

Case Filed Against Mamata Banerjee Over 2025 "Ganda Dharma" Remark

New Delhi.(Agency)

The complaint alleges that Mamata Banerjee's comments hurt the sentiments of followers of Sanatan Dharma and promoted communal disharmony.

An FIR has been registered against TMC Chief and former West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Tuesday for allegedly making derogatory remarks about Sanatan Dharma while attending an Eid celebration in Kolkata last year. The complaint, lodged by advocate Rinki Chatterjee Singh at the Siliguri Cyber Police Station, alleges that Banerjee's comments hurt the sentiments of followers of Sanatan Dharma and promoted communal disharmony. In her complaint, Singh alleged that the TMC supremo referred to Sanatan Dharma as "ganda dharma" (dirty religion), which "deeply hurt the religious sentiments and beliefs of millions of followers." The complaint further states that during the 2026 West



Bengal Legislative Assembly Election campaign, Banerjee allegedly issued a provocative statement, suggesting that if a particular community attacked Hindus, "their 12 ta beje jabe" (a Bengali colloquialism implying severe consequences). Advocate Singh argued in her filing that such remarks were intended to "influence voters through fear and intimidation" and promote "social unrest and communal disharmony." Police have registered the First Information Report (FIR) under several provisions of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), India's new criminal code. The charges include Section 351(1) for criminal intimidation and Section 352 for intentional insult with intent to provoke a breach of peace. Authorities also invoked Section 353(2), which penalises the circulation of information intended to promote hatred or enmity between different religious groups.

ED raids ex-Kerala CM Pinarayi Vijayan's home in corruption case tied to daughter

New Delhi.(Agency)

The Enforcement Directorate on Wednesday conducted searches at 10 locations across Kerala, including the home of ex-Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, in a money laundering probe linked to the Cochin Minerals and Rutile Limited (CMRL) corruption case in which his daughter is implicated. Officials told news agency ANI that the raids were part of the ED's ongoing probe into alleged financial irregularities involving Cochin Minerals and Rutile Limited and Exalogic Solutions Pvt Ltd, owned by Vijayan's daughter T Veena. The searches came a day after the Kerala High Court refused to cancel the ED's investigation into the CMRL case.

ED sleuths also raided former minister and MLA PA Muhammad Riyas in Kozhikode. He is T Veena's husband.

CMRL, a Kerala-based company engaged in the manufacture of synthetic rutile and industrial chemicals, has been under the scanner over allegations of bribery and money laundering.

The controversy centres on claims that Exalogic Solutions received large sums from CMRL without providing any services in return. Though the case does not directly name Vijayan as an accused, it triggered a major political storm in Kerala. Notably, the Kerala State Industrial Development Corporation had a 13.4 per cent stake in CMRL.

WHAT IS THE CMRL CASE?

The allegations first surfaced in August 2023 after reports claimed that Exalogic had received Rs 1.72 crore from CMRL between 2017 and 2020 despite rendering no services. Following the revelations, the Centre directed the Serious Fraud Investigation Office (SFIO) to carry out a detailed probe.

Trinamool MLA, absconding for weeks, arrested from Odisha's Puri in threats case

West Bengal STF arrested TMC MLA Dilip Mondal from Puri after weeks on the run. The move follows complaints of threats against political rivals and comes days after his son was held in a firearms case.

Kolkata.(Agency)

Trinamool MLA Dilip Mondal was arrested by the West Bengal STF from Odisha's Puri after remaining absconding for several weeks, police sources said. Mondal had been on the run since allegations surfaced against him for allegedly threatening political opponents. Police had earlier conducted raids at two properties linked to the Trinamool MLA in the Pailan area on May 14 as part of the investigation.

The arrest comes days after Mondal's son, Arghya Mondal, was arrested along with five others from the Bakkhali-Fraserganj area in South 24 Parganas on May 18 for allegedly possessing firearms. According to police, a joint team of West Bengal Police and Diamond Harbour district police carried out the operation late on Sunday. Officials said two pistols and six mobile phones were seized from the accused during the raid. All six were later brought to Diamond Harbour police station for questioning. Police also alleged that Arghya Mondal had been threatening BJP workers and supporters in the area. Investigators had earlier described Dilip Mondal as "absconding" and said efforts were underway to trace him following complaints related to intimidation and threats against political rivals.

BACKGROUND: CRACKDOWN ON TRINAMOOL LEADERS

The arrest of Dilip Mondal comes amid an intensified crackdown by the newly formed BJP government in West Bengal on Trinamool leaders and functionaries over alleged corruption, extortion and recruitment irregularities.

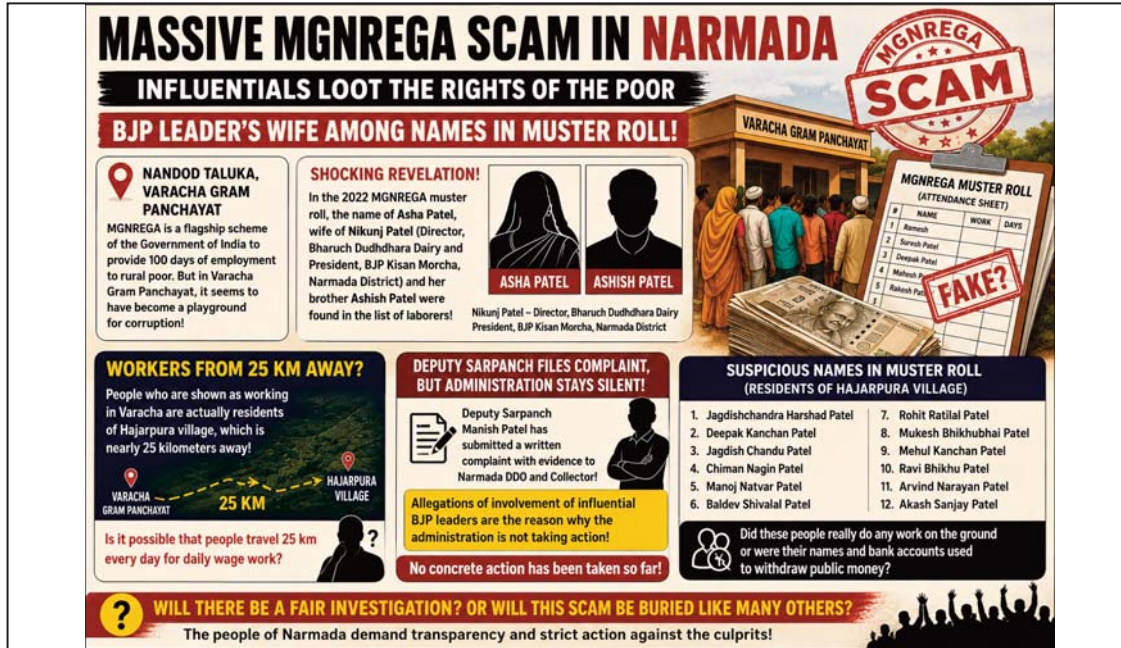
In recent weeks, several Trinamool leaders, councillors and civic body officials have either been arrested or questioned by central and state agencies, triggering growing unease within the ruling All India Trinamool Congress. Former Trinamool minister Sujit Bose was arrested by the Enforcement Directorate on May 11 in connection with an alleged recruitment scam linked to the South Dum Dum Municipality. The ED booked him under provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA). The agency has also questioned former South Dum Dum Municipality chairperson Panchu Roy over alleged irregularities in civic recruitment.



Massive MGNREGA Scam Alleged in Narmada: Influential Names, Including BJP Leader's Wife, Found in Muster Roll

Mahanagar Metro Desk / Pawan Mekan

Narmada. Serious allegations of corruption have surfaced in Gujarat's Narmada district over the alleged misuse of funds under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) scheme. The controversy centers around Varacha Gram Panchayat in Nandod taluka, where influential and politically connected individuals are allegedly shown as laborers in official muster rolls meant for poor rural workers. The revelations have triggered outrage locally, with accusations that funds intended for economically weaker families were diverted through fraudulent entries and fake labor records. BJP Leader's Family Names Found in Muster Roll The controversy intensified after scrutiny of the 2022 MGNREGA muster rolls reportedly revealed the names of Asha Patel, wife of Nikunj Patel — Director of Bharuch Dudhdhara Dairy and President of the BJP Kisan Morcha in Narmada district — along with her brother Ashish Patel, listed among laborers engaged in manual work under the scheme. The disclosure has sparked political debate and raised serious concerns over whether welfare schemes designed for marginalized rural workers are being exploited by affluent and influential individuals. 'Paper Workers'



From 25 Kilometers Away? Further suspicion emerged after the addresses of several workers listed in the muster rolls were examined. According to allegations, many individuals shown as laborers in Varacha village are actually residents of Hajarpura village, located nearly 25 kilometers away. Locals are now questioning whether workers genuinely traveled such long distances daily for manual labor work, or whether the entries were fabricated solely to siphon off government funds. Deputy Sarpanch Alleges Administrative Silence-Varacha village Deputy Sarpanch Manish Patel has reportedly submitted a written complaint along with supporting documents to the Narmada District Development Officer

(DDO) and the District Collector, alleging large-scale irregularities and embezzlement in the implementation of the scheme. However, allegations are now being made that despite the submission of evidence, authorities have failed to initiate any concrete investigation, allegedly due to the involvement of politically influential individuals. List of Allegedly Suspicious Names in Muster Roll The following individuals from Hajarpura village were reportedly found listed in the Varacha Gram Panchayat muster roll: Jagdishchandra Harshad Patel, Deepak Kanchan Patel, Jagdish Chandu Patel, Chiman Nagin Patel, Manoj Natvar Patel, Baldev Shivalal Patel, Rohit Ratilal Patel, Mukesh Bhikhubhai Patel, Mehul Kan-

chan Patel, Ravi Bhikhu Patel, Arvind Narayan Patel, Akash Sanjay Patel. Authorities are expected to verify whether these individuals actually performed labor work under MGNREGA or whether their identities and bank accounts were allegedly used to facilitate fraudulent withdrawals. Key Question Remains With names linked to politically connected individuals surfacing in the alleged scam, questions are now being raised over whether a fair and impartial investigation will take place. The coming days may determine whether the administration acts decisively or whether the matter is buried under political pressure.

— Wahab Sheikh, Narmada

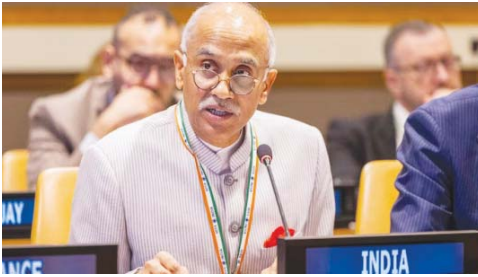
Sponsoring terrorism will have consequences: India tears into Pak at UN

Speaking at the UNSC Open Debate in New York, India's Permanent Representative to the UN, Ambassador Harish Parvathaneni, accused Pakistan of decades-long support for terrorism, religious extremism and violent

New Delhi.(Agency)

India launched a scathing attack on Pakistan at the UN Security Council (UNSC), declaring that Islamabad "will have to accept that there are consequences for sponsoring cross-border terrorism" and accusing it of decades-long support for terrorism, religious extremism and violent radicalism.

Speaking at the UNSC Open Debate in New York, India's Permanent Representative to the UN, Ambassador Harish Parvathaneni, delivered a blistering rebuttal and said, "I am compelled to respond to baseless and unwarranted remarks made by Pakistan today. India would like to set the facts



The Indian envoy said Pakistan's record since Independence had been marked by aggression against India and continued sponsorship of terrorism "Independent India began its life battling with cross-border aggression by Pakistan, which coveted Indian

result of their complete, legal and irrevocable accession," he said.

Parvathaneni accused Pakistan of repeatedly violating the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity and peaceful coexistence through wars, unprovoked aggression and terror activities directed against India.

"The use of cross-border terrorism by Pakistan and its doctrine of 'bleeding India by a thousand cuts' exposes its hollow rhetoric of commitment to the UN Charter," he said.

The envoy strongly asserted that "India has every right to defend itself from such cross-border terrorism. Pakistan will have to accept that there are consequences of its sponsorship of cross-border terrorism." across the border.

fostering extremist forces since its creation.

"Pakistan's harnessing of the malevolent forces of terrorism, religious extremism, violent radicalism, and anti-India rhetoric has continued unabated since its creation," Parvathaneni said.

"The facts in this regard are on public record and need no further elucidation. Pakistan must credibly and irrevocably end its support for all forms of terrorism," he added. The envoy's latest remarks came barely a week after the envoy had rebuked Pakistan at another UNSC debate on the protection of civilians in armed conflict. During that debate as well, Pakistan had attempted to raise Jammu and Kashmir, prompting a forceful

News box

Trader out to buy food injured in hit & run in Gurgaon

GURGAON.(Agency)

A 26-year-old grocery shop owner suffered severe head injuries after an unidentified speeding vehicle hit his moped near Sector 37 late on May 21 and fled the spot.

The victim, Laxman Mandal, a native of Bihar who runs a grocery shop in Anjana Colony, has remained unconscious since the accident and is undergoing treatment at Safdarjung Hospital in Delhi.

According to a complaint filed by his cousin Shankar Kumar at Sector 10A police station, Laxman had left around 11.30 pm on his TVS moped to bring food from Sector 37. While returning near Plot No. 368, an unidentified vehicle allegedly rammed into his two-wheeler, throwing him onto the road. "The unknown vehicle driver was driving at high speed and negligently. After causing the accident, he fled from the spot," the complainant stated in the FIR.

Shankar said he rushed to the spot after receiving information and took his cousin to Govt Hospital, Sector 10, where doctors provided initial treatment before referring him to a higher medical centre due to the severity of his injuries. He was later shifted to Safdarjung Hospital. Police said the medico-legal report prepared at the hospital documented three major injuries. A case was registered under Sections 281 (rash driving) and 125(a) of the BNS, and police are examining CCTV footage to identify the offending vehicle. In another case, Prashant, a 22-year-old electrician from Jharsa, remains critical after his motorcycle crashed into a car allegedly parked without warning indicators on NH-48 near Narsinghpur around 1 am on Sunday.

According to his father Subhash Singh, Prashant was returning from IMT Manesar when the accident occurred. Police found the Tata electric vehicle parked on the roadside and the damaged motorcycle nearby.

Respite from warm nights, but heatwave alert stays

Ghaziabad.(Agency)

The city continued to reel under intense heat on Tuesday, with the maximum temperature rising to 43.4°C, up from 41.6°C recorded a day earlier, as heatwave conditions persisted across Haryana.

Despite a sharp rise in daytime temperature, the city witnessed comparatively cooler nights. The minimum temperature dropped to 24.2°C on Tuesday, seven notches below 31.2°C recorded on Monday.

IMD said heatwave conditions were observed at isolated places across Haryana, with Sirsa recording the state's highest maximum temperature at 46°C. Warm night conditions were also reported from some pockets.

District-wise warnings issued by the weather department placed Gurgaon under a "be prepared" heat alert for May 26 and 27, indicating the likelihood of continued heatwave-like conditions over the next two days.

However, IMD forecast a change in weather from May 28 under the influence of a western disturbance. Thunderstorms accompanied by lightning and gusty winds are likely in Gurgaon and several other districts between May 28 and May 30, which may lead to a gradual fall in temperatures.

The weather department advised residents to avoid direct exposure to the sun during peak afternoon hours, stay hydrated and take precautions against heat-related illnesses, particularly children, elderly people and those with existing health conditions.

3k Haryana students to take ISRO tour for space science sessions

Ghaziabad.(Agency)

Haryana will send around 3,000 meritorious students from classes 9 to 12 to various centres of Indian Space Research Organisation between Aug and Dec this year, officials said. The visits will be conducted in multiple batches and will provide students exposure to space science, satellite systems and rocket technology. The programme is being implemented under the Samagra Shiksha Haryana scheme to promote scientific learning among school students. Officials said the initiative has been expanded following a pilot programme in 2025-



26, during which 198 students and 12 teachers visited ISRO facilities in Ahmedabad. The state govt bore all expenses for the tour.

Explaining the selection process, the project coordinator (science) of the scheme, Sonali Vohra, said students would be selected district-wise based on academic performance. "The first batch will include district toppers across different schools, followed by second- and third-rank holders in subsequent batches. Around 88 students from each district, along with teachers, are expected to participate, taking the total close to 3,000," she said. Vohra added that the programme includes toppers from classes 8 to 11 who are now studying in classes 9 to 12, particularly in the science stream, to ensure continuity in scientific exposure.

Meanwhile, four Haryana students are currently visiting Japan under the Sakura Science Exchange Program. Officials said the students — all Class 12 state toppers — include two from Fatehabad and one each from Bhiwani and Mahendragarh. They left India on May 24 and are scheduled to return on May 30. "These students are getting exposure to Japan's advanced science education and innovation ecosystem, which is a valuable learning experience," Vohra said. Swapnil Rajender Patil, state project director of the scheme, said such programmes help improve scientific temperament and broaden students' global outlook.

