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Nitish Kumar to take Rajya Sabha oath on April 10 as Bihar finalises takeover plans

Bihar prepares for a new political chapter as Nitish Kumar takes Rajya Sabha oath on April 10. Newly elected MPs, including BJP and RLM leaders, will follow on April 16 amid crucial Delhi meetings.



New Delhi.(Agency)

Former Chief Minister Nitish Kumar is set to take his oath as a Rajya Sabha member on April 10, marking the first step in the formation of Bihar's new government. Minister Vijay Kumar Chaudhary confirmed the schedule, noting that Nitish Kumar's swearing-in will precede the oath of other newly elected MPs from the state. "This is an important first step before the induction of the new government. Nitish Kumar's Rajya Sabha oath will take place on April 10," Chaudhary said.

NEWLY ELECTED BIHAR MPS TO TAKE OATH ON APRIL 16

Bihar's newly elected Rajya Sabha MPs, including BJP national president Nitin Naveen and Shivsh Kumar, will take their oaths on April 16 during a special session of Parliament. Alongside BJP leaders, Upendra Kushwaha, head of the RLM, will also be sworn in on the same day. All ceremonies will take place in the Rajya Sabha chamber. BJP holds crucial Delhi meeting ahead of government formation. Sources in the BJP said a key meeting of Bihar BJP leaders will take place in Delhi on April 10, led by Nitin Naveen. The meeting will include senior central leaders and state BJP leadership. Present will be Bihar BJP president Sanjay Sarawagi, deputy leader Samrat Chaudhary, Vijay Kumar Sinha, Nityanand Rai, Sanjay Jaiswal, regional organisation secretary Nagendra Ji, and state organisation secretary Bhiku Bhai Dalsania. Ministers Dilip Jaiswal and Mangal Pandey are also expected to attend. The agenda includes seeking the name of the new Chief Minister from the state core committee, attempting to reach consensus, and deciding the next steps following Nitish Kumar's resignation as Chief Minister. **SWEARING-IN SCHEDULE AND POLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE** While Nitish Kumar takes his oath on April 10, the BJP and RLM leaders' Rajya Sabha swearing-in on April 16 will coincide with a special session of Parliament. The timing is seen as critical in setting the stage for Bihar's new government formation and coordination between central and state leadership.

S Jaishankar To Travel To UAE This Week, 1st Visit Amid Iran War

New Delhi.(Agency)

External Affairs Minister (EAM) S Jaishankar will be travelling to the UAE this week, the first such visit by an Indian minister since the beginning of the Iran war and the Middle East crisis, sources said. According to sources, Jaishankar will visit Mauritius and the UAE between April 9 and April 12. He will first visit Mauritius for the Indian Ocean Conference (IOC), and then the UAE, sources said, adding that energy security is at the top of the agenda. The announcement of his travel comes hours after the US and Iran agreed to a two-week ceasefire, with President Donald Trump accepting Tehran's 10-point conditions and calling them "workable". India welcomed the ceasefire, saying it will "lead to a lasting peace" in the Middle East. "As we have continuously advocated earlier, de-escalation, dialogue and diplomacy are essential to bring an early end to the ongoing conflict. The conflict has already caused immense suffering to people and disrupted global energy supply and trade networks. We expect that unimpeded freedom of navigation and global flow of commerce would prevail through the Strait of Hormuz," the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said in a statement. The war began on February 28 when the US and Israel carried out coordinated airstrikes across Iran after stalled nuclear talks and claims that Tehran had resumed its nuclear activities. The strikes, named 'Operation Epic Fury', targeted many Iranian cities and killed many top leaders, including Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and his family members.

Short news

Assam Elections 2026: C-Voters Opinion Poll Shows BJP's Return For Third Straight Time In Tight Battle

Assam.(Agency)

Is the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) emerging as one of the biggest gainers in the Assembly elections in Assam? Well a latest C-Voter survey offers an insight into the mood of the electorates ahead of the states Assembly elections in Assam. According to the C-Voter survey, in Assam, BJP-led NDA will leads at 48% while UPA is likely to stands at 35%. Earlier, a vote tracker survey by VoteVibe, released exclusively on CNN-News18 showed the National Democratic Alliance, led by the BJP, is on course for a decisive third straight victory in Assam. In the battle for 126 Assembly seats, it is being predicted that the BJP will secure victory in around 96 to 98 seats. A recent opinion poll estimates have shown that the BJP-led NDA is predicted to win comfortably in Assam, with about 96-98 seats for the alliance. This is a big increase over its 2021 tally. The Congress-led opposition is projected to get around 26-30 seats.

Tamil Nadu Elections 2026: C-VOTER Opinion Poll Says AIADMK, DMK Locked In Tight Contest



Tamil Nadu.(Agency)

The countdown to the Tamil Nadu Assembly Election has begun, with the state set to undergo polls in a single phase on April 23. Vote counting is scheduled for May 4, 2026, according to the Election Commission of India (ECI). The ruling Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK), under the leadership of Chief Minister MK Stalin, is eyeing a consecutive term by highlighting its governance record and welfare-driven policies. The AIADMK is striving to regain power, joining hands with the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in a bid to consolidate opposition votes. Though traditionally weaker in Tamil Nadu, the BJP is trying to expand its ground in the state by focusing on urban voters and strategic alliances. Actor-turned-politician Vijay is looking to make his electoral debut with his party, Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK). While Vijay enjoys an enormous fanbase in the southern state, it still remains uncertain how much influence his popularity will translate into actual votes in the elections. And the question is — Will the DMK retain power, or will anti-incumbency prevail?

India welcomes US-Iran ceasefire, calls for lasting peace and free Hormuz flow

India has welcomed the US-Iran ceasefire, urging lasting peace in West Asia. The government emphasises dialogue, de-escalation, and unhindered global trade, highlighting the strategic importance of the Strait of Hormuz.

New Delhi.(Agency)

India has welcomed the recent ceasefire between the United States and Iran, expressing hope that it will pave the way for lasting peace in West Asia. In an official statement issued on April 8, 2026, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said, "We welcome the ceasefire reached and hope that it will lead to a lasting peace in West Asia. As we have continuously advocated earlier, de-escalation, dialogue and diplomacy are essential to bring an early end to the ongoing conflict." The statement highlighted the conflict's impact on global trade and energy supply. India urged that the Strait of Hormuz remain open to ensure unhindered movement of goods and energy resources. "The conflict has already



caused immense suffering to people and disrupted global energy supply and trade networks. We expect that

unimpeded freedom of navigation and global flow of commerce would prevail through the Strait of Hormuz," the MEA said. India's response reflects its long-standing policy of advocating dialogue and de-escalation to resolve regional conflicts. The MEA emphasised that diplomacy remains crucial in achieving early and sustainable peace in West Asia.

"Deescalation, dialogue and diplomacy are essential," the statement reiterated, underscoring India's commitment to stability in the region. This comes hours after US President Donald Trump announced a temporary pause in planned military action against Iran, saying the strikes will be delayed for two weeks. The decision, shared on his Truth Social platform shortly before a previously indicated deadline, eased immediate concerns of rising tensions.

'I Regret, Not My Intention': Kharge Seeks Apology For 'People Illiterate In Gujarat' Remark

New Delhi.(Agency)

Days after triggering a major controversy over an alleged "illiterate" remark about the people of Gujarat, Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge on Wednesday stepped back and issued an apology. The Congress president said he did not intend to hurt the sentiments of the people of Gujarat and expressed regret over his statement.

"Some remarks of mine in a recent election speech in Kerala are being deliberately misinterpreted. Even so, I express my sincere regret. It was never my intention to hurt the sentiments of the people of Gujarat, for whom I have always had and will continue to have the highest of respect," Kharge wrote on X. 'People of Kerala Educated Than Gujarat People' Earlier, in poll-bound Kerala's Idukki district,



while addressing a rally, Kharge remarked that the people of Kerala are educated and clever, unlike some of their counterparts in Gujarat and some other states, hence it would be difficult for Pinarayi Vijayan (Kerala CM) and the BJP to fool them.

"Don't try to misguide the people of Kerala. They are very clever, they are educated. Modi ji, Vijay (Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan), you can both fool those who are illiterate in Gujarat or other places, but you can't fool Kerala people," he said. However, this sparked a political controversy, with the BJP being the flag-bearer of the protest against the Congress chief over his remarks. Launching a scathing attack against the Kharge, Harsh Sanghavi, the Deputy Chief Minister of Gujarat, said that Kharge had insulted a state that has not only given birth to Mahatma Gandhi and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel but also provided India with a new model of development.

Iranian oil heads to India after China detour Ending 7-year import freeze

For the first time in seven years, India is set to receive the first Iranian crude vessel, with Indian Oil Corporation procuring a shipment following US sanctions relief.

New Delhi.(Agency)

India is set to receive a shipment of crude oil from Iran this week, with the cargo arriving after a tanker initially heading towards China was rerouted to Indian shores, ending a seven-year hiatus in imports from Tehran after Washington temporarily lifted sanctions on Iranian oil to stabilise strained global supplies. Shipping data from the London Stock Exchange Group (LSEG) and Kpler show that the Curaao-flagged very large crude carrier Jaya has been chartered to deliver Iranian crude to India's east coast. The vessel's journey suggests a rerouting, having initially moved towards Southeast Asian waters, reportedly with China as a potential destination, before altering course towards India. The cargo has been procured by Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), which has not yet issued an official response to queries on the development. In a further indication of renewed flows, another tanker, Jordan, is also signalling India as its discharge point, news agency Reuters reported. India last imported Iranian oil in May



2019, when US sanctions forced refiners to halt purchases despite Tehran being a key supplier offering favourable terms. Since then, Indian refiners have relied heavily on alternative sources, including West Asian producers and the United States.

Watch: Uma Bharti turns street vendor, sells poha-jalebi to protest demolition drive

The veteran BJP leader said her act was in protest against an anti-encroachment drive that removed street vendors from key areas of Madhya Pradesh's Tikamgarh town.

New Delhi.(Agency)

A video of former Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Uma Bharti selling poha and jalebi from a roadside cart in Tikamgarh has gone viral. Responding to it, the veteran BJP leader said the act was a protest against an anti-encroachment drive that removed street vendors from key areas of the town. Just a few days ago, the Tikamgarh Municipal Corporation carried out a demolition drive along Civil Lines Road, where several



handcarts and small kiosks were cleared by officials, including the SDM and tehsildar, citing encroachment.

The action triggered concern among local vendors, many of whom rely on these setups for their daily livelihood. Taking a stand, the former Chief Minister on Tuesday stepped onto the streets and joined the vendors, symbolically selling poha and jalebi from a cart.

She termed the administration's action "dictatorial" and urged authorities to reconsider the crackdown, saying it unfairly targets the poor. Bharti said small traders work hard to sustain their families and that such drives directly affect their survival. She appealed to officials to restore the removed carts and allow vendors to continue earning in their usual spaces.

News box

Decomposed body found in pond in Gurgaon's Sector 76

GURGAON.(Agency)

A decomposed body of a man was found in a pond in Sector 76 on Monday evening. Police said the body could have been lying there for several days.

They said locals first noticed the body floating in the pond and alerted authorities. A police team reached the spot and retrieved the body, which had decomposed significantly, making identification difficult. "No ID was found on the body," an officer said.

Officers said preliminary examination indicated that the body could be around four to five days old, adding that no immediate injury marks could be clearly established due to the condition of the body. The body has been sent to the mortuary for post-mortem examination, which is expected to ascertain the exact cause of death. Police said efforts are underway to establish the identity of the deceased. Nearby police stations have been alerted, and records of missing persons are being checked to find a match. "We are trying to identify the deceased and verify if any missing person complaint corresponds with the description. The cause of death will be clear after the post-mortem report," a senior officer from Kherki Daula police station said. A case is yet to be registered in the matter. Police said further legal action will be initiated based on the findings of the post-mortem and identification of the deceased. The area around the pond was briefly cordoned off during the recovery operation. Police have also spoken to residents of nearby sectors to gather any information that could help in the investigation.

18-year-old falls to death from 16th floor, family alleges rape, murder

Noida

An 18-year-old girl fell to her death under mysterious circumstances from the 16th floor of a tower in a high-rise society in Indirapuram on Tuesday. While police suspect it to be a case of suicide, the girl's family alleged that she was murdered after being sexually assaulted.

According to police, the girl's father is a laundry worker who also cleans vehicles at the society. He has been working there for around 10 years and the girl used to help her father there. ACP (Indirapuram) Abhishek Srivastava said that residents called emergency helpline number 112 to report that a girl had fallen from the tower around 6am. A police team reached the spot and found her body, which was later sent for an autopsy and reports are awaited. CCTV footage shows that the girl and her father reached the society around 5.50am. The girl allegedly told her father she was going to the society's park while he went down to the basement to clean the vehicles. She was then spotted on camera a few minutes later getting in the lift alone and going up to the 16th floor. "In the CCTV footage, the girl was seen going into the lift at 5.53am alone, and she reached the 16th floor at 5.55am. Another CCTV clip shows she fell from the 16th floor at 5.56am. According to the footage, no one was seen around her, and she was seen in the lobby of the tower alone," ACP said.

Her father told cops that he was cleaning a car when someone told him that a girl had fallen from the 16th floor. When he went to see what happened, he found his daughter lying in a pool of blood. He claims that when he found her body, her clothes were torn suspiciously, leading him to suspect she was assaulted.

'Tech support' racket busted, 4 cyber cons who trapped people with 'hacking alerts' arrested

Noida.(Agency)

Four fraudsters, who used to threaten their victims with "hacking alerts" and later defrauded them of crores of rupees, were arrested on Tuesday. The gang cheated people "by creating fear about data theft and hacking incidents", police said. The accused, who would pose as technical support executives for their victims, were arrested from Sector 76 following technical surveillance and local intelligence inputs. Using screen-sharing applications, they gained remote access to victims' systems and extracted sensitive banking information.

Those arrested are Mohammad Bilal, 26, and Dev Kapahi, 25, both residents of Adarsh Nagar in Delhi; Abhishek Mukheja, 27, a resident of Bhiwadi in Rajasthan's Alwar district; and Kushagra Nimbekar, 24, a resident of Rohini, Delhi. Police said the accused operated an organised cyber fraud network that targeted foreign citizens through online advertisements. All four accused are reportedly well educated and fluent in foreign accents, which helped them easily gain the trust of international victims. Four laptops, eight mobile phones, four microphone headsets and two routers allegedly used in carrying out the fraud were seized. DCP Shavya Goyal said that the accused ran paid advertisements on internet platforms and social media, displaying toll-free numbers under the guise of technical support services. When foreign nationals encountered these advertisements and called the listed numbers, their calls were routed through specialised calling software installed on the accused's laptops. The fraudsters then impersonated technical support agents and falsely claimed that the victim's computer or device had been hacked. To create panic and make their claims appear genuine, the accused deliberately blacked out the victim's computer screen, convincing them that a cyberattack was underway.

After accessing banking details, the accused assessed the victim's financial status. Victims with smaller balances were typically coerced into paying amounts ranging from \$350 to \$2,000 as "security" or "repair" charges. In cases where victims had larger funds, the calls were transferred to senior members of the gang who continued the scam to extract higher payments. Police said the fraudulently obtained money was converted into cryptocurrency and later distributed among the accused to avoid detection. Examination of seized laptops and mobile phones already revealed transaction records indicating cyber fraud worth crores of rupees.

Officials said that the arrests highlight the growing sophistication of cybercrime networks and the misuse of technology to target victims across international borders.

6 months gone, work on Behrampur sewage plant not started in Haryana, GMDA invites bids again

GURGAON.(Agency)

Construction of a proposed sewage treatment plant (STP) and main pumping station in Behrampur has hit a hurdle.

Having failed to finalise bids six months after floating the tender, GMDA has now re-invited bids for the Rs 191-crore project. The project is aimed at strengthening sewage treatment capacity in new sectors along Southern Peripheral Road (SPR), where rapid urbanisation is expected to significantly increase wastewater generation. Sanctioned in June 2022, the tender for the project was only invited in Oct last year. However, it was cancelled last month, citing administrative reasons. Officials said the move was necessitated by revisions in norms issued by the public health engineering department (PHED), which had to be incorporated into the bid document. "There was a revision. Accordingly, the tender was cancelled and has now been re-invited. It is scheduled to be opened on April 28," a



GMDA official said. Under this, GMDA will undertake the construction of a 400 million litres per day (MLD) main pumping station (MPS) and an additional 100 MLD STP at Behrampur. The facility is intended to augment the existing treatment capacity as sewage inflow

continues to rise with expanding residential and commercial development. Around 23km of master sewer lines in sectors 58 to 67 have been laid by HSVP, while the remaining network between sectors 58 and 76 is being taken up by GMDA. Once these

lines are fully connected, a substantial increase in sewage flow to the Behrampur plant is expected, necessitating the additional 100 MLD treatment capacity, the official said. The project also includes a power generation unit that will utilise biogas produced during the treatment process, helping offset operational costs. Officials said the entire project is expected to be completed within two years once the project is allotted. At present, the Behrampur sewage treatment facility has a capacity of 170 MLD. However, only about 30% of the treated water meets tertiary treatment standards. To address this gap, GMDA is simultaneously upgrading its existing 120 MLD plant to the tertiary level. Once the upgrade is completed, the biological oxygen demand (BOD) in treated water will be reduced from 30 mg/litre to 10 mg/litre, making it suitable for reuse in agriculture, construction and groundwater recharge.

Farmhouse owner in Gurgaon hacked to death, caretaker arrested

Gurgaon.(Agency)

A 36-year-old farmhouse owner in Sohna was allegedly hacked to death with a sickle by a caretaker who had worked for the family for nearly 20 years, left recently after an assault and returned months ago carrying a grudge with him.

Rahul, a businessman from Ghata village, was found dead at the family's farmhouse near Sohna-Ballabgarh road, close to Harchandpur bus stand. Police said he was murdered on the night of April 5, but the crime surfaced the next day after cops received information about a body lying on the property premises. According to a complaint filed by Rahul's brother, the family had employed Khemchand to look after the farmhouse, where a few rooms

have been built. Rahul, he said, had gone to the property on April 5 and was last seen there. When the family tried to contact Khemchand after calls to Rahul's phone went unanswered, he disappeared and switched his cellphone off, deepening suspicion against him. When the family checked the farmhouse, they found Rahul lying dead in one of the rooms and alerted police. A police team reached the farmhouse and called in fingerprint experts. During inspection, officials recovered the suspected murder weapon, a sickle. Police spokesperson Sandeep Turan said Khemchand, a 65-year-old resident of Heerapur Khurd in Bulandshahr, was tracked down by the crime branch and arrested in Delhi on

Tuesday. During questioning, police learnt that Khemchand had worked at the farmhouse for almost two decades but left a year and a half ago after Rahul allegedly assaulted him.

