, prosecutors said Thursday. The high-performance AI servers were made by the San Jose, California-based Super Micro Computer Inc. The three people are accused of conspiring to purchase the servers in Taiwan, then use the false documents for export declarations to smuggle the servers to China, Taiwan's Keelung District Prosecutors Office said in a statement. Prosecutors did not identify the three people. AP

## AI controversy over winning story grips literary competition

**Valeriya Safronova**  
May 21

CONCERNS OVER the increasingly widespread use of artificial intelligence tools to assist with writing continue to roil the literary world.

This week, the Commonwealth Short Story Prize drew attention from readers who suspected that one of its winning stories, *The Serpent in the Grove*, was written by AI. Like all five regional winners of the competition, the story was published online by Granta, a British literary journal that has featured work by renowned authors including Kazuo Ishiguro, Zadie Smith and Salman Rushdie.

"We've taken stock of the comments and tried to be very systematic in our understanding of some of the perspectives and tried to look at ourselves internally to see if we feel that our process to date has been robust enough," said Razmi Farook, director-general of the Com-



Granta posted statements distancing its editors from the contest selections. FILE

monwealth Foundation, which administers the prize, in a video call with *The New York Times*. "We're confident in the rigor of our process, but we're conscious that this is an evolving technological environment."

Granta, which did not respond to questions sent by the *Times* before publication, took a different stance in its multiple public statements. NYT

"We showed Claude.ai the story and asked whether it was AI-generated," Sigrid Rausing, the publisher of Granta, said in a statement. "The response was long, concluding that it was 'almost certainly not produced unaided by a human.'"

Rausing added: "It may be that the judges have now awarded a prize to an instance of AI plagiarism — we don't yet know, and perhaps we never will know."

On its website, the magazine posted a statement above each of the five winning stories distancing its editors from the contest's selection process.

"Granta editors were not involved with these stories or their selection beyond copy-editing them upon receipt," the statement reads in part. "The suggestion that writers have submitted material not authentically their own is a charge we take seriously, but until definite evidence comes to light we will keep these stories on our website." NYT

## Trump delays AI executive order after objecting to its provisions

**Reuters**  
May 21

US PRESIDENT Donald Trump on Thursday said he had postponed signing an executive order on AI because he "didn't like certain aspects of it."

Trump had planned to sign the order at a ceremony on Thursday afternoon attended by CEOs of AI companies.

The order would create a voluntary framework for AI developers to engage with the US government before the public release of covered models, two sources told Reuters Wednesday.

The president also had planned to direct the US government to use the advanced models to improve the cybersecurity defenses of government systems, along with networks owned by sectors that are vital to the nation's economy, such as banks and hospitals, according to another source.

## US shuts 'India-based' call centre defrauding elderly Americans

**Press Trust of India**  
New York, May 21

US AUTHORITIES have shut down an India-based call centre operation that allegedly defrauded hundreds of elderly Americans of millions of dollars through tech support scams, following a years-long investigation that led to the conviction of five "telemarketing fraudsters".

In a social media post on Wednesday, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Boston said that the probe also resulted in the arrest and conviction of a former employee of the call routing company used by the fraudsters.

It said the call centre scam targeted hundreds of elderly victims in the US and abroad and defrauded them of millions of dollars.

"This comes after a FBI Boston investigation that has resulted in the arrests and conviction of a former employee of their call routing company, and five India-based telemarketing fraudsters," it said.

Adam Young, 42, of Miami and Harrison Gevirtz, 33, of Las Vegas, admitted to operating a business that provided telecommunications-related services to customers they knew were engaged in fraud schemes. Young and Gevirtz pleaded guilty after an investigation launched in 2020 led to the conviction of five India-based telemarketing fraudsters and a former employee of their call routing company.

Indian nationals Sahil Narang, Chirag Sachdeva, Abrar Anjum and Manish Kumar were convicted on charges related to India-based telemarketing fraud schemes that targeted and defrauded Americans, many of them elderly or otherwise vulnerable, the statement said.

### IRA SACHS' SPARE YET LUSH STYLE IMPARTS A LEANER, MORE KNOWING LOOK TO HIS LEAD CHARACTER — RAMI MALEK AS DOWNTOWN MUSICIAN JIMMY GEORGE

## The Man I Love brings alive the pulsating energy of NYC during the Reagan era



SHUBHRA GUPTA

THE 80S IN NYC was a scene, man. If you're of a certain vintage, you may have actually heard this line from the know-it-all seniors when you arrived in any Liberal Arts college in Delhi University as a newbie — those exalted beings who smoked Charminars and wore drainpipe jeans and floppy hair and big Beatles glasses who were, in hindsight, probably spouting received wisdom.

There are no such gap between perception and knowing in Ira Sachs' marvellous re-creation of that very specific Reagan era in *The Man I Love*, which brings alive the sights and sounds of the city with the kind of pulsating energy that can come only from someone who has lived through it.

This was the decade after the flower children of the 70s, and Woodstock, had grown into adults who had to find work to pay their bills, but where a fresh band of the young and restless found themselves at the centre of a thriving gay movement which was at the time more visible and more vocal than anywhere else in America.

And his vision is carried through by Rami Malek playing Downtown musician Jimmy George, who sees his death coming, but refuses to get fazed by it, while never hiding from it. He lives with his partner Dennis (Tom Sturridge) who has the unenviable job of caring for him; he also has a quick little fling with British lad Vincent (Luther Ford), who literally flings himself at Jimmy.

Jimmy's immediate family, sister Brenda (Rebecca Hall) and brother-in-law Gene (Ebon Moss-Bachrach) are at hand when he returns from hospital after a near-fatal bout of pneumonia; Jimmy's parents are far more disapproving of his orientation and lifestyle. It's the



A still from *The Man I Love*. FESTIVAL DE CANNES

clash of generations that's natural, but it's probably what accounts for Jimmy's motherless look: Malek builds Jimmy up with delicate strokes, which

leans into his queer identity, but also never loses sight of his personhood.

The last time Sachs competed for the Palme d'Or was in

2019 with *Frankie*. The American director, best known in Indie circles for his tightly-knit dramas, has been most prolific in the past couple of years, with a film each in Venice (*Passages*) and Sundance (*Peter Hujar's Day*). But this Cannes competition entry has gone right to the top of his own filmography, and amongst this critic's favourite entries this year.

There's a scene in which Sachs, who has co-written this "most personal" film with long-time collaborator Mauricio Zacharias, mining many of the details from his own memory, gets a room full people to sing. That's all they do, sing: each one, when their turn comes, turning to their song.

It's like any other post-dinner sing-song that you may come across, but the sequence is one of piercing beauty, as the camera holds each singer, and their voice, in regard. Those people aren't doing it to sound perfect, they are just making an evening richer and better.

They tell us who they are through the act of singing, and the choice of song.

There have innumerable movies on gay characters afflicted with AIDS in cinema from around the world — from 1993 *Philadelphia* to 1995 *My Brother Nikhil*. But many of the beats of *The Man I Love* remind me of one of the best literary accounts of that "wild" time in New York, captured by Allan

Gurganus's terrific account of three friends facing a full-blown AIDS crisis in *Plays Well With Others*.

Malek's Jimmy may remind you of his Freddie Mercury in *Bohemian Rhapsody*, the 2018 biopic of the Queen lead singer. But Sachs's spare yet lush style — which makes New York apartments look both grungy and attractive — imparts a leaner, more knowing look to his lead character, whose muted flamboyance remains unwavering even in the face of his impending mortality. Malek won an Oscar then, and I won't be surprised if this turn garners him more prizes.

But for now, this film will have to do.

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If there are questions of current or contemporary relevance that you would like explained, please write to [explained@indianexpress.com](mailto:explained@indianexpress.com)

• GEOPOLITICS

## What Russia-China ties mean for India's security

In 2025, 32% of Russia's total trade value was with China. With the US also trying to woo China, New Delhi will have to work on new strategies



**EXPERT EXPLAINS**

**RAJAN KUMAR**

PROFESSOR, SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES, JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY



Russian President Vladimir Putin and Chinese President Xi Jinping in Beijing on Wednesday. AP

• ENVIRONMENT

## No new dam in upper Ganga: The long road to 'consensus'

**Nikhil Ghanekar**  
New Delhi, May 21

ON WEDNESDAY, the Union Government presented a 'consensus' view to the Supreme Court that it was not in favour of new hydroelectric projects (HEPs) on the Alaknanda and Bhagirathi Rivers, the headwater streams of the Ganga River.

The debate on damming the rivers was spurred by the 2013 Kedarnath disaster, which prompted the SC to order a scrutiny of existing and proposed projects in Uttarakhand, and freeze environmental and forest clearances for new HEPs.

The government's unified stand comes after over a decade of disagreements within. These centred around Uttarakhand's economic interests, efforts to maintain a minimum environmental flow in the Ganga, and assessments on their impact on the fragile Himalayan ecosystem.

**Committees and conflicts**

Based on the SC's 2013 order, the Union Environment Ministry constituted an expert body led by environmental expert Ravi Chopra. It was to study whether HEPs had a role in escalating the impact of the Kedarnath flood and to examine whether 24 such projects would significantly affect the biodiversity of the basins.

This expert body (EB-I) submitted that 23 of the 24 projects under review would harm biodiversity, and the Environment Ministry endorsed its view. However, the Central Electricity Authority and the Central Water Commission disagreed. They recommended hydropower, claiming a minimal environmental footprint and citing no grounds to link it to the 2013 disaster.

Meanwhile, six project developers who already had clearances moved court to lift the SC's freeze. Faced with differing views, the Supreme Court in 2015 directed the Environment Ministry to constitute another body: expert body-II.

Setup under hydrology expert BP Das, EB-II's mandate included 'cumulative impact and carrying capacity' assessment of the Ganga for the development of HEPs with a focus on glacial movement, seismic vulnerability, and socio-economic impacts.

In October 2015, the Environment Ministry told the court that EB-II had also okayed all six projects, but added it would also consult the Ministry of Jal Shakti (then Water Resources and Ganga Rejuvenation), and the Ministry of Power before a final decision. A major disagreement within the ministries occurred at this juncture and the matter remained in a deadlock.

In its final report, EB-II studied 70 HEPs in the upper reaches of the Ganga River basin, out of which 19 were already commissioned. From the remaining 51, it recommended implementing 28 projects in a draft final report. The Jal Shakti Ministry opposed this in 2019.

Eventually, the Centre filed a consensus submission in 2021 on permitting seven projects that had finished substantial physical construction and where financial investment was in advanced stages.

**Revisiting assessments**

The matter, though, did not rest there. The SC, in 2024, ordered that a committee headed by Cabinet Secretary TV Somanathan have due deliberations on EB-II recommendations. Even if the Centre was not bound to accept the recommendations, it had to state reasons for it.

The committee considered the views of the Uttarakhand government, various ministries and civil society and finally recommended only five projects — Bowala Nandprayag, Devsari, Bhyundar Ganga, Jhalakoti, and Urgan-II. To arrive at this, it delineated the key issues, which included projects lying in the path of areas prone to glacial lake outburst floods (GLOFs). It noted that the Sikkim GLOF event of 2023 demonstrated the devastating impacts downstream. Then, it eliminated projects that would have a high ecological impact.

In January this year, the SC granted three months for a final decision. The Centre has primarily highlighted the fragility of the region to make a case for not having any new hydel dams. It termed the two river basins 'sui generis' or one of a kind, and argued that the biodiversity, cultural, and geological implications are large.

Recent disasters in Uttarakhand, such as the 2021 Rishi Ganga floods, Joshimath land subsidence, and Dharali landslide were cited as proof of the region's vulnerability.

RUSSIAN PRESIDENT Vladimir Putin arrived in Beijing on Tuesday, less than a week after US President Donald Trump concluded his three-day visit. Although such high-level engagements in quick succession are extremely rare, these visits underline China's emergence as a central hub of global diplomacy. Washington seeks to alleviate its strained ties, while Moscow aims to secure Beijing's sustained economic support and preserve its strategic relevance in global geopolitics.

The US, China and Russia are systemic players and the nature of their interactions is central to the global order's stability and future direction. Therefore, Putin's visit to Beijing is significant not merely for bilateral reasons. But can the Russia-China partnership pave the way for a military alliance?

**History of bilateral relations**

Historically, Russia-China relations can be understood in three phases: the imperial period, the Soviet period, and the post-Soviet period. Russia and China have interacted as civilisational states for centuries. They share a long border of roughly 4,300 km, and their relationship has largely been tranquil.

However, there were periods of episodic conflicts and hostility. For instance, Chinese literature often refers to the 19th century as a "period of humiliation" in which European powers, including Russia, forced China to sign unfair treaties.

The establishment of the Communist regime in China in 1949 enabled strong cooperation with the Soviet Union, culminating in the famous Treaty of Friendship in 1950. But the ideological affinity was short-lived, and soon differences emerged over the correct interpretation of socialist ideology, regional geopolitics, and global influence.

China also expected the Soviet Union to provide nuclear technology, which the latter refused. These developments led to the famous Sino-Soviet schism of the 1960s, culminating in armed clashes in 1969.

This provided the US with an opportunity to realign its policy toward China. Then US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger's famous "ping-pong diplomacy" (referring to a series of friendly table tennis matches between Chinese and American players in 1971 as a symbolic gesture of goodwill) thawed Cold War ties and paved the way for US President Richard Nixon's 1972 visit to Beijing.

Washington, Beijing, and Islamabad forged close ties during this period, jeopardising India's continental security and destabilising regional geopolitics. Now, President Trump seems to be pursuing a similar policy of establishing close ties with Pakistan and China.

After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, China's Jiang Zemin and Russia's Boris Yeltsin signed the Strategic Partnership Treaty in 1992. However, Russian President Vladimir Putin and Chinese President Xi Jinping added new dynamism to Russia-China relations when they declared a "no-limits" partnership in 2022, just before the onset of Russia's war with Ukraine.

**Political and economic cooperation**

Russia and China have deep economic and political ties and complement each other in several respects. Putin and Xi have met more than 40 times: in fact, Putin has

visited China more than 20 times, while Xi has visited Russia 11 times.

China is the leading player in commerce, technology and finance, while Russia thrives on its energy and defence exports. Russia needs market, technology and capital, while China needs energy and defence products. Following Western sanctions, Russia has become heavily dependent on China. The Russian economy would have collapsed without China's support from 2022. Russia's total trade value was about \$700 billion in 2025, of which about \$228 billion (or 32 per cent) was only with China.

For key technologies, Russia now depends heavily on China. Chinese automobile, telecom and electronic companies have captured a high share of the Russian market. Russian technology firms rely heavily on semiconductor and industrial electronics from China. They are also collaborating in aerospace, satellite navigation, advanced materials, and industrial artificial intelligence. Before the Ukraine war, Russia's gas supply was mainly to European states, but after the sanctions, it has gone mainly to China. Also, trade between the two countries takes place in local currencies of yuan and rouble, reflecting the accelerating de-dollarisation of bilateral trade.