Doorstep waste pickup still erratic as Gurgaon readies for Swachh survey

GURGAON.(Agency)

A team from the Swachh Survekshan has begun a cleanliness survey in the city to assess sanitation and waste management systems ahead of the national rankings.

In 2025, the city jumped from 140th position in 2024 to 41st rank nationally in the category of cities with populations between three lakh and 10 lakh.

Despite the improvement, persistent gaps in the city's waste management system continue to raise concerns. Gurgaon currently does not have a dedicated long-term agency handling door-to-door waste collection across the city, leading to repeated disruptions in sanitation services. Residents across several sectors and colonies have complained of irregular garbage collection, delayed lifting of waste, and poor monitoring of sanitation operations. During the coming surveys, teams that will cover all 36 wards commenced from Ward 1, comprising Nathupur village, DLF Phase 3, National Media Centre, Ambience Island, Garden Estate, DLF

Corporate Park, Sikanderpur Ghosi, Blocks J and Q of DLF Phase 2, and Belvedere Towers, among other areas.

MCG officials said the inspection exercise is expected to continue for at least a week, during which survey teams will conduct field inspections, interact with residents and sanitation workers, and assess the condition of public spaces, waste collection systems and sanitation infrastructure.

"We have submitted a report to the team, which they will verify during their field assessment. Their assessment will include doorstep waste collection, sewerage system, besides other sanitation works," said a senior MCG official. Gurgaon will be assessed on parameters carrying a total of 10,500 marks. The survey will evaluate visible cleanliness across roads, markets and



residential colonies, segregation, collection and transportation of waste, solid waste management practices, access to sanitation facilities, used water management, mechanisation of desludging services, advocacy and awareness campaigns related to

cleanliness, institutional strengthening, welfare of sanitation workers, and citizen feedback and grievance redressal. The assessment will also focus on garbage vulnerable points, scientific processing of waste, upkeep of public toilets, and public participation in cleanliness drives. According to the city's Swachh Survekshan report card in 2025, door-to-door waste collection coverage fell sharply from 85% in 2024 to 59% in 2025, highlighting the impact of the

administrative transition and operational gaps. Concerns over segregated waste, overflowing garbage points, and inadequate monitoring continue to persist despite repeated assurances from the civic body.

How to ease IGI travel? GMDA proposes longer NH-8 bypass

Gurgaon.(Agency)

As congestion on NH8 and roads leading to IGI Airport only gets worse, agencies in the city are examining the possibility of extending a proposed Gurgaon-Delhi connector through Mahipalpur to Ghata Chowk on Southern Peripheral Road (SPR). The proposal was discussed at a meeting on Tuesday, chaired by GMDA CEO PC Meena. Officials from Gurgaon Metro Rail Ltd, GMDA, NHA's consultant and other departments held discussions on proposals submitted by Delhi International Airport Limited (DIAL) to identify long-term traffic decongestion measures around IGI Airport and key Gurgaon corridors.

NHAI has planned a 20-km six-lane corridor from AIIMS in Delhi to Gurgaon-Faridabad Road via Mahipalpur. Officials said the connectivity till Khushboo Chowk is already part of the proposed NHAI decongestion plan, and GMDA has now suggested studying its further extension till Ghata Chowk to create a wider bypass-like movement corridor for commuters travelling from south Delhi towards southern Gurgaon and Jaipur-bound routes without the need

to enter NH8. A separate meeting with senior NHA officials will be held soon to deliberate on the proposal, possible alignments and feasibility aspects, the GMDA official said.

A senior GMDA official said, "The proposed connectivity till Khushboo



Chowk is already under consideration by NHAI. GMDA has now requested NHAI to examine whether it can be extended further till Ghata Chowk so that the alternative route could function like a ring-road connectivity for through traffic, reducing dependence on NH8 and easing pressure on key bottlenecks near the airport. For instance, traffic coming from south Delhi towards Jaipur can access Delhi-Mumbai Expressway through the proposed Greater Southern Peripheral

Road or SPR. Officials said the idea is to reduce dependency on the heavily congested NH8 stretch near IGI Airport by creating alternative movement corridors for through traffic. "The objective is to reduce pressure on NH8 and improve dispersal of traffic coming from the Delhi side towards Gurgaon and Jaipur-bound routes without forcing vehicles to enter city bottlenecks," the official added.

Other proposals, including elevated corridors and a grade separator at Rezag La Chowk connecting Dwarka Expressway and NH8, were also discussed, though officials clarified that most suggestions remain at a preliminary conceptual stage and are yet to undergo detailed feasibility assessment.

DIAL also presented proposals including extension of Dwarka Expressway till Mayapuri, extension of Barapullah Road from INA till Mahipalpur, extension of UER-II till Tughlakabad and construction of a bypass at Rangpuri. But GMDA officials clarified that these projects fall outside the authority's jurisdiction.

Amid rent row, 2 on scooter fire 10 rounds at vacant house

Ghaziabad.(Agency)

Two unidentified persons on a scooter fired more than 10 rounds at a vacant house in Sahibabad on Monday. Police found a chit bearing the threat, 'Agli baari teri' (You are next) in the front yard of a neighbour. The property's owner, based in Delhi, has been pursuing a rent recovery case at the ADM court against former tenant Sanjay Gupta, who vacated the premises three months ago after allegedly defaulting on rent for more than 18 months. The house owner Asha Rani's son, Sachin Kumar, filed a complaint at the Sahibabad police station. He told the cops that around 11 pm on Monday, two unidentified men opened fire at our house. "I suspect our

former tenant, Sanjay Gupta, is behind it. A piece of paper has been found in the house of our neighbour Bharat Singh. It bears a threat message," he said. Sachin said he had rented out the house to Sanjay Gupta in 2024. In 2025, when he asked him to vacate the house, he refused and stopped paying rent. He took the matter to the ADM court. On the court's order, Gupta vacated the house in March 2026, and Sachin filed a case against him for the recovery of outstanding rent. "A hearing was scheduled for the case on Tuesday," he said. According to eyewitnesses, the men fired several rounds in quick succession. The sudden firing created panic in the area. A car parked near an adjacent house was also

damaged. A police team found 12 empty cartridges at the spot. A forensic team also collected evidence. An initial investigation linked the matter to the old rivalry and the dispute over vacating the house. ACP Amit Saxena said information about the firing was received around 11 pm. They reached out to the house owner Asha Rani, who lives in Shahdara. An FIR has been registered against Sanjay Gupta and unidentified persons under sections 125 (act endangering life or personal safety or others) and 351(2) (punishment for criminal intimidation) of BNS. "Teams have been formed to nab the accused while police teams are also checking the CCTV cameras of the nearby areas.

Special public prosecutor Utkarsh Vats said the survivor's account was reliable and consistent, with no contradiction between her statement recorded under Section 164 CrPC and her deposition before the court. "Her evidence is corroborated by the testimony of the plaintiff and the investigating officer," he said. The examining doctor, Sonia Sehgal, testified that the survivor had an abrasion on the inner thigh and that medical examination indicated vaginal intercourse, with redness and swelling in the internal parts. The defence contended that the FSL report did not establish a match between the male-specific allele recovered from the survivor and the accused, and argued he deserved the benefit of doubt.

First batch yet to hit Gurgaon roads, GMCBL seeks 500 more e-buses to plug commute gaps

Gurgaon.(Agency)

Even as the first batch of electric buses is yet to hit the city roads, GMCBL has started the process to expand its planned fleet. GMCBL has sought 500 more electric buses from the Centre to address the city's widening public transport deficit. Officials said GMCBL — through MCG — has submitted the requirement proposal for additional electric buses to the ministry of housing and urban affairs (MoHUA) under the Urban Challenge Fund. This comes amid growing concerns over inadequate public transport infrastructure in the city, where commuters continue to rely heavily on private vehicles and app-based cabs due to the unreliable bus services, worsening congestion and pollution levels. According to officials, the proposal has been prepared keeping in view the city's growing population, rising vehicular congestion and the need to strengthen urban mobility and last-mile connectivity.

GMCBL CEO Vishwajeet Choudhary told TOI, "The proposal has been submitted to improve urban mobility and ensure accessible, end-to-end public transport connectivity across the city. With the expansion of urban areas, efforts are being made to improve the city bus fleet



and provide reliable public transport to commuters." As per MoHUA guidelines, cities with a population above 20 lakh should have at least 50 buses per lakh population to ensure adequate public transport coverage. With Gurgaon's population estimated to be nearly 25 lakh, the city ideally requires around 1,250 buses. However, it is currently managing barely over 12% of the required fleet strength.

At present, GMCBL has around 200 buses, of which 50 are currently operating in

Faridabad following directions from the state govt. With fewer than 150 buses effectively available for Gurgaon, public transport coverage remains sparse in several parts of the city. Many of the existing buses are ageing and prone to frequent breakdowns, affecting service reliability and commuter confidence.

GMCBL officials said that the first batch of e-buses is likely to be added to the fleet by next month. The city saw the last addition of eight CNG buses equipped with AC in 2021. In Feb, the state govt approved the

acquisition of electric buses for Gurgaon. In Sept last year, Convergence Energy Services Ltd finalised a concessionaire for the procurement, operation and maintenance of 200 electric buses under the PM e-Bus Sewa Phase-I initiative. Of these, 100 buses were earmarked for Gurgaon and 100 for Faridabad.

However, officials said Faridabad is yet to develop the required charging and depot infrastructure. As a result, buses allocated to Faridabad are now expected to operate in Gurgaon, increasing the number of e-buses likely to be introduced in the city.

GMCBL officials said preparations to integrate the new electric fleet are already underway. A charging substation has been installed at the Sector 10 depot, while the selected concessionaire is currently developing charging bays and related infrastructure. Simultaneously, work on another bus depot in Sector 48 is nearing completion. According to a GMDA official, nearly 96% of the construction work is completed and the facility is expected to be commissioned next month. "The infrastructure required for operating electric buses is being put in place. Once operational, the new fleet will improve the reach of public transport services in Gurgaon," the official added.

Bakrid goat dispute triggers communal tension at Mumbai's Mira Road housing society, 200 police deployed

Bajrang Dal activists clashed with Muslim residents at a housing society after objections to goats being brought in for Eid ul Adha sacrifice; the animals have since been moved out.

Mumbai. (Agency)

A simmering dispute over goats brought into a residential complex for Eid ul Adha sacrifice escalated into communal tension at Mira Road on Tuesday, prompting heavy police deployment after right-wing activists staged protests outside the housing society and clashes broke out between members of the two communities.

Tension flared at a residential complex in Mira Road ahead of Eid ul Adha, popularly known as Bakrid, after a dispute broke out over more than 50 goats being housed within the society premises, prompting heavy police deployment and detention of several persons. The unrest began at Poonam Cluster 1 on Monday

night after residents and right-wing activists objected to the construction of a temporary shed for sacrificial goats inside the housing complex. The society, which consists of over 550 flats, is a mixed-population locality with several Muslim families residing there. Locals said that over the last few years, Muslim families had been bringing sacrificial animals, especially goats, which are tied in sheds and later sacrificed during Eid. As per earlier rules, municipal corporations have the authority to grant temporary permission for sacrifice in housing society common areas if certain conditions are met, including hygiene, sanitation and the absence of nearby licensed slaughter facilities. "This



has been happening in the society for quite a few years, with goats being tied and even slaughtered. However, a section of the residents has opposed this for some time and a similar issue had occurred last time as well. Many residents feel uncomfortable with slaughter taking place and goats being moved around in the

society, and the problem escalated on Monday," a resident of the society, who did not wish to be named, said.

The issue escalated on Monday night when a section of residents called Bajrang Dal activists into the society complex to intervene in the matter. According to police, around 10 pm, local Bajrang Dal leader Pawan Thakur and several activists reached the society and asked residents to remove the animals, leading to an argument.

Around two hours later, Bajrang Dal functionary Nagnath Kamble arrived at the complex with supporters. At around 12.50 am on Tuesday, an unidentified man allegedly attempted to attack Kamble with a knife from behind. Harsh Singh, another

Bajrang Dal activist who was standing nearby, intervened and suffered injuries to his left hand while trying to stop the attacker.

In his complaint, Singh alleged that he and others tried to catch the suspect, but the man assaulted him and fled the spot. Singh was later taken to hospital for treatment. Story continues below. Subscribe to see fewer ads.

Based on his statement, the Kashimira police registered an FIR against an unidentified person under relevant sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS). Following the incident, police deployed more than 200 personnel around the residential complex and nearby areas to prevent any escalation.

Short news

CBI records statements of Twisha kin, conducts matrimonial home study

BHOPAL. (Agency)

Hours after taking over the probe into the May 12 alleged dowry death of model-actor Twisha Sharma, a team of CBI Special Crime Unit-III from Delhi started investigations on the ground in Madhya Pradesh capital Bhopal on Tuesday.

The CBI team comprising two female sleuths conducted a study of the crime scene – the terrace of Twisha's matrimonial house in the Katara Hills area, where the 33-year-old Twisha was allegedly found hanging to death on the night of May 12. The team also analysed other parts of the house.

Twisha's mother-in-law Giribala and husband Samarth are both accused in the suspected dowry death case registered by the CBI on Monday evening on the basis of the Bhopal Police's FIR in the case, which was registered on May 15.

After Twisha's matrimonial house in Katara Hills area, the CBI team drove around 25 km to the 3 EME Centre of the Indian Army, where they met Twisha's parents, army officer brother Major Harshit Sharma and recorded their statements.

The CBI team stood at the Kurukshetra officer's mess of the 3 EME Centre in Bhopal's Bairagarh area for around two and half hours. Subsequently, the Bhopal Police's SIT formally handed over the case diary and investigation-related records, including forensic analysis documents, post-mortem reports, witness statements and digital evidence, to the CBI team. A source privy to Tuesday's developments claimed that the CBI team wasn't satisfied with the head of Katara Hills Police Station, particularly as the documents weren't arranged in the right sequence.

Driver 'sidelined' from RTC work for remarks on paddy purchase in Telangana

KARIMNAGAR/JAGTIAL. (Agency)

A political row broke out in Jagtial after a driver operating a private bus hired by the TGSRTC was reportedly withdrawn from duty following his remarks on paddy procurement issues.

B Ashok, attached to the Jagtial RTC depot, was operating a private hire bus TS21-T 5006 on the Jagtial-Dharmapuri route while Congress leaders, including SC Welfare Minister Adhuri Laxman Kumar, were staging a protest against the recent hike in fuel prices.

Ashok reportedly remarked that leaders should focus on paddy and maize procurement instead of protesting against fuel price hikes. His comments triggered objections from Congress leaders, who later complained to RTC authorities.

Following the complaint, the RTC Jagtial depot manager reportedly issued notices to the bus owner, Chukka Venugopal, asking for Ashok to be withdrawn from RTC duties. Sources said Ashok was not a regular RTC employee. The issue soon took a political turn, with BRS leaders, led by Karimnagar MLA Gangula Kamalakara and senior leader T Jeevan Reddy, meeting RTC regional officials in Karimnagar and demanding that Ashok not be removed from RTC-related work.

In a video released later, Ashok clarified that his remarks were not directed against any political party or leader. He said he had only spoken informally to someone from his village about the difficulties being faced by farmers. "I did not criticise any leader. I only spoke about the welfare of farmers," Ashok said, adding that he was later informed by RTC officials not to report for duty and that work would not be allotted to him in five depots.

A week after tiger attack, Maharashtra Wildlife board approves Rs 260 cr plan to prevent human-wildlife conflict

Mumbai. (Agency)

In its bid to prevent human-wildlife conflict, the State Wildlife Board Standing Committee has approved the establishment of control rooms at ten locations in the first phase, the deployment of an AI-based alert system in one thousand villages and the creation of two rescue centers and ten treatment centers across the state. This project valued at approximately Rs 260 crore, aims to curb wildlife attacks on humans, said committee chairman and Forest minister Ganesh Naik.

Last week, four women were killed after they were mauled by a tigress and her cubs in Chandrapur district. The incident marks the seventh fatal tiger attack reported from the district this year. As per the action plan, ten control rooms, modeled after police



control rooms, will be established in various parts of the state. These control rooms will be equipped with cutting-edge digital systems to track Forest Department resources, vehicles, and patrol units. Minister Naik stated that in the event of a human-wildlife conflict, these control rooms will immediately alert relevant parties to initiate necessary actions.

To ensure villagers are informed when wild animals are detected outside forest areas, an AI-based alert system—already implemented on a pilot basis in villages adjacent to forests—will now be expanded to about one thousand villages across the state.