"He started returning for work intermittently a few months ago. He nursed a resentment, and admitted he was angry because Rahul would thrash him at times," an officer said. According to Turan, on the night of April 5, Khemchand attacked Rahul several times on the neck with a sickle, killing him on the spot. He then fled to Delhi. A murder case was registered against Khemchand at Sohna Sadar police station. "An investigation has been initiated," an officer said.

Gurgaon tops India's pollution chart in March, PM2.5 level twice safe limit

Ghaziabad.(Agency)

Gurgaon ranked as the most polluted city in India in March 2026, recording a monthly average PM2.5 concentration of 116 µg/m³. The level is nearly twice India's national ambient air quality standard (60 µg/m³) and far above the WHO guideline of 15 µg/m³. Haryana accounted for four of the 10 cities, followed by two each from Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh, and one each from Rajasthan and Gujarat. Other places in the top 10 included Bahadurgarh, Faridabad, Singrauli, Mandideep, Ghaziabad, Manesar, Bhiwadi, Noida and Nandesar, according to an analysis by Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air (CREA) covering 251 cities.

The city also showed sustained exposure, appearing 27 times among the top 10 most polluted cities during March, the highest frequency recorded. In Gurgaon, the air quality remained consistently poor through the month. Of 31 monitored days, Gurgaon recorded 13 days in the 'poor' category (91-120 µg/m³) and 12 days in the 'very poor' category (121-250 µg/m³) when levels of PM 2.5 were taken into consideration. Only one day was 'satisfactory', and none met the 'good' standard. Haryana also recorded the highest number of cities exceeding National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS), with nine out of 24 cities breaching limits, followed by Uttar Pradesh. At the national level, 220 of 251 cities with over 80% data availability from continuous ambient air quality monitoring stations (CAAQMS) reported PM2.5 levels within India's daily standard. However, only three cities met the stricter WHO guideline, highlighting the gap between national standards and global health benchmarks. Among NCAP cities, seven of 96 cities exceeded India's daily PM2.5 standard, while 94 breached WHO limits. Among 155 non-NCAP cities, 154 exceeded WHO limits and 25 crossed national standards. The CREA analysis also assessed progress under the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) for FY 2025-26, based on PM10 reductions against the 2017-18 baseline using cities with over 80% valid data. It found that 89 of 96 NCAP cities continue to exceed annual NAAQS limits. While 79 cities showed improvement, PM10 levels increased in 14 cities and remained unchanged in three.

New LPG applications jump as black market collapses in Gurgaon

Noida.(Agency)

The city is seeing a sudden rush for LPG connections as the collapse of the informal cylinder market has pushed thousands of households towards authorised supply. Many residents who had managed for years without formal connections are now scrambling for regular access to cooking gas after the West Asia conflict disrupted unofficial channels and tightened supplies. Officials said around 5,800 requests for new LPG connections are pending across Indian Oil, Hindustan Petroleum and Bharat Petroleum agencies in the district. Distributors said around 500 applications are being received every day, but clarified that the figure may include the same person applying to multiple companies at once. The surge has also intensified because oil companies have kept new connections on hold since March 15, creating a growing backlog. Roshan Kumar, a Sector 50 resident, said he never felt the need for a formal connection earlier because cylinders were easily available in the black market. Living in rented accommodation and shifting



frequently also made address updates cumbersome, he pointed out. But after supplies tightened, he applied for a connection. More than 10 days later, he is still waiting for a response.

Bharat Singh Yadav, president of All India LPG Distributors Federation in Haryana, said agencies have been receiving far more requests than they can actually process. "People often call in frustration when connections are not issued after they apply. But distributors have little room to help because the process itself is on hold," he added. The rush, Yadav said, is no longer limited to migrant workers. "Many working professionals who had avoided

formal connections are now applying to secure uninterrupted supply," he added.

Taran, who is also the district nodal officer for LPG at Indian Oil, said agency staff are facing frequent complaints and arguments before applicants are told that fresh connections are currently suspended. As a temporary option, applicants are being offered 5kg cylinders. Some accept them for immediate use, while others prefer to wait for a standard 14kg cylinder through a proper connection. Taran also clarified that the pending numbers do not fully reflect the actual demand because many applicants are approaching IOCL, HP and BP at the same time. Before the current disruption, the city used to see around 3,000 new LPG connections a month. The district administration has stepped in to promote 5kg cylinders as a stop-gap measure. After a review meeting on LPG and PNG supply chaired by deputy commissioner Ajay Kumar following a video conference led by chief secretary Anurag Rastogi, officials said these smaller cylinders can be obtained quickly without a connection. "All you need is an ID proof," an official said.

After HC stay on S+4, town planning asks HSVP how infra funds were used

Gurgaon.(Agency)

While Haryana has put all approvals for still-plus-four (S+4) residential construction on hold following an interim stay by Punjab and Haryana high court, the department of town and country planning (DTCP) has sought a utilisation report from HSVP on Rs 689 crore it had transferred to the development agency for infrastructure upgrades.

The amount, deposited under the account of PDR (proportionate development charges), was intended to fund urban infrastructure upgrades linked to increased density. Pressure on infrastructure is one of the major concerns of the S+4 policy that petitioners have voiced in high court. "We have sought detailed information from HSVP on expenditure of development charges collected for infrastructure augmentation. This will help assess the current status and plan future actions," a senior DTCP official said. DTCP's April 3 directive covers residential plotted projects in Haryana, including densely populated areas such as Gurgaon, where the policy had led to a sharp rise in construction activities. The letter was issued by town and country planning director Chander Shekhar Khare to HSVP chief

administrator, director general (housing for all), urban local bodies director, and HSIIDC managing director.

HC had restrained Haryana govt from moving ahead with the S+4 floor policy and stayed the operation of its July 24, 2024 notification. "The department has issued clear instructions to all authorities concerned to put approvals related to still-plus-four floors on hold with immediate effect. The court has raised important issues on the capacity of existing urban infrastructure to support increased density. These aspects will be examined in detail, and necessary steps will be taken based on further directions," the official said. The department also stated that no layouts, zoning plans or service plans should be approved if they involve enhanced density linked to S+4 floors. It further ordered that online platforms, including the S+4 portal and HOBPAS (Haryana Online Building Plan Approval System), must stop accepting applications for such permissions with immediate effect. HC observed that any increase in number of floors without matching upgrades in civic services could

place an "additional burden" on already strained urban systems, including sewage networks, drainage, traffic movement and other essential services. DTCP's April 3 communication reflected similar concerns, saying cities such as Gurgaon are already facing infrastructure stress



because of rising population density and warned that unchecked vertical expansion could lead to waterlogging in low-lying areas, traffic congestion, and added pressure on sewage treatment facilities. The department also stated HSVP is yet to submit a status report on how the funds

were used, despite earlier correspondence. When contacted by TOI, HSVP officials said a detailed response, covering formulation of SOPs and utilisation of funds would be submitted soon. Officials said lack of clarity over the use of these funds has deepened concerns

about whether sufficient infrastructure upgrades were carried out to support the S+4 policy. The department had earlier sought standard operating procedures (SOPs) and detailed infrastructure augmentation plans, but these are still pending. Urban planners said the high court's intervention could have major implications for real estate activity in Gurgaon and other fast-urbanising cities. The S+4 policy had allowed additional independent floors on plotted land, resulting in a surge in builder floors and a rise in housing supply. For now, all such activities remain uncertain. Authorities have been told to strictly follow the court's directions till further orders, effectively freezing new permissions under the policy and placing ongoing approvals under scrutiny.

All HC Bar Association raises issue of book pricing by private schools in UP

Prayagraj. (Agency)

The Allahabad High Court Bar Association has taken a strong stance against the arbitrary pricing of books in private schools of Uttar Pradesh.

The Association has written to Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath raising the issue of arbitrary book prices and unnecessary changes made to textbooks every year by private schools in the state.

The letter was sent by Allahabad High Court Bar Association president Rakesh Pandey and general secretary Akhilesh Kumar Sharma on Tuesday demanding CM Yogi Adityanath's immediate intervention.

The letter states that most private schools in the state are placing an unnecessary financial burden on parents as school managements are arbitrarily increasing book prices and forcing parents to purchase books only from designated stores. This eliminates competition and results in higher prices for parents.

The Bar Association also noted that many schools release new editions of textbooks every year, despite no significant changes to the curriculum. New books are made mandatory with minor changes to a few chapters, forcing parents to purchase new books every year. The Association called this unfair to parents and stated that most families cannot afford additional expenses.

Allahabad HC stays arrest of Banda Jail officials in scrap mafia case

Prayagraj. (Agency)

The Allahabad High Court has granted interim relief to the suspended Jail Superintendent of Banda Jail Anil Kumar Gautam and Jailer Vikram Singh Yadav in connection with the case involving the release of Noida scrap mafia Ravi Kana, alias Ravi Nagar, from jail.

The High Court has stayed the arrest of both officials. The order was passed by a division bench comprising Justice Rajiv Mishra and Justice Satya Vir Singh on Tuesday.

The court granted an interim stay on the arrest of the petitioners, Jail Superintendent Anil Kumar Gautam and Jailer Vikram Singh Yadav, until further orders.

The court also directed all respondents, including the government, to file their replies within six weeks. The petitioners have been given two weeks thereafter to file a rejoinder affidavit. The next hearing in the case is scheduled for May 27.

On January 29, 2026, scrap mafia and gangster Ravi Kana was released from jail without a court order. On February 2, Jail Chowki Incharge Anurag Pandey lodged an FIR at Kotwali Nagar Police Station against Banda Jail Superintendent Anil Kumar Gautam, Jailer Vikram Singh Yadav, and other concerned officers and staff of Banda Jail.

Thunderstorms and rain in UP: Alert issued in several districts

Lucknow. (Agency)

Strong winds, thunderstorms and light rain lowered the temperature in many parts of Uttar Pradesh, including the state capital Lucknow, in the past 24 hours, damaging standing crops at several places.

The Meteorological Department said rain and thunderstorms will continue at many locations in western and eastern UP over the next two days. After a scorching day on Tuesday afternoon, the weather suddenly turned pleasant in the evening, bringing relief. By evening, the capital became overcast, and light rain began accompanied by strong winds. Similar conditions were observed in other districts of the state.

According to the IMD, light rain was recorded in several districts from western to eastern Uttar Pradesh.

The IMD said, the weather was affected from Saharanpur to Sonbhadra and Agra. Light rainfall of up to 5 mm was observed in several districts. A yellow alert has been issued for Lucknow, Rae Bareilly, Unnao, Pratapgarh, Prayagraj, Mirzapur, Sonbhadra, Chandauli, Varanasi, Jaunpur, Azamgarh, Ambedkar Nagar, Sant Kabir Nagar, Lakhimpur Kheri, Pilibhit, Bareilly, Rampur, Moradabad, Amroha, Bijnor, Badaun, Hardoi, and Shahjahanpur.

A yellow alert serves as a "be updated" warning for, mild, severe weather expected in the next 24-48 hours. It signals to remain cautious and stay informed.

A 40 kmph wind and light thunderstorms are expected on Wednesday. An orange alert (when severe weather is expected to cause significant disruption, danger to life, or major damage) has been issued for Bahraich, Barabanki, Sitapur, Basti, Gonda, Sultanpur, and Amethi. Moderate thunderstorms with strong winds of 41 to 61 kmph are expected in these areas.

On Tuesday, Lucknow recorded a maximum temperature of 34.5 degrees Celsius and a minimum of 20.4 degrees C. Kanpur recorded a maximum of 35 degrees and a minimum of 18 degrees, while Gorakhpur recorded temperatures above 36 degrees.

The maximum temperature in Varanasi and Prayagraj was recorded at 37 degrees.

Banda recorded the highest temperature of 38.6 degrees, while Bijnor recorded the lowest temperature of 15.5 degrees Celsius.

Punjab School of Eminence row: In Nawanshahr, parents charged Rs 5,000 for admission against Rs 876 norm

The issue came to light on Monday after Sanjiv Bhalla from Saroya village complained to Punjab Education Minister Harjot Singh Bains.

Chandigarh. (Agency)

A Punjab government-run 'School of Eminence'—promoted as part of the Aam Aadmi Party's (AAP) push for accessible, high-quality education—is facing serious allegations of violating fee norms by charging students far above the prescribed amount.

Parents of students at the School of Eminence in Nawanshahr, Shaheed Bhagat Singh Nagar district, have alleged that Rs 5,000 is being collected from those seeking admission to Class 11, despite the officially notified annual fee in government schools being around Rs 876. The sharp difference has sparked concern among families, many of whom claim they are compelled to pay out of fear of losing admission. Parents have further alleged that the fee is being collected at the time of admission without proper receipts.



The principal of the school, Sarabjeet Singh, did not respond to repeated attempts for a comment. The issue came to light on Monday after resident Sanjiv Bhalla from Saroya village formally raised the matter with authorities. In his complaint addressed

to Punjab Education Minister Harjot Singh Bains, as well as senior education officials, Bhalla detailed his personal experience. He stated that his daughter had successfully cleared the entrance process for admission into Class 11. However, when his family

members went to complete the admission formalities, they were allegedly asked to deposit Rs 5,000.

Bhalla alleged that upon learning about the officially prescribed fee, he objected and sought a receipt. Following this, most of the amount was reportedly returned, and the admission was initially cancelled. He further claimed that the school later reversed its decision and granted admission under certain concession categories, even though his daughter did not qualify for them. Bhalla said his complaint was aimed at highlighting a larger issue affecting multiple families, and sought action against the principal.

He also demanded a high-level inquiry into the school's functioning and accountability for those responsible, urging the government to ensure that such practices do not continue unchecked.

Woman among four held with 16.8 kg of heroin in Phagwara

Phagwara heroin seizure sees four arrested, including a woman, as Punjab Police bust a Pakistan-linked drug smuggling module and recover 16.8 kg contraband.

Chandigarh. (Agency)

Kapurthala police claim to have busted a Pakistan-backed narcotics smuggling module with the arrest of its four operatives, including a woman, and seized 16.8 kg of heroin from their possession.

Punjab Director General of Police (DGP) Gaurav Yadav said here on Tuesday the arrested persons have been identified as Balwinder Singh of Pandori Mohalla in Sultanpur Lodhi, Sumanpreet Kaur of Gohalwar in Amritsar, Harpal Singh and Jaskaranbir Singh, all residents of Dauke village in Amritsar. Police teams also impounded the Maruti Baleno car they were travelling in.

"Preliminary investigations have revealed that the drug trafficking was being orchestrated at the behest of Pakistan and Dubai-based

handlers. The consignment was brought from the Amritsar border area and was intended for delivery in Chandigarh," Yadav



coming days." Sharing operational details, Kapurthala Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Gaurav Toora said acting on secret information, a strategic trap was laid by Phagwara police teams.

"When the police intercepted the suspects' Baleno car, the accused attempted to run over the police party to escape. After a high-speed chase, the police had to fire rounds at the vehicle's tyres to bring it to a halt," said the SSP. A search of the vehicle led to the recovery of 16.8 kg of heroin, the SSP added.

An FIR has been registered under section 21C of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) at Sadar Phagwara police station, police said.

The DGP said, "Further investigation is underway to unearth the entire network. More arrests and recoveries are likely in the

NDPS Act and section 111 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) at Sadar Phagwara police station, police said.

'Up to 2.5%' clause sparks fresh row as arhtiyas seek restoration of full commission

Punjab commission agents (arhtiyas) demand the restoration of their full 2.5% commission. This ongoing standoff over capped fees threatens wheat procurement in mandis.

Jalandhar. (Agency)

Even as wheat has started arriving in some grain markets despite last week's inclement weather, a parallel crisis is brewing in mandis across Punjab.

Commission agents (arhtiyas) have intensified their demand for restoration of full 2.5 per cent commission — a rate they say was effectively diluted due to the insertion of the words "up to 2.5%" in the 2020 notification.

Arhtiyas argue that by introducing the word "up to", the notification had fundamentally altered the nature of their commission structure. Prior to 2020, the Punjab Agricultural Produce Markets Act provided for a fixed commission of 2.5% on procurement.

"However, following the January 15, 2020, amendment by the Punjab government on the behest of a senior officer in state procurement agency (Pungrain), an amendment was made where the words 'up to 2.5%' were added. Following this, a notification by the Centre was issued in April 2020, and the wording was changed

to 'up to 2.5%', giving authorities the discretion to pay any amount below the ceiling — something that has resulted in a fixed per quintal payment of around Rs 46 till last year," said Ravinder Singh Cheema, president of the Punjab Arhtiya



Association, adding that this year, Rs 4.75 has been increased, which comes to Rs 50.75. However, this is still less than 2% commission instead of a percentage-based commission, he said.

Arhtiyas say this shift has significantly impacted their earnings with rising inflation and increased operational costs.

"When MSP is revised every year and statutory levies like Market Development Fee (MDF) and Rural Development Fund (RDF) are still calculated as a percentage, why has our commission been capped and converted into a fixed amount?" asked Prem Goel, president of the Arhtiyas Association Punjab.

They said that the removal of the percentage-based system has created an imbalance, particularly as procurement volumes remain high and their role in facilitating government purchases of wheat and paddy continues to be critical. According to them, the earlier system ensured that their income remained proportionate to the scale of procurement, whereas the current fixed structure does not account for

inflation or rising costs. The issue has also taken a legal turn. Goel added that whenever they try to challenge the matter in court, the interpretation of the phrase "up to 2.5%" works against them, as it legally permits payment at lower rates. "This single phrase has weakened our case.

