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RNI Regn. No. MPENG/2004/13703,Vol.22 Issue 313

BHOPAL | FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 2025 | PAGES 16 | ₹2.00

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PIONEER IN SHORT

CALCUTTA HC DISQUALIFIES ROY

The Calcutta High Court disqualified senior Trinamool Congress (TMC) leader Mukul Roy from the Bengal Legislative Assembly, marking the first instance of judicially disqualifying an elected representative. Roy, a former Union Railway Minister and close aide of Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, had won the Krishnagar North seat in 2021 as a BJP candidate before returning to TMC within months. The BJP demanded his disqualification, but Speaker Biman Banerjee refused, citing lack of official information. Opposition Leader Suvendu Adhikari subsequently filed a petition, leading to Thursday's ruling, which retroactively disqualified Roy from June 11, 2021, and annulled his chairmanship of the Public Accounts Committee. The court invoked the Tenth Schedule of the Constitution and 1986 Rules, also overruling the Speaker's decision. Adhikari hailed the verdict as a constitutional victory and criticised Banerjee for bias, while alleging multiple defections in Bengal politics and warning of four more potential disqualifications of MLAs in similar cases.

The Bystander

DELHI POLICE ISSUES ADVISORY

Amid heightened security in Delhi, the Delhi Police has issued an advisory urging passengers to reach transport hubs well ahead of their scheduled departures to avoid inconvenience. Joint Commissioner of Police (Transport Range) Milind Dumbre said the advisory, issued on Wednesday, aims to facilitate smooth security checks at railway stations, metro stations and the airport. Passengers are advised to arrive at least one hour before train departures, 20 minutes before metro rides
and three hours before flights. The enhanced security measures include detailed screening of passengers, luggage, and vehicles entering these facilities.

CISCE RELEASES DATE SHEET

The CISCE board exams for 2025 are set to begin soon, with Class 12 (ISC) exams starting on February 12 and Class 10 (ICSE) exams from February 17, officials announced. Approximately 2.6 lakh students will appear for the ICSE exams, while around 1.5 lakh candidates are expected for the ISC exams. Joseph Emmanuel, Chief Executive and Secretary of the Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations, stated that the schedule has been designed to provide a balanced academic calendar and sufficient preparation time between major subjects. The Class 10 examinations will continue until March 30 and the Class 12 exams will conclude on April 6.

Third car tied to Delhi blast recovered

RAHUL DATTA ■ New Delhi

A third car was recovered on Thursday in connection with the Red Fort bomb blast case. According to the police, the plan was to use at least 32 vehicles to carry out explosions on the Babri Masjid demolition anniversary on December 6.

The vehicle, believed to have been used by Red Fort car bomber for reconnaissance, was found parked inside Al-Falah University, Faridabad, Haryana. It is the third car connected with the blast case.

While the main suspect Dr Umar Un Nabi allegedly detonated his car near the Red Fort on Monday evening killing 13 people, another car, which also belonged to him, was found parked in Khandawali village, Faridabad on Wednesday.

Police personnel investigating the blast site near Red Fort in New Delhi on Thursday PTI

Several teams from Delhi Police, along with other agencies, coordinated operations to track down the missing vehicle. Investigators are now analysing surveillance footage, tracking vehicle registrations to piece together the suspects' movements.

Meanwhile, in a major development, Faridabad Police on Thursday morning detained the man who parked the second vehicle which was recovered on Tuesday. The individual, identified as Faheem, is reportedly a relative of Dr Umar. Investigators are questioning him to determine his role in terror module.

Intelligence agencies believe the Red Fort bomber and his accomplices used one of the vehicles to transport and stockpile ammonium nitrate over time.

As regards the larger conspiracy, at least 32 cars were being prepped to carry explosive materials and or deliver bombs, they said.

CONTINUED ON >> P4

A view of the Al-Falah University in Faridabad PTI

Al-Falah under lens

RAJESH KUMAR ■ New Delhi

The university at the centre of the Delhi blast is now facing the heat of investigating agencies. On Thursday, the Enforcement Directorate (ED) and other financial agencies were tasked with carrying out a detailed forensic and financial audit of the University's books and accounts.

The decisions was taken after meeting chaired by Union Home Minister Amit Shah reviewed for the progress of the ongoing investigation into the blast, which killed 13 people. "An order has been issued to carry out a forensic audit of all records of Al-Falah University. The ED and other financial agencies were also asked by the Government to check the money trail of Al-Falah University," a source said.

Meawhile, the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) has now issued a show-cause notice to the Al-Falah University for displaying false certification on its website and the Association of Indian Universities (AIU) has suspended the membership of the university.

The National Investigation Agency (NIA), it is learnt, has requested the university submit all records dating back to 2019, including employment, payment, hostel details and source of funds and donations.

In its show-cause notice, the NAAC said it has noted that the university, "which is neither accredited nor applied for accreditation by NAAC", has publicly displayed on its website that some of its colleges are NAAC-certified. "This is absolutely wrong and misleading the public, especially the parents, students and stakeholders," the NAAC notice said.

CONTINUED ON >> P4

Bangladesh election, referendum together: Yunus

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

Muhammad Yunus, the interim leader of Bangladesh, announced on Thursday that the country will hold a national referendum on constitutional reforms and the upcoming parliamentary elections on the same day, in the first half of February 2026.

In a televised address, Yunus said the decision was approved at the Adviser's Council meeting, describing it as "a major step toward implementing the reform roadmap that emerged from last year's protests." The announcement came a amid calls for a nationwide lockdown by the Awami League and sporadic incidents of violence, including an explosion near the Dhaka University and arson in Tangra, where a bus was set on fire.

The July National Charter outlines sweeping constitutional and structural reforms aimed at strengthening democracy, accountability and governance. It proposes the formation of a bicameral parliament, with an upper house of 100 members to be appointed in proportion to the national vote share received by political parties.

Raids continue as Delhi terror plot unfolds

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

The Delhi Police has reconstructed Dr Umar Nabi's last hours using footage from more than 50 CCTV cameras. Investigators have also found that the suspects allegedly used a Switzerland-based encrypted messaging application to plan and coordinate their activities related to the terror conspiracy.

Police said the four suspects had pooled in more than ₹26 lakh in cash, which was handed over to Umar for safekeeping and operational use. Using the money, the group had allegedly purchased around 26 quintals of NPK (Nitrogen, Phosphorus, and Potassium) fertiliser, approximately worth ₹3 lakh, from suppliers in Gurugram, Nuh and nearby towns. The fertiliser is commonly used to make Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs).

AGENCIES HAVE IDENTIFIED A TOTAL 21 DOCTORS, ENGINEERS AND PROFESSIONALS AS PART OF THE WHITE COLLAR TERROR MODULE

The investigative agencies have identified a total 21 doctors, engineers and educated professionals as part of the White Collar terror module. The agencies said that the suspects were planning serial blasts. "They were all awaiting final authorisation from their Pakistan handler but got busted," said a senior investigator.

Describing Umar as the most radicalised member of the module, sources said, he allegedly switched off his phones and snapped digital contacts after the arrest of Muzammil and others connected to the conspiracy.

CONTINUED ON >> P4

Bihar awaits results as EVMs open

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Patna

As the counting for the Assembly polls in Bihar are scheduled for Friday, the leaders across the political spectrum of Bihar on Thursday held hectic parleys and reviewed last-minute preparations.

The recently concluded high-stakes Assembly polls will decide whether Nitish Kumar, the longest-serving chief minister, will get a record fifth term to form NDA Government or INDIA bloc's CM candidate and RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav will emerge as the CM.

Meanwhile, RJD leader and INDIA bloc's CM candidate, Tejashwi Yadav said his party workers and the common people were ready to handle "any unconstitutional activity during counting", while a lesser known RJD leader Sunil Kumar Singh threatened that a "Nepal-like situation" would be witnessed on the streets if "counting is halted, like in 2020".

Security personnel keeping vigil outside a strong room on the eve of counting of votes in Bihar PTI

Speaking to reporters, Sunil Kumar Singh said, "People have voted for a change. Tejashwi Yadav's Government will be formed in 2025. In 2020, the counting was halted for four hours, and if something like that happens this time as well, we will see a Nepal-like situation on the streets."

CONTINUED ON >> P4

Punishment will echo: Amit Shah

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Ahmedabad

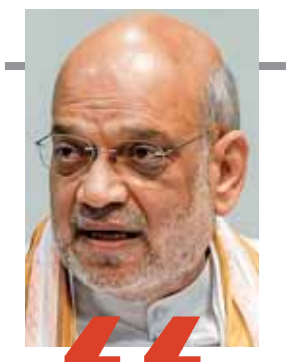
Coming down heavily on the perpetrators of the terrorists blast in Delhi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Thursday said the punishment for those behind the blast will send a message to the world that no one should ever dare to even think of such an attack again.

"Punishment given to the perpetrators of the Delhi terror attack will send a message to the world that no one should ever dare to even think of such an attack in our country," Amit Shah said.

Shah further asserted, "All those who committed this cowardly act and those behind it will be brought before law and given strictest possible punishment. The Government of India and Ministry of Home Affairs are committed to ensuring this."

Shah was speaking, through video link, at the inauguration of Shri Motibhai R Chaudhary Sagar Sainik School and Sagar Organic Plant at Boriyavi village in Gujarat's Mehsana district. He also expressed deep condolences for the families of the victims of the blast, it said.

"Prime Minister Narendra Modi's resolve to ensure strict punishment for all those responsible for this terrorist act will definitely be fulfilled," Shah further said.



PUNISHMENT FOR THE PERPETRATORS OF THE ATTACK WILL SEND A MESSAGE TO THE WORLD THAT NO ONE SHOULD DARE TO EVEN THINK OF SUCH AN ATTACK IN OUR COUNTRY. PM MODI'S RESOLVE TO ENSURE STRICT PUNISHMENT WILL BE FULFILLED

AMIT SHAH, UNION MINISTER FOR HOME AFFAIRS

Under Modi's leadership, the entire world has recognised India's fight against terrorism over the past 11 years, and the prime minister is at the forefront of leading this fight globally, he said.

A massive blast rocked Delhi on Monday evening when a slow-moving car exploded at 6.52pm near the Red Fort, killing 13 people and injuring nearly a dozen others. Visuals from the ground showed damaged vehicles and mangled bodies.

On Wednesday, the Union Cabinet, following the meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS), termed the Delhi blast a "terrorist incident" and directed that the investigation into the explosion incident near Red Fort in Chandni Chowk area on Monday evening be pursued with utmost urgency.

Sources said that the CCS, which was held during the day chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and attended by Home Minister Amit Shah, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, Foreign Minister S Jaishankar, NSA Ajit Doval reviewed the situation.

The Cabinet reiterated India's unwavering commitment to a policy of zero tolerance towards terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

CM pitches space tech vision as next big leap

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Indore

Madhya Pradesh is preparing to "take a new leap" in space and advanced technology, Chief Minister Dr Mohan Yadav said on Thursday at the MP Tech Growth Conclave 2.0 in Indore.

Dr Yadav addressed an audience comprising global capability centre leaders, technology entrepreneurs, senior defence officials from the Indian Army's MCTE, and executives from IT, electronics, semiconductor and drone firms. He said the state will soon implement its Space Tech Policy-2025 to expand satellite data use, remote sensing and space start-ups.

He said the government plans to build a 2,000-acre Knowledge and AI City in Bhopal, designed to cluster world-class research institutions and emerging tech companies. A 25-acre Science City, he added, will become a centre for innovation and learning for students and youth.

Dr Yadav said 68 activities took place during the conclave, from inaugurations to MoU signings. He said these commitments would bring Rs 15,896 crore in investment and create 64,085 jobs, calling it a significant moment for the state's technology sector.

The Chief Minister said Madhya Pradesh had received 99 investment proposals worth Rs 34,000 crore since the Investors Summit and Tech Growth Conclave 1.0 in April. Twenty-seven projects are under development, and nearly Rs 6,000 crore has already been invested in eight months, creating 50,000 jobs.

Bureaucrats' collection revives the melody of India's national tune

DEEPAK KUMAR JHA
■ New Delhi

Days after Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the year-long celebrations to commemorate 150th years of the national song last week, he was mesmerised by the first ever recorded version of Vande Matram. All thanks to two serving senior bureaucrats who have treasured a collection of gramophone records.

Sources said the PM was captivated when he was introduced to the 1996-batch Indian Civil Accounts Service officer Akhilesh Jha and 1997-batch IRS officer Rashmita Jha, who played him the first ever record of the national song.

"The PM appreciated a lot to the zeal of the enthusiast bureaucrat couple in dedicatedly researching and revisiting the history of the country. PM was also informed that the officers have done many gramophone sessions in various parts of country to create awareness about the journey of Vande Mataram," officials present on the occasion said. Union Culture Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat and Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta and top officials of the Government were present on the occasion.

PIONEER PHOTO

Sources said the couple further narrated the other format they have been working together towards awakeing of citizens about the Indian freedom struggle. "They mentioned that they produced 75-episode YouTube series titled *Azadinama* which was sourced from gramophone records and which supplemented the history of India's freedom movement when country celebrated 75 years of Indian independence," officials privy to the moment shared.

Both Akhilesh, who is currently serving in Rural Development Ministry, and Rashmita could not be contacted till filing of the reports.The bureaucrat couple have co-authored many books together and are graduates from Patna College, Bihar. It was learnt that Akhilesh has widely travelled to Pakistan and neighbouring country for research work and did a book titled *Katasraj: Ek Bhooli Bisri Dastaan* which provides not only a historical account of the place situated in western Pakistan, but also a panoramic view of the Hindu temple complex dedicated to Lord Shiva.