This will provide villagers with immediate information regarding animal movements, allowing them to remain vigilant. Additionally, rescue centers will be built for captured wildlife, and ten transit treatment centers will be established for animal medical care. Twenty rapid rescue teams will be formed to assist in the rescue of wild animals. To protect forest-fringe villages, two thousand primary response teams will be created to support the Forest Department.

SSC GD exam chaos: Protests erupt over glitches in UP, tests at multiple centres cancelled

Lucknow. (Agency)

Amid protests by candidates over alleged "technical disruptions", the Staff Selection Commission (Central Region) on Tuesday cancelled the Constable (General Duty) Examination, 2026, at several centres in Uttar Pradesh.

In a series of posts on X, the SSC said that technical disruptions were reported at one centre each in Kanpur, Prayagraj, Lucknow, and Muzaffarpur during the forenoon shift on May 25 (Monday). "As a result, tests scheduled at these centres were cancelled and affected candidates were rescheduled for subsequent dates," it added.

According to the SSC, disruptions continued at a part of the iTech centre in Prayagraj, leading to some candidates



advocating a boycott and affecting the ongoing examination at another part of the same venue.

"Accordingly, the examination at this Prayagraj venue has been cancelled for all remaining days.

Affected candidates will be rescheduled. The SSC plans to complete the examination process for all candidates by

May 31, 2026 (Sunday)."

The SSC has been conducting the exam since April 27, 2026. According to the Commission, tests are being held in multiple shifts across the country at about 230 centres, and are scheduled to conclude on May 31. Earlier, candidates staged protests over alleged mismanagement at the Prayagraj examination centre.

According to police, several candidates alleged that technical glitches had severely disrupted the examination process. The situation escalated after candidates, angered by the reported server failures and inadequate arrangements at the centre, allegedly vandalised property inside the premises and demanded cancellation of the examination.

Gujarat govt says Rs 105 cr hostel complex to come up at Air India plane crash site, families seek memorial: 'Place connected to lives, grief & loss'

The minister said the hostel buildings had suffered severe structural damage after the aircraft crashed into the Meghani Nagar campus while 92 students were residing there. A subsequent structural audit declared the buildings unsafe, making demolition unavoidable.

Vadodara. (Agency)

IN JUST over two weeks, June 12 will mark one year since the Air India AI171 Ahmedabad crash shattered hundreds of families of the 260 victims – when flames tore through the BJ Medical College hostel complex in Meghani Nagar, leaving behind twisted debris, burnt rooms, unfinished conversations and families that say time has not moved forward since.

As the Gujarat government on Tuesday announced preparations to demolish the damaged hostel blocks and build a new Rs 105-crore residential complex at the site, grieving relatives of victims are making an emotional appeal – to not let the site disappear beneath concrete and reconstruction.

For families still carrying the trauma of the crash, the land where the aircraft came down is not merely a redevelopment site, but a place forever tied to grief, memories



and loss. In representations sent to authorities on Tuesday, relatives have urged the government to preserve at least a portion of the site as a memorial dedicated to those killed in the crash.

Mukti Vansadiya, a 32-year-old resident of Surat, who lost her parents – Divya and Arjunsinh – in the crash said the request made by the families to construct a memorial was for "respect and dignity" to be accorded to those who died in the tragedy. Vansadiya told The Indian Express, "We are already fighting a battle

against powerful corporate entities and other vested interests who are not allowing families to access the truth of the crash... All that we want is that our departed loved ones should be given dignity and respect. Handing out Rs 1 crore in compensation does not mean respect... I am willing to return the compensation in exchange for the dignity that my parents' memory deserves."

Mukti, a former travel agency executive who quit her profession following her parents' death in the crash, now works with a social outreach programme. She says, "All my life, I booked flight tickets and travel plans for clients... My parents were first-time travellers to London. After the crash, I could not continue in my profession. When the Tata Group offered me employment in their social outreach programme, I took it up to keep myself occupied. But when we seek this memorial, I am willing to let it all

go... Everyone thinks that being alone, the compensation has made me self-sufficient... but no one understands the darkness of loneliness after losing family."

Mukti's demand comes on a day when another London-based relative of a victim, who was travelling on the ill-fated flight, wrote an email marked to departments of health and urban development in the government of Gujarat, Ministry of Civil Aviation and other departments of the Ministry of Health. The email stated, "I write this not as a political voice, but as a member of a family directly affected by this tragedy.. For us, this place is not merely land or infrastructure. It is a site connected to lives, memories, grief, and irreversible loss... We respectfully but firmly request that the site be preserved as a memorial space dedicated to the victims, rather than being immediately repurposed or redeveloped."

Time to Dismantle the Architecture of Official Privilege

Age is just a number. Recently, a 68-year-old man was arrested for impersonating a government officer while driving an SUV fitted with a beacon light. In Mumbai, the Traffic Police booked around 80 vehicles in just two days—April 1 and 2—during a citywide crackdown on illegal beacons, fake police stickers, sirens, and counterfeit “press” tags. In Kolkata, arrests for similar offences have continued through 2025 and 2026. In Gurugram, a man was arrested for posing as an IAS officer while driving a vehicle emblazoned with “Government of India.”

A democracy should not resemble a royal procession. Yet India’s roads continue to function as moving displays of power, where ordinary citizens are expected to step aside because the state believes itself superior to the very public it is meant to serve. What is revealing is that none of these impersonators pretended to be businessmen or celebrities. They chose to impersonate government officials because, in India, that identity still commands fear, obedience, and privilege. The beacon remains a shortcut to authority. And that is the real scandal. When Narendra Modi came to power in 2014, one of his most visible symbolic interventions was an attack on India’s deeply entrenched VIP culture. On April 19, 2017, the government formally announced that red beacons—the notorious *lal batti*—would be removed from nearly all official vehicles. Modi described it as the end of “VIP culture” and the beginning of “EPI culture”: Every Person is Important.

For a brief moment, Indian roads looked different. Ministers removed flashing lights from their SUVs before television cameras. Convoys became smaller. The symbolism appeared powerful. But today, red and blue beacons have quietly returned—fixed illegally onto SUVs, hidden inside grilles, flashing from dashboards, and mounted on escort vehicles and private cars with no legal right to carry them. Across highways and city roads, the old message has returned: move aside, power is coming through.

The law itself is unambiguous. In its December 10, 2013 directions in SLP (C) No. 23984/2010 and 25237/2010, the Supreme Court of India directed state governments to sharply restrict the use of red lights and align regulations with the Central Motor Vehicles Rules, 1989. The Union government tightened these rules further in 2017. By May that year, red beacons had effectively been banned for almost all public officials. Only a limited group of constitutional authorities—such as the President, Vice-President, Prime Minister, Chief Justice of India, and Lok Sabha Speaker—retained restricted use while on official duty. Blue beacons were confined strictly to emergency services: ambulances, fire services, police, and disaster response vehicles. Yet the law is openly violated because enforcement remains selective. Police officers often hesitate to stop vehicles that appear official, even when they are clearly suspicious. Many would rather salute first and ask questions later. For decades, the Indian state has relied on spectacle to project authority: pilot cars, sirens, armed escorts, reserved lounges, separate entrances, sprawling bungalows, layers of protocol, and expanding security rings. The beacon sits at the centre of this culture because its symbolism is instantly understood. Even someone with no formal education recognises it as a signal that someone powerful is passing through. This culture survives because India still confuses public service with social status. Article 14 of the Constitution guarantees equality before the law. No citizen acquires a higher civic status merely by holding public office. The very concept of a “VIP” sits uneasily within a constitutional democracy. A minister is not a king. A bureaucrat is not a nobleman. A judge is not a lord. Public office is meant to signify responsibility, not superiority.

Nuclear consensus remains elusive

Non-Proliferation Treaty’s Review Conference ends on a predictably disappointing note

THE 2026 Review Conference (RevCon) of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) concluded at the United Nations in New York on May 22 without adopting a final consensus document. This is a major setback to the equitable regulation of the global nuclear domain, which is in considerable disarray due to the deep geopolitical discord among the major powers; the steady loss of trust about the intent and commitment of the five nuclear weapon states (NWS) towards disarmament; and the uncertainties induced by the emergence of new technologies, including AI (artificial intelligence) that can muddy the tenets of nuclear deterrence. The inability to reach a consensus was no surprise. It marks the third consecutive review cycle (following 2015 and 2022) to end without an agreed-upon statement among the 191 NPT member states. India, Pakistan and Israel are non-signatories to the NPT, while North Korea withdrew from the treaty in 2003. It is instructive that these four nations are nuclear weapon states, with Israel maintaining ambiguity about nuclear tests, unlike the other three. The NPT, a very unequal treaty, came into force in 1970. It sought to segregate the five nuclear haves or NWS (nuclear weapon states)—the US, erstwhile USSR (now Russia), UK, France and China—from the rest of the world, which was expected to remain non-NWS (NNWS) in perpetuity. The five NWS are also the permanent members of the UN Security Council, the P5, deemed to be the executive apex of the UN system and responsible for global peace and security. The NPT scaffolding was built around three pillars that sought to balance rights and obligations among the NWS and the NNWS—nuclear non-proliferation, disarmament and the peaceful use of nuclear energy. The five NWS agreed not to transfer nuclear weapons or help others acquire them, while the NNWS agreed not to acquire or develop nuclear weapons. The objective was to stop the spread of nuclear weapons beyond the original five. The disarmament pillar was framed as the NWS committed to pursue negotiations “in good faith” towards nuclear disarmament, leading to general and complete disarmament. This is the Article VI obligation and the reason why NNWS agreed to forgo acquiring the

apocalyptic nuclear weapon capability—the onerous promise by the NWS that existing arsenals would eventually be reduced to zero. The third pillar is the peaceful use of nuclear energy, wherein all parties have the “inalienable right” to develop nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. In return, non-nuclear states must accept IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency) safeguards to verify that enriched material is not being diverted towards weapons. In essence, the NPT bargain was basically a template that was imposed on the NNWS

weapon capability against NNWS have also been tainted. In recent years, this has been evident in the actions of Russia and the US in the Ukraine and Iran wars, respectively. Both Ukraine and Iran have revealed the manner in which the core NPT provisions have been sullied. Paradoxically, Ukraine, which had nuclear weapons when it was part of the USSR, became a de facto NWS when the Cold War ended in December 1991; it was prevailed upon to renounce this status and become a NNWS. Solemn pledges were made that its sovereignty would not be violated, but then the February 2022 Russian invasion happened. And in the early stages of the war, Moscow engaged in not-so-subtle nuclear sabre-rattling. Iran, which is a signatory to the NPT as a NNWS and had accepted IAEA safeguards under the (P5 plus 1) negotiated nuclear deal during the Barack Obama years, was blatantly attacked by the US and Israel on “trumped-up” charges earlier this year. The “inalienable right” of a NNWS to peaceful nuclear pursuit is in tatters. India has no de jure locus appropos of the NPT since it is a non-signatory, but it has a de facto dialectical relationship with the global nuclear order. Since the 1950s, when Jawaharlal Nehru was at the helm, India was in the vanguard of global disarmament advocacy and contributed to the Partial Test Ban Treaty.

However, Delhi was cast as a nuclear outlier by the US till it became a nuclear weapon state in May 1998 and was then accorded an exceptional status in late 2008. This extraordinary *modus vivendi* was enabled in large measure by then US President George W Bush; it has given India a distinctive perch in the global nuclear architecture. The 2026 RevCon ended on a predictably disappointing note, but the failure underscored the need to restore the sanctity of deterrence norms—it is more urgent now than ever before. The US, Russia and China have abdicated their responsibility in different ways. Alas, they are no longer the guardians they were expected to be. The world needs resolute stakeholders to repair the NPT pillars in an equitable, empathetic and consensual manner. In the mid-1960s, the Indian representative to the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament (ENDC) in Geneva, Ambassador VC Trivedi, described the nascent NPT as a means to “disarm the unarmed.”



by the “first five”, whose diktat to the rest of the world was: you are not to build bombs; you get help with peaceful nuclear energy and we, the countries that have bombs, will work to get rid of them. Regrettably, all three pillars have been weakened or distorted over the decades. The most blatant transgression was in relation to proliferation. The five NWS closed ranks to allow vertical proliferation of their respective arsenals, but growled in unison to prevent horizontal proliferation. The first violation of the NPT was the covert assistance provided by NWS to enable Israel, Pakistan and North Korea to acquire nuclear weapons during the Cold War decades. The disarmament commitment and the pledge by the NWS not to use or threaten to use their nuclear

Wrestling justice: Vinesh verdict puts fairness above vendetta

Federations must evolve credible, transparent systems that reduce arbitrariness and inspire trust

THE Delhi High Court’s decision allowing Vinesh Phogat to participate in the Asian Games trials is about more than the fate of just one athlete. It underscores that sporting institutions cannot function through opaque rules, selective application and personal vendetta. The court’s sharp remarks against the Wrestling Federation of India (WFI), including its observation that the federation appeared “vindictive”, should worry everyone invested in Indian sport. Federations exist to nurture talent and ensure fairness, not to settle scores with athletes who challenge authority. The attempt to deny Vinesh a fair opportunity after her return from maternity leave and injury recovery exposed how Indian sports administration lacks transparent, humane and gender-sensitive policies. India has celebrated sporting mothers before. Mary Kom returned after motherhood to win world titles and an Olympic medal, while Sania Mirza made a successful comeback to international tennis after childbirth. Globally, champions like



Serena Williams and Allyson Felix transformed conversations around maternity rights in sport through their extraordinary post-pregnancy performances.

Motherhood, therefore, cannot become a professional handicap or an excuse for bureaucratic exclusion. The controversy also reflects the continuing fallout of the wrestlers’ protest movement, where several athletes accused powerful officials of intimidation and misconduct. When outspoken sportspersons begin facing administrative roadblocks, public confidence in sporting bodies erodes rapidly.

India celebrates women athletes when they win medals, but often abandons them when they confront institutional power or biological realities such as pregnancy and recovery. Courts should not have to repeatedly intervene in athlete selection. Federations must evolve credible, transparent systems that reduce arbitrariness and inspire trust. Indian sport cannot aspire to global excellence while remaining trapped in internal politics and institutional insecurity. Athletes must be judged by merit and performance, not by their conformity or silence.

Why the Places of Worship Act matters

— The Act prohibits the conversion of the religious character of a place of worship and imposes an obligation on the state to maintain that character as it existed on August 15, 1947

NATIONS progress when they address unemployment, inequality, education, public health, climate vulnerability, and the dignity of ordinary citizens. Not when they perpetually summon ghosts from history to dominate the present. The tragedy is that such disputes rarely remain confined to courtrooms. Once historical anxieties are released into public discourse, they travel rapidly into neighbourhoods, colour social relations, power electoral campaigns and seep into everyday conversations. The damage then is not merely institutional but also societal, destroying the possibility of peaceful coexistence. There are moments in the life of a republic when the letter of the law survives, but its spirit erodes through reinterpretation, circumvention and selective political invocation. The ongoing debates and litigations surrounding places of worship in India represent one such moment. The question before us is much more than legal. It is civilisational and constitutional. And it is likely to impact our nation and people in profound ways. The Places of Worship Act, 1991, was enacted in extraordinary times. It was born amidst one of the most volatile phases of post-Independence India, when communal anxieties had begun acquiring organised political expression and ‘historical grievances’ were being transformed into contemporary political mobilisations. Parliament, through this legislation, sought to draw a constitutional Lakshman Rekha. The law essentially conveyed that independent India would not become a battlefield for relitigating medieval history. At its core, the 1991 Act was an appeal for national maturity.

The wisdom of the law lay in recognising that ours is not a land of singular histories. Our cities, shrines and monuments carry layers of memory of empire-building,

trade, exchange, assimilation, coexistence, destruction and reconstruction. If every generation decides to reopen the wounds of the past in search of historical purification, the republic itself risks becoming permanently unsettled. Yet what we increasingly witness today is not so much a direct assault on the law, but a gradual weakening of its ethical and constitutional



intent. Its spirit is being bypassed through a climate where symbolic disputes are resurrected, historical claims are amplified for political mobilisation and the language of faith is deployed in ways that deepen social suspicion rather than democratic fraternity.