Punjab yet to pay salary to employees, minister blames technical issue, bank holidays

Chandigarh. (Agency)

The Punjab government employees were yet to get the salary for the month of March till Tuesday with Finance Minister Harpal Cheema blaming "technical issue" and bank holidays even as he added that some sections may get it as late as April 15 or after

"The salary for March is delayed every year. There are issues with the software. There were bank holiday for two days. It will be credited soon (but) some employees may get it after April 15. They understand. They never raise any objection because they know it is a technical issue," said Cheema. Punjab has a monthly salary bill of Rs 3,260 crore. Sukhchaint Singh Khaira, president of Punjab government

employees association confirmed that the salaries were not paid till the evening. "We have not been paid. We have been told that we will get it tomorrow," he said. Meanwhile, the government has raised a loan of Rs 1,500 crore to meet part of the capital expenditure under its ongoing plan and development schemes.

As per a Finance Department notification, dated April 2 and published in the Punjab Government Gazette, the loan will be raised through a yield-based auction to be conducted by the Reserve Bank of India. The bids were submitted electronically Tuesday on the RBI's e-Kuber platform.

Up to 10 per cent of the notified amount has been reserved for non-competitive bidders, with a cap of one per cent per

single bid. The tenure of the stock will commence on April 8, 2026, and the loan



will be repaid at par on April 8, 2036. Interest, based on the cut-off yield determined at the auction, will be paid half-yearly on October 8 and April 8, said the notification. The notification added

that the Centre has already accorded its consent for the borrowing as required under Article 293(3) of the Constitution. Payment by successful bidders is scheduled for April 8 before the close of banking hours.

Cheema downplayed the borrowing. "We already made it clear in the Budget 2026-27 that we will be borrowing money. This was the first instalment of the loan. It is an issue if we hide it. When it is out in the open, then why is it being made an issue?"

Presenting the Budget in the Vidhan Sabha on March 9, Cheema had said that the government is estimated to borrow around Rs 39,970 crore in the 2026-27 fiscal.

When the West Asia crisis hits home and hard

As the West Asia conflict continues into its fifth week, Sri Lanka may feel it has avoided diplomatic wrangles and has not become a target of hostility from warring nations. Colombo has strived to maintain neutrality and avoid being coerced into taking sides. But the challenges are far from over. The island, an unlikely participant in the US-Israeli-Iran war, grabbed headlines when the US Navy torpedoed IRIS Dena, an Iran-flagged vessel in the Indian Ocean, close to Sri Lanka. During the Raisina Dialogue 2026 last month, Sri Lankan foreign minister Vijitha Herath was repeatedly questioned about the repatriation of Iranian sailors, but he kept his answers simple: Colombo's response to the distressed Iranian vessels IRIS Dena and IRIS Bushehr was guided by the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and the principles of international humanitarian law. He sidestepped attempts to extract further explanations. Proof of Colombo's stance was also in the refusal to permit two American warplanes to land. Around the same time when Iranian vessels requested permission for three naval vessels to dock in Sri Lanka, a US request to deploy two warplanes equipped with anti-ship missiles to land at the Mattala Rajapaksa International Airport was refused to maintain neutrality, President Anura Kumara Dissanayake told parliament recently. Colombo has been lauded for navigating such choppy diplomatic waters with aplomb. Maintaining neutrality is difficult, whether a party to the conflict or not. Colombo understands it should prioritise neighbouring India and balance China, while also not provoking the US and Israel, two old allies. But Sri Lanka's real test may lie elsewhere, in how the island faces the full force of an energy crisis. The theatre of war is elsewhere; Colombo has no direct role but always has strong interests. The US is Sri Lanka's main trading partner, and Iran imports high volumes of Ceylon tea. Thus, for Sri Lanka, the impact of the West Asia conflict is very real and economic. The disrupted global supply chains, disrupted shipping activities and rising oil prices are already having an impact that will worsen, even if the war ends soon. The entire world may soon need to start over, and for Sri Lanka—which has been struggling to herald an economic comeback after the debilitating 2022 collapse—short-term fixes are unlikely to help turn things around. Colombo is heavily energy-dependent and to meet its annual demand of 14,150 GWh, a steady supply of coal and petroleum is required. Even as Colombo reassures the public of steady fuel and gas supplies, people are already feeling the weight of the war. Colombo received 38,000 MT of fuel from India last week and is locked in discussions with Russia, after sanctions on Moscow were temporarily lifted. Meanwhile, Colombo has taken urgent measures in response. Fuel is now rationed via a QR code system, and the country has a four-day workweek. People are now grappling with fuel quotas, electricity and gas price hikes, which are driving up food and transport costs and adding to the already prohibitive cost of living. The surge in prices and inflation will slow down tourism and impact remittances from the war-hit Gulf countries. Sri Lanka's Petroleum Distributors Association, meanwhile, will hold a silent protest on April 6 over unresolved issues affecting their operations. To cap it all, the government has also imposed water cuts as the nation prepares to herald the Sinhala-Hindu New Year in a few days. As Sri Lanka braces for water and power cuts with a distant war's impacts reaching home, the National People's Power administration is facing its first proper test of credibility following the country's energy minister, Kumara Jayakody, being indicted in the Colombo High Court over allegations of corruption dating back to his tenure as a senior public official.

Strategy's exit wound

From Chanakya to Clausewitz, strategy was never about endless conflict. It was about purpose, application & termination

In the military, we are trained for the start. We study the opening gambit, the kinetic surge, the breach and the suppression of the enemy's will. We understand escalation. But there is a quieter discipline that once defined strategy and is now fading. The art of the stop. Conflicts that ended well had a simple anatomy. Not total annihilation, but clarity of objective. Someone had the spine to decide the mission was over. Not because the enemy vanished, but because the job was done. Force applied. Threshold reached. Then came the hardest command. Stop. Go home. Today, that spine is missing. No one decides. Conflicts drift. A war without an end state is not a campaign. It is drift with casualties.

The Indian gold standard

We do not have to search for a benchmark. In 1971, India executed one of the most decisive campaigns in modern history. It was not just victory. It was the restraint that followed. We did not linger. We did not convert success into occupation. We knew what done looked like.

In the Maldives in 1988, we intervened, restored order and withdrew. No residue. No secondary agenda. Maximum impact, minimum footprint. Even in Sri Lanka, complex as it was, we exercised the discipline to disengage when returns diminished. India's restraint lay not only in what it did, but in what it chose not to strike. Infrastructure was not treated as a target. It carries the life of a society. To destroy it is to punish the very people in whose name wars are often justified.

That discipline preserved legitimacy.

Consider Operation Sindoor. Precision.

Bounded. Purposeful. Held. Done. Gone.

In each case, ends defined means. Today, means risk becoming ends in themselves.

Drift dressed as doctrine

We call it hybrid war. We call it grey zone. We call it calibrated ambiguity. From the field, it looks simpler. Drift, dressed as doctrine. In West Asia, objectives shift while operations continue. One day promises decisive victory. The next speaks of a longer campaign. Negotiations, pauses and escalation overlap until words lose meaning. In Europe, conflict has stretched into years. Objectives have accumulated layers of geopolitics until clarity dissolves. Fighting continues not because the end state is defined, but because no one will define it. The conflict sustains itself.

The tea stall reality

Strategy forgets who pays for drift. The strategist speaks of theatre. The citizen pays for duration.

The man at the tea stall does not read doctrine. He feels rising prices from broken supply chains that never stabilise because wars never settle. He sees families trapped in conflict zones with no exit. He lives with uncertainty that seeps into the national psyche.

When a war has a horizon, society mobilises and recovers.

legitimacy lies in discrimination.

If a slap is enough, why the cane? If the objective is correction, why punish the class for the fault of one.

Infrastructure is not a battlefield. It is society's bloodstream. Strike it, and you are no longer shaping the conflict. You are punishing the future.

Every use of force leaves a residue, not just on the target, but on the initiator. Excess shapes memory, perception and resistance. What is gained in immediacy is often lost in legitimacy. A calibrated response corrects behaviour. An indiscriminate one scars generations. Those scars return.

Humanity as the global common

Covid-19, climate and conflict have revealed a simple truth. No crisis remains local.

A war in one region disturbs food, fuel, trade and trust across continents. Humanity is now the ultimate global common. It survives not on declarations, but on restraint in action. If it fractures, there is no rear area left.

Win the war before the war. And if that is not possible, design for termination.

The laws we never updated

War has never been lawless. It has always carried limits.

The Geneva Conventions established the baseline. Protect the wounded. Protect prisoners of war. Protect civilians. Distinguish between combatant and non-combatant.

The Additional Protocol-I recognised that war was changing. Civilians would no longer remain distant. Distinction and proportionality became central to legitimacy. Civilian objects shall not be attacked. Systems indispensable to survival

such as food, water and essential infrastructure are protected.

But the battlefield has moved faster than the law. Today, power grids collapse cities. Data networks carry economies. Supply chains sustain nations. These are not secondary systems. They are society itself.

And yet, they are increasingly treated as targets. We do not need new principles. We need the discipline to apply the existing ones to the wars we are actually fighting.

The minimum we owe

Across centuries, from Sun Tzu through Chanakya, Machiavelli and Clausewitz, strategy was never about endless conflict. It was about purpose, application and termination.



When it has none, the economy and spirit bend around it. If success is never defined, it is never achieved. Failure becomes the quiet default.

The paradox of capability

We have never had more tools to end conflict, yet we are worse at finishing them. Drones, cyber operations and precision strikes allow pressure below declared war. We can sustain a condition of neither peace nor war indefinitely. That is the trap. Capability has replaced decision. To stop requires accountability. It requires stating what was gained and what was lost. It demands ownership. It is easier to say the situation is evolving than to declare an outcome.

The measure of force

Force must be applied with clarity and purpose. But its

Accountability at stake: SC verdict links hierarchy with culpability

Having lost Delhi last year, AAP cannot afford to let infighting weaken its desperate bid to retain Punjab.

THE higher the authority, the greater the accountability — that's the message conveyed by the Supreme Court, which has restored the dismissal of a senior bank manager. This is a timely reaffirmation of a principle often invoked but erratically applied: those who are at the top of the pecking order have greater responsibility than their subordinates. The SC has rightly overturned the Delhi High Court's decision to dilute the punishment awarded to the erring officer. The case pertains to allegations of serious financial misconduct, primarily misappropriation of bank customers' money and tampering with records. While the high court relied on the principle of parity — arguing that co-delinquents received lighter punishment — the Supreme Court rejected a mechanical application of equality. The SC observed that equating a senior manager with a gunman (bank security guard) reflected "outrageous defiance of logic and reason." Indeed, institutional



roles and duties are not interchangeable. A bank manager operates within a framework of trust and supervision. When such an officer is found guilty of

wrongdoing, the organisation itself comes under scrutiny. Therefore, a harsher penalty is not only justified but necessary to preserve professional integrity.

The SC has also reiterated the limits of judicial review in disciplinary matters. It emphasised that courts are not appellate bodies tasked with re-evaluating penalties based on subjective notions of fairness. Intervention is warranted only when punishment is shockingly disproportionate or procedurally flawed. This restraint is vital for maintaining the autonomy of the authorities concerned, which are in the best position to assess irregularities at the workplace. The judgment also clarifies the doctrine of proportionality. Equality under the law does not imply identical outcomes in unequal circumstances. Differences in rank and responsibility are valid grounds for dissimilar consequences. Ignoring these factors and finding scapegoats can be perilous for institutional discipline.

50 years of the bitten Apple

Trump's manner of expression marks a departure from the diplomatic tradition, in which disagreement was sharp but rarely personalised in public.

Sleepy Joe." "Crooked Hillary." "Very dishonest and weak." "Stone cold loser." This is not campaign-trail excess. It is the working vocabulary of Donald Trump, a language that has travelled, largely unchanged, from domestic politics into the conduct of international affairs. Its latest target is the French President. In response to French reluctance to join US-led military action in the Strait of Hormuz, Trump did not reach first for strategy or alliance management. Instead, he reached for ridicule by suggesting that Macron was "still recovering" from a supposed "right hook to the jaw" from his wife. Macron's reply — that the remark was "not elegant, nor up to standard" — was measured, even restrained. But the exchange points to something larger than a passing slight. It reveals a shift in how power is communicated. The style did not begin in diplomacy. Long before the presidency, Trump had refined it in the glare of American television. In a running feud with comedian and talk show host Rosie O'Donnell, he dispensed with argument altogether, reaching instead for insult — calling her "a slob", "a pig", and "disgusting". The exchange was crude, theatrical and highly public. It was also, in retrospect, a prototype.

That pattern has not softened with time. Decades later, the same register surfaces in attacks on cultural figures such as Bruce Springsteen — dismissed as "very boring", "a dried up prune", and afflicted with "Trump Derangement Syndrome". The target changes; the language does not. What appeared then as celebrity provocation now reads as governing method. Opponents are reduced to caricature; disagreement is personalised; complexity is compressed into a phrase. Abroad, the same instinct is applied to allies. Justin Trudeau is dismissed as "very dishonest and weak." Angela Merkel's Germany is

described as "totally controlled by Russia." In Britain, even local leadership is not spared: Sadiq Khan — the capital's directly elected mayor — is labelled a "stone cold loser." Even alliance commitments are recast in diminishing, almost theatrical terms. Under the US-Japan alliance, Trump complained: "If we're attacked, Japan doesn't have to help us... they can watch it on a Sony television" — a remark that casts Japan less as an ally than as an audience, reducing a serious defence commitment to caricature. American presidents have embarrassed themselves before. When George HW Bush fell ill and vomited on Japanese Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa during a state dinner in 1992, the moment was mortifying, but unmistakably accidental — a human lapse rather than a political message. What is different now is intent. The awkwardness is no longer incidental; it is instrumental. The language is not incidental; it is the method. At its sharpest, it is the language of the gutter stripped of convention, indifferent to proportion and deployed not to persuade but to diminish. The deeper irony is that the sharpest language is not reserved for adversaries, but for allies. Vladimir Putin is a "strong leader"; Xi Jinping "very smart", even "a friend" when circumstances require. The tone softens where the stakes are highest. It hardens where the risks are lowest. Allies — bound by treaty, habit and dependence — are exposed to public correction precisely because they are unlikely to respond in kind. The pattern is not confined to France. In Britain, the same method has begun to intrude into operational matters. After Keir Starmer declined to align fully with US military action against Iran, Trump responded not with private pressure but with public derision, mimicking the Prime Minister as hesitant and overly



reliant on advisers, and dismissing Britain as "not our best" ally. The episode is instructive. The disagreement itself is unremarkable; such divergences have long existed within alliances. What is new is the manner of its expression. Consultation — the routine mechanism of modern government — is recast as weakness. Deliberation becomes something to be mocked. The language does not merely describe policy differences; it seeks to delegitimise the process by which those differences are reached. This inversion marks a departure from the post-war diplomatic tradition, in which disagreement was often sharp but rarely personalised in public. The purpose of that restraint was not politeness, but stability. Trump collapses that distinction. The performance becomes the policy.

In another register, the method resembles the logic of commercial cinema — whether in Hollywood or Bollywood — where conflict is sharpened into character, opponents are reduced to types and the audience is invited to respond not with analysis but with

recognition. The cutting line replaces the considered argument; the punchline carries the scene. What was once entertainment grammar has migrated into statecraft. There is a tactical logic to this approach. Public bluntness signals strength to domestic audiences. It unsettles counterparts, forcing them to respond in real time. It turns negotiation into spectacle.

Yet there are costs. Alliances depend not only on shared interests, but also on habits of trust, discretion and predictability. When communication becomes volatile and personalised, those habits erode. Partners hedge. Coordination weakens. The appearance of unity — itself a form of power — becomes harder to sustain.

The current disagreement over the Strait of Hormuz illustrates the point. The US, having moved decisively, now seeks broader support. Europe hesitates, not privately but openly. "It is not our operation," Macron says. The contrast with other political cultures is instructive. In India, for instance, leaders may deploy sharp rhetoric in domestic contest, but such language rarely travels into the conduct of foreign policy. Abroad, the tone remains measured, formal and state-centred. The boundary between internal politics and external diplomacy, though often strained, is still largely observed. In Washington, that boundary has been deliberately erased.

In this sense, the diplomacy of insult produces its own mirror. If language is stripped of ceremony in Washington, it will not be restored elsewhere.

The result is a more exposed international order, in which relationships are tested in public rather than managed in private; where the line between politics and performance grows increasingly thin.

Tips to look flawless and acne-free in summer



Ensure facial hygiene to avoid acne and rashes in summer

Here are some tips that can help you look flawless and acne-free:

Watch your diet:

One should avoid food such as doughnuts, wheat bread, soda and baked potatoes. Removing sugary and starchy products from your diet will help you control acne and will keep you healthy in the long run.

Avoid stress:

Physical as well as emotional stress has been proven to trigger acne breakouts in some people.

Wrong cosmetics: Another common factor responsible for causing acne is the use of certain kinds of cosmetics and cleansing products. Avoid using greasy or harsh products or those whose ingredients you are allergic to. These products tend to clog your skin pores and irritate your skin, and result in acne breakouts.

Facial hygiene:

Wash your face with a gentle cleanser at regular intervals. Splashing fresh water on your facial skin rejuvenates it and the hydration prevents acne and pimples.

Include fruits and vegetables in your diet: These foods not only work wonders for your overall health, they are also vital sources of antioxidants, vitamins and other essential nutrients that erase the signs of acne and heal acne-ridden skin.

Hydration:

Make sure you drink lots of water throughout the day. Water flushes out toxins and other impurities from your system and keeps your skin cleansed and hydrated. Avoid a sedentary lifestyle: Try and remain physically active. Yoga and exercise improve your skin and boost metabolism.

Wear comfortable clothing: Sport loose clothes that do not irritate your skin. Prevent acne breakouts by avoiding the heat, friction and constant pressure caused by restrictive headgear or other forms of athletic gear. Switch to cotton clothing instead of wearing synthetic.

Clean up after exercise:

Make sure you shower after exercising to get the sweat and grime off as soon as possible. When you sweat after a serious workout, there is an accumulation of dead cells on the surface of your skin. It is essential to remove these immediately to avoid blockages which can then lead to acne breakouts.

Five benefits of having Oily skin



So, you thought it was downright bad to have an oily skin? Well, it's time to think again. The occasional breakouts should not demoralise. Because, here are a five benefits of having an oily skin.



Much slower rate of aging: People with dry skin show the signs of aging much faster than the ones with oily skin. Wrinkles and fine lines get camouflaged by the oily skin. Your skin a natural glow, all the time: The shine on your oily face doesn't look bad all the time. While many buy expensive products to get that shiny T-zone, you have it for free. Isn't that awesome? Your face has natural oils: And these oils keep your skin healthy and soft. Hence, you don't need expensive day or

night creams to protect your skin and make it smooth. Your skin will always be moisturised, season no bar: Your skins natural oils will take care of it. Not only that, your skin is also resilient to the harshness of various environmental conditions.