**Outcomes of Putin-Xi summit**

The Putin-Xi summit is being con-

**Power of Siberia**

The 3,000-km cross-border Power of Siberia 1 pipeline transports natural gas from Eastern Siberia directly to northeastern China's Heilongjiang province.

The proposed 2,600-km Power of Siberia 2 pipeline stretches from the Arctic gas fields of Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Okrug to Mongolia.

• LAW

## Why world's richest cricketing body is not covered under RTI Act

**Amaal Sheikh**  
New Delhi, May 21

THE CENTRAL Information Commission (CIC) this week held that the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), India's principal cricket governing body, is not a "public authority" under the Right to Information (RTI) Act and cannot be compelled to disclose information under the law.

The order came in a case filed by a Delhi resident who had sought to know under what authority BCCI selects players to represent India, why governments provide stadiums and police security to what is technically a private association, and whether the government exercises any legal control over cricket administration in India.

The CIC noted that BCCI does not fall within the ambit of a "public authority" under Section 2(h) of the RTI Act and dismissed the appeal filed in 2018, after the

Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports said that information sought was not available.

**The legal framework**

Section 2(h) defines a "public authority" as "any authority or body or institution of self-government established or constituted" by the Constitution, laws made by Parliament or state legislatures, or government notifications. It also includes bodies "owned, controlled or substantially financed" by the government, including NGOs financed by public funds.

Article 12 of the Constitution defines "State" to include the government and Parliament of India, state governments and legislatures, and "all local or other authorities" under government control. Since then, courts have expanded this through judicial interpretation.

The National Sports Governance Act, 2025, which provides that sports bodies re-

**Supreme Court ruling**

The constitutional foundation for the CIC's reasoning lies in the 2005 judgment in *Zee Telefilms Ltd v. Union of India*.

In that case, a broadcaster had challenged BCCI's control over telecast rights, arguing that the Board should be treated as "State" under Article 12.

ceiving grants from the government would be treated as public authorities under the RTI Act to the extent of utilisation of those funds. Since BCCI receives no such grants, it falls outside this statutory extension.

The Lodha Committee had recommended bringing BCCI under the RTI. In 2018, the Law Commission also recommended that sports bodies performing public functions be brought within its ambit. But none of this translated into binding law.

An earlier CIC bench in 2018 held BCCI to be a public authority and directed it to appoint Central Public Information Officers and disclose information under Section 4 of the RTI Act. The Madras High Court later set aside that order and remanded the matter for fresh consideration, which subsequently resulted in this latest order.

**What the CIC said**

**ON REGISTRATION OF BCCI:** BCCI does

not meet the definition of "public authority" under Section 2(h) of the RTI Act. It is a society registered under the Tamil Nadu Societies Registration Act, 1975, "a private association of individuals which has obtained legal recognition through registration." The CIC said the Act does not cover all entities "merely because they are registered under a statute".

**ON CONTROL OVER BCCI:** Citing a 2013 SC ruling, the CIC found that BCCI's internal structure does not reflect governmental control. Office bearers are elected internally under its own rules, no government nominee sits on committees, and government approval is not required for decisions.

**ON FINANCING:** BCCI generates its revenue independently. It rejected the argument that use of government-owned stadiums or police deployment during matches amounts to substantial government financing.

• AGRICULTURE

## Iran war, monsoon worries could make millets the preferred choice of farmers

**Harish Damodaran**  
New Delhi, May 21

Rs 12 to Rs 25 per kg.

**Input crunch**

LAST WEEK, Ramesh Chander sowed *bajra* (pearl millet) on eight acres. He plans to sow seeds of the 'Proagro 9001' hybrid on another six acres next month, after harvesting the standing *moong* (green gram) crop on that field. "I will grow *bajra* on 14 acres this year, from nine in 2025 and two acres in 2024," says the 40-year-old with a 34-acre holding in Kusambi village of Haryana's Sirsa district.

The higher *bajra* acreage is at the expense of *narma* (cotton). Chander had cultivated the natural fibre crop on 23 acres in 2024, which he reduced to 12 last year: "This time, I may do just one acre".

Chander gives three reasons for virtually deserting cotton.

The first is the threat from *gulabi sundi* or pink bollworm. Till 4-5 years ago, *kapas* (raw un-ginned cotton) yields were 10-12 quintals per acre. Last year, he harvested only 31 quintals from his 12 acres due to the insect pest, whose larvae bore into the bolls (fruits) of cotton plants and feed on the developing seeds and fibre inside, causing yield loss and lint discolouration.

The second reason is labour shortage for picking cotton, with the cost ranging from

The third factor has to do with chemical inputs — fertilisers and pesticides.

For cotton, Chander applies two 50-kg bags of single super phosphate (SSP), half-a-bag of muriate of potash (MOP) and 10 kg of sulphur bentonite per acre during sowing, followed by one bag of di-ammonium phosphate (DAP) and two 45-kg urea bags after 1.5 months.

He also sprays multiple insecticides for controlling American bollworm, spotted bollworm, tobacco caterpillars, thrips, jassids and aphids.

"The total sprays are anywhere from five to 10 over the crop's life cycle of 180-185 days. And these chemicals don't work against *gulabi sundi*," points out Chander.

In *bajra*, per-acre fertiliser use is just two bags of SSP and two urea bags, with two 80-gram sprays of 'Proclaim' to control top borer. "I get 18-20 quintals/acre grain yield from Proagro 9001, which matures in 90-95 days. And only 1-2 irrigations are necessary, compared to 5-7 in cotton," he adds.

Satyender Singh, Chief Executive Officer (Seeds) at Crystal Crop Protection Ltd, sees a clear trend of Northwest India farmers moving away from cotton.

• Consumption/Sale of fertiliser products (lakh tonnes)

	Urea	DAP	NP/NPK	SSP	MOP
2016-17	296.14	89.64	84.14	37.57	28.63
2017-18	298.94	92.94	85.96	34.39	31.58
2018-19	314.18	92.11	90.28	35.79	29.57
2019-20	336.95	101	98.57	44.03	27.87
2020-21	350.43	119.11	118.11	44.89	34.25
2021-22	341.8	92.72	114.79	56.81	24.56
2022-23	357.25	104.18	100.74	50.17	16.32
2023-24	357.8	108.12	110.73	45.44	16.45
2024-25	387.74	92.81	142.14	49.28	22.02
2025-26	396.38	93.96	140.67	55.29	22.56

SOURCE: THE FERTILISER ASSOCIATION OF INDIA.

"Yield losses from pink bollworm, long growing period, and rising input and labour costs are discouraging them," notes Singh, whose Delhi-based company markets the Proagro 9001, 9190 and 9180 *bajra* hybrids. Proagro 9001 alone was planted in roughly 1.6 million acres area across Uttar

Pradesh, MP, Rajasthan and Haryana in the 2025 *kharif* (monsoon) season.

**Planting flexibility**

The *bajra* Chander would sow in June 15-20 is harvestable three months later, giving him ample time to plant a 130-140 days

*rabi* (winter-spring) mustard crop by mid-October. After that is harvested, he can sow a 60-65 days *zaid* (summer) *moong* crop from mid-March to mid-April. "*Bajra* allows farmers to take an extra crop. With cotton (sowing time from mid-April to mid-May), they can only go for wheat in November and there is no scope to plant summer *moong* after that," adds Singh.

**West Asia woes**

A major uncertainty that Indian farmers are facing ahead of *kharif* plantings, which will take off with the monsoon rain from June, is fertilisers.

Between 2016-17 and 2025-26 (April-March), domestic sale of urea has gone up from below 300 lakh to nearly 400 lakh tonnes. Consumption of DAP, SSP and complex fertilisers containing nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium and sulphur in different proportions have also significantly increased over this period (see table).

This year, fertiliser availability is a challenge because of the still-blocked Strait of Hormuz.

While the requirement of fertilisers isn't much in *bajra*, *moong* and other pulses, that's not so with paddy or maize. Chander planted the Pusa Basmati 1401 paddy variety on nine acres in 2024 and 13 acres in 2025.

He seeks to take it to 19 acres this year, but the crop needs three bags of urea, one bag of DAP, half-a-bag of MOP and 4 kg of zinc sulphate.

The challenge is still more in maize. Rakesh Karole, a farmer from Makrala village in Pandhara tehsil of MP's Khandwa district, harvests 26-28 quintals per acre yields in *kharif* and 28-32 quintals in *rabi* from the Advanta 'PAC 741' and 'PAC 751' hybrids over 105-110 and 120-130 days respectively.

But maize consumes two bags of urea, one bag of DAP, half-a-bag of MOP and 5 kg of zinc sulphate as a first dose after 20-25 days of sowing. It is followed by one bag each of urea and 12:32:16 complex fertiliser after 45 days, and half-a-bag of urea after 75 days.

This year, the price sentiment isn't bad for cotton and maize. The West Asia tensions have driven up prices of manmade fibres like polyester and nylon, and also demand for bio-ethanol from maize used in blending with petrol.

However, the global supply shock in fertilisers as well as petroleum-derived solvents and emulsifiers that go into pesticide formulations may dampen farmer enthusiasm.

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Classifieds

PERSONAL

I Saqib Husain S/O, Shakir Hussain R/O T-401 Basti Hazrat Nizamuddin New Delhi 110013 have changed my name to Saqib Hussain. 0040855838-1
I Samla Bai Kanvar W/o Chandra Bhuvan Singh R/o Kanvar Para, Gevra Basti, Ward- 56, Korba M.Corp, Korba, Chhattisgarh - 495454, have changed my name to Samla Devi 0071037045-1
I SAID S/O-ABDUL WAHEED,R/O-D-348, Shaheed-Nagar, Chikamberpur,Sahibabad, Ghaziabad,Uttar Pradesh-201006 has changed my name to MOHAMMAD SAYEED,for all future,purpose. 0040855876-2
I Praveen Pasricha S/o Shri Laxman Dass Pasricha, R/o 7/74, Ground Floor, Back Side, Subhash Nagar, Delhi-110027 have changed my name to Parveen Pasricha for all purposes. 0040855728-1
I Parmod Kumar son of Puran Chand Jain resident of 32 Rama Park, Old Rohtak Road Kishan Ganj, Delhi-110007 have changed my name to Parmod Kumar Jain for all future purposes. 0040855736-1
I Nafeesul Hasan S/O, Shafiq Ahmad R/o 59/a, Block-j, Thokar No. 4, Abul Fazel Enclave Part-1, Jamia Nagar, Okhla, New Delhi-110025 have changed my name to Nafisul Hasan. 0040855835-1
I Mohar Bai D/o Salikram and W/o Har Narayan R/o Durpa, Risdi, Korba, Chhattisgarh-495454, have changed my name to Mohar Kunwar 0071037043-1
I M.D. Ajam S/O Imatyaj Ahmad R/o Kh No-27/11-27/20, Left Poram, 4Th Floor, Gali No-6 Sangam Vihar, Wazirabad, Delhi-110084, have changed my name to Mohd Azam 0071037059-1
I Kailash Sahney W/o R Sawhney R/o C-74B, Kalkaji, Delhi-110019, have changed my name to Kailash Sawhney 0071037015-1
I Jyothi Kumar PB S/O Bhaskaran Add :RZ-2047,GALI NO-27, TUGLAKABAD, KALKAJI, New Delhi-110019, Have Change My Name To Jyothi Kumar 0040855847-6
I Janardan Prasad S/o Rajendra Sah R/o Mokar, Rohtas, Bihar-821113, have changed my name to Deepak Kumar 0071037052-1
I,Dinesh Narayan Jajoo,S/o Vishnu Narain Jajoo,R/O-B-357 S/F,Green Field Colony, Sector-43,Faridabad-121003,Have Changed My Name To Dinesh Narain Jajoo. 0040855847-4
I, ASHKAR HUSAIN S/O AKHTAR HUSAIN R/O-B-240 NEAR MCD SCHOOL, SHREE RAM COLONY, RAJEEV NAGAR,NORTH-EAST, DELHI-110094,I inform that my name and my father name is wrongly mentioned in passport is Ashkar Hussain S/O Akhtar Hassan but correct name is Ashkar Husain s/o Akhtar husain permanently. 0040855855-6 0071037006-1
It is for general information that I,RESHNA LOKESH daughter of LATE V.K. SASEENDRAN,ex-wife of SHRI,LOKESH KUMAR,residing at QTR.NO.002,BLOCK-B,THYAGRAJ NAGAR,NEW DELHI-110003,declare that I got divorce from my,husband SHRI LOKESH KUMAR vide Court Decree.No.HMA No.29/24 dated-15/01/2024. Further,I have changed the name of mine and my,minor son SAAYUJYA RESHNA LOKESH aged-07-years and we shall hereafter be known as V.K.RESHNA and SAAYUJYA V.K.It is certified that I,have compiled with other legal requirements in this connection. 0040855876-1
I have changed my name to Sanjay Chaudhary from Sanjay Kumar for all future purposes. Sanjay Chaudhary S/O Ram Charan Singh Nagla Salikpur Shikarpur Distt. Bulandshahr. 0040855499-1
I, AALIYA W/O TAJ SAIED R/O H.No- 1936, GALI RAJAN, DARIYA GANJ, VTC- 8 DARYA GANJ, PO: DARYA GANJ, DISTRICT: CENTRAL DELHI, DELHI- 110002 HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO AALIYA SAEED FOR ALL PURPOSES. 0071037011-1
I,kawaljeet Singh Sachdeva,S/O-Tricholan Singh,Add H-No-985,Ground Floor Near-Singh Sabha Gurudwara Dr Mukharjee Nagar,North West-Delhi-110009,Have Change My Name To Kawaljeet Singh 0040855847-8
I, Dinesh Pandey, Son of Late Sh. Thaneswar Prasad Pandey, resident of House No-F-52, Khasra No.23/2, Third Floor, Deep Vihar, Village Pansali, Delhi-110042 have changed my name from Dinesh Chander to Dinesh Pandey for all future purposes. 0040855730-2
I, Alka Pandey, Wife of Sh. Dinesh Pandey, resident of House No-F-52, Khasra No.23/2, Third Floor, Deep Vihar, Village Pansali, Delhi-110042 have changed my name from Alka to Alka Pandey for all future purposes. 0040855730-1