Further, the first ever book on legendary Ghazal singer Ustad Mehdi Hassan was also done by Akhilesh Jha in Hindi titled *Mere Mehdi Hassan*. People close to Akhilesh said in the year 2007 the legendary singer on request of Jha has travelled to India with his family members for u nveileing of the book.

Other major books include *Ved Gatha*, *AdiShankar* and *Purush-Pariksha*. Akhilesh is also known for his hands in IT initiatives in Government and working with undertrial prisoners and slum children.

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CM leads Bhavantar push with Rs 233 cr payout to soya farmers

STAFF REPORTER ■ Bhopal

Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Dr Mohan Yadav on Thursday transferred Rs 233 crore to the accounts of more than 1.33 lakh soybean farmers under the state's Bhavantar payment scheme, describing the payout as a fulfilment of a promise made just 15 days earlier.

Speaking at a public gathering in Dewas, Dr Yadav said the Bhavantar model had become a symbol of respect and prosperity for farmers, who he called the backbone of the state's identity. He said the payout showed the government had delivered what it had committed to, and added that Madhya Pradesh was the first state in the country to implement the scheme to ensure farmers received a fair return on their produce.

According to Dr Yadav, soybean fetched Rs 4,800 per quintal last year, while this season farmers are receiving more than Rs 5,300 after an additional benefit of Rs 500 per quintal. More than nine lakh farmers registered to sell soybean under the programme this year, with Thursday's transfer marking the first such payment cycle for 1.33 lakh growers.

He said registered farmers will be able to sell soybean in mandis until January 15. Procurement is taking place at more than 220 main mandis and 80 sub-mandis across the state. All transactions, he said, are being carried out through the e-mandi portal, with real-time entries, CCTV oversight and direct online payments into farmers' accounts.

A Bhavantar call centre has also been set up to assist farmers using the system. Dr Yadav said the online process had removed several difficulties earlier faced by farmers while selling their produce, adding that transparency and monitoring were now embedded at each stage.

The Chief Minister lit a ceremonial lamp at the event, performed kanya-pujan and opened an exhibition showcasing organic farming methods and agricultural machinery. He also laid foundation stones for development projects worth Rs 183.25 crore in the district and distributed benefits linked to organic farming, agricultural equipment and micro-food processing schemes.

Dr Yadav announced that Madhya Pradesh will observe 2026 as the "Year of Agro-based Industries." He said the state will celebrate Gita Jayanti on December 1 with full grandeur and added that Gita Bhavans are being constructed in urban areas and Vrindavan-style villages will be created in every development block.

The Chief Minister said the government was encouraging both farming and cattle rearing, and urged farmers to adopt natural farming. He said those who register for natural farming will receive assistance of Rs 4,000 per acre.

He also highlighted the Dr Bhimrao Ambedkar Kamdhenu dairy scheme, under which a farmer establishing a dairy unit worth Rs 40 lakh will receive Rs 10 lakh as subsidy from the state.

To address stubble-burning issues, Dr Yadav said compressed biogas plants had been launched in the state. He said both farmers and soldiers held equal respect in society and that the prosperity of farmers was crucial for the economic stability of the country.

Referring to recent payments under the Ladli Behna scheme, Dr Yadav said the increased amount reflected the government's ongoing commitments to women's economic empowerment. He said the government had raised the assistance under the scheme to Rs 1,500 and added that farmers producing kodo and kutki in 11 districts had received bonuses of Rs 1,000 per quintal. Wheat and paddy growers, he said, were also benefiting from phased price increases.

Dr Yadav said the state was providing subsidies for solar pumps and would now transfer funds under various welfare schemes every seven days.

Officials of Bhopal Metro Rail Project inspect the last phase of development work in Bhopal on Thursday. Pioneer photo

Youth Cong appointments signal strategic surge for Singhar

STAFF REPORTER ■ Bhopal

The appointments in the Madhya Pradesh Youth Congress have triggered a significant realignment within the party state unit, underscoring a sharp consolidation of influence for Leader of the Opposition Umang Singhar.

Orders for the appointments of Yash Ghanghoriya as State President, Abhishek Parmar as Senior Vice-President and Devendra Singh Dadu as Vice-President were issued on Wednesday. As per routine, only the president was to be declared, but those who were also in the fray were adjusted as Senior Vice-President and Vice-President. This clearly reflects the current power play inside the Congress ecosystem.

Yash Ghanghoriya's elevation is seen as a strategic win for Singhar, who pushed hard for his candidate despite multi-layered factional negotiations. Party insiders say the outcome positions Singhar as the most assertive power centre in the Youth Congress structure. His grip is visible in the numbers: of the 59 district presidents elected statewide, 36 come from his network. This volume of organisational control gives Singhar a scaled-up operational advantage ahead of the 2026 electoral cycle.

Yash's political lineage also adds a layer of complexity. His father, MLA Lakhan Ghanghoriya, is widely known as a supporter of former Chief Minister Kamal Nath. Nath himself extended full backing to Yash's candidature, signalling a tactical alignment between Nath and Singhar - two leaders who have often navigated parallel but occasionally converging political arcs. The collaboration indicates a transactional, outcome-focused cooperation rather than ideological cohesion, but it moves the needle inside the organisation.

The appointment of Abhishekh Parmar as Senior Vice-President reflects the parallel assertiveness of the Jitu Patwari camp. Parmar is viewed as a Patwari loyalist, keeping the Madhya Pradesh Congress President's leverage intact despite the numerical dominance of Singhar's camp. Devendra Singh Dadu, meanwhile, represents the Ajay Singh faction, giving the former Leader of the Opposition a foothold in the redesigned leadership structure.

The combined picture shows a Youth Congress leadership engineered through power-balancing rather than consensus-building. Strategists believe Singhar's camp currently holds the most scalable organisational assets, but Patwari and Ajay Singh retain critical influence nodes, preventing any single leader from achieving total monopoly inside the youth wing.

Governor urges early energy awareness, distributes prizes for art competition

STAFF REPORTER ■ Bhopal

Governor Mangubhai Patel on Thursday urged students to adopt energy-saving habits early as he awarded prizes at the State-Level Painting Competition on Energy Conservation organised by NHDC with the Bureau of Energy Efficiency.

The event at Subhash Yadav Bhavan brought together 100 shortlisted students from across Madhya Pradesh. NHDC awarded Rs 50,000, Rs 30,000 and Rs 20,000 to the top three winners in both categories, along with 10 consolation prizes of Rs 7,500 each. All participants received Rs 2,000.

Patel praised NHDC for promoting awareness of energy conservation among schoolchildren and urged students to remain mindful of energy use. NHDC managing director Rajeev Jain said the corporation was working to strengthen the state's self-reliance through green energy and conservation.

The contest was held in two groups - Classes 5 to 7 and Classes 8 to 10 - after school-level screenings. Students competed in a spot painting round based on energy conservation themes.

Aarohi Chaurasia of St Joseph's School, Arera Colony won Category A, followed by Bani Kaur of New Digamber School, Indore and Poorvi Rawal of Kalidas Montessori Senior Secondary School, Ujjain. In Category B, Awaiz Alam of My World Higher Secondary School, Bhopal placed first, ahead of Alisha Khan of Carmel Convent Senior Secondary School, Govindpura, and Urooj Fatima of Seoni Public School.

Woman jumps to death, teen succumbs after suicide attempt

STAFF REPORTER ■ Bhopal

A 34-year-old woman died on Thursday morning after jumping into the Upper Lake under Talaiya police limits, police said. Identified as Tarannum alias Zikra of Talaiya, she reached the lakeside early and leapt into the water. Divers pulled her out after commuters raised an alarm, but Hamidia Hospital doctors declared her dead on arrival. Her husband said she had been mentally unwell and left home quietly.

In a separate incident, an 18-year-old girl from Bilkhiriya died during treatment after consuming mosquito repellent liquid following an argument with her brother. Police have recorded family statements and are probing the circumstances.

SIT remand for paediatrician in Chhindwara toxic syrup case

STAFF REPORTER ■ Bhopal

The investigation into the toxic cough syrup deaths in Chhindwara intensified on Thursday, with the Special Investigation Team (SIT) taking arrested paediatrician Dr Praveen Soni on a three-day police remand. The case, involving the deaths of 26 children, has triggered extensive scrutiny of drug supply chains and medical practices.

A Parasia police team reached Chhindwara Jail in the afternoon and took Dr Soni into custody for interrogation. Officials said the SIT will question him on drug distribution, treatment protocols and sample reports to determine his role and identify additional evidence.

Investigators have found that the toxic syrup was supplied by Srisan Company. Police are now preparing to name company owner Ranganathan and chemical analyst K Maheshwari as accused after evidence suggested lapses in manufacturing and quality control.

Cases have been registered under BNS Sections 105 and 276, along with Sections 27(A) and 27(B) of the Drugs and Cosmetics Act. Similar offences have been registered in Parasia as the probe expands across multiple locations.

The SIT is now focused on tracing how the contaminated syrup reached the market and identifying individuals directly involved in its production and distribution. Interrogation of Dr Soni will centre on the medicine supply chain, sample testing records and medication administered during treatment.

Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav witnesses various Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) exchange ceremony at the Madhya Pradesh Tech Growth Conclave -"2.0" in Indore, Madhya Pradesh on Thursday. Pioneer photo

Narcotics probe zeroes in on kingpins 'Gandhi' and 'Doctor'

PNS ■ Indore

Indore's Crime Branch has zeroed in on nine major traffickers - including two who operate under the code names Gandhi and Doctor - as the city's anti-narcotics campaign intensifies.

Police said the accused transport narcotics from Mandsaur, Pratapgarh in Rajasthan, and parts of Maharashtra, supplying local peddlers after taking phone orders and delivering consignments at fixed spots across the city. Each suspect carries a reward of Rs 10,000, and officers say their arrest could significantly disrupt the flow of synthetic drugs into Indore's densest urban clusters, where demand has quietly risen in the past year.

Acting on instructions from Police Commissioner Santosh Singh, an ACP-led team recently arrested thirty six small and mid-level peddlers. Their questioning uncovered the wider network and identified the nine key suppliers now being targeted.

The suspects include Shahid Khan, known as Gandhi; Mahfooz Khan, called Doctor; along with Manay Jain, Shahrukh Khan, Gulnawaz Pathan, Salman alias Salim, Akram Pathan, Rajkumar Narang, and Magan Akhade.

Several of these names had emerged in 2021 when the Crime Branch seized seventy kilograms of MD drugs worth about Rs 70 crore. Investigators say the network has continued operating since then, repeatedly slipping out of reach while shifting routes and delivery points to avoid surveillance.

"All major figures involved in the drug supply chain have been identified. Arrests will be made soon," Additional DCP Rajesh Dandotiya said.

Man dies of injuries after two bikes collide head-on near Imaliya outpost

STAFF REPORTER ■ Bhopal

A 29-year-old man died on Thursday morning from severe injuries sustained in a head-on collision between two motorcycles near the Imaliya outpost under Gunga police station on the state capital's northern outskirts.

The crash occurred around 5 pm on Wednesday and left three others, including a woman and her teenage daughter, injured.

Police said Vishnu Sen was riding towards Bhopal with the woman and her 15-year-old daughter seated pillion when their motorcycle collided directly with an oncoming two-wheeler. The impact flung all four riders onto the road with considerable force, causing fractures, head injuries, and extensive bleeding. The isolated stretch, which lacks barriers and lighting, has seen multiple accidents in recent years.

Villagers working in nearby fields and motorists passing through were the first to respond. They used private vehicles to move the injured to the community health centre in Berasia, about 15 kilometres away, while alerting police and emergency services.

Medical teams stabilised the woman, her daughter, and the second motorcyclist, who suffered non-life-threatening injuries, but Sen's condition deteriorated through the night due to internal bleeding.

Doctors attempted emergency interventions, but he died in the early hours of Thursday. Hospital staff said the other three are stable and under observation.

Gunga police station in-charge Krishna Thakur said a case has been registered under sections related to rash driving and causing death by negligence. Statements from survivors and witnesses are being recorded, and both motorcycles have been seized for inspection.

Top tax officials convene to chart overhaul of TDS regime

STAFF REPORTER ■ Bhopal

Senior tax administrators from across the country gathered in the city on Thursday for the 22nd All India TDS Conference, a strategy-led review of compliance gaps and preparations for the upcoming Income-tax Act, 2025.

The conference, held at Hotel Taj Lakefront and organised by the Income Tax Department for the Madhya Pradesh-Chhattisgarh region in collaboration with the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT), brought together Principal Chief Commissioners, Chief Commissioners, Directors General and senior officers from TDS, Investigation, Systems, International Tax and other divisions. CBDT Chairman Ravi Agrawal inaugurated the conference and released a new information brochure for Drawing and Disbursing Officers aimed at improving TDS compliance in government departments. He said the conference carries significant weight as the new Income-tax Act will be enforced from April 01, 2026, with TDS provisions to be implemented first. He urged officers to begin early preparations, step up capacity-building and strengthen data-backed processes to ensure a smooth transition.

Agrawal also emphasised the need for stronger coordination between system units and field formations to streamline compliance under the new legal framework.

CBDT Member (TPS & Revenue) Pankaj Kumar Mishra raised concerns over recurring compliance lapses, particularly under Section 192 relating to salary TDS. He said monitoring must extend to autonomous institutions, PSUs and state departments, and called for deeper outreach and awareness programmes to close existing gaps.

Technical sessions through the day discussed untagged challans, correction statements, fraudulent TDS claims, prosecution, compounding and the use of data analytics to identify compliance failures. Senior officers also examined the need for sector-specific analysis, targeted communication strategies and stronger coordination with state governments to ensure timely TDS recovery. The discussions focused on building a more transparent and technology-driven compliance architecture.

The conference was organised under the guidance of Lalit Krishna Singh Dahiya, Principal Chief Commissioner of Income Tax for Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh.