Low maintenance: Yes, you don't need those heavy foundations that wear out in the middle of the day. A simple dash of face powder and you are ready to go.

Tips on packing Jewellery for your travels

If you are an accessory lover, chances are that while packing for a vacations, you end up carrying a fair bit of weight, thanks to your jewellery bag.



But with a few tricks, you can easily reduce your load. Just carry versatile pieces that you can mix and match.

We give you a few tips on how you can maximise the use of a few chosen pieces and travel light.

Pick versatile and convertible pieces: These make packing convenient because they do the work of more than one piece. For instance, a necklace can easily double up as a stylish bracelet.

Pearl earrings: They won't get in your way while you're navigating through airports. Besides, they add sophistication to the overall look of the outfit.

Your favourite everyday piece: Be it a ring, a bracelet or delicate chain, there are a few pieces that can add to any look.

A dash of colour: Pick jewellery with pop colours because they have the ability to instantly make a simple black dress chic.

Sparkle and shine: Add a little sparkle to an outfit by wearing a pair of hoop earrings. It's easier than packing another dress.

Makeup on acne?

This could be tricky if you are not aware of the dermatological effects

When you are suffering from acne you need to be careful of what you wear on your skin because the wrong cream or powder can aggravate your condition. However, the right product can, not just camouflage your acne marks but also lend an elusive iridescence to your skin.

Dr Sama Rais, consultant dermatologist and cosmetologist says that if one is suffering from mild acne one must preferably apply light makeup like a daily-wear foundation and a concealer which is non-comedogenic. She adds, "When you have acne you should avoid clogging of pores and so, must not use heavy makeup that cakes up on your face." However, she cautions, "In the initial phase, while undergoing treatments, it is best to avoid makeup till the eruptions settle a bit."

In the later course of the treatment when you have only acne marks left on your skin, experts say, that it is completely okay to wear light makeup.

Covering marks with makeup could also boost one's confidence.

Dr Poonam Wadhvani, cosmetic dermatologist says, "For acne prone skin always apply makeup, which is paraben-free or oil-free or lanolin-free and non-comedogenic."

Choosing the right product is essential, emphasises Dr Wadhvani. She adds, "If one has oily skin, one should never use a creamy, hydrating moisturiser. Rather, one should use a primer, a good foundation and then dust powder on top of it."

Dermatologist Dr Geeta Oberoi calls attention to using minimal makeup on skin that has acne. She states, "Use light makeup to just conceal the marks during the day. But you need to make sure to keep your face makeup free at night or when at home, to avoid clogging of pores." Dr Oberoi also cautions, "Do not use oil as a makeup remover if you have acne. Opt for a double cleansing with a cleanser to remove makeup followed by a medicated face wash."



Let your hair shine in summer

Here are some easy tips to prepare your hair for the season.

- Cleansing

We often end up with various hair problems during the summer - things like hairfall and dandruff are common occurrences due to the build up of dirt and pollution on our scalp.

A dirty scalp tends to get really oily and will make our hair feel heavy and unflattering. Therefore, it is important to wash our hair more often in the summer.

Use the Hair Spa Rejuvenation shampoo two to three times a week. The product is infused with hydrating marine minerals complex and essential

nutrients that deeply nourish and cleanse the scalp.

- Massage and Condition

It always helps to massage your scalp during the summer as it increases the blood flow, leaves your hair beautifully nourished and will also make you feel rejuvenated.

Once you wash your hair, apply a generous amount of the Hair Spa Rejuvenation massage it with a conditioner to wet hair. The conditioner is especially designed to massage the scalp and moisturize the hair.

This prevents it from tangling, making it softer and smoother.

- Protect

We all worry about UV protection for our skin, but what about the hair? UVA and UVB rays can also cause damage to the cuticles leaving your hair dry, frizzy and dull.

It's time to get creative with that headgear. Experiment with hats and scarves that will not only make you look stylish, but will also double up and protect your hair from the harsh sun.

- Use hair-friendly tools and styles

Since your hair is already prone to so much damage in the summer because of all the heat and humidity, we should ensure that all other processes are smooth and hassle-free. If you choose to blow dry your hair, avoid heat and opt for the cool setting. It's there for a reason.

Avoid metal or rubber when buying hair accessories as they can easily entangle the hair causing breakage. Cotton or plastic hair bands will always be safer.

Opt for loose styles such as fishtail braids or a glamorous messy bun that are really summer-friendly and easily be created at home.

- Protect those tresses while swimming

There is no better feeling than taking a dip into cool water during the scorching summer heat.

The pool water is usually loaded with chlorine and other chemicals that can cause damage to the hair. While you may feel good, you will notice that your hair gets frizzy.

When you are in the pool, ensure that you cover up with a swimming cap.

After swim, care is also really important so ensure that you wash and condition your hair with moisturizing hair products.

Cleanse and condition your hair well, use the right tools and protect it from heat, humidity and pollution for a healthy shine on your mane.

- Stay healthy

It's not only about what you put on your hair that matters, but also what you put inside your body. Maintain a diet that is rich in Vitamins, Iron and Zinc that help in preventing your hair from becoming dull, thin and dry.

Indulge in different kinds of berries and fruits like kiwis, oranges and papaya, while also gorging on all things green. Spinach and other leafy vegetables are really high in Iron content and can do wonders for your hair.

Don't forget to include a wide variety of nuts in your diet as they act as superfoods for your hair. They are rich in Vitamin E which boosts blood circulation to the scalp and keeps the hair follicles healthy.



NEWS BOX

13 years, one question: Would a brother lie to save a sister who may have caused another sister's death?

BELAGAVI.(Agency)

On the evening of October 14, 2012, three siblings were in a car on the Western Express Highway when everything went wrong. By the end of that night, one sister was in the hospital with fatal injuries. Within days, the other was booked by the police for causing her death. It took thirteen years, and one question, to set her free.

The question was this: if Parul Khurana had been driving recklessly and caused the death of her elder sister Gunjan, why would their brother, who was also in the car that night, lie to protect her?

He wouldn't, the Borivali magistrate court ruled last month. And that finding, straightforward as it sounds, was enough to acquit Parul of charges of rash and negligent driving and causing death by negligence, charges she had carried for over a decade.

The police version was that Parul was at the wheel when the car hit an electric pole. Parul's version, backed by her brother's testimony, was different. It was Gunjan who was driving, and she lost control after a BEST bus rammed into them. There were no eyewitnesses. The case came down to who the court believed.

It believed the brother. "If at all, the accused was at fault and due to her negligence their sister had died, no man of ordinary prudence would have deposed falsely only to save one sister against another sister who had died in the accident," judicial magistrate A M Mujawar wrote in the order passed on March 27 and made available this week.

Mumbai restaurants are raising prices due to LPG shortage. Here's what's on your bill now — and what's coming

BENGALURU.(Agency)

The arithmetic of running a kitchen on scarce and expensive fuel is becoming harder to ignore across the city. The cost of the crisis, absorbed quietly for weeks, is beginning to appear on the bills.

Vijay Shetty, owner of Udipi Shri Krishna in Lower Parel and president of the Indian Hotel & Restaurant Association (AHAR), said that the majority of Mumbai's eateries have already increased prices by 10 to 20 per cent.

"Vegetables, edible oil, plastic containers for delivery, the induction stoves many had to purchase overnight — all have added up," he said, adding that majority of their members that include QSRs, vegetarian restaurants, permit rooms and fine diners, have increased the price.

The crisis began quietly. On March 5, a government circular asking oil marketing companies to ensure that LPG is supplied solely to domestic consumers triggered hoarding, black marketing, and a supply crunch.

Restaurants of all shapes and sizes, from fine dining establishments to small neighbourhood eateries, and bakeries that were compelled by court order to give up their wood-fired ovens last year — all found themselves suddenly without fuel. The cost of a cylinder in black market shot up to Rs 4,000 or above. Most chose to absorb the cost for as long as they could. That period is now ending.

In dead of night, tunnel boring machines on the move in Mumbai

Manipur.(Agency)

Since March 31, a convoy of multi-axle trailers has been inching forward on Mumbai's roads each night, accompanied by escort vehicles including a towing vehicle. The trailers, carrying multiple parts of two tunnel boring machines (TBMs), are on their way from the Jawaharlal Nehru Port (JNPT) to Vikhroli and Savali, a distance of about 62 kilometres and 51 kilometres, respectively.

The TBMs, weighing 6,000 tonnes in total, are for the 21-km underground tunnel stretch of the Mumbai-Ahmedabad High-Speed Rail Corridor — India's first bullet train project. Supplied by the German company, Herrenknecht, they arrived at the port, via Guangzhou in China, on March 23. Each TBM is estimated to cost about Rs 250 crore.

Led by a 144-horsepower Volvo truck, the convoy restricts its movement to between 11 pm and 5 am. The biggest trailer is loaded with a 300-tonne main drive, the critical and heaviest part of a TBM that powers the cutter head used to excavate tunnels. At least three more multi-axle trailers carry the other heavy components including the main shield.

In fact, a total of 219 trailers have been deployed to move the TBMs from JNPT to the two sites where they will be deployed — Vikhroli, a suburb of Mumbai, and Savali in Ghansoli area of Navi Mumbai.

UP Critical Corridor teams on crucial stretches saved 450 lives in first quarter: Police

Deployment of the specialised teams equipped with required gadgets and trained to handle road accidents was the brainchild of DGP Rajeev Krishna

Lucknow.(Agency)

Uttar Pradesh Police has succeeded in saving over 450 lives in road accidents across the state during the last three months with the help of Critical Corridor (CC) police teams equipped with required gadgets and deployed on accident prone stretches, police said.

According to police, deployment of the CC teams equipped with required gadgets and trained to handle road accidents was the brainchild of DGP Rajeev Krishna, who launched the Zero Fatality District (ZFD) scheme aimed at systematically curbing road accidents under the jurisdiction of critical police stations. The scheme was rolled out on January 1 this year in road stretches under 487 police stations identified as the most accident-prone across all seven Police Commissionerates and 68 districts of the state, officials said. A detailed SOP was issued by the DGP and accordingly 573 CC teams were formed in the identified areas.

These teams were provided with modern electronic enforcement devices such as speed laser guns, breath analyzers, decibel metres, etc and were assigned the responsibility of



identifying the most accident-prone routes within their jurisdictions and implementing long-term measures along with effective enforcement actions, police said.

"To curb fatalities in road accidents and reduce the number of the accidents have been one of my key priorities. This is being achieved

systematically applying the SOP through the trained police teams in the field and monitoring at the headquarters level. Saving lives in such road accidents and other accidents is our key motive, which also happens to be the instructions from the Chief Minister," DGP Krishna told.

According to the quarterly review of the scheme, compared to 2025, in 2026 there has been a 7.43% drop in accidents, 11.55% in fatalities, and 8.05% in the number of injured persons. In the state, there are a total of 88 units in 68 districts and seven commissionerates with 20 zones, police said.

Out of these 88 units, accidents have dropped in 51 units, while in five units there has been no increase, thus putting 56 units (63.6%) in the green zone. Similarly, in terms of fatalities, 60 units have recorded a decrease and 6 units have shown no increase, resulting in 66 units (75%) being in the green zone, police said.

AAP MLA Italia alleges police misbehaviour with his elderly mother

Earlier on the day, Utran police officials went to Italiya's residence and inquired with his mother about his whereabouts and informed her about the NBW issued against him by the Mehsana court, police officials said. Italiya was informed of this by his mother over a phone call.

Surat.(Agency)

AAP MLA from Visavadar Gopal Italiya on Tuesday alleged that police officials misbehaved with his elderly mother when they were at his residence in Surat's Mota Varachha to serve a non-bailable warrant issued against him.

Earlier on the day, Utran police officials went to Italiya's residence and inquired with his mother about his whereabouts and informed her about the NBW issued against him by the Mehsana court, police officials said. Italiya was informed of this by his mother over a phone call.

Condemning the incident and alleging cops misbehaving with her mother, Italiya later



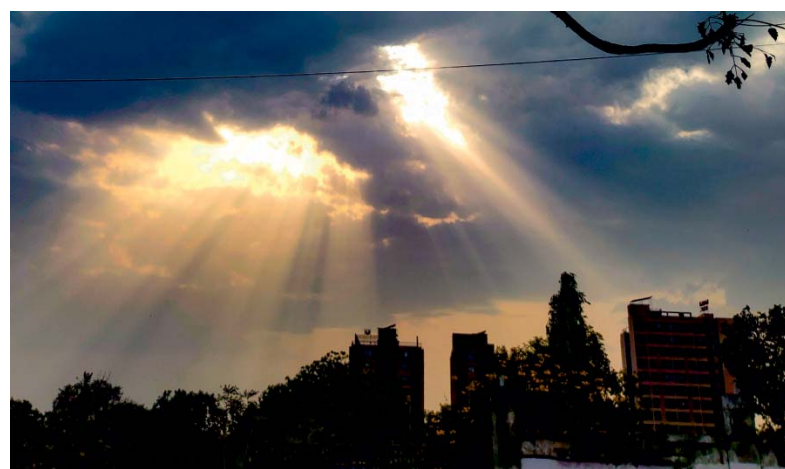
uploaded a video on social media and said, "...First, they spoke to my elderly mother, who

was well behaved, and later started misbehaving with her and used abusive language... Police officials know that I am in Visavadar. They should have come here..."

Refuting the allegation, Surat DCP (Zone 5) Lakhdirsinh Zala said, "The case [in question] was registered against Gopal Italiya in 2020 in Mehsana, and for that the Mehsana Court had issued a non-bailable warrant against him on March 27. The execution of the warrant was dated April 7... our staff reached his house on Tuesday and took photographs of his house after not finding Italia and

uploaded them on the court's website."

Gujarat: This weekend, state to feel the 'heat'; IMD issues yellow alert



Ahmedabad.(Agency)

While a brief spell of rain accompanied by high-speed winds brought relief to some parts of Gujarat on Tuesday evening, hot and humid conditions are likely to be back for the weekend. The India Meteorological Department

(IMD) has issued yellow warning for the state from April 11 to 13. "Discomfort due to hot and humid air is very likely to prevail over the coastal areas of Gujarat, Saurashtra and Kutch from April 11 to 13," the IMD stated on Tuesday.

Owing to the Western Disturbance and a cyclonic circulation over northeast Pakistan and adjoining Afghanistan, several parts of Gujarat received rainfall on Tuesday.

While Sethamba in Aravalli saw the highest of 30 mm rain, 37 talukas also experienced rainfall between 2 pm and 6 pm. It rained 26 mm in Mansa, Gandhinagar followed by 23 mm in Himmatnagar, Sabarkantha and 18 mm in Vijapur, Mehsana and Talod, Sabarkantha. Due to light spells and overcast skies throughout the day, maximum temperatures at most of the places in Gujarat were below normal temperature on Tuesday. Amreli recorded the highest of 36.7 degrees Celsius, which was 3.3 degrees lower than normal.

Ahmedabad recorded 36.6 degrees Celsius (3.9 degrees lower than normal temperature), Rajkot 36.5 degrees (2.5 degrees lower), Bhavnagar 35.1 degrees (2.5 degrees lower), and Gandhinagar 35.4 degree (2.7 degrees lower than normal).

Karnataka records 114 low-intensity earthquakes in five years, north districts see higher activity

MANGALURU.(Agency)

Karnataka has witnessed a dispersed but uneven pattern of low-intensity seismic activity over the past five years, with certain northern and northeastern districts emerging as relatively more active, according to data presented in the Lok Sabha by the Ministry of Earth Sciences recently.

The data shows that while the overall number of earthquakes in the state remains modest -- 114 events between 2021 and 2025 -- their distribution is not uniform. Districts such as Vijayapura, Bidar and Kalaburagi account for a higher share of recorded tremors, indicating localised clusters of microseismic activity.

Vijayapura stands out as the most seismically active district in the state during this period, recording 11 earthquakes in 2021, followed by 19 in 2022, six in 2023, two in 2024, and seven in 2025. Bidar also shows sustained activity, with three events each in 2021 and 2022, peaking at seven in 2023, and continuing with two and three events in subsequent years. Kalaburagi, which saw no activity in 2021, recorded a notable uptick with five earthquakes in 2023 and four in 2025.

Ballari registered a distinct spike in 2024 with seven earthquakes after relatively low activity in preceding years. In contrast, southern and coastal districts such as Mysuru, Dakshina Kannada and Kolar reported only isolated or negligible seismic events.

'Indefeasible right to be a part of election process': Gujarat HC rules in favour of man whose name 'deleted' during SIR

Vadodara.(Agency)

The Gujarat High Court on Tuesday directed the State Election Commission to include the name of an Ahmedabad-based petitioner, whose name was deleted during the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) undertaken across the country, into the electoral list scheduled to be published on April 10, a day ahead of the last date of filing of nominations for the upcoming April 26 civic body polls.

The HC quashed and set aside an April 4 order of the Election Officer refusing to include the name of the petitioner in the upcoming rolls.

A Division Bench of Justice NSS Gowda and Justice J L Odedra of the Gujarat High Court was hearing a petition by Ahmedabad-resident JB Patel, through his advocate KH Mistry, challenging the April 4, 2026, endorsement of the Electoral Officer, who refused to include his name in the electoral roll, following the deletion during the SIR activity conducted earlier this year. The petitioner submitted that the authorities cited the 'rules' of the Bombay Provincial Municipal Corporation

(Registration of Electoral Votes) Rules, 1994, to "refuse to incorporate his name in the upcoming list" of April 10, although his request to be included in the Assembly constituency electoral roll had been accepted on March 3. The State

government, State Election Commission, Additional Voter Registration Officer and Deputy Municipal Commissioner (North Zone) are respondents in the case.

Patel's advocate Chitrajeet Upadhyay submitted that his name was included in the electoral roll updated in December 2021 for the Assembly polls held the following year.

The court order notes that since he had shifted his residence, his name came to be deleted during the course of the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of the electoral rolls of the Legislative Assembly conducted earlier this year. The petitioner submitted to the court that he had made an application to include his name in the

electoral roll on February 8.

