



MAHANAGAR METRO

VOICE OF THE CITY, PULSE OF THE NATION

JD Vance-led US delegation lands in Pakistan for high-stakes ceasefire talks with Iran

New Delhi.(Agency)

Top US officials have arrived for crucial Iran talks, but fresh demands from Tehran and continuing violence in Lebanon threaten to derail fragile ceasefire efforts at a critical moment for the region.

A US government aircraft carrying senior officials has landed in Islamabad on Saturday afternoon, setting the stage for crucial negotiations with Iran aimed at ending a six-week war that has shaken the Middle East and global economy, Reuters reported. According to Pakistani sources, the delegation includes Vice President JD Vance, along with special envoy Steve Witkoff and adviser Jared Kushner, who are leading Washington's efforts at the talks. The US team arrived hours after the Iranian delegation had already reached Islamabad in the early hours of Saturday. Iran's delegation, led by parliamentary speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf and Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi, is in the Pakistani capital for talks to resolve the conflict with the US and Israel, Iran's foreign ministry said.

According to Mehr News Agency, the Iranian and US delegations are expected to first hold separate meetings with Pakistan's Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif. After these initial diplomatic engagements, the main round of indirect negotiations is expected to begin.

Pakistan said it hopes the parties would engage constructively and reiterated its desire to "continue facilitating the parties towards reaching lasting and durable solution to the conflict."

Even before formal discussions could begin, Iran signalled that the path to negotiations may not be straightforward. Iran's parliamentary speaker Mohammad

Bagher Ghalibaf said talks could not proceed without commitments on Lebanon and the unblocking of Iranian assets. He said Washington had earlier agreed to these terms, adding that Tehran expects those assurances to be honoured. At the same time, he indicated Iran is open to a deal if the US offers what he described as a "genuine agreement" and grants Iran its rights.

TRUMP UPS PRESSURE, VANCE SIGNALS



CAUTION

US President Donald Trump struck a hard tone ahead of the talks, saying on social media that Iran "has no cards" and accusing it of leveraging international waterways. "The Iranians don't seem to realise they have no cards. The only reason they are alive today is to negotiate!" he wrote.

Karnataka Congress minister accused of backing SDPI in Davangere South bypoll

Bengaluru.(Agency)

Fresh trouble seems to be brewing within the Karnataka Congress after senior leaders allegedly backed a rival candidate in the Davangere South by-election on April 9.

State minister Zameer Ahmed Khan and MLCs Naseer Ahmed and Jabbar have been accused of covertly supporting SDPI candidate Afsar Kodlipete by allegedly funding his campaign.

According to party sources, several leaders of the Karnataka unit have flagged the issue to the Congress high command. Sources indicate that the All India Congress Committee is likely to take disciplinary action against the minister and the two MLCs.

The Congress party has not issued an official statement on the matter yet. The controversy began during ticket allocation for the April 9 bypoll, necessitated by the death of sitting MLA and senior Congress leader Shamanur Shivashankarappa. The counting of votes will take place on May 4.

The three leaders had reportedly pushed for a Muslim candidate, as the constituency has a sizeable minority population. However, the party leadership chose Samarth Mallikarjun, son of state minister SS Mallikarjun, as its official candidate.

Party sources claim that the disgruntled trio began working against the party's candidate, allegedly funneling Rs 10 crore to support the SDPI candidate's campaign. The Congress is staring at a significant embarrassment in Karnataka, if the high command takes strict action against Khan and the two legislators.

The development comes amid the growing rift between Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and his deputy, DK Shivakumar, over the CM's position. With Assembly polls less than two years away, the latest crisis is likely to complicate Congress's push for a second consecutive term.

Short news

Vijay Cancels Cuddalore Rally Amid Safety Concerns Ahead Of April 23 Polls

Chennai.(Agency)

In a significant development ahead of the Tamil Nadu Assembly elections, actor-turned-politician Joseph Vijay has cancelled his scheduled campaign rally in Cuddalore district, which was set to begin at 2 P.M. on Saturday, citing safety concerns. The rally, part of a day-long campaign planned across multiple locations in the district, had already been postponed once earlier this week.

The cancellation comes at a time when political parties have intensified their campaign efforts across Tamil Nadu, with leaders criss-crossing constituencies to consolidate voter support.

Vijay, who is contesting his first election as the leader of the Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK), has been actively touring several districts over the past few days.

He began his campaign in Perambur in Chennai and subsequently addressed gatherings in Tiruchirappalli, Tirunelveli and Thoothukudi, before continuing voter outreach in Karaikudi.

Centre to move 155 LMT foodgrains from Punjab as CM Mann flags storage crisis

CHANDIGARH.(Agency)

Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann on Friday met Union Food and Public Distribution Minister Pralhad Joshi in New Delhi and secured relief measures, with the Centre agreeing to run special trains to lift 155 lakh metric tonnes of foodgrains lying in Punjab to ease the storage crisis ahead of the Rabi Marketing Season.

Alongside this, Mann raised structural issues, including higher cash credit interest rates, Rs 9,000 crore pending under the Rural Development Fund, compensation for hailstorm-hit crops, and demands of arhtiyas. The Union Minister assured follow-up, including a Secretary-level mechanism to address pending dues.

Sharing details on X, Mann said, "Today, in Delhi, I held an important meeting with Union Food Minister Pralhad Joshi... several key issues related to Punjab were discussed, including the demands of arhtiyas."

He added, "Critical matters were raised, such as swift lifting of 15.5 million metric tonnes of wheat and rice, immediate payment of Rs 9,000 crore under RDF, reducing high interest rates under the Cash Credit Limit, and addressing EPF issues of mandi labourers." "I am pleased that the Union Minister has responded very positively... we remain committed to safeguarding Punjab's interests," he said. Flagging storage shortages, Mann said, "180.88 LMT foodgrains are already stored against capacity."

'Sabka malik ek hai...': Army chief says Operation Sindoor timing chosen to respect 'namaz' hours

The Army chief had earlier said the first strikes during Operation Sindoor took place between 1-1.30 am on nine identified terrorist targets.

New Delhi.(Agency)

Army chief General Upendra Dwivedi has revealed that the Indian Army had purposely changed the timing of Operation Sindoor last year to ensure that they do not hit terror camps in Pakistan during "namaz hours". The top military officer had earlier said the first strikes during the operation took place between 1-1.30 am on nine identified terrorist targets.

Speaking in a podcast in Bengaluru, General Dwivedi said that the Army meticulously chose the timing of the military strike launched last year in retaliation for the April Pahalgam terror attack. He said that the Indian military could have carried out the anti-terror action



against Pakistan anytime between 2 am and 4 am, but they planned the attack before that to avoid disrupting "namaz".

"When we were to destroy these targets, the timing was 2 o'clock, 4 o'clock, anytime. But we made sure that when the people on the other side were going through their 'namaz' prayer in the terrorist camp. We said this time will not touch, because 'sabka malik ek hai.' And that's why we chose a time when we knew that it was not," the Army chief said. India launched Operation Sindoor targeting terror establishments in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir in May last year in the aftermath of the April 22 Pahalgam terror attack, which claimed the lives of 26 people, mostly tourists. This led to a full-blown conflict between India and Pakistan, with Islamabad launching drones and carrying out shelling and New Delhi retaliating strongly.

Mahanagar Metro: Special Editorial

Power's Arrogance Has Reduced Human Lives to Mere Statistics: Gujarat Must Wake Up Now

Pawan Mankan (Group Editor)

Ahmedabad: In a democracy, people are regarded as supreme. But looking at the present situation in Gujarat, it appears that for the ruling establishment, citizens have been reduced to nothing more than a *vote bank*, while human deaths are treated merely as percentages. When massive crowds gather at bus stops and even one person loses their life in the chaos, the government proudly calls it a "minimal death rate." But shame on such thinking. Ask the family that lost its loved one what that "one death" truly means.

Bridges Collapse, Innocent Blood Is Spilled—And You Call It Success?

In past bridge tragedies, hundreds of innocent people lost their lives. Yet today, the government shamelessly presents figures claiming that the accident percentage has gone down. Is this administrative success? No. It is living proof of public helplessness and deep-rooted corruption. The rot has spread so far that with elections approaching, new faces are being given tickets in a desperate attempt to wash away old sins. But the people of Gujarat are not naïve; they can already sense the smell of new corruption behind new faces.



The "Gujarat Model" of Development—or Just an Illusion?

Every election season brings loud praise of the so-called *Gujarat Model*. But the reality is that even basic development remains beyond the reach of the common citizen. The ruling class seems to care neither for people's lives nor their future. Their only attachment is to power, and their only greed is for money.

The Time for Change: Silence Is Now a Crime

The time has come for the people of Gujarat to awaken their dormant conscience. This election is an opportunity to show the true strength of the vote. Remember, a change of

power in Gujarat will not merely mean a change in one state government—it will send shockwaves straight to the Centre and shatter the arrogance of those in power. Mahanagar Metro's Appeal

We are not against any individual or any particular political party. We stand against a system that no longer treats human beings as human.

Mahanagar Metro appeals to the people of Gujarat to free themselves from political blind loyalty and choose candidates who are honest, capable, and committed to real work. Gujarat no longer needs false propaganda. It needs genuine, ground-level change

Digital Conspiracy: Investigating the Truth

Faith Defamation Plot Against Jain Community Fails



Fake videos used to blackmail monks; Sangh clears saints of wrongdoing

By Pawan Mankan | Group Editor

Ahmedabad, Gujarat: A criminal gang allegedly used morphed videos and fake social media content over the past 18 months to blackmail Jain monks and defame the community. After religious leaders refused to give in, the clips were reportedly circulated online to create division and spread misinformation. In a tragic development, a Jain nun whose face was allegedly misused in the fake content is said to be in a critical coma-like condition after severe mental trauma. The Jain Sangh has given a clean chit to the monks, calling them victims of a planned digital conspiracy. Mahanagar Metro News has launched a campaign demanding strict action against the culprits and urged the public not to share unverified religious content online.

Short news

Labourer found dead in govt school in Gurgaon with injuries to face

Gurgaon.(Agency)

A 22-year-old man was found dead inside a govt school in Hailey Mandi on Friday morning, police said. The body was found lying in the verandah of a room at Govt Model Sanskriti Primary School around 7.25am by the school's head teacher. Police said the body had injuries on the face and forehead, and bloodstains were found at the spot.

On receiving information, a police team reached the spot along with forensic experts, a dog squad and a duty magistrate. The area was cordoned off and evidence was collected. Senior officers were also alerted soon after, and the body was sent for autopsy.

The victim, identified as Ravi of Lalitpur district in UP, was living in a rented accommodation in Hailey Mandi and worked as a labourer. His family told police that he had not returned home on Thursday. Sources said investigators found a liquor bottle at the spot, suggesting the victim may have been drinking. Preliminary findings suggest the victim may have been attacked with stones or bricks, possibly following a dispute. A case of murder under Section 103(1) of the BNS has been registered against an unidentified person. CCTV footage from the area is being examined, police said. "The crime scene was examined, and some leads have been found," a police officer said, adding that efforts are underway to identify and arrest the accused. The education department officials did not respond to the queries about the absence of a security guard in the school.

Parents away at work, 6-year-old lured and raped by teen

Noida.(Agency)

A 16-year-old boy was taken into custody for allegedly raping a six-year-old girl from her neighbourhood.

The child lives with her parents, who work as daily-wage labourers. On Wednesday, the couple had gone to work, leaving her alone at home. Around 2pm, the child was playing in the lane when the teenager approached her and lured her into his home on the pretext of giving her food and snacks. He then allegedly gagged and raped her. When the child went home upset and with soiled clothes, her parents got suspicious. She then told her mother what happened. The couple filed a complaint at Sector 113 police station. The teenager was arrested. He has been charged under sections of rape, intimidation and the POCSO Act. Further investigation is underway.

Murder FIR filed against 3 friends of Noida student who drowned in pit after mom alleges foul play

Noida.(Agency)

The drowning of a 23-year-old student in a water-filled construction pit has now turned into a murder investigation after his mother accused his three friends of killing him and pointed to injury marks on his body.

Harshit Bhatt, a physical education student who had just finished his sixth semester exam, died on Wednesday after entering the pit behind Supernova building in Sector 94 with his friends. On Friday, an FIR for murder was registered at Sector 126 police station against Vyas, Krish and Himanshu, the three who were with Harshit when he drowned.

Cops said all angles, including the mother's allegation of murder and the possibility that the group was drunk, are being examined. According to cops, Harshit, a resident of Indirapuram and an undergraduate student at Amity University in Sector 125, went to the site with three friends after his final paper. The group allegedly crossed into the stalled Noida Habitat and Convention Centre site through a broken section of the boundary wall. The excavation, dug for basement work, had filled with water. Police referred to CCTV footage, and said the four bought liquor from a nearby shop around 2.45pm and drank before and after the exam. Beer cans and liquor bottles were also found near the pit. Police believe the group, allegedly intoxicated, decided to wade into the water around 3.30pm. The friends told police Harshit entered first. After swimming near the edge and completing two laps, he moved towards the centre, where the pit was far deeper and the bottom marshy. One friend allegedly tried to pull him out, but got stuck in the sludge. The group then called for help.

Greater Noida looks for co to build logistics park in Dadri

Noida.(Agency)

Greater Noida Industrial Development Authority (GNIDA) has moved to appoint a developer for a multimodal logistics park in Kappa-II, near the Inland Container Depot in Dadri. Spread over 174 acres, the proposed facility is strategically located close to Noida International Airport and will have access to both the Eastern and Western freight corridors. GNIDA has issued a tender to select a developer through an e-auction process for the project. "The project will strengthen Greater Noida's image as an industrial hub with strong logistic facilities. This will also save cost in logistics for businesses in the area," said GNIDA CEO Saumya Srivastava. The project is estimated to generate around 5,000 jobs. As per the tender, the selected applicant will be required to invest a minimum of around Rs 1,000 crore in the project. The allotment of the plot will be made on a leasehold basis for a period of 90 years. The applicant must have at least 10 years of experience in the logistics sector. Registration process began on March 28 and last date for submission is June 27. The date for the e-auction will be notified separately, officials said. GNIDA launched this project last year when three firms - Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone Ltd, Super Handlers, and Empezar Logistics - submitted their proposals for the project.

17 Gurgaon traffic hotspots marked for revamp under CAQM plan to curb air pollution

GURGAON.(Agency)

As many as 17 junctions across sectors 1 to 57 have been identified for traffic decongestion measures, with GMDA set to undertake the project as part of efforts linked to pollution mitigation targets laid down by CAQM.

The locations were selected based on high traffic volume and congestion, which contribute to pollution generation due to idling vehicles and slow movement, an official said. The identified junctions include Sector 48-49 and South City-II, Sector 40-45 and Cyber Park, Sector 4-5, Rezang La Chowk, Modern Bazar near Mayfield Garden, opposite Tau Devi Lal Park (Sector 22), Sector Road 72A and Sector 33, Arcadia Mall junction, Sector 9 Chowk, Sector 4-7 Chowk, Daultabad flyover, Millennium City Centre Metro Station, Sector 41-45, Bakhtawar Chowk, Unitech Cyber Park, Ghata Power House and Kaushal Chowk. According to GMDA, the project focuses on redesigning traffic movement

at intersections through targeted engineering intervention to ensure vehicles spend less time waiting at signals, which in turn is expected to lower vehicular emissions at these hotspots.

"The objective is to optimise each traffic signal cycle so that the maximum number of vehicles can pass through an intersection. Along with major changes, smaller interventions such as geometric improvements and traffic channelisation will also be undertaken wherever required," said GMDA executive engineer Amit Godara. The tender for the project has been floated, and work will begin after the bidding process is completed. Officials said they are aiming to complete most of the work within the year, ahead of the peak pollution season. The project will cost Rs 7.5 crore.

Under the plan, slip lanes will be extended. These slip lanes are currently too short at

several locations and get blocked by vehicles waiting at traffic lights, defeating their purpose of allowing free left turns. By increasing their length,



authorities expect to facilitate uninterrupted movement for turning vehicles. Another key intervention includes the creation of free U-turns at central verges. At present, commuters often have to wait through an entire signal cycle to take a U-turn. The proposed

design will allow vehicles to turn without stopping at traffic lights, thereby reducing congestion at intersections, the official said. The move comes amid persistent complaints from commuters about traffic snarls across key corridors in the city, particularly during peak hours. In addition, Gurgaon ranked as the most polluted city in India in March 2026, recording a monthly average PM2.5 concentration of 116 µg/m³.

"During peak hours, we often have to wait through two to three signal cycles just to cross a junction. The situation gets worse because the slip roads are practically useless as they get blocked by vehicles standing at the signal. There is also a complete lack of lane discipline. Even vehicles that are supposed to go straight end up occupying the left lane, blocking those who want to take a free turn. This creates unnecessary congestion," said Puneet Pahwa, general secretary of sector 46.