Kalidas festival opens today with young voices and vivid performances

PNS ■ Ujjain

The three-day State-Level School Kalidas Festival opens today at the Pt Suryanarayan Vyas Sankul Hall in the Kalidas Sanskrit Academy, bringing together around 250 students from across Madhya Pradesh for a celebration of classical arts.

The festival begins this morning with the inaugural ceremony and the Junior Group Dance Drama Competition, scheduled from 11:00 am to 2:00 pm. Organisers said students representing various divisions will present shloka recitations and dance dramas inspired by classical themes.

On Saturday, the Junior and Senior Group Shloka Recitation Competitions will take place from 9:00 am to 11:00 am, followed by the Senior Group Dance Drama and the Junior and Senior Group Drawing Exhibition from 11:00 am onwards.

The event will conclude on Sunday with the closing ceremony and prize distribution at 11:00 am, marking the end of a programme designed to showcase the depth of classical learning and performance among schoolchildren.

MP refreshes GCC push at Tech Growth Conclave 2.0 in Indore

PNS ■ Indore

The 'MP GCC Leadership Connect Roundtable' brought senior industry leaders and policymakers together at Indore's Brilliant Convention Center on Thursday, outlining a roadmap to position Madhya Pradesh as a preferred hub for Global Capability Centers. More than twenty five GCCs participated in the discussions, signalling rising interest in the state's technology ambitions and wider investment potential.

Additional Chief Secretary for Science and Technology Sanjay Dubey said developing MP as a GCC centre is a major government priority. He noted that tier two cities offer a strong, reliable business ecosystem and said MP is the first state in the country to introduce a dedicated GCC policy, giving firms clarity, predictability, and long-term administrative stability. Dubey said the government is creating a drone data repository, promoting investment in the semiconductor sector, offering subsidies through the data centre policy, and drafting a space technology policy to support emerging industries. He added that IIT Indore is the only institute in India offering both BTech and MTech courses in space technology, strengthening the state's academic foundation.

He said MP is emerging as a leader in startup promotion, with more than ten per cent of India's gaming IP creation coming from the state. This, he noted, reflects its expanding talent base, improving innovation culture, and steady rise in technical capability across multiple sectors.

Industry representatives stressed the importance of talent and continuity in attracting more GCCs. Vena India Center Head Gautam Yadav highlighted the strength of the combined IIT Indore, MANIT Bhopal, and GSITS Indore talent pool, saying senior leadership recruitment will be crucial for sustained GCC growth. Vena India Vice President Parth Sen Gupta pointed to the state's potential in the financial sector. KPMG Partner Gaurav Kumar said tier two cities in MP offer excellent talent, and many young professionals prefer staying within the state for work. NTT Data Cyber Head Kshitij Banthia noted thriving GCC operations and a strong startup culture, urging higher levels of local recruitment. EY LLP Partner Aditya Kshetrapal said consistency and continuity are essential for cost-effective GCC operations and long-term efficiency.

An artist performs at the inauguration of a four-day Kerala Festival, at Dussehra ground Bittan market in Bhopal on Thursday.

Police step up drills as Barwani readies for CM's visit today

STAFF REPORTER ■ Bhopal

Barwani police carried out a full-scale security rehearsal on Thursday ahead of Dr Mohan Yadav's scheduled visit to Moratlai village in Pansemal block today for Janjatiya Gaurav Diwas.

Under the supervision of Superintendent of Police Jagdish Dawar, officers simulated every stage of the Chief Minister's arrival, movement and programme closure. Dawar personally briefed deployed officers and personnel before sending them to their assigned duty points.

He inspected the helipad, the main venue, the stage, public entry routes and parking areas to assess readiness. Traffic arrangements from the helipad to the venue were reviewed, and deployment along the route was checked for gaps.

Emergency response teams - including QRT units, fire services and medical staff - were tested for readiness, with a mock drill conducted to gauge their reaction in a crisis. Dawar told his team that alertness and coordination at every level were essential. "Every level of security must work in complete sync. This is a moment of pride for the district, and security, dignity and punctuality remain our top priorities," he said.

Officials said the administration aims to ensure that Dr Yadav's visit is conducted smoothly, safely and with full decorum.

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Printed and published by Syed Naved Alam on behalf of CMYK Printech Limited and Printed at "SHRI BALAJI PRINTERS" Plot No.137,138,139 Sector I Special Industrial Area Govindpura Bhopal - 462023, (M.P.) and published at 152 Saif Complex - 2nd Floor, M.P. Nagar, Zone 1, Bhopal-462011 (M.P), Telephone: 0755-2550977, Mob.: 09893130364. Executive Editor Deepak Kumar Jha, RNI Regn. No. MPENG/2004/13703, Regd. No. L-2/BPLON/41/2006-2008, AIR SURCHARGE of Re. 1.00 East: Calcutta, Ranchi, Bhubaneswar, North Leh West: Mumbai & Ahmedabad South: Bangalore & Chennai. Central : Khajuraho, Delhi Office:- 201-205, 208-210, 2nd Floor, Pratap Bhawan 5, B.S.Z. Marg, New Delhi-110002 Phone: 011-46035729, 011-69342500, Mumbai Office: Devendra Adhikari Mobile No.: 09867575933, 09892829259, Lucknow Office: 4th Floor, Sahara Shopping Centre, Faizabad Road, Lucknow 226 016. Telephones: 0522-2346443, 2346444, 2346445.

The Pioneer
BHOPAL | FRIDAY | NOVEMBER 14, 2025

Cold wave to test devotees at four-day Ijtema

STAFF REPORTER ■ Bhopal

A sharp, early-season cold wave is set to challenge tens of thousands attendees at a four-day Muslim religious congregation beginning on the outskirts of the state capital today, with the Met office warning of harsh conditions across western and central Madhya Pradesh.

The gathering will unfold in open grounds just as night temperatures drop below 8 degrees Celsius and northerly winds intensify. The India Meteorological Department said minimums in host districts are likely to settle between 7 degrees Celsius and 9 degrees Celsius under clear skies, while daytime highs may struggle to rise beyond the mid-twenties through the weekend.

With the cold wave alert extended till November 16, the IMD cautioned of frost-like conditions at daybreak and urged extra care for the elderly, children, and those exposed overnight during prayers and sermons. Officials said the chill, driven by snowfall in the northern hills, will remain unrelenting despite dry skies.

Organisers are rushing to strengthen arrangements to shield participants, who travel from across the country each year. Volunteers were seen stockpiling blankets and lining temporary shelters as temperatures continued to fall on Thursday.

The cold spell is also unsettling farmers in prime sowing zones such as Indore, Bhopal, Rajgarh, and Shajapur, now under severe cold wave alerts. Night temperatures have dipped to 7 degrees Celsius in Rajgarh and below 8 elsewhere, creating frost-prone mornings that threaten nascent rabi plantings. Agronomists warned that prolonged exposure to such cold could stunt germination and cause injury to young seedlings, risking yield losses of up to 30 per cent if the freeze-like conditions persist.

Collector orders tighter checks as voter roll revision continues

STAFF REPORTER ■ Bhopal

The special intensive revision of electoral rolls must be carried out with stricter monitoring and clearer protocols, Collector Kaushalendra Vikram Singh told officials and booth level officers on Thursday.

Singh said the accuracy of the voter list underpins the strength of the democratic process and stressed that the exercise must be handled with seriousness at every tier. He directed booth level officers to distribute nomination forms only after meeting the actual voter or an adult member of the household during door-to-door visits.

Officials were asked to hand over both copies of the enrolment form to each voter and immediately mark the "Delivered" option on the BLO app after distribution. Singh also told them to explain the 2003 mapping details during the visit and provide written information wherever the data is available.

BLOs have also been instructed to help citizens fill out the enrolment forms and digitise the completed documents on the app without delay. Singh said this would ensure cleaner records and minimise procedural gaps during the revision drive.

He further directed supervisors to step up inspections and keep the exercise under strict watch so that each phase of the campaign is executed accurately and on time. Singh said the ongoing revision is crucial for the refinement of the electoral roll and urged all concerned officials to discharge their responsibilities with full commitment.

Speaker of Madhya Pradesh State Assembly confers degrees to the students at the graduation ceremony of Mansarovar Global University at Kushabhau Thackeray convention center in Bhopal on Thursday. Pioneer photo

Students participate in a state level painting competition on energy conservation organised by NHDC, at Samanvay Bhawan in Bhopal on Thursday. Pioneer photo

Kerwa bridge to get Rs 5 crore rebuild

STAFF REPORTER ■ Bhopal

A new footbridge at the ageing Kerwa Dam in the state capital will be built before the monsoon at a cost of Rs 5 crore, with work set to begin within a week and monthly progress reports to be sent to Water Resources Minister Tulsi Silawat, department officials said after inspecting the damaged structure again on Thursday.

A portion of the bridge collapsed on November 11, though no one was on it at the time. Officials admit the cave-in could have been fatal had there been pedestrian movement. The dam supplies water to the Kolar area of the city.

During his visit to the site a day after the incident, Silawat reviewed the damage with engineers and inspected the eight automatic tilting gates.

Construction of the dam began in 1975 and was completed in 1980, shortly after the Bhadbhada Dam. The minister later held a meeting with senior officials.

He ordered a detailed inquiry into the collapse and directed that an estimate for the reconstruction be prepared within a week. The project is expected to take five months and cost about Rs 5 crore.

Exposed and corroded reinforcement bars, peeling plaster and hanging chunks of concrete are visible across the structure. The slab above three gates has already fallen, and the remaining portions appear severely weakened.

Silawat has ordered that all slabs and gates be rebuilt and directed officials to conduct an audit of all old dams in the state.

Rwanda delegation visits Katju Hospital, praises care model

STAFF REPORTER ■ Bhopal

A visiting delegation from Rwanda and members of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) toured the Government Kailashnath Katju Hospital on Thursday to study its maternal and child health services and explore avenues for international collaboration.

The team included Dr Francois Regis Saïza, head of the Maternal and Child Health Facility Programme Unit at the Rwanda Biomedical Centre, Esperence Ndenga, partnership and grant writing analyst at Rwanda's Ministry of Health, and Marie Claire Irianyawera, SRHR head at UNFPA Rwanda. They were joined by Sunil Thomas, state head of UNFPA Madhya Pradesh, and Anurag Sonwalkar, state programme officer.

Nodal officer Dr Rachna Dubey guided the group through key units, including the Shakti preventive gynaecology centre, ANC and PNC wards, the human milk bank, labour rooms and other maternal and child health facilities.

She briefed the delegation on clinical standards, protocols and service processes. Hospital superintendent Dr Balram Upadhyay was also present.

The delegation praised the hospital's cleanliness, modern infrastructure, staff commitment and patient-centred approach. They singled out the human milk bank as an "innovative and inspiring" model that could be replicated in Rwanda to strengthen neonatal care.

Dr Dubey said the hospital continued to expand programmes aimed at empowering women and improving maternal and child health outcomes. She added that initiatives like the Shakti centre were reshaping preventive care for women.

The visiting officials said India's experience offered valuable lessons and that the systems observed in Bhopal would help Rwanda strengthen its own healthcare framework.

Madhya Pradesh showcases advances in fingerprint-led crime investigation

STAFF REPORTER ■ Bhopal

Madhya Pradesh reaffirmed its position as a national leader in fingerprint-based criminal identification at a one-day state-level workshop for fingerprint experts held at the new auditorium of Police Headquarters on Thursday.

Additional Director General of Police, State Crime Records Bureau, Jaideep Prasad, who chaired the workshop, said the state had emerged as one of the frontrunners in fingerprint-driven investigation under the National Automated Fingerprint Identification System.

Prasad told participants that Madhya Pradesh ranks among the leading states in the country for fingerprint-based criminal identification and investigation, urging experts to prioritise technological innovation, scientific methodology and professional efficiency.

In an interaction with The Pioneer, he highlighted the release of the updated Fingerprint Manual 2025, revised after 2023 to incorporate the latest technical advancements. The manual, unveiled by him at the event, offers guidance on field methodology, digital analysis, data recording and optimal use of the NAFIS platform.

Prasad said the multi-stakeholder reference document, developed with coordinated inputs from state and central agencies, is designed to enhance investigative accuracy, speed and scientific rigour.

Collector advises against child marriages

Bhopal: With the wedding season at its peak, the Bhopal administration on Thursday warned that anyone conducting or aiding child marriages faces up to two years in jail, a Rs 100000 fine or both under the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act 2006.Collector Kaushlendra Vikram Singh told communities to stay alert as the wedding season intensifies. He said the Lado Abhiyan is being used to intensify checks and encourage faster reporting.Singh asked mass-wedding organisers to file affidavits confirming they will not host underage marriages, and told printers, caterers, priests, bands and venue operators to verify age documents before providing services, and report suspected cases to WCD officers or helplines 112, 1098 or 181.

Recover tax dues or face strict action, Sanskriti Jain warns ward officials

STAFF REPORTER ■ Bhopal

Municipal Commissioner Sanskriti Jain on Thursday ordered a stringent push to raise civic revenue, directing officials to improve the recovery of property tax and lease rent and warning that officers with poor performance would receive notices.

Jain reviewed municipal works and time-bound cases in the conference hall of the municipal office, where she said ward in-charges and zonal officers reporting less than 10 per cent recovery would be issued notices. She also instructed that strict action be taken against taxpayers who have not cleared dues and that demand notices be delivered door to door to strengthen collections.

Additional Commissioners Anju Arun Kumar, Tanmay Vashishth Sharma, Mukesh Sharma, Varun Awasthi, Harshit Tiwari and Gunwant Sewatkar were present, Jain further directed all Additional Commissioners to remain in the field at least four days a week within their respective assembly constituencies to continuously monitor ward activities and lift recovery performance. She said sanitation arrangements across wards, zones and offices must be ensured without exception.