The court order notes that on February 17, the Chief Electoral Officer published an electoral roll in which the name of the petitioner was not found. The petitioner



then filed an application on March 3, for the inclusion of his name in the electoral roll was accepted by the Electoral Registration Officer under the provisions of the Representation of People's Act, 1950. The petitioner's advocate submitted that though his application was accepted and the final electoral list is to be published

on April 10, the petitioner's name did not appear in the list of voters in the preliminary list of the electoral roll that was issued on March 23. This, the court order notes the submissions, was due to the fact that the petitioner's name was deleted

ahead of the February 17 list that was published by the Election Commission of India -- this list of February 17, as per the rules of the Act is the basis of the electoral roll that will be published on April 10.

Upadhyay submitted that Patel is aspiring to contest the upcoming polls for the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation as a candidate of a political party. Upadhyay submitted that as per the Rules of the Act, "as the name of the petitioner has been ordered to be included in the

Assembly Constituency prior to the period of 10 days of the filing of nominations for the upcoming polls", he had an "indefeasible right to be a part of the election process and he would have a right to be in the electoral roll and cast his vote and even to participate in the election."

Get lost vs shouting claims

Trinamool, EC meet sparks political storm in Bengal

A seven-minute meeting between TMC leaders and the Election Commission has sparked a political storm, with explosive claims, counter-allegations, and an impeachment push set to intensify the confrontation.

New Delhi.(Agency) A meeting between the Trinamool Congress and the Election Commission has snowballed into a political controversy, with the party claiming Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar told its delegation to "get lost" within minutes of the interaction beginning. TMC MP Derek O Brien said the meeting lasted only a few minutes. "Today, we went to the Chief Election Commissioner. He told us 'get lost' within 7 minutes of the meeting. The meeting started at 10:02 am and ended at 10:07 am," he said. Brien said the delegation questioned the Election Commission over transfer of officials and raised concerns about the conduct of free and fair

elections. "When we told him that you are transferring officials, and how you would want to conduct a free and fair election? And then he said, leave from here," he said.



He described the exchange as deeply concerning. "What I saw today is a shame," he added. According to the TMC, the meeting began with the delegation raising nine letters sent

by party chief Mamata Banerjee that had not received any response. They also flagged alleged interactions between Election Commission officials and BJP supporters in Nandigram. "The meeting started with us raising the issue of nine letters written by Mamata Banerjee. No response sent," Brien said earlier. He added that the delegation objected to the functioning of the commission, saying they did not want to hear from the CEC if other election commissioners were not allowed to speak. "We told CEC Gyanesh Kumar, we don't want to listen to you as you don't allow other two commissioners speak," he said.

'RELEASE VIDEO OR AUDIO', TMC CHALLENGES EC

The TMC has challenged the Election Commission to make public the proceedings of the meeting. "I challenge the Election Commissioner to release the video or audio of what happened today," Brien said. He also said one member of the delegation congratulated the CEC for being the only one in India to face removal notices in both Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha.

WAR OF WORDS ESCALATES

The confrontation escalated further as Derek O Brien accused the poll body of leaking selective accounts of the meeting and referred to narratives being circulated through informal channels. He also described the Chief Election Commissioner as a "criminal," intensifying the political attack.

ELECTION COMMISSION SOURCES REJECT ALLEGATIONS

Sources within the Election Commission denied the TMC's claims and offered a different account of the meeting. According to these sources, Derek O Brien raised his voice and asked the Chief Election Commissioner not to speak.

Greater Kailash hit-and-run: Law student arrested, told police he got 'distracted while driving'

New Delhi.(Agency) A 19-year-old law student has been arrested for allegedly mowing down a house help and fleeing in South Delhi's upscale Greater Kailash last month. Police officers said the youth, Ruhaan Chadha, claimed he was "talking to his woman friend" who was seated in the passenger seat and got distracted while driving. Police said the teen's mother, Niharika Chadha, has also been arrested for allegedly trying to hide evidence and harbouring her son. She claimed her husband passed away recently and that's why Ruhaan was 'depressed' and distracted, a senior police officer said. Mother and son were arrested on Tuesday. The incident took place on March 31. A 41-year-old house help was hit by a Maruti Ciaz while he was on his bike in GK's Block B, going back home after buying milk. The deceased was identified as Surendra Das, a resident of Greater Kailash I, who was working as a domestic help and cook in the area. Ruhaan, a first-year law student, and Niharika, who runs a boutique from her house, are both residents of GK, police officers said. Officers said the car was registered under the name of Niharika. The car was seized; it showed signs of some 'repair' work done on its front part to allegedly hide the impact of the accident, police officers said. "The youth went to his mother immediately after the incident and told her everything. She then allegedly tried to get the car fixed and harboured her son for a week despite knowing about the accident," DCP (South) Anant Mittal said.

IITian Varshney, linked to alleged Rs 20K crore GainBitcoin fraud, gets bail

New Delhi.(Agency) A Delhi court on Tuesday granted bail to IIT alumnus Ayush Varshney, co-founder and chief technical officer of Darwin Labs Pvt Ltd, in a case relating to an alleged Rs 20,000-crore cryptocurrency "fraud". "There is no iota of evidence...that the accused/applicant had induced any complainant/ victim and received any amount from them... [He] had joined five times the investigation being conducted by ED (Enforcement Directorate) in the connected case.... which shows that accused had no intention to abscond," Additional Chief Judicial Magistrate (ACJM) Mayank Goel of Rouse Avenue Court said in his order. The CBI, which is investigating allegations relating to the GainBitcoin crypto fraud, had arrested Varshney last month after he was apprehended by Immigration authorities at Mumbai airport. According to the CBI, Varshney's company was "instrumental in developing the entire technological infrastructure of the fraudulent scheme, including Bitcoin mining pool platform GBMiners.com, BitCoin Payment Gateway, Coin Bank BitCoin wallet and the Gain BitCoin investor facing website". In his plea for bail, Varshney argued that "If someone else misuses my software, the liability shouldn't fall on me" in the same way that a shopkeeper who sells a knife could not be held accountable for murder. The GainBitcoin Ponzi scheme was allegedly floated by a company called Variabletech Pte. Limited, wherein investors were induced to invest in a "fraudulent" cryptocurrency scheme on the promise of high returns. The funds collected by the investors were allegedly misappropriated. The online platform was allegedly launched in 2015 by one Amit Bhardwaj, a computer science engineering graduate from Maharashtra, and his associates. It promised investors 10% monthly return for 18 months on Bitcoin investments for the purpose of "cloud mining of bitcoins".

Security scare at Delhi Assembly: Angle of act of terrorist can't be ruled out, police tell court

"The angle of act of terrorist cannot be ruled out without proper investigation," he said. The court was also informed that Sarabjit had allegedly thrown his mobile phone in a river in Kurukshetra, which is yet to be recovered.

New Delhi.(Agency) Sarabjit Singh, the 37-year-old man who drove an SUV through a boom barrier at the Delhi Assembly complex on Monday, was remanded him in eight days of police custody by a court on Tuesday afternoon. During the hearing, the Delhi Police told the court that the "angle" of a terrorist act can't be ruled out. Special Public Prosecutor (SPP) Atul Kumar Srivastava told the court that Sarabjit had tried to run his car over one CRPF head constable, who was posted at Gate 2 in the Assembly. He also told the court that Singh sat inside the car of a VIP. "The angle of act of terrorist cannot be ruled out without proper investigation," he said. The court was also informed that Sarabjit had allegedly thrown his

mobile phone in a river in Kurukshetra, which is yet to be recovered. The Delhi Police sought Sarabjit's custody to "unearth the entire



conspiracy behind the incident" and to "explore any terror angle". They alleged that they needed to visit various places in Punjab and Uttar Pradesh to ascertain his movement. Maintaining

that they needed to know the "purpose" behind him entering the Assembly premises, the police said that alleged involvement of other persons in the incident also needed to be investigated. According to the police, Sarabjit's family has informed them that he was suffering from depression. Also, Singh had purchased the SUV used in the incident last month, they added. Judicial Magistrate First Class Kartik Taparia of Tis Hazari Court said, "Considering the fact that the allegations against the accused are very serious, and from the prima facie case as brought by investigating agency, it does not appear that the accused is mentally incapacitated to not understand the consequences of his actions."

Regularisation of unauthorised colonies in Delhi without guardrails: Why 'as-is, where-is' has its pitfalls

TOD is a strategy for urban development that aims to create the largest possible numbers of houses, shops, offices and recreational spaces near public transport facilities so the use of personal vehicles is minimised, commutes become shorter, and the cost of transport is reduced.

New Delhi.(Agency) The government has sought to ease processes in the capital's transit-oriented development (TOD) policy and regularisation of unauthorised colonies, but experts cautioned that certain changes, in particular the absence of provisions for local area planning, could lead to haphazard development. The definitions TOD is a strategy for urban development that aims to create the largest possible numbers of houses, shops, offices and recreational spaces near public transport facilities so the use of personal vehicles is minimised, commutes become shorter, and the cost of transport is reduced. This is done by allowing additional Floor Area Ratio (FAR) - the amount of construction allowed on a particular plot - to landowners near public transport hubs, so that more people can live and work close to public transport. Unauthorised colonies (UACs) are settlements that encroach on government or non-residential land, and typically suffer from haphazard growth, lack of public amenities and social infrastructure, unsafe structures, and unhygienic conditions. 'Regularisation' of UACs is the



process of giving legal approval to layout plans of unauthorised buildings or colonies. The concerns Under the 2021 TOD policy, an Influence Zone Plan (IZP) had to be submitted to DDA, outlining area improvement works such as road widening, upgraded public streets with multi-utility zones, signage, public conveniences, and street vending zones. The new policy does not mention an IZP or other integrated plan - a landowner with the minimum required land in the TOD area will automatically get a higher FAR. The new system is supposed to promote the ease of doing business. However, experts have said this might lead to haphazard development. "Just increasing FAR is not enough for a TOD; there must also be detailed planning to improve street network, walkability, and underground infrastructure. For this, Local Area Plans (LAP) must be prepared," Jignesh Mehta, urban expert at Ahmedabad's CEPT University and member of the Gujarat government's High Level Committee on planned urban development, told.

Gurgaon boy run over by school van: Driver arrested; school plans route changes

New Delhi.(Agency) The driver of a school van, which allegedly mowed down an eight-year-old boy in Gurgaon's Bhandosi on Monday morning, was arrested late Tuesday evening. "We arrested the driver, Rajesh, Tuesday night. The school was also named in the complaint, but the FIR was lodged against the driver as only his role [came to light in the incident]," Bhandosi Police Station House Officer Inspector Surender Kumar said. The FIR was filed against the driver for rash driving and causing death by negligence based on the father's complaint, officers said. Speaking with on Wednesday, Principal of M S Public School, Pooja Bishnoi, said the van was among four the school had been using on lease. She said they would be taking corrective steps. The child, Shivansh Tripathi, was a Class 1 student at Laburnum Public School. According to the complaint filed by his father, Santosh Kumar Tripathi, the incident occurred around 8 am when Shivansh was returning from a grocery shop in the Shyam Kunj area. In his complaint, the father alleged that a Maruti Suzuki Ecco car, which belonged to MS Public School, was being driven at a high speed and in a negligent manner. The driver was allegedly reversing the vehicle when it hit Shivansh. He sustained severe injuries to his head and body and bled heavily. He was declared dead at the hospital. Maruti Kunj Police Post incharge Sub-Inspector Parmod Kumar said police had reviewed CCTV footage of the area. "The driver was reversing towards the end of the road and could not spot the child... the child too didn't spot the van till it was close to him and it was too late to run away. The driver was heading back after dropping the students to school. He was at Medanta Hospital with the family," he said. Principal Bishnoi told The Indian Express, "We did not provide transport earlier but started it on the request of parents. The van in question had been rented by us five months ago, it belonged to the driver, Rajesh. We have not received any call from the police or parents [of the deceased] so far, but we will make sure such incidents do not happen again. We have been cooperating. In fact, after the incident, the driver informed the child's mother and me and we first took them to a nearby private hospital; it referred them to Medanta. We were with the parents till 10 pm..."

Delhi Traffic Alert: Massive Jam Near Ashram Flyover After Truck Accident-Ring Road Hit, Routes to Avoid

A major traffic jam has hit Delhi's Ring Road near Ashram Flyover after an accident involving an LGV and container trucks. Movement is affected in both directions between Sarai Kale Khan and AIIMS, with commuters advised to avoid the route and expect delays.

New Delhi.(Agency) New Delhi: Thousands of commuters in South and Southeast Delhi were left stranded for hours on Wednesday morning after a major road accident near the Ashram Flyover paralysed traffic on the Ring Road. The collision, involving a light goods vehicle (LGV) and two heavy container trucks, has resulted in a massive traffic snarl extending several kilometres in both directions. The accident occurred during the peak morning rush hour when an LGV reportedly lost control and collided with two container trucks. The impact left the vehicles destroyed across the carriageway, effectively choking one of the city's most critical flyovers. While emergency services reached the spot within minutes, the sheer size of



the container trucks has made the recovery operation difficult. Heavy-duty cranes have been deployed to clear the wreckage, but as of noon, traffic movement remains restricted to a single lane on the affected stretch.

Crude prices plunge over 13 per cent after US announces ceasefire in West Asia conflict

Mumbai.(Agency)

Crude oil prices in the international market dropped sharply following the announcement of a ceasefire by the United States in the ongoing West Asia conflict. Brent crude prices fell by more than 13%, trading at \$94.94 per barrel—down 13.62% or \$14.88—at 7:04 AM Indian Standard Time. Meanwhile, US WTI crude declined by 14.60%, or \$16.49, to \$96.46 per barrel. The conflict, now in its 35th day, had pushed crude prices to nearly double their pre-war levels.

Brent crude, which was trading between \$62 and \$65 per barrel before the conflict, surged to a high of \$119 per barrel and had been hovering above \$110 in recent weeks. US President Donald Trump, in a post on Truth Social, announced a two-week ceasefire in the conflict. He stated that he would suspend bombing and attacks on Iran for a limited period. "...I hold off the destructive force being sent tonight to Iran, and subject to the Islamic Republic of Iran agreeing to the COMPLETE, IMMEDIATE, and SAFE OPENING of the Strait of Hormuz, I agree to suspend the bombing and attack of Iran for a period of two weeks. This will be a double sided CEASEFIRE! The reason for doing so is that we have already met and exceeded all Military objectives, and are very far along with a definitive Agreement concerning Longterm PEACE with Iran, and PEACE in the Middle East..."

The conflict had severely disrupted cargo movement through the Strait of Hormuz, a vital chokepoint that accounts for nearly 20% of global oil and gas supplies. In addition to the blockade, Iran targeted several oil and gas facilities in the region, further exacerbating supply concerns. Production was also affected in some countries due to storage constraints, as exports were hindered by the disruption in the Strait. India, which depends on imports for nearly 90% of its crude oil needs, is particularly vulnerable to such disruptions. The country sources nearly 90% of its total LPG imports through routes passing via the Strait of Hormuz.

During the month-long crisis, India had to increase the prices of aviation turbine fuel (ATF), premium petrol and diesel, as well as domestic and commercial LPG, to absorb the impact of rising crude prices and supply disruptions of gas in the country. According to estimates, a sustained increase of \$1 per barrel in crude prices can raise India's annual import bill by approximately Rs 16,000 crore.

US-Iran war: From tourism to infra, these sectors in India can net huge benefits

Kolkata.(Agency)

The US-Iran war has triggered supply shocks across the world and also the Indian economy. From shrinkage of export markets to inflationary pressures, from dramatic decline in the value of the rupee to sectors directly dependent on natural gas supplies, the conflict has caused a lot of misery. Now analysts are saying the truce becoming durable and the possibility of the Strait of Hormuz reopening can translate into major gains for different sectors of the Indian economy. However, the extent of the relief will ultimately depend on the durability of the ceasefire and the level of the crude oil price. Let's have a look at which sectors can gain and how.

Energy prices

Primarily, the immediate benefit will be to those who are buying crude. The benchmark Brent crude prices plunged by 16% on Wednesday — from a level of about \$111 a barrel to under \$95 a barrel. All nations which are critically dependent on imported oil such as India — it imports close to 90% of the crude requirements — will immediately benefit. As on April 7, the average price of the crude oil that India buys stood at a staggering \$135.63 a barrel. This has not only stoked inflationary pressures in India but also has impacted the revenue stream of the government after it cut excise by Rs 10/litre to prevent any rise in the retail prices of petrol and diesel to prevent wider inflationary pressure on the economy.

LIC bonus shares: Board meeting on April 13 to discuss maiden issue 4 years after listing

New Delhi.(Agency)

The country's largest insurance company, PSU Life Insurance Corporation of India or LIC appears to be preparing to issue its first bonus share to reward investors. The attention of investors is now focused on the board meeting scheduled for April 13, where the proposal will be taken up for discussion. A regulatory filing has communicated that the LIC board will meet on April 13 to consider the issue of bonus shares. If approved, it will mark the first in its four-year journey in the stock market. But according to rules, the proposal has to be approved by shareholders. LIC also clarified that the trading window for its shares is currently closed and will remain closed until 48 hours after the announcement of its fourth quarter and full-year results for fiscal year 2026. Therefore, investors will have to wait a few days for any major decisions.

Financial situation of LIC

The insurance major posted robust results in the Dec or Q3FY26 quarter. Net profit jumped 17% to reach Rs 12,958 crore in the Q3 period against Rs 11,056 crore in the same period last year. Net premium income rose to Rs 1,25,613 crore, compared to Rs 1,06,891 crore a year earlier. Total income also went up to Rs 2,33,984 crore. All these indicate the company's operational strength. LIC stock performance

The LIC stock has been under a bit of pressure recently. On Tuesday, April 7, LIC shares closed at Rs 740.50, down 4.45 or 0.60%.

Adani moves US court seeking dismissal of SEC fraud case, says lawsuit lacks jurisdiction

In a pre-motion letter filed ahead of a planned April 30 motion seeking dismissal of the lawsuit, Adanis through their lawyers said the SEC's claims over a 2021 bond sale by the group's renewable energy arm, Adani Green Energy Ltd (AGEL) are legally flawed on multiple grounds.