And the courts, which were supposed to defend the 1991 Act in letter and spirit, have appeared to waver in their commitment. Instead of treating the law as the decisive starting point, courts have increasingly anchored their reasoning in archaeological surveys, contested historical narratives and procedural workarounds, treating the statute as one consideration among many

rather than the governing rule. When the governing law becomes the final reference rather than the starting point, adjudication ceases to enforce the legislative bar and quietly enables its circumvention. The 1991 Act prohibits the conversion of the religious character of a place of worship and imposes an obligation on the state to maintain that character as it existed on August 15, 1947. The law preserves non-retrogression as an essential feature of our secular values. However, the recent decision of the MP High Court and several similar petitions pending in courts across India eviscerate the very core of the law. One must ask: what exactly is the republic attempting to achieve through this excavation of contested pasts? No democracy can move forward if governance becomes captive to civilisational score-settling. India’s constitutional vision was never based on historical amnesia. The Constitution does not ask citizens to forget history; it asks them not to become captive to it. There is a difference between remembering history and weaponising it. BR Ambedkar warned that constitutional morality requires restraint, especially from those who wield political and institutional power. Restraint is not a synonym for weakness; it is the highest expression of democratic confidence. In deeply diverse societies, peace is sustained by a collective willingness to avoid converting every difference into perpetual conflict. The Places of Worship Act is about protecting the future from the burdens of an endlessly litigated past. It is an assurance that generations born after Independence would not inherit an India consumed by retrospective vengeance, and would, instead, march forward with peace and progress as the guiding lights.

What is equally worrying today is the normalisation of a

discourse where constitutional guarantees are increasingly evaluated through majoritarian sentiment. The republic cannot function on shifting emotional majorities. Let us reaffirm that constitutionalism, by definition, exists to provide stability against the volatility of passions. That is why the idea of India cannot be reduced to a project of historical rectification. A civilisation like India could survive invasions, colonialism, partitions and upheavals only because it possessed the ethical confidence to move without being consumed by inherited or manufactured grievances. Its continuity rested not upon revenge, but upon renewal.

The challenge before contemporary India is whether it possesses the democratic wisdom and civilisational maturity not to embark upon the perilous path of collective self-destruction. For, once the spirit of reconciliation is replaced by the politics of endless reclamation, there may never be any logical or moral point of closure. History across the world, is an infinite archive of wounds, conquests, humiliations and displacements. Every civilisation carries scars, but no modern republic can survive if each inherited wound is transformed into a perpetual political project.

The danger lies precisely here: when the past becomes the primary site of political legitimacy, the future becomes a casualty. Societies then cease to govern themselves through constitutional reason and begin navigating through accumulated resentments. Such resentments, unfortunately, are never in short supply in a diverse country like India. In this cycle of retribution, the republic risks exhausting itself in the endless management of inherited anger, suspicion and grievance. The Members of Parliament who framed the Places of Worship Act understood this danger with remarkable foresight and sobriety.

You can reverse
the years if
you start
taking care of
your skin early.
We get beauty
experts to tell
you how



skin is massaged with a skin replenishing cream in a way that enhances absorption into the deeper layers of the skin. Specialised masks are used and a face lift is given which irons out the lines and wrinkles, making the skin firm and youthful. Later, a day cream and a serum are applied to restore firmness — making your skin tighter and compact.

Duration - 60 minutes

Homemade remedies to treat mature skin
- Massage your face with almond or coconut oil once in a week before going to bed. These oils are known to be best for ageing skin as they help improve your complexion, reduce fine lines and wrinkles.
- Says skin expert, Punit Saraogi, "The application of aloe vera juice and honey is said to visibly reduce the signs of ageing." Apply a face pack of aloe vera juice and honey to treat wrinkles and fine lines.
- Basil and tulsi has effective anti-ageing and anti-oxidant properties. Boil fresh tulsi leaves and basil and drink the water after it cools down.
- Switch to drinking green tea. Green tea is said to have anti-inflammatory and anti-ageing properties which help in skin rejuvenation.

How to apply anti-ageing cream

- Wash your face well with an anti-ageing foaming cleanser. Rinse it off with cool water and pat dry. Make sure moisture does not remain on your skin.
- Start by applying the cream using long strokes towards your temple in soft, circular motions.
- For the delicate area around your eyes, pat the cream onto the skin till it is absorbed.

Choosing an anti-ageing cream

Says Dr Pai, "The first thing to do when choosing an anti-ageing cream is to determine its ingredients. The selection of the cream depends on your skin type. For example, as the skin ages, it tends to become drier — so a person with dry skin should opt for a cream-based solution, while those with oily or combination skin should go in for a lotion or gel-based anti-ageing beauty blend.

Retinol: Retinol is an anti-oxidant which increases skin cell production and collagen and thickens your dermis (skin layer). If you have dry skin or combination skin, it is advisable for you to choose a product with retinol.

Ubiquinone: If you have normal to dry skin, pick an anti-ageing cream with ubiquinone. It is an anti-oxidant which prevents free radicals produced due to pollution. It helps in building collagen and elastin, therefore reducing the appearance of fine lines and wrinkles on the skin.

Vitamin C: Those with sensitive or oily skin should opt for a lotion with vitamin C. Creams rich in vitamin C helps reduce the free radical damage caused to the skin.

Isoflavones: Great for those with dry and flaky skin, isoflavones are a class of phytoestrogens — plant-derived compounds with oestrogenic activity. Creams with isoflavones claim to firm and re-densify skin, increasing collagen production and skin's tensile strength.

Look Beautiful at any age

By the time you've reached your late 20s, you've already settled down in life — professionally and personally —and the glow is visible on your face. But this is not enough. After the age of 25, the skin starts showing signs of ageing — dark circles, visible pores, fine lines, wrinkles, uneven skin tone and dullness. Says dermatologist Dr Farida Modi, "It is crucial to take care of your skin once you are in your mid 20s. So, follow a proper skincare routine with a well-balanced diet."

Signs of skin-ageing

Says Dr Kalpana Sarangi, a consulting dermatologist, "In their mid 20s, women start experiencing dryness of the skin, followed by freckles, fine lines, wrinkles and puffiness around the eyes. To treat these symptoms, you need a good anti-ageing moisturising cream. This cream is specially designed to treat all the signs of ageing." Some of the warning signs of skin-ageing are:

Dark circles

Dark circles result from stress, lack of sleep or prolonged exposure to sunlight. As you age, the skin around your eyes gets thinner, resulting in dark patches around your eyes. To avoid this, make it a point to use a good under-eye gel during bedtime.

Fine lines and wrinkles

Collagen and elastin fibres are present beneath the skin's surface around your mouth and eyes. They begin to gradually break down as you age — this leads to fine lines and wrinkles. Use a cream with vitamin A or retinol, which helps in their reduction.

Sagging skin

As you get older, the skin starts to lose its elasticity which in turn leads to sagging. To treat sagging skin, use an age-diffusing serum for firmness.

Visible pores

Those with oily or combination skin suffer from visible pores. Use a good anti-ageing foaming cleanser and a toner daily to reduce the enlarged pores.

Uneven skin tone

Age spots or uneven skin tone can happen due to hormonal disorder, exposure to sunlight etc. Use an anti-ageing cream that corrects the skin tone and a firming serum to treat uneven skin.

Causes of skin-ageing

Says dermatologist Dr Jamuna Pai, "The skin ages due to external and internal factors. Among internal factors, decrease in elastin production, less turnover of new skin cells and the inability of the skin to retain moisture are the main reasons. The external factors include lifestyle change and environmental



damage like constant exposure to sunlight, poor diet, too much stress and lack of exercise."

In your mid 20s, your skin is in its prime. Ageing does not happen overnight, it happens over a period of time. Though you can't evade it, you can delay it if you take good care of your skin well in advance.

How to care for mature skin

Says beauty expert, Aakriti Kochar, "Trying to hide mature skin with make-up is not the solution. The make-up will stay for only two hours or so and then your skin will come back to its normal state. To treat mature skin, you need to regularly cleanse, tone and moisturise your skin."

- Opt for creams rich in vitamins C and E,

which help counter the effect of sun exposure and reduce wrinkles.

- Wear a sunscreen with SPF 15 and above.
- Says Dr Mohan Thomas, senior cosmetic surgeon, "Use an alpha-hydroxyl cleanser or lotion on the areas of the skin that have age spots. This will help to fade them."

Anti-ageing facials

Gold Caviar Riche face therapy
This facial is done using real gold and the goodness of caviar extracts that keep your skin looking younger, brighter and healthier. The massage creams contain Omega 3, Omega 6 fatty acids, and vitamins A & E which repair the damage done to your skin.
Duration - 90 minutes

Pumpkin peel facial

This treatment uses natural pumpkin extracts which help in the regeneration of cells. Suitable for all skin types, it prevents dryness, acne and removes dead cells. It also helps in cell renewal and treats hyper-pigmentation.
Duration - 60 minutes

Telomere facial

This treatment uses creams and serums specially designed for mature skin. The



Uganda-returned woman, isolated in Bengaluru, tests negative for Ebola

New Delhi.(Agency)

In a major relief for health authorities and the public in India, the test results of a 28-year-old woman who returned from Uganda and was isolated in Bengaluru due to a suspected Ebola infection have returned negative. Following the test result, the Centre confirmed that no case of Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) has been detected in the country so far. The woman, who had recently travelled from an Ebola-affected region in Africa and later developed mild symptoms such as body ache, had been shifted to the state-run Epidemic Diseases Hospital in Bengaluru as a precautionary measure amid heightened global concern over the outbreak. The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare said the woman was placed under isolation "as a matter of abundant caution" after reporting symptoms. A sample was subsequently sent

to the National Institute of Virology (NIV), Pune, for laboratory testing.

"The test result has returned negative for Ebola Virus Disease," the ministry said, adding that "No case of Ebola Virus Disease has been confirmed in India".

NO SEVERE SYMPTOMS OBSERVED

Officials said the woman remained stable throughout observation and did not exhibit severe symptoms associated with the disease. As per established health protocols, authorities initiated monitoring and isolation procedures because of her recent travel history to Uganda, one of the countries affected by the ongoing Ebola outbreak. The government previously issued an advisory for its citizens to avoid all kinds of non-essential travel to countries, including the Democratic Republic of Congo, Uganda, and South Sudan, where over 220 suspected deaths

due to Ebola have been reported.

The development comes at a time when governments and health agencies across the world are on alert following the World Health Organization's declaration of the Ebola outbreak in these countries as a "Public Health Emergency of International Concern" (PHEIC).

The Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention has also designated the outbreak as a "Public Health Emergency of Continental Security" (PHECS).

HEALTH MINISTER REVIEWS PREPAREDNESS

In response to the global situation, Union Health Minister JP Nadda reviewed India's preparedness and surveillance mechanisms in a high-level meeting with senior officials. During the review, Nadda



directed authorities to ensure that Ebola screening arrangements at all airports, seaports and land border crossings remain "fully vigilant and robust". He also instructed the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) and the National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) to maintain readiness for "tracking, testing, and surveillance" in case of any suspected

infections.

Following Nadda's directions, the Union Health Secretary chaired a joint review meeting involving multiple ministries and concerned agencies to strengthen coordination and response mechanisms.

INDIA STEPS UP VIGIL

The Centre has also advised all states and Union Territories to intensify surveillance, hospital preparedness and screening of international travellers arriving from affected regions. In Karnataka, the health department has already activated precautionary protocols. Authorities have advised people returning from Ebola-affected countries to monitor their health and self-observe for 21 days. Rapid Response Teams (RRTs) have also been tasked with surveillance and contact monitoring activities.

The CIA, the T-72, and the Delhi Gymkhana Club - a Cold War tale

New Delhi.(Agency)

New Delhi's 113-year old Delhi Gymkhana club has been asked to vacate its premises by June 5, 2026. The eviction notice from the central government cites 'national security, defense infrastructure' and 'urgent public interest' in taking over the 27-acre club, located a stone's throw away from the Prime Minister's residence on 7 Lok Kalyan Marg. The club with its manicured lawns, two dozen tennis courts, a swimming pool, a wooden-floored ballroom, and multiple bars, serves Delhi's elite. Nearly fifty years ago, the club was also a drop site for the egregious leak of Indian military secrets. This incident was detailed in granular detail in 'See No Evil', the 2002 autobiography of a former CIA agent Robert Baer.

The Gymkhana Club then was one of the places where spies disguised as diplomats could mingle with Indian officials, bypassing government rules forbidding contact with foreign nationals. Spies could also enter the club and shake off determined 'tails' from India's Intelligence Bureau. The story began in the late 1970s with the arrival of Baer, a freshly minted CIA agent to the US Embassy. The Cold War was then at its peak. NATO and Warsaw Pact armies stood ranged against each other, on hair-trigger alert, across Europe. Among the growing mass of military hardware were some cutting edge Soviet platforms that caused the West serious worry. If the Cold War burst into a hot war, titanium-hulled Alfa class interceptor submarines would barrel down the Atlantic Ocean to hunt NATO warships, stratosphere-skimming MiG-25 'Foxbats' would shoot down US bombers, and on the ground, a new battle tank, the T-72 would lead Soviet armoured spearheads across the Fulda Gap into West Germany. The Pentagon and the CIA pursued these advancement in Soviet hardware with relentless zeal—to understand their capabilities, detect their vulnerabilities and field countermeasures.

Centre gets HC nod to resume eviction process of Race Club in central Delhi

New Delhi.(Agency)

The Delhi High Court on Tuesday allowed the Central government to resume eviction proceedings against the Delhi Race Club from its 53-acre government land in central Delhi. A bench of Chief Justice Devendra Kumar Upadhyaya and Justice Tejas Karia allowed the Centre's appeal against the interim protection granted earlier by a single judge.

The two-judge bench passed the order after the government submitted that the club had directly approached the high court even though the matter was still at the notice stage and no final eviction order had been passed yet. The dispute relates to around 53 acres of government land on Lok Kalyan Marg, occupied by the Delhi Race Club. The Centre told the court that the Public Premises Act already provided a process where the estate officer first hears the matter and any aggrieved party can later file an appeal.

"The questions, such as whether the lease still exists, whether the occupation is authorised and the effect of past payments, should first be examined by the estate officer.

The respondent (club) cannot, merely by asserting a subsisting lease, oust the jurisdiction of the estate officer or seek quashing of the show cause notice at the threshold," the Centre told the court.

It claimed that the original lease for the land was granted in 1926 for 25 years, with extensions possible subject to conditions and approval. The Centre said the last extension expired on December 31, 1994, and was never renewed after that.

A single judge on April 24 stopped the estate officer from proceeding further on a show-cause notice issued to the club on April 17. The notice had asked the club to explain why eviction proceedings should not be initiated against it.

The judge had restrained the Union Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs from taking "forcible possession" of the Club at Kamal Ataturk Marg, as well as the Jaipur Polo Ground in the Race Course area. The judge had noted that the race club has been operating on the 53.242-acre premises since a lease was first granted in 1926.

Deletion of name in SIR doesn't end citizenship: Supreme Court's big order

New Delhi.(Agency)

Upholding the legality of the Special Intensive Revision (SIR), the Supreme Court on Wednesday said that the deletion of names from electoral rolls under the exercise does not determine citizenship. The verdict is crucial as the petitioners and the opposition had argued that the SIR exercise, which is being conducted by the Election Commission, was a citizenship verification exercise by backdoor.

On the larger question of whether ECI can determine citizenship, a bench of Chief Justice Surya Kant and

Justice Joymalya Bagchi underlined a key rider. The court said the ECI could examine the same, but from



the limited standpoint of determining inclusion or exclusion of the concerned person from the electoral rolls.

"The commission can delete, but that

doesn't mean he or she is no more the citizen of India. It doesn't have anything to do with the determination of citizenship," the Supreme Court said.

The verdict came on a batch of petitions challenging the legality of the SIR process, which required voters whose names were absent from the 2002/2003 electoral rolls to establish ancestral linkage to a person whose name appeared in that list. The ECI defended the exercise as necessary to cleanse voter rolls and verify citizenship claims.

However, the petitioners argued that the determination of citizenship through SIR was not within the poll body's mandate.

Supreme Court upholds SIR, says it advances free and fair elections

New Delhi.(Agency)

In a shot in the arm for the Election Commission of India, the Supreme Court on Wednesday upheld its Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls as "legally tenable", ruling that the exercise advances the constitutional imperative of free and fair elections. The verdict comes just days before the third and final phase of the SIR begins on May 30 across 16 states and three Union Territories, where fresh verification and revision of voter rolls are set to be carried out by the poll panel.

A bench led by Chief Justice of India Surya Kant and Justice Joymalya Bagchi examined whether the EC had the powers under Article 326 of the Constitution, the Representation



of the People Act, 1950, and related rules to conduct the exercise in its present form.

"We are equally satisfied that the object sought to be achieved by the SIR bears a direct nexus to the constitutional goal of free and fair elections," the Chief Justice said while pronouncing the verdict.

"The impugned SIR does not detract from the constitutional obligation of free and fair elections," the court added while upholding the exercise

introduced in Bihar and later extended to other states.

The bench said the SIR did not override existing election laws. "Rather, it breathes life into the constitutional mandate under Article 324 within the precise statutory contours provided by Section 21(3)," it stated. "Therefore, it cannot be said that the Commission has acted in excess of its statutory powers," it added.

The top court made it clear that the exercise could not be struck down merely because its procedure differed from the ordinary revision process. The ruling was a setback for opposition parties, who have furiously opposed the revision process due to its timing and the fear of wrongful deletions.