Haryana workers cite panel to demand Rs 23k, say new wages 'too low'

Gurgaon.(Agency)

Unhappy with the wage revision — which they call far too low — the labour bodies are seeking a minimum wage of Rs 23,196, as recommended by a panel last year. Centre of Indian Trade Unions (CITU), representing various labour unions, on Friday wrote to Haryana chief minister Nayab Singh Saini, urging him to implement the recommendation of State Minimum Wage Committee on Dec 29, 2025, besides immediate notification, instead of the newly announced Rs 15,200. Along with the wage, the labour bodies have also demanded cancellation of FIRs against the workers during the recent protests, compensation for injuries and supply of LPG at govt rate to all workers. Arguing that the last minimum wage revision took place in 2015, the wage should have been revised every five years, but the state delayed it by nearly six years, CITU said. CITU pointed out that based on the price index and cost-of-living calculations, it demanded Rs

30,000 as the minimum wage during committee meetings. However, after the committee's ninth meeting in Panchkula approved over Rs 23,000 unanimously, "this amount should be notified and enforced," the letter added. The unions said thousands of industrial and garment workers in Manesar and Gurgaon have been protesting for days over wage revision, but the administration has "responded with police action and imposed Section 163 and force was used against the protesting workers." The letter termed the police crackdown "wrong and unjustified." The key demands of the unions include: Notify and implement the minimum wage recommended by the state panel immediately; withdraw Section 163 imposed in Manesar and Gurgaon; stop police action and release detained workers immediately; provide medical care to injured workers; set up counters at govt rates to supply LPG gas cylinders to workers; ensure double wages for overtime work as per law; and

withdraw all action taken against protesting workers. They have also sought ensuring ESI/EPF benefits for all. CITU general secretary Jay Bhagwan said the last minimum wage revision was implemented on Nov 1, 2015. "According to law, wages must be revised every five years, but the due revision in Oct 2020 was delayed by many years," said Bhagwan. The letter also mentioned that despite peaceful mobilisations, police action — including lathi charge and detention of workers — was reported, leaving several workers injured. "We demand cancellation of FIRs against the workers," said Satvir, a CITU office-bearer.

The letter also mentioned that despite peaceful mobilisations, police action — including lathi charge and detention of workers — was reported, leaving several workers injured. "We demand cancellation of FIRs against the workers," said Satvir, a CITU office-bearer. ed for all residential towers.

Man gets 10 yrs RI for raping minor at Gzb creche

Gurgaon.(Agency)

A special court on Friday sentenced a 74-year-old man to 10 years of rigorous imprisonment for sexually assaulting a five-year-old girl at a creche in Ghaziabad in 2016. The court also imposed a fine of Rs 2 lakh, directing that the entire amount be paid to the survivor for her treatment and rehabilitation. Additional district and sessions judge Deepika Tiwary convicted Arun Kumar Sinha, a resident of Chhapra district in Bihar, under Section 5/6 of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (Pocso) Act for aggravated penetrative sexual assault. The time Sinha has already spent in judicial custody will be adjusted against his sentence. In 2016, the minor was in kindergarten and would be left at the creche each day because both her parents returned late from work. The creche was run by the convict's daughter-in-law. On Jan 4, the girl expressed reluctance to return to the creche while being brought home and told her father about what she

described as the "dirty acts" by the convict. Her father filed a police complaint on Jan 12.

Police registered a case under sections 376 (rape) and 377 (unnatural offence) of the Indian Penal Code, along with Section



5/6 of the Pocso Act. A chargesheet was filed on Feb 19, and the special Pocso court framed charges on Aug 29 of the same year. The prosecution examined five witnesses, including the survivor's father, the minor, the examining doctor and police investigators. The defence

examined two witnesses in support of the convict's claim that he was at his native place in Bihar when the assault took place. The court gave the greatest weight to the testimony of the survivor, now a Class 10 student. The minor described the assault in detail, and said the accused had committed similar acts with other children at the creche, including his own granddaughter, and maintained consistency across her statement to police, her statement before a magistrate and her deposition in court during trial.

Accepting her as a "sterling witness" — a legal standard applied when a victim's account is found reliable enough to sustain a conviction without corroboration — the court noted that cross-examination by the defence failed to raise any material contradiction that could undermine her credibility.

The court also found no contradiction between the accounts of the survivor and her father on the identity of the accused, the nature of the act or the circumstances in which it occurred.

Haryana Industries slam 35% hike, say MSMEs may be forced to shut

Gurgaon.(Agency)

Industry bodies have been jolted by the Haryana govt's "abrupt" 35% minimum wage hike and its immediate implementation from April 1, a move they say has put businesses "in the dock."

They caution that the move will strain cash flows, push some units towards sickness and could discourage future investment and expansion in the state. Many MSMEs may be pushed towards "closure", they have pointed out. They argue the revision should have been introduced in a staggered manner after proper consultation. With companies set to prepare April salary slips by midmonth, they fear the limited timeframe will trigger confusion and mistrust between workers and management.

Industry representatives warn that the actual impact on salary outgo will be nearly 45% because ESIC, PF, bonus, gratuity and other statutory components are all linked to the basic wage. The revised rates now exceed those in neighbouring states such as UP, Rajasthan and Punjab, squeezing margins and eroding Haryana's competitive edge.

President of Gurgaon Chamber of Commerce & Industry Vikas Jain said the hike should have been implemented in a "better and planned way." "The industry should have been given time. We just closed the financial year. Administrative work requires preparation," he said, adding that future revisions must follow detailed dialogue with industry. "This will — overall wage bills — impact cash flow, working capital, operational costs and margins and might push some industries to the brink," Jain said.

Secretary general of the chamber SK Ahuja pointed out that minimum wages in neighbouring states like Rajasthan, Punjab and UP remain in the range of Rs 11,000-12,000. "Minimum wage in Haryana is now on the higher side. Haryana is also landlocked and has higher logistics costs compared with states like Maharashtra and Gujarat with ports. All this dilutes our competitive advantage," Ahuja said. According to the original application filed by local resident KK Yadav, the wetland is recorded as a johar (pond) in official revenue records and is also listed as an identified wetland in the National Wetland Atlas prepared by the MoEF&CC

Gurgaon civic body panel clears Rs 282 crore for 45 projects

Gurgaon.(Agency)

The finance and contracts committee (F&CC) of MCG on Friday approved 45 projects worth Rs 282 crore, with more than 70% of the works related to road construction, repair and maintenance across the city. Among the major approvals, road construction in Saraswati Enclave, road construction in an estimated cost of Rs 9.7 crore, while the laying of bituminous concrete roads in Mayfield Garden will cost Rs 6.2 crore. Reconstruction of roads in South City-2 was approved at Rs 8.3 crore.

The committee also cleared the development of a model road from the Delhi border at Bijwasan to Ram Chowk in Palam Vihar for Rs 9.1 crore. The highest-value project approved was the construction of a model road in Daultabad at a cost of Rs 9.9 crore. Moreover, the panel sanctioned Rs 3.3 crore for recarpeting of roads with bituminous concrete and replacement of sidewalk tiles in blocks D, E, F and Residency Green of Greenwood City. It also approved two separate allocations of Rs 9.5 crore each for repair and maintenance works in New Gurgaon and Old Gurgaon. These works include



addressing daily complaints received through social media platforms and public grievance portals.

The focus on roads comes amid criticism from residents over poor road conditions, frequent damage and the short lifespan of recently repaired stretches.

Mayor Raj Rani Malhotra said, "MCG is committed to balanced and sustainable development of the city. Better basic

amenities will be provided to residents through these projects, and the city's infrastructure will be strengthened."

MCG commissioner Pradeep Dahiya said, "The approved projects have been prepared based on the needs of residents and suggestions received from public representatives. All works will be completed timely so that people can benefit at the earliest."

Of the 45 projects approved, the remaining 13 focus on basic civic infrastructure, including water supply, sewerage and urban amenities. Water supply projects and infrastructure upgrades will be carried out in areas including Sector 40 at Rs 4 crore and Dhankot village at Rs 6.7 crore. These include pipeline laying, boosting stations and underground water storage to address shortages in several parts of the city.

Sewerage and drainage works will be undertaken in Narsingpur along NH8 at Rs 9 crore and Saraswati Enclave at Rs 8.9 crore, among other areas. Civic infrastructure projects include market redevelopment in Sector 31 and public utility upgrades, along with parking facilities in Sector 45.

Beautification and public amenities projects include improvement of public spaces in Jharsa and development of secondary waste collection points in Bajhera at Rs 5.3 crore and Bhondsi Road at Rs 2.9 crore.

"These projects are intended to complement road upgrades by strengthening core infrastructure, though their share remains lower," officials said.

UP SIR effect: All parties forced to change their strategy for 2027 Assembly polls

Lucknow. (Agency)

The Election Commission of India released the final voter list in Uttar Pradesh after a 166-day Special Intensive Revision (SIR) campaign on Friday. Over 20 million names were deleted from the final list.

This process by the Election Commission has not only led to a major change in the voter list but also forced political parties to change their strategies for the 2027 assembly elections.

Principal state players such as BJP, Samajwadi Party, BSP, and Congress have closely monitored the SIR process. These parties not only deployed their workers to persuade voters not to migrate from urban areas to rural areas, but also ensured that new voters were enrolled after the names were deleted from the draft voter list.

UP Congress chief Ajay Rai stated that the entire Special Intensive Revision (SIR) process in Uttar Pradesh is illegal, a betrayal of democracy, and a direct

violation of the public's right to vote. The party will not accept the current voter list, he said. He demanded that a thorough investigation be conducted before the elections and the names of all young people who have attained the age of 18 be added to the voter list. If the Central Election Commission is unable to do this, then the voter lists of municipal bodies and gram panchayats should be used for the assembly elections.

Between October 27, 2025, and April 10, voters' names were removed from the list not only in urban areas, including Lucknow, Ghaziabad, Kanpur Nagar, Gautam Buddha Nagar, Meerut, Agra, and Prayagraj, but also in districts with a high rural population: Kannauj, Balrampur, Badaun, Bahraich, Farrukhabad, Sonbhadra, and Etawah.

The state's urban areas are considered strongholds of the BJP, and these areas played a key role in the party's victory in

the 2017 and 2022 assembly elections, eroding the support base of the opposition Samajwadi Party and Bahujan Samaj Party. In the 2017 and 2022 assembly elections, the BJP won the most seats in Lucknow, Ghaziabad, Gautam Buddha Nagar, Meerut, and Prayagraj. It remains to be seen whether the large number of voter deletions will impact the party's electoral prospects.

On the other hand, districts with a higher rural population are considered strongholds of the Samajwadi Party. Relying on the PDA (Backward, Dalit, Minority) formula, the Samajwadi Party increased its seat count in Uttar Pradesh to 37 in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, winning most of the rural seats by playing the caste card.

The deletion of a large number of voters' names in Kannauj, Etawah, Badaun, Farrukhabad, and Bahraich is likely to raise concerns within the Samajwadi Party (SP)

camp. SP national spokesperson and MP Rajiv Rai said the SIR process was a result of a collusion between the BJP and the Election Commission. The party was working on its strategy and would soon take concrete steps.

The deletion of names of duplicate, deceased, and relocated voters, the addition of new names, and the migration of a large number of voters from urban areas to rural areas have altered the population figures in several assembly constituencies.

Traditionally, the BJP has had an edge over its political rivals in the National Capital Region (NCR) districts of Ghaziabad, Gautam Buddha Nagar, and Meerut.

The BJP has also held an edge in Bareilly and Agra in western Uttar Pradesh, Lucknow in central Uttar Pradesh, and Prayagraj, Varanasi, and Gorakhpur in eastern Uttar Pradesh. These districts saw the highest number of voter deletions.

The Rohilkhand region's districts of Rampur, Saharanpur, Moradabad, Bijnor, Amroha, and Pilibhit saw a total of 8% to 10% voter deletions. This region is considered a stronghold of the Samajwadi Party.

Azamgarh (9.46%), Ambedkar Nagar (9.90%), Mainpuri (10.29%), Jaunpur (9.86%), Etah (11.20%), Ghazipur (10.89%), and Firozabad (8.95%) also saw low voter deletion rates. The Samajwadi Party won a significant number of seats in these districts in 2022. The draft voter list released on January 6 contained 125.5 million voters, while the list released on October 27, 2025, contained 154.4 million voters.

BJP Uttar Pradesh unit president and union Minister of State for Finance Pankaj Chaudhary hit back at the Samajwadi Party, saying that statements by that party and Congress are completely devoid of facts, misleading, and merely an attempt to hide their political failures.

Short news

A letter, beard & speech: How a Bareilly boy identified fraud, saved his parents from 'digital arrest' scam

Lucknow. (Agency)

A letter on a signage, a long beard, and speech — these are the three inconsistencies that led a 14-year-old boy in Bareilly to suspect that the men threatening his parents over a call, alleging links to terror groups, were fraudsters, and eventually save them from getting duped. The callers kept the family under what police described as "digital arrest" for nearly nine hours on April 6, during which they were not allowed to leave the house or contact anyone outside.

As his parents were unwilling to accept his suspicion that the callers were fraudsters, Tanmay Saxena, a Class 7 student, took matters in his hands. He put his parents' mobile phone — through which the threats were being issued — on flight mode, effectively cutting off all communication.

The next day, after the family realised the nature of deception, they filed a police complaint at Prem Nagar Police Station, following which an FIR was registered against unidentified persons. No arrests have been made so far, police said.

AI-powered tool to help Gujarat Police weed out drug menace

KOZHIKODE. (Agency)

The state government on Friday said that police in Gujarat had become the first in the country to develop an artificial intelligence-driven tool that was aimed at strengthening narcotics investigation and enforcement.

Named 'NARIT AI' (Narcotics Analysis & RAG-based Investigation Tool), it provides real-time analytical support to investigating officers, as per an official note.

According to Gujarat Police, "NARIT AI is a Retrieval Augmented Generation (RAG)-based system designed to assist law enforcement agencies in handling complex narcotics cases under the NDPS legal framework. By integrating legal provisions, case laws, and investigative procedures, the system provides real-time analytical support to investigating officers."

The application was developed by Western Railway police, Vadodra division, in collaboration with a Mumbai-based AI startup.

The statement quoted Deputy Chief Minister Harsh Sanghavi as saying, "We have adopted a 'zero tolerance' policy towards narcotics-related crimes and will leave no stone unturned—from registering cases to securing convictions—by using all available tools, including AI."

The application was conceptualised under the guidance of in-charge chief of the state police, DGP KLN Rao and Surat City Police Commissioner Anupam Singh Gehlot, and was initiated by Abhay Soni, Superintendent of Police (SP), Western Railway, Vadodra.

The statement quoted SP Soni as saying, "Earlier, investigations were handled only by specialised police staff, which created workload and administrative delays. This tool will act as a force multiplier by leveraging the latest RAG-based AI technology and will enable every investigating officer to conduct proper, procedure-compliant investigations, thereby improving the conviction rate in NDPS cases."

Mamata Banerjee: A Saga of Struggle, Simplicity, and Governance

Kolkata/Ahmedabad. In the landscape of Indian politics, whenever the conversation turns to resilience and grit, one image stands out: a pair of humble rubber slippers, a simple cotton sari, and a face reflecting unwavering resolve. Mamata Banerjee, affectionately called 'Didi' by the masses, has become a symbol of simplicity and integrity in an era of opulence, proving that power does not have to distance a leader from their roots. Service Above Power The life of Mamata Banerjee is a testament to the fact that integrity is not just about financial transparency—it is about loyalty to one's ideology and the people. A leader who spent decades fighting on the streets to dismantle a 34-year-old political fortress, she never succumbed to the allure of luxury. Even today, she continues to reside in her modest ancestral house, staying true to the lifestyle she maintained long before she held the reins of the state. Welfare Schemes: Direct Impact on the Grassroots Her commitment to the people is best reflected in her flagship initiatives, designed to empower the most vulnerable sections of society. * Kanyashree Prakalpa: A world-renowned initiative that has provided education and financial independence to millions of girls. This scheme has earned global acclaim,



including prestigious recognition from the United Nations. * Swasthya Sathi: By providing health insurance cover to every household, she has ensured that the right to life and health is not a privilege but a guarantee for all. * Duare Sarkar (Government at Your Doorstep): This innovative administrative outreach, where the government reaches the citizen's threshold, stands as a hallmark of her transparent and people-centric gov-

ernance. 'Didi'—Resilient Amidst Challenges In a political climate where ideologies often shift like sand, Mamata Banerjee remains an unshakable rock. Throughout her career, she has prioritized the interests of the poor, the farmers, and the laborers over corporate agendas—be it during the historic Singur movement or the Nandigram struggle. Her personal life remains untouched by the stains of greed, and her focus remains singularly on public service. The Direct Connection with the People The public's deep-rooted affection for 'Didi' stems from her authenticity. She is not just a Chief Minister; she is a member of the family. Her 'politics of the soil' and fearless demeanor set her apart. When she walks through the narrow lanes of Bengal, it isn't a mere political stunt—it is a genuine manifestation of her bond with the common man. Conclusion For a woman to single-handedly influence national politics while fiercely guarding her state's identity is her greatest victory. Her integrity is mirrored in the eyes of millions of supporters who believe that as long as 'Didi' is at the helm, the fight for their rights will never cease. "A true leader is one who rejects the comforts of a palace to walk the dusty streets with the people." Special Feature: Mahanagar Metro News Desk

At Election Rally, Mamata Banerjee Levels Major Charge Against Bharatiya Janata Party

Kolkata. West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Saturday made a sensational allegation against the BJP during an election rally at Keshiyari in Paschim Medinipur, claiming that the party tried to get her nomination from the Bhabanipur constituency cancelled by using fake legal documents. Campaigning for Trinamool Congress candidate Ram Jiban Mandi, Banerjee said political opponents had allegedly prepared forged affidavits in her name in an attempt to invalidate her candidature, but the plan ultimately failed. She described the move as an act of political desperation driven by fear of defeat. Banerjee also launched a sharp attack on the ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, calling it a "major scam" designed to manipulate the outcome of the West Bengal elections. She alleged that nearly 90 lakh voter names were removed and claimed the process was being misused to weaken democracy. In an-



other explosive charge, she said that in Bihar, people whose names were deleted from the voter rolls were allegedly being threatened with removal from ration lists and freezing of bank accounts. Banerjee warned that no such tactics would be allowed in West Bengal. The Tri-

namool Congress chief further criticised the BJP's promise to implement the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) if voted to power, arguing that such a move would interfere with religious freedom and cultural customs of Hindus, Muslims, and tribal communities.