New York.(Agency)

Billionaire Gautam Adani and his nephew Sagar Adani have asked a US court to dismiss a securities fraud lawsuit brought by the US Securities and Exchange Commission, arguing the case falls outside the US jurisdiction and fails to establish any wrongdoing. In a pre-motion letter filed ahead of a planned April 30 motion seeking dismissal of the lawsuit, Adanis through their lawyers

said the SEC's claims over a 2021 bond sale by the group's renewable energy arm, Adani Green Energy Ltd (AGEL) are legally flawed on multiple grounds. The SEC had sued the Adanis in November 2024, alleging they misled investors by failing to disclose an alleged bribery scheme tied to Indian state officials, framing the case under US securities laws. Adanis argued that the court lacks personal jurisdiction, saying neither had sufficient contacts with the US or direct involvement in the bond offering. The USD 750 million bond sale was conducted outside the United States under Rule 144A and Regulation S exemptions, with securities sold to non-US underwriters and only later resold in part to qualified institutional buyers, they said. Lawyers added the complaint does not allege that Gautam Adani approved the issuance,

attended key meetings, or directed any activity at US investors. The filing also contends the SEC's case is impermissibly extraterritorial, noting the



securities were not listed in the US, the issuer is Indian, and the alleged misconduct occurred entirely in India. Citing US Supreme Court precedent, the defendants said the SEC failed to show any "domestic

transaction", a requirement for applying US securities laws. They went on to state that SEC does not allege any investor losses, adding that the bonds matured and were fully repaid with interest in 2024.

They also disputed the underlying bribery allegations, saying there is no credible evidence supporting such claims.

The filing argues that statements cited by the SEC -- relating to ESG commitments, anti-corruption practices, and corporate reputation -- amount to non-actionable "puffery", or general corporate optimism that investors cannot reasonably rely on.

It further said the SEC failed to link either defendant to specific misleading statements or demonstrate intent to defraud. The defendants are seeking dismissal of the case in full and said they are prepared to appear for a pre-motion conference if required.

Gold up Rs 5,000, silver jumps Rs 14,000: Will the rally continue?

New Delhi.(Agency)

Gold and silver prices climbed sharply on Wednesday, surprising many investors. The sudden rise comes as global markets reacted to easing tensions between the US and Iran after a temporary ceasefire.

SHARP JUMP IN PRICES

By around 11:15 am, MCX gold was trading at Rs 1,54,300, up by over Rs 4,011, while silver surged nearly Rs 13,652, to Rs 2,45,000.

The rise in precious metals came even as stock markets moved higher and crude oil prices fell. This shows that investors are still cautious and continue to lean towards safe-haven assets like gold.

WHY ARE GOLD AND SILVER RISING?

Experts say gold is continuing to benefit from its safe-haven appeal. Even though tensions have cooled slightly, uncertainty has not disappeared. "Gold

prices have kept rising, with the current ceasefire news from Iran and the US also contributing positively to their rise. While this is meant to ease the tension at hand, it has only strengthened investors' inclination



towards holding investments that serve as havens in times of uncertainty," said Aksha Kamboj, Vice President, India Bullion & Jewellers Association (IBJA). She added that while the overall mood looks positive, some ups and

downs are still likely in the short term. Silver has also seen a strong rally, supported by both investor interest and industrial demand.

"The price of silver has seen a rise due to positive sentiments among investors in light of the Iran-US truce agreement, in addition to continuous demand from industries," Kamboj explained.

However, she cautioned that silver tends to be more volatile than gold, meaning prices can move sharply in either direction. WHAT LEVELS SHOULD INVESTORS WATCH?

According to Ponnudi R, CEO of Enrich Money, the ceasefire has improved global sentiment and reduced fears of a prolonged conflict. "The announcement of a temporary two-week ceasefire between the US and Iran has significantly improved global risk appetite, easing concerns around prolonged conflict and potential supply disruptions," he said.

Sensex surges nearly 3,000 points: 4 things investors should know

New Delhi.(Agency)

Domestic stock markets staged a sharp rebound in early trade on Wednesday, with benchmark indices surging after a sudden drop in crude oil prices flipped global sentiment overnight. As of 11:02 am, the BSE Sensex stood at 77,535.53, up 2,918.95 points or 3.91%, while the Nifty 50 was at 23,992.35, higher by 868.70 points or 3.76%. Investor wealth has swelled by nearly Rs 17 lakh crore so far in this session.

DECODING TODAY'S MARKET RALLY

The rally is being driven by a single, powerful trigger. A two-week ceasefire between the US and Iran has led to a sharp correction in crude oil prices, forcing markets to rapidly reprice risk.

"The two-week ceasefire between the US and Iran has dramatically altered the near-term market scenario. The crash in Brent crude following the ceasefire will again turn the market bullish," said Dr. V K Vijayakumar. The chain reaction is

clear. Crude prices fall, fuel costs drop, inflation risks ease, and pressure on interest rates reduces. That improves the macro outlook and pushes equities higher. For India, crude is a critical variable. As a major oil importer, lower crude prices ease inflation, support the rupee, and give the Reserve Bank of India more room to hold interest rates.

"This ceasefire, particularly the reopening of the Hormuz Strait, will embolden the bulls. The RBI, aided by the crash in crude, is likely to hold rates," Vijayakumar said, adding that a stronger rupee could even force foreign investors to turn buyers.

BROAD-BASED RALLY ACROSS SECTORS

The rally in the Nifty 50 remains broad-based, led by financials, capital goods and consumption stocks. Heavyweights such as HDFC Bank rose over 5% to Rs 811.70, while Larsen & Toubro gained nearly 7% to Rs 3,983.10. Among the top movers, InterGlobe Aviation

(IndiGo) surged around 9% to Rs 4,647.30, benefiting directly from the sharp fall in crude oil prices. Auto majors Maruti Suzuki and Mahindra & Mahindra gained over 6% each. Financial stocks also saw strong traction, with Axis Bank rising over 5% and ICICI Bank up nearly 5%, signalling a sharp rebound in rate-sensitive sectors. "Beaten-down financials have the potential to stage a recovery. Crude-related stocks like aviation, capital goods, paints and adhesives will be on a strong wicket," Vijayakumar said. On the flip side, IT stocks lagged the rally. Infosys was largely flat, while Wipro and Tech Mahindra traded lower.

WHY IS TODAY'S RALLY SO SHARP?

The speed of the move reflects how quickly market positioning has flipped. Until recently, investors were bracing for prolonged geopolitical tensions and elevated crude prices.

What is RBI's plan after rupee's recent fall vs US dollar? RBI Governor explains

RBI's focus will remain on managing sharp swings in the currency rather than controlling its direction, as global factors continue to drive movements in the rupee.

New Delhi.(Agency)

Reserve Bank of India Governor Sanjay Malhotra on Wednesday explained the central bank's approach to the rupee, saying it will not target any fixed level even after the currency's recent fall to around Rs 95 against the US dollar.

He said the RBI's focus will remain on managing sharp swings in the currency rather than controlling its direction, as global factors continue to drive movements in the rupee. His comments come after the rupee touched a record low of around Rs 95 against the US dollar and declined more than 4% during the March quarter, amid global uncertainty and rising oil prices.

POLICY REMAINS MARKET-DRIVEN The Governor made it clear that the RBI does not target any specific level for the rupee and will continue to allow market forces to decide its value. "Despite a stronger macroeconomic fundamental,

the Indian Rupee in the last financial year depreciated more than the average in the previous years," he said. He added, "Our exchange rate policy remains unchanged intervention in the foreign exchange market is aimed at smoothing excessive and disruptive volatility without targeting any specific level or band. The RBI has followed this approach for several years, stepping in only to reduce sharp movements rather than control the direction of the currency.

FOCUS ON CURBING VOLATILITY

The Governor said the central bank's role is to prevent extreme swings that could hurt the economy or financial markets. "This is consistent with our long-standing policy of exchange rates being market-

determined," he said. He added that the RBI aims to "contain excessive or disruptive volatility" so that currency movements do not go beyond what economic fundamentals justify.

GLOBAL FACTORS WEIGH ON RUPEE



The rupee's weakness has come at a time when global risks have increased due to the West Asia conflict.

Higher crude oil prices, strong demand for the US dollar as a safe asset, and volatility in global markets have all added pressure on emerging market currencies, including

the rupee. The RBI had earlier noted that safe-haven flows into the US dollar have led to depreciation pressure on currencies of major economies. LIQUIDITY AND FINANCIAL SYSTEM REMAIN STABLE

Despite currency pressures, the RBI said domestic financial conditions remain stable. System liquidity has been in surplus, averaging about Rs 2.3 lakh crore since the last policy meeting, according to the Governor. He added that the central bank will continue to manage liquidity actively to ensure that the banking system has enough funds to support economic activity.

Banks and non-banking financial companies also remain in good health, with strong capital levels and stable asset quality, the RBI said. The RBI's comments suggest that while the rupee has come under pressure, the central bank is not looking to defend any specific level.



1. Cucumber, Rose Water and Lemon Juice:

While lemon acts as natural bleach, cucumber and rose water acts as cooling agents. In a small bowl take a table spoon each of cucumber juice, lemon juice and rose water and mix in well. Apply the mix with cotton on tanned areas and

3. Oat Meal and Butter Milk:

While butter milk is an excellent source for soothing skin and healing

Homemade face packs for tan Removal

keep it for about 10 minutes. Then wash it off with cold water. Apply this pack every day after you get back home from the sun.

2. Gram flour and turmeric mix:

Mix two tablespoons of gram flour with a pinch of turmeric, a tablespoon of milk and a table spoon of crushed orange peel in a bowl with cold rose water. Apply the mix on clean face and let it dry for about 15-20 minutes. Once the pack dries, slowly remove the pack by scrubbing gently in clockwise and anti-clockwise direction; the exfoliation effect will help in removing the tan.

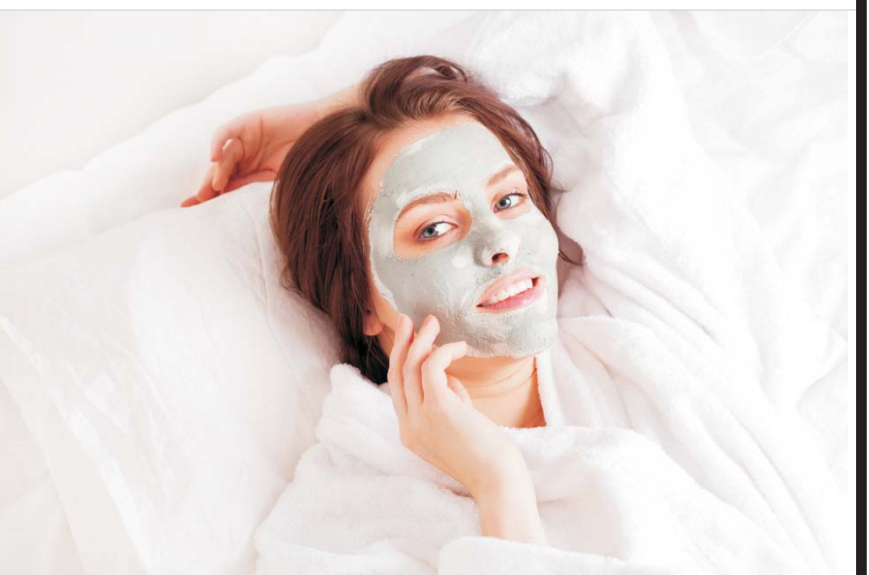
blisters and oatmeal is a great natural scrub. In a bowl mix two tablespoon of oatmeal with three-four tablespoons of butter milk and apply on tanned areas. Gently massage in circular motion; let it stay for 15-20 minutes and cleanse with water.

4. Milk and strawberry:

Not only is this combination a healthy one, it also helps in improving skin complexion and reduction of dark spots, freckles and even pigmentation. Take four-five crushed strawberries and mix it with two tablespoons of milk cream and apply it on face. Let it stay for about 20-30 minutes. Rinse it with fresh water.

Sure you have waited for long to go for that vacation and enjoy a little tanning session. But then when you come back home you realise that the little tan sessions went too ahead leaving you with tanned hands, face and practically the whole you. So here are certain home remedies which will help you to get rid of tanned skin.

How to make natural lavender mask



To make your own soothing mask at home, here's what you need.

A lavender face mask is a great way to reduce stress and feel relaxed when you are worked up. It always soothes you especially if you've been going through a troubled phase. However, getting hold of something from the market is pretty tedious, since you may not know whether it is available easily or not. Here's how you can make one at home and store it for a long duration of time.

What you need - 1/4 tsp organic honey
4 drops of essential lavender oil

1 tbsp yogurt
1/2 tsp olive oil (optional)

How to make it - Mix all the ingredients together in a bowl and keep it overnight in a refrigerator. Before applying the pack, wash your face well with normal tap water, pat it dry. Make sure that the pack is not too watery and not too thick. Apply it evenly on your face and neck. Keep it on for 20 minutes and wash it off with normal water. You can also take a few drops of lavender oil and massage it on your face and leave it overnight.

Age-proof your Hands

A good hand cream is important for softer and younger looking skin. Here's what to keep in mind when buying one



When it comes to skincare, one often indulges in products that take care of the facial skin and hair. However, your hands are also susceptible to ageing and to prevent the appearance of fine lines and wrinkles, invest in a good hand cream. Here are a few basic rules to follow.

Pick one according to your skin type

The first and foremost rule is to choose a hand cream that suits your skin type. This will ensure that your skin does not experience any sort of irritation. For example, if you have sensitive skin, investing in a cream that contains vitamin A is advised. Vitamin A ensures that your skin does not have an allergic reaction.

Look for moisturising properties

The second general rule of a hand cream is to check for its moisturising properties. A hand cream is generally used to keep your hands nourished for a long duration of time. No matter what season it is, the more moisturisation it offers, the better it is.

Opt for a product with SPF

Most hand creams these days contain sun protection factor. If you are looking for one that can be used during the day, this is your best bet. Not only will it keep your hands moisturised through the day, it will also protect them from the harmful UV rays of the sun.

One for the night

Apart from a day hand cream, one should also invest in one that can be used during the night. A hand cream for this time of the day should contain retinoid and Vitamin E, that will keep your hands soft and supple. Retinoid protects your hands from ageing and Vitamin E eases out fine lines and wrinkles.

Should have anti-inflammatory properties

Your sore hands can be treated with a hand cream that contains anti-inflammatory properties. Choose creams that do not contain parabens.

Choose one that does not contain fragrance

A hand cream should be selected on the basis of its benefits and not smell. The ones that have fragrance in it are not advised because they contain ingredients that may have damaging effects on your skin.



Here are office makeup looks for the season



Corporate lunch

A hint of peachy blush will add freshness to a dull afternoon. Outline your lips with a lip pencil in a corresponding shade and fill it in with a creamy matte lipstick in the same shade. You can choose from colours like light pink, peach, nude or even a lighter shade of brown. Thinly outline the eyes. Don't go too high on your eye makeup.

Dinner party

An office party or post-work drinks allow one to bring a little drama to your look. Do a winged cat-eye and keep the liner thick on the lower inner rims as well. Use a pink lip gloss to finish off.

Boardroom presentation

Highlight one of your features, either the lips or eyes. For instance, your lips bright and let your eyes have the bare minimum of colour. If red is too bright for you, pick lip

colours like plum or burgundy.

Do's and don'ts

- Stick to neutral colours for a corporate office environment
- Don't overdo the colours and compact
- Opt for blushers in colours like rose and apricot. For Indian women, indigo blue, browns and grey are great in eye shadows and liners.
- Don't wear yellow-tinged colours like coral and fuchsia, since they could make your teeth appear yellow
- Keep the foundation to a minimum
- For an alert look, don't forget the mascara and curl your lashes with an eyelash curler before stepping out
- Air-conditioned environments are dehydrating on the skin. So, always keep lip balm and hand lotion handy in your bag



CMYK



NEWS BOX

Bindaas Vaibhav Sooryavanshi forcing Yashasvi Jaiswal to level-up at Rajasthan Royals

New Delhi. (Agency)

Vaibhav Sooryavanshi's fearless shot-making is pushing Yashasvi Jaiswal to elevate his own game, the 24-year-old said after Rajasthan Royals' 27-run win over Mumbai Indians on April 7. The two left-handers, separated by nine years, tore into the MI bowling attack, guiding Rajasthan to 150 in a rain-curtained 11-over contest. In reply, Mumbai never found the required tempo, managing just 123 for 9. MI were jolted early when Sooryavanshi launched Jasprit Bumrah for a first-ball six, a shot that set the tone for the innings. The youngster, in only his second IPL season, smashed 39 off 14 balls before falling to Shardul Thakur in the fifth over.

Sooryavanshi's dismissal came in dramatic fashion. He crunched a full delivery through extra cover, only for Tilak Varma to time his leap perfectly at the boundary and complete a stunning catch. At the other end, Jaiswal matched the tempo, the duo putting together



an 80-run stand. While Sooryavanshi fell, Jaiswal carried on, finishing unbeaten on 77 off 32 balls in the shortened game.

Jaiswal mixed scoops and uppercuts with his traditional strokeplay, making life difficult for the Mumbai bowlers. The assault was so relentless that only MI captain Hardik Pandya conceded at under 10 runs per over. Speaking after the match, Jaiswal credited the young Sooryavanshi for forcing him to level up. "The way he has been playing, it's tremendous. He's working so hard as well, so I also get motivated - I feel like I need to develop some different shots too," Jaiswal told the broadcaster. "All the time we have these discussions, like how we can go about it. If he's taking on someone, I just keep giving him positive messages - that you can go after him, just play freely, khel bindaas (smiles)," he added.

JAISWAL-SOORYAVANSHI: THE PARTNERSHIP

The key to his relationship with Vaibhav Sooryavanshi, Jaiswal says, is the fact that there is no elder brother syndrome. Neither does he order around the 15-year-old, nor does he speak to him in a tone that he is older than the youngster.

Controversy Hits Bangladesh Cricket As Government Probe Makes Big Revelation

New Delhi. (Agency)

The Bangladesh government's investigation committee has uncovered evidence of vote-rigging, bias, and coercion in the October 2025 Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) elections. The five-member panel, led by former justice AKM Asaduzzaman, submitted its findings to the sports ministry on Sunday, as per ESPNcricinfo. The committee reported a lack of cooperation from BCB's top officials on multiple occasions. Former BCB president Aminul Islam said in a recent interview that he did not participate in a face-to-face meeting with the panel, opting instead to submit a written response. Despite this, the committee found that both BCB officials and individuals within the sports ministry were involved in



irregularities during the election process. Mohammed Aminul Ahasan, the NSC sports director, read out the government's report at a press conference on Tuesday afternoon. "The election process was not free, fair or transparent. Voters were intimidated, and procedural irregularities were rampant."