Restore traditional rituals, consider Goswamis' suggestions: SC to Vrindavan temple

A bench led by Chief Justice Surya Kant directed the inclusion of four Goswami representatives — two each from the Shayan Bhog and Raj Bhog groups — in the temple management committee.

New Delhi.(Agency)

The Supreme Court on Tuesday introduced a major shift in the administration of the historic Banke Bihari Temple in Vrindavan by directing that members of the Goswami community on the temple's High-Powered Committee must now be chosen through an internal democratic process rather than by officials. The ruling aims to ensure genuine representation of the community in decisions concerning temple affairs.

The top court also urged the committee to safeguard long-standing religious customs and rituals while simultaneously strengthening crowd regulation, visitor management and overall temple administration in consultation with representatives from the Goswami groups.

A bench comprising Chief Justice of India Surya Kant and Justice Joymalya Bagchi directed that two representatives each from the Shayan Bhog and Raj Bhog Goswami groups be included in the committee overseeing temple administration.

The Court ordered the inclusion of Gopesh Goswami and Himanshu Goswami from the Shayan Bhog group, and Rajat Goswami and Shailendra Goswami from the Raj Bhog group.

"With a view to ensuring that the suggestions with respect to allowing the traditional religious practices to the extent possible, without any exploitation of visitors and other day-to-day rituals, we have recommended that among the two groups of Goswamis should be nominated to the committee," the bench observed.

"All of them shall jointly give suggestions for improvement of traditional and religious practices and the day-to-day functioning of the temple.

We have no reason to doubt that such suggestions shall be given due consideration by the committee constituted by this Court," it added. The Court said suggestions could also be made regarding temple timings and rituals. The Goswami representatives are expected to advise the committee on temple traditions, seva practices and administrative functioning.

India has more cities than it knows of. Why are they hiding in plain sight?

New Delhi.(Agency)

Are there other Lucknow, Pune and Rajkot than we know of? India might have far more cities than the government's numbers acknowledge. A working paper released by the Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister (EAC-PM) argues that India's actual level of urbanisation is significantly higher than what government data suggests. The paper says it impacts the residents because panchayats are forced to deal with urban issues, like waste management and traffic, that they aren't equipped to handle. Titled India's Hidden Urbanisation & Its Policy Implications, the paper by EAC-PM member Shamika Ravi and consultants Manuj Joshi and Apurv Kumar Mishra contends that millions of Indians live in settlements

that function like towns and cities but remain officially classified as rural. According to Census 2011, only 31.1% of Indians lived in urban areas. But the paper cites satellite-based estimates showing India might already have been 63% urban in 2015.

The authors of the paper warn that the gap between administrative labelling and the ground realities is distorting governance, public spending and infrastructure planning.

The debate has acquired fresh relevance because the Registrar General of India has proposed retaining the 2011 definition of urban areas for Census 2027 to ensure comparability across decades. The authors of the paper, however, argue that

India's urban transition has outpaced the urban-rural definitions devised half a century ago. The concern over hidden urbanisation or hidden urban sports in



India is not entirely new. The World Bank's Agglomeration Index (published in 2015), developed by economists Uchida Hirotsugu and Andrew Nelson, estimated that 55.3% of India's

population was already living in urban-like areas in the 2010s. It highlighted that a large degree of "hidden urbanisation" was beyond legal city limits.

INDIA'S CITIES ARE HIDING IN PLAIN SIGHT? BUT HOW?

The EAC-PM paper's central argument is that India is urbanising much faster than its administrative systems are recognising cities and towns.

It notes that the classification of human settlements as urban or rural determines governance structures, eligibility for schemes and allocation of public resources. Yet many places that have urban characteristics (factories, shops, offices, transport, construction or services rather than farming) remain officially rural.

India ranks second in APAC as data center operational capacity hits 1.6 GW: Cushman & Wakefield

New Delhi .(Agency)

India ranks second in Asia Pacific (APAC) markets with 1.6 GW operational capacity, establishing itself as a significant growth engine for digital infrastructure in the region. The country also features among the top three APAC markets by development pipeline, with 3.1 GW under construction and planned.

According to the Cushman & Wakefield Global Data Center Market Comparison 2026 report, accelerating AI adoption, hyperscale cloud expansion, and rising enterprise demand continue to reshape global data center development patterns.

The report noted that India's data center ecosystem relies on a multi-market presence, with Mumbai, Hyderabad, Chennai, Delhi NCR, Pune, and Bengaluru included in the assessment.

Mumbai anchors India's position as a primary market in Asia Pacific and is expected to surpass 1 GW of operational capacity by the end of 2026. Growth is also increasingly supported by secondary markets such as Hyderabad, Chennai, Delhi NCR, and Pune.

Hyderabad ranks as the top secondary market in Asia Pacific and ninth globally, underscoring its prominence. Bengaluru is positioned as a tertiary data center market within the regional landscape. Hyperscaler demand remains a key driver of expansion across India, particularly in Mumbai, Hyderabad, and Pune.

SBI Life collaborates with Datamatics to harness Agentic AI, redefining underwriting for smarter, future-ready risk assessment

Mumbai.(Agency)

Datamatics (BSE: 532528) (NSE: DATAMATICS), a global Digital Technologies, Operations, and Experiences company, today announced that SBI Life Insurance, one of India's most trusted life insurers, has appointed Datamatics to redefine underwriting operations using Agentic AI-powered automation.

Underwriting is a mission-critical function for life insurers, particularly for complex cases that require detailed analysis of medical histories, laboratory reports, and multiple risk indicators. Traditionally, these evaluations have relied on manual review by experienced underwriters, a process that demands significant time and expertise.

SBI Life has implemented Datamatics' TruAI Underwriting solution, powered by Agentic AI. The platform is designed to assist underwriters in handling complex medical underwriting cases with greater speed, consistency and insight.

TruAI Underwriting ingests and analyzes documents such as medical reports, declarations, and laboratory results, extracting key medical parameters and highlighting potential risk indicators. It generates a consolidated digital case summary and provides intelligent decision support, drawing on underwriting rules and historical outcomes. With self-learning capabilities, the system continuously enhances risk evaluation over time, while final decision authority remains with human underwriters to ensure governance, accountability, and regulatory compliance.

The Leadership Federation Successfully Concludes the 7th GCC Leadership Conclave in Mumbai; Honors Leaders Driving the Future of Global Capability Centers

Mumbai.(Agency)

The Leadership Federation successfully concluded the 7th Edition of the GCC Leadership Conclave on 21st and 22nd May 2026 at Taj Lands End, Mumbai, bringing together some of India's most influential GCC leaders, CXOs, enterprise decision-makers, technology leaders, workplace strategists, academic institutions, and ecosystem partners.

The 7th GCC Leadership Conclave was honored to have Dr. Niranjan Hiranandani, Founder & Chairman, Hiranandani Group, as the Chief Guest for the Mumbai edition.

The Mumbai edition was hosted in association with Regalia Business Parks - An Initiative by Niranjan Hiranandani group as the Title Partner, bringing added focus to the role of world-class workplace infrastructure in enabling the next phase of GCC growth in India.

Hosted in Mumbai, India's financial capital and one of the country's most important enterprise leadership hubs, the conclave created a powerful platform for strategic dialogue, meaningful networking, partnership building, and high-value business engagement across the Global Capability Center ecosystem.

The two-day gathering reflected the rapidly expanding role of GCCs in shaping the future of global enterprises. As GCCs continue to evolve from execution and delivery centers into strategic engines of innovation, transformation, AI adoption, digital capability, and enterprise value creation, the Mumbai edition brought together leaders who are actively building and influencing this next phase of growth.

Where GCC Leadership Meets Enterprise Transformation The 7th GCC Leadership Conclave was designed as a curated leadership platform for senior decision-makers who are building, scaling, and transforming global capability centers in India.

Air India, BigBasket, Tata Electronics: Inside Tata Sons' key boardroom discussions

Tata Sons' latest board meeting stayed calm as operating chiefs answered questions on Air India, BigBasket and other businesses. The discussions showed tighter scrutiny of profits, capital allocation and the group's long-term strategic bets.

New Delhi.(Agency)

The latest board meeting of Tata Sons may have appeared calm on the surface, but several difficult conversations around losses, investments and strategy continued to dominate discussions inside the Tata Group. The meeting had drawn unusual attention after reports that the previous board interaction earlier this year had become tense, with tough questions being raised over the financial performance of key Tata businesses, including Air India and BigBasket, reported The Economic Times (ET).

This time, however, the atmosphere was calmer. According to the report, Tata Sons chairman Natarajan Chandrasekaran adopted a different approach during the meeting by allowing operating company chiefs to directly explain the status of their businesses to

board members and trustees.

The report said Chandra largely "gave the floor" to Tata company executives and encouraged them to answer questions directly instead of centralising discussions around himself.

That change in style appears to have helped reduce friction and keep the focus on business performance and future plans. Still, beneath the calmer mood, the discussions reflected growing scrutiny within the Tata Group around investment discipline, profitability and capital allocation.

AIR INDIA REMAINED AT THE CENTRE OF DISCUSSIONS

One of the biggest focus areas during the meeting was Air India, according to the ET report. Board members reportedly

sought detailed updates on the airline's operational performance, integration process, fleet expansion plans and the



long road towards profitability.

The airline continues to be one of Tata Group's most expensive and strategically important bets after the conglomerate

acquired it from the Indian government.

The report suggested that concerns remain around how much capital Air India may continue to require and how quickly the business can improve financially.

The Tata Group has already committed billions of dollars towards aircraft orders, fleet modernisation, technology upgrades, route expansion, and integration of Air India with Vistara and AirAsia India operations. The report suggested that board members wanted greater visibility into returns on these investments and the airline's long-term financial trajectory. Air India's losses and capital requirements had reportedly become one of the sharper points of discussion in earlier meetings too.

Sensex, Nifty open flat as Middle East tensions keep investors cautious

New Delhi.(Agency)

Benchmark stock market indices opened flat on Wednesday as investors remained cautious over the fragile ceasefire between the US and Iran and rising tensions in the Middle East.

The S&P BSE Sensex slipped 22.10 points, or 0.03%, to 75,987.60 in early trade, while the NSE Nifty50 declined 6.95 points, or 0.03%, to 23,906.75.

Investor sentiment remained subdued after Iran accused the US of violating the ceasefire by striking targets near the Strait of Hormuz, raising concerns that the three-month-long conflict may continue. Adding to worries, Israel launched more than 120 air strikes on Lebanon on Tuesday, according to Lebanese security sources. Iran has reportedly demanded an end to Israeli attacks in Lebanon as part of any broader peace agreement. The Indian rupee also weakened slightly, opening 0.07% lower at 95.75 against the US dollar, compared to its previous close of 95.68.

Broader markets traded higher despite the cautious mood. The Nifty Midcap 100 gained 0.43%, while the Nifty Smallcap 100 rose 0.35%. India VIX edged up 0.23%.

Among sectoral indices, Nifty Metal emerged as the top gainer, rising 1.48%,



while Nifty Media advanced 0.76%. Nifty Realty gained 0.50%, and Nifty Consumer Durables climbed 0.47%. Nifty Auto and Nifty PSU Bank also traded in the green. However, Nifty Oil & Gas declined 0.55%, while Nifty

Private Bank slipped 0.38% and Nifty Financial Services fell 0.32%.

Among Sensex stocks, NTPC led the gainers, rising 2.97%. Eternal Ltd climbed 1.62%, while Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone gained 1.16%. Power Grid Corporation advanced 1.13%. Asian Paints and Tata Steel also traded higher.

On the losing side, HDFC Bank dropped 1.57%, Infosys declined 0.61%, Bharat Electronics slipped 0.42%, Bharti Airtel fell 0.27%, and Reliance Industries was down 0.19% in early trade. Dr VK Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist, Geojit Investments Limited, said, "With S&P 500, Nasdaq and Nikkei setting new records and KOSPI and Taixei getting bought on declines the bull rally in these markets is showing no signs of losing steam. So long as this trend continues, Indian market will remain on the back foot weighed down by FII selling."

Union MoS Satish Chandra Dubey reviews SECL operations, launches digital portals during Chhattisgarh visit

Raipur (Chhattisgarh).(Agency)

Union Minister of State (MoS) for Coal and Mines Satish Chandra Dubey reviewed the operational performance and future plans of South Eastern Coalfields Limited (SECL) during a one-day visit to Chhattisgarh, where he also held discussions with Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai on coal production, infrastructure development, logistics connectivity, energy security and industrial growth in the state.

According to a press release issued by the Ministry of Coal, the discussions focused on strengthening coordination between the Centre and the state government for expediting development projects, improving ease of operations and creating economic growth and employment opportunities in coal-bearing regions.

The Minister appreciated the support extended by the Chhattisgarh Government towards coal sector development and expressed confidence

that the collaborative approach would further strengthen the state's contribution to the country's energy



security.

During his visit to the SECL Headquarters, Dubey chaired a review meeting where he assessed coal production, dispatch, quality management, safety measures, digitisation initiatives, environmental sustainability efforts, coal gasification

projects, mine closure activities, CSR initiatives and future action plans of the company.

The Minister emphasised the importance of "safe and sustainable mining practices, adoption of modern technologies and enhancement of operational efficiency". He said SECL is "playing a pivotal role in strengthening India's energy security" and appreciated the company's work in production, quality assurance, safety standards and environmental management.

He also stressed that Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives should continue to focus on "inclusive development and welfare of people residing in coalfield regions".

SECL Chairman-cum-Managing Director Harish Duhan informed that during the ongoing financial year 2026-27, SECL contributed 26.86 million tonnes towards Coal India Limited's cumulative production milestone of 100 million tonnes.



feedback and demands from employee representatives and pensioner bodies.

The Commission has already held meetings in Delhi and announced visits to several other cities in recent weeks, including Lucknow, Hyderabad, Srinagar, Ladakh and Jammu & Kashmir.

According to the notice, stakeholders can submit memorandums through the official 8th Pay Commission website. The last date for submission of memorandums is May 31, 2026.

"Venue details and meeting schedule shall be intimated separately," the notice said. The Commission also clarified that separate meetings for other states and Union Territories will be held in due course.

The 8th Pay Commission was constituted to review salaries, pensions and allowances of central government employees and pensioners.

From Messi to mounting lawsuits: Inside the collapse of Byju's empire

A Singapore court sentenced Byju Raveendran to six months in jail for contempt over asset-related orders. The ruling sharpens focus on Byju's steep fall from a \$22 billion edtech darling to a company facing debt, lawsuits and insolvency proceedings.

New Delhi.(Agency)

There was a time when Lionel Messi became the global ambassador of Byju's, a move that showed just how big India's most celebrated edtech startup had become. The company's logo appeared on the Indian cricket team's jersey. Global investors poured billions into the startup. Founder Byju Raveendran became one of the biggest faces of India's startup boom. Today, the same founder is facing a six-month jail sentence in Singapore.

The dramatic fall of Byju's, once valued at \$22 billion, is now being seen as one of the biggest collapses in India's startup history.

What began as a fast-growing education technology success story slowly spiralled into delayed audits, mounting debt, angry investors, insolvency proceedings, cross-border lawsuits and accusations of fund diversion. The latest setback came after a Singapore court sentenced Raveendran to six months in prison for contempt over disobeying court orders linked to his assets. But the story of Byju's collapse had started much earlier.

HOW BYJU'S BECAME INDIA'S BIGGEST EDTECH STAR

Founded in 2011 as Think & Learn Pvt Ltd, Byju's rapidly grew by tapping into India's massive demand for education and competitive exam preparation.

The timing worked perfectly.

As smartphones spread across India and online learning became mainstream, the company positioned itself as the future of education.

Then came the Covid-19 pandemic.

Schools shut down, students moved online and demand for digital education exploded. Investors rushed in with funding and Byju's expanded aggressively across India and international markets.

The company acquired several firms including Aakash Educational Services, Great Learning and Epic in deals reportedly worth nearly \$3 billion.

Its growth story looked unstoppable. The company launched massive advertising campaigns, signed celebrity endorsements and expanded globally at breakneck speed. The appointment of

Messi as a global ambassador became one of the clearest symbols of how ambitious the company had become.

LOAN THAT CHANGED EVERYTHING The turning point came in November 2021 when Byju's raised a massive \$1.2 billion term loan from overseas lenders.



At the time, the deal was celebrated as proof that Indian startups had entered the global big league. But that same loan later became the centre of the company's crisis. Lenders began questioning the company's governance standards and transparency after delays in filing audited financial statements.

The situation worsened when the

company's FY21 financial results eventually revealed losses of around Rs 4,588 crore. Investor confidence started weakening rapidly. Then came one of the biggest warning signs.

Audit firm Deloitte resigned after citing delays in financial statements and communication issues. Later, BDO Global's India affiliate also stepped down.