Abhishek Banerjee's Big Promise: "Your Snatched Voting Rights Will Be Restored Within One Month"

Kolkata. The political heat in Murshidabad's Rejinagar reached a new high as Trinamool Congress National General Secretary Abhishek Banerjee launched a sharp attack on the opposition while making a major promise to voters. Addressing a massive gathering at Pratap Sangha Ground, he said that all names "unjustly removed" from the voter list would be restored within one month of the government being



formed, assuring people that their democratic rights would not be taken away at any cost. Banerjee also targeted Humayun Kabir, accusing him of acting at the BJP's behest and betraying the trust of minority communities for personal gain. Referring to the recent AI-generated fake video controversy, he

questioned the BJP leadership, asking why resignations followed if the video was truly fake, and described it as an example of the party's "politics of fear." The rally made it clear that the TMC is positioning this election not just around development, but around the larger themes of rights, dignity, and respect, sending a strong political message from Rejinagar to the rest of West Bengal.

Seize historic occasion to empower nari shakti

In the coming days, India will be immersed in a festive season. The people of Assam will mark Rongali Bihu, while Odisha will celebrate Maha Bishuba Pana Sankranti. In West Bengal, Poila Boishakh will usher in the Bengali New Year, and in Kerala, Vishu will be observed with immense enthusiasm. In Tamil Nadu, Puthandu will be celebrated, while in Punjab and other parts of northern India, it will be Baisakhi, which will usher in a spirit of hope as well as positivity. I convey my best wishes to all those across India and the world who are marking these festivals. May these auspicious occasions bring happiness and prosperity to everyone's lives.

Furthermore, on April 11, we will commence the 200th birth anniversary celebrations of Mahatma Phule and on the 14th, India will pay homage to Babasaheb Ambedkar on Ambedkar Jayanti.

In addition to these special occasions, when the spirit of renewal fills our hearts and minds, our nation stands at the threshold of another historic occasion. It is an opportunity to deepen the foundations of our democracy and reaffirm our collective commitment to equality and inclusion.

On April 16, Parliament will be convened to discuss and pass an important Bill that advances women's reservation. To describe this merely as a legislative exercise would be an understatement. It is a reflection of the aspirations of crores of women across India. It is an affirmation of a principle that has long guided our civilisational ethos—society progresses when women progress. Women's contributions to our nation are vast and invaluable. Today, India is witnessing remarkable achievements by women across every field.

From science and technology to entrepreneurship, from sports to the armed forces, and from music to the arts, women are at the forefront of India's progress. Over the years, sustained efforts have been made to create an enabling environment for women's empowerment. Greater access to education, improved healthcare, enhanced financial inclusion and better access to basic amenities have strengthened the foundations of women's participation in economic and social life. Yet, their representation in the world of politics and legislative bodies has not always been commensurate with their role in society. This is particularly unfortunate because when women participate in administration and decision-making, they bring with them experiences and insights that enrich public discourse and improve the quality of governance. It is imperative that the 2029 Lok Sabha elections and the Assembly elections in the coming times are conducted with women's reservation in place. Over the decades, there have been repeated efforts to provide women with their rightful place in democratic institutions by the previous governments. Committees were made, Bill drafts were introduced, but they never saw the light of day. But the broad consensus remained that women's representation in legislative bodies has to increase. In September 2023, Parliament passed the Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam with the same spirit of consensus. I consider it to be among the most special occasions of my life. This opportunity to ensure women's reservation also resonates deeply with the spirit of our Constitution. The makers of our Constitution envisioned a society where equality is both enshrined and realised in practice. Strengthening women's participation in legislative institutions is an important step towards fulfilling that vision. It reflects our commitment to building a society where every citizen has an equal stake in shaping the nation's destiny. This is a moment that cannot be deferred any longer. Every delay in advancing women's representation is, in effect, a delay in strengthening the quality and inclusiveness of our democracy. For decades, the need for greater participation of women in legislative institutions has been acknowledged.

Iran makes Trump blink first

Diplomatic win for Tehran as US President accepts its 10 points as the basis of talks

A few hours before he was set to unleash "hell" on Iran, US President Donald Trump posted on Truth Social that he had agreed to "suspend the bombing and attack of Iran for a period of two weeks". In response, Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said on behalf of the country's Supreme National Security Council (SNSC), "If attacks against Iran are halted, our Powerful Armed Forces will cease their defensive operations". Israel grudgingly decided to follow the American lead. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said, "Israel supports President Trump's decision to suspend strikes against Iran for two weeks..." Thanks to this breakthrough, a ceasefire has begun. Both Trump and Iran have declared victory, while the world has heaved more than a sigh of relief.

There are crucial gaps in the protagonists' statements on the truce. The US and Israel have made the ceasefire contingent on the reopening of the Strait of Hormuz. Trump wrote that his decision was subject to its "complete, immediate and safe" opening, but he did not prescribe a modality. Iran has given a nuanced response. It has referred to its negotiating stand on the Strait; Tehran is keen to control the "passage through the Strait in coordination with Iran's armed forces, which confers a unique economic and geopolitical position on Iran". It remains to be seen how the Strait will function. Without its complete reopening, the ceasefire will not work.

Netanyahu has announced that the ceasefire does not include the fighting in Lebanon. Iran's statement, though equivocal — and Iranian diplomacy specialises in frustrating equivocation — indicates that it does. Will Iran continue with the ceasefire if Israel persists with its attacks on Lebanon? Will Trump rein in Netanyahu on Lebanon? The next 48 hours are critical to the continuation of the ceasefire, but there is too much at stake for Trump and the Iranians for it to fail. If Netanyahu plays spoilsport, Trump can bring him to heel. Meanwhile, Iran can claim diplomatic success in Trump's acceptance of its 10 points as the basis of negotiations. He wrote, "It is a workable basis on which to negotiate". He has set aside his own 15 points. But Iran would know that its document is an opening gambit. It has mentioned its requirements — UN Security Council guarantees for non-aggression, reparation, security of its proxies, removal of sanctions, unfreezing of assets and no US bases in the Gulf — but it's difficult to assume that most of these would be acceptable to the US. On nuclear enrichment, an indispensable US requirement, the SNSC

statement mentions "acceptance of enrichment", but does not dwell on this point. Iran would have to make concessions on the nuclear issue.

The scene will shift to Islamabad for diplomatic action if the US confirms that talks will be held there on April 10. Iran has done so. Pakistan, which it must be admitted is the current toast of a large part of the world, has "invited" both sides, but not Israel. It is likely that at least one round of negotiations will be held in Pakistan. After Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar's China visit, Pakistan's mediation seemed to have flagged, but the US and Iran decided to continue relying on it. Even as Trump has tried

the world because it has impacted global energy security and therefore, the global economy.

Indeed, the Iranian strategy of regionalising and globalising the war has been audacious but effective. Faced with an existential crisis, the Iranian system has responded successfully to save itself.

Did the US with all its war-gaming capacity not anticipate Iran's strategy and the commitment to shahadat (martyrdom)? Trump's chest-thumping and the use of expletives, and the bombing of Iran, cannot hide that he has not succeeded in his basic objectives. And, all this happened because the US does not care to understand the cultures of other peoples; that a people while being pragmatic can also draw on their cultural and spiritual heritage to offer resistance. Did India, like the US and Israel, anticipate that Iran will fold up soon? If it did, as it seems so, it betrayed an inadequate understanding of Shia Islam. That would not be surprising because the Indian establishment's knowledge of Islamic traditions is limited. That leads it to ignore or form half-baked ideas about them. It should have known that the Shia tradition of shahadat would lend resilience to Iran. Hence, the Indian articulation could have been different, even if the preponderance of its interests lay in the Arab Gulf states.

Above all, did the government realise, as the war clouds gathered, that Iran would close the Strait? Some Indian analysts believe that in the situation that confronted India, it could not but take sides and it made the right

choice. In making choices, subtlety should never be lost. In this case, India took recourse to the mantra of diplomacy and dialogue, but the perception that it had leaned towards the US and Israel remained. This was compounded by the timing of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Israel a couple of days before the attack on Iran.

The Ministry of External Affairs' statement welcoming the ceasefire will not be a balm for the Sangh Parivar or the PM's supporters who may smart at the international encomiums heaped on Pakistan. Maturity demands that our neighbour should be allowed its moment in the sun. This cannot last because its domestic dynamics will, as always, be its undoing.



to put a gloss on the Iran war, he has failed in his objective of removing the Vilayat-e-Faqih system. What he, and even more Israel, wanted was to crush it, and for Iran to sue for peace, if not surrender. The decapitation strike led to regime change, but the new regime will continue to operate within the clerical system. In Iran, it will be much of a muchness.

Iran globalised the impact of the war by taking it to the Arab Gulf states and even more by effectively choking the Strait. In doing so, it removed 20% of the world's hydrocarbons. All wars after World War II impacted, at most, some regions. The Vietnam and Afghanistan wars of the 20th century and the ongoing wars in Ukraine and Gaza fall in this category. The Iran war is the first since 1945 that has had global implications. It has threatened

Fragile ceasefire: US, Iran have a narrow window for negotiations

However, Israel has intensified its campaign in Lebanon, targeting Hezbollah and inflicting heavy civilian casualties in Beirut

THE declaration of a two-week ceasefire between the US and Iran offers a welcome pause in a war that has already reshaped West Asia's strategic landscape. After weeks of devastating air strikes, the effective blockade of the Strait of Hormuz and threats of civilisational destruction, even a temporary halt brings relief — to civilians, global markets and energy-dependent economies. However, beneath this fragile calm lies a troubling reality: none of the core disputes that triggered the hostilities have been resolved. Both Washington and Tehran have claimed success. President Donald Trump is portraying the ceasefire as evidence of American military dominance and a pathway to demolishing Iran's nuclear ambitions. Iran has framed the outcome as a strategic victory, having resisted the onslaught of US-Israeli forces and demonstrated its leverage over global oil flows. These competing narratives indicate recalibration, not a step towards achieving durable peace. The



widening of the conflict beyond Iran's borders is alarming. Israel has intensified its campaign in

Lebanon, targeting Hezbollah and inflicting heavy civilian casualties in Beirut. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has made it clear that this front remains active, exposing the ceasefire's limited scope. A truce that excludes parallel theatres of war seems unsustainable.

Even as Pakistan has come to the fore as a key mediator, conflicting interpretations of the ceasefire terms — particularly regarding uranium enrichment and control of the Strait of Hormuz — highlight the absence of a shared framework. Without clarity, even minor violations could ruin the agreement. Ultimately, this ceasefire is primarily a test of intent rather than a diplomatic breakthrough. It offers a narrow window for negotiations and is also a stark reminder of how quickly gains can be squandered. If the proposed talks in Islamabad fail to bridge the gulf, the region may soon find itself sucked back into the whirlpool of war.

Together, let us empower our Nari Shakti

The opportunity to ensure women's reservation resonates deeply with the spirit of our Constitution.

IN the coming days, India will be immersed in a festive season, with celebrations taking place across the length and breadth of the nation. The people of Assam will mark Rongali Bihu, while Odisha will celebrate Maha Bishuba Pana Sankranti. In West Bengal, Poila Boishakh will usher in the Bengali New Year, and in Kerala, Vishu will be observed with immense enthusiasm. In Tamil Nadu, Puthandu will be celebrated, while in Punjab and other parts of North India, it will be Baisakhi, which will usher in a spirit of hope as well as positivity. I convey my best wishes to all those across India and the world who are marking these festivals. May these auspicious occasions bring happiness and prosperity to everyone's lives. Furthermore, on April 11, we will commence the 200th birth anniversary celebrations of Mahatma Phule and on the 14th, India will pay homage to Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar on Ambedkar Jayanti. In addition to these special occasions, when the spirit of renewal fills our hearts and minds, our nation stands at the threshold of another historic occasion. It is an opportunity to deepen the foundations of our democracy and to reaffirm our collective commitment to equality and inclusion.

On April 16, Parliament will be convened to discuss and pass an important Bill that advances women's reservation. To describe this merely as a legislative exercise would be an understatement. It is a reflection of the aspirations of crores of women across India. It is an affirmation of a principle that has long guided our civilisational ethos — society progresses when women progress. Women constitute nearly half of India's population. Their contributions to our nation are vast and invaluable. Today, India is witnessing remarkable achievements by women across every field. From science and technology to entrepreneurship, from sports to the armed forces and from music to the arts, women are at the forefront of India's progress.

Over the years, sustained efforts have been made to create an enabling environment for women's empowerment. Greater access to education, improved healthcare, enhanced financial inclusion and better access to basic amenities have strengthened the foundations of women's participation in economic and social life.

Yet, their representation in the world of politics and legislative bodies has not always been commensurate with their role in society. This is particularly unfortunate because when women participate in administration and decision-making, they bring with them experiences and insights that enrich public discourse and improve the quality of governance. It is imperative that the 2029 Lok Sabha elections and the Assembly elections in various states in the coming times are conducted with women's reservation in place. Over the decades, there have been repeated efforts to provide women with their rightful place in democratic institutions by previous governments. Committees were formed, draft Bills were introduced but they never saw the light of day. But the broad consensus has remained that women's representation in legislative bodies has to increase. In September 2023, Parliament passed the Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam with the same spirit of consensus. I consider it to be among the most special occasions of my life. This opportunity to ensure women's reservation also resonates deeply with the spirit of our Constitution. The makers of our Constitution envisioned a society where equality is both enshrined and realised in practice. Strengthening women's participation in legislative institutions is an important step towards fulfilling that vision. It reflects our commitment to building a society where every citizen has an equal stake

in shaping the nation's destiny. This is a moment that cannot be deferred any longer. Every delay in advancing women's representation is, in effect, a delay in strengthening the quality and inclusiveness of our democracy. For decades, the need for greater participation of women in legislative institutions has been acknowledged, discussed and reaffirmed.



To postpone action now would mean extending an imbalance that we already recognise and have the capacity to correct. At a time when India is moving forward with confidence and purpose, it is essential that our institutions reflect the aspirations of all citizens, especially those who form half our population. Timely

action will not only honour long-standing commitments but also ensure that the momentum of progress is sustained. This is truly a historic opportunity to make our democracy more representative, responsive and future-ready. This moment calls for collective action. It is not about any one government, party or individual. It is about the nation as a whole recognising the importance of this step and coming together to realise it. It is what we owe to our Nari Shakti. That is why the passage of a Bill for women's reservation should reflect the broadest possible consensus and be guided by the larger national interest. Such opportunities call upon us to act not for ourselves, but for future generations. They remind us that the true strength of a democracy lies in its ability to evolve and to become more inclusive over time.

As we approach this historic Parliament sitting, I appeal to all Members of Parliament, across party lines, to come together in support of this important step for the women of India. Let us seize this opportunity with a sense of responsibility and purpose. Let us act in a manner that reflects the

highest traditions of our democracy. India has always shown that when it comes to matters of national importance, it can rise above differences and act with unity. This is one such moment. Let us move forward together and strengthen constitutional values and empower our Nari Shakti for national progress.

How about building a little bird house this Summer?

Who wouldn't like to wake up to the chirping of birds or the sound of squeaky squirrels tumbling over tree branches in the backyard? For our ever-widening urban living spaces though, these early morning pleasantries may seem like a dream. But if well thoughtout, within our limited ambit too, we can still build tiny habitats for feathered creatures that fly around our homes almost unnoticed. The spring-summer season can be a good time to make a start. Here's how you can make your home bird-friendly...

PLACE A BIRD BATH

Birds also need to beat the heat on a scorching summer day, and nothing can be as joyful as a splash in the water. Set up tiny pools around the house, where birds can take a quick dip or halt for a bit to drink water. Keep these water sources clean and easily spottable.

INSTALL A NEST BOX

Placing a nest box in your garden or balcony can be the best possible way to invite those little sparrows, mynas, warblers and finches home. Just make sure that these wooden boxes are wellventilated and sheltered from bad weather, or even predators like cats.

SPARE A SNAG

Feeders aside, birds like to perch in broken branches. They also use these spots as signing



posts while marking their territory -in a way, dead trees in the backyard serve as a vantage point of their habitat. They can also double as anchors for bird houses.