Ahasan stated that the government had sufficient grounds to dissolve the Aminul-led BCB board. Concluding his press briefing, he announced the 11 members of a new ad hoc committee that will oversee the BCB for the next three months. Tamim Iqbal, the former Bangladesh captain, who had accused Aminul of abusing his authority as BCB president just four weeks before last year's election, has been appointed as the new BCB president. On March 10, 2026, Mr Shariful Alam and other former councillors made a complaint about the district and division sports associations. The subject of the complaint was the deadline for submitting councillors' names from this category. The concerned authorities were sent letters on September 1 and 2 that the submission deadline would be September 17. The BCB extended this deadline to September 19 and then to September 22.

Havertz strikes late as Arsenal steal Champions League advantage against

Arsenal will be firm favourites to advance to the semi-finals in the second leg in north London on April 15, but they will have to improve significantly to win the tournament for the first time.

LISBON. (Agency)

Kai Havertz snatched a last-gasp winner as Arsenal bounced back from their domestic distress to steal a 1-0 victory at Sporting Lisbon in the Champions League quarter-final first leg on Tuesday. Mikel Arteta's side arrived at the Jose Alvalade Stadium rocked by successive defeats against Manchester City in the League Cup final and Southampton in the FA Cup quarter-finals.

Once again, the Gunners were below their best but they emerged with the win thanks to David Raya's fine saves and Havertz's clinical finish in stoppage-time.

Arsenal will be firm favourites to advance to the semi-finals in the second leg in north London on April 15, but they will have to improve significantly to win the tournament for the first time. Those agonising losses to City and second-tier Southampton marked the first time that Arsenal had been beaten in successive matches this term, with the embarrassing FA Cup defeat just the Gunners' fifth of the season. The after-shocks were still being felt as Arsenal struggled to find any momentum in Lisbon, but not for the first time this season they found a way to win ugly. "We had to be a little bit crisper, faster, more efficient to break them down when they had that block," Arteta said. We had a goal disallowed and there were two or three occasions where we were close but we lacked that final pass. In the end a magic moment from the finishers win us the game. "It's beautiful and that's the impact you need when you get to this stage of the season. Everybody has to make an impact and they certainly did that tonight." Praising the outstanding Raya, Arteta added: "He had two moments where he made two big

saves. "At the moment he's phenomenal and extraordinary since he joined us. We are very lucky to have him." Aiming to finally banish accusations that they are English football's nearly men by winning their first major trophy since the 2020 FA Cup, Arsenal have



faced pointed questions about their perceived lack of mental strength. Grinding out the win in Lisbon was a suitable riposte to the critics. Insisting his players were "hungrier than ever", Arteta had urged Arsenal to use the "pain" of their recent

defeats as motivation and they rose to the challenge. Sitting nine points clear of second-placed Manchester City, the Premier League leaders are also on course for their first title in 22 years. Playing in the last eight for the first time since 1983, Sporting's 17-game winning run at home made them dangerous opponents for Arsenal. Super subs

Injury-hit Arsenal were still without Jurrien Timber, Piero Hincapie, Eberechi Eze and Bukayo Saka, although Declan Rice returned after missing the Southampton game and England's recent friendlies.

Raya was also back in goal for Arsenal after missing the previous two games and the Spaniard quickly made his presence felt.

Ousmane Diomande's deft pass split the Arsenal defence, sending Maxi Araujo clear for a fierce strike that Raya tipped onto the crossbar at full-stretch. Raya was forced into action again to smother Geny Catamo's low drive from an acute angle inside the penalty area.

IPL 2026, DC vs GT: Gill back for struggling Gujarat as Delhi eye a fortress at Kotla

CHENNAI. (Agency)

Axar Patel sounded a warning to the rest of the teams. "Let's make Kotla our fortress," he said on the eve of Delhi Capitals' first IPL 2026 match at the Arun Jaitley Stadium. The Capitals duly delivered, easing past Mumbai Indians at home last week. Now, they face a struggling Gujarat Titans side, hoping to complete an early-season hat-trick of wins. After winning just one of five at Kotla last season, Delhi will aim to build on their strong start as they play all seven home games in the capital this year.

Standing in their way, however, is the looming threat of rain, as northern India continues to feel the effects of a Western Disturbance. The return of Shubman Gill from a neck muscle spasm strengthens the Titans, but Delhi - who appear a well-oiled machine - will start as favourites against a Gujarat side that looks formidable on paper but has been hampered by poor form among several of their key players. Delhi Capitals will take on Gujarat Titans from 7:30 pm IST on Wednesday, April 8. JioHotstar will stream the match live in India, while Star Sports will broadcast it on television. RINGSIDE

VIEW: DC vs GT

On the eve of the game in Delhi, early evening rain provided both teams with an opportunity to iron out their shortcomings. In the Gujarat Titans camp, the focus was firmly on their misfiring middle order.



Washington Sundar, entrusted with bringing solidity to that unit, underwent a 40-minute workout. Tested by Prasad Krishna, Rashid Khan and Sai Kishore, the young all-rounder gradually found his rhythm. After taking his time to settle, Sundar began striking the ball crisply, dispatching deliveries into the stands - something the Titans will hope he can replicate in Wednesday's match.

Then came Shubman Gill, their captain, who

missed the game against Rajasthan Royals in Ahmedabad - where their middle order collapsed after a strong start in a failed chase of 211.

Gill eased into the nets session, arriving minutes after his opening partner Sai Sudharsan confirmed that the skipper would be fit to play. Once he found his timing, Gill sent a few balls soaring into the stands. As is typical of India's ODI and Test captain, there was nothing extravagant - just precise timing and elegant strokeplay, putting the likes of Mohammed Siraj and Gurnoor Brar under pressure. Rahul Tewatia, who appears out of touch, also spent time in the nets, as Gujarat look increasingly desperate to stabilise their middle order.

On the other side of the main strip, KL Rahul was the focal point. Following routine, the wicketkeeper-batter walked out with Pathum Nissanka, but it was Rahul who dominated the session, clearly eager to make a significant contribution after two successive failures (0 and 1). While the Sri Lankan opener looked in sublime touch, Rahul appeared sharp, though occasionally troubled by the pace of Aujib Nabi.

When will Jammu & Kashmir pacer Aujib Nabi make his IPL debut?

BARCELONA. (Agency)

Jammu and Kashmir pacer Aujib Nabi is yet to feature for Delhi Capitals in his maiden Indian Premier League season. The Capitals, who bought Nabi for a hefty sum of Rs 8.40 crore after beating SunRisers Hyderabad in the IPL auction, are yet to find a place for the young pacer in their line-up. Nabi entered his maiden IPL stint on the back of an incredible domestic season. He was the standout performer in the Ranji Trophy, picking up 60 wickets. His match-winning spell in the final helped Jammu and Kashmir clinch their maiden Ranji title, beating a strong Karnataka side stacked with superstars. However, despite coming off a high, Nabi has not featured in the first two games for the Capitals this season. So what has gone wrong? Why has Aujib Nabi not played a game yet? Speaking ahead of the match against Gujarat Titans, set to be played on April 8, DC bowling coach Munaf Patel said that the team has simply not been able to fit the fast bowler into the playing XI so far.

Speaking to reporters at the Arun Jaitley Stadium,



Munaf showered praise on Nabi, calling him one of the best players in the squad.

Munaf revealed that DC are keen to give Nabi an opportunity in the IPL, especially given his outstanding work ethic. He pointed out that while most bowlers deliver five to six overs in the nets during the IPL, Nabi pushes himself to bowl 10 to 12 overs, often continuing until he is asked to stop. Even then, Nabi insists on bowling a little more.

"He is a very good kid. As fast bowlers, we are a little crazy, a little eccentric, but he is a very good kid. He has an incredible work ethic and he has never played in the IPL or been part of this ecosystem."

Australia Star Mocks Organisers Over PSL Scheduling: 'Might Go And Sleep Here'

New Delhi. (Agency)

Multan Sultans captain Ashton Turner has taken a jibe at the organisers over the scheduling of the ongoing Pakistan Super League (PSL). With four wins in five matches, the Turner-led Sultans currently sit top of the PSL 2026 points table. Multan Sultans defeated Quetta Gladiators on Sunday at the Gaddafi Stadium, just a day before easing past Rawalpindi Pindiz at the same venue. Speaking after the match against the Gladiators on Sunday, Turner criticised the PSL scheduling and noted how little room there is for recovery. "Might go and find somewhere to get a blanket and a pillow and sleep here - very short turnaround," Turner said during the post-match presentation. Despite the quick turnaround, Turner praised his team's efforts, adding that they were well-balanced



across all departments in their victory over Quetta Gladiators.

"Slightly different conditions than the last two games. We did well in all three facets, which

is satisfying. I was probably going to bowl the first over, but we expected two left-handers at the top. Fair play to them - they changed that," he added. Turner also reflected on his side's performance to date, noting that while the dressing room mood is excellent, he maintained that the Sultans are yet to peak or deliver a "perfect win." "We are having fun, a lot of smiles in our dressing room. Whilst we strive for a perfect game, we know there is a little bit we can improve. They were really tough wickets to bowl; first half done, important to take learnings forward. We have the luxury of bowling options and we want to have a wrist spinner in our ranks; conditions will dictate, might not bowl them as much... we know they are match-winners and they are going to be an important part going forward," said Turner.

Luis Diaz, Harry Kane give Bayern Champions League edge at Real Madrid

MADRID. (Agency)

Luis Diaz and Harry Kane scored the goals that gave dominant Bayern Munich a crucial 2-1 Champions League quarter-final first leg win away to Real Madrid on Tuesday. Kylian Mbappe's strike 16 minutes from time gave record 15-time winners Real a lifeline at their Bernabeu home in a gripping battle. Vincent Kompany's side, arguably the strongest team in Europe this season, produced a masterclass in the first half and could have been several goals ahead. Instead they had only one from Diaz, which Kane added to after the interval, but French superstar Mbappe's goal kept Alvaro Arbeloa's side in the tie. "It's a shame it wasn't 2-0 at the end to be completely honest," said Bayern goalkeeper Manuel Neuer, who made several good saves in the second half as Madrid ramped up the pressure. "You know how dangerous Real Madrid are, we saw that again today. They had plenty of chances and could've scored more. First up we're happy about the victory here away from home, but

it'll be a tough challenge back in Munich." Real Madrid defender Antonio Rudiger said that Mbappe's goal had kept the tie open. "For me, the two goals we conceded were gifts, and in the second half we needed more," Rudiger told Movistar. I think we're alive, everything is open with that goal from Mbappe. I think we had many chances to score goals, but in the end this is how it is."

The round's glamour fixture was a European classic -- a record 29th time these heavyweights have faced each other in the competition. Bayern flew out of the blocks and Konrad Laimer's rasping effort narrowly over the bar showed that Kompany's side had come to the Spanish capital to attack. After nine consecutive matches against Madrid without a win, Bayern were determined to put an end to that streak and show why many consider them favourites to lift the trophy this season. Bayern should have taken the lead through defender Dayot Upamecano, who fluffed his lines from point-blank range, after Kane cushioned the ball into his path,

allowing Alvaro Carreras to hack the ball off the line. Madrid were largely pinned back as Bayern dominated the ball, but the hosts sought to send through rapid strikers Mbappe



and Vinicius Junior on the counter, with Neuer saving from both. Madrid's defensive work was nearly undone by a moment of madness from 18-year-old midfielder Thiago Pitarch, starting in place of Jude Bellingham, whose poor back pass under pressure was straight to Serge Gnabry in front of goal, but goalkeeper Andriy Lunin deflected the

German's shot behind.

Slick Bayern

Bayern toyed at times with Real, who ceded possession far too often, and their opening goal was a slick combination play which caught the hosts on their heels. Gnabry exchanged a one-two with Kane and pushed the ball in behind Trent Alexander-Arnold for the Madrid defender's former Liverpool team-mate Diaz to reach and stroke home past Lunin in the 41st minute. Kane, who was a doubt to start because of an ankle problem, did not seem fully fit but made an even bigger impact less than a minute into the second half. Olise cut the ball back to him on the edge of the box and Kane fizzed a curling effort into the bottom corner to double Bayern's lead. It was his 11th Champions League strike this season, trailing only Mbappe on 14, and his 49th goal across all competitions. Vinicius had a fine chance to pull one back for Real when Upamecano badly underhit a header back to Neuer, but the Brazilian sliced.



'Told Dad I'm A Fan':

Kalyani Priyadarshan

Reacts As Mithila Palkar Credits Her For Bhooth Bangla Opportunity

Mithila Palkar is currently gearing up for the release of her upcoming film 'Bhooth Bangla', starring Akshay Kumar, Paresh Rawal, and others. The horror-comedy is directed by Priyadarshan, and the trailer of Bhooth Bangla was released yesterday. Now, Mithila has shared a post on Instagram thanking Priyadarshan for trusting her with the role. She also called his daughter and actress Kalyani Priyadarshan a 'girl's girl', mentioning that without her, the idea of being cast in the film wouldn't have been possible!

Mithila Palkar Expresses Gratitude To Kalyani Priyadarshan

On Tuesday, Mithila shared a video clip with Priyadarshan from the sets of Bhooth Bangla. She looks stunning in a yellow saree, in the clip. In her caption, she showered love on Kalyani Priyadarshan and wrote, "An opportunity I hadn't even



imagined for myself So grateful to @kalyanipriyadarshan, without whom this idea wouldn't have been seeded! A girl's girl."

Further thanking Priyadarshan, she added, "And Priyan Sir, THANK YOU for the trust! I cannot tell you how priceless being part of your film universe feels! Eternally grateful! And to our audiences—so much love on the trailer! Uff! Thank you! Can't wait for you guys to watch the film #BhoothBangla."

Kalyani Priyadarshan Reacts

Kalyani responded to Mithila's post, saying that all she did was tell her father, Priyadarshan, that she was a fan. "Listen! All I told my dad was that I'm a fan! I didn't do anything more. And I can't wait to see you in the film!", wrote Kalyani. Mithila replied, "@kalyanipriyadarshan and that did all the magic. So I'm grateful!"

About Bhooth Bangla

The trailer of Bhooth Bangla was unveiled on April 6. Alongside Akshay Kumar, the film features a strong ensemble cast including Paresh Rawal, Rajpal Yadav, Tabu, and Mithila Palkar, each bringing their signature comic timing and on-screen presence. It also features late actor Asrani in a posthumous appearance, making it one of his final screen performances. The film marks the much-awaited reunion of Akshay Kumar and Priyadarshan after a long gap of 14 years. While the film was earlier scheduled to release in theatres on 10th April, it will now arrive in theatres on April 16.

Shah Rukh Khan

To NOT Have A Cameo In Rajinikanth's Jailer 2 For This Reason: Find Out

The news of Shah Rukh Khan's cameo in Rajinikanth's Jailer 2 itself had fans on the edge of their seats, but now there is some sad update for moviegoers, as a recent report suggests that Shah Rukh Khan has politely declined the offer. The report states that SRK wants to focus entirely on King and hence doesn't want audiences to see him on the big screen before the action thriller.

As per Pinkvilla, a source shared, "The makers were keen to have Shah Rukh Khan onboard for a five-day cameo, and he was absolutely open to the idea. However, his current focus remains firmly on King, which holds immense importance for him, especially as it marks his daughter Suhana Khan's big-screen launch. In a respectful conversation with the team, SRK expressed his willingness to do the cameo while requesting that the release of Jailer 2 could be aligned post King, as he wanted his appearance to remain exclusive to that film. He has a certain look in King, and he doesn't want to have the same in any other film before."

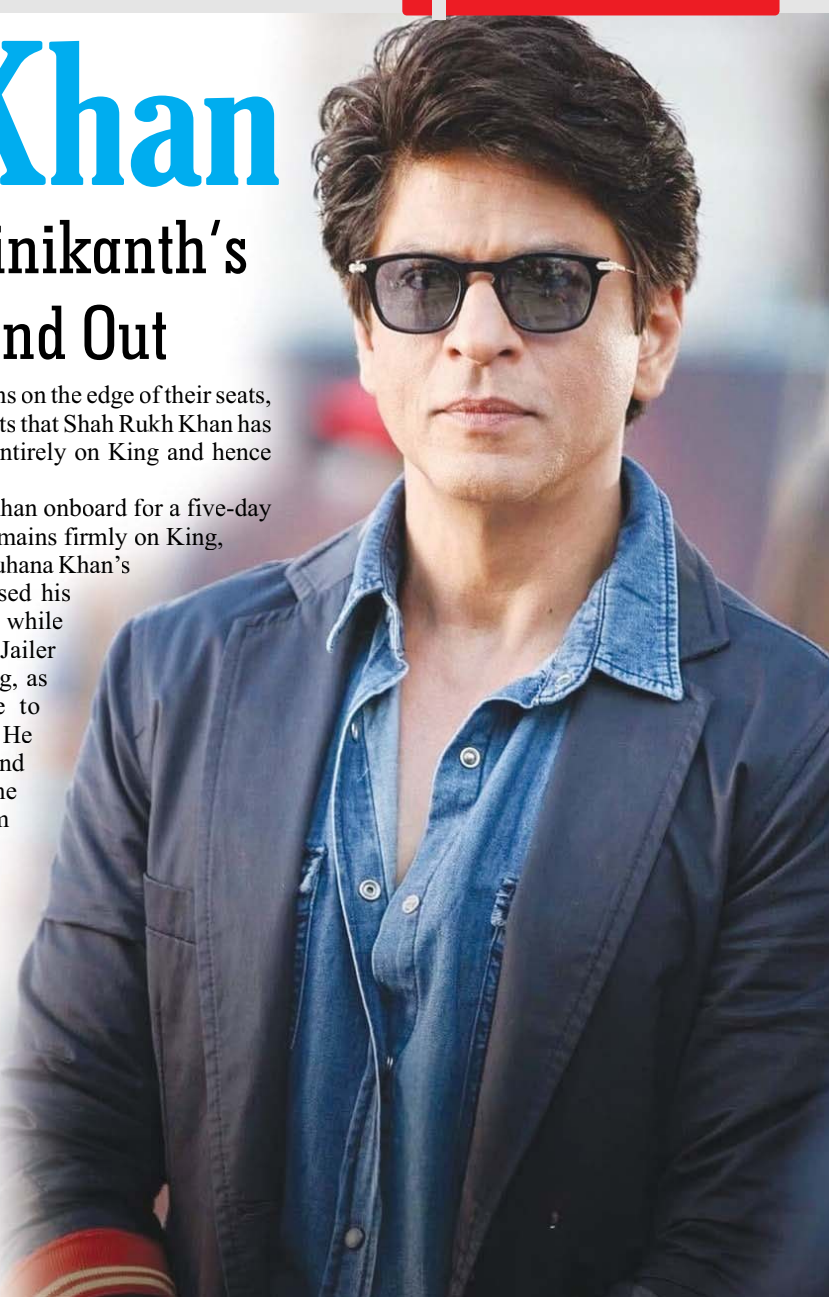


While Shah Rukh Khan holds the highest regard for

Rajinikanth and is eager to collaborate with him in the future, right now the difference in the release of Jailer 2 and King isn't much; hence, both parties have mutually decided to drop the idea of a cameo for now.