The exits triggered deeper concerns among investors and lenders about the company's financial management.

ALLEGATIONS OF HIDDEN MONEY AND GLOBAL COURT BATTLES

By late 2022 and early 2023, relations between Byju's and its lenders had collapsed. According to the report, lenders accused the company of breaching loan conditions and later alleged that nearly \$533 million linked to the loan had been moved without proper disclosure.

The legal battle soon spread across multiple countries. US lenders launched cases in Delaware and New York courts while Singapore emerged as another major legal battleground.

Short news

For Telangana lorry operators, fuel hikes are 'slow poison'

HYDERABAD.(Agency)

Every few days, the numbers on fuel station boards change again. For most commuters, it may mean spending a little extra to fill a bike or car tank. But for thousands of lorry owners and drivers across Telangana, each small diesel hike is becoming a question of survival.

With diesel prices now touching Rs 103.74 per litre and petrol at Rs 115.58, transporters say the repeated increases are quietly pushing the road transport sector into a financial squeeze from which many small operators may not recover. Transporters describe the rising fuel prices as "slow poison" for the industry. "A heavy vehicle travelling nearly 700 km a day consumes around 250 litres of diesel. With the latest increase alone, operators are spending nearly Rs 2,500 extra every day," said Telangana Lorry Union president Rajender Reddy.

For small and single-lorry owners, the impact is sharper. Many say they are caught between rising operational costs and transport contractors who largely dictate freight rates. "If diesel prices rise sharply once, we can revise charges accordingly. But when prices go up by Rs 2 or Rs 3 every week, we cannot keep increasing freight charges," Rajender Reddy said. Lorry owner Rajanna said transport contractors largely control freight pricing, leaving vehicle owners with poor returns and little bargaining power. With nearly 6.6 lakh commercial vehicles on Telangana roads and 65-70% of goods transport dependent on lorries, transporters warn rising fuel costs could soon force many operators out of business.

Ahmedabad: Arson, vandalism flare up after Satellite murder tension

Mumbai . (Agency)

Tension following a murder in Satellite area earlier this month appears to have led into incidents of arson and vandalism, with two separate complaints lodged at Satellite police station on Monday alleging that unidentified persons set houses and a CNG autorickshaw on fire in Rajivnagar area.

In the first complaint, a 65-year-old homemaker alleged that a mob of around 15 unidentified persons broke into her locked house in Rajivnagar Division-2 near Shakti School around 3am on May 25 and set the property on fire, causing damage estimated at nearly Rs 1 lakh.

According to the complaint, the woman and her relatives had temporarily shifted to their native village after the murder of a local resident on May 2 triggered tension in the locality. She stated that relatives and associates of the deceased had allegedly been visiting the area and creating disturbances, prompting the family to keep the house locked and move out for safety.

The complainant said she received a call from a neighbour informing her that a group had broken the lock of her residence and set household belongings on fire. On reaching the spot, she found furniture, bedding, fans, a television set, a water motor and a sewing machine partially burnt. Locals also informed her that fires had been reported at a few other houses in the locality.

13,000 students who passed Classes 10, 12 finals to retake Gujarat board exams for better marks

Ahmedabad.(Agency)

Over 13,000 students who already cleared their board exams will reappear for the Gujarat Secondary and Higher Secondary Education Board (GSHSEB) supplementary exams from June 11 to June 20 to boost their scores under the state's "Best of Two" policy.

This trend is driven primarily by Class 12 science students, with around 11,000 candidates aiming to improve their percentile ranks to secure seats in premier medical, paramedical, and engineering colleges. Additionally, nearly 2,000 Class 10 students and 400 Class 12 general stream students will reappear for a score upgrade.

Overall, approximately 1.94 lakh students have registered for the supplementary exams this year. This includes 1.23 lakh Class 10 students, nearly 30,000 from Class 12 science, and over 40,000 from the general stream. Major urban centres account for the bulk of the candidates. Ahmedabad leads with over 28,000 students, followed by Surat (over 16,000), Vadodara (over 13,000), and Rajkot (over 8,000).

The evaluation process will begin on a priority immediately after the exams conclude on June 20. The board aims to declare results early to ensure students can secure timely higher education admissions for the current academic year. All administrative arrangements at exam centres have been completed.

Unusually warmer nights increasing faster in Mumbai than hotter days: CEEW analysis

Mumbai .(Agency)

Hot days and warm nights have both increased in Mumbai, driven by a combination of global warming and urbanisation. But warm nights have increased much more sharply, according to an analysis of IMD data by the Council on Energy, Environment and Water (CEEW).

The number of 'unusually warm nights' in a year more than doubled from an average of 12 nights in 1981-2010 to 26 in 2011-2024, according to CEEW's analysis.

Unusually hot days also rose in this period, but not quite as sharply, increasing from an average of 12 days a year to 18 days a year in the same period.

An unusually hot day or warm night is defined as one in which local temperatures are higher than on 90% of days or nights recorded during 1981-2010. The trend has implications for the city's health and productivity. "Poor nighttime cooling disrupts sleep and recovery, especially for people doing physically demanding outdoor



work," said CEEW analyst Vishwas Chitale. In coastal cities like Mumbai, high humidity also makes it harder for the body to cool itself through sweating, he noted. "Warmer nights prevent recovery from intense daytime heat, increasing the risk of heat exhaustion and heat stroke while worsening conditions such as diabetes and hypertension."

Globally, temperatures are rising as greenhouse-gas emissions from burning coal, oil and gas warm the atmosphere. India's

mean temperature has increased by about 0.9°C since 1901. But urbanisation amplifies this warming. That's because the asphalt and concrete of cities trap heat during the day and release it at night — part of a phenomenon known as the 'urban heat island' effect.

Across India, the rise in warm nights has been greatest in densely populated districts housing tier 1 and tier 2 cities like Mumbai, Delhi, Chennai and Jaipur, according to CEEW. Interestingly, CEEW's analysis also reveals a seasonal trend for the city. While minimum temperatures rose across all seasons, the increase was sharpest in the post-monsoon months between Oct-Dec. In summer, average minimum temperatures rose by around 0.5°C in 2011-2024, compared with 1981-2010, similar to the daytime maximum increase of 0.4°C. But in the post-monsoon months, average minimum temperatures rose much more sharply — by 0.8°C, compared to a 0.1°C rise in daytime maximum.

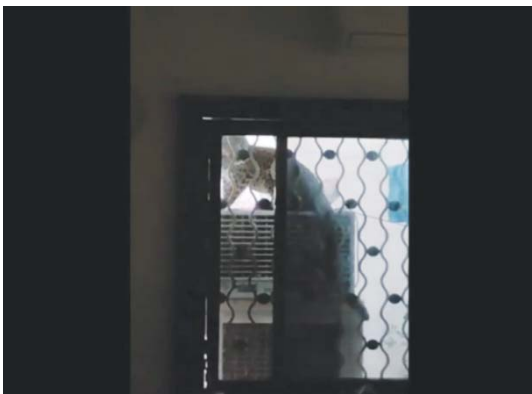
Leopard strays into residential area in Maharashtra's Amravati; safely rescued after joint rescue operation

Amravati. (Agency)

A leopard cub entered a residential locality in Maharashtra's Amravati district, triggering panic among residents before it was safely rescued after a joint operation by police and civic authorities.

According to officials, the leopard—estimated to be around nine to ten months old—was spotted in the Rampuri Camp area of Amravati on Tuesday.

A rescue team comprising local police personnel and staff from the Amravati Municipal Corporation immediately reached the spot and launched an operation to safely capture the animal. The rescue operation lasted around two to three hours. Meanwhile, amid the ongoing heatwave in Odisha, the administration of Nandankanan Zoological Park in Bhubaneswar has implemented an extensive summer management plan to



protect animals and ensure visitor comfort. The zoo, home to around 169 species and nearly 4,000 animals, has introduced species-specific cooling measures to help them cope with rising temperatures and prolonged exposure to extreme weather conditions.

For large carnivores such as tigers, lions,

leopards and bears, shaded resting spaces, water pools and ponds have been arranged inside enclosures. Foggers and mist spray systems have also been installed to reduce heat stress. Primates are being given water-rich fruits in addition to their regular diet, while bird enclosures have been equipped with abundant water and cooling spots.

The zoo administration has also stepped up arrangements for visitors by setting up multiple drinking water points with cold water, along with fans and mist foggers in high-footfall areas such as entrances.

The measures come as Odisha continues to reel under severe heatwave conditions. The India Meteorological Department has issued orange alerts for several districts, warning that extreme temperatures are likely to persist through May 28. Jharsuguda recorded 45.2 degrees Celsius earlier this week, with temperatures in several areas remaining above normal and prompting health advisories across the state.

Hit by desertions and dissent, BJD faces a battle for survival

BHUBANESWAR.(Agency)

The BJD finds itself at a critical juncture with yet another senior leader, former Rajya Sabha MP Debashish Samantaray quitting the party and joining the BJP on Tuesday.

The immediate fallout of Samantaray's relinquishing the Rajya Sabha seat is that the BJD's number in the Upper House has further reduced to five, diminishing the party's presence at the national level.

After the 2024 election debacle, three Rajya Sabha MPs including Mamata Mahanta, Sujete Kumar and now Samantaray have left the party for BJP.

The string of exits from BJD exposes a deep internal turmoil within the party. The BJD seems to have not been able to restabilise itself even after two years of the 2024 debacle. The promised reflection of the reasons, organisational shake-up to revitalise the party and a course correction have



not materialised. Senior leaders continue to feel sidelined with the party apparatus being run by comparatively junior-level functionaries controlled by the same powers that be. Despite party president Naveen Patnaik's attempts to lead from the front as has been reflected on various recent issues, there is no abatement of the resentment among leaders over party affairs. This was openly displayed during the recent biennial Rajya Sabha election when as

many as six MLAs cross-voted defying the whip to vote for BJD's second candidate.

A senior leader disclosed that there is severe dissatisfaction within the party ranks over the manner in which it is being run. "The situation has again come to the pre-2024 period when party president's close aide VK Pandian was running the show. There is no change. Many leaders and workers feel that Pandian is still in charge albeit behind the scene. This has

created a division in the party. Though the situation remains manageable, the restlessness among the party leaders is growing," he cautioned. He said, with panchayat election less than a year away, the party has an urgent job of stopping the exodus at the grassroots level. "However, the leadership continues to be in a denial mode. BJP is framing the exits as BJD is a sinking ship. The perception is gaining ground," he said.

'Custodial torture, illegal detention' haunt cops, locals gherao Cuttack's Barang police station

CUTTACK.(Agency)

Barang police continued to witness protest with around 50 women belonging to Chandi Prasad village staging demonstration in front of the police station on Tuesday alleging custodial torture on Rakesh Behera who was detained in connection with the recovery of half-buried woman's body from the bed of Kathajodi river. Alleging that Rakesh was illegally detained even after confirmation that it was not his wife's body, the agitators demanded an inquiry into the incident, treatment and compensation.

The women even tried to enter the police station but police station gate was locked up from inside following which the protesters staged a dharna in front of the entrance.

One platoon police has been deployed to prevent any untoward incident. Speaking to mediapersons, Cuttack DCP Khilari Rishikesh Dnyandeo said a probe would be conducted into the allegations by verifying the CCTV footage and action initiated basing on the outcome of the investigation. Rakesh was detained by police on May 21 after half-buried body of a woman was recovered from the bed of river Kathajodi near Brahmanigaon. Incidentally, his wife had become untraceable on May 15 and he had filed a missing person report the next day which attracted police attention. His family alleged that Rakesh was detained despite police being informed that his wife was in Delhi.

Woman journalist injured in hit-and-run in Navi Mumbai, biker escapes

Mumbai .(Agency)

A Navi Mumbai based journalist Sandhya Jain (56), who writes on women's rights and safety, was badly injured in a hit-and-run accident recently on the Palm Beach Road, as a speeding motorcyclist jumped a red signal to crash straight into her scooter.

Shockingly, the culprit biker has not been caught due to "poor CCTV camera quality" as the registered number plate of the motorcycle could not be captured on camera on the city's landmark road stretch. For the past nine days, Jain has been lying at Apollo Hospital at Seawoods with multiple fractures in both her hands, a nose fracture, facial trauma and various other smaller injuries. Talking to TOI from her



hospital bed, Jain said, "On May 18, I was driving my scooter in order to go to NMMC head-office at Belapur to meet a civic official for some work. As per the CCTV recordings of two cameras at the NRI Junction of Palm Beach Road, at exactly 4.39 pm, this biker wearing a maroon shirt jumped the red signal and speeded ahead

to dash into my scooter, while I was moving forward as my traffic light was green at that moment."

Jain, who edits two magazines 'Women Zone' and 'Kanchan Kanika', added that as she fell down unconscious on the busy road, the biker simply lifted his motorcycle and slyly pushed it away from the accident scene in order to escape.

Her husband, Sandeep Kumar Jain, who resides at NRI Complex, said, "It is surprising that while an FIR has been registered at NRI police station against the unknown biker for reckless driving, he has not been arrested as we do not have his vehicle number. The accident happened in broad daylight on the supposedly best road of Navi Mumbai, where several

surveillance cameras are installed."

The investigating officer (IO), Kiran Swar, of NRI police said: "We have checked some of the CCTV recordings at the time of accident in order to identify the culprit. However, the bike number plate is not properly seen in the video recordings. We are further inquiring into this matter." Commissioner of Navi Mumbai Municipal Corporation (NMMC), Kailas Shinde, told TOI: "While NMMC does have a CCTV monitoring room at our Belapur head-office, the police also have a similar CCTV control room with them. They are the primary users of CCTV in order to check various traffic violations etc. Hence, the police should have reported earlier if there is any issue.

NEWS BOX

Jyothi, Dhiraj targetting Asiad with an open mind



CHENNAI. (Agency)

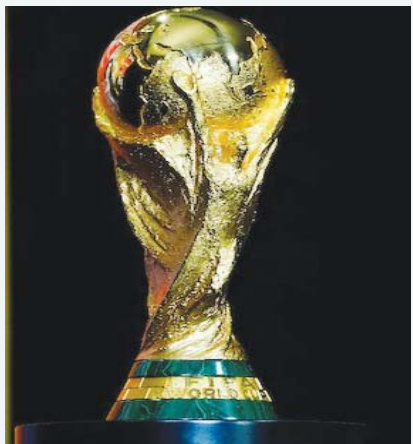
In the recently-concluded Asian Games selection trials, some of the prominent archers from the country — both recurve and compound categories — failed to live up their standards, thereby missing out on a spot in the national team for the multi-sport event. Atanu Das and multiple Olympians Deepika Kumari and Tarundeep Rai were some of the notable names who missed out. Those who made the cut are part of the ongoing senior national archery coaching camp at the Sports Authority of India's (SAI) NCOE in Sonapat, which is set to go on until June 7. The 16 elite archers — compound and recurve — are currently looking to build combinations, marry consistency with an objective to win a medal during the Asian Games, which is scheduled to be held from September 19 to October 4 in Japan. While admitting that there were a few surprises, World No 3 compound archer, Jyothi Surekha Vennam, believed that the archers who were selected for the Asian Games deserve to be in the team. "I know it was a little surprising to see the result of who got selected for the Asian Games, but there is a very healthy competition in India. It doesn't matter if you're in the team or not. So I think, in a way, it is really good because we get such good competition here. After so much process, those who are consistently performing, no matter what the situation is, are getting selected and moving forward and performing as well," she said in a virtual interaction facilitated by SAI on Tuesday.

Additionally, she believes that the team has enough time to prepare, by taking part in the Archery World Cup Stage 3 and 4. "We can plan on things. If we are lacking on anything, we can improve those things and go ahead as a team," she said.

'Gap with top nations not much'

Olympian and Asiad silver medallist Dhiraj Bommadevara felt the absence of Atanu and Tarundeep would be a big miss for the team ahead of a crucial year. Recurve archers Neeraj Chauhan, Yashdeep Bhoge and women archers Kirti Sharma, Kumkum Anil Mohod, Ankita Bhakat were selected for the biennial event in Aichi-Nagoya.