CREATE LITTLE BRUSH PILES

Ground-nesting birds need brush shelters, particularly during breeding season. Transform a corner of your yard or balcony into a bird-friendly habitat, using twigs and fallen branches. Also, keep supplemental food close by, especially during seasons of scarcity.

KEEP YOUR KITCHEN GARDEN ORGANIC

Turn your garden or terrace into a safe haven for the little birdies by providing them with a leaf litter and organic food -such as grains, seeds, fruits and shoots -all year round. Use chemical pesticides sparingly, and let the lawn be a little more messy than manicured.

How to keep your house cool this summer

Hot, sweaty and humid days can tend to drain the energy out of our body. It is evident that one cannot survive the summer without air coolers and air conditioners. Keeping your home cool, may help you, to an extent, to beat the heat. Here are a few tips to keep your house cool...

- The problem area is the rooftop. It radiates heat and makes the entire house hot. Create a terrace garden to keep the rooftop cool. The soil will absorb the heat. If the rooftop is cool, the rooms will also be cool. If you plan to paint your house, paint the rooftop white, so that it reflects the heat.

- Always ensure that you close your blinds during the daytime. Heat waves tend to enter your rooms through open windows. So, it is best to close them. If you really want to leave the windows open, then do so after the sunset. As for

blinds, bamboo blinds are a good option to cool things down.

- Flannel sheets and upholstery should be changed regularly during summer. Opt for soft cottons in pleasant colours so that the room remains cool during the day.

- Switch off the home appliances after

using them. The radiations that come out from these electronics can add to the heat in the room. Avoid using incandescent bulbs.

- It is not just about keeping your house cool but you need to keep your body cool, too. Drink more liquids when you are at home. This is the time to indulge in those yummy milkshakes and smoothies.

- Try to cross-ventilate the house as much as possible. Also, remember to leave the exhaust fans switched on during the day.

- Do your kids stand near the refrigerator for cool air? Prevent them from doing so, as the effect is counterproductive.

The motor in the fridge starts working harder when left open for a long time, thus making your room hotter.

- This is the perfect time for grills. Chuck the stove and make ample use of the

outdoors in the evenings. Call your friends over for a grill party.

- Place a lot of flowers inside the house. This gives a pleasant atmosphere and is soothing. Also use this time to create a mini garden in the balcony, which not only looks pretty, but can cool down your room, too.



A good carpet can give you a feeling of comfort and luxury each morning. Regardless of the size of your budget or space, carpets can help you create a stylish interior with special tricks.

Angelique Dhama, chief marketing officer, Obeteer Rugs shares some carpet essential tips: - Rug is one of the most important decorative items in a room. Finding the rug of your choice is also one of the most difficult tasks. It is recommended that the rug is finalized first and then the room is decorated around it as it is always easier to find accessories to match the rug.

- Rug size can visually impact the decor, and also the perceived size of the room. While it is important to be practical since a larger rug can be more expensive, a rug should never feel small for a room. One has to ensure that the edges of a living room rug is placed under at least the front feet of the furniture, and in the case of dining rooms all chairs should still be on the rug when they are pulled out for use. Bedrooms and other areas can have throw rugs of smaller sizes depending on the decor needs. One can use two small or medium sized rugs to create two distinct living spaces in a large room.

- When using more than one rug, it's better to buy rugs that complement each other in style to avoid a jarring look.

- Colors of the rug should match your decor and the mood. A bold color can be used if the rug is the centerpiece of the room, whereas pastel colors are ideal for the rug to blend in with the surroundings.

- Dark and bright color rugs are better suited for large rooms. Light pastel color rugs are better suited for smaller rooms as they tend to make the room look larger.

- Patterned rugs go well with solid upholstery, but if furnishings are upholstered with heavy patterns, rug with subtle patterns or solid colors would be a better choice.

- Once can choose between traditional, transitional, floral and modern patterns based on your style and the other furnishing items in the room.

- Wool is the fiber of choice of rug connoisseurs. In addition to being a natural fiber, wool is warm in winter and cool in summer, it is easy to clean and maintain, and has a very soft feel under foot. Wool absorbs noise much better than other fibers. Wool also retains the original colors and keeps looking fresher for many years.

- Most reputed dealers allow customers to try out rugs at home before final purchase. Make use of this service as you should be sure you are buying the right rugs for your home.

- Carpets often anchor your room, so they should be chosen wisely. Choose right size, pattern and color to suit your decor. Also keep the aesthetics to coordinate with the furniture and drapes. E.g. a very beautiful modern rug may look disastrous if kept in a traditionally decorated room.

How you should use

Rugs

to decorate your

Room



Are they hazardous to health?

Carpets and rugs can turn into health hazard if they are not maintained well. Angelique says, "Since mites are trapped by fibers and rug pile, one can avoid buying rugs with long, shag pile. However, normal rugs are safe as long as they are vacuumed regularly and kept clean."

Here are ways you can keep your carpets clean and make them live longer:

- Carpets should be vacuumed regularly - Blot spills should immediately be cleaned with a dry cotton cloth.

- The best way to maintain them is by keeping them away from moisture, getting it professionally cleaned regularly if stored; one has to keep it in a dry place.

Short news

4 Pune journalists 'on sting operation' booked for filming a woman changing clothes in a hotel room

Pune.(Agency)

The Pune police on Friday booked four journalists for allegedly taking objectionable video of a woman while she was changing her clothes in a hotel room in the Budhwar Peth area of Pune city. The police said that the accused, identified as Rohan Kadam, who worked for a television news channel, and three others, took a room on rent in Ajay Lodge in Budhwar Peth on April 8 and allegedly took a video of a woman changing her clothes in another room, claiming that they were doing a "sting operation".

The woman who noticed the inappropriate act raised an alarm and registered a First Information Report (FIR) in the case at the Vishrambag police station on Friday night. The journalists were booked under Section 77 (Capturing or sharing images of a woman where she has a reasonable expectation of privacy), and Section 3 (5) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS).

After the incident came to light, the Pune Union of Working Journalists (PUWJ) condemned the act of the journalists and wrote to the Commissioner of Pune City Police to take legal action against them. PUWJ office-bearers held a meeting with Deputy Commissioner of Police Krishikesh Rawale, saying the organisation does not support wrong activities of any journalists.

Cyber fraud: After father books car on rent, man loses Rs 7 lakh

BENGALURU.(Agency)

A 25-year-old man, working as a tech consultant with a private company, lost Rs 7 lakh to cyber fraudsters soon after his father submitted his credit card details online to book a car on rent. He lodged the first information report (FIR) at Kothrud police station on Thursday.

Police said the complainant is a resident of Kothrud. On November 26, his father did a search online and found a WhatsApp number of a firm that claimed to provide cars on rent. However, police said, the WhatsApp number was put up online by cyber fraudsters. When the complainant's father called on this number, a fraudster who received the call gave instructions to pay the money online for the booking.

Police said the father gave the complainant's credit card information to the fraudster, who also asked him to share his mobile phone screen by clicking on a link. Within sometime, the fraudsters managed to gain access to the mobile phone of the complainant's father. Police said the fraudsters transferred Rs 7.07 lakh from the complainant's credit card account into other fraudulent bank accounts in three online transactions on the same day.

The victims initially filed a complaint at the Cyber police station. After verification, an FIR was lodged at Kothrud police station on Friday. Police have booked the unidentified cyber fraudsters in this case under Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) sections 319(2), 318 and sections of the Information Technology Act. A team led by senior police inspector Sandeep Deshmane is investigating the case. Police are probing the mobile phone as well as the WhatsApp numbers and bank accounts used by the cyber criminals.

BY Vijayendra attends BJP meet in Delhi; stresses organisational push in Karnataka

BENGALURU.(Agency)

Opposing the establishment of Karnataka Public (Magnet) Schools by closing government schools within a 5-6 km radius of KPS schools, All India Democratic Students Organisation (AIDSO) organised a state-level convention on April 10 in Freedom Park in Bengaluru.

Hundreds of protesters, including parents, children, Kannada authors, educationists and AIDSO activists gathered at the convention to oppose the move. Kannada writer K Marulasiddappa said, "The Congress government has snatched away the people's right to education and handed out guarantee schemes instead. All governments ruling us have consistently protected the interests of wealthy businessmen while neglecting the poor. By snatching away people's right to education, healthcare and employment, the government is attempting to silence them with their guarantee schemes. Let us unite to fight for our neighbourhood schools against a government that fails to understand their importance."

Meanwhile, Dr VP Niranjanaradhya, a developmental educationist, stated, "In its election manifesto, Congress promised to completely reject NEP-2020 and strengthen education by introducing SEP (State Education Policy). However, it is shameful that it has undemocratically implemented the KPS Magnet Scheme, which is similar to the cluster school scheme stated in NEP."

Two years after it was proposed, Mumbai opens first detention centre for illegal foreign nationals

Mumbai.(Agency)

Nearly two years after it was first mooted and months after being described as "almost ready", the state's first 'sthandbadhata kendra' (detention centre) in central Mumbai has finally become operational. The facility, located in Bhoiwada, began functioning two weeks ago and currently houses around 40 Bangladeshi nationals awaiting deportation.

Last month, The Indian Express had reported that the centre remained unused due to a bureaucratic deadlock over its management, even as police struggled to accommodate detainees who could not be jailed as they were not facing criminal charges. In 2025, police detained and deported 1,058 Bangladeshi nationals, many of whom were temporarily housed in police station rooms. "On March 26, the facility that can house nearly 80 people was made operational; it was taken over by the Social Welfare department with security provided by the Maharashtra State Security Force within the compound and a constable outside the two-storey structure that has 20 rooms each floor with two bunk beds on either sides," a senior officer said.

That the 40 people lodged at the centre will remain until being transported to the Indo-Bangla border for deportation, the officer said. A lone police guard from the Local Arms



Division was stationed outside the structure during a visit by The Indian Express. Sources said that the Social Justice and Special Assistance department, which manages the facility, has divided it into male and female sections, with space for 60 men and 20 women. "All the necessary facilities such as food, bathrooms and bunk beds are available at the detention centre."

However, operational challenges remain. "The division of male and female sections was skewed as they assumed more men would be detained. In reality, more women are being detained and the space for 20 women has already filled up due to which we have to house some of them in police stations," an officer said. "We will request the Social Welfare department to make necessary changes..." the officer said.

While over 1,061 Bangladeshi nationals were deported in 2025, nearly 400 have been detained this year, until March-end — 220 by the Mumbai police, and 180 by other units. "While the capacity of the detention centre may at times be inadequate, but with people staying there hopefully for a few weeks before they are deported, it should not be an issue," the official said. The delay in operationalising the centre stemmed from disagreements between departments. The SJSA department had expressed reservations about handling foreign nationals, while police maintained that the detainees were neither accused in criminal cases nor in judicial custody.

DMK urges Election Commission to revoke TN Chief Secretary's transfer

The DMK also underlined that several routine matters, including file clearances and court-related issues, need attention in the run-up to the announcement of election results.

CHENNAI.(Agency)

The DMK on Saturday criticised the Election Commission of India's decision to transfer Tamil Nadu Chief Secretary N Muruganandam and appoint M Sai Kumar in his place, calling the move "arbitrary and unreasonable".

In a representation to Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar and Election Commissioners Sukhbir Singh Sandhu and Vivek Joshi on April 9, DMK treasurer and MP T R Baalu said the order, issued on April 8, did not cite any reasons for the transfer. He pointed out that no major political party had raised complaints against Muruganandam, questioning the basis for the decision.

Baalu emphasised that administrative continuity was crucial, especially as the Assembly election



process is underway. "The government cannot come to a standstill during elections. The Chief Secretary plays a key role in overseeing day-to-day administration," he said.

Highlighting that Muruganandam has been serving as Chief Secretary for over a year and a half, Baalu noted that he is best placed to ensure the smooth functioning of governance during the election period, when political leadership is largely engaged in campaigning.

The DMK also underlined that several routine matters, including file clearances and court-related issues, need attention in the run-up to the announcement of election results.

Urging immediate intervention, Baalu requested the Commission to withdraw its April 8 order and reinstate Muruganandam as Chief Secretary to ensure continuity and stability in the state administration.

Delimitation: CM Revanth warns of 'serious damage' to southern states, calls it a regional issue

HYDERABAD.(Agency)

Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy on Friday said that the Centre's proposed constituency delimitation exercise would cause "serious damage" to southern states, alleging that the move is akin to "killing someone who is already wounded".

During a chat with reporters in Delhi, he questioned whether southern states, which are already facing economic disadvantages, should now suffer political losses as well.

Calling delimitation a "regional issue rather than a party issue," Revanth accused the Centre of attempting to gain power by increasing seats in larger northern states. He further alleged that leaders from southern states are already being pushed into "secondary roles" in national politics and higher offices.

On women's reservation, Revanth reiterated that the Congress remains committed to its implementation. However, he argued that the real issue lies in the proposed increase in Lok

Sabha seats linked to delimitation. He described the idea of a 50% increase in seats as an "attractive cover" to mask deeper regional imbalances.

Revanth warns Centre of backlash over 'flawed' delimitation The chief



minister questioned the Centre's intent, suggesting that if there was genuine commitment to women's reservation, 181 out of the existing 543 Lok Sabha seats could be allocated to women in the upcoming elections itself.

Revanth said he had raised concerns over the injustice likely to be faced by southern states during the delimitation process at the Congress Working Committee meeting earlier in the day.

He added that the party would also consult its allies in the INDIA bloc before deciding on a forward strategy.

Drawing parallels with past protests, he reminded the Centre of the backlash it faced over the now-repealed farm laws, cautioning against ignoring regional concerns.

The chief minister remarked that if seat distribution increases significantly in larger states, leaders like G Kishan Reddy and Bandi Sanjay "may not even get attendant-level positions." He warned that if delimitation is carried out as per the Centre's current approach,

southern states could risk losing their political relevance. He also alleged that the BJP has historically been uncomfortable with the growth and progress of southern states. He suggested that apart from population, economic contribution should also be considered as a basis for constituency delimitation and representation, especially in Cabinet formation and parliamentary strength.

Bihar man held after offering foreign agency help to breach PM Modi's security

Chennai.(Agency)

A man has been arrested in Bihar's Buxar district for allegedly sending a message to a foreign intelligence agency's website, claiming he could compromise Prime Minister Narendra Modi's security in exchange for money, police said. The accused, Amal Kumar Tiwari from Simri, was apprehended on Thursday night. A laptop, mobile phones and other digital evidence were seized from his residence.



According to a PTI report police said that, Tiwari had posted a message on the website of a US-based intelligence agency, seeking payment in return for breaching the Prime Minister's security. Investigators found multiple VPNs and applications on his phone that were used to access the dark web. Police also recovered fake identity documents, which were allegedly being used for cybercrimes. During interrogation, Tiwari confessed to his involvement in the incident. He was earlier booked in a case related to threatening to hack the Kolkata airport website, officials said. He is currently being questioned by police and central agencies.

DBS testing helps Maharashtra scale up sickle cell screening in Nandurbar

Finger-prick genetic test boosts accuracy, drives mass screening in tribal district under national mission

Mumbai.(Agency)

In Maharashtra's tribal district Nandurbar, a simple finger-prick test is helping scale up screening for sickle cell disease, a genetic blood disorder that continues to affect thousands in the region.

Under the National Sickle Cell Anaemia Elimination Mission, the district has screened nearly seven lakh people since April 2025 using dried blood spot (DBS)-based Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) testing, replacing older methods that were faster but less reliable. Officials say the shift has improved both accuracy and coverage, with around 7,000 people diagnosed so far in Nandurbar and up to 22% of those screened identified as carriers. The disease, which causes red blood cells to become rigid and block blood flow, leads to severe pain, infections and organ damage. In tribal districts like Nandurbar, a predominantly tribal region of nearly 20 lakh people, where

communities often marry within close social groups, the risk of transmission is higher. Sickle cell disease follows a clear genetic pattern, if both parents are carriers, there is a 25% chance that their child will be born with the disease and a 50% chance that they will be born as carriers, even though the parents themselves may not show symptoms. Health officials estimate that over 15,000 people in the district may be living with the condition, many of them undiagnosed.

Under the National Sickle Cell Anaemia Elimination Mission, Nandurbar has identified around 11 lakh people below the age of 40 for screening. With the introduction of DBS-based testing in April 2025 in the district, screening has gathered pace. The district conducts close to 50,000 tests every month. For years, large-scale screening relied on solubility tests, a quick and low-cost method in which a drop of

blood is mixed with a solution; a cloudy result indicates possible sickle haemoglobin. However, the test cannot



distinguish between patients and carriers and may yield inaccurate results. "They were useful for initial screening, but not always reliable at scale," says Dr Giriraj Ratan Chandak, founder of Lightening Lives LLP and former chief

scientist at the CSIR-Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology, Hyderabad. "When you are testing lakhs of people, even a small margin of error can translate into a large number of missed or wrongly classified cases."

While the DBS-based Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) method has been piloted across several states over the past few years, sustained programmes have been uneven. "We began work in Chhattisgarh around 2018, followed by Maharashtra in 2019, and later expanded to Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Jharkhand," Dr Chandak says.