"The makers were looking at an August release, ahead of King in December, and given the differing timelines, both parties mutually and amicably decided to part ways on this cameo. Shah Rukh Khan has also personally spoken to Rajinikanth and conveyed his admiration, assuring him that he would be happy to collaborate, be it a cameo or a full-fledged role, at a more suitable time in the future," the source further shared.

Earlier today, an X account, Rangastharam, reported that SRK had allotted five days of call sheets without taking any remuneration, purely out of his love and respect for Rajinikanth for Jailer 2, but this new update suggests that the earlier report isn't true.



Shah Rukh Khan, Sourav Ganguly Share A Warm Hug At Kolkata's Eden Gardens; Internet Can't Keep Calm



On April 6, Shah Rukh Khan, accompanied by his daughter Suhana Khan, arrived in Kolkata to cheer for their IPL team, Kolkata Knight Riders, as they faced off against Punjab Kings. Their presence at the stadium added extra charm and star power to an already high-stakes match day at Eden Gardens. Apart from this, SRK's sweet reunion with former India captain Sourav Ganguly went on to become one of the major highlights of the game. Several videos and pictures of the duo have been doing the rounds on social media.

Shah Rukh Khan meets Sourav Ganguly

Shah Rukh and Suhana, who are currently busy shooting for King, reached Kolkata on Monday to attend the KKR match. However, the match was called off due to the wet outfield. Later, a video featuring Shah Rukh and Sourav was shared by the official social media handles of Kolkata Knight Riders. The duo can be seen interacting and hugging each other. Harshit Rana, who is out of the tournament due to injury, was also seen with them, along with SRK's manager, Pooja Dadlani. Sharing the video on Instagram, the team wrote in the caption, "When the KING met the PRINCE OF BENGAL."

Soon after the video was shared, it was flooded with fan comments. One comment read, "his hugs are back!!" Another comment read, "Ask the king to make him the Coach or the Director at KKR and you will see the magic... Venky and his decisions post a winning season are totally beyond comprehension and that is where you need someone like dada to ensure consistency!!" One of the comments also read, "Our king in our den." One fan called it the "Ultimate Eden Gardens reunion."

Meanwhile, Shah Rukh Khan, who was last seen in Dunki, is all set to return to the big screen with a bang. He has an actioner titled King, which is directed by Siddharth Anand. The film also stars Suhana, Abhishek Bachchan, Deepika Padukone, Rani Mukerji, Saurabh Shukla, Arshad Warsi, and Raghav Juyal. Slated for release on December 24, 2026, its first glimpse has already left fans excited and eager for what's to come.

After Salman Khan's Support, Rajpal Yadav Takes Unexpected Stand For Saurabh Dwivedi; Internet Slams Actor



Actor Rajpal Yadav, who is currently busy promoting his upcoming film Bhooth Bangla, has been hitting headlines ever since news about his legal case and brief time in the Tihar jail in connection with a cheque bounce case. Recently, the actor received support after he was allegedly humiliated at an award show, which was hosted in Mumbai. During a segment on stage, senior journalist Saurabh Dwivedi, who was hosting alongside Zakir Khan, made a remark referencing Yadav's financial case. The remarks left everyone in splits, including the actor himself. After the clip surfaced on social media, netizens criticised the insensitive comments. Not only the internet, but also Salman Khan came out in Rajpal's support on April 7. However, the actor has now defended the senior journalist and requested his fans not to troll him.

Rajpal Yadav defends senior journalist Saurabh Dwivedi amid receiving support from Salman Khan

A while ago, Rajpal Yadav took to social media and shared a video addressing the ongoing controversy. He shared that the controversial segment during the award show was planned by him, Zakir, and Saurabh.

Rajpal went on to call them his "younger brothers." He said that they have always respected him, adding that Saurabh even asked everyone in the auditorium to stand up and applaud him. Rajpal further requested everyone on social media not to troll Saurabh or anyone. He can be heard saying, "Saurabh ka dil dukhna matlab mera dil dukhna hai."

He ended the video by saying, "I love Saurabh, I love Zakir, I love you all. I am here because of you guys. Thank you." Yadav's video came soon after Salman Khan showed his support for him. Netizens were seen taking a dig and trolling him in the comments section.

One user wrote, "Salman Khan watching you take Saurabh's side." Another user wrote, "Bhai Thora to wait Kar le Salman sir ne tmhare liye stand liya .aur tumne video Bana di ...sad." One of the comments also read, "Kya bhai Salman ke Tweet ke Baad Lafda Shuru hone se Pehele Khatam Hogaya."

NEWS BOX

"We Are In World War": Billionaire Investor Calls China, Russia 'Winners' In Iran Conflict

World. (Agency)

Billionaire investor Ray Dalio is warning that the Iran war should not be read as a contained crisis or a conflict heading toward resolution. In his view it is part of a much larger breakdown in the global order, one that is following the same historical pattern that has preceded major wars before. "We are now in a world war that isn't going to end anytime soon," Dalio wrote in a blog, framing the current moment not as a single regional flare-up but as a system of interconnected conflicts spreading across military, economic, technological, and geopolitical fronts. He said that while the phrase "world war" may sound extreme, the structure is already visible. Dalio pointed to the Russia-Ukraine-Europe-US war, the Israel-Gaza-Lebanon-Syria war, the Yemen-Sudan-Saudi Arabia-UAE war, and the US-Israel-GCC-Iran war as conflicts that are no longer isolated. "Together, these conflicts make up a very classic world war that is analogous to past world wars," he wrote.

Dalio's Big Cycle

That is where his "Big Cycle" comes in. Dalio argues that history moves through recurring cycles in which monetary systems, domestic political orders, and geopolitical orders weaken at the same time. He wrote that he has "many indicators suggesting that we are in the part of the Big Cycle when the monetary order, some domestic political orders, and the geopolitical world order are breaking down."

He described this stage as a transition from the pre-fighting phase to the fighting phase, one broadly comparable to 1913-14 and 1938-39. He was careful to say the timing is not precise, but his broader message was unmistakable. The conditions that typically precede wider wars are, in his telling, already in place.

Artemis II Crew, ISS Astronauts Speak On First Ship-To-Ship Space Call

World. (Agency)

NASA's Artemis II moon mission crew spoke briefly with the astronauts living and working on the International Space Station on Tuesday afternoon, the first call of its kind in the history of spaceflight.

At around 2:40 p.m. New York time, the two crews connected during an audio call and spoke about what it was like for the Artemis crew to launch and then fly around the moon. Christina Koch of the Artemis II crew said the training she got from living on the ISS applied to their current mission. "Basically every single thing that we learned on ISS is up here," Koch said to the space station crew. "Of course, there's the funny and practical: how to eat, how to do silly things with water, how to flip around. We're bringing that with us, too." There are currently seven astronauts on board the International Space Station: three NASA astronauts, three Russian cosmonauts and a French astronaut from the European Space Agency. NASA astronaut Jessica Meir, the commander of SpaceX's Crew-12 mission docked at the station, is a close friend of Koch and the pair famously conducted the first all-women spacewalk together in 2019.

"Jessica, I always hoped we would be in space again together, but I never thought it would be like this," Koch said. "It's amazing. Congratulations to you on being commander, and I hope you have an amazing rest of your trip in space." Meir returned the sentiment. "I'm so happy that we are back in space together, even if we are a few miles apart," she joked.

Anthropic's Claude Mythos AI Exposes Critical Software Security Flaws

United States. (Agency)

Anthropic on Tuesday said its yet-to-be-released artificial intelligence model called Claude Mythos has proven keenly adept at exposing software weaknesses. Mythos has laid bare thousands of vulnerabilities in commonly used applications for which no patch or fix exists, prompting the San Francisco-based AI startup to form an alliance with cybersecurity specialists to bolster defenses against hacking. "We have a new model that we're explicitly not releasing to the public," Mike Krieger of Anthropic Labs said at a HumanX AI conference in San Francisco. Instead, Anthropic is letting cybersecurity specialists and engineers in the open-source community work with Mythos to use the model as a defensive weapon "sort of arming them ahead of time," Krieger explained.

Leaps in AI model capabilities have come with concerns about hackers using such tools for figuring out passwords or cracking encryption meant to keep data safe. The oldest of the vulnerabilities uncovered by Mythos dates back 27 years, and none were ostensibly noticed by their makers before being pinpointed by the AI model, according to Anthropic. Mythos is the latest generation of Anthropic's Claude family of AI, and a recent leak of some of its code prompted the startup to release a blog post warning it posed unprecedented cybersecurity risks. "AI models have reached a level of coding capability where they can surpass all but the most skilled humans at finding and exploiting software vulnerabilities," Anthropic said in a blog post. "The fallout -- for economies, public safety, and national security -- could be severe."

Software vulnerabilities exposed by Mythos were often subtle and difficult to detect without AI, according to Anthropic. As an example, it said Mythos found a previously unnoticed flaw in video software that had been tested more than 5 million times by its creators.

Countdown to Iran ceasefire: The 90 minutes that stopped a war

It was 6.32 pm. Ninety minutes to the deadline. That was when the post went up, and the war paused, held in place by a 10-point document drafted by Tehran. This is the story of the race to the crease announced by Trump.

World. (Agency)

It was nearing 6.30 pm. Washington DC. The clock was ticking. It was 90 minutes to President Donald Trump's deadline for an apocalyptic attack on Iran. That morning, he had written the words on Truth Social, and the world had stopped to read them. "A whole civilisation will die tonight, never to

be brought back again." No diplomatic euphemism. No wiggle room. Just eleven words that described the erasure of a nation of 90 million people were posted on social media before breakfast. The deadline was 8.00 pm Eastern Time. The target list was drawn up: bridges, power plants, water infrastructure. Trump had already touted the destruction of a large bridge near Tehran as a preview of what was coming. The world held its breath. A senior US official, speaking to Fox News that afternoon, tried to sound measured: "We are absolutely in touch with them. Absolutely. The talks have been positive. If we get lucky, we will have something by the end of the day." If we get lucky. That was the state of diplomacy at 90 minutes to zero. The world was waiting for the hand of fate to deliver.

TEHRAN GETS READY

In Tehran, the regime had responded the only way it could -- with shahadat. Iran's deputy minister of youth and sports called on young people to form a "human chain" around the country's power plants. In the

tradition of Shia sacrifice, ordinary Iranians, students, workers and families were standing with their arms linked at



fence lines, placing their bodies between Trump's deadline and the grid that kept their hospitals running and their water flowing. Iranian state media broadcast it live: a human chain in front of the Kazerun combined cycle power plant in Fars province.

At the same time, US and Israeli strikes were still escalating ahead of the deadline. Israel was carrying out attacks on Iranian railways and bridges, and the US was launching fresh strikes on the oil export

hub of Kharg Island.

The war was not pausing for diplomacy. It was accelerating toward the feared apocalyptic finish.

Iran's own foreign ministry spokesman had told reporters that US officials had been "trying to intimidate Iranians with such literature for 48 years" and that Iran would not be subdued by deadlines. Every public signal pointed toward catastrophe.

THE RACE FOR CEASEFIRE

In Islamabad, something else was happening.

Pakistan's Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif had been working the phones. The idea of a two-week ceasefire was one he had proposed that Tuesday afternoon, on X, tagging Trump, Vance, Rubio, Witkoff, and Iranian leaders simultaneously. He wrote that diplomatic efforts were "progressing steadily, strongly and powerfully," and made two requests in the same breath: that Trump extend his deadline by two weeks, and that Iran open the Strait of Hormuz as a goodwill gesture for the same period.

Iran, Oman get to levy Hormuz transit fee under 2-week ceasefire plan: Report

World. (Agency)

The two-week ceasefire plan between the US and Iran includes a provision allowing both Iran and Oman to levy transit fees on ships passing through the Strait of Hormuz, the narrow mouth of the Persian Gulf that facilitates roughly one-fifth of global oil trade. The 34-km-wide strait lies within the territorial waters of both Oman and Iran and has been considered an international waterway, with no tolls levied by either country in the past. Tehran officials, according to news agency AP, said Iran would use the funds for post-war reconstruction, as the conflict has caused widespread destruction to the country's defence, administrative, and civilian infrastructure. Both the US and Iran agreed to a ceasefire early Wednesday to end the 40-day conflict, with Tehran accepting to conditionally reopen the strategic waterway, which had effectively been closed since the war began on February 28. The closure, marked by attacks on vessels transiting the route, had sent global oil prices soaring. Further discussions,

including the future of the Strait of Hormuz and other aspects of a long-term peace, are likely to be taken up in negotiations between the US and Israel, set to begin in Islamabad on Friday. Agreeing to the ceasefire, US President Donald Trump remarked that Iran had presented a 10-point



proposal that was a "workable basis" for negotiations and that he expected an agreement to be "finalised and consummated" during the two-week window. "We received a 10 point proposal from Iran, and believe it is a workable basis on which to negotiate. Almost all of the various points of past contention have been agreed to between the United States and Iran, but

a two-week period will allow the Agreement to be finalised and consummated," he said, without specifying any points of negotiations.

According to Reuters, the transit fee would vary depending on the type of ship, its cargo, and other prevailing conditions. Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister Kazem Gharibabadi said last week that Tehran was drafting a protocol with Oman in this regard, adding that the move was intended to facilitate, rather than restrict, transit.

Gulf nations, including the United Arab Emirates and Qatar, have taken a stance against any such move, calling for free and open navigation and stating that any discussion on financial mechanisms should wait. Under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), which governs international maritime law, states bordering straits cannot demand payment merely for granting passage. However, they may impose limited fees for specific services such as piloting, tugging, or port services, provided these are not levied more heavily on vessels from any particular

American journalist Shelly Kittleson has been released week after kidnapping in Iraq, says Rubio

HANOI. (Agency)

American journalist Shelly Kittleson, who was kidnapped from a Baghdad streetcorner last week, was released Tuesday, U.S. and Iraqi officials said.

The development came after the powerful Iran-backed Iraqi militia Kataib Hezbollah said in a statement that it had decided to free Kittleson, who was abducted on March 31. Its condition was that Kittleson must "leave the country immediately" upon her release. Two officials within the militia, who spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to comment publicly, told The Associated Press that in exchange for freeing Kittleson, several members of the group who had previously been detained by Iraqi

authorities would be released. U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio confirmed Kittleson's release in a statement early Wednesday. He said on



X, "We are relieved that this American is now freed and are working to support her safe departure from Iraq." Rubio thanked Iraqi authorities, as well as the FBI and U.S. Defense

Department and other U.S. agencies for their work toward securing Kittleson's release. A one-off release according to one of two Iraqi officials who confirmed her release before the U.S. announcement, Kittleson was freed in the afternoon. The officials, who spoke to the AP on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to comment publicly, did not share her current whereabouts but said that prior to her release, Kittleson had been held in Baghdad. In its statement, Kataib Hezbollah said its decision came "in appreciation of the patriotic stances of the outgoing" Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammed Shia al-Sudani, without giving more details. It added that "this initiative will not be repeated in the future."

Hormuz control, uranium enrichment: Iran's 10-point proposal at centre of US truce

In a statement shortly after Donald Trump's announcement on Tuesday night, Iran's Supreme National Security Council said the US had suspended its "bombing and attack" campaign and accepted the two-week, "double-sided" ceasefire after being compelled by Tehran's military and political pressure.

HOUSTON. (Agency)

Iran claimed a "historic victory" over the US and Israel after US President Donald Trump stepped back from threatened strikes and agreed to a two-week ceasefire. On its part,

Tehran has also laid out a sweeping 10-point proposal that it says Washington has agreed to in principle. However, conflicting and multiple versions of statements attributed to Iranian officials circulated in both Farsi and English and carried by state and semi-official media, with some clearly outlining the 10-point plan and others making broader political claims, including on uranium enrichment. Shortly after Trump's announcement on Tuesday night, Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi tweeted that Tehran would halt its defensive operations if attacks against Iran stopped. He added that Iran's armed forces would coordinate safe passage through the Strait of Hormuz during the ceasefire, and noted that Tehran was reviewing a 15-point proposal from Washington.

Araghchi also said the US had accepted the "general framework" of Iran's own 10-point plan as a basis for negotiations. Also confirming the ceasefire, Iran's Supreme National Security Council said

the US had suspended its "bombing and attack" campaign and accepted the two-week, "double-sided" ceasefire after being compelled by Tehran's military and political pressure. "Iran achieved a great victory and forced the criminal America to



accept its 10-point plan," the Council said, claiming that Washington had agreed to key demands including regulating passage through the Strait of Hormuz, ending attacks on Iran and its regional allies, recognition of Iran's nuclear enrichment rights, lifting of sanctions, and withdrawal

of US forces from the region. The Council further asserted that the US had been pushing for a ceasefire for over a month, but Iran repeatedly rejected deadlines, choosing instead to continue the conflict until its objectives were met. "The war has thus continued until today, the 40th day," it said, adding that Tehran prioritised "the enemy's regret and desperation" and the removal of long-term threats. Despite the ceasefire, Iran signalled that hostilities are not fully over. It said the pause in fighting is conditional and tied to negotiations over the implementation of its proposal, warning that the battle could continue if its demands are not met. This does not mean an end to the war and Iran will accept an end to the war only when, in view of Iran's acceptance of the principles envisaged in the 10-point plan, its details are also finalised in the negotiations," it said, adding, "Our hands remain upon the trigger, and should the slightest error be committed by the enemy, it shall be met with full force."