I,hitherto known as Ravi Lakshmi Narayan alias Murali Ravi Narayan,son of,Ravi Narayan,residing at,H-006,Yamuna-Apartments, Alaknanda,New Delhi-110019,have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Murali Ravi Narayan. 0040855849-8
I,hitherto known as PAARTH SHARMA,S/O-RAJEEV PANDIT,R/O-B-83,C-7,TRONICA-VICTY,VC: LONI, DISTRICT:GHAZIABAD,UTTAR PRADESH-201102,have changed my name and shall hereafter be known HITEN PANDIT. 0040855849-9
I,Vrinda Oberoi,D/o-Upjive Singh Oberoi,R/o 40C Green-View Apartments,Near Mother Dairy,Sector-15A,Noida,Gautam Budh Nagar,U.P.-201301,have changed my name to Vrinda Singh Oberoi. 0040855855-1
I,Vivek Kumar,S/o-Rakesh Awasthi,R/O-C-22A/1,2nd Floor,Banglow Road,Adarsh-Nagar,Delhi-110033,have changed my name to Vivek Awasthi for all purposes. 0040855849-1
I,Uganta Uganta Lamba Uganta Devi,W/O Samsher Singh Lamba,R/O Garhi, Garhi, Mahendargarh(Haryana)-123021,have changed my name to Uganta Devi. 0040855855-4
I,Sumeet Pal Singh Sachdeva,S/O-Kawaljeet Singh,H-NO-985,Ground Floor,Near-Singh Sabha Gurudwara Dr Mukharjee-Nagar North,West-Delhi 110009,Have Change My Name To Sumeet Pal Singh 0040855847-7
I,Smt Kiran,wife of,Anil Kumar,R/O-will- Barwan Post-kanani Dist-Ballia State- Uttar Pradesh Pin-277304,have changed My Name from Smt kiran to Kiran vide-affidavit date-21.May.2026. 0040855855-8
I,Shakti Vohra,w/o-vishal Bhandari,R/o-F-24/231-232,sector-3,Rohini Delhi-110085,have changed my name to Shakti Bhandari after-marriage,for all purposes. 0040855847-2
I,Samarjit Datta,S/o Borendranath Datta,R/o.H.No.556,Alpha-2,Greater Noida,Distt. Gautam Budh Nagar,Uttar pradesh-201306,have changed my name to Smarjit Datta for all future,purposes. 0040855847-1
I,SYED MUHAMMAD RAIYAN ZAIDI,SYED MOHD. RAIYAN,S/o-SAYYAD MUHAMMAD SHAKHEEL,R/O- PLOT.NO- 323/1,EXT-2C,NANGLOI,DELHI-110041 have changed my name to SAYYAD MUHAMMAD RAIYAN ZAIDI. 0040855855-2
I,SYED MOHD SHAKEL/SYED MOHAMMED SHAKHEEL/SYED MUHAMMAD SHAKHEL,s/o-ZARGHAM HUSSAIN,R/O- PLOT.NO- 323/1,EXT-2C,NANGLOI, DELHI-110041,have changed my name to SAYYAD MUHAMMAD SHAKHEEL 0040855855-6
I,SYED MOHD FARHAN,S/M. FARHAN,S/O-SAYYAD MUHAMMAD SHAKHEEL,R/O- PLOT.NO.323/1,EXT-2C,NANGLOI,DELHI-110041, have changed my name to SAYYAD MUHAMMAD FARHAN ZAIDI. 0040855855-3
I,Swaratmika D/O, Rajiv Nayyar R/o 102, Adhunik Apartment, Gurgaon have changed my name to Swaratmika Tiwari. 0040855836-1
I,SHIV KUMARI,mother of,Anil Kumar, address-VILLAGE-Barwan, PO- Karnal,Dist -Ballia state-Uttar Pradesh,Pin-277304,have changed my name from shiv kumari to shiv kumari Devi,vide affidavit date-21/5/2026 0040855849-11
I, SHEHRIN W/o Mohammad Faizan,R/O H.No-116/KN.No-693/517/218,1st Floor,Gali.No-5,Ambekar Basti,Maujpur,Delhi-110053,have changed my name to SHEHREEN ANSARI,for all, future purposes. 0040855846-4
I,ASHAKEEL MIYAN,SHAKEEL AHMED/SYED MOHAMMAD SHAKHEEL,S/O-ZARGHAM HUSSAIN,R/O-PLOT.NO-323/1, EXT-2C,NANGLOI, DELHI-110041 have changed my name to SAYYAD MUHAMMAD SHAKHEEL. 0040855855-5
I,SHABABA JEHARA,D/O-SHAKHAWALA HUSAIN,R/O-J-45B,ABUL FAZAL-ENCLAVE 1,OKHLA,JAMIA-NAGAR,OKHLA,SOUTH DELHI-110025.INFORM THAT GIVEN NAME- SHABAAB ZEHRRA JAFERY, FOR ALL PURPOSE. 0040855847-10
I,SANDEEP S/O RAJIB R/O KARONTHA (70) KARONTHA ROHTAK haryana-124001.HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO SANDEEP KUMAR.0040855846-6
I,Hersh vedkumar Bhandari S/o Vedkumar Bhandari R/O 07/apartment no 402, block 07, la gardenia, the palms, south city 1, have changed my name to Hersh Bhandari 0071036994-1
I, Gireeraj Sharma R/o 67/25 Yadav Park Extension, Nangloi, New Delhi have changed my minor son's name from Kavya Gautam to Kavayansh Gautam. 0040855840-1

I,Ritu S/o Daulat Ram R/o H.No-98, AI-Block,Gali No.-8,Rahul-Chowk, Mohan Garden,Uttam Nagar,Delhi-110059,have changed my name to Ritu Kumari. 0040855846-3
I,Rajiv Kumar Mahajan,S/O-Surender Mahajan,R/o-44C, Punjabi-Camp, F-Block, Mangolpuri,North West-Delhi-110083,have changed my name to Rajeev Mahajan. 0040855846-2
I,RAKHI SHARMA TRIPATHI,W/O-AMITABH TRIPATHI ADD-B-903 PARK VIEW SPA SECTOR-47,GURGAON HARYANA-122018,Have Change My Name To RAKHI SHARMA 0040855847-9
I,RAKESH S/O-Komal R/O-D-53,Harijan Camp Kirti Nagar New Delhi-110015, have changed my name to ANANT PRASAD for all purposes 0040855849-4
I,RABIA PARVEEN/RABIYA w/o-SAYYAD MUHAMMAD SHAKHEEL,R/O-PLOT No.-323/1, EXT-2C,NANGLOI, DELHI-110041 have changed my name to RABEA PARVEEN. 0040855847-3
I,Swati Jha, Wife of Arvind Kumar Mishra, R/O KPA 2 -1804, Jaypee Wishtown, Sector-133, Noida-201304 have changed my name from Swati Jha to Swati Mishra vide Affidavit dated 4 February 2025, Notary Public/Noida. 0040855742-1
I,Shyam Minotra S/O Kishan Chand Minotra R/O-A135, Anand Vihar, Delhi -92 have changed my name to Shyam Sunder Minotra permanently. 0071037051-1
I, Sanjeev Kumar Bakshi S/o Ganshyam Das Phul R/O L-113 Sector-11, Noida, GB.Nagar-201301, have changed my name to Sanjeev Bakshi for all future purposes. 0071037001-1
I,AKHIL S/o Late Mahavir Singh R/O KU-46 Pitampura Delhi-110034 have changed my name to AKHIL AHLAWAT 0040855849-3
I, Sanjay, S/o Krishan Lal Madaan, R/O D-501, 5th Floor, Tower-D, Desire, Main Market Road, Espire Tower, Hamilton Heights Sector-37, Amarnagar, Faridabad, Haryana-121003, have changed my name to Sanjay Madaan, for all purposes. 0040855732-1
I, Sangeeta Saivastava W/o No. 197236R Rank EX MCEAR-10/Gautam Hans Srivastava R/o 14/61, Geeta Colony, Delhi-110031 has changed my name to Savita Srivastava vide affidavit date 19-5-26 before Delhi. 0071037008-1
I, SANDEEP KUMAR S/o Jagdish Kumar R/o-62, Sector-30, Amarnagar, Faridabad -121003 have changed my name to SANDEEP KUMAR SHARMA. 0071037063-1
I, SAAMRITH MITTAL W/O SMOULIH SINGHAL R/O C2/50, ASHOK VIHAR, PHASE-2, DELHI-110052 DECLARE THAT SAMRIDIH MITTAL AND SAMRIDIH SINGHAL BOTH ARE ONE AND SAME PERSON. 0071037058-1
I, SAJJAD ALI R/O F-11/4, UGF front side, Sri Syed Road, Jago Bai Extn, Okhla, Delhi-25 have changed my name to SHAJAD. 0071037063-1
I, N22973-H Rank Ex POR(TEL) Satender Singh Gusain R/o Flat No.128, Netaji Subhash Apartment, Pocket-1, Phase-2, Sector-13, Dwarka, Delhi-110078 has changed the name of my minor Son from Aviral to Aviral Kandari vide affidavit date 19-5-26 before Delhi. 0071037023-1
I, Naina abhua W/o Gaurav R/O E-308, Budh Nagar, Inderpuri, Central Delhi-110012 have changed my name to Naina for all future purposes. 0071037091-1
I, NAZIYA TARANUM C/O Anjum Ara, 1617-A, FF, Gali No-14, Govindpurj, Kalkaji, Delhi-19 have changed my name to NAZIYA TARANUM. 0071037061-1
I, MUKESH KUMAR JHA S/O SHRI VINAY KUMAR JHA R/O A269C, GALI NO.8, NEAR UNID CLINIC SAURABH VIHAR, HARI NAGAR EXTN, BADARPUR, POST-BADARPUR, DISTT:-SOUTH DELHI, DELHI-110044 have changed my name to MUKESH JHA for all future purpose 0071037005-1
I, LALIT C/o Rohtas, C-290A, Harsh Vihar, Hari Nagar Extn., Part-3, Badarpur, Delhi-44 have changed my name to LALIT KUMAR. 0071037068-1
I, Krishna Kumar S/o Mahavir Prasad Garg R/O E-230, Delta-1, Greater Noida, G.B Nagar, U.P have changed my name to Krishna Kumar Garg for all future purposes 0071037002-1
I, Kishore Kumar S/o Sh.Om Prakash Sharma R/O 1128 A Maruti Vihar MG Road Chakkarpur, Gurugram -122001 have changed my name to Kishore Kumar sharma for all future purposes. 0071037093-1
I, Dharmender Kumar S/o Matru Prasad F-119, Gali No-16, Mittal Colony, Pul Prahladpur, Delhi-44, have changed my name to Dharmendra Kumar. 0071037066-1

I,CHETANYA KUMAR,S/O-SHRI PAL SINGH,R/O-N-17C/196/F-BLOCK T-HUTS J01.COLONY,WAZIRPUR,ASHOK -VIHAR,DELHI-110052,I have changed my name in my-daughter school-record,from CHETAN KUMAR TO CHETANYA KUMAR,for all,future purposes. 0040855846-5
I,ASHNEET KAUR NANDA, W/O-KARANJOT SINGH MAINEE,R/O-240 JAGRITI-ENCLAVE,VIKAS-MARG, DELHI-110092,HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO ASHNEET NANDA MAINEE. 0040855846-1
I,AKHIL AHLAWAT,S/o-Late Mahavir Singh,R/o-KU-46,Pitampura,Delhi-110034,inform that my father name wrongly written as MAHABIR PARSHAD in my Passport but my father correct name is MAHAVIR SINGH 0040855849-4
I,AJAY S/O AJMER SINGH,R/O KOTH KALAN (2),HISAR (HARYANA)-125039,HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO AJAY SINGH FOR ALL FUTURE PURPOSES. 0040855847-3
I,Swati Jha, Wife of Arvind Kumar Mishra, R/O KPA 2 -1804, Jaypee Wishtown, Sector-133, Noida-201304 have changed my name from Swati Jha to Swati Mishra vide Affidavit dated 4 February 2025, Notary Public/Noida. 0040855742-1
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I,AKHIL S/o Late Mahavir Singh R/O KU-46 Pitampura Delhi-110034 have changed my name to AKHIL AHLAWAT 0040855849-3
I, Sanjay, S/o Krishan Lal Madaan, R/O D-501, 5th Floor, Tower-D, Desire, Main Market Road, Espire Tower, Hamilton Heights Sector-37, Amarnagar, Faridabad, Haryana-121003, have changed my name to Sanjay Madaan, for all purposes. 0040855732-1
I, Sangeeta Saivastava W/o No. 197236R Rank EX MCEAR-10/Gautam Hans Srivastava R/o 14/61, Geeta Colony, Delhi-110031 has changed my name to Savita Srivastava vide affidavit date 19-5-26 before Delhi. 0071037008-1
I, SANDEEP KUMAR S/o Jagdish Kumar R/o-62, Sector-30, Amarnagar, Faridabad -121003 have changed my name to SANDEEP KUMAR SHARMA. 0071037063-1
I, SAAMRITH MITTAL W/O SMOULIH SINGHAL R/O C2/50, ASHOK VIHAR, PHASE-2, DELHI-110052 DECLARE THAT SAMRIDIH MITTAL AND SAMRIDIH SINGHAL BOTH ARE ONE AND SAME PERSON. 0071037058-1
I, SAJJAD ALI R/O F-11/4, UGF front side, Sri Syed Road, Jago Bai Extn, Okhla, Delhi-25 have changed my name to SHAJAD. 0071037063-1
I, N22973-H Rank Ex POR(TEL) Satender Singh Gusain R/o Flat No.128, Netaji Subhash Apartment, Pocket-1, Phase-2, Sector-13, Dwarka, Delhi-110078 has changed the name of my minor Son from Aviral to Aviral Kandari vide affidavit date 19-5-26 before Delhi. 0071037023-1
I, Naina abhua W/o Gaurav R/O E-308, Budh Nagar, Inderpuri, Central Delhi-110012 have changed my name to Naina for all future purposes. 0071037091-1
I, NAZIYA TARANUM C/O Anjum Ara, 1617-A, FF, Gali No-14, Govindpurj, Kalkaji, Delhi-19 have changed my name to NAZIYA TARANUM. 0071037061-1
I, MUKESH KUMAR JHA S/O SHRI VINAY KUMAR JHA R/O A269C, GALI NO.8, NEAR UNID CLINIC SAURABH VIHAR, HARI NAGAR EXTN, BADARPUR, POST-BADARPUR, DISTT:-SOUTH DELHI, DELHI-110044 have changed my name to MUKESH JHA for all future purpose 0071037005-1
I, LALIT C/o Rohtas, C-290A, Harsh Vihar, Hari Nagar Extn., Part-3, Badarpur, Delhi-44 have changed my name to LALIT KUMAR. 0071037068-1
I, Krishna Kumar S/o Mahavir Prasad Garg R/O E-230, Delta-1, Greater Noida, G.B Nagar, U.P have changed my name to Krishna Kumar Garg for all future purposes 0071037002-1
I, Kishore Kumar S/o Sh.Om Prakash Sharma R/O 1128 A Maruti Vihar MG Road Chakkarpur, Gurugram -122001 have changed my name to Kishore Kumar sharma for all future purposes. 0071037093-1
I, Dharmender Kumar S/o Matru Prasad F-119, Gali No-16, Mittal Colony, Pul Prahladpur, Delhi-44, have changed my name to Dharmendra Kumar. 0071037066-1