"In many places, we conducted large-scale testing and trained teams at institutions like AIIMS Nagpur and AIIMS Bhopal, as well as medical colleges in Rajasthan. But these efforts did not always translate into sustained, district-level programmes."

Covered for 40 years, Delhi Gate drain opened as desilting picks up pace ahead of monsoon

Work crosses 70% at Delhi Gate drain, 78% at Barapulla; over 14 lakh MT silt removed as govt pushes time-bound plan to curb waterlogging

New Delhi.(Agency)
In a push to boost monsoon preparedness, Delhi's Irrigation & Flood Control Minister Parvesh Sahib Singh on Friday conducted an on-ground inspection of desilting work at two key drains managed by his department (IFCD)—the Delhi Gate drain and the Barapulla drain. The visit underscored both the scale and urgency of efforts under way to address waterlogging in the Capital ahead of the rains. In a significant development, the Delhi Gate drain—covered with slabs for nearly 40 years—is now being opened for comprehensive cleaning. For decades, the covered structure had severely limited effective desilting, contributing to recurrent waterlogging in surrounding areas. For the first time in four decades, the slabs are being dismantled to provide full access to the drain, enabling

deep cleaning and restoration of its carrying capacity. The minister stated that desilting at the Delhi Gate drain has already surpassed 70%, with more than 21,000 metric tonnes of silt removed so far. Work is progressing rapidly, with substantial deployment of machinery and manpower visible on the ground. At the Barapulla drain, another crucial IFCD channel, the minister noted that desilting is nearing 78% completion, with over 31,000 metric tonnes of silt cleared. The scale of operations reflects a focused and time-bound approach to ensure major drains are fully functional before the monsoon. Reviewing the overall progress of drains under the IFCD, the minister noted that out of the 77 identified drains, nearly 50% of

desilting has been completed, with more than 14 lakh metric tonnes of silt removed so far. The department has set a target of 28 lakh



metric tonnes, and work is continuing without interruption to meet this goal within

the stipulated timeline. He said, "This is not just about cleaning drains. It is about correcting years of neglect and ensuring that Delhi is prepared before the rains arrive. Our focus is clear—start early, work with urgency, and complete desilting on time." The minister emphasised that desilting work across IFCD drains this year is being closely monitored, with accountability enforced at every level to prevent delays and ensure quality execution. Strict timelines are being followed to keep the city ready. **21K-MT silt removed from drain** The minister stated that desilting at the Delhi Gate drain has already surpassed 70%, with more than 21,000 metric tonnes of silt removed so far. Work is moving fast, with machinery and manpower.

Man gets life term for raping deaf, mute woman with mental disabilities

New Delhi.(Agency)
A 55-year-old man has been awarded life imprisonment by a special court in Rajasthan's Tonk district for raping a 20-year-old mentally challenged deaf-and-mute woman with locomotor disabilities. The court has also imposed a fine of Rs 1.25 lakh on the convict. The verdict was delivered by the special SC-ST court of Tonk. The man, named Ramlal, worked as a commission agent at brick kilns, and the survivor's house was under construction at the time of the incident. He committed the heinous crime when the survivor was alone at her residence. However, during the incident, the young woman's mother and sister, who were initially away, suddenly reached home. After they raised an alarm, the family's neighbours rushed there and overpowered Ramlal. He was later arrested by the police. The court relied on 16 witnesses, 33 documents, and 5 articles, presented by the prosecution, to reach its verdict. Due to her severe physical limitations, the survivor was brought to the court in a wheelchair by her parents. Judge Aarti Maheshwari of the Tonk SC-ST court read out a self-penned poem, inspired by the survivor's fight for justice, as she pronounced the quantum of punishment for Ramlal. The court has also ordered compensation for the survivor. The case highlights the need for swift judicial process in addressing crimes against vulnerable individuals.



Kerala Girl Who Went Missing During Hike In Karnataka Found Dead 4 Days Later

Sri Nanda, a Class 10 student and a native of Palakkad in Kerala, was on a family trip in Karnataka with around 40 relatives.

New Delhi.(Agency)
A 14-year-old girl from Kerala who went missing during a family trip to the Chandradrona hill range in Karnataka was found dead - four days after an intensive search by the police, with her family suspecting a case of kidnapping. Sri Nanda, a Class 10 student and a native of Palakkad in Kerala, was on a family trip in Karnataka with around 40 relatives. According to the police, they had visited the UNESCO World Heritage Site Hampi in the North Karnataka region and arrived in Chikkamagaluru city at 3 pm on April 7. They then travelled in private jeeps to a shrine and later went for a hike to a tourist spot in the Chandradrona hills on April 7. The girl was seen in a video with one of her family members on the day of the hike. However, around 6 pm - as the darkness set in, the girl went missing.

According to her family, they had last seen her in the Manikyadhara region of the hills. Despite continuous search efforts by family members initially, she could not be traced, prompting a police complaint. The cops immediately launched a



search operation in the deep ghat sections and steep terrains of the hills. Officials used ropes to access difficult areas, while drone surveillance had also been deployed during night operations. Four days after a continuous search, Sri Nanda's body was found in the valley, nearly

1,500 feet below the Manikyadhara viewpoint. The girl's family expressed suspicion that she had been kidnapped.

"One argument is that the girl was kidnapped, while another suggests that she may have gone away with someone.

Such opinions are being expressed, but the truth will be known once she is traced," Karnataka Home Minister G Parameshwara said.

Although authorities launched the search operation immediately and used modern equipment such as thermal cameras and drones, no clues were found initially, which raised suspicions.

Officials are probing all angles and verifying whether she slipped from the mountain or if there is any other reason behind the incident, they said. Police have seized the mobile phones of the girl's parents for further investigation.

'Dosa' deaths: Did 'son' preference play a role in Ahmedabad girls' case? Diary, sulphas tablets deepen mystery

New Delhi.(Agency)
Days after two young girls died and their parents hospitalised after allegedly consuming homemade dosa in Gujarat's Ahmedabad, a report by Forensic Science Laboratory has ruled out it to a case of suspected food poisoning. While the oldest girl was four years old, the youngest — born earlier this year — was three months old. The initial investigation has revealed that the girls died after consuming a toxic substance commonly found in a pesticide known as sulphas, which is used for grain preservation. Police have recovered sulphas tablets from the house of the victims and sent it for examination. They are examining if this was mixed with food or ingested orally. Samples of leftover food and other materials have been sent for analysis. **What diary mentions about desire for a son** Police have also found a diary from the house which points to the desire to have a son. Blood samples of the parents, Vimal Prajapati and Bhavna Prajapati, also showed the presence of this poison — high concentrations of aluminium phosphate and zinc. It has clear the air on the initial suspicion that the deaths were not caused by eating dosa, but due to ingestion of poison. On April 1, Vimal had brought ready-made dosa batter from a local dairy, after which the family consumed dosa. The incident at Chandkheda had raised concerns over adulterated food, however, no other customer fell ill after using the same product. Given the seriousness of the case, the cops then started examining different it from different angles including mass suicide or murder. **Family's background under scrutiny** The cops are also analysing CCTV footage from nearby areas to identify any suspicious activity. Meanwhile, the family's background is also under scrutiny. A personal diary recovered from the house points to a desire to have a son. The diary entry also mentions a vow to visit a particular temple after the birth of a son. Police have found that Vimal Prajapati had been unemployed for a long time and was trying to build a career in modelling. He was also planning to travel to Australia. Financial distress and domestic tension have also come to light.

Most wanted gangster Sahil Chauhan deported from Thailand, STF to take custody

New Delhi.(Agency)
In a major breakthrough for Indian security agencies, most wanted gangster Sahil Chauhan is being brought to India after being deported from Thailand. According to officials, Chauhan will arrive at the Indira Gandhi International Airport in Delhi, where he will be taken into custody by the Haryana Special Task Force (STF) immediately upon landing on Saturday. Chauhan, a notorious figure in organised crime, is also wanted by the National Investigation Agency (NIA) in connection with multiple cases. He is believed to be a key member of the gang led by Koushal Chaudhary, who is currently lodged in a Haryana jail. Investigators allege that Chauhan played a significant



role in orchestrating several contract killings in India while operating from abroad. His activities had made him a high-priority target for law enforcement agencies. Sources said that Chauhan was recently detained overseas following coordinated efforts by central agencies and the Haryana Police. His deportation marks a crucial step in ongoing attempts to dismantle transnational criminal networks linked to Indian gangs. Officials added that extensive security arrangements have been put in place at the Delhi airport ahead of his arrival. After being taken into custody, Chauhan is expected to be produced before a court and may be taken to Haryana for further interrogation.

Poll Body Orders Repoll In Assam's Karimganj North After Scrutiny Of Records

New Delhi.(Agency)
The Election Commission of India (ECI) on Friday ordered a repoll for Assam's Karimganj North following a detailed post-poll scrutiny of Form 17A and other poll-day records. According to the ECI, the repoll is scheduled to be conducted on Saturday, April 11. The Commission stated that the scrutiny of documents was carried out smoothly across all 296 Assembly Constituencies (ACs) that went to polls in Assam, Kerala, and Puducherry, as well as four ACs where bye-elections were held in Karnataka, Nagaland and Tripura. The process was conducted in the presence of 296 Returning Officers (ROs) and 296 General Observers

(GOs) appointed by the Commission. All 1,899 candidates were informed in advance about the date, time, and venue to ensure their participation in the scrutiny exercise.



Joshi, held a review meeting with Central Observers deployed in Tamil Nadu ahead of the upcoming Assembly elections.

JNU student leaders raise funding, staffing issues for health centre with CMO

JNUSU tells CMO staff unpaid for two months, warns resource shortages and reimbursement issues may hit access to affordable healthcare

New Delhi.(Agency)
The Jawaharlal Nehru University Students' Union (JNUSU) on Friday met the university's Chief Medical Officer (CMO) to discuss issues related to the functioning of the campus health centre, flagging concerns over funding constraints, staff shortages, and delays in salary payments. According to the student body, the health centre is currently operating with limited financial resources. It reportedly receives around `5,000 for stationery, `5 lakh for first aid, and `1 lakh for miscellaneous and maintenance expenses. Students claim that these allocations are insufficient to meet the operational requirements of the facility. During the meeting, the union was informed that some part-time staff at the health centre have not received salaries for the past two



months. The issue of delayed payments, particularly in a central university setting, was highlighted as a matter of concern. The JNUSU also pointed to the reimbursement-based funding mechanism, stating that submitted vouchers are not always fully compensated, adding to

financial strain. It further alleged that there is increasing pressure to reduce services and move towards a more self-sustaining model, which, according to the union, could impact access to affordable healthcare on campus. Students also claimed that, in some cases, payments for certain medical tests prescribed by doctors at the health centre have been denied, which they attributed to the ongoing financial constraints. The JNUSU has urged the administration to address the issues by ensuring timely release of funds, clearing pending salaries, and maintaining the full range of services at the health centre. **Delayed salary issue highlighted** During the meeting, the union was informed that some part-time staff at the health centre have not received salaries for the past.

Indian markets surge for second consecutive week amid US-Iran ceasefire

New Delhi.(Agency)

Indian equity benchmarks closed in green for the second consecutive week, amid huge short covering due to the US-Iran ceasefire. Nifty gained 5.89 per cent during the week and added 1.16 per cent on the last trading day to reach 24,050. At close, the Sensex was up 918 points or 1.20 percent at 77,550. It gained 5.77 per cent during the week. Bank Nifty overperformed the broader market, closing at 55,912, up 1.99 per cent on Friday. It posted a steep weekly surge of 8.47 per cent. On the weekly timeframe, the Bank Nifty index has formed a strong bullish candle, suggesting continued strength and potential for further upside if momentum sustains. The index is likely to find support in the 53,700-53,000 range, while resistance is placed around the 56,700-57,700 zone, market participants said. Analysts noted that Nifty's movement indicated strong buying participation and reflects a bullish undertone in the market.

From a technical standpoint, the 23,500-23,150 range is likely to act as a key support zone. On the upside, resistance is expected in the 24,500-25,000 band, they said. Meanwhile, India VIX fell by 7.72 per cent to close at 18.85, pointing to reduced volatility and a decline in market fear. However, the volatility remains high, as doubts grow over the sustainability of the US-Iran truce. Sectorally, Nifty realty, capital markets and financial services emerged as the top gainers on a weekly basis up 12.97 per cent, 11.7 per cent and 10.8 per cent, respectively. Broader indices performed in line with the benchmark indices during the week, as the Nifty Midcap100 added 7.76 per cent, while Nifty Smallcap100 gained 7.60 per cent. Investors remain keen on developments in the US-Iran negotiations, crude oil price movements and foreign fund flows.

Swiggy co-founder Nandan Reddy steps down amid board leadership reshuffle

New Delhi.(Agency)

Food and grocery delivery company Swiggy said on Friday that its cofounder and head of innovation, Nandan Reddy, will step down from his executive position and also leave his seat on the board.

Reddy, who cofounded Swiggy with Sriharsha Majety and Rahul Jainini, is leaving the company to start his own venture. Jainini had exited the company in May 2020. The Bengaluru-based firm said in a stock exchange filing that cofounder and chief growth officer Phani Kishan Addepalli, along with chief financial officer Rahul Bothra, will join its board of directors. Renan De Castro Alves Pinto from Prusur Ventures will also join the board as a nominee director, replacing Roger Rabalais, who is stepping down after transitioning from the Dutch technology investor. In a separate filing, Swiggy said it is making changes to its articles of association to reorganise shareholder rights related to nominating directors to the board. As part of this move, the company has removed the rights previously held by Accel and SoftBank to nominate directors. In July last year, SoftBank's Sumer Juneja and Accel's Anand Daniel had already stepped down from the board. As of December 31, Accel held a 2.8% stake in Swiggy.

The company has also given cofounder and group CEO Sriharsha Majety the right to nominate himself and one more member of the senior management team to the board, which has enabled Bothra's appointment. Addepalli's appointment comes in place of Reddy. Addepalli, who earlier led Swiggy's quick commerce business Instamart, was elevated to cofounder in July 2021. "Nandan has been a vital collaborator and a visionary force throughout Swiggy's evolution—from our beginnings in a single Bengaluru neighbourhood to becoming a nationwide platform serving millions. His steadfast commitment to our culture, innovation, and the consumer experience is woven into our DNA. While his daily presence will be missed, I look forward to the impact of his future endeavours," Sriharsha Majety, group CEO, Swiggy said.

How to double your money in a secured way: Check these post office schemes

New Delhi.(Agency)

The humble post office began offering savings instruments in 1882 with the setting up of the Post Office Savings Bank — barely three years after electricity was introduced in India in the former capital of Calcutta. The great deal of trust that Indians have built around the post office since then remain undiminished to this day. The post office now offers savings instruments which have become a byword for safety of investment, a dimension that is becoming significant as uncertainty grows in the financial markets. Armed with a government guarantee, your money remains safe in these schemes and grows over time. There are schemes that double your money in a predictable time frame. The rate of the interest in small savings schemes can be reset by the Union finance ministry once every three months. Let's have a look at these instruments, which still hold immense significance for those prioritising safety of capital and guaranteed returns above everything else.

Kisan Vikas Patra (KVP)

The Kisan Vikas Patra, popularly referred to as KVP, is one of the most popular schemes offered by the post office. Its primary objective is to encourage people to deposit money for long-term savings. It was introduced in April 1988 as a small savings instrument which was designed to double investments over a fixed time period. It was closed in 2011, but the government launched it again in 2014 to boost encourage long-term financial discipline.

Tenure and interest rate in KVP

This scheme doubles your investment in 9 years and 5 months. The annual rate of interest paid now stands at 7.5%. reased capital base.

Gold gains for third consecutive week amid dollar weakness

New Delhi.(Agency)

Gold prices rose 1.65 per cent during the week extending gains for their consecutive week, amid safe haven buying and weakened US dollar over easing inflation fears and the start of the US-Iran ceasefire negotiations.

On Friday, MCX gold June futures added 0.02 per cent while MCX silver May futures inched up 0.01 per cent. Currently gold futures stand at Rs 1,52,690, while silver futures at Rs 2,43,300 per kg. The price of 10 grams of 24-carat gold was at Rs 1,50,327 on Friday up from Rs 1,47,891 seen on Monday market opening, according to data published by the India Bullion and Jewellers Association (IBJA). Analysts noted that COMEX gold ended at USD 4,787.40 per troy ounce, up 3 per cent on a weekly basis, however a major resistance in ahead of USD 5,000, after which they predicted a strong bull run. Market participants said the dollar came under pressure after the US-Iran truce, as



traders reassessed the outlook for US interest rates.

Falling crude oil prices after the de-escalation fuelled hopes of lower inflation and renewed speculation about

US Federal Reserve rate cuts in the medium term. The commodities market navigated the week on a cautiously balanced note, with sentiment shaped by stabilising price action and continued

macro uncertainty, a market participant said, adding that precious metals showed early signs of stability following recent volatility.

Meanwhile, currency movements—particularly in the USD/INR pair—are likely to remain a key driver, with recent rupee strength offering some cushion to domestic commodity prices, he added.

Any reversal in the currency trend, driven by shifts in global risk sentiment or renewed dollar strength, could influence the next phase of price action.