Zee Entertainment in talks with FIFA over World Cup broadcast rights in India



NEW DELHI. (Agency)

India's Zee Entertainment Enterprises is in talks with FIFA to acquire the streaming and broadcast rights for the 2026 FIFA World Cup in India, the company said in a statement on Tuesday. The move comes at a significant moment for the Indian sports broadcasting market, with negotiations between FIFA and the Reliance-Disney joint venture currently at a deadlock, just weeks before the tournament is scheduled to begin on June 11, 2026. The revised valuation still remains substantially higher than the reported \$20 million offer made by the Reliance-Disney combine, led by Mukesh Ambani's Reliance Industries. Japan's Sony Group Corporation had also explored the possibility of bidding for the India rights. However, Sony eventually chose not to make a formal offer for the FIFA package. Zee disclosed its discussions with FIFA during the launch of "Unite8 Sports", a dedicated portfolio of sports channels that the company said would strengthen its sports offerings and expand its reach among Indian audiences. The broadcaster has been looking to grow its sports business amid rising competition in India's media and streaming market, where premium sporting properties continue to play a major role in subscriber growth and advertising revenues. FIFA had previously said that it had already concluded broadcast agreements across more than 180 territories globally, though the India rights remain unresolved despite the country's rapidly expanding digital sports audience and increasing interest in football. India accounted for 2.9 per cent of the global linear television reach of the 2022 FIFA World Cup in Qatar, underlining the market's growing importance for international football broadcasters and rights holders.

IPL 2026 Eliminator: Vaibhav Sooryavanshi's playoffs pressure test meets familiar SRH

IPL 2026 Eliminator, SRH vs RR: Rajasthan Royals and Sunrisers Hyderabad meet in the IPL Eliminator with Vaibhav Sooryavanshi under the spotlight. The contest pits RR's teenage surge against SRH's winning record, batting depth and familiarity with knockout routes.

New Delhi. (Agency)

The IPL playoffs have arrived for Vaibhav Sooryavanshi almost as quickly as international fame did. At just 15 years old, Rajasthan Royals' teenage sensation now walks into his first-ever IPL knockout match carrying not only RR's batting hopes, but also the curiosity of an entire tournament that has slowly fallen in love with his fearlessness. Standing in Rajasthan's way in New Chandigarh on Wednesday will be a

Sunrisers Hyderabad side that knows exactly how dangerous the teenager can be and also knows exactly how to survive the Eliminator route. After all, SRH remain the only team since 2016 to win the IPL after featuring in the Eliminator, and they would love to believe that "2026 is the new 2016" is more than just a banter. While Vaibhav has become the face of RR's late-season surge, Sunrisers Hyderabad quietly arrive with a serious psychological edge. They have already beaten Rajasthan twice this season and are currently riding a six-match winning streak against them dating back to 2022. The first meeting saw SRH dismantle RR by 57 runs in Hyderabad with Praful Hinge and Sakib Hussain combining for eight wickets. The second clash in Jaipur looked different only because Vaibhav exploded for a stunning 36-ball century, but even that ultimately ended in another SRH victory. RR only sealed their playoff berth on the final weekend after back-to-back wins over struggling opponents, recovering from a phase where even stand-in captain Riyan Parag admitted the side did not deserve a top-

four place if they continued playing the way they were. SRH, meanwhile, missed out on the top two partly because of that shocking 86 all out against Gujarat Titans, the collapse that ultimately damaged their net run rate



beyond repair. Which means both teams arrive with unfinished business.

One side wants to prove the teenage phenomenon can survive playoff pressure. The other wants to remind everyone why its batting lineup remains the scariest in the tournament.

VAIBHAV SOORYAVANSHI VS SRH'S HIT SQUAD

At 15, Vaibhav Sooryavanshi has already produced one of the wildest debut IPL seasons ever seen. The left-hander from Bihar has smashed 583 runs in 14 innings at a strike rate of 232.27, turning almost every powerplay into controlled madness. His 93 off 38 balls against Lucknow Super Giants remains one of the standout knocks of IPL 2026, while his 36-ball century against SRH officially turned him into the tournament's breakout superstar.

But playoffs are a different beast altogether. Every weakness gets examined harder. Every risky shot suddenly carries more consequence. And SRH probably have the exact bowling attack needed to test whether Vaibhav's fearless approach survives knockout pressure. Pat Cummins barely bowled at Vaibhav during that Jaipur century, sending down only four deliveries that disappeared for eight runs. It would be surprising if that happens again. SRH are expected to attack him much earlier this time with Cummins' hard lengths, Sakib Hussain's variations and potentially Harshal Patel returning as the Impact option.

French Open 2026, Day 4 Order of Play: Djokovic, Basavareddy headline action-packed 2nd round clashes

New Delhi. (Agency)

Novak Djokovic's quest for a record-extending 25th Grand Slam title and Nishesh Basavareddy's dream French Open breakthrough will headline a packed Day 4 schedule at Roland Garros on Wednesday. With Iga Swiatek, Alexander Zverev, Casper Ruud and rising Brazilian sensation Joao Fonseca also in action, Paris is set for another loaded day of second-round clashes. Djokovic returns to Court Philippe-Chatrier after surviving a difficult opening-round test against French big-server Giovanni Mpetshi Perricard. The 39-year-old dropped the first set before finding rhythm under the night-session lights, but this time the Serbian great will have to deal with a very different challenge. The third seed faces another Frenchman in Valentin Royer, though the bigger battle may come from the Paris heat itself. Djokovic has been scheduled for the third match of the day on Chatrier, which means he could

walk into the hottest conditions of the afternoon after matches involving Iga Swiatek and Elina Svitolina. The third seed faces another Frenchman in Valentin Royer, though the bigger battle may come from the Paris heat itself. Djokovic has been



scheduled for the third match of the day on Chatrier, which means he could walk into the hottest conditions of the afternoon after matches involving Iga Swiatek and Elina Svitolina. The 24-time Grand Slam champion would probably have preferred another night-session slot, but that honour

has instead gone to Alexander Zverev's clash against Tomas Machac. Djokovic's opening-round comeback once again showed why he remains one of the most dangerous players at Roland Garros despite approaching 40. Royer, ranked 74th in the world, will have the home crowd behind him, but beating Djokovic across five sets on Philippe-Chatrier remains one of the toughest tasks in tennis. BASAVAREDDY LOOKS TO CONTINUE DREAM RUN

While Djokovic continues chasing history, one of the stories of the tournament so far belongs to Nishesh Basavareddy.

The 21-year-old American wildcard of Indian origin announced himself on one of tennis' biggest stages after stunning seventh seed Taylor Fritz in four sets during the opening round. Ranked 148th in the world, Basavareddy produced the biggest win of his young career on his Roland Garros main-draw debut, winning 7-6(5), 7-6(5), 6-7(9), 6-1 on Court Suzanne Lenglen.

India Women's pre-T20 World Cup checklist: Key areas to fix in England series



New Delhi. (Agency)

India's preparations for the Women's T20 World Cup have seen a mix of highs and lows. They started strongly with a 5-0 series win over Sri Lanka at home last December, before travelling to Australia and securing a historic 2-1 series victory, their maiden series win there in a decade. Shreyanka Patil made a strong impact on her return, delivering a Player of the Match performance in the series. However, momentum dipped soon after as India endured a difficult tour of South Africa, losing the series 1-4 in a disappointing campaign where the team struggled for consistency.

With that behind them, attention now turns firmly to the future and the upcoming Women's T20 World Cup. Before the tournament, India will play a three-match T20I series against England, followed by two warm-up matches. While the setback against South Africa may have unsettled the side, Harmanpreet Kaur's India still have valuable opportunities ahead to settle combinations, regain rhythm, and fine-tune their squad ahead of the global event.

Here are the key areas India Women need to focus on in the T20I series against England as they build up to the T20 World Cup.

GIVE NANDNI SHARMA A FULL GO

Now that Nandni Sharma has earned her maiden India call-up, there is little value in keeping her on the bench during the T20I series against England. Even if she is not currently in India's first-choice pace plans for the World Cup, she should be given opportunities across all three matches to build exposure and experience.

With the possibility of injuries always present, one of the three pacers: Renuka Singh Thakur, Kranti Goud, or Arundhati Reddy could be unavailable at some stage, making it important that backups are match-ready. Kranti Goud's impact against England last year is a reminder of how quickly young bowlers can step up when given the chance.

Sportspersons' role in National Sports Board unclear

The NSB is going to be the sole authority that will grant recognition to National Sports Bodies including the Indian Olympic Association and Paralympic Committee of India

CHENNAI. (Agency)

After notifying the National Sports Governance Act early this year, the Union government has notified the National Sports Governance Rules pertaining to National Sports Board (NSB) and National Sports Tribunal (NST) — the two legal arms of the sports ministry to settle dispute of various sports bodies, athletes and other

stakeholders. What seems interesting is that the gazette notification is silent on sportspersons holding office in any of the above bodies. Even the NSG Act does not



throw enough light on sportspersons' role in the board and says, "The Chairperson and the Members referred to in sub-section (1) shall be appointed by the Central Government from amongst persons of ability, integrity and standing who possess special knowledge or practical

experience in the field of public administration, sports governance, sports law and other related fields, on the recommendation of a search-cum-selection committee comprising of such number of persons, having wide experience in public administration, sports administration and recipients of national sports awards, as may be prescribed." Going by the government notification, an NSB chairperson's position will be equivalent to a secretary with the government of India, while members would be that of additional secretary. Even their salaries will depend on their positions held when they come to

office. Basically, it will be an extension of government service in the secretary and additional secretary level. Notification also states that a person from statutory and autonomous body is also eligible to hold office.

RCB used to rely on individual superstars, now they win as a unit

➡ IPL Qualifier 1, RCB vs GT: Royal Challengers Bengaluru's shift from a superstar-led model to a balanced team has come into focus through recent assessments by Ambati Rayudu and Tom Moody. The change reflects a wider structural overhaul in management and philosophy, with shared roles now driving results.

Las Vegas. (Agency)

During its inception, Royal Challengers Bengaluru was a franchise perceived to be one that loved the glamour and the spotlight more than the actual cricket being played on the field. Driven by then-owner Vijay Mallya's penchant for a high-flying lifestyle, the team actively brought in major

Bollywood and regional film stars as official brand ambassadors, creating a massive entertainment crossover. The M. Chinnaswamy Stadium on match nights felt less like a traditional cricket venue and more like an exclusive red-carpet event. Glamour, lifestyle, and high-profile after-parties routinely shared equal billing with the sport itself.

Qualifier 1, RCB vs GT: Highlights | Scorecard

For over a decade, this Hollywood-esque approach manifested on the turf through a heavy reliance on individual genius. RCB became a fantasy league experiment brought to life, built entirely around a terrifyingly top-heavy batting line-up of legendary superstars. If the stars aligned, they looked unstoppable. If they failed, the deck collapsed. This stark reality was laid bare by former Chennai Super Kings batter Ambati Rayudu, who recalled exactly what it was like for rival teams to plan against those iconic but flawed line-ups:

"When we won against RCB, it was winning against RCB. When we lost, we lost to AB de Villiers, we lost to Virat Kohli, or we lost to



Chris Gayle. We never lost to RCB. It's only when these guys performed that they could beat a team like a CSK or an MI. But now I don't see any team coming close to how good these guys are." THE SUPERSTAR TRAP This superstar-centric failure is not unique to cricket. The sporting world is littered with "video game line-ups" that fall completely

flat in reality. Take football's most famous experiment: Real Madrid's Galacticos era in the early 2000s. Despite boasting Ronaldo Nazario, Luis Figo, David Beckham, and Zinedine Zidane under one roof, this visually stunning group famously weren't able to be actually crowned the best in Europe—meaning they did not win the Champions League together. The squad lacked balance, defensive workhorses, and structural cohesion.

A modern parallel emerged at Paris Saint-Germain. Pairing Lionel Messi, Kylian Mbappé, and Neymar Jr. alongside seasoned winners like Sergio Ramos and Achraf Hakimi created a marketing juggernaut, yet they did not live up to the billing either, routinely crumbling in Europe. Coincidentally, when both teams ended up overlooking the superstars and building an actual team, that's when they found success. RCB found themselves in that exact same boat. They possessed the ultimate draw cards, but they lacked a functional engine room.

Mouni Roy Calls

Disha Patani

'Little Sister' In New Post, Deletes Later

Actress Mouni Roy recently shared an adorable picture with her close friend Disha Patani on her social media account, calling her as her "little sister." However, soon after the actress deleted the post for reasons not known. In the now-deleted post, Mouni Roy shared a glamorous picture posing with Disha Patani. Mouni looked stunning in a black cut-out mini outfit paired with sneakers, while Disha opted for a sporty and casual look featuring a white sports bra, oversized denims and a white cap. Sharing the picture, Mouni had written, "Missing my lil sister! Come back soon x @dishapatani." For the uninitiated, Mouni Roy and Disha Patani are known to share a very close friendship in the industry. The actresses are often seen vacationing together at exotic international destinations and share glamorous and stylish pictures from their trips on social media.

Recently, Disha Patani found herself at the centre of online trolling after reports of Mouni Roy's separation and divorce from businessman Suraj Nambiar surfaced online. Several social media users had baselessly accused Disha of being the reason behind the reported rift between Mouni and Suraj.

Disha had reportedly disabled the comment section on her social media posts after receiving heavy criticism and hate messages from netizens. On May 18, Suraj had taken to his social media account, putting an end to the chatter around their separation.

Suraj had shared a strong statement clarifying that there is "no alimony, no dispute, and no third party involved" in his separation from Mouni. Taking to his social media account, Suraj wrote, "Recent baseless reports surrounding our separation have been made in bad taste and are absolutely malicious. Let me set the record straight once and for all. There is no alimony. There are no disputes. There is no third party involved."

He added, "Mouni and I chose to part ways together, with mutual respect and with full consideration for each other's well-being. That is the truth. Everything else being reported is fiction, and in some cases, a deliberate attempt to vilify two people who have done nothing but ask to be left alone."

He further added, "I want to state this clearly and finally: there is no truth to any of the claims being made about either of us, or about any third party. Dragging other people into this is not cool. Specially innocent friends who have nothing to do with this. Mouni and I have both conducted ourselves with dignity through this period and we expect that same dignity to be extended to us by those reporting on it."

Suraj further wrote, "Media houses have chosen to fabricate narratives that do not exist. These reports have been published without a shred of verification, which is highly unfair. I am calling this out clearly and directly, because staying silent in the face of deliberate misinformation is not something I am willing to do." "Our joint statement said everything that needed to be said. I request everyone to honour it and to allow both of us the space to move forward in peace. Thank you," he concluded.



'Do You Think You're Worthy Of Being Here?': When Saroj Khan Scolded Shruti Seth During Fanaa Shoot



Amir Khan and Kajol starrer Fanaa is one of the most loved films in Bollywood, remembered for its gripping storyline, soulful music, and the sizzling chemistry between the lead pair. Even years after its release, the romantic thriller continues to hold a special place in the hearts of audiences. Today, on May 26, the film has completed its 20 years and on the special occasion, actress Shruti Seth, who played the role of Kajol's friend Fatima in the film, recalled getting scolded by Saroj Khan.

During her chat with SCREEN, Shruti Seth walked down memory lane on Fanaa's 20th anniversary. Calling it a "special" film, she also revealed that she met her now-husband, Danish Aslam, while shooting for the film. She said, "It was my first Yash Raj film, my first film, it will always be special to me. I met my then boyfriend and now husband (Danish Aslam was the assistant director) on the set for the first time. We didn't know that we were going to end up dating. When we got married in Goa, director Kunal Kohli officiated our wedding. That was very special, because we were always grateful that he is the reason we found each other. It was a familial bond that was formed at Fanaa shoot."

She further revealed that she used to get scolded by the late choreographer, Saroj Khan. She choreographed the film's iconic patriotic song Des Rangila. She shared, "Mujhe bahut daant padi unse (I got scolded by her)."

The thing is that one understands the world that all your legends come from. We can sit today and say that one shouldn't talk to their crew like that, but if one is able to just lean into a little bit of generosity and look at it from the point of view that someone treats their craft like a religion.

Any disrespect towards it brings out a certain response, which then you can sort of understand. You may not be able to excuse it, there is a softer way to do things, but I can expand my heart a little bit and say that I get why she expects perfection from people."

Mudassar Khan Says He Had 'No Idea' Salman Khan Would Attend His Wedding



Salman Khan is known for his down-to-earth nature, and the actor never disappoints when it comes to showing love to the people he has worked with. In 2023, Khan surprised his fans and everyone else when he attended the wedding of choreographer Mudassar Khan, who has worked with the actor in several of his films. Now, in a recent interview, the choreographer shared that he was unaware of Salman's arrival and called it the biggest surprise of his life.

In an interview with Filmifygyan, Mudassar shared that Salman Khan waited for 45 minutes in Jogeshwari's heavy traffic just to attend his wedding. The choreographer said, "Meri shaadi mein Salman Khan aaye, woh meri zindagi ki sabse badi gift thi. I think meri life ka one of the biggest surprises tha woh, kyunki mujhe nahi pata tha ki woh aayenge. Maine invite kiya tha, but maine nahi socha tha ki woh aayenge, kyunki woh itna busy rehte hain. Matlab, he literally entered Jogeshwari ka traffic, stayed there for 45 minutes, and then entered that small hall where I was getting married. It was like a big thing for me. Woh mere liye bahut badi blessing thi. (Salman Khan coming to my wedding was the biggest gift of my life. I think it was one of the biggest surprises of my life because I had no idea he would come. I had invited him, but I never thought he actually would, considering how busy he always is. He literally got stuck in Jogeshwari traffic for 45 minutes and still came to that small hall where I was getting married. It was a huge thing for me. It was truly a big blessing.)"

Mudassar Khan has worked with Salman Khan in films like Dabangg, Bodyguard, Ready and more. He got married to his girlfriend, Riya Kishanchandani. Mudassar announced the good news on his social media handle and wrote, "Alhamdulillah, married to the most beautiful person in the world, @riya_kishanchandani. Thank you to both of our families for all the support and love from all of our friends and loved ones. Dua mein yaad rakhna." Following their wedding in 2023, the couple was blessed with a baby girl the following year, in December 2024. The couple shared the happy news through their social media account and wrote, "With the blessings of Almighty and the prayers of family and friends, we, Mr. & Mrs. Khan, are proud to announce that we are blessed with a baby girl. Alhamdulillah."

Karisma Kapoor

Recalls Shahid Kapoor's Bollywood Journey: 'Ek Song Mein Mere Piche Dance Kiya Tha'

The upcoming episode of the dance reality show, India's Best Dancer Season 5' will see Bollywood star and also the show's judge Karisma Kapoor laud actor Shahid Kapoor for his journey from a background dancer to a Bollywood star. Post the performance of contestant Prince, Karisma was surprised to know that he was earlier a background dancer. Deeply impressed, Karisma acknowledged his arduous journey and identified Shahid Kapoor's journey, drawing parallels with both their journeys. The actress recalled Shahid's days as a background dancer and said, "Ek actor ne mere hi ek song mein mere piche as a background dancer, dance kiya tha aur woh the Shahid Kapoor; aur aaj aap dekhiye Shahid Kapoor kaha tak pahuch gaye hain and I see those same qualities in you."

Before becoming one of Bollywood's most bankable stars, Shahid Kapoor, was part of the choreographer Shiamak Davar's dance troupe during the 90s and often performed as a background dancer in Bollywood songs. He has danced behind Karisma Kapoor in the iconic song 'Le Gayi' from 'Dil To Pagal Hai' starring Shah Rukh Khan, Madhuri Dixit and Karisma Kapoor. He was also seen grooving behind Aishwarya Rai in the energetic track 'Kahin Aag Lage Lag Jaaye' from 'Taal'.

Shahid Kapoor, after a few years as a background dancer, made his Bollywood debut in 2003 with 'Ishq Vishk' opposite Amrita Rao and Shenaz Treasurywala. Over the years, he established himself with films like 'Jab We Met', 'Kaminey', 'Haider' 'Kabir Singh' and 'Udta Punjab'.

Interestingly, Shahid was also in a long-term relationship with Karisma Kapoor's younger sister and Bollywood diva Kareena Kapoor during the early 2000s. The duo dated for many years before parting ways in 2007. Shahid Kapoor is now gearing up for his upcoming film 'Cocktail 2', which also stars Kriti Sanon and Rashmika Mandanna.



NEWS BOX

UNSC must be a living instrument, not a fossil: India renews call for reforms, expansion of Security Council

New York . (Agency)

India on Tuesday reiterated its call for reforms at the United Nations, stressing the need to enhance the organisation's productivity and effectiveness, and highlighting that it cannot address contemporary global challenges while remaining frozen in an architecture designed in the 1940s.

The remarks were made by Ambassador Harish Parvathaneni at the UN Security Council Open Debate on 'Upholding the Purposes and Principles of the UN Charter and Strengthening the UN-centered International System'.

He presented India's suggestions to reinforce a UN-centered international system and said that these include strengthening the General Assembly of the body; undertaking meaningful reforms, expanding the UNSC to reflect contemporary geopolitical realities, and making its functioning more transparent and accountable. "The wider UN membership is an important stakeholder on all Security Council matters. Denying access to historical and contemporary documents and maintaining the rules of procedure at a provisional status are not tenable in this age. The working methods must be refashioned appropriately in tune with our times", he said.

Ambassador Parvathaneni further stated, "The UN Security Council must be a living instrument, not a fossil. More than any other member state, the permanent members must deliberate on this matter."

The Ambassador highlighted how the present-day geopolitical developments have strained multilateralism, thus growing concerns towards the legitimacy, efficacy and relevance of the United Nations. He noted that while the UN Charter had mandated a review conference in 1955, no such review was ever undertaken.

Trump signals "PERFECT" health after medical checkup

Washington.(Agency)

US President Donald Trump on Tuesday said that he has completed his six-month physical examination at the Walter Reed Military Medical Center, declaring that all results were "perfect".

In a post on Truth Social, Trump thanked the doctors and medical staff for their care, adding that the check-up went smoothly and reaffirming his health status.

"Just finished my 6 month physical at Walter Reed Military Medical Center. Everything checked out PERFECTLY. Thank you to the great Doctors and Staff! Heading back to the White House. President DJT", he said.

This was Trump's third visit to Walter Reed National Military Medical Center will for a medical exam since becoming the oldest president ever inaugurated last year, CNN reported.

Citing The White House, it added that the check-up would include "routine annual dental and medical assessments," despite him having already visited a dentist in Florida twice this year.

Last year in July, Trump, who is now 79, was diagnosed with a "benign and common" vein condition known as chronic venous insufficiency after he noticed swelling in his legs. Since his return to the White House, Trump has been spotted with several visible ailments. Quoting the White House, CNN reported that the swelling in his ankles that was revealed last summer was a result of chronic venous insufficiency, a common issue related to age.

The bruises on Trump's hands, which are often seen covered with thick makeup, occur because he takes a large dose of aspirin -- higher than his doctors recommend -- and shakes many hands, the White House said.

India gifts 10 prisoner carrier trucks to Nepal

Kathmandu.(Agency)

Ten prisoner carrier trucks were ceremonially handed over by Consul General Devi Sahai Meena to Bhola Dahal, Chief District Officer, Parsa, Government of Nepal, at an event held in Birgunj on Tuesday.

This is a part of supplies by the Government of India that have helped enhance Nepal's capacities related to law enforcement.

In his remarks, Bhola Dahal thanked the Indian side for the gifted trucks and conveyed his appreciation for the comprehensive and mutually beneficial nature of cooperation between the two countries, according to an official release. Earlier this year, the Government of India had gifted about 640 vehicles - including SUVs, pickups and trucks- to Nepal as part of the assistance requested by the Government of Nepal for the House of Representatives elections held on 5 March 2026.

In previous years, more than 2,000 vehicles were gifted by the Government of India to security agencies, including the Nepal Police, Armed Police Force, and Nepali Army, the release stated.

The ongoing cooperation and support from the Indian side reflect the multi-faceted and multisectoral development partnership that exists between both countries. It also symbolises the deep mutual trust and friendship between the people of India and Nepal. Last month, the foundation stone for the construction of a school in Nepal's Far-Western region with Indian assistance was laid.

Issuing a press release, the Indian Embassy stated that the foundation stone was laid for the construction of the building of Shree Basuki Secondary School in Mellekh Rural Municipality-4 of Achham district in Sudurpaschim Province of Nepal.

As per the embassy, the foundation stone was jointly laid by Narayan Singh, First Secretary, Embassy of India, Kathmandu, and Jwala Singh Saud, Chairman of Mellekh Rural Municipality.

Biden sues Justice Department to block release of private interview audio

Joe Biden has sued the US Department of Justice to stop the release of audio recordings and transcripts of private interviews with his biographer. The move comes before the department's planned handover of the materials to the House Judiciary Committee and the Heritage Foundation.

Washington.(Agency)

Former Democratic US President Joe Biden sued the US Department of Justice on Tuesday, seeking to bar the release of audio recordings and transcripts of private conversations with his biographer in 2016 and 2017.

The lawsuit, filed in federal court in Washington DC, comes ahead of the department's planned June 15 release of the materials to the US House Judiciary Committee and the conservative Heritage Foundation.

The foundation sought them after they were used as part of then-Special Counsel Robert Hur's 2023 investigation into Biden's handling of classified documents. Hur declined to bring criminal charges.

The department fought the Heritage Foundation's 2024 request for the records as exempt from the Freedom of



Information Act until President Donald Trump took office, the lawsuit claims. It announced it would be releasing the records in response to the committee's

request, which the lawsuit claims is meant only to skirt federal law barring their release. The lawsuit asks the court to declare the

committee's request pretextual and invalid, and permanently bar the release of the records to the committee.

Representatives for the Department of Justice did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

The recordings, made in Biden's home, were part of the writing process for his 2017 memoir, "Promise Me, Dad: A Year of Hope, Hardship, and Purpose," which detailed Biden's decision to pursue the presidency while his eldest son Beau fought brain cancer.

Earlier this month, Biden sought to intervene in the Heritage Foundation's lawsuit against the Justice Department over the materials. Last week, a judge allowed Biden to join the case but barred him from pursuing claims about the committee's request for the materials, according to court records.

Ex-JPMorgan banker's lawyer resigns ahead of sex assault lawsuit hearing

SEOUL.(Agency)

Former JPMorgan banker Chirayu Rana faced a major setback on Tuesday after his attorney Daniel Kaiser abruptly withdrew from representing him just hours before a scheduled court appearance tied to his explosive lawsuit against the banking giant and a senior executive.

According to sources cited in The New York Post and The Wall Street Journal, court filings showed that the attorney formally requested to be discharged from the case, leaving Rana temporarily without legal representation.

The surprise exit came shortly before a New York court hearing where Rana was expected to fight for the right to continue proceeding anonymously under the name "John

Doe". According to the filing, Rana currently has no replacement lawyer and will represent himself "pro se" unless he hires new counsel.



LAWSUIT TRIGGERED MAJOR CONTROVERSY Rana, a former vice president at JPMorgan Chase, filed the lawsuit

earlier this year accusing senior executive Lorna Hajdini of sexually assaulting and abusing him during his time at the bank.

The lawsuit also alleged that Rana experienced racism and retaliation within JPMorgan's leveraged finance division. JPMorgan and Hajdini have strongly denied the accusations.

In a formal court filing submitted last week, JPMorgan described Rana's allegations as "false and malicious".

The bank stated that it "denies that Plaintiff was sexually assaulted, harassed, discriminated or retaliated against". JPMorgan also said it reserved the right to pursue its own claims against Rana over alleged wrongdoing.

"Mother Teresa's legacy inspires us all": Rubio recalls visit to Mother House

Washington.(Agency)

Washington. US Secretary of State Marco Rubio, who recently concluded his four-day visit to India recalled his visit to Mother House in Kolkata and highlighted how Mother Teresa's legacy continues to inspire people.

In a post on X, he expressed how profound the visit was and that Mother Teresa's service, faith and compassion continue to move people.

"Deeply moved by my visit to Mother House. Mother Teresa's legacy of faith, compassion, and service inspires us all", Rubio said.

The Missionaries of Charity was the first stop for Rubio when he visited India.

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio along with his wife Jeanette D Rubio, on Saturday arrived at Nirmala Shishu Bhavan Missionaries of Charity, in Kolkata. The Nirmala

Shishu Bhavan is a network of specialised children's homes managed by the Missionaries of Charity, the Roman Catholic religious



congregation established by Mother Teresa in 1950.

Earlier, Rubio along with his wife, visited the Mother House in central Kolkata,

the global headquarters of Saint Teresa's Missionaries of Charity. The last US Secretary of State to set foot in Kolkata was Hillary Clinton in May 2012.

During his four-day visit to India, Rubio made stops at the Taj Mahal in Agra and Amer Fort in Jaipur. In New Delhi he met Prime Minister Narendra Modi, National Security Advisor Ajit Doval, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and participated in the QUAD Foreign Ministers Meeting.

His visit also saw India and the United States on Tuesday sign a bilateral Critical Minerals Framework, marking a milestone in the strategic partnership between the two nations to ensure that the foundational elements required for advanced technology and energy are available within trusted networks.

Israel pushes ground ops beyond security zone after massive strikes in Lebanon

World.(Agency)

Israel pounded Lebanon with more than 120 air strikes on Tuesday in one of the heaviest days of bombing in weeks, Lebanese security sources said, as Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said his military was deepening its operations in the country.

The bombing raids further frayed a tenuous ceasefire announced on April 16 that was meant to halt fighting between Israel and Lebanese armed group Hezbollah, and came as Iran said the United States had violated a separate truce by striking southern Iran. Lebanese security sources told Reuters that Israeli strikes had hit across southern and eastern Lebanon on Tuesday. Lebanon's National News Agency said at least 10 people, including women and children, were killed in one strike on the town of Burj al-Shamali in southern Lebanon.

Some strikes hit near the Beaufort Castle, a nearly 900-year-old fortress in southern Lebanon that UNESCO has described as one of the best-preserved examples of medieval castles in the region. At least three strikes also hit near Lebanon's largest water reservoir at the Qaraoun Dam in east Lebanon, Lebanon's National News Agency said.

In a statement on Tuesday, Netanyahu said the Israeli military "is operating with large forces in the field and capturing and controlling areas."

"We are fortifying the security strip to protect the northern communities," he said in a reference to a self-declared security zone occupied by Israeli troops several kilometres inside southern Lebanon.

HEZBOLLAH FIRES AT ISRAELI TANKS

Two sources said on Tuesday that the Israeli military had expanded its ground operations in southern Lebanon past the security zone but gave no further details on the extent of the advance beyond the so-called Yellow Line.

That line, separate from the U.N.-demarcated "Blue Line" marking the frontier between Lebanon and Israel after Israel's withdrawal in 2000, forms part of a proposed buffer zone extending 5 km to 10 km (3 miles to 6 miles) into southern Lebanon. Israel's military had ordered residents not to return to dozens of villages in the zone, and its troops have been destroying homes in the area.

An Israeli military official said the military was "operating in a targeted manner beyond the Forward Defense Line in order to remove direct threats to the citizens of the State of Israel" and Israeli soldiers, "in accordance with the directives of the political echelon."

Netanyahu said on Monday Israel would intensify its strikes against Hezbollah, while a U.S. official said the Iran-backed group had ignored warnings to halt attacks that risked undermining negotiations to end the U.S.-Israeli war on Iran.

Fresh US strikes near the Strait of Hormuz prompted Iran to accuse Washington of breaching the ceasefire. The incident has clouded talks on shipping, frozen assets and wider regional de-escalation.

World.(Agency)

Fresh US strikes near the Strait of Hormuz have drawn sharp condemnation from Iran, threatening to derail a fragile ceasefire and complicate ongoing negotiations aimed at ending the conflict that has disrupted global oil supplies and regional stability.

Iran's foreign ministry accused the United States of violating the nearly seven-week-old ceasefire after attacks in Hormozgan province early Tuesday. Iranian media reported explosions in the area, while Washington described the operation as

defensive, saying it targeted missile positions and boats allegedly attempting to lay naval mines near the strategic waterway.

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio said negotiations to secure a broader agreement could still take "a few days", despite earlier signs of progress between Tehran and Washington on an initial framework intended to halt hostilities and restore maritime traffic through the Strait of Hormuz.

FROZEN FUNDS EMERGE AS KEY STICKING POINT

The proposed preliminary agreement would reportedly establish a 30-day framework to reopen shipping routes and reduce fighting across the region, while leaving more difficult issues such as Iran's nuclear programme for later talks.

Iranian negotiators are also seeking the release of roughly \$24 billion in frozen Iranian assets as part of the deal, according to Iranian media reports. Reports said the issue has emerged as the main unresolved obstacle in efforts to finalise the

memorandum of understanding between Tehran and Washington. Iran has also pushed for an end to hostilities in Lebanon, where fighting between Israeli forces and



Hezbollah militants has continued despite an April ceasefire.

OIL MARKETS REACT TO HORMUZ TENSIONS

The conflict, which began with US and Israeli strikes on Iran in late February, has severely disrupted energy markets. Traffic through the Strait of Hormuz — a key route for nearly one-fifth of global oil and liquefied natural gas trade — remains far

below normal levels.

Iran's Revolutionary Guards said 25 oil tankers and commercial vessels crossed the strait with Iranian permission over the past 24 hours. However, tensions escalated further after the Guards claimed Iranian air defences downed one US drone and engaged another drone and a fighter jet over the Gulf region.

Global oil markets reacted sharply, with Brent crude prices rising around 3.5 percent to nearly \$100 per barrel amid fears of prolonged supply disruptions.

REGIONAL CONFLICT SHOWS NO SIGNS OF EASING

Iran's Supreme Leader Mojtaba Khamenei declared that anti-US and anti-Israel slogans would continue to define the Islamic Republic's stance, saying "the clock cannot be turned back".

Meanwhile, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Israel was expanding military operations in Lebanon, where clashes with Hezbollah have continued despite the truce announced earlier this year.