LOST AND FOUND
We, Vijay Manchanda S/o S. P. Manchanda & Mrs Poonam Manchanda W/o Vijay Manchanda R/o H-31, Sector-39 Noida, Gautam Buddha Nagar Uttar Pradesh -201301. Have lost original Lease Deed, GPA, Allotment letter & Possession Letter of above said property, If someone found Please contact - 9810031210 0040855731-1
I, Sumit Malik, S/o late Shri Lalit Kumar, resident of House No. 129, G-Block, Vikasपुरi, Delhi-110018, have lost or misplaced my property papers and Conveyance Deed pertaining to my property at House No. H-440, Vikasपुरi, Delhi-110018. If found please contact: 9654858857 0040855734-1
Lost my original Allotment Letter of my Flat No.B-83, Category-B,Navshakti CGHS, Sector-9, Rohini, Delhi-110085, Landmark-Shakti Apartment. Finder may Contact-Maha Singh Mann at above noted-address. 0040855747-1
Lost my original Share Certificate, Possession Letter & Allotment Letter of my Flat No.46, The Shanker C.G.H.S Limited,Plot No.4, Sector-15, Rohini, Delhi-110089, Finder may Contact- Amarjit Singh S/o-Late Gurdav Singh at-F-243, Ground Floor, Vikasपुरi, Delhi-110018 0040855754-1
PUBLIC NOTICE
IN THE COURT OF DR. PANKAJ SHARMA, DJ-JC, NEW DELHI PATIALA HOUSE COURT, NEW DELHI Case No. PC/11/2026 Title GURVIJAY SINGH GAREWAL vs STATE ICT OF DELHI & ORS. NODIA 18-09-2026. 1. GURVIJAY SINGH GAREWAL S/o Late Mr. Karan Singh Presently residing at 151 Cooper Road, Birming NSW 2143, Australia. 2. AMRANAGAR FARIDABAD, Haryana-121003, have changed my name to Sanjay Madaan, for all purposes. 0040855732-1
I, Sangeeta Saivastava W/o No. 197236R Rank EX MCEAR-10/Gautam Hans Srivastava R/o 14/61, Geeta Colony, Delhi-110031 has changed my name to Savita Srivastava vide affidavit date 19-5-26 before Delhi. 0071037008-1
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I, SAJJAD ALI R/O F-11/4, UGF front side, Sri Syed Road, Jago Bai Extn, Okhla, Delhi-25 have changed my name to SHAJAD. 0071037063-1
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I, MUKESH KUMAR JHA S/O SHRI VINAY KUMAR JHA R/O A269C, GALI NO.8, NEAR UNID CLINIC SAURABH VIHAR, HARI NAGAR EXTN, BADARPUR, POST-BADARPUR, DISTT:-SOUTH DELHI, DELHI-110044 have changed my name to MUKESH JHA for all future purpose 0071037005-1
I, LALIT C/o Rohtas, C-290A, Harsh Vihar, Hari Nagar Extn., Part-3, Badarpur, Delhi-44 have changed my name to LALIT KUMAR. 0071037068-1
I, Krishna Kumar S/o Mahavir Prasad Garg R/O E-230, Delta-1, Greater Noida, G.B Nagar, U.P have changed my name to Krishna Kumar Garg for all future purposes 0071037002-1
I, Kishore Kumar S/o Sh.Om Prakash Sharma R/O 1128 A Maruti Vihar MG Road Chakkarpur, Gurugram -122001 have changed my name to Kishore Kumar sharma for all future purposes. 0071037093-1
I, Dharmender Kumar S/o Matru Prasad F-119, Gali No-16, Mittal Colony, Pul Prahladpur, Delhi-44, have changed my name to Dharmendra Kumar. 0071037066-1

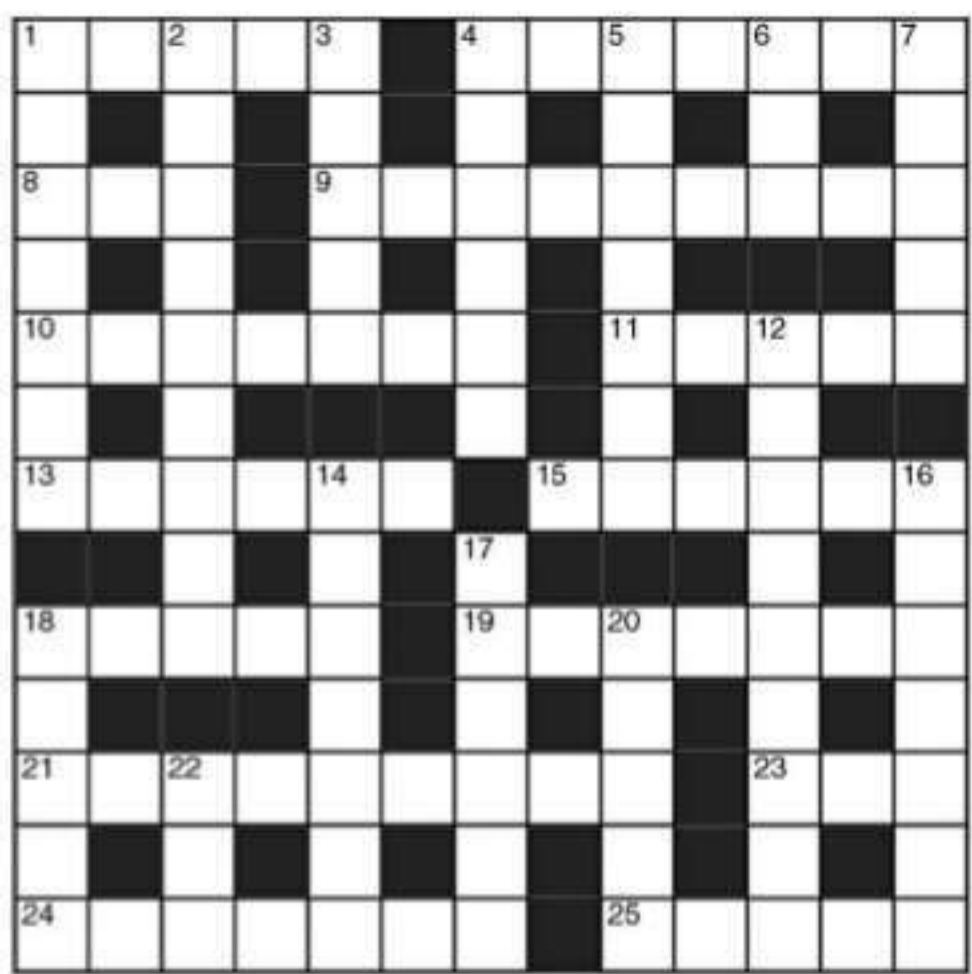
PUBLIC NOTICE
Lost Sale deed between Bhim Sen Seth (buyer) and DLF Housing and Construction Pvt Ltd (seller) for plot at S30, Greater Kailash 1, New Delhi 110048. Document No. 7930, Additional Book No. 1, Volume No. 1056, Pages 147-148 dated 27/11/1963. Sale Deed dated 20/11/1963. Registered at Sub Registrar Office, New Delhi. Filed LR No: 318082/2026. If found, contact 9650863474
PUBLIC NOTICE
TDI Lake Side Heights Kundli/00080/13-14, T-14/1001, KLD-2/00025/14-15 Lake Drive Apartment Kundli, Original Allotment letter, Original booking receipts belonging to Surender Rana S/o Late Sh Raj Roop Rana R/o A-4/103, Printers Apartment, Rohini Sector-13 Delhi-85 have been lost. FIR has been lodged vide LR 151432/2026 dated 08/03/2026 If anyone finds, kindly contact-98111 34331 within 15 days of the date of issue of this ad.
PUBLIC NOTICE
Public at large is hereby informed that my client SH. RAJESH SHAM S/O SH. KHADERU RAM R/O E-15, J.J. COLONY, RAJGIRI NAGAR, NEW DELHI-110027, do hereby demand and debar his Daughter Namey ANALI at PRESENT LIVING WITH MR. ROHIT CHANDRANATH PANKAJ PUNJ, NEW DELHI, SIDH ROAD, ROHINI, MADHYA PRADESH-52007, from all my movable and immovable properties and primary membership of the family with immediate effect. Accordingly she has been debarred from any claim, right, title, interest etc in the said properties of my client. Because she is not loyal to the family and their customs. Any person's dealing with her will be doing at their own risk and cost. My client have no concern or relationship with her.
Satyajind Nath Sharma (Advocate) Mobile No: 9899059521
PUBLIC NOTICE
General public is hereby informed that my client SH. CHARU SETHI W/O SH. SANJAY SETHI R/O 32, BHERA ENCLAVE, PASCHEEN VIHAR, NEW DELHI-110087, IS THE OWNER OF DDA BUILD UP JANTA FLAT BEARING NO. 635, ON FIRST FLOOR, BLOCK/PLOT/UG-I, GATEWAY ENCLAVE, WAZIRPUR NAGAR, THE ORIGINAL SALE DEED, REGD. ON 24/12/2011, HAS BEEN LOST. AN FIR in this effect has been lodged in Police Station No. 103, NEW DELHI-110087. ANY PERSON (a) claiming any right, title, interest or any objection or found in possession of original documents, may wish to inform the above named persons at above address/phone No. 9811323035, within 15 days from the date of publication of this notice. The person claiming any right, interest, objections with respect to this property can personally inform the above named owners/persons. Any deal by any person in respect of the said property shall be treated as null, void and ineffective, in future. Sd/- B. B. N. DEO, Advocate S.R.No.18 Compous, Janak Puri,ND-08
PUBLIC NOTICE
General public is hereby informed that my client SH. CHARU SETHI W/O SH. SANJAY SETHI R/O 32, BHERA ENCLAVE, PASCHEEN VIHAR, NEW DELHI-110087, IS THE OWNER OF DDA BUILD UP JANTA FLAT BEARING NO. 635, ON FIRST FLOOR, BLOCK/PLOT/UG-I, GATEWAY ENCLAVE, WAZIRPUR NAGAR, THE ORIGINAL SALE DEED, REGD. ON 24/12/2011, HAS BEEN LOST. AN FIR in this effect has been lodged in Police Station No. 103, NEW DELHI-110087. ANY PERSON (a) claiming any right, title, interest or any objection or found in possession of original documents, may wish to inform the above named persons at above address/phone No. 9811323035, within 15 days from the date of publication of this notice. The person claiming any right, interest, objections with respect to this property can personally inform the above named owners/persons. Any deal by any person in respect of the said property shall be treated as null, void and ineffective, in future. Sd/- B. B. N. DEO, Advocate S.R.No.18 Compous, Janak Puri,ND-08
IMPORTANT
Whilst care is taken prior to acceptance of advertising copy, it is not possible to verify its contents. The Indian Express (P) Limited cannot be held responsible for such contents, nor for any loss or damage incurred as a result of transactions with companies, associations or individuals advertising in its newspapers or Publications. We therefore recommend that readers make necessary inquiries before sending any monies or entering into any agreements with advertisers or otherwise acting on an advertisement in any manner whatsoever.
NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY
E-TENDER NOTICE
DRM/Electrical, North Western Railway, Jodhpur for & on behalf of the president of India, invites E-tender for the following work. 1. Complete details of tenders can be seen on Website No:- http://www.ireps.gov.in. 2. Date & time of closing of e-tender: 10.06.2026 upto 15.00 hrs.; 3. Date & time of opening of e-tender: After 15.00 hrs. on 10.06.2026; Tender No.: 27R3/2025-26; Name of Work: Electrical work in connection with up-gradation of wagon maintenance facilities at SONU in JU Division. Approx. Cost of the Work (Rs.): Rs. 2891595.12; Tender No.: 54R/2025-26; Name of Work: (i) Electrical work in connection with repair and maintenance of staff quarters under ADEN HQ (ii) Electrical work in c/w-Up gradation & improvement of personnel Department Jodhpur. Approx. Cost of the work (Rs.): Rs 1729413.51; Tender No.: 55R/2025-26; Name of Work: (i) Electrical work in connection with replacement of old/dilapidated quarters by 20 units Type-III quarters in Nehru Park Colony under ADEN/HQ. (ii) Electrical work in connection with improvement of staff quarters in Medical Colony, BGKT Colony in the section of ADEN/HQ/JU (iii) Electrical work in connection with improvement of staff quarters in DS Colony, NP Colony in the section of ADEN/HQ/JU (iv) Electrical work in connection with improvement of staff quarters in Workshop Colony, Loco colony in the section of ADEN/HQ/JU (v) Electrical work in connection with improvement of staff quarters in DS Colony, Medical Colony in the section of ADEN/HQ/Jodhpur Approx. Cost of the work (Rs.): Rs. 21478796.41; For detailed information visit http://www.ireps.gov.in 751-AM/26 Please join us on NWR/Railways