The MCX Gold prices are holding above the key support band of Rs 1,48,000 to Rs 1,46,000, while the immediate resistance is placed around the Rs 1,54,000 to Rs 1,55,000 zone, he added. The MCX Silver prices are holding above the Rs 2,30,000 to Rs 2,25,000 support zone, with deeper support placed near Rs 2,05,000 to Rs 2,00,000, the analyst noted.

Middle East war to cut global growth, spike inflation despite truce: World Bank

The World Bank's baseline estimate now projects growth in emerging markets and developing economies of 3.65 per cent in 2026, compared to 4 per cent in October, dropping as low as 2.6 per cent in an adverse scenario with a longer-lasting war.

Washington.(Agency)

The war in the Middle East will have a cascading impact on the global economy, even if a ceasefire announced by U.S. President Donald Trump takes hold, World Bank President Ajay Banga told news agency Reuters in an interview on Friday.

And the damage will be far deeper if the ceasefire fails and the conflict escalates, he said. Banga on Tuesday said global growth could be lowered by 0.3 to 0.4 percentage point in a baseline scenario, with an early end to the war, and by as much as 1 percentage point if it endures. Inflation could increase by 200 to 300 basis points, with a much higher impact - of up to 0.9 percentage point - if the war continues, he said. The World Bank's baseline estimate now projects growth in emerging markets and developing economies of 3.65 per cent in 2026, compared to 4 per cent in

October, dropping as low as 2.6 per cent in an adverse scenario with a



longer-lasting war. Inflation in those countries was now forecast to hit 4.9 per cent in 2026, up from the previous estimate of 3 per cent. The extreme scenario could see inflation rising as high as 6.7 per cent, according to estimates viewed by Reuters.

The war, which has killed thousands of people across the Middle East, has sent

the price of oil up by 50 per cent while disrupting supplies of oil, gas, fertiliser, helium and other goods, as well as tourism and air travel. The two-week ceasefire announced by Trump appears tenuous, with Israel and Iran continuing strikes. Iran said on Friday that blocked Iranian assets must be released and a ceasefire must take hold in Lebanon before US-Iran talks, scheduled for Saturday in Pakistan, can proceed. Trump said that US warships were being reloaded with ammunition in case the talks failed. The question really is, does this current peace and the negotiations that are going to be happening this weekend - will this lead to a lasting peace and then a reopening of the Strait (of Hormuz)?" said Banga. "If it doesn't lead to that, and if conflict were to break out again, would that have an even larger impact, or longer-term impact on energy infrastructure.

FII's trimmed stake in these nine stocks in Jan-March: Check the list; do you own any?

In the Jan-March 2026 period several prominent stocks witnessed FIIs trimming their holdings in them. These represent a wide array of sectors. However, it must be kept in mind that the decline in FII stake in a stock is not necessarily representative of worrying state of affairs in the company.

Kolkata.(Agency)

FIIs have trimmed stake in a few prominent stocks in the Indian equity market in the Q4 period of FY26. The buying of offloading of any stock by FIIs are closely watched in the country and indicators consider it as a significant barometer. If FIIs cut their stake in a particular stock, it is often interpreted as a sign of caution. This can mirror changes in market sentiment, global conditions, or investment strategies. However, it is not necessary that a reduction in stake by FIIs is a signal of the less-than-satisfactory state of affairs in the company. According to data for the Q4 period, the following stocks witnessed a decline in FII holdings by more than 1% on a quarter-on-quarter basis. Let's have a closer look at these stocks.

Stocks in which FIIs trimmed stake

Eternal: FII stake declined from 36.24% in December 2025 to 32.61% in March 2026. Therefore, FIIs reduced their stake by up to 4% in a single quarter.
HDFC Bank: Foreign investors trimmed their stake in the biggest private sector lender in the country HDFC Bank from 47.67% to 44.05%.
Vijaya Diagnostic Centre: In this big diagnostic chain, FIIs slashed their holding from 15.1% to 13.38%.
DLF: In this real estate giant, FII stake went down from 14.81% to 13.54%.
Shree Cement: In this cement stock FII holdings went down from 10.07% to 8.94%.
Apollo Hospitals Enterprise: In this healthcare sector leader, FIIs cut their stake from 43.54% to 42.62%.
Emmvee Photovoltaic Power: In this renewable energy company, the stake by foreign investors went down from 3.97% to 2.45%.
International

Gemological Institute (IGI): In this company, FII holding declined from 9.61% to 8.6%.
Cemindia Projects: In this company, the stake held by foreign investors went down from 8.19% to 7.31%.

What does FII stake reduction signal?

A decline in FII holdings does not indicate anything in particular. It can be assessed from different perspectives. It need not be a worrying signal for investors. Often, foreign investors reduce their holdings to book profits or balance portfolio. Often global economic triggers are a cue. One has to watch if the decline in FII holdings is continuing from quarter to quarter. Such a persistent decline could indicate that major investors are cautious regarding these stocks. They could also be moving investments to other markets altogether.

Rent vs Buy in 2026: One of these will make you rich, The other will keep you broke

Buying a home means taking on a large loan, paying it back over 20 to 30 years, and eventually owning an asset that may or may not have grown in value.

New Delhi.(Agency)

This is one of the biggest money decisions most people ever make. And yet most people make it based on emotion — the feeling that owning a home means you have truly "made it," or the fear that renting means you are throwing money away every month. Neither instinct is entirely right. The truth depends almost entirely on your personal situation, the city you live in, and what your plan to do with the next ten years of your life. Buying a home means taking on a large loan, paying it back over 20 to 30 years, and eventually owning an asset that may or may not have grown in value. Renting means paying someone else each month for the right to live somewhere, with no ownership at the end — but also far fewer costs upfront and much more freedom to move. Neither option is inherently better. They are just different tools for different situations.

The case for buying

When you pay a home loan EMI every month, a portion of that payment is reducing what you owe and building your ownership stake in the property. Over time, you own more and more of it. When you rent, that money goes to your landlord and you own nothing at the end. That is the most basic financial argument for buying. Beyond that, property in India has historically gone up in value. In cities like Bengaluru, Pune, and Hyderabad, prices have risen between five and ten percent per year in growing areas. If you buy in the right location and hold for long enough, the property itself becomes a growing asset. There are also tax benefits. If you take a home loan, you can claim a deduction of up to Rs 2 lakh per year on the interest you pay under Section 24(b) of the Income Tax Act, and up to Rs 1.5 lakh on the principal repayment under Section 80C. For someone in a higher tax bracket, this is a meaningful saving every year.

Finally, owning your home gives you stability. No landlord can ask you to vacate at the end of eleven months. You can paint the walls, renovate the kitchen, and make the space genuinely yours.

The case for renting

Buying a home in India requires a lot of money upfront. A typical down payment is 20 percent of the property value. On a Rs 1 crore flat, that is Rs 20 lakh before you have paid a single EMI. Add stamp duty, registration charges, brokerage, and basic furnishing and you are easily looking at Rs 25 to Rs 30 lakh out of pocket on day one.

Buying a car or bike? The hidden truth behind insurance sold at dealerships

When you buy a car or bike, the final bill usually comes as an 'on-road price' that includes insurance. For most buyers, this is accepted without much thought, as it appears to be a standard part of the purchase. But what often goes unnoticed is that this insurance is not mandatory to buy from the dealer.

New Delhi.(Agency)

Buying a car or bike is often one of the milestone purchases people make. The focus is usually on the price, the model, the delivery date. Somewhere in that process, insurance quietly becomes just another item on the bill. It is bundled into the "on-road price", explained briefly, and rarely questioned. But that is where many buyers end up paying more than they should, or worse, buying a policy that does not fully protect them.

BUYING INSURANCE AT THE DEALERSHIP IS NOT AS SIMPLE AS IT LOOKS

At the time of delivery, most buyers are told that insurance is part of the process. In some cases, they are even made to feel that buying insurance from the dealer is necessary to avoid future issues with claims or servicing. But this is not true. Saurabh Vijayvergia, founder and

CEO, CoverSure, said this largely comes down to how insurance is sold at the point of purchase. "Most buyers rely on the dealer's guidance during a high-value purchase, while insurance quietly becomes a commission-led add-on within an OEM-broker ecosystem." In simple terms, insurance is often treated as a product to be sold, not a decision to be made.

WHY DEALERS PUSH THEIR OWN INSURANCE POLICIES

The biggest reason is commercial. Dealers earn commissions on insurance policies sold through their network. Since buyers are already in the process of making a large purchase, insurance becomes an easy add-on. Vijayvergia explained that this creates a clear information gap. "A buyer may be quoted an on-road price of Rs 10 lakh, which includes an insurance premium of Rs

45,000. A similar policy in the open market could cost Rs 30,000-Rs 35,000



or offer better coverage, but the difference is often masked with 'free' add-ons like accessories." This makes it difficult for buyers to compare or question the policy. The scale of the issue is also visible in data. The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India's (IRDAI) Annual Report 2024-25 noted a 14.3% rise in complaints under unfair

business practices, which includes mis-selling at the point of sale.

HOW POLICIES ARE MADE TO LOOK CHEAPER THAN THEY ARE

One of the most common ways this works is by making the premium look attractive upfront. Vijayvergia said dealers often use "premium compression" tactics. This means reducing the visible cost, but weakening the policy in ways that only become clear later. A common example is lowering the Insured Declared Value (IDV), which is the maximum amount you can claim if the vehicle is stolen or completely damaged. A lower IDV reduces the premium slightly, but can cut the claim amount by Rs 50,000 to Rs 1 lakh or more. Another tactic is adding high voluntary deductibles.



Help your Kids design a fairy Summer Garden

Are your kids in love with tiny little Tinkerbell and her world of fairies and pixies? Then a fairy garden would be the perfect summer gift for the little ones.

A fair(l)y new trend in container gardening, it is all about creating realistic landscapes — complete with cute little houses, cobblestone paths, fences and forests — in terracotta pots, wicker baskets, wide plastic bowls, wooden boxes, tubs et al.

Usually, these miniature gardens are created in such a way that they are visible from all sides. And it's completely up to you to create the ambience using small fences, tiny chairs or benches, random toys and whatever you fancy. Once your landscaping is done, create a small snaking path through your forest using coloured pebbles. Done? Now, let the fairies drop in!

What's more, a fairy garden is the perfect way to initiate your kids into learning more about plants during their summer vacations! So, let your imagination run riot!

Get, set, go...

- Put potting mix in the container.
 - You can experiment with various interesting arrangements by placing all the items for decoration
 - toy furniture, rocks, ornamental mushrooms, pebbles, twigs, seashells etc
 - here and there on the soil. Make sure they don't tumble out.
 - Once the layout is set, plant the largest root first. Small creepers are good for the borders.
 - Trim regularly to keep them growing low and lush.
 - You can use succulents that don't require a lot of care.
 - Water, as required, just to keep the soil moist.
- DIY: Broken-pot landscape
- Even a broken pot can look beautiful with some amount of imagination. It can be created either from the pieces left from an accidental break or from a carefully planned cut. To cut such a pot, soak it and use a craft drill or file to create a shape that can then be broken out with a hammer very carefully.
 - Fill the container with potting mixture and arrange the shards in the soil.
 - Broken pots with an assortment of succulents will make this garden a sight to behold.

Be creative while renovating

Your kitchen



Planning to renovate your kitchen? But this should not cost you a fortune or be beyond the reach of your modest budget. Just be creative, make simple changes and bring life into your kitchen. All of these ideas will cost you must less. So, what are you waiting for? Bring in that whole new look in your kitchen.

Paint: The cheapest way to change a space for a newer and better look, is to paint it. Change the colour and bring in some elements of spark. If you are happy with bright colours then you can go and change the 'all white' look of your kitchen. You can also paint your tiles and give your kitchen a whole new look.

Cabinets: All that you need is to change the look. If your cabinet

bases are in reasonably good shape, paint the cabinets. Or you can put some posters on the cabinets to give a new funky look.

Accessorise it: If you stick to neutral colours then you can add accessories. Put some cool poster in the kitchen.

You can also frame artworks done by your kids in the kitchen. If you have a collection of books on food and different cuisines or recipes, you can put them in your kitchen. Another great way to add life and vibrancy is to have potted indoor plants in your kitchen.



5 appliances every cook must have

Planning to cook? Then there is a list of appliances that you must have in your kitchen. Take a look at some of them...

A paring knife

This is the basic one, needed to cut small vegetables and fruits. You can easily slice fruits with it, cut the peels of potatoes and other thick skins, devein shrimp, de-seed and section fruits, etc. Always look for one with a comfortable handle.

Measuring cup

It's not always possible to cook saying, 'take a handful of this or that'.

Every kitchen must have a measuring cup or jar to measure liquids like milk or stick or even dry ingredients like sugar, before cooking. It's better to get a transparent plastic one that allows you to see what you are measuring.

Blender

A blender and hand blender are must-have appliances in the kitchen. The electric blender is used to mix foods and liquids like summer mocktails and soups and is available in different sizes. Blenders with a jug make it more convenient.

Vegetable peeler

Vegetable peelers or potato peelers are a most utilised appliance.

They can get the skin off carrots and apples quickly and make the cooking process effortless. There are several designs available, like the Y or straight type. You can also use the peeler to cut slices of cheese or make thin ribbons of chocolate.

Garlic press



This nifty little gadget is most useful as we Indians uses a lot of garlic in cooking. The press pushes the cloves through holes to get the peels. So you need not mince the garlic with a knife anymore, if you have this.

Do up your pad with bronze decor

Picture frames to adorn your living area

To make your living area look well-spaced out, use picture frames in bold bronze designs. You can use carved and detailed frames for paintings and photographs. If you wish to make a collage of many photographs, you can probably use a smaller picture frame in bronze to make it look interesting.

Bronze sculptures in your dining or living area

Bronze sculptures in different sizes and shapes looks very interesting. You can have Italian figures, Buddha sculpture or a bronze abstract sculpture

placed in your living area. But make sure that you do not clutter the area. Choose one piece that will stand out and make your room look interesting.

Wall fixtures

Wall fixtures also make your room look interesting. You can try having one in your bedroom as a bookshelf so just as a showpiece where you can place other decor items.

Large mirrors

Wall mirrors placed in your living area or bedroom can make your house look elegant. You can place it either in your hallway or near your dining area so that it does not clash with other decor items in your house.



NEWS BOX

Cooper Connolly inspired by Shaun Marsh aims to write his own story with Punjab Kings



New Delhi. (Agency)

Unlike most franchises, the Punjab Kings carry a burden that has little to do with talent and everything to do with time. Alongside Delhi Capitals, they remain one of the original sides still searching for that elusive Indian Premier League title. And yet, the absence of silverware has not meant an absence of impact. Over the years, Punjab have been home to players who have left their mark in ways that do not always reflect on a trophy cabinet. That is the enduring charm of the IPL, where some of the best talent from India and around the world come together, each bringing their own identity to the same stage. It was not too long ago that Connolly found himself in the unforgiving spotlight of international cricket. Just over a year back, he was drafted into the Australian squad as a replacement for Matt Short during the Champions Trophy. The opportunity came quickly, and so did the challenge.

PBKS vs SRH, IPL 2026: Preview

Facing Mohammed Shami in a high-stakes semifinal, Connolly was tested in conditions that demand precision and composure. It was relentless, and on that day, it proved a step too far. He was outdone. Outclassed. But not undone. What has followed since has been far more telling. There are signs of growth now. For the Punjab Kings this season, Connolly has begun to make those moments count.

An unbeaten 76 against the Gujarat Titans, guiding a chase with calm authority. A brisk 36 against Chennai Super Kings, delivering impact in a different role. Different situations, same assurance. And yet, when the conversation turns to legacy, Connolly is fully aware of the standards set by those who came before him. When asked about leaving behind something meaningful, like the impact players such as David Miller or Shaun Marsh have had, Connolly's response is measured.

No second season blues: Vaibhav Sooryavanshi makes ex-India batter eat his own words

New Delhi. (Agency)

Vaibhav Sooryavanshi has made former India batter Robin Uthappa eat his own words after his spectacular knock against Royal Challengers Bengaluru. Playing for Rajasthan Royals in the IPL 2026 match on Friday at the Barsapara Cricket Stadium in Guwahati, Sooryavanshi scored 78 off 26 balls as RR beat RCB by six wickets. Earlier this year, Uthappa had suggested Sooryavanshi might struggle with second season blues, noting his success involved some luck and surprise. He felt bowlers



would adapt, making it tougher, and predicted the youngster would learn, score runs, but not match last season where he hit the fastest century by an Indian. 'A GENERATIONAL TALENT'

Uthappa admitted he was happy to be proven wrong about Sooryavanshi, acknowledging there are no second season blues for him. He praised the 15-year-old's improved preparation, saying that he looks ahead of bowlers, called him a generational talent, and clarified he never labelled his previous p'I am only SO HAPPY to be wrong about this. Second season blues are a reality in professional sport. It's a part and parcel of professional sport. I have absolutely no qualms in saying that he's not having second season blues at the moment and he's come to this season heaps better prepared than the last one,' Uthappa wrote on X.