She also instructed officials to prepare and photograph a list of old or unused materials so they can be disposed of promptly. Jain added that each assembly constituency should take immediate action to establish one "Garbage Café" and complete all requirements without delay.

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
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NIT No. 21/TS/EE/QCU/PHED/2025-26, Bhopal, Dated: 10.11.2025

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Online digitally sealed tenders are invited on behalf of the Government of M.P. for the following work on Percentage rate in appendix 2.10 from registered Contractor in Centralized Registration system in MPPWD for "Annual maintenance contract for EPABX System installed in the office of The Engineer-in-Chief, Public Health Engineering Department, "Jal Bhawan" Bhopal for Year 2025-26... ". Tender can be purchase from **10.11.2025 to 25.11.2025 at 17.30 hours** & submission of tender **25.11.2025 up to 17:30 hours.** Envelop "A" will be open **on 26.11.2025 at 17:30 hours** Website: www.mpeproc.gov.in. **(E-Tender No 2025_PHED_461765_1, PHED, Date 10.11.2025).**

S. No.	Name of work	Probable amount of contract	Earnest Money	Cost of tender documents	Time allowed for completion
1	Annual maintenance contract for EPABX System installed in the office of The Engineer-in-Chief, Public Health Engineering Department, "Jal Bhawan" Bhopal for Year 2025-26.	**Rs. 73815.00** (Rs. Seventy Three Thousand Eight Hundred Fifteen Only)	**Rs. 1476.00** (Rs. One Thousand Four Hundred Seventy Six Only)	**Rs. 1000.00** (Rs. One Thousand Only)	**365 Days**

1. Detailed condition can be seen in this office in working hours.
2. Last date for purchase of tender: **25.11.2025 upto 17:30 hours.**
3. Last date of submission of tender: **25.11.2025 upto 17:30 hours.**
4. Envelop A will be open on dated: **26.11.2025 at 17:30 hours.**

Executive Engineer
Quality Control Unit Division
Public Health Engineering Department, Bhopal.
G-21389/25

Open tennis tournament begins with record field at BHEL Officers Club

STAFF REPORTER ■ Bhopal

The Open Tennis Tournament, Winter 2025, began at the BHEL Officers Club on Thursday, opening four days of play that organisers say have drawn the strongest field since the event was launched.

More than 130 players from Bhopal and neighbouring districts are competing across categories that include Under-12 Boys and Girls, Men's and Women's Singles, Men's Singles for players aged 35 and above, and Men's Doubles with a combined age of at least 45. Officials said the turnout reflects rising interest in competitive tennis among both young entrants and senior players. Matches are being played through the day on multiple courts, with early rounds expected to decide the quarter-final line-up by Saturday. Organisers said the winter event has grown steadily over the years.

The tournament was inaugurated by Ilaiyaraaja T, Managing Director of the MP State Tourism Development Corporation, who praised the organisers for maintaining a competitive pathway for young athletes. Finals in all categories will be held on Sunday.

Police investigate cyber con after man loses Rs 1.49 lakh

STAFF REPORTER ■ Bhopal

Scammers promised massive returns to lure victims into repeated payments

Gautam Nagar police have registered a case against unidentified cybercriminals for allegedly duping a private company employee of Rs 1.49 lakh through a task-based online investment scheme.

Police said the fraud began in September when Vinod Ahirwar received a WhatsApp message from a person using the Telegram ID "Priya", claiming to represent a company offering high cashback for liking posts and sharing links. The contact later promised heavy returns on investment and referral bonuses.

Ahirwar first sent Rs 500 but was gradually drawn into transferring larger sums via UPI to multiple accounts, lured by assurances of 200 per cent returns. Over two months, he completed more than 20 tasks and invested Rs 1.49 lakh, relying on fake screenshots and testimonials. When he attempted to withdraw what he believed were earnings of more than Rs 3 lakh, the contact disappeared.

He then lodged a complaint, after which police registered a case and began tracing the money trail with support from the Madhya Pradesh Cyber Cell. "This is a classic task scam exploiting job seekers," said Gautam Nagar SI Rajesh Kumar.

Bhopal has logged more than 450 cyber fraud cases this year, with reported losses exceeding Rs 15 crore. Investigators believe more victims may surface, as referral links shared through the scheme are likely to have drawn in others. Authorities have urged residents to report unsolicited online offers and lodge complaints through helpline 1930.

Civic apathy, encroachments turn city roads into death traps

ANKUSH SINGH ■ Bhopal

Encroachments across major commercial and residential stretches of the state capital are tightening bottlenecks, slowing traffic to a crawl, and raising accident risk, with residents alleging that the Bhopal Municipal Corporation (BMC) has allowed the problem to spiral through years of weak enforcement and selective action.

On the Ayodhya Bypass, the problem is most visible. What was once a wide, fast-moving corridor has been squeezed into a cluttered, stop-and-start stretch as rows of unauthorised kiosks, carts, and food stalls now occupy both edges of the carriageway.

The stretch from Anand Nagar to Bhanpur Bridge and onward to Karond Square carries heavy traffic round the clock, yet the road has steadily narrowed as unlicensed stalls serving vegetables, snacks, clothes, plastic goods, and now winter wear crowd both sides. The pressure has surged further with the seasonal rush of woollen sellers setting up wherever they find space. Residents allege the chaos is not accidental but enabled. Rajeev Nagar resident and LIC agent Mahesh Verma said municipal staff routinely "accept bribes to allow these illegal shops to operate", adding that repeated complaints have led to "no action at all".

While the city does officially demarcate certain winter markets - including the Tibetan Bazaar near Sangam Talkies and the seasonal clothing hub near Lily Talkies - where traders pay a fixed fee and operate under permission, the Ayodhya Bypass has effectively slipped into a free-for-all. Each evening, food stalls, pani puri vendors, and food vans spill onto the road, leaving motorists to squeeze through bottlenecks and negotiate blind turns. The disorder is now visible in other pockets as well. At New Market, shoppers complain that store owners occupy pavements with merchandise, leaving the remaining road space to hawkers. "You can't even find parking now," said Ankit Kushwaha. "Most of the goods are kept outside the shops, not inside."

Near the TT Nagar Multi-Level Smart Parking, congestion has become a daily reality. Fruit, vegetable, tobacco, and spice stalls have for months occupied space near the Corporation's own Public Relations Office. "It's become difficult to even take out vehicles," said Jahangirabad resident and private school teacher Rishabh Chauhan. "There's simply no space left."

Local businessmen say the encroachments are hurting them as well. "These kiosks drive customers away," said Saurabh Yadav, who runs a snacks outlet in Jahangirabad. "The Corporation just takes bribes and fills its pockets."

Street vendors, for their part, say they have little choice. Aman, a vegetable seller near the BSNL office in MP Nagar Zone-1, said municipal personnel demand monthly payments and threaten confiscation or fines if they refuse. "Different officials come each time, all asking for money in the name of enforcement," he said. Shoe vendor Nishant Sahu echoed the compulsion many express. "We set up stalls on the road because we have no option. If we could afford our own shop, we wouldn't do this. This is how we pay for rent, food, and our children's school fees."

Urban planners say the crisis has predictable consequences: clogged traffic, unpredictable pedestrian movement, and a spike in accident potential. They argue that designating formal vending zones, issuing temporary permits, and carrying out routine enforcement could restore order without disrupting livelihoods.

For now, however, residents are left navigating a corridor of encroachment, dust, and daily logjams - and what they describe as a civic administration unwilling to confront the problem.

कार्यालय कार्यपालन यंत्री,
राजधानी परियोजना खण्ड क्रमांक-2
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क्र. 106,107,108,109,110,111,112,113,114/का.यं./रा.परि.खण्ड-2/लोस्वायांवि/ दिनांक 04.11.25

निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना

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क्र.	ऑनलाईन निविदा क्र.	कार्य का नाम	अनुमानित राशि (रू. लाख में)	धरोहर राशि (रूपये)	निविदा प्रपत्र का मूल्य	कार्य पूर्ण करने की अवधि
1	2025-PHED_460516	Cleaning and de silting work Collection Chamber, PTU and RCC Channel at Badwai sewage treatment plant Bhopal	6,19,913=00	12,398=00	2,000=00	180 Days Including rainy season
2	2025-PHED_460526	Repairing of damaged manhole chambers i/c de silting and cleaning of manholes and sewer line constructed under BWL Project at Jahangirabad Section-c of Sub Div-6 Bhopal	8,46,728=00	16,935=00	2,000=00	30 Days Including rainy season
3	2025-PHED_460527	Repairing, reconstruction of damaged manhole chambers including Cleaning and de silting of manholes and sewer line of block no 121-125 Shivaji Nagar, Bhopal	8,12,028=00	16,241=00	2,000=00	30 Days Including rainy season
4	2025-PHED_460528	Surface dressing and Coursed Rubble Masonry work below existing Boundary wall at Tilak Nagar Sewage Pump House under CP Sub Div. No. 05 PHED Bhopal	5,95,968=00	11,919=00	2,000=00	30 Days Including rainy season
5	2025-PHED_460529	Replacing damaged 200 mm dia SW RCC sewer line with repairing of damaged manhole chamber i/c de silting and cleaning of manholes and sewer line at Idgah Hills under Fatehgarh SPH, Bhopal	7,54,364=00	15,087=00	2,000=00	30 Days Including rainy season
6	2025-PHED_460531	Providing of Unskilled, Skilled & High Skilled Male Labour/Female Kamgar/Chowkidar/Computer Operator etc i/c T&P and safety equipment for sewage maintenance work at various sites under C.P. Div. 02, Sub. Division No. 6 PHED Bhopal	1,43,79,612=00	1,43,796=00	10,000=00	365 Days Including rainy season
7	2025-PHED_460532	Repairing of damaged manhole chamber i/c de silting and cleaning of manholes and sewer line constructed under BWL Project at Section No.1 of Sub Div.No.5 PHED Bhopal	7,98,700=00	15,974=00	2,000=00	30 Days Including rainy season
8	2025-PHED_460533	Repairing of damaged manhole chamber with cleaning of manholes and sewer line at Lake View Nursery, Vanvihar, Kotra Network, Bhopal	8,04,446=00	16,089=00	2,000=00	30 Days Including rainy season
9	2025-PHED_460618	Repairing of damaged manhole chamber with cleaning of manholes and sewer line at E-3, Arera colony, Section No. 2 Network Area, Bhopal	8,06,115=00	16,122=00	2,000=00	30 Days Including rainy season

- निविदा प्रपत्र की निर्धारित राशि एवं धरोहर राशि एवं अन्य आवश्यक दस्तावेज ऑनलाईन प्रस्तुत करने होगे एवं अन्य समस्त विस्तृत जानकारी mptenders.gov.in पर देखी जा सकती है।
- निविदा संशोधन केवल वेबसाईट पर ही दर्शाया जावेगा। पृथक से समाचार पत्रों में प्रकाशन नही किया जावेगा।
- निविदा क्रय करने की अंतिम तिथि 19.11.2025 है।

कार्यपालन यंत्री
राजधानी परियोजना खण्ड क्र.-2,
लोक स्वास्थ्य यांत्रिकीय विभाग, भोपाल
G-21354/25

The Pioneer
BHOPAL | FRIDAY | NOVEMBER 14, 2025

IN FOCUS

Indian military personnel show skills during the Tri-service exercise Trishul, a joint military exercise of the Army, Navy and the Indian Air Force codenamed Amphex 2025 at Madhavpur Beach PTI

PM, Shah hail Cabinet decisions

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Thursday hailed the decisions of the Union Cabinet regarding exports. The Union Cabinet, at a meeting chaired by Modi on Wednesday, approved the export promotion mission and a credit guarantee scheme for exporters.

"Ensuring 'Made in India'resonates even louder in the world market! The Union Cabinet approved the Export Promotion Mission (EPM), which will improve export competitiveness, help MSMEs, first-time exporters and sectors that are labour-intensive," Modi said in a social media post. "It brings together key stakeholders to build a mechanism that is outcome based and effective," he added.

The prime minister also said the Credit Guarantee Scheme for Exporters, which has been approved by the Cabinet, will boost global competitiveness, ensure smooth business operations and help realise our dream of an Aatmanirbhar Bharat.

Modi said the decision to rationalise the royalty rates of graphite, caesium, rubidium and zirconium will strengthen supply chains and create job opportunities. The Cabinet also approved rationalisation of royalty rates of graphite, caesium, rubidium and zirconium minerals critical for Green Energy. "This Cabinet decision will boost sustainability and self-reliance. It will strengthen supply chains and create job opportunities as well," the prime minister said. Home Minister Shah hailed the Union Cabinet's approval of two schemes worth ₹45,000 crore to help exporters, which were hit by high US tariffs.

Shah said India's export sector is reinforced with a new support system, as the ₹25,060-crore 'Export Promotion Mission'has been approved by the Union Cabinet. "The decision is a firm step towards Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision for making the sector more competitive through globalising Indian products while unleashing a wide range of employment opportunities for youth," he said.

The home minister also said the Cabinet has approved the Credit Guarantee Scheme for Exporters (CGSE), offering ₹20,000 crore collateral-free credit with a 100 per cent guarantee by the National Credit Guarantee Trustee Company.

"This landmark step will boost liquidity, empower MSMEs, and accelerate Bharat's march towards the USD 1 trillion export target — a decisive stride towards 'Atmanirbhar Bharat'," he said. The Export Promotion Mission seeks to strengthen India's export competitiveness, particularly for MSMEs, first-time exporters, and labour-intensive sectors. The CGSE will ensure collateral-free credit support for exporters to help tide over global market disruptions.

Crushed between trucks, 8 dead in Pune collision

People standing near the remains of a car after the accident on the Mumbai-Bengaluru Highway PTI

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ Pune

Eight persons were killed and 14 others injured after a car got crushed between two large container trucks with a huge fire engulfing all three vehicles on the Mumbai-Bengaluru highway here on Thursday evening, police said.

The horrific incident involving multiple vehicles took place on Navale Bridge, infamous as an accident-prone stretch.

Officials suspected that the CNG kit in the car exploded following the impact which led to the fire.

"As per preliminary information, a heavy container truck was going towards Mumbai. Its driver lost control due to a suspected brake failure on the bridge, and it hit a few vehicles in its way including a mini-bus before ramming into another big container in front. A car was caught between these two trucks and got crushed badly," Deputy Commissioner of Police Sambhaji Kadam said.

The impact triggered a huge fire and the three vehicles got engulfed in it, he said.

Most of the injured were travelling in the minibus.

Pune police commissioner Amitesh Kumar, who visited the spot, said, "The fire erupted due to the impact of the collision."

Haryana committed to control pollution: Narbir

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Gurugram

Haryana's Forest and Environment Minister, Rao Narbir Singh, has said that the State Government is fully committed to controlling environmental pollution and ensuring strict compliance with the directions issued by the National Green Tribunal (NGT) and the Supreme Court.

He emphasised that effective pollution control can only be achieved through coordinated efforts among all concerned departments, and tangible results must be visible on the ground. The minister was presiding over a high-level meeting of the Haryana State Pollution Control Board (HSPCB) held on Thursday. The meeting was attended by Additional Chief Secretary (Environment and Forests) Sudhir Rajpal, HSPCB Chairman Vineet Garg, HSIIDC Managing Director Yash Garg, and other senior officials.

The meeting reviewed the current status of environmental pollution control measures in the state and discussed an action plan for future implementation.

Singh directed officials to ensure that no industrial or sewage waste water is discharged into the Yamuna River. He ordered the installation of CCTV cameras to monitor the 11 drains located in the Yamuna catchment area where Common Effluent Treatment Plants (CETPs) and Sewage Treatment Plants (STPs) are operational.

Each drain, he said, should be assigned a nodal department and officer responsible for regular inspection and reporting.

Argentina condemns Delhi blast, expresses solidarity with India

ASHOKE RAJ ■ New Delhi

Argentina's Ambassador to India, Mariano Caucino

The Embassy of Argentina in India has strongly condemned the recent terrorist attack that struck the Indian capital on Monday, November 11.

In an official statement, Argentina's Ambassador to India, Mariano Caucino, expressed deep solidarity with India and its leadership, affirming that "Argentina stands with India and its Prime Minister in this difficult moment." Ambassador Caucino described the attack as "unacceptable," emphasizing Argentina's firm stance against terrorism in all its forms. "In today's world, it is unacceptable that some countries promote and harbor terrorism," he said, underscoring Buenos Aires'longstanding commitment to combat global extremism. The ambassador condemned terrorism and described the acts as "unacceptable." Caucino stated that Argentina joins India and all peace-loving nations in rejecting "all forms of terror." Referring to Argentina's own history of suffering from terrorist violence, the ambassador recalled the devastating attacks against the Israeli Embassy in 1992 and the AMIA Jewish Community Centre in 1994, which claimed around 100 innocent lives. "We have not forgotten," he added.

Caucino also highlighted President Javier Milei's clear position on the global fight against terrorism, noting that the Argentine government "has been very clear in condemning terrorism in all its forms" and reaffirming its support for international efforts to eradicate extremist violence.

"On behalf of the Argentine people and government, I express our solidarity with the victims and our unwavering support for the Indian authorities led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi," the ambassador concluded. The statement follows widespread international condemnation of the Delhi blast, which authorities in India are currently investigating as a terrorist act.

ED arrests Jaypee ex-CMD Manoj Gaur

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Thursday arrested Manoj Gaur, former Executive Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of M/s Jaiprakash Associates Ltd (JAL) and former Chairman and Managing Director of M/s Jaypee Infratech Ltd (JIL), in connection with a money-laundering probe linked to the alleged diversion and misuse of funds worth ₹14,599 crore collected from homebuyers.

The ED initiated its investigation into the Jaypee Group on the basis of multiple FIRs registered by the Economic Offences Wings (EOW) of Delhi and Uttar Pradesh Police, following complaints filed by homebuyers of the Jaypee Wishtown and Jaypee Greens projects. The complaints alleged criminal conspiracy, cheating and breach of trust by the company and its promoters. It is alleged that money collected from thousands of homebuyers for housing projects was diverted for purposes other than construction, leaving projects incomplete and buyers defrauded. On 23 May 2025, the ED conducted search operations at 15 locations in Delhi, Noida, Ghaziabad and Mumbai, including the offices and premises of Jaiprakash Associates Ltd and Jaypee Infratech Ltd. "During the searches, the ED seized a large volume of financial and digital records, along with documents evidencing the offence of money laundering and diversion of funds," the agency said in a statement.

According to ED officials, the case concerns large-scale financial irregularities involving Jaypee Group subsidiaries Jaypee Infratech Ltd and Jaiprakash Associates Ltd. The investigation focuses on suspected fund diversion from housing projects, primarily affecting thousands of homebuyers who invested in the group's real estate ventures but never received possession of their flats. The probe stems from several FIR filed in 2017. The FIRs accused the company of criminal conspiracy, cheating and dishonest inducement, alleging that money raised from investors was misused or diverted. The ED said the alleged fraud included funds collected for prominent projects such as Jaypee Wishtown and Jaypee Greens, where buyers were promised homes that were never delivered.

Help me find a wife, young man's plea to Sharad Pawar

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ Mumbai

In a one-of-a-kind request, a 34-year-old bachelor from Akola district in Vidarbha region of Maharashtra has shot off an emotional letter to the NCP (SP) Chief Sharad Pawar, urging him to "play cupid" and help find a bride for him.

The letter, written by an unmarried man from farmers' suicide-hit belt of Vidarbha region, surfaced from a pile of letters and memorandums handed over to the 84-year-old Pawar at a public meeting, when he visited Akola on November 8.

"I am already 34. I am growing old. I fear that I may never get married. I am suffering from loneliness. Please consider my plea and help me find a life partner.

I promise to work hard and be a good husband. You will give me life in the form of a wife. I will be indebted to you," Mangesh Ingale wrote to Pawar. A Bachelor in Arts who is now pursuing his MA, Ingale lives in a modest home with his two brothers and a sister. He has shared his full contact details in his letter to the NCP (SP) chief. Ingale, who currently works as a Swiggy delivery partner, stated in his letter that he had no demands or conditions. "I can marry a girl of any caste. If needed, I am ready to live at her house as a house-husband and do all domestic chores. I just want companionship," he said in his letter which has gone viral on social media. Confirming the development, senior NCP (SP) leader and former Home Minister Anil Deshmukh said: "The letter shows the faith the kind of faith that people have in Pawar saheb. It was found in a bunch of representations made to Pawar during his recent visit to Akola.

The 34-year-old man has Pawar saheb's help to find a bride.,. This is a social issue and the agrarian distress that Maharashtra is going through".

"We have been instructed by our superiors in the party to help him. We will begin searching for a suitable bride for Ingale and take full responsibility to settle his life," NCP (SP)'s Akola district president Sangram said. Dwelling upon the "bride shortage" in agrarian crisis-hit Vidarbha region, farmer leader and Vidarbha Jan Andolan Samiti's founder Kishor Tiwari said: "I am not surprised by the plight of the man who has petitioned Pawar for help to find a bride. The problem stems from multiple factors like recurring drought, declining rural incomes, economic distress and the falling ratio of marriageable girls.

Ex-PM Manmohan remembered at Pradhan Mantri Sanghralaya

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

Montek Singh Ahluwalia, speaking during the Prime Minister's Lecture Series on 'The Life and Legacy of DrManmohan Singh'in New Delhi PTI

The Prime Ministers Museum and Library (PMML), a premier academic institution that, among other things, preserves and showcases the legacy of all Prime Ministers since Independence, organised a lecture by Montek Singh Ahluwalia, eminent economist, on 'The life and Legacy of Dr Manmohan Singh'on 13 November 2025 as part of the Prime Ministers Lecture Series.

Ahluwalia classified Dr Manmohan Singh's long and highly distinguished career into three parts: as an economist-bureaucrat, 1970-1991; as Finance Minister of India, 1991-1996; and as Prime Minister, 2004-2014. Ahluwalia argued that Dr Singh's tenure as FM was the high point of his career as it was transformative for the nation. As PM, Dr Singh made many important contributions such as MGNREGA, Indo-US Civil Nuclear Deal, apart from ensuring that the economic reforms launched in 1991 under Prime Minister Narasimha Rao and continued by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpaye, were not rolled back despite significant opposition from within his party. He noted that all this contributed to high economic growth in the range of 8-9 percent between 2004 and 2010.

PMML, one-of-its-kind academic institution in the country, has a major Library, Archives of Private Papers of eminent persons and Institutions, a Centre for Contemporary Studies and a Planetarium with a special gallery on astronomy and space.

The Pradhanmantri Sangrahalaya, PMML showcases the lives, vision and contribution of Indian Prime Ministers. Nripendra Misra, Chairman, Executive Council, PMML delivered the welcome address. He noted that Dr Manmohan Singh was among the most illustrious leaders of Independent India and will be remembered for his diligence, academic approach to work, accessibility, and unassuming demeanour.

Misra highlighted Dr Manmohan Singh's role in ushering in a comprehensive policy of economic reforms which remains globally celebrated even now. Ashwani Lohani, Director, PMML, stated that this prestigious Lecture Series highlights the role, vision and contributions made by Prime Ministers to the nation.

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Third car tied to Delhi blast recovered

The cars identified, so far, were selected because they are old and resold multiple times, making it difficult for the security agencies to trace them.

So far eight people have been arrested in connection with the terror module.

As part of the ongoing investigations, the Uttar Pradesh Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS) has detained a medical student from Kanpur in connection with the ongoing investigation into the recent Delhi blast, officials said on Thursday.

The doctor, identified as Dr Mohammad Arif, 32, a first-year DM (Cardiology) student at the state-run Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi Memorial (GSVM) Medical College, was taken into custody from an undisclosed location.

Later, an ATS team searched his rented accommodation in Ashok Nagar, Nazirabad, and seized his mobile phone and laptop for forensic examination before taking him to Delhi for questioning, officials said. Arif is likely to be confronted with those already arrested in the Delhi blast case, they added.

A native of Anantnag in Jammu and Kashmir, Arif, came under the ATS radar following disclosures made during the interrogation of former GSVM professor Dr Shaheen Sayeed.

Sayeed, connected to Al-Falah University, has been arrested as part of investigation into the "white-collar" terror module with links to Jaish-e-Mohammed and Ansar Ghazwat-ul-Hind.

Sources said that on the day of the explosion near the Red Fort in Delhi, Arif was in telephonic contact with individuals allegedly linked to Dr Shaheen's network, including her brother Parvez.

He had also recently visited Jammu and Kashmir, which further raised suspicion. When ATS personnel reached his residence, he allegedly attempted to delete data from his phone, but officials seized the device in time.

Preliminary analysis of his call records and chats reportedly indicated communication with the alleged mastermind and other suspects.

Investigators believe the group used a shared email ID to exchange draft messages, a method often employed by terror outfits to avoid electronic surveillance.

Meanwhile, ATS and National Investigation Agency (NIA) teams are continuing operations in Kanpur to trace any additional links to Dr Shaheen's network. More names may surface as the probe progresses, officials said.

Hours after police busted the terror module on Monday, with links to proscribed Jaish-e-Mohammed and Ansar Ghazwat-ul-Hind, and arrested eight people, including three doctors, a high-intensity blast ripped through a slow-moving car outside Delhi's Red Fort area, claiming the lives of 13 people and injuring several others.

Al-Falah under lens

The accreditation body has sought an explanation from the university and directed it to remove the portions on its website and other publicly available documents that claim NAAC certification.

The accreditation for Al-Falah School of Engineering and Technology expired in 2018, while that of Al-Falah School of Education and Training expired in 2016, the notice said. The NAAC is an autonomous Government body that evaluates and certifies the quality of higher education institutions like colleges and universities.

"The accreditation status of both the colleges has expired. Both the colleges have not yet volunteered for fresh Assessment and Accreditation process of the NAAC," the notice said. According to its website, Al-Falah University was established by the Haryana Legislative Assembly under the Haryana Private Universities Act.

It started as an engineering college in 1997. In 2013, the Al-Falah Engineering College received A-category NAAC accreditation. In 2014, the Haryana Government granted it university status. The Al-Falah Medical College is also affiliated with the university.

Raids continue as Delhi terror plot unfolds

Umar, it is alleged, was the bridge between all the doctors,.

Investigators suspect the accused doctors set up a private server on the said application to communicate securely and evade detection. "Detailed planning, including location sharing and task allocation, is believed to have been conducted through this private network," a police source added.

Earlier in the day, a medical college professor and a cardiology student, both from Jammu and Kashmir, were detained in Uttar Pradesh in connection with the Delhi blast

Meanwhile, different teams of NIA with help of local law enforcement agencies are continue to carry out raids in Delhi, Jammu and Kashmir and other parts of the country to trace and arrest other suspects.

Bihar awaits results as EVMs open

Where the exit polls have been nearly unanimous in predicting a clean sweep for the NDA, the RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav rubbished these predictions and claimed Mahagathbandhan would form the Government with a thumping majority.

The BJP, on the other hand, said the RJD leaders'remarks expressed their despair as the people, who have sealed their mandate in EVMs, have decided to give another term to the NDA.

Bihar witnessed a historic voter turnout of 67.13 per cent in the elections to the 243-member assembly in two phases on November 6 and 11.

Meanwhile, the Election Commission said that the counting of votes will begin at 8 am, and the trends and results are likely to start trickling in by 9 am.

The Pioneer
BHOPAL | FRIDAY | NOVEMBER 14, 2025

RSS denies US lobbying allegation

RSS on Thursday denied allegations of paying money to a US firm for lobbying. Sunil Ambekar, Akhil Bharatiya Prachar Pramukh said, Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh works in Bharat and has not engaged any lobbying firm in United States of America.

Education most powerful tool for empowerment: CM Omar

Asserting that Jammu and Kashmir stands at the threshold of transformation, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Thursday emphasised that education is the most powerful tool for equity and empowerment and it must reach every corner of the Union territory. Addressing the 19th Special Convocation of the University of Jammu here, Abdullah said, "Jammu and Kashmir stands at the threshold of transformation."

Tripura CM inaugurates, lays foundation stone of 22 projects

Tripura Chief Minister Manik Saha on Thursday inaugurated and laid foundation stone of 22 projects worth ₹207 crore in Dhalai district.

Books play role of catalyst, says Dharmendra Pradhan

Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan on Thursday said books play a "catalytic role" in life, and urged the young generation to develop an interest in reading. He also called Gujarat an "intellectual state" that has always been in the forefront in the culture of reading and teaching. Pradhan and Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel inaugurated 'Ahmedabad International Book Festival 2025' and 'Food for Thought Fest' at the Sabarmati Event Centre.

Bihar polls: ECI says elaborate arrangements in place

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
Patna

Elaborate arrangements are in place across all 243 constituencies of Bihar for counting of votes on November 14, the Election Commission said on Thursday. Counting will be conducted by 243 returning officers (ROs) in the presence of 243 counting observers and the candidates or their agents.

As many as 4,372 counting tables staffed with one counting supervisor, counting assistant and micro-observer at each table have been set up, the poll authority said.

More than 18,000 counting agents appointed by the candidates will also oversee the counting process, it pointed out.

Counting will commence at 8 AM and according to the EC's directions, postal ballot counting will begin first. Counting of electronic voting machines (EVMs) will begin thereafter at 8.30 AM.

Security personnel arrive to keep vigil outside a strong room where the Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) have been kept, on the eve of counting of votes for the Bihar Assembly Election in Patna PTI

Counting of postal ballots is to be completed before the penultimate round of EVM counting, according to a recent EC direction.

Postal ballots are counted in the presence of candidates or their counting agents by the RO or assistant RO.

During EVM counting, control units are brought to the counting tables round-wise and shown to the counting agents to verify that the seals are intact and serial numbers match the records in part I of Form 17C.

The number of votes recorded in EVMs is cross-verified with entries in Form 17C. In case of any mismatch, VVPAT slips from that polling station are to be counted mandatorily.

After completion of EVM counting, a random selection of five polling stations per constituency is made for VVPAT verification. The slips are matched with EVM results in the presence of candidates and their counting agents.

Results will be compiled and made available round-wise and constituency-wise by the respective ROs on the official EC results portal.

"The commission advises all to refer only to this portal for accurate and verified updates and not rely on any hearsay or unofficial sources. TV channels and internet media channels are also advised accordingly," the EC cautioned.

Women outnumber men by 14% or more in voter turnout in 7 Bihar districts

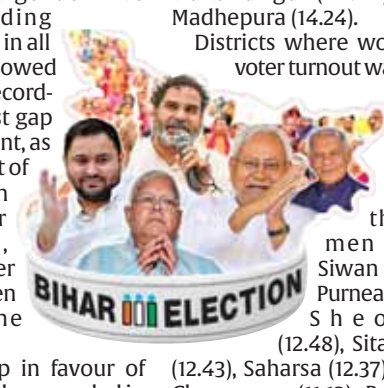
PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
Patna

Women outnumbered men by 14 per cent or more in voter turnout in seven districts of Bihar, where assembly elections were recently held, as per the Election Commission. In 10 other districts, the polling percentage among women was over 10 per cent more than men.

Patna, however, was the only district in the state to have recorded more turnout of men than women. A total of 57.88 per cent of the women exercised their franchise while 60.05 per cent of the men voted in the polls.

Bihar's 243 assembly seats went to the polls in two phases on November 6 and 11. Results will be declared on November 14.

Bihar registered a historic voter turnout of 67.13 per cent, the highest-ever in the state. Women's voter turnout was 71.78 per cent, while polling percentage among men was 62.98, as per an EC statement.



EC's latest gender-wise data regarding voter turnout in all 38 districts showed that Supaul recorded the biggest gap at 20.71 per cent, as 83.69 per cent of the women exercised their franchise, while 62.98 per cent of the men voted in the polls.

A wide gap in favour of women was also recorded in Kishanganj (19.5 per cent), Madhubani (18.4), Gopalganj (17.72), Araria (14.43), Darbhanga (14.41) and Madhepura (14.24).

Districts where women's voter turnout was over 10 per cent more than that of men were Siwan (13.83), Purnea (13.36), Sheohar (12.48), Sitamarhi (12.43), Saharsa (12.37), Purvi Champaran (11.13), Paschim Champaran (11.03), Khagaria (10.66), Samastipur (10.64) and Banka (10.53).

ROHTAS DM DISMISSES RJD'S EVM TRUCK CLAIM

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
Rohtas

The district administration in Bihar's Rohtas on Thursday dismissed the opposition RJD's claim that a truck loaded with EVMs entered a counting centre without prior information.

District Magistrate Udita Singh claimed that the truck, which entered the counting centre, was loaded with empty steel boxes.

The RJD had earlier posted a video on social media of the counting centre, asking, "Why was a truck allegedly loaded with EVMs allowed to enter a counting centre at Sasaram (Rohtas district) without any prior information? Why was the truck driver not presented before the people? And why was the CCTV camera feed unavailable after 2 pm?"

Al Falah University's four doctors pooled ₹30 lakh for Red Fort bomb materials

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
New Delhi

Initial investigations suggest that four doctors from the Al Falah institution pooled around ₹26–30 lakh to procure materials used in the deadly explosion near the Red Fort. It has come to light that the four doctors reportedly planned the attack within the premises of University.

The four suspects — identified as Dr Muzammil Ganaie, Dr Adeel Ahmad Rather, Dr Shaheen Sayeed and Dr Umar Nabi — allegedly contributed cash to the fund, which was handed over to Dr Umar for safekeeping. The accused are said to have purchased around 26 quintals of NPK fertiliser from markets in Gurugram, Nuh and other nearby towns. The fertiliser, when mixed with specific chemicals, can be used to manufacture Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs), according to sources. Officials said the procurement of such a large quantity of fertiliser has become a crucial lead in the ongoing investigation, with financial transactions and delivery records now under verification.

Preliminary reports indicate that the group had also planned a series of coordinated blasts across the National Capital Region on 6 December — the anniversary of the 1992 demolition of the Babri Masjid in Ayodhya.

A room within the university premises is believed to have served as a meeting point for the suspects. Dr Umar and his associates allegedly met secretly in Building 17, Room 13, which belonged to Dr Muzammil. Investigators suspect that it was in this room that the accused planned not only the Red Fort blast but also other potential attacks in Delhi and parts of Uttar Pradesh.

Police believe the group initially planned to smuggle chemicals from the university laboratory, located only a few metres from Dr Muzammil's room. Dr Umar and Dr Shaheen, both faculty members, reportedly arranged for the chemicals, which were later stored at rented properties in Dhauj and Taga villages in Faridabad.

Sources said Dr Muzammil's room has since been sealed, with investigators recovering several electronic devices, pen drives and chemical residues. Forensic experts have also seized digital data from the room and the university laboratory. Investigators suspect that small quantities of ammonium nitrate were mixed with oxidisers to produce explosives.

On Wednesday, a joint team of the National Investigation Agency (NIA) and the Jammu and Kashmir

Police visited the Al-Falah Medical College campus and instructed the management to hand over all staff and student-related documents for scrutiny. "The NIA has asked for complete records from 2019 onwards — including faculty recruitment, attendance registers, salary details, ID proofs and address verification of staff," a senior police officer said.

"A dedicated team will now examine these records to identify any irregularities in hiring or funding," the officer added. Officials familiar with the case confirmed that several faculty members and students are being questioned to determine how individuals with suspected terror links — including Dr Mohammad Umar Un Nabi, Dr Muzammil and Dr Nisar-ul-Hassan — were employed at the university. Dr Nisar, who joined the institution in 2022, had earlier been dismissed by the Jammu and Kashmir administration under Article 311(2)(c) for alleged anti-national activities. His daughter is reportedly enrolled as a first-year student at the same university.

Officials said personal diaries and notebooks recovered during recent searches have been seized for forensic analysis. Investigators believe these may contain handwritten notes, financial records and coded entries suggesting communication and funding trails.

"The contents of the recovered diaries are being carefully analysed and could offer critical insights into the financial and operational links," said an officer involved in the investigation.

The NIA is also examining the university's financial operations, including salary disbursements and payment methods used for staff members under investigation. The management has been asked to provide details of bank accounts, salary transfers and any scholarships or stipends issued to students under scrutiny.

Senior NIA officials said the current focus is on tracing the flow of funds that may have supported radical activities under the guise of academic employment.

"Every financial and employment record will be independently verified. The objective is to determine whether the institution was systematically infiltrated or unknowingly harboured individuals with extremist affiliations," an official stated.

Investigators added that the four doctors arrested in connection with what they described as a "white-collar terror module" had raised more than ?26 lakh to purchase materials used in the Red Fort blast. The funds, collected in cash, were entrusted to Dr Umar for operational purposes.

Dr Umar, a resident of Pulwama in Jammu and Kashmir and an assistant professor at Al Falah University in Faridabad, was allegedly driving the Hyundai i20 that exploded near the Red Fort on Monday evening.

Authorities suspect the funds were part of a broader terror financing network. Using the pooled money, the suspects allegedly purchased NPK fertiliser worth around ₹3 lakh from suppliers in Gurugram, Nuh and nearby towns.

Police sources said the large-scale procurement of fertiliser is a major lead in the ongoing investigation. They also revealed that Umar and Muzammil had a disagreement over fund management in the days before the blast, and investigators are now examining whether this dispute affected the timing or execution of the attack.

HC disqualifies TMC leader Mukul Roy from West Bengal Assembly

SAUGAR SENGUPTA
Kolkata

In a first-of-its-kind order where the membership of an elected representative was judicially disqualified, the Calcutta High Court on Thursday ordered the disqualification of senior Trinamool Congress leader Mukul Roy from the Bengal Legislative Assembly.

Roy, a close aide of Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee and a former railway minister during the UPA regime before he subsequently joined the BJP, had entered the Bengal Assembly on a saffron ticket in the 2021 State elections. He won from the Krishnagar North seat. He was subsequently appointed as Chairman of the PAC in the State Assembly.

However, within a couple of months, he returned to the Trinamool Congress in June 2021, prompting the Opposition BJP to demand his disqualification from the House. Speaker Biman Banjeree, however, refused to oblige, saying he was still a BJP member and had no information that he had left his party.

Trinamool Congress leader Mukul Roy

This led to a petition being filed by Opposition Leader Suvendu Adhikari in the High Court, which on Thursday passed the order disqualifying Roy, who is presently bedridden on account of some old-age disease at his home.

Passing the order, the division bench of Debanshu Basak and Md Shabbar Rashidi said that the MLA was "declared to have suffered disqualification with effect from June 11, 2021" and his appointment "as the Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee is set aside."

The order was passed vide the Tenth Schedule of the Constitution of India and the Rules of 1986 with effect from June 11, 2021.

The Court also set aside the decision of the Speaker, advocate Billwadal Bhattacharya, who appeared for Adhikari, said.

The order stands out as the first judicial order disqualifying an elected representative. Earlier Speakers of the Houses had taken such decisions.

Welcoming the order, Adhikari said that "this is the victory of the Constitution of India and loss of face of a speaker like Biman Banerjee, proving that he is totally ineligible to be a speaker. He is an utterly biased person.

GPS interference reported in Mumbai airspace

ASHOKE RAJ
New Delhi

After Delhi, aviation authorities have issued an alert warning pilots and air traffic controllers of possible GPS signal interference in the skies near Mumbai, amid heightened concerns over cyber threats targeting aviation systems.

The Notice to Airmen (NOTAM), valid from November 13 to 17, cautions aircraft operating within the Mumbai Flight Information Region (FIR) about potential disruptions in satellite-based navigation systems.

Pilots have been advised to exercise "utmost caution" and be prepared for possible loss or degradation of GPS signals along two key Air Traffic Service (ATS) routes — L639 and P574. "GPS signal interference/loss reported on ATS L639 and P574 in Mumbai FIR. All aircraft to exercise caution," the NOTAM reads.

The alert follows recent incidents of suspected GPS spoofing, which disrupted air traffic operations over Delhi last week, leading to delays and diversions for nearly 36 hours. In response, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has directed all airlines, pilots, and Air Traffic Control units to report any instance of GPS signal manipulation or interference within 10 minutes of detection. The National Security Advisor's Office, headed by Ajit Doval, is currently investigating the Delhi incident.

Experts say such interference could indicate spoofing or jamming—techniques used in cyberattacks to mislead pilots and navigation systems by transmitting false positional data. Aviation security analysts have warned that disruptions of this nature can pose serious operational and safety challenges.

The warning was first flagged publicly by Damien Symon, a geo-intelligence analyst with Intel Lab, who noted on X (formerly Twitter) that India's NOTAM followed "reports of similar interference observed around New Delhi."

In a separate development, Air India's Toronto–Delhi flight (AI188) received a bomb threat while en route to the capital on Thursday. The airline later confirmed that the threat was a hoax.

J&K Police approaches Interpol for red corner notice on White Collar terrorists

MOHIT KANDHARI
Jammu

To bring to justice all those absconding members of the 'White Collar' terror module, the Jammu and Kashmir police have now approached Interpol to issue a Red Corner Notice to track down their whereabouts.

The first notice has been issued against Qazigund-based Dr Muzaffar, brother of Dr Adeel Ahmad Rather.

According to the probe agencies, Dr Muzaffar was part of the team of doctors who travelled to Turkey in March 2022. Dr Umar Nabi and Dr Muzammil Ganaie were other members of the group who visited Turkey for a three-week-long trip.

In Turkey, the members of the White Collar terror module were guided by one of their handlers to use encrypted messaging apps to avoid coming on the radar of the intelligence agencies, probe agencies revealed.

Chasing some of the vital leads, when Jammu and Kashmir police officers, working alongside central intelligence agencies, started looking for Dr Muzaffar, they reportedly came to know that he may have fled the country and even stayed away from the marriage ceremony of Dr Adeel.

An armed personnel keeps vigil along the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway following the Delhi bomb blast in Anantnag, J&K PTI

The terror module was unmasked by the Jammu and Kashmir police with the arrest of Dr Adeel Ahmad Rather from Saharanpur in the first week of November. According to the probe agencies, he is now emerging as one of the key members of the core group involved in planning the terror strikes at the behest of their Pakistan-based handlers.

He got married in the first week of October 2025. The local police authorities are also scanning the wedding guest list to verify whether other members of the 'White Collar' terror module were part of the marriage celebrations and visited the Kashmir valley.

The police authorities are currently scanning CCTV footage and other videos to verify whether some of the suspected faculty members working in the Al-Falah University were also present in the valley to attend his marriage ceremony or not.

Meanwhile, Jammu and Kashmir police have been informed by their counterparts in Uttar Pradesh that they have also retrieved copies of the recent air travel tickets from the vicinity of his rented accommodation in Saharanpur.

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States Focus

MANEKA CALLS SC'S ORDER ON STRAY ANIMALS IMPRACTICAL

Animal rights activist and former Union minister Maneka Gandhi on Thursday described the Supreme Court's directive to remove stray animals and lodge them at shelter homes as "impractical", and said compassion should guide India's approach towards animals.
The Supreme Court last week took note of the "alarming rise" in dog bite incidents in institutional areas like educational centres, hospitals, bus stands and railway stations, and directed the authorities to move such canines to designated shelters.

CHIDAMBARAM SPEAKING IN FAVOUR OF TERRORISTS: GIRIRAJ

Union minister Giriraj Singh on Thursday lashed out at Congress leader P Chidambaram over his "home-grown terrorists" remarks and accused him of speaking in their favour. This came a day after the former Union home minister talked of "home-grown terrorists" and said the government's discreet silence is because it knows about them. In a social media post on Wednesday, though Chidambaram did not talk of the Delhi blast that claimed 13 lives and injured over 25 people, he posed a question on why and under what circumstances Indian citizens are turning into terrorists.

DGP directs courteous conduct on road by cops escorting VIPs

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
Chandigarh

A day after retired Lieutenant General DS Hooda, who led the 2016 surgical strikes, accused an escort vehicle of Punjab Police of hitting his car, the state's Director General of Police on Thursday issued directions for respectful and courteous conduct on the road by cops escorting VIPs.

Hooda on Wednesday alleged that his vehicle was hit by a Punjab Police vehicle, which was escorting a VIP, on the Zirakpur flyover in Mohali when he was travelling with his wife. He called it a "deliberate act" by the Punjab Police vehicle and had asked Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann and DGP Yadav to take note of it.

On Thursday, in a post on X, Yadav said Punjab Police, being a professional force, has a zero tolerance policy towards misconduct, as its duty is not just to protect threatened persons but also to uphold public dignity, safety and confidence on the roads.

RETIRED LT GENERAL DS HOODA ON WEDNESDAY ALLEGED THAT HIS VEHICLE WAS HIT BY A POLICE ESCORT VEHICLE

"VIP protection is a high-responsibility assignment demanding discipline, patience, and respect for citizens. Strong security apparatus and respectful conduct must go hand in hand," he added.

He also issued directions to all concerned police personnel for immediate compliance. Among them were adherence to traffic rules and regulations during non-emergency movements. Compliance with road safety norms should be ensured, Yadav said.

"Facilitation of smooth movement, while ensuring minimal disturbance to public traffic. Professional conduct with courtesy to be maintained throughout the road journey with the protectee," the DGP said.

"Utmost patience and restraint shall be exercised under all circumstances. Any incidents are to be reported to the concerned quarters immediately by the Escort in-charge. Mandatory briefing by all districts to escort, pilot and traffic staff within 48 hours, on professional and courteous conduct on the road," he said.

Lt Gen Hooda (retd) is the former Northern Army Commander under whose watch the 2016 surgical strikes on terror launch pads in PoK were conducted following the Uri terror attack.

"The arrogance and impunity of someone who is supposed to be a guardian of law soils the uniform and reputation of the organisation," Hooda on X said.

Later, Yadav regretted the distress and concern caused to Hooda and his wife and said that, "such behaviour, if established, is completely unacceptable and contrary to the values of professionalism and public service that Punjab Police stands for."

On Wednesday, Yadav said that directions were issued to identify the vehicles and personnel involved, assuring that the matter was being taken seriously and appropriate action would be initiated to ensure accountability.

Delhi blast: Congress demands all-party meeting

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
New Delhi

The Congress on Thursday demanded that Prime Minister Narendra Modi should immediately chair an all-party meeting in the aftermath of the Delhi blast and asked whether the "new normal doctrine" defined by the government following the Pahalgam attack of treating any future terror strike as an 'act of war' stands.

The opposition party also demanded that the Winter Session of Parliament, scheduled to start on December 1, be advanced so that there could be a debate on the incident. Congress' media and publicity department head Pawan Khera called for fixing of accountability and asserted that someone in the government should take responsibility, recalling that the then home minister Shivraj Patil had resigned following the Mumbai terror attack under the UPA.

> We also demand that Parliament session be advanced as this is a serious challenge and must be discussed in Parliament
> —PAWAN KHERA, CONGRESS LEADER

"The surprising thing is that after 48 hours, it was the Cabinet that announced that this was a terror attack," Khera said at a press conference here.

Despite intelligence agencies being there and National Security Advisor Ajit Doval keeping a close watch, how did 2,900 kg of explosive reach Faridabad, he asked.

"In a car, there was so much explosive near the Red Fort... Who is taking responsibility for this and is accountability being fixed," Khera further asked.

"We always stood with the government when a terror attack happened and will do so in future. But it is our duty to ask questions as to whose failure it is and who will take responsibility for it," he said.

The Congress demands that an-all party meeting under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister be called immediately, he said.

"We also demand that Parliament session be advanced as this is a serious challenge and must be discussed in Parliament," Khera said. After Pahalgam and following Operation Sindoor, the government had come up with a new normal doctrine that any terror attack will be considered an act of war, Khera said and asked if that stands.

The government on Wednesday termed the blast near the Red Fort in which 13 people were killed as a "terrorist incident". A meeting of the Union Cabinet chaired by Modi upon his return from Bhutan directed investigating agencies to deal with the case with "utmost urgency and professionalism" to bring the perpetrators and their sponsors to justice without delay.

UIDAI flags 34 lakh deceased voters in West Bengal

SAUGAR SENGUPTA
Kolkata

The Trinamool Congress has strongly reacted to what they called the "barged entry" of the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) in electoral affairs, after the Aadhar authorities flagged about 34 lakh Aadhar card holders in West Bengal as "deceased", prompting the Election Commission of India (ECI) to begin a deletion of such names.

"This is an unconstitutional act. It seems the ECI is following the Bihar path to delete names by getting the Aadhar authorities to barge into the electoral affairs. It is the same authorities that had earlier told Parliament that it had no mechanism to preserve state-wise or age-wise data of Aadhar card holders. If that be so, then how could they produce this figure of 34 lakh?" Trinamool Congress spokesperson Arup Chakrabarty said. This after the Chief Electoral Officer's office proceeded to enquire into the matter so that the names of the "deceased" voters could be deleted.

Earlier the UIDAI said that about 34 lakh cardholders in Bengal had been found to be deceased, while another 13 lakh names had never been included in the Aadhar regime since the Aadhar card was introduced in January 2009. The information was reportedly shared during a meeting between UIDAI authorities and Bengal Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) Manoj Kumar Agarwal. Earlier the CEOs had been directed to coordinate with the Aadhar authorities regarding the matter.

SIR was currently in progress in Bengal, where the booth-level officers (BLOs) were conducting door-to-door verification by distributing enumeration forms based on the 2025 electoral rolls. After these forms were filled up and submitted by the voters, they would be verified with the 2002 electoral rolls when SIR was last held.

THE INFORMATION WAS REPORTEDLY SHARED DURING A MEETING BETWEEN UIDAI AUTHORITIES AND BENGAL CEO MANOJ KUMAR AGARWAL

"As there have been numerous complaints coming regarding ghost and deceased voters, the information provided by the Aadhar authorities will be of immense help," a senior election official said.

"The development is highly suspicious because it came at a time when the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls was under process," TMC leader Debangshu Bhattacharya said, iterating, "Our leader Abhishek Banerjee has already said that even if a single name is unlawfully deleted, then there will be consequences."

In Bihar too the "ECI had deleted names of lakhs of people as deceased, but subsequently they were forced to re-include many of them, though many others were still left out. This was done at the behest of the BJP so that they can win the elections," the TMC leader said, adding, "In Bengal, however, we will not let their cunning game plan succeed. Remember, this is Mamata Banerjee they are dealing with."

Following the ECI directive, the poll officials have started counterchecking the matter with the banks, as "most of the accounts are linked to bank accounts. So once this is crosschecked, the names will be deleted," an official said.

Man dies as girder collapses on vehicle

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
Alappuzha

A man died after a heavy girder collapsed onto a pickup vehicle at Chandiroor in the early hours of Thursday while work on the elevated highway was in progress, police said.

The deceased was identified as Rajesh (47), a native of Pallipad near Haripad in Alappuzha district, an officer said. The 13-km-long elevated road is being constructed on NH-66 from Aroor to Thuravoor.

According to police, the accident occurred around 2.30 am when two heavy girders were being placed on the piers.

After positioning them, workers operating a crane were adjusting the girders when they collapsed, and one fell on a pickup lorry passing below.

Rajesh, who was driving the vehicle carrying eggs from Tamil Nadu to Haripad, was trapped inside the cabin as the impact crushed the vehicle. It took more than three hours for the police and Fire and Rescue Services personnel to cut through the concrete girder and pull him out, but he succumbed to his injuries.

"Usually, traffic restrictions are imposed when girders are placed on piers. However, we understand that traffic was allowed during the work at midnight," Aroor MLA Daleema told reporters.

She said she had spoken to the district collector to ensure that all safety measures are strictly followed hereafter, including police deployment during high-risk construction work. Residents said workers, including crane operators, fled the spot soon after the incident, delaying the rescue operation.

"If they had stayed and helped lift the collapsed girder using the crane, the man's life might have been saved. He was seen waving his hand for help when we reached the spot," a resident said.Locals also alleged that the construction work was being carried out without adequate safety precautions.

"A transport bus and a lorry were behind the pickup vehicle. The casualty would have been much worse if the girder had fallen on the bus," another resident said.

Alappuzha District Collector Alex Varghese said the accident occurred due to a technical issue with the jack used for installing the girders.

Kerala: PM SHRI row remains unresolved between Left allies

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
Thiruvananthapuram

Kerala General Education Minister V Sivankutty said on Thursday that he should not be held responsible if the Centre withholds funds for the state's schools, as a rift between the ruling allies — CPI(M) and CPI — over PM SHRI Schools scheme remains unresolved.

Speaking to reporters about his recent meeting with Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, Sivankutty said their 45-minute discussion was not about PM SHRI but about the delay in releasing funds under other central schemes.

According to the minister, under the Samagra Shiksha Kerala (SSK) programme, the state has received ₹92.41 crore while ₹1,066.36 crore remains pending.

Under the Strengthening Teaching-Learning and Results for States (STARS) programme, ₹212.63 crore is yet to be received, and around ₹12 crore is pending under the PM Janjati Adivasi Nyaya Maha Abhiyan (JANMAN) programme.

"I am apprehensive about the pending amount from the central government. If the remaining fund under SSK is not received, as the education minister, I am not responsible for it. Those who are responsible should take the responsibility," Sivankutty said. He said that in the last four-and-a-half years, no RSS agenda has been allowed to influence the education sector in Kerala.

"I am not commenting on who protested against the RSS agenda on the national front. This is not the time for that since civic polls are approaching," he said.

Sivankutty said he came to know that some groups were claiming to be the only ones defending the Left front and countering RSS influence in Kerala's education sector, calling such claims misleading. He said the state government has consistently acted against RSS influence in education and taken necessary action when such cases were noticed in CBSE schools under the central government.

Referring to an article written by CPI state secretary Binoy Viswam suggesting that LDF's political stance led to Kerala's letter to the Centre against PM SHRI, the minister said, "By reading the article, it is clear who it points to. We are not fools."

> I am apprehensive about the pending amount from the Union Government. If the remaining fund under Samagra Shiksha Kerala (SSK) is not received, as the education minister, I am not responsible for it. Those who are responsible should take the responsibility
> —V SIVANKUTTY, KERALA GENERAL EDUCATION MINISTER

When asked about any rift with CPI, Sivankutty said he has affection for the ally party.

"I have only stated the reality. I have not criticised anyone or taken names," he said. He added that a committee formed to review PM SHRI has a crucial role.

"The committee will meet soon, take the opinion of all its members, and decide which parts of PM SHRI should be avoided. Later, a report will be submitted to the chief minister," he said.

Sivankutty clarified that the PM SHRI scheme has been kept in abeyance and not withdrawn.

Responding to Sivankutty's remarks, CPI state secretary Binoy Viswam on Thursday said he did not understand why the minister was provoked.

Viswam said that as the state secretary of CPI, he was not ready for any provocation and his political awareness did not allow it.

"All should have that political awareness," he added.

He said he was not someone to teach Sivankutty about the PM SHRI scheme.

"It is CPI(M) general secretary M A Baby and CPI(M) state secretary M V Govindan who are apt to teach Sivankutty about Left politics on PM SHRI," he said.

Viswam said the PM SHRI and National Education Policy (NEP) are interconnected and part of an attempt to implement the RSS agenda.

"There are CPI(M) leaders here to explain that," he added. He said he did not believe Sivankutty lacked political awareness, describing him as a respected leader, a good friend, and an able education minister. "I am not ready to belittle Sivankutty," he said.

MP unveils tiger sculpture built entirely from scrap metal

GIRISH SHARMA
Bhopal

A massive tiger sculpture built entirely from discarded iron material has become the latest attraction at Pench Tiger Reserve's Khwasa tourism complex. The installation, created under the Mission LIFE framework that promotes Reduce, Reuse and Recycle, is being positioned as the largest tiger sculpture of its kind anywhere in the world.

The structure stands 17 ft 6 inches tall, stretches 40 ft in length and is 8 ft wide. According to data referenced by Pench authorities from the World Record Academy, the earlier largest tiger installation — located in Georgia, USA — measured only 8 ft in height and 14 ft in length.

Pench officials said the new sculpture surpasses that figure by a significant margin, giving the reserve a globally recognisable visual landmark.

The artwork was conceptualised and executed by a team of Seoni-based artists led by Rishabh Kashyap.

The group spent nearly 200 days assembling the giant form using scrap sourced from local households, workshops and defunct machinery. Old bicycles, rusted pipes, weathered metal sheets and other leftover iron components were brought together piece by piece to form the tiger's body, limbs and distinctive stripes.

Project managers said the idea emerged from local interest in creating a Made in India symbol that reflects both the spirit of conservation and the practical value of recycling.

The team studied various forms of scrap-metal art and then adapted the concept to

align with Pench's identity as one of India's most prominent tiger landscapes. The final design was shaped with attention to anatomical accuracy while keeping the rough, industrial texture intact to highlight the recycled material.

Pench Tiger Reserve Deputy Director Rajneesh Singh told The Pioneer that the sculpture is meant to operate as more than a tourist photo point. It is intended to serve as a tangible reminder of how scrap can be transformed into useful and visually striking creations, reinforcing public engagement with Mission LIFE. The model also represents a collaborative effort between the reserve staff, local artists and community members who contributed material, labour and support during the assembly phase.

The installation has been placed prominently within the Khwasa complex, where it will be used for environmental education sessions, awareness campaigns and visitor interaction programmes. Pench authorities believe the sculpture will help build stronger connections with travellers, especially families and school groups, while also broadening the reserve's profile in national and international tourism circuits.

The sculpture strengthens Pench's brand identity and delivers a clear sustainability signal. Its scale, visual appeal and community involvement position it as a strategic asset for visitor engagement.

The project's long-term value will depend on proper upkeep, structured messaging for tourists and integration into broader conservation outreach at the reserve.

Six Naxals killed in Chhattisgarh

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
Bijapur

Dreaded Maoist leaders Urmila, wife of senior operative Papa Rao, as well as Buchanna Kudiyam are among the six Naxalites killed in an encounter with security personnel in Chhattisgarh's Bijapur district on November 11, a police official said on Thursday.

The six, who were gunned down in the forests of Kandulnar, and Kachlaram villages in remote pockets of Indravati national park area, carried a total bounty of ₹27 lakh, Bijapur Superintendent of Police Jitendra Yadav said in a press conference.

While Buchanna alias Kanna (35) was the mastermind behind several major Naxal attacks over the past decade targeting security forces, civilians, and development projects, Urmila was the main handler of logistical supplies for PLGA (People's Liberation Guerrilla Army) battalion of Maoists.

The operation involving personnel of District Reserve Guard (DRG) from Bijapur and Dantewada and Special Task Force (STF), both units of state police, was launched based on inputs about presence of Maoists leaders, including Special Zonal Committee Member (SZCM) Papa Rao, his wife and Divisional Committee Member (DVCM) Urmila, DVCM and in charge of Madded area committee Kanna alias Buchanna and DVCM Mohan Kadti along with 50-60 cadres, Yadav said.

"While Urmila, Buchanna and four others cadres were neutralised in the gunfight, other senior leaders managed to escape. Four other deceased have been identified as Area Committee Member Jagat Tamo alias Tamo, who carried a reward of ₹5 lakh, and platoon members Deve, Bhagat and Mangli Oyam, carrying rewards of ₹2 lakh each," the SP informed.

"Buchanna, who carried a Rs 8 lakh bounty, was considered one of the most dreaded Maoist leaders operating in south Bastar. He was a key planner and executor of major Naxal attacks over the past decade targeting security forces, civilians, and development projects. As many as 42 criminal cases were registered against him in different police stations of Bijapur district, and 18 arrest warrants were pending," Yadav said.

Buchanna played a key role in the July 2008 Kongupalli police post attack and January 2016 Nuknarpal camp attack, triggering IED blasts, which were foiled due to timely police response, he said.

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Legends inspire a new era of justice and accountability

PRASHANT TEWARI

Dr BR Ambedkar

Ashoke Kumar Sen

HR Bhardwaj

Independent India's longest-serving and most distinguished Law Ministers, namely Dr BR Ambedkar, Ashoke Kumar Sen and HR Bhardwaj, spanned different eras of the Republic, yet their contributions remain deeply intertwined by a shared pursuit of justice, equality, and constitutional integrity. Each, in his own way, strengthened India's democratic edifice, transforming the law from a colonial instrument of control into a moral force for liberation and inclusion. In an era of erosion of institutional credibility, the legends legacy contribution can set in an example for the current decision makers to guide the current fragile legal institutions in the country.

Dr BR Ambedkar: The Visionary Reformer and Architect of Equality

India's first law minister Dr Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar, revered as the Architect of the Indian Constitution, transformed India's social and legal consciousness by embedding equality and justice at its core. Born into a Dalit family, Ambedkar's life was a living testament to resilience and reform.

His famous words, "I measure the progress of a community by the degree of progress which women have achieved", reflected his unwavering belief in gender and social equity.

As India's Law Minister, Ambedkar laid the foundation for affirmative action, social justice and fundamental rights through constitutional provisions that outlawed untouchability and discrimination. His push for the Hindu Code Bill was revolutionary seeking to grant women equal rights in inheritance, marriage and property at a time when patriarchal orthodoxy resisted reform.

Though he faced political opposition, his moral conviction never wavered. Ambedkar believed law was a tool of transformation, not mere regulation, a belief that continues to inspire India's march toward equality.

Ashoke Kumar Sen: The Defender of Democratic Ideals

Ashoke Kumar Sen, one of India's longest-serving Law Ministers, extraordinary brilliant lawyer and an erudite parliamentarian, brought gravitas and moderation to Indian lawmaking. A distinguished lawyer and intellectual, Sen was known for his articulate advocacy and moral courage during politically turbulent decades. He often said, "The law must be the shield of liberty, not the weapon of power."

Serving under multiple prime ministers, Sen guided the Ministry of Law through some of India's most testing times including the post-Emergency years when the sanctity of the Constitution and the independence of the judiciary were under scrutiny. He strengthened legal institutions, championed judicial autonomy and expanded legal aid for the underprivileged. His vision of a judiciary accessible to all citizens laid the foundation for the Legal Services Authorities Act and reforms in legal education. Sen's statesmanship and devotion to constitutional ethics made him a guardian of democratic continuity amid crisis.

HR Bhardwaj: The Pragmatic Moderniser

Hans Raj Bhardwaj, one of India's longest serving Law Minister in the early 2000s, carried forward the legacy of Ambedkar by adapting legal reform to a rapidly globalising and digitising world. Known for his forthrightness and administrative acumen, Bhardwaj often remarked, "Justice delayed is justice denied, and delay is a denial of democracy itself."

During his tenure, he prioritised judicial reforms, advocating for faster case disposal, electronic filing and computerisation of courts. Bhardwaj also championed legal literacy and access to justice for marginalised citizens, expanding the scope of Lok Adalats and Legal Aid Services. His push to modernise legal processes reflected his belief that technology must serve the cause of justice, not merely efficiency. Bhardwaj's tenure represented a bridge between traditional legal thought and a future-oriented judicial system that embraces innovation without compromising integrity.

He was the backbone of the various Congress Government's for over three decades, brought executive and judicial conflict to almost negligible levels and he was credited for upgrading the salary and perks of the Judges to a respectable levels to deliver fearless and equitable justice.

A Unified Legacy to in-spite equitable Justice, Reform and Modernisation

Though separated by time, Ambedkar, Sen and Bhardwaj shared a profound moral compass: the belief that the law must serve humanity. Their combined legacy, social emancipation, judicial independence and modernisation form the spine of India's democratic jurisprudence.

As India enters a new era of governance and technology, the Law Ministry must now champion the integration of Artificial Intelligence and digital tools to accelerate justice delivery. From e-courts to predictive case analytics, technology can drastically reduce pendency, promote transparency and democratise legal access, transforming Ambedkar's dream of equality before law into a 21st-century reality.

Such reform would do more than merely modernise the judiciary — it would fulfil the vision of those who saw in the law not a privilege for the few, but a promise to the many. In the spirit of Dr BR Ambedkar's integrity, Ashok Sen's intellect, and HR Bhardwaj's innovation, India's justice system must evolve to become fairer, faster and truly accessible to all.

Today, while India strides confidently toward its ambition of becoming a global superpower, its legal system is buckling under its own weight. As economist Sanjeev Sanyal recently observed, "the judicial system is the biggest hurdle to the Viksit Bharat mission." It is imperative, therefore, that both the Government and the judiciary undertake bold, urgent and comprehensive reforms to restore faith and sanity in the lives of ordinary citizens. In doing so, they may well draw inspiration from the enduring legacies of our legal luminaries, Ambedkar, Sen and Bhardwaj, who envisioned justice not as an ornament of governance, but as its very foundation.

The writer is a prominent columnist and Public Policy Expert; the views expressed are personal

Order Order

MP: High Court restrains media from coverage of protest in Gwalior

The Madhya Pradesh High Court (HC) has directed the authorities to restrain the media for the time being from publishing any news linked to a protest call over the proposed installation of Dr BR Ambedkar's statue on its Gwalior bench's premises. The directive by the division bench of Chief Justice Sanjeev Sachdeva and Justice Vinay Saraf on Wednesday came on a public interest litigation (PIL) filed by PG Najpande of NGO Nagrik Upbhokta Margdarshak Manch, claiming that the protest on November 16 will pose a "danger to the life and property of the people, particularly children".

Two groups of lawyers are at loggerheads in Gwalior over the installation of Ambedkar's statue on the court premises. One insists that the statue be installed, while the other is opposing it tooth and nail. The group opposed to the statue on the court premises has called for a protest in Gwalior on November 16. According to the petitioner's counsels Sanjay Agrawal, Arpit Agrawal and Ankita Singh Parihar, ex-president of the High Court Bar Association's Gwalior Bench Anil Mishra has given the protest call.

Citing some agitations of 2018, the PIL claimed that the November 16 protest will pose "a danger to the life and property of the people, especially children in Gwalior". It also sought an interim direction to the print and electronic media not to give publicity to the said call. The HC asked the district administration to restrain the media for the time being from carrying any news linked to the protest call. The court also issued notices to Mishra and the Bhim Army, an Ambedkarite and Bahujan rights organisation, returnable by December 3.

NIA court sentences man to 10 yrs RI for petrol bomb attack outside Raj Bhavan gate

A special court for the National Investigation Agency at Poonamallee, here, sentenced one Karukka Vinoth to ten years imprisonment for his involvement in the petrol bomb attack outside the Raj Bhavan gate in 2023. In addition to the rigorous imprisonment (RI), the court imposed a fine of ₹5,000 for hurling two petrol bombs and causing them to explode near the official residence of the Governor on October 25, 2023.

Vinoth, 39, was sentenced under various sections of the Explosive Substance Act and for causing damage to public property. Following the incident, the Chennai police had released CCTV footage showing the suspect Vinoth hurling petrol bombs a few meters away from the Raj Bhavan gate no. 1.

The Raj Bhavan had claimed that miscreants, armed with petrol bombs, attempted to barge into the Governor's residence through the main gate that is used by the Governor and other dignitaries. Accepting NIA's arguments, Judge S Malarvizhi ruled that the charges against the accused were proved beyond reasonable doubt and sentenced Vinoth to ten years RI and imposed a fine of ₹5,000 on November 12.

Deceased pilot of Ahmedabad plane crash not being blamed: Centre to SC

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
New Delhi

The deceased pilot, Captain Sumeet Sabharwal of Air India, has not been blamed in the AAIB's preliminary report into the June 12 plane crash that claimed 260 lives, the Centre told the Supreme Court on Thursday.

Air India's Boeing 787-8 flight AI171 en route to London's Gatwick airport was operated by pilot-in-command Captain Sabharwal and co-pilot Captain Clive Kunder, who lost their lives in the crash after taking off from Ahmedabad. The horrific incident killed 260 people, including 241 passengers and crew on board.

The Supreme Court had issued notice to the Centre and the Director General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) on a plea of Pushkaraj Sabharwal, the father of deceased pilot Captain Sumeet Sabharwal.

Pushkaraj Sabharwal and the Federation of Indian Pilots moved the Supreme Court for a court-monitored inquiry headed by a former Supreme Court judge into the crash of Air India flight AI171 in Ahmedabad.