RajCOMP Info Services Limited (RISL)
C-Block 1st Floor, Yojana Bhawan, Tilak Marg, C-Scheme, Jaipur
RISL invites bids from the eligible bidders against "Short term RFP for Procurement of IT Hardware for various departments". The estimated cost is Rs. 7.60 Cr. The details can be seen on the websites: https://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in, https://sppp.rajasthan.gov.in, https://risl.rajasthan.gov.in, https://doitc.rajasthan.gov.in.
UBN No.: RJ52627GLOB00023 General Manager (Technical) & OIC (Store), RISL
RajSamwad/C/26/3275
The Brihanmumbai Electric Supply & Transport Undertaking (OF THE BRIHANMUMBAI MAHANAGARPALIKA)
TENDER NOTICE
E-tenders are Re - invited for the supply of following items.
(1) 81467, (2) 81601, (3) 81418.
Note: For more details, log on to website https://mahatenders.gov.in
PRO/AAM(M)/26/2026 GENERAL MANAGER
NORTHERN RAILWAY TENDER NOTICE
Notice Inviting Tender (NIT) for Appointment of Station Ticket Booking Agents (STBAs) at 23 NSG-5 Category Stations and 47 NSG-6 Category Stations (Total 70 STBAs) over 70 Stations of Delhi Division, Northern Railway.
1.0 Tender No. C6/STBA/Tender/2026
2.0 Name of the work and its locations Appointment of Station Ticket Booking Agents (STBAs) at 23 NSG-5 Category Stations and 47 NSG-6 Category Stations (Total 70 STBAs) over 70 Stations over Delhi Division for issuance of Unreserved Tickets through Computerized Unreserved Ticketing System (UTS) for a period of Three Years on contract basis.
3.0 Cost of Tender Rs. 1,000/- + 18% GST i.e. 1180/- (Rs.One thousand One Hundred Eighty only).
4.0 Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) to be deposited Rs. 2,000/- (Rs. Two Thousand only) applying for NSG-6 category station & Rs. 5000/- for applying for NSG-5 category station.
5.0 Address of the office from where the tender form can be purchased Commercial Branch, DRM Office, State Entry Road, New Delhi w.e.f. 21.05.2026 to 10.06.2026 on any working days in between 11:00 hours to 17:00 hours and on 11.06.2026 up to 14:00 hrs.
6.0 Tender Type Open Tender
7.0 Date & time for submission of tender and opening of the tender 11.06.2026 up to 15:00 hours at Tender Room, Commercial Branch DRM Office, State Entry Road, New Delhi thereafter, it shall be opened on same day at 15:10 hours.
8.0 Where complete details of tender can be seen. Tender Notice and Tender Documents is available at Northern Railway website i.e. www.nr.indianrailways.gov.in in PDF format.
File No.C6/STBA/Tender/2026 1717/2026
SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE
CSB Bank PUBLIC NOTICE ON AUCTION OF PLEDGED GOLD ORNAMENTS
The borrowers in specific and interested bidders in general, are hereby informed that an account of non-payment of the Banks due by the borrowers as under despite the payment notice and recall/auction notice issued by the Bank, the gold ornaments pledged with the bank security by the respective borrowers for the loan availed by them will be sold in public auction on "as is where is" and "non-recourse" at branch premises on 29<sup>th</sup> May 2026 at 10.30 AM. The auction may be adjourned to any other later date at the discretion of the bank upon publication of the same in the Bank's notice board. The borrowers are hereby further informed that the gold ornaments will be disposed of by private sale if the public auction is not successful and if there is a further balance to be recovered thereafter, legal action will be initiated against the borrower for recovery of the balance amounts due to the Bank. "In case of Deceased borrower, all conditions will be applicable to legal heirs."
Table with 7 columns: S. No., Auction Center, Account Name, Client ID, No of Acc., Bal. Outstanding as on 19-05-2026, Weight (grams)
1. Ashok Vihar - Delhi Bal Mukund 7305368 1 181644.67 26.2
2. Ashok Vihar - Delhi Laxmi W/O Prit Swami, 599165 4 931045.88 179.02
3. Ashok Vihar - Delhi Purush Sharma 8169035 1 330020.01 58.63
4. Ashok Vihar - Delhi Vipin Kumar Bhadana 4708575 1 526066.85 96.83
5. Greater Kailash - 1 Arvind Singh 4210098 1 84334.13 13
6. Gautam Nagar Bhabha Sethi 7081674 2 888583 145.7
7. Gautam Nagar Kiran 4675653 2 123561.81 29
8. Palam Suman Bhatti 8244058 1 122681.34 17.15
9. Janakpuri Jashbala 832477 1 890808.99 116
10. Janakpuri Nareesh Singh 10255000 1 577495.64 58.54
11. Dwaraka Kajal 4849685 1 176180.45 21.2
12. Dwaraka Sahil Kumar 8175210 1 147238.82 19.13
13. Dwaraka Suman Bhatti 8244058 1 504213.26 60.98
14. Dwaraka Tanishq Kumar 10115313 1 573142.6 76.65
15. Dwaraka Vandana 8246252 1 407093.51 49.5
16. Rohini Sector 7 Aman 4376053 1 22535 36.15
17. Rohini Sector 7 Anushka Aggarwal 7321297 2 941987.29 133.05
18. Rohini Sector 7 Geeta Narula 4200370 1 1079080.94 152.13
19. Rohini Sector 7 Rohan Saxena 3789910 1 358694.66 60.15
20. Shalimarbagh Aryan Sethi 7354408 1 30700.36 4
21. Shalimarbagh Sachin Gupta 5045346 2 833424.55 113.03
22. Shalimarbagh Shiv 10085886 1 117849.53 20.67
23. Shalimarbagh Suresh 4721659 1 205272.78 28.84
24. Okhla Manoj Kumar Wadhwa 7961310 1 223230.04 32.51
25. Okhla Suman Kaur 4886630 3 757160.21 110.76
26. Mayap Vihar-New Delhi Sandeep Singh 4961712 3 578997.06 103.97
27. Dilsad Garden Suhail Chaudhary 10085104 1 213580.53 27.04
28. Rajouri Garden Harish Mittal 7947703 1 760964.42 82



## CROSSWORD

5995



**ACROSS**  
 1 Their inspiration is an advantage in writing (5)  
 4 Clue far from being accurate (7)  
 8 Prosecute for wrong use (3)  
 9 Keep dark for a defined period (9)  
 10 Spread out and blow up (7)  
 11 An award for tidiness (5)  
 13 Upset the drawer and get the money (6)  
 15 Unguarded runway is destroyed (6)  
 18 Subtle publicity featuring girl in the woods (5)  
 19 Make-up helps mother hide a blemish (7)  
 21 Considering retribution (9)  
 23 Man in a mix-up (3)  
 24 It could restore respect for a belief in ghosts (7)  
 25 Had quite enough of disgruntled dates (5)

**DOWN**  
 1 Erasmus possibly creates friction (7)  
 2 Go off quietly as a thief will do? (5,4)  
 3 Very distant until now (2,3)  
 4 Decay that is breaking up vehicles (6)  
 5 Stop working having become exhausted (3,4)  
 6 It causes obscurity often in banks (3)  
 7 Put out an alert afterwards (5)  
 12 His work is play (9)  
 14 He used to fight in company rated disorderly (7)  
 16 Longed for time to take up study? (7)  
 17 A rule the British once had (6)  
 18 Either way you can play it (5)  
 20 Some characters give autographs (5)  
 22 People said to be waiting for a hint (3)

**SOLUTIONS CROSSWORD 5994 ACROSS:** 1 Fire escape, 8 Prong, 9 Eardrum, 10 Oddment, 11 Abhor, 12 Scribe, 14 Asleep, 17 Cabal, 19 Teashop, 21 Naughty, 22 Occur, 23 Separately **DOWN:** 2 In order, 3 Eagle, 4 Svelte, 5 Airways, 6 Earth, 7 Emery paper, 8 Poor second, 13 Bellhop, 15 Ethical, 16 Stayer, 18 Blues, 20 About

## JUMBLER 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 quip.

A \_\_\_ is based on knowledge and not on numbers. - Plato (4,8)

**NZEOO**      **EHOCNS**

● ● ● ● ●      ● ● ● ● ●

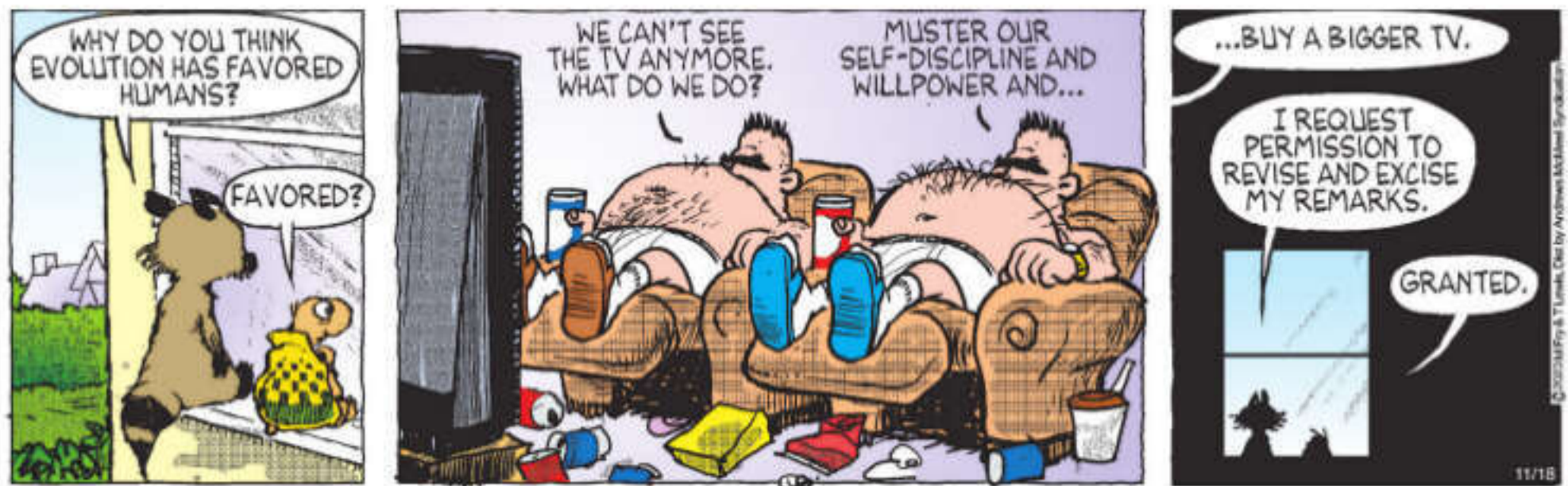
**CNIOI**      **EERDDG**

● ● ● ● ●      ● ● ● ● ●

**ANSWER:** A good decision is based on knowledge and not on numbers. - Plato  
 SOLUTIONS: Ozone, Ionic, Chosen, Pledge

## 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

**SUDOKU 6326**

		3	5	2				
9				6	5			
8				9	7			
		6		3	4	2		
6	1	4	7					
	9	2				8		
4	8							1
	5	7	9					

**SOLUTION SUDOKU 6326**

2	4	3	1	6	7	9	8	5
6	5	1	4	8	9	2	7	3
9	7	8	2	5	3	6	1	4
7	6	2	5	9	4	1	3	8
1	9	5	7	3	8	4	6	2
3	8	4	6	2	1	7	5	9
4	1	9	3	7	5	8	2	6
5	2	7	8	4	6	3	9	1
8	3	6	9	1	2	5	4	7

## PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON

**(See Section 82 Cr. P./84 BNSS)**  
 Whereas complaint has been made before me that the accused **Kingsley Chinedu Udeofor** S/o Udeofor R/o H. No. 21, Gali No. 06, Laxmi Vihar, Uttam Nagar, Delhi has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in **FIR No. 89/2014 U/s 21(c) NDPS ACT & 14 Foreigners ACT, PS Crime Branch, Delhi** and it has been returned to warrant of arrest there upon issued that the said accused **Kingsley Chinedu Udeofor** cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said accused **Kingsley Chinedu Udeofor** has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of said warrant). Proclamation is hereby made that **Kingsley Chinedu Udeofor** in **FIR No. 89/2014 U/s 21(c) NDPS ACT & 14 Foreigners ACT, PS Crime Branch, Delhi** is required to appear before this court to answer the said complaint on or before **03.07.2026**.

By order  
**Shri Satvir Singh Lamba**  
 Special Judge (NDPS)  
 Room No. 132  
 Tis Hazari Court, Delhi

DP/6652/Crime/2026

## PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON

**See Section 84 Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023**  
 Whereas complaint has been made before me that the accused **Nwosu Theophilus Nduubuisi**, S/o Paul Nwosu, R/o: H.No. R-3, B-10, Ground Floor, Mohan Garden, Uttam Nagar, Delhi has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in case **FIR No. 263/2018, U/s 21 NDPS Act, P.S.: Civil Lines, Delhi** and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said accused **Nwosu Theophilus Nduubuisi** cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said accused **Nwosu Theophilus Nduubuisi** has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant). Proclamation is hereby made that the said **Nwosu Theophilus Nduubuisi** accused of case **FIR No. 263/2018, U/s 21 NDPS Act, P.S.: Civil Lines, Delhi** and is required to appear before this Court to answer the said complaint on or before **07.07.2026**.

By Order  
**Sh. Virender Singh**  
 Special Judge (NDPS) Central  
 Room No. 222, Tis Hazari Courts, Delhi

DP/6343/N/2026  
 (Court Matter)

## PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON

**See Section 82 Cr.P.C.**  
 Whereas complaint has been made before me that the accused **Gulab Mohammad @ Gulab Idresh**, S/o: Mohd. Kalam @ Darji R/o: (1) H. No. 172, Vishnu Garden, Tagore Garden, Delhi, (2): H. No. 1A-512, Sharda Enclave, near Gauri Shankar Enclave, Kirari Suleman Nagar, Delhi, (3): H.No. 166-A, Kh. No. 46/9/1/2, Second Floor, Sharda Vats Enclave, Street No. 2, near Gauri Shankar Enclave, Sharda Enclave, Prem Nagar Phase-III, Kirari Suleman Nagar, North East District, Delhi has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in case **CT/JCC NI Act No. 3731/18, U/s 138 NI Act, P.S.: Rajouri Garden, Delhi** and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said accused **Gulab Mohammad @ Gulab Idresh** cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said accused **Gulab Mohammad @ Gulab Idresh** has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant). Proclamation is hereby made that the said **Gulab Mohammad @ Gulab Idresh** accused of offence in case **CT/JCC NI Act No. 3731/18, U/s 138 NI Act, P.S.: Rajouri Garden, Delhi** and is required to appear before this Court to answer the said complaint on or before **03.07.2026**.

By Order  
**Ms. Poonam Singh**  
 Judicial Magistrate First Class (NI Act)-04, West  
 Room No. 4, Tis Hazari Court, Delhi

DP/6511/WD/2026  
 (Court Matter)

## SALUTE THE SOLDIER

**INDO-TIBETAN BORDER POLICE (ITBP) 22 May, 2026**  
 ITBP salutes its braveheart Head Constable **Midhin M.S. Vill.** - Mulavana Distt.- Kollam (Kerala) who made the supreme sacrifice in the line of duty on this day in Arunachal Pradesh in 2017.

**BORDER SECURITY FORCE 25.09.1961 - 22.05.1999**  
 Director General and all Ranks of Border Security Force remember its gallant officer **Sh. Singh Ran Yadav**, Second in Command on his Balidan Diwas. On this day, he sustained fatal bullet injuries while fighting militants in Barpeta, Assam and made ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty.

**SUB INSPECTOR H B GAUR 06.12.1953 - 22.05.2002**  
 Director General and all Ranks of Border Security Force remember its gallant Subordinate officer Sub Inspector **H B Gaur** on his Balidan Diwas. On this day, he sustained fatal bullet injuries in Counterpart firing in area of BOP Manihari, Samba (Jammu) and made ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty.

**CENTRAL RESERVE POLICE FORCE**  
 DG and all Ranks of #CRPF pay solemn tribute to Constable **Solaniki Mehulbhai Nandalbhai** of 210 CoBRA Bn, who made the supreme sacrifice while bravely combating Maoists during an operation in the forest area of Tumrel, district Bijapur, Chhattisgarh on 22 May 2025. In this operation one Maoist was neutralized. #CRPF salutes the braveheart and pledges never to let his sacrifice go in vain.

**NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY**  
 Letter No.-DRM/C/AGRA/PAY & USE/POLICY/2018 Dated:-20.05.2026  
**E-Auction Notice**  
 On Behalf of the President of India, The Sr. Divisional Commercial Manager-North Central Railway-Agra invites E-Auction as per categories given as under:-  
**Category:** Cloak Room **Auction Catalogue No.:** Cloak-AF-26-01  
**Asset Details:** Manning of Cloak Room on Operation and Maintenance (O&M) basis at Agra Fort Railway Station.  
**E-Auction Start Date and time:** Date-05.06.2026 Time: 12:45 **E-Auction End Date and Time:** Date-05.06.2026 Time: 13:15. **Note:** Prospective bidders are requested to visit **E-Auction Leasing Module** on **IREPS website** ([www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in)). The Lot-wise details are available therein under the above mentioned Catalogue Number. **1140/26 (D)**  
 North central railways @ [www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in](http://www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in) @ [CPRNCR](https://www.cprnrcr.com)

**PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF PERSONS ACCUSED**  
**(See Section 82 Cr P/84 Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita-2023)**  
 Whereas complaint has been made before me that two accused persons namely (1) **Suresh @ Golu S/o Pappu R/o H.No. 6/19, Trilokpur, Kalyanpuri, Delhi** (2) **Ashish @ Multani @ Bakri @ Fatichar S/o Nanak Chand R/o H.No. 6/248, Trilokpur, Kalyanpuri, Delhi** have committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in case **E-FIR No. 33056/2020 Dated 19.12.2020 U/s 379/411/34 IPC at PS: Jagatpuri, Delhi** and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said accused (1) **Suresh @ Golu** (2) **Ashish @ Multani @ Bakri @ Fatichar** can not be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said accused (1) **Suresh @ Golu** (2) **Ashish @ Multani @ Bakri @ Fatichar** have absconded (or are concealing themselves to avoid the service of the said warrant). Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused (1) **Suresh @ Golu** (2) **Ashish @ Multani @ Bakri @ Fatichar** of **E-FIR No. 33056/2020 Dated 19.12.2020 U/s 379/411/34 IPC at PS: Jagatpuri, Delhi** is required to appear before this court to answer the said complaint on or before **25.06.2026**.

By order  
**Anushtha Srivastava**  
 Judicial Magistrate First Class-05  
 Shahdara Distt. Room No. 07,  
 Karkardooma Courts, Delhi

DP/6617/SHD/2026

**TRANSMISSION CORPORATION OF ANDHRA PRADESH LIMITED**  
 (A Government of Andhra Pradesh Undertaking & an ISO 27001-2022 Certified Company)  
**NOTICE INVITING TENDER**  
 The APTRANSCO invites bids online for **Spec.No.PMM12-e-39/2026: 220kV Metering Current Transformers, Creepage - 31mm/kV. Date & Time of availability of above tender: 22.05.2026 at 5:00 PM. Website: [www.tender.apeprocurement.gov.in](http://www.tender.apeprocurement.gov.in). Contact No.CE/Transmission: 0866-2429230. R.O. No.GMCC/APTRANSCO/41/26-27 Sd/- CHIEF ENGINEER/TRANSMISSION**

## PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON

**See Section 82 CrPC / 84 Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023**  
 Whereas complaint has been made before me that the accused person **Subham @ Lambu S/o Sanjay, R/o C-375, Balbir Vihar, Kirari Suleman Nagar, Delhi**, has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in **FIR No. 66/2024, U/S 392/411/34 IPC, PS Aman Vihar, Rohini Distt., Delhi** and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said accused **Subham @ Lambu** cannot be found, and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said accused **Subham @ Lambu** has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant); Proclamation is hereby made that **Subham @ Lambu** the said accused of **FIR No. 66/2024, U/S 392/411/34 IPC, PS Aman Vihar, Rohini Distt., Delhi**, is required to appear before this Court to answer the said complaint on or before **31.07.2026**.

By Order  
**Ms. Shagun**  
 Judicial Magistrate First Class,  
 (North-West), Court No.-109, 1st Floor,  
 Rohini Courts, Delhi

DP/6611/RD/2026  
 (Court Matter)

**NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY**  
**E-TENDERING NOTICE**  
 E-Tendering Notice No.: 2026-May-02 Dated: 20.05.2026  
 Basis at Agra Fort Railway Station.  
 Divisional Railway Manager (Engineering), N.C. Rly Agra for and on behalf of the President of India invites 'Open Tender' through on Line only (E-Tendering) for the following works. The details of the tender are as under:  
**1 Tender No.:** 2026-May-02-01 **Approx Cost Rs.:** 11084303.87  
**Description of work:** Reconditioning of CMS crossings under the jurisdiction of Sr. DEN-I/Agra.  
**2 Tender No.:** 2026-May-02-02 **Approx Cost Rs.:** 9424446.86  
**Description of work:** Maintenance of 4th line in the jurisdiction of SSE/Pway/PWL under ADEN/MTJ-I.  
**3 Tender No.:** 2026-May-02-03 **Approx Cost Rs.:** 9999470.20  
**Description of work:** Malthura Jn.- Upgradation of C&W Depot Buildings and associated infrastructure at MTJ.  
**4 Tender No.:** 2026-May-02-04 **Approx Cost Rs.:** 4368409.78  
**Description of work:** Provision of goods siding at Govindgarh station with connecting line no. 3 at both ends.  
**5 Tender No.:** 2026-May-02-05 **Approx Cost Rs.:** 13199492.45  
**Description of work:** (A) Baad-Development of Scrap Yard at Tank Wagon Depot Baad (B) Construction of Approach Road for TW Shed and Toilet in TRD Depot.  
 For full details and submission of bid please see the Indian Railways website **'www.ireps.gov.in'**. Tenders can only be submitted through web portal **'www.ireps.gov.in'** up to **15:00 hrs on 10.06.2026 1150/26 (ADM)**  
 North central railways @ [www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in](http://www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in) @ [CPRNCR](https://www.cprnrcr.com)

## ROYAL STARS

BY GEORGIA NICOLS

**ARIES (MAR 21 - APR 20):** This is a highly creative day for you. It's great for the arts and wonderful for tapping into your creative talents. It's a fantastic day to schmooze. However, it's an accident-prone day. Tonight: Socialise.

**TAURUS (APR 21 - MAY 21):** Keep an eye on your money. You might find or lose it. Protect what you own against loss, theft or damage. It's a good day to make money plans but not to act. Don't spend money today except for food and gas. Tonight: Relax at home.

**GEMINI (MAY 22 - JUNE 21):** Today you feel excited and impulsive. Please note that this energy can be accident-prone. Think before you act. Agree to nothing important. A discussion with someone older might help you. Tonight: Discussions.

**CANCER (JUNE 22 - JULY 23):** This is a restless day for you — no question. However, you will be diplomatic and charming. Don't shop today except for food and gas. There is a Moon Alert all day. Background research might be helpful. Tonight: Maintain your belongings.

**LEO (JULY 24 - AUG 23):** Today you have an edge over everyone else. However, there is a Moon Alert in effect all day. Restrict spending to food and gas. Plans with a group or a friend might change. You also might meet someone unusual. Tonight: You're strong.

**VIRGO (AUG 24 - SEP 23):** Unpredictable events might take place. People in authority might catch you off guard. Or something else might occur that sends you in a new direction. Postpone important decisions and restrict spending to food and gas today. Tonight: Seek privacy.

**LIBRA (SEP 24 - OCT 23):** Travel plans might suddenly change today. You might meet someone unusual. Agree to nothing important. Restrict spending to food and gas. Tonight: Enjoy friends.

**SCORPIO (OCT 24 - NOV 23):** Keep an eye on banking and shared property, because something unexpected might impact your assets. You're high-viz. Postpone important decisions and shopping. Be patient with partners and close friends. Tonight: You're admired.

**SAGITTARIUS (NOV 24 - DEC 22):** A partner or close friend might throw a curveball your way today. Some of you might meet someone who is unusual. Discussions about kids, vacations and social plans might take place, but agree to nothing important. Tonight: Learn and explore.

**CAPRICORN (DEC 23 - JAN 20):** Your work routine will be interrupted today. This is an accident-prone day for pets. Be vigilant. Relations with those who are close are smooth but don't agree to long-range plans. Wait until tomorrow. Tonight: Check your finances.s.

**AQUARIUS (JAN 21 - FEB 19):** Parents should know this is an accident-prone day for your kids. Be vigilant. Social plans might be cancelled or you might receive an unexpected invitation. Be willing to compromise. Tonight: Listen and be reasonable.

**PISCES (FEB 20 - MAR 20):** Small appliances might break down. Someone unexpected might appear at your door. Discussions about money or spending might take place, but don't act upon your ideas. Wait until tomorrow after the Moon Alert is over. Tonight: Get better organised.

Will get to know next year: Gaikwad on Dhoni's future



MS Dhoni during a lap of honour in Chennai on Monday. PTI

Express News Service Chennai, May 21

THE FUTURE of MS Dhoni at Chennai Super Kings remains uncertain, with skipper Ruturaj Gaikwad admitting that even the dressing room does not yet know whether the veteran will return for IPL 2027.

"You and I'll get to know it next year," Gaikwad said after CSK's crushing 89-run defeat to Gujarat Titans in Ahmedabad on Thursday. "It's a hard miss for us. He can come in those late overs and change the game just by staying in the crease. Never know about next season, but really happy with the guys we have," Gaikwad added.

Dhoni did not play a single game in IPL 2026. The 44-year-old was initially expected to miss only the opening two weeks of the season while recovering from a calf injury. However, the former India captain never returned to action as the tournament progressed.

Things worsened when Dhoni suffered a thumb injury ahead of CSK's clash against Lucknow Super Giants in Lucknow, further complicating any hopes of a comeback during the second half of the campaign.

"I can confirm Dhoni is not here (Ahmedabad) with the team, but if we do happen to qualify, he'll definitely join back up with the squad. He's got a bit of a sore thumb. He's recovering nicely, but he won't be ready for this match. If we manage to get through to the playoffs, hopefully he'll be alright," CSK batting coach Mike Hussey had said.

Having been ruled out at the start of the season for two weeks due to a calf injury, Dhoni then decided to sit out matches even after regaining fitness because he didn't want to take a spot from Kartik Sharma, who is being groomed for the next season. But with the injuries mounting in the camp and around the time Jamie Overton left for home with a thigh injury, a spot had opened up and Dhoni was supposed to travel to Lucknow for their away fixture.

However, a thumb injury that Dhoni sustained in a practice session ruled him out. Though he tried to get into the XII for their last home match against Sunrisers Hyderabad, when their qualification fate was in their own hands, he pulled out because he wasn't 100 per cent fit.

Having not chosen to travel to any of the venues on match days, Dhoni made a rare appearance at the Chepauk on Monday. Though he left the team hotel with the rest of the players, he made his entry into the field only during the innings break for a photograph. And once the match was over, Dhoni took a lap of honour.

## END OF THE ROAD

# CSK hit the Titans iceberg

A ruthless display with bat and ball from Shubman Gill and Co ends a forgettable season for Super Kings

**SYNOPSIS:** Top-heavy Titans crush CSK bowling before their bowling class put an end to their season in an emphatic manner.

Tushar Bhaduri New Delhi, May 21

GUJARAT TITANS seem to be getting into the groove at the perfect time. An all-round awesome performance put the Chennai Super Kings out of their misery as the five-time champions were thrashed by 89 runs. A target of 230 was always going to be too high against a bowling attack of GT's class, and CSK's sorry season ended with being bowled out inside 14 overs.

### Openers shut case

They or their strokeplay are unlike anything expected of a typical T20 opening partnership these days. But Sai Sudharsan and Shubman Gill continue to get the job done, while being easy on the eye. Thursday brought their seventh century partnership in the IPL, as they set up Gujarat Titans' impressive victory over Chennai Super Kings, that put the latter finally out of playoff contention.

It's not that Sai and Gill didn't improvise or play around with the bowlers' lines and length. But there was no slogging — in fact, on the rare occasions they tried something outside their regular repertoire, it didn't work out.

T20 cricket is a format largely associated with big hits and sixes. But the two shots that showcased Gill's class came in the second over of the match. Aussie left-arm Spencer Johnson offered a bit of room

and the Titans skipper stood tall to the hard-length ball. The bat made contact at the precise moment to impart the optimum timing and the ball sped past point to the boundary.

Later in the over, Gill played a delightful front-foot straight drive to a delivery that was not quite a half-volley, but the timing and placement had watchers drooling. It was the captain who made most of the early running, but Sai was bidding his time. His consistency belies the law of averages in this format — Thursday's knock was his fifth consecutive half-century of the tournament and seventh in his last eight visits to the crease.

The leg-side arc is the preferred scoring area for most batters in the shortest format, and the CSK bowlers tried to deny them that outlet. But Gill and Sai were a couple of steps ahead of them, repeatedly making room to hit through and over the offside. It was only when left-arm wrist-spinner Noor Ahmad came on that the cow corner was targeted. The 125-run stand in a little over 12 overs was match-defining and CSK skipper Ruturaj Gaikwad was left to rue not challenging a caught-behind not-out verdict relatively early on against Gill.

### Buttler backs up

When Jos Buttler is in full flow, it's tough to imagine that this batter couldn't buy a run not too long ago. The IPL seems to have liberated the England veteran, who must be considered one of the greats of the format. He arrived in the middle in the 13th over, but still managed an unbeaten 57 off just 27 balls. That unfettered bat-swing made good contact with the ball on Thursday and it was sent into



Siraj does an imitation of Cristiano Ronaldo's 'Siuuu' celebration after dismissing Gaikwad. ANI

### • IPL table

Teams	M	W	L	P	NRR
RCB (Q)	13	9	4	18	1.065
GT (Q)	14	9	5	18	0.695
SRH (Q)	13	8	5	16	0.350
RR	13	7	6	14	0.083
PBKS	13	6	6	13	0.227
KKR	13	6	6	13	0.011
CSK (E)	14	6	8	12	-0.345
DC	13	6	7	12	-0.871
MI (E)	13	4	9	8	-0.510
LSG (E)	13	4	9	8	-0.702

the crowd on four occasions. Buttler didn't indulge in any cute ramps and focused his attention in front of the wicket and square of it, after tickling a leg-side offering to fine-leg on the first ball he faced.

In his element, Buttler makes finding boundaries ridiculously easy. That's why he is equally effective outside the Powerplay. Hitting sixes seems child's play even though he doesn't come across as a heavily-built man. Two step-hits over wide long-on off Noor

got him going, but he also seemed to find gaps in the field almost at will.