"He looks like he's one perhaps 2 steps ahead of the bowlers he's going up against! Truly a generational talent and I pray he will continue in this same way for the rest of career. And one clarification: I NEVER CALLED HIM OR HIS PERFORMANCE LAST SEASON A FLUKE!! Peace out," Uthappa added. **PERFORMANCE A FLUKE.**

HOW SOORYAVANSHI TOOK DOWN RCB Sooryavanshi was breathtaking against RCB, smashing eight fours and seven sixes.

Ayush Shetty vs Kunlavut Vitidsarn livestreaming: Where to watch Badminton Asia semis

Ayush Shetty stands one win away from a historic final as he faces World No. 1 Kunlavut Vitidsarn in Ningbo. Riding a giant-killing run, the young Indian now carries the nation's hopes on the continental stage.

LISBON. (Agency)

Ayush Shetty is on the verge of the biggest match of his young career as he prepares to take on Kunlavut Vitidsarn in the semi-finals of the Badminton Asia Championships 2026. The clash, set to be played in Ningbo, China, pits one of India's brightest emerging talents against the current World No. 1.

The Indian shuttler has been on a giant-killing run throughout the tournament. He began by defeating World No. 7 Li Shi Feng in straight games, before getting past Chi Yu Jen in the next round. But it was his quarter-final win that truly turned heads, a straight-games

victory over third seed Jonatan Christie. That result not only confirmed his arrival on the big stage but also ensured India a rare medal at the continental event. It has been a welcome boost for Indian badminton, especially after early exits for Lakshya Sen and HS Prannoy earlier in the tournament. Now, standing between Shetty and a place in the final is Vitidsarn, the reigning world champion and one of the most consistent performers on the circuit. It is a classic test of youth and momentum against pedigree and experience.

AYUSH SHETTY CARRYING INDIA'S HOPES

With Lakshya Sen and HS Prannoy exiting early, Shetty is the last Indian left in the men's singles draw. That alone puts a bit more weight on this run.

Shetty's journey to this stage has been nothing short of remarkable.

The 20-year-old has stitched together a series of statement wins, knocking out higher-ranked opponents and showing a level of composure that belies his age. With

confidence high and momentum firmly on his side, he now faces his toughest test yet. He's already done enough to secure a medal, becoming the first Indian men's singles player since Prannoy in 2018 to reach the podium at the Asian meet. It also ends a short wait for India overall, with the last

showing tactical awareness and confidence against some of the best in the world.

AYUSH SHETTY VS KUNLAVUT VITIDSARN: HEAD-TO-HEAD

Shetty and Vitidsarn have faced each other once before on the circuit. Their previous meeting came at the Arctic Open 2025, where the Thai star came out on top in straight games.

While that result gives Vitidsarn a psychological edge, Shetty's current form suggests this contest could be far more competitive. The Indian has evolved significantly since that meeting and arrives in the semi-final with strong momentum.

WHEN AND IS AYUSH SHETTY VS KUNLAVUT VITIDSARN SEMI-FINAL?

The Ayush Shetty vs Kunlavut Vitidsarn semi-final will be played on Saturday, April 11. It is scheduled as the fourth match on court 1, with play beginning at 7:30 am IST, meaning the expected start time will be after 10 am IST.



medal coming from Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty in 2023. More importantly, the manner of his wins has stood out. Shetty has not just edged past opponents but has taken control of matches,

PSL drama

Daryl Mitchell objects to Usman Tariq's pause, refuses to face Pak spinner

New Delhi. (Agency)

A fresh controversy erupted in the Pakistan Super League (PSL) on Friday as New Zealand's senior batter Daryl Mitchell briefly refused to play against Quetta Gladiators' mystery spinner Usman Tariq, protesting the bowler's unique pause before delivery. The incident occurred during the middle overs of Rawalpindi's chase at the National Stadium. As Usman Tariq approached the crease, he performed his trademark prolonged stutter, effectively stopping his momentum before releasing the ball. Mitchell, visibly frustrated by the disruption to his timing, stepped away from his stumps and signaled to the umpire that he was not ready to face the delivery. Mitchell pulled out more than once in the over, leaving the on-air commentators frustrated. Ramiz Raja, who was on air, opined that Mitchell should have done better.

FROM ASHWIN'S IDEA?

The standoff appeared to be a tactical move

straight from the playbook of Indian veteran Ravichandran Ashwin. Recently, Ashwin had publicly discussed the legality of Tariq's



action, suggesting that batters should use the laws of the game to counter the pause.

Ashwin had noted that if a bowler's delivery stride is so staggered that it confuses the batsman's peripheral vision, the batsman is within his rights to pull out. By doing so, Mitchell forced a lengthy discussion between the umpires and the Quetta captain, though Tariq was eventually allowed to

continue without a formal warning. Notably, Usman Tariq's unique action has been deemed legal by the International Cricket Council.

QUETTA CLINICAL IN VICTORY

While the Mitchell-Tariq duel provided the evening's drama, the Quetta Gladiators dominated the actual contest, securing a convincing 61-run win to solidify their position in the 2026 standings.

Batting first, Quetta posted a strong 182/6. The innings was anchored by veteran Rilee Rossouw, who struck a composed 53. He found able support in Saud Shakeel, as the pair neutralized the Rawalpindi pace attack before a late flourish took the score past 180.

In response, Rawalpindi never found their rhythm. The chase derailed early as wickets fell at regular intervals. Saad Masood offered a lone fight with 31, but the rest of the batting order crumbled under the pressure of the rising run rate.

Wounded Chennaiyin face stern test vs high-flying EBFC

New Delhi. (Agency)

Chennaiyin FC, with time running out, need to start winning matches this season. After their 1-2 loss to home against a wounded Inter Kashi side on Tuesday, Chennai are keen to turn things around in their favour in a tough test against East Bengal on Saturday. They currently sit 11th in the table with five points, four points safe off the relegation spots.

One of the concerns that needs to be addressed is their attacking output.

So far this season, Chennaiyin FC have only scored four goals. Only Kerala Blasters FC and Mohammedan SC — placed 13th and 14th in the league respectively — have scored less goals (3) than CFC. Head coach Clifford Miranda explained why the side were not clinical enough. "Right now, we don't have many goals to show for our efforts. But that's also because we have not



had enough forays into the final third, and I understand the reason why. When I came here, the team was playing more direct football, and I needed time to change the way we wanted to play. My approach is more possession-based, what I call progressive possession-based football. We can go direct if the opponent is pressing us, but if they sit back, we keep the ball. It's about patient, controlled possession," he explained.

While that was achieved in a way or two, as Chennaiyin FC ended with 66 per cent possession in their last match — one thing that the players need to work on more is to finish chances. "The next step is to help players make better decisions when it comes to going forward," he said.

Miranda also added how mental strength and physical fitness have been key, and a drop in levels of those two have cost them dearly. "Whatever we do, we have to do it consistently over a period of 90 minutes. If we don't do it for one minute we concede. That has happened against Mumbai — the first goal, against Odisha — the set-piece, against Goa — the set-piece and the last game against Inter Kashi, the first fifteen minutes of the second half.

From Virar to Churchgate: The daily grind that toughened up Ayush Mhatre

IPL 2026: Ayush Mhatre's start to IPL 2026 has been inconsistent, much like Chennai Super Kings' own transition phase. But for a player shaped by long train journeys and hard yards in Mumbai cricket, phases like these are not new.

New Delhi. (Agency)

The world of sport invariably works in cycles. Teams that dominate for long phases eventually come down, before finding a way back up again. That is where Chennai Super Kings find themselves. After more than a decade of consistency, the side is now in a rebuild. The core that defined them has thinned out, and the shift from experience to youth has been inevitable. Last season, that shift became clearer. Chennai moved away from their trusted core and brought in a group of younger, largely uncapped players to reset the squad. One of those players was Ayush Mhatre. Mhatre added the missing intent to the batting line-up in 2025 as CSK desperately sought after the formula for new-age T20 batting. This season, though, has not started the same way. Mhatre's IPL 2026 campaign has been mixed. A 73 against Punjab Kings briefly held together an innings that was falling apart, but in the other two games he has been dismissed for

single-digit scores. He has also lost his opening slot, with Sanju Samson and Ruturaj Gaikwad moving up the order



despite struggling. For a young batter, it is not the easiest phase to navigate. But perhaps that struggle is not very unfamiliar either. At the ICC Under-19 Cricket World Cup, which India went on to win, Mhatre did not have a smooth tournament with the bat. For large parts, the runs were not coming. He still found ways to contribute. He bowled more than expected, chipped in

with off-spin, and stayed involved as captain. The runs came late. Two fifties in the semi-final and final. India won the World Cup, and Mhatre returned as captain, joining a list that includes Mohammad Kaif, Virat Kohli, Unmukt Chand, Prithvi Shaw and Yash Dhull. For runs themselves. For a young batter, it is not the easiest phase to navigate. But perhaps that struggle is not very unfamiliar either.

At the ICC Under-19 Cricket World Cup, which India went on to win, Mhatre did not have a smooth tournament with the bat. For large parts, the runs were not coming. He still found ways to contribute. He bowled more than expected, chipped in with off-spin, and stayed involved as captain.

The runs came late. Two fifties in the semi-final and final. India won the World Cup, and Mhatre returned as captain, joining a list that includes Mohammad Kaif, Virat Kohli, Unmukt Chand, Prithvi Shaw and Yash Dhull.

Hardik Pandya wins hearts with tribute to Rohit Sharma's 15-year MI journey

IPL 2026: Hardik Pandya paid a heartfelt tribute to Rohit Sharma on completing 15 years with Mumbai Indians, praising his leadership and lasting impact. Rohit joined MI in 2011 and played a key role in their five IPL title wins.

CHENNAI. (Agency)

Hardik Pandya won hearts with a heartfelt message for Rohit Sharma, who has completed 15 years with Mumbai Indians. Back in 2011, MI signed Rohit for USD 2 million after his move from the now-defunct Deccan Chargers. He made his debut for MI against Delhi Capitals (then Delhi Daredevils) on April 10, 2011 at the Arun

Jaitley Stadium. Hardik congratulated Rohit, thanking him for his leadership and inspiration over the years for the five-time champions. He highlighted Rohit's role in nurturing players, praised his personality, and credited him for consistently leading from the front. "Bro, congratulations on 15 years. Thank you for the way you've led this franchise for so long. I made my debut under you, and so did Boom (Jasprit Bumrah) and many others," Hardik said in a video uploaded by MI. "Thank you for inspiring so many who've gone on to represent both this franchise and India. You've been amazing, not just as a leader, but as a person, always friendly, open, and leading from the front. Many congratulations, and thank you for



everything you've done over the years," Hardik added. Speculation around a captaincy rift at the Mumbai Indians between Rohit and Hardik continues to do the rounds, but there is little concrete evidence to support claims of a dressing-room fallout. The rumours largely stem from the franchise's

decision ahead of IPL 2024 to replace Rohit, who led the side to five titles, with Hardik as captain, a move that triggered significant fan backlash. Recent reports, including claims of an ultimatum from Hardik to Rohit, have been dismissed by the franchise as baseless. As things stand, Hardik remains the official captain, while Rohit continues to be a senior figure in the squad. Rohit Sharma has played 230 IPL matches for the Mumbai Indians, scoring 5,994 runs at an average of 29.67 and a strike rate of 132.79. His tally includes 40 half-centuries and two centuries, with a highest score of 109 not out against the Kolkata Knight Riders in 2012.

In the ongoing IPL season, Rohit Sharma has scored 118 runs from three matches at an average of 39.33, with a top score of 78 against the Kolkata Knight Riders at the Wankhede Stadium.



Shraddha Kapoor

To Collaborate With Vicky Kaushal For Mahavatar? Here's What We Know

Shraddha Kapoor is reportedly in talks to star opposite Vicky Kaushal in the upcoming mythological film Mahavatar. The news has created a buzz among fans about a fresh on-screen pairing. While there has been no official confirmation yet, a report suggests that the actress is in talks with the makers.

Mid-day has quoted a source saying, "Shraddha fits the brief perfectly. The team was keen on someone who brings star value and presence. Plus, the Vicky-Shraddha pairing will be fresh, and the makers are confident this combination will resonate with the audience." Earlier, reports also suggested that Deepika Padukone is in talks for the mythological drama. But looks like things did not fall in place. Well, it was never confirmed.

Vicky Kaushal To Undergo Major Physical Transformation For Mythological Epic?

Earlier, source told mid-day, "The actor cannot begin his physical prep as he is currently shooting Sanjay Leela Bhansali's Love & War, in which he sports an athletic look. For Mahavatar, he will need to build a heavy frame like that of a wrestler, complete with a rugged look and long, matted hair. After Love & War



reaches the finish line in April, the actor will adopt a new diet plan and workout regime to attain the required look."

In 2024, Vicky Kaushal announced the project and shared the first look of Mahavatar which immediately went viral. Sharing the look, the actor wrote, "Dinesh Vijan brings to life the story of the eternal warrior of dharma! Vicky Kaushal stars as Chiranjeevi Parashurama in #Mahavatar, directed by Amar Kaushik. Coming to cinemas - Christmas 2026!"

The actor is currently shooting for Love & War with Sanjay Leela Bhansali About Shraddha Kapoor

As per reports, Shraddha Kapoor will be next seen in Eetha, a biopic inspired by the life of Maharashtra's celebrated Tamasha performer, Vithabai Narayangaonkar. After this, she will jump into the shoot of Naagin. As per Mid-Day, Shraddha will finish Eetha shoot in March this year and in April, she will begin shooting for Naagin. "Shraddha has been deeply invested in Eetha. The role is physically gruelling and emotionally intense, but she is keen to finish the film within the schedule. The makers are confident of wrapping by March," a production source told the portal.

"Naagin has been in development for a long time, and the team wanted to get everything right — from the VFX design to the casting. With Shraddha locked in, the rest of the cast has fallen into place. The plan is to start shooting by April," the source said.

Sonam Kapoor

shares candid new mom moment with newborn son

Sonam Kapoor recently welcomed her second son. The actress has not revealed her son's face, but often shares real mother moments. Just like this one, she has once again won hearts on social media with her candid take on motherhood. Sonam shared an adorable picture with her newborn son, giving fans a glimpse into her real, unfiltered mom life. Taking to her Instagram stories, Sonam Kapoor shared a photo in which she is seen holding her son on her shoulder and posing for the camera. "Dar circles zindabad" read the caption. On March 30, Sonam Kapoor and Anand Ahuja were blessed with their second son. "With immense gratitude and hearts full of love, we are delighted to announce the arrival of our baby boy today, 29th of March 2026," she wrote while announcing the news.



She added, "Our family has grown, and with his arrival, our hearts have expanded in the most beautiful way. Vayu is overjoyed to welcome his little brother, and we feel deeply blessed by this precious new life who has filled our home with happiness and grace. We are grateful to begin this beautiful new chapter as a family of

four. With love, Sonam, Anand & Vayu."

Sonam had confirmed her second pregnancy back in November 2025, posting a picture in a pink cord set with black stockings and heels, gently holding her baby bump. Her caption then was simple and sweet: "Mother" with a kissing emoji.

The couple, married since 2018, are already parents to Vayu, born in August 2022. Anand Ahuja, grandson of Shahi Exports owner Harish Ahuja, has carved out his own entrepreneurial path, founding the clothing brand Bhane and India's first multi-brand sneaker boutique, VegNonVeg.

Rhea Kapoor Shares First Pic Of Sonam Kapoor And Anand Ahuja's Baby Boy

Recently, Rhea Kapoor also shared the first glimpse of Sonam and Anand's baby boy, and everyone seems to be in rather awe already with the photo grabbing attention and how.



Aditya Dhar Calls THIS Dhurandhar Crew Member 'Most Helpful, Most Generous' On Set



Aditya Dhar wrote, "Dearest Smriti, I still remember one of our very first conversations, when we spoke about how Jaskirat starts with a hint of colour and how, by the end, Hamza is almost swallowed by black. How, somewhere along the way, the colour quietly leaves his life without drawing attention to it. At that point, it was just a thought, a tiny, slightly mad detailing idea I threw at you. And you just held on to it.

He said, "Because while you kept saying, 'Adi Sir, I don't know if I'm the right person for this,' I was sitting there thinking, 'This is exactly why you are.' You didn't come with baggage. You didn't come with a fixed 'style' of what this world should look like. You came with honesty and that dangerous thing called ZIDD. And then you went and did what you do best, you over-delivered in the most ridiculous, unbelievable way."

The filmmaker wrote, "Who stitches 10000 costumes for a film and close to 1000 Pathanis in the first 30 days and still worries about the detailing of a button on a junior artist's cuff?"

Who creates 250+ looks for Hamza and still loses sleep over whether the ring on his little finger feels emotionally correct? Who manages thousands of accessories over a 1.5-year shoot and still shows up every day like it's day one? Only you. "The most helpful, most generous human being on set. Always there. Always giving. Always smiling through the chaos (even when I know some days you wanted to kill most of us). What you built wasn't just costumes. You built a world. A language. An identity that breathes through every single frame of Dhurandhar," he mentioned.

"And the most beautiful part? From a space that once felt unfamiliar, you created something so distinct that people are now following your design styles everywhere. That's not talent alone. That's courage. That's ZIDD. I'm just really, really grateful I got to witness that journey up close. And I'm even more grateful that I got you on this film. Love and Luck, forever!" the filmmaker concluded.