The wide yorker is a ball notoriously difficult to hit, if the bowler gets it right. Buttler stays deep in the crease and hammers the ball through cover. If Titans' opening partnership regularly puts the opposition on the back foot, what follows them often sucks the life out of bowlers, effortlessly.

### Attack, in every sense

Batters win sponsorships, bowlers win championships.

This is an adage often repeated in cricket, and it's a template that Titans seem to follow to a T. That's what makes an above-average total almost impossible for an opposition to chase down against their bowling might.

And their attack isn't made up of many so-called T20 experts. The likes of Mohammed Siraj, Kagiso Rabada, Jason Holder and Rashid Khan — even Prasidh Krishna — will not be out of place in any format of the game. The lengths Siraj and Rabada bowl with the new ball is

akin to what may be seen in the first morning of a Test. Siraj snared Sanju Samson first ball with one that shaped away and took the outside edge on its way to the wicketkeeper, before he hit the top of Gaikwad's off-stump. Urvil Patel's leg-side hoick betrayed desperation.

Rabada's extra pace makes the big hit a risky proposition, and Rashid's accuracy and variations are too much to handle for late-order batters. They, like Siraj, finished with three wickets apiece.

But any hopes that CSK may have had to chase down 229 and stay alive were dashed by Siraj's opening burst. Shivam Dube tried to inject some jeopardy in the middle overs with a 17-ball 47, but it couldn't have lasted long against such a high-class attack.

**BRIEF SCORES:** GT 229/4 in 20 ovs (Sai Sudharsan 84, Shubman Gill 64, Jos Buttler 57 n.o.) bt CSK 140 all out in 13.4 ovs (Shivam Dube 47; Rashid Khan 3/18, Mohammed Siraj 3/26, Kagiso Rabada 3/32) by 89 runs.

## • BRIEFLY



In the absence of an injured Alcaraz, Sinner is the favourite. FILE

## Sinner has favourable path at French Open; Novak's tougher

WORLD NUMBER one Jannik Sinner will open his French Open campaign against French wildcard Clement Tabur after Thursday's draw handed the Italian top seed a favourable-looking path through the top half of the men's singles bracket. Sinner, the overwhelming favourite for the title in Paris, could meet another Frenchman in 30th seed Corentin Moutet in the third round and, if the seedings hold, Canadian Felix Auger-Aliassime in the semi-finals. Twenty-four-time Grand Slam champion Novak Djokovic faces a far more testing route after being drawn against big-serving Frenchman Giovanni Mpetshi Perricard in the opening round. REUTERS

## Kushwaha to captain India in U18 Asia Cup

FORWARD KETAN Kushwaha was on Thursday appointed captain of the Indian team for the upcoming U18 hockey Asia Cup from May 29 to June 6 in Kakamigahara. The squad was selected after a rigorous national coaching camp at Udhav Das Mehta (Bhai ji) Central Centre at SAI Bhopal under the team's coaching staff comprising Sardar Singh and Rajnish Mishra. The team's preparations included a high-profile four-match series against the Australia U-18 team in Bhopal as part of an exposure tour. PTI

## Maguire left out of Eng's World Cup squad

MANCHESTER UNITED defender Harry Maguire has been left out of England's squad for this year's World Cup. The center back confirmed in a social media post Thursday that he is not part of Thomas Tuchel's roster for the tournament in the United States, Canada and Mexico, saying he was "shocked and gutted" by the decision. Tuchel will confirm his squad on Friday. AP

## Germany recalls 'keeper Neuer out of retirement

VETERAN GOALKEEPER Manuel Neuer has been coaxed out of retirement for the World Cup by Germany coach Julian Nagelsmann. The 40-year-old Neuer retired after the 2024 European Championship but was included in Nagelsmann's squad for the upcoming tournament in Canada, Mexico and the United States. His inclusion is a blow to Hoffenheim goalkeeper Oliver Baumann, who was assured he was the No. 1. AP

## CWG Day to be celebrated on May 24

Shooter Anjum Modgil and badminton player Trupti Murgunde will be among the sporting stars in attendance when the country celebrates the Commonwealth Games Day on May 24 with the main event in Ahmedabad. The 75th edition of Fit India Sundays on Cycle will be held in Ahmedabad on May 24 "in the spirit of the Commonwealth Games movement, celebrating sportsmanship, unity, fitness and national pride," the sports ministry stated on Thursday. Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviya will lead the event. PTI

## Lustrinelli named Union Berlin coach

Union Berlin has appointed Mauro Lustrinelli — a man — as the successor to Marie-Louise Eta, the Bundesliga's first female head coach. Lustrinelli, who led unheralded Thun to the Swiss championship a year after leading it to promotion, agreed to take over at Union for next season, the club announced on Thursday without divulging the length of his contract. AP

## Caruana beats Pragg on dramatic day

INDIA'S R Praggnanandhaa lost his first game in the Super Chess Classic after being defeated by Fabiano Caruana of the United States in the seventh round of the tournament that is a part of the Grand Chess tour in Bucharest. Praggnanandhaa's first loss in the tournament almost threw him out of contention for a top place finish. The Indian started with the Queen pawn opening and faced the Ragozine variation in the Queen's gambit declined. PTI

# Bhuvneshwar finds new ways to take wickets at 36

Tanishq Vaddi Hyderabad, May 21

THE 2016 IPL final at Chinnaswamy, Bhuvneshwar Kumar in orange, winning the trophy for Sunrisers Hyderabad. Nine years later, same ground, different jersey — this time Royal Challengers Bengaluru's maiden title. Two franchises, two championships, and a career that refuses to follow the arc most fast bowlers trace.

Swinging the ball was never something Bhuvneshwar had to learn.

It came naturally. His in-swingers and outswingers were a puzzle for batters even in the shortest format, where the white ball and its seam have rarely been kind to fast bowlers.

Over 11 years, he evolved from a swinging new-ball bowler into a death bowling specialist — nailing yorkers in the final overs, winning two Purple Caps, becoming as complete a T20 bowler as you will find.



Bhuvneshwar Kumar has adapted to the changing demands of the game. ANI

The secret was length. To swing the ball, you pitch it up. But at SRH, Bhuvneshwar discovered that the fuller deliveries were not always his

most fruitful.

The real damage came from slightly behind — 6 to 8 metres — that corridor where batters do not know whether to drive or cut, whether to go forward or stay back. The ball swung from there. He picked up 81 of his 157 SRH wickets bowling at that length.

His final memorable spell at Uppal came against Rajasthan Royals in 2024 — 3 for 41, and a masterclass in the craft. Jos Buttler was on the back foot to cut, the ball full and swinging back in, taking the edge to slip. Sanju Samson got a delivery not quite full enough to drive, stayed back, pushed his bat in front of his pads, and watched the ball swing in sharply to uproot the stumps.

But 2024 was also the season the batters began finding answers.

Bhuvneshwar picked up 11 wickets at an economy of 9.35 — his worst at SRH since joining the franchise.

When Bhuvneshwar moved to RCB, finding swing at Chinnaswamy was never going to be easy. Last year was decent — 17 wickets — but the economy sat at 9.29, still high.

So he adapted again. At SRH, when he varied his length, he tended to go fuller — 2 to 6 metres, the traditional swing bowler's territory, his second-best wicket-taking length there with 28. At RCB this season, he has gone shorter — 8 to 10 metres. The good length is still there, but the variations have shifted back.

### Experienced operator

The results tell the story. At the 8 to 10 metre length, he is averaging 16.5 and going at an economy of 6.7.

At the 6 to 8 metre length, the average is 20.5 and the economy 7.6. The shorter length is working better, and he is using it with the kind of cunning that only comes from experience.

The Tristan Stubbs wicket showed exactly how. Stubbs was set up for something fuller, bat ready for the drive. He got the 8 to 10 metre delivery instead, held his line, and watched the ball swing away from a length at which it had no business swinging — the outside edge flying to slip. For Axar Patel, the 6 to 8 metre trap was laid first before the fuller one undid him.

### Using yorker early

And then there is the yorker. At 36, Bhuvneshwar's yorker is going at just 5 runs conceded, compared to 6.9 at SRH.

He is using it more with the new ball this season too — deployed earlier, a weapon that most bowlers reserve for the death.

At 36, in his second franchise, on a ground that offers him nothing, Bhuvneshwar Kumar is still taking wickets. The method has changed. The results haven't.

## • MALAYSIA MASTERS

# Funding own comeback after meniscus surgery, Ashmita finds her feet again

Shivani Naik Mumbai, May 21

RIGHT BEFORE Ashmita Chalaha defeated Goh Jin Wei, the Malaysian opponent known for her own sparkly jump smashes, the Indian was deliberating on how to reschedule her flight back to India. On her comeback from a middle meniscus tear surgery and rehab of the last 8 months, the Assamese 26-year-old hadn't considered she might play the quarterfinals of the Super 500 Malaysia Masters.

The 21-13, 21-16 victory earned in quick time, just 27 minutes over the Malaysian crowd's darling, seemed to be the easiest thing, given everything she was multi-managing. It helped that National Centre of Excellence coach Park Tae Sang was sitting for her matches — given she had

managed the last China Baoji Masters tournament all by herself.

Her mother recalled the conversation from Wednesday. Geetali, who has been working at a top hospital chain for the last 28 years, but has doubled up as her counsellor now that Ashmita is an independent athlete and not part of the India team, was trying to get her to chant "Om Sai Ram" on the phone, something she spiritually believes in.

Ashmita repeated the words, but had been distracted. Flight bookings for Friday needed to be rescheduled, the hotel stay extended. "She was weighing options of cancelling or rebooking, to save Rs29,000. So she told me, 'zyada mat bolo. Lemme think.'"

The mother was immediately concerned. Ashmita, who made the



Ashmita beat Malaysia's Goh Jin Wei. BADMINTON PHOTO

main draw at Malaysia after qualifying matches, had been adventurous once again, trying to cut on costs of playing tournaments to make ranking points. "She had taken a bullet train to get to the airport in China," Geetali said, with dread. Millions do, but Ashmita has a phobia. "Once when

travelling from Orleans to Paris, she had taken the wrong train. She kept asking around but the language was an issue until an English speaker told her she was on the wrong train. She had jumped out of the train just as it was picking up speed. It has been a phobia ever since."

In China, travelling alone,

she worked up the courage to board one to reach the airport before flying out to Malaysia.

### The hair secret

The 'zyada mat bolo' mother-daughter tiff was however a result of another affable argument. "She announced at home she's growing her hair because her elder sister is getting married. She wants to wear a lehenga," Geetali says.

Having always sported a short crop, the trouble was the hair was falling onto her face, and she had to nail the exact way to use clips to keep it off her forehead. On a poor network connection, the two were trying to figure out the best way to deal with these practical unforced off-court niggles.

Ashmita moved back to Guwahati, having left the Padukone academy in Bangalore amicably, because she needed

a change of scenery. "They were terrific in counselling her through injury and rehab, but she felt she needed to move back because she needed dedicated attention," Geetali says.

At the NCE, coach Park welcomed the new challenge.

Despite being a local, Ashmita moved in as a hostel boarder, going home only late Saturdays and returning Monday mornings.

Having left Bangalore, she also lost her OGG funding support, and started dipping into her monthly salary with the Indian Oil to play tournaments. The game was fairly intact, but she was working harder, as the fall in rankings from No.42 to outside of 200s had hit hard. So, while taking the bullet train was inevitable as flights were costly, Geetali had multiple fears. "I kept calling her because she has a habit of falling

asleep after matches so I told her 'don't go to sleep'. But she's managing everything alone now," she says.

When not part of the Indian team, the logistics can be overwhelming, and Ashmita's jumping-out-of-the-train nightmare, had left her a tad wary. But a huge suitcase, a cabin box carrying her kit, a knapsack with her gadgets and two translation devices, plus Ashmita safely made their way to Malaysia where she beat Pai Yu Po 21-23, 21-16, 21-16. In Round 1, she beat Thalita Ramdani 21-13, 21-16.

Part of India's Asian team gold winning squad from 2023, Ashmita is clambering back. "Falling from No.42 to 200 was depressing. At my hospital I see a lot of people come in shattering like her, so we stood by her. I told her sometimes you need to lose, to rise again. Now

she's more confident," Geetali says. "Earlier she used to be jittery playing Top 20s. Now she has a good attitude. Also, her friends like Isharani, Devika are doing well. Unnati is playing so well. For all parents of Women's Singles, any of these girls doing well is inspiring."

Ashmita would also enrol into correspondence courses. "She wants to complete her graduation. Whenever she's home we do revisions on her projects in Sociology, Psychology and Physical Education." Most Sundays are spent watching F1 car races. I look forward to Saturday now when I cook her prawns, pork and chicken stew she likes. It's been tough for her but she's doing things independently now, managing out of own money. She's working hard, hope results follow," the mother hopes. Now at No.71, she plays Line Kjaersfeldt next.

## Sports Minister proposes jail time for drug suppliers

Express News Service  
New Delhi, May 21

THE GOVERNMENT plans to enact an amendment to the existing anti-doping regulations, which could criminalise facilitation, supply and encouragement of nefarious activity. The legislation to this effect can be introduced in the next session of Parliament itself.

The proposal assumes significance as India regularly achieves the dubious distinction of leading the world in the number of anti-doping rule violations across sports, and has the highest positivity rate in testing among major countries. Recently, the Athletics Integrity Unit (AIU) of World Athletics downgraded the Indian federation to the highest-category risk in terms of doping, resulting in national embarrassment. With the country hosting the 2030 Commonwealth Games and hoping to stage the Olympics and Asian Games as well, it shows Indian sport and its whole ecosystem in poor light.

"Till now, only the sports persons testing positive were punished with suspensions, disqualification or return of medals. That has not helped us eradicate the problem. We need to target the whole chain and hand out stringent punishments," sports minister Mansukh Mandaviya said at an interaction on Thursday.

"Efforts have been made in this regard for a long time, but haven't been successful."

A draft for the proposed legislation has been prepared and will be put up in the public domain for feedback, suggestions, consultation and inputs.

"Till now, there was no criminal framework for our anti-doping measures. It's not just a sporting violation. This amendment will address that problem. We hope to get the legislation passed in the Monsoon Session of Parliament as there is likely to be general agreement on the doping menace," the minister said.

"There are a lot of unscrupulous elements who exploit athletes, some of them minors, for their own gain. There are traffickers, sellers, syndicates and some administrators also. If some coaches and other athletes are involved, we won't spare them either. We will treat it as organised crime."

The head of the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) president Witold Banka was in India last month and expressed concern over the doping menace in the country, which he described as a "big problem". He held high-level meetings with various stakeholders and stressed on working with various law-enforcement agencies in this regard. However, Mandaviya said that the latest legislative push was not a result of pressure from the global body.

"It's our own initiative as we want to get our house in order."

This comes after Banka termed India the biggest producer of performance-enhancing drugs and steroids.

## Archery coach jailed for sexually harassing minor

Express News Service  
Chandigarh, May 21

A FAST Track Special Court in Haryana's Sonapat has sentenced a national-level archery coach, **Kuldeep Vedwan (in pic)**, to five years of rigorous imprisonment in a sexual harassment case involving a minor female national-level archer. The court convicted the coach under provisions of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act and imposed a fine of Rs 15,000.

Vedwan played an influential role in the rise of para-archers Sheetal Devi and Parash Nag, coaching both of them in

their early years.

Additional Sessions Judge Narendra Singh pronounced the sentence on May 20. Following the conviction, Vedwan was taken into custody. The case was originally registered in August 2023 at a police station in Sonapat district.

According to the prosecution, Vedwan, a resident of Baghat in Uttar Pradesh, allegedly attempted to sexually harass the junior player during a youth archery championship trial held in Sonapat in April 2023. The archer, in her complaint, had said that she had travelled to Sonapat to participate in Youth Championship trials conducted at a Sports Authority of India centre.

She was training at the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board Katra Stadium, where

the accused's foundation was involved in coaching operations.

### Physical advances

The victim accused the coach of entering her hotel room around 4 am on April 7 and making inappropriate physical advances. In her complaint, the victim alleged that she resisted for nearly 15 to 20 minutes before managing to escape and seek refuge in another room occupied by woman players. The player further alleged that the coach later apologised and urged her not to disclose the incident, saying his career would be ruined. She also accused him of repeatedly pressuring her to stay in his room during subsequent hotel stays, allegedly promising to make her a "big player" if she

cooperated.

Special Public Prosecutor Vijender Singh Khatri said the court convicted the accused after examining evidence and hearing arguments from both sides.

The court, under Section 10 of the POCSO Act, awarded five years of rigorous imprisonment along with a fine of Rs 10,000. It also sentenced the convict under Section 12 of the Act to three years of rigorous imprisonment and imposed an additional fine of Rs 5,000. The court said that the sentences will run concurrently.

After the trials in April 2023, the victim was selected for the Asia Cup in Singapore. She later informed her family about the incident, following which a complaint was submitted to the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine

Board. An internal inquiry committee reportedly advised the family to file a police complaint in Sonapat.

The police subsequently registered a case under the Indian Penal Code (IPC) Section 354A and Sections 10 and 12 of the PoCSO Act. The investigation was conducted by a woman police officer, and the matter was later tried in the Fast Track Special Court.

Vedwan is a former national-level archer who later became a coach after quitting his job in the Army. Over the years, he established multiple archery academies in Uttar Pradesh, Puducherry, and Jammu and Kashmir, and was associated with training para-archery athletes at the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board Sports Complex.

## East Bengal end 22-year wait for league crown, edge out rivals Bagan

Rohit Mundayar  
New Delhi, May 21

IT WAS April 2004. Bhaichung Bhutia, Douglas da Silva and Dipankar Roy were on the scoresheet the last time East Bengal confirmed a national league title for themselves. The National Football League was the top flight of Indian football at the time, and this was East Bengal's third time winning it in four seasons, apart from successfully defending the title that year. Their next league title came on Thursday, after a gap of 22 long years, and it came thanks to goals from a Spaniard and a Palestinian.

East Bengal were in pole position to win, with the closest challengers being rivals Mohun Bagan Super Giant. Punjab FC and Mumbai City FC, the next two contenders, were up against each other at the JLN Stadium in New Delhi. Jamshedpur FC were facing Odisha FC at home and needed a miracle to win the title.



Youssef Ezzejari scored East Bengal's opening goal against Inter Kashi on Thursday. PTI

### ● ISL: Final Standings

CLUB	P	W	D	L	GD	PTS
E Bengal	13	7	5	1	19	26
Bagan	13	7	5	1	14	26
Mum C	13	7	4	2	8	25
BFC	13	6	5	2	6	23
Punjab	13	6	4	3	6	22

points, East Bengal 2nd with 23, Punjab 3rd with 23, Bengaluru FC 4th with 23 (although that was only academic), Mumbai City FC fifth with 23, and Jamshedpur 6th with 22.

### RING REDEMPTION

## If not for boxing, I would have fallen into drugs: Asian U-15 champion

Mohammad Yasser, 14, works as a part-time cook in Rajouri; his mother works as a house help, father passed away when he was six years old

Nitin Sharma  
Chandigarh, May 21

BOXING SAVED 14-year-old Mohammad Yasser from getting into drugs, a menace in the old residential complex of District Institute of Education and Training (DIET) in Rajouri, where his family shifted after their home was demolished in an anti-encroachment drive in Bela Colony in 2018. Last week, the teenager rose above circumstances to excel in the ring by winning a gold medal (58 kg) at the Asian Under-15 Boxing Championships in Tashkent.

"If my younger brother and I had not started boxing, we would have fallen into drugs," Yasser told *The Indian Express*. Life has been tough for Yasser. He works as a part-time cook for some of the MBBS students of the Government Medical College in Rajouri. His mother, Naseem Akhter, is a house help. His father, Naadeem, who worked as a construction worker, passed away following a heart attack when Yasser was six years old. Yasser will go back to cooking to earn a living when not training.

"I have been working as a part-time cook to support my mother for the last three years. When I won the gold in Uzbekistan, the first thought which came to my mind was to tell my younger brother, who stepped in for me, that I would be back in the kitchen soon," Yasser said. The family, two brothers, an asister and their mother, live in a one-room accommodation in a dilapidated building of the District Institute of Education and Training (DIET), where

slum-dwellers like his family moved into.

"When our home was demolished, we were shifted to the old DIET complex. Our neighbour's family was into drugs. My mother would send my brother and me to the nearby stadium to play while she took our sister along with her so that we could stay away from the drug menace. I did not have any money to get anything for my mother from Uzbekistan, but I am going home with this gold medal. To win a gold medal for India is my biggest achievement," Yasser said.

At Tashkent, Yasser scored wins over Kyrgyzstan's Akbarzhan Nabitdzhanov, Kazakhstan's Meirilan Beissekhan and beat Iran's S Mousa in the semifinal. In the final, he got the better of home favourite Abdulloh Karimjonov. The Jammu and Kashmir boxer sees this title as a major step towards his dream of representing India at the Olympics. "It was the first time that I could go abroad. After my daily practice at Rajouri Stadium, I would watch videos of Kazakh and Uzbek boxers as well as those of Indian pro boxer Nishant Dev bhaiya by borrowing phones from doctors. The wins in Tashkent gave me the belief that perhaps one day, I can win an Olympic medal," Yasser said.

His mother, Naseem, worked hard to ensure she could support the boxing careers of both her sons. When talking over the phone, she had to cut short her conversation because of the noise from a fight between drug addicts outside their home. "I started



Mohammad Yasser with his gold medal. (R) His brother, Fareed, and mother, Naseem, at their home. IE

“Our neighbour's family was into drugs. My mother would send my brother and me to the nearby stadium to play while she took our sister along with her so that we could stay away from the drug menace.”

MOHAMMAD YASSER,  
UNDER-15 ASIAN CHAMPION

working after my husband died. I would get paid Rs 2,000 each from the three houses I worked in. Whatever I could do to support my kids, I did. Sometimes, my health would deteriorate too. At times, thieves would break in and take the money and utensils away. I did not find peace. There were days when we went to sleep hungry. Now he is coming with a medal,



I will have peace," Naseem said.

The two brothers started by getting water for boxers and marking lines with white powder at the JK Sports Council Stadium near their home. "There were days when we would only drink water or only have a roti with sugar. We got about Rs 15 from the boxers for helping them out, but some of them refused to pay us. We would then get into arguments and fights," Yasser said.

The minor brawls the brothers were involved in changed their fortunes. Mohammad Ishtiaque Malik, a coach at the Khelo India Centre at Rajouri, felt the brothers have an instinct to throw punches. He took them under his wings. Malik, who was a trainee of Jagdish Singh, mentor to Beijing Olympics bronze medallist Vijender Singh, was a good scout.

"Both Yasser and Fareed would fight at the stadium near their home with the seniors when they would not pay them for the work. I was impressed by their fighting skills and attitude. Initially, I did not tell their

mother about their boxing training," Malik said.

In 2024, Yasser won the 55-kg title in the J&K Sub-Junior Championships. He followed it up by winning the Sub-Junior Nationals last year, after which he was asked to join the national camp. "Yasser had strength as well as the willpower. And right from day one, his straight punches were good. He had good lower-body strength, but we had to work on his upper-body strength. With time, his hook and jab became his strength," Malik said.

Post his national medal, Yasser received a monthly stipend of Rs 4000 from Abhishek Sharma, Deputy Commissioner, Rajouri. He saved up money to buy a pair of boxing gloves and also gave some of it to his mother. "I have not got any prize money for state or national medals yet," Yasser said. Before he travels from Jammu to Rajouri, Yasser wants to buy a suit for his mother. "She has not skipped her work for a single day and has sacrificed a lot."

## Villa clinch Europa League with 3-0 win

Associated Press  
Istanbul, May 21

IN FRONT of the future king of England, Unai Emery reaffirmed his status as the king of the Europa League.

Aston Villa beat Freiburg 3-0 in Istanbul on Wednesday to secure Emery a record-extending fifth title in this competition. Celebrating wildly inside the Tupras Stadium was life-long Villa fan Prince William, who traveled to watch his beloved team end a 30-year wait for a major trophy. He had his phone out taking photos as captain John McGinn lifted the cup in the center of the field and in front of an explosion of confetti. "He's a classy guy. He was in the dressing room before the game and he's a massive Villa fan so he was never going to miss it," McGinn told *TNT Sports*.

It was Villa's first major piece of silverware since winning the English League Cup in 1996 and its first continental title since lifting the European Cup and then the

Super Cup in 1982.

Was the outcome ever in doubt with the ultimate Europa League specialist Emery on the sideline? The Spanish coach has enjoyed remarkable success in Europe's second-tier competition, winning it three years running with Sevilla from 2014-16 and again with Villarreal in 2021.

Now he has led a third team with Villa in its name to the title. "I am always very grateful for Europe, for every competition, Conference League, Champions League, Europa League, but especially Europa League," Emery said. "We fought strongly in this competition and tried to give it our best. This played in a very serious way this year." Two brilliant first-half strikes from Youri Tielemans and Emiliano Buendia put Villa into a 2-0 lead at the break. Morgan Rogers added a third in the second half.

German team Freiburg, which was playing in the second division 10 years ago, was outclassed in its first European final.

### ● FEDERATION CUP ATHLETICS

## High stakes as athletes chase CWG, Asian U23 C'ship spots

Pritish Raj  
Ranchi, May 21

DECATHLON NATIONAL record holder Tejaswin Shankar is warming up in the golden hour under the stadium lights as he gears up for his first set of events on Friday at the Federation Cup Athletics in Birs Munda Stadium, Ranchi.

The 27-year-old from Delhi aims to qualify for the upcoming Commonwealth Games in Glasgow. However, he will have to meet the qualification standard set by the Athletics Federation of India. "It is a crucial tournament for me as the CWG qualification is on the line. I came to India ten days back and landed here three days back to acclimatise to the weather," Tejaswin said during the press conference.

Tejaswin would need 7787 points in Decathlon to qualify for the event. His only Decathlon event this season was at David Nobles Combined Events in USA where he scored 7947 points. Tejaswin, who is also national record holder in high jump, has a chance to

qualify for the both events. "I will prioritize Decathlon for CWG as I get to do ten events together," said Tejaswin.

Federation Cup, one of the main fixtures in the Indian athletics calendar, will act as the qualifying event for CWG and Asian U-23 Athletics Championships. However, only 32 athletes including 16 men and 16 women will be allowed to participate in CWG. "If there are more than 32 athletes, the selection committee will have to pick and choose as organizers have made it clear that every Athletics squad will have only 32 athletes," Lalit Bhanot, Chairman of AFI planning commission said.

Commonwealth Games have competitive field in athletics with presence of African athletes in most of the events.

Qualifying standards for events like 100m (10.16s), 400m (44.96s) would need athletes to break the national record and for events like Javelin Throw (82.61m) it is world class.

Javelin Throw is becoming one of the blue riband event in the Indian athletics landscape.



(L-R) Sprinters Gurinder Singh, Animesh Kujur and Tamil Arasu will be the ones to watch out for at the Fed Cup. GAJENDRA YADAV/FILE

A top national event usually features at least five throwers who have crossed 80m mark.

The field in Ranchi has 2025 World championship finalist Sachin Yadav, 2022 World Championship finalist Rohit Yadav, Asian Games silver medallist Kishore Kumar Jena among others.

The qualification standard is set at 82.61m and one would expect that the likes of Sachin and Rohit will book their berth for CWG as two-time Olympic medallist Neeraj Chopra hasn't started his season yet.

The qualifying mark for long jump is 8.05m and the selection committee will be spoilt for choices as the field features ace jumper Sreeshankar Murali, returning national record holder Jeswin Aldrin, and NCAA indoor champion Lokesh Ananthan.

Lokesh, who hasn't competed in any domestic competition this year, was given an exception by AFI as he was regularly competing on the NCAA circuit and also won the indoor final title there.

"Long jump is very stacked

### ● Day 1 schedule

**Decathlon:** 5 events  
**Women's Long Jump final:** 6 pm  
**Women's Discus Throw:** 7 pm  
**10000m men's:** 6:25 am  
**10000m women's:** 5:40 am  
**3000m steeplechase (women):** 8:10 pm  
**3000m steeplechase (men):** 8:20 pm

and we can see a big mark if these athletes have a good day. It is going to be a tough race for CWG qualification," one of jump coaches said.

Despite Youngster Shahnavaz Khan, who has the best Indian mark of 8.43m, not participating due to his inclusion in the national camp for U20 World Championships, the field is stacked enough to make the headlines.

Indian Sprinters, who had the limelight last year due to multiple national records, will find it tough in the 100m dash to qualify as the qualifying mark would require them to breach the national record of

10.18s. "I know it is going to be tough as the qualification mark for 100m is high but my focus is on 200m which is my pet event," said India's ace sprinter Animesh Kujur. Animesh needs a timing of less than 20.61s in 200m to book his berth.

Former national record holder Gurinder Singh said that the tough qualification mark will act as motivation. "Yes, it is a tough mark but we have gone below 10.20s last year and I think with the set of athletes competing, we can push it further. Such tough marks act as extra motivation for us," he told *The Indian Express*.

Apart from these events, eyes will on Annu Rani (Javelin Throw), Tajinderpal Singh Toor (Shot Put), Vishal TK (400m), Shaali Singh (Long Jump), Ancy Sojan (Long Jump) who will attempt to qualify for the Commonwealth Games.

Till now, 16 male athletes and three female athletes have breached the qualification mark for Commonwealth Games with their selection resting on the selection committee.