'Kumbh Girl' Monalisa Is A Minor? NCST Probe Leads To FIR Against Husband Farman Khan Under POCSO



The case surrounding viral "Kumbh girl" Monalisa has taken a serious turn, with fresh developments raising legal and ethical concerns. The young woman, who recently married her boyfriend Farman Khan in Kerala, is now reportedly at the centre of an investigation that claims she is a minor. According to reports, the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST) has concluded that Monalisa is 16 years old. Following these findings, an FIR has been registered against her husband under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act at the Maheshwar police station in Madhya Pradesh's Khargone district.

NCST Probe Claims Monalisa Is A Minor

As per a report by Aaj Tak, the NCST conducted a detailed investigation into the matter, which established that Monalisa belongs to the Pardhi tribal community and was married off as an adult despite being underage.

The commission reportedly verified official records from the Government Medical Hospital in Maheshwar, Madhya Pradesh. These documents indicate that Monalisa was born on December 30, 2009, at 5:50 pm. Based on this, she was 16 years old at the time of her marriage on March 11, 2026.

Wedding Took Place In Kerala

The investigation also traced the wedding ceremony to the Arumanoor Temple in Poovar, near Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala. The temple administration confirmed that the marriage was conducted based on the age mentioned in the couple's Aadhaar cards. The marriage was later officially registered at the village panchayat office in Poovar.

FIR Filed Against Husband Under POCSO

Following the findings, police have registered an FIR against Farman Khan at the Maheshwar police station. Reports suggest that multiple charges have been invoked, including sections under the POCSO Act, the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), and the SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, considering Monalisa's tribal background.

NEWS BOX

Iranian Delegation Arrives In Pak For Peace Talks. Welcomed By Asim Munir

Islamabad. (Agency)

An Iranian delegation landed here in the wee hours of Saturday for talks with the US, as the world keeps its fingers crossed for an agreement to end the conflict between the two sides. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, while announcing a two-week ceasefire on Wednesday, had said that the US and Iran would hold talks in Islamabad, tagging the presidents of the US and Iran in his statement on X.

The Iranian delegation led by its Parliament Speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf, along with Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi, would participate in the Islamabad Talks slated to begin later Saturday, after the arrival of the US delegation led by Vice President JD Vance, which was on its way to Islamabad.

The Pakistan foreign office said the delegation from Iran was received upon its arrival by Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar, along with National Assembly Speaker Ayaz Sadiq, Chief of Defence Forces and Chief of Army Staff, Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, and Minister for Interior, Syed Mohsin Raza Naqvi. A high-powered delegation from the Islamic Republic of Iran led by Speaker of the Iranian Parliament, Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf, along with Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi arrived in Islamabad today to participate in Islamabad Talks," the foreign office said in a statement. Expressing hope that the two sides would engage constructively, Dar reiterated Pakistan's desire to continue facilitating the parties towards reaching a lasting and durable solution to the conflict in West Asia, according to the statement.

The delegation came amid speculation making rounds on social media, casting doubts on the visit by the Iranians due to the strikes by Israel in Lebanon.

Kamala Harris Says She Might Run For President Again In 2028

Washington. (Agency)

Former Vice President Kamala Harris, who was the Democratic Party's nominee for the presidency in 2024, said on Friday that she was considering running for president again in 2028. Harris, making an appearance at a meeting of the National Action Network, a civil rights organization founded by Reverend Al Sharpton, was asked directly by Sharpton if she was going to run again.

"I might, I might. I'm thinking about it. I'm thinking about it," Harris said, as the crowd at the New York City event cheered in response. Harris added that she would consider a run in the context of who, in 2028, could do the best job as president "for the American people." Harris, who served as vice president under President Joe Biden, lost her 2024 presidential bid to President Donald Trump, who won both the popular vote and the Electoral College. Harris had previously served as a U.S. senator and as attorney general of California, among other offices. Harris made an unsuccessful run to be the Democratic Party's presidential nominee in 2020. A run in 2028 for Harris could face challenges among voters who have indicated in polling that they want to see new leaders for the Democratic Party following Harris' loss to Trump. The National Action Network convention drew several potential Democratic candidates, including Pennsylvania Governor Josh Shapiro, former Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg and Illinois Governor JB Pritzker, among others.

'One Nation Under God': What Is Trump's Washington Arch Plan

Tehran. (Agency)

President Donald Trump's plans for a new triumphal arch in the capital, unveiled on Friday, include a towering winged figure with a Lady Liberty-like torch and crown, flanked by two eagles and guarded by four lions — all gilded. The 12-page plan released by the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts shows the arch will stand 250 feet tall (76.2 meters) from its base to the tip of the winged figure's torch, with "One Nation Under God" and "Liberty and Justice for All" inscribed in gold atop either side of the monument.

The plan indicates the structure would stand between the Lincoln Memorial in the east and Arlington National Cemetery toward the west and within a traffic circle connecting Washington with northern Virginia. The arch would dwarf the Lincoln Memorial, which stands at 99 feet tall (30.2 meters).

Trump wrote on social media that it "will be the GREATEST and MOST BEAUTIFUL Triumphal Arch, anywhere in the World. This will be a wonderful addition to the Washington D.C. area for all Americans to enjoy for Trump has said he wants to build the arch near the Lincoln Memorial and argued that the nation's capital first sought such a monument 200 years ago."

It was interrupted by a thing called the Civil War, and so it never got built," Trump said in February. "Then, they almost built something in 1902, but it never happened." Trump has said that major cities around the world have such monuments, and Washington is the only one without one. The arch is one of several architectural changes Trump is making in his second term. In addition to building a large ballroom at the White House, he's also made changes to the Oval Office and converted the Rose Garden into a stone-covered patio.

many decades to come!" The arch goes beyond the White House, giving Trump a chance to leave another lasting monument in a city known for them. It would expand on his earlier talk of sprucing up the city by replacing its "tired" grasses, and broken signage and street medians.

Artemis II astronauts return from moon with a splashdown to close out a record-breaking lunar voyage

All eyes were on the capsule's life-protecting heat shield that had to withstand thousands of degrees during reentry.

World. (Agency)

Artemis II's astronauts returned from the moon with a dramatic splashdown in the Pacific on Friday to close out humanity's first lunar voyage in more than a half-century. It was a triumphant homecoming for the crew of four whose record-breaking lunar flyby revealed not only swaths of the moon's far side — never seen before by human eyes — but a total solar eclipse.

Commander Reid Wiseman, pilot Victor Glover, Christina Koch and Canada's Jeremy Hansen hit the atmosphere traveling Mach 33 — or 33 times the speed of sound — a blistering blur not seen since NASA's Apollo moonshots of the 1960s and 1970s. Their Orion capsule, dubbed Integrity, made the plunge on automatic pilot. The tension in Mission Control mounted as the capsule became engulfed in red-hot plasma during peak heating and entered a planned communication blackout. All eyes were on the capsule's life-protecting heat shield that had to

withstand thousands of degrees during reentry. On the spacecraft's only other test flight — in 2022, with no one on board — the shield's charred exterior came back looking as pockmarked as the moon. Like so many others, lead flight director Jeff Radigan anticipated feeling some of that "irrational fear that is human nature," especially during the six-minute blackout that preceded the opening of the parachutes. The recovery ship USS John P. Murtha awaited the crew's arrival off the San Diego coast, along with a squadron of military planes and helicopters.

The astronauts' families huddled in Mission Control's viewing room, where cheers erupted when the capsule emerged from its communication blackout and again at splashdown.

The last time NASA and the Defense Department teamed up for a lunar crew's reentry was Apollo 17 in 1972. Artemis II was projected to come screaming back at 36,170 feet (11,025 meters) per second —



or 24,661 mph (39,668 kph) — just shy of the record before slowing to a 19 mph (30 kph) splashdown. "A perfect bull's-eye splashdown," reported Mission Control's Rob Navias. Artemis II's record flyby and views of the moon

Launched from Florida on April 1, the astronauts racked up one win after another as they deftly navigated NASA's long-awaited lunar comeback, the first major step in establishing a sustainable moon base. Artemis II didn't land on the moon or even orbit it. But it broke Apollo 13's distance record and marked the farthest that humans have ever journeyed from Earth when the crew reached 252,756 miles (406,771 kilometers). Then in the mission's most heart-tugging scene, the teary astronauts asked permission to name a pair of craters after their moonship and Wiseman's late wife, Carroll. During Monday's record-breaking flyby, they documented scenes of the moon's far side never seen before by the human eye along with a total solar eclipse. The eclipse, in particular, "just blew all of us away," Glover said. Their sense of wonder and awe awed everyone, as did their breathtaking pictures of the moon and Earth. original "Star Trek."

Iran delegation reaches Islamabad, says US talks hinge on Lebanon ceasefire, asset release

World. (Agency)

An Iranian delegation arrived in Islamabad in the early hours of Saturday for crucial talks with the United States, raising global hopes for a breakthrough to end the ongoing conflict between the two sides.

The visit follows Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's announcement of a two-week ceasefire earlier this week, during which he said Islamabad would host talks between the US and Iran. The Iranian delegation, led by Parliament Speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf and accompanied by Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi, is set to participate in the Islamabad Talks scheduled to begin later in the day. The US delegation, headed by Vice President JD Vance, was also en route to the Pakistani capital at the time. According to Pakistan's foreign office, the Iranian delegation was received on arrival by Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar, National Assembly Speaker Ayaz Sadiq, Chief of Army Staff Field

Marshal Syed Asim Munir, and Interior Minister Syed Mohsin Raza Naqvi. In a statement, the foreign office confirmed that the "high-powered delegation" from Iran had arrived to take part in the Islamabad Talks. Dar expressed hope that both sides would engage constructively and reiterated Pakistan's intent to facilitate efforts towards a lasting and durable resolution to the conflict in West Asia.

The conformation comes amid speculation on social media over whether the Iranian delegation would attend, particularly in light of Israeli strikes in Lebanon. Some reports, citing Iranian media, suggested Tehran's participation hinged on the fulfilment of conditions outlined in the ceasefire agreement. Iran's semi-official Tasnim news agency had reported that negotiations would not commence until certain "preconditions" were met. Echoing this, Ghalibaf said two agreed measures, a ceasefire in Lebanon and the release of Iran's blocked assets, were yet to be implemented. "These

two matters must be fulfilled before negotiations begin," Ghalibaf said in a post on X before departing for Islamabad. Meanwhile, the US delegation led by Vance was expected to arrive shortly. Ahead of his departure, Vance said President Donald Trump had provided "clear guidelines" for the negotiations. "As the US president said, if the Iranians are willing to negotiate in good faith, we're certainly willing to extend an open hand. If they're going to try to play us, they're going to find that the negotiating team is not that receptive," he told reporters. The talks are being held during a two-week pause in the US-Israeli war on Iran, which began on February 28 with attacks launched by the US and Israel. Pakistan played a key role in facilitating the dialogue, following Sharif's appeal earlier this week that led to the temporary halt in hostilities. Earlier, Araghchi, in a phone call with Iran's ambassador to Lebanon Mohammad Reza Shabani, stressed that the US must honour its ceasefire commitments.

10 Indian Nationals Indicted In US Visa Fraud Conspiracy

Boston. (Agency)

Ten Indian nationals have been indicted by a federal grand jury in Boston in connection with a conspiracy to carry out staged armed robberies of convenience stores for the purpose of allowing store clerks to falsely claim they were crime victims on immigration applications. The defendants were previously charged by criminal complaint in March 2026, according to the United States Attorney's Office for the District of Massachusetts. The accused have been identified as Jitendrakumar Patel (39), Maheshkumar Patel (36), Sanjaykumar Patel (45), Dipikaben Patel (40), Rameshbhai Patel (52), Amitabhen Patel (43), Ronakkumar Patel (28), Sangitaben Patel (36), Minkesh Patel (42), and Sonal Patel (42). Authorities stated that while most of the accused were residing unlawfully in various parts of the United States, one had already been deported to India. Two others have been taken into immigration custody. In a statement, the United States Attorney's Office said all 10 defendants were previously charged by criminal complaint and released on conditions. Rameshbhai Patel and Ronakkumar Patel have been taken into immigration custody.

The defendants are subject to deportation upon completion of any sentence imposed. This case stems from an investigation into Rambhai Patel, the organiser of the scheme, and getaway driver Balwinder Singh, both of whom were charged in December 2023 and later convicted. According to the charging documents, in March 2023, Rambhai Patel and his co-conspirators set up and carried out staged armed robberies of at least six convenience/liquor stores and fast food restaurants in Massachusetts and elsewhere.

It is alleged that the purpose of the staged robberies was to allow the clerks present to falsely claim that they were victims of a violent crime on an application for a U non-immigration status (U Visa). A U Visa is available to victims of certain crimes who have suffered mental or physical abuse and who have been helpful to law enforcement in the investigation or prosecution of criminal. In the course of the alleged staged robberies, the "robber" would allegedly threaten store clerks and/or owners with an apparent firearm before taking cash from the register and fleeing, while the interaction was captured on store surveillance video. The clerks and/or owners would then wait five or more minutes until the alleged "robber" had escaped before calling police to report the "crime." The "victims" are alleged to have each paid Rambhai Patel to participate in the scheme. In turn, Rambhai Patel paid the store owners for the use of their stores for the staged robbery. activity. n May 2025.

Iranian delegation flight to Islamabad pays tribute to victims of Minab school strike

Washington. (Agency)

An image from the inside of the flight carrying the Iranian delegation to Islamabad has drawn attention ahead of crucial US-Iran talks, set against a backdrop of ceasefire tensions and fragile diplomatic engagement.

During the journey, Iran's speaker Ghalibaf used the flight to make a symbolic political statement. Inside the aircraft, empty seats were arranged with photographs and personal belongings of victims from the Minab school strike, including children killed in what Iran has charged as a US-Israeli attack. Sharing the image on X, Ghalibaf wrote, "my companions on this flight, Minab 168," referring to the children and staff killed in the February 28, 2026 strike on an elementary school in Minab.

The attack, which Iran says killed at least 165 people, has become a central element of its messaging ahead of the

negotiations. The delegation travelling to Islamabad for talks has been named "Minab 168" in memory of the



victims. Various Iranian Embassies have reshared the image, with some stating: "We will never forget the children of Minab, ever. The United States has repeatedly rejected the allegations that it targeted the school. Former President Donald Trump has previously said Iranian forces are 'very inaccurate' with their munitions, suggesting the incident

may have been misattributed. However, a report cited by The New York Times indicated that a Tomahawk missile strike may have been involved due to a targeting error. The US is the only country involved in the war that uses Tomahawk missiles. Meanwhile, delegations from the United States and Iran are expected to meet in Islamabad for talks on a proposed 10-point ceasefire plan. The Iranian side will be led by Ghalibaf, along with Foreign Minister Araghchi and other officials. US Vice President JD Vance is expected to attend the talks along with special envoy Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner. The Iranian delegation arrived in Pakistan earlier on Saturday and was received by senior Pakistani officials, including Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar and military leadership.

Iran demands truce in Lebanon, release of blocked assets ahead of peace talks in Islamabad

ISLAMABAD. (Agency)

Iran's parliament speaker

Mohammad

Bagher Ghalibaf

said both demands

had been

"mutually agreed

upon between the

parties" but had

"yet to be

implemented".

Iran's parliament speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf on Friday demanded a ceasefire in Lebanon and the release of his country's blocked assets, ahead of high-level negotiations aimed at ending the war in Iran.

Both had been "mutually agreed upon between the parties" but had "yet to be implemented", Ghalibaf wrote on X. Estimates vary on the value of Iranian assets frozen abroad because of US sanctions, but the UN special rapporteur on unilateral coercive measures, Alena Douhan, put the figure at \$100-120 billion during a visit to Tehran in 2022.

His demand came ahead of the planned ceasefire talks in Pakistan. US Vice President JD Vance, who is traveling to Islamabad for the talks, warned Tehran not to "play" Washington in the scheduled talks. "We're going to try to have a positive negotiation," Vance told reporters as he left for Pakistan, where he is expected to arrive Saturday. Meanwhile, US President Donald Trump on Friday said that US warships are being reloaded with weaponry to strike Iran if



talks in Pakistan fail to produce a deal. In an interview with the New York Post, Trump said, "We have a reset going. We're loading up the ships with the best ammunition, the best weapons ever made -- even better than what we did previously, and we blew them apart," the Post quoted Trump as saying. Meanwhile, Hezbollah chief Naim Qassem urged the

Lebanese government to stop giving "free concessions" to Israel ahead of negotiations between the two governments due to begin in Washington next week.

"We will not accept a return to the previous situation, and we call on officials to stop offering free concessions," Qassem said in a written message broadcast on the party's Al-Manar TV, in which he also denounced Israeli strikes that killed more than 300 people in Lebanon on Wednesday as "bloody criminality". European and Arab states have pressured Israel to stop targeting Beirut, a Western diplomat told AFP. The diplomat, who asked to remain anonymous in order to discuss sensitive matters, said there was "ongoing diplomatic pressure from European states, Gulf states and Egypt on Israel to prevent renewed Israeli airstrikes on Beirut" following Wednesday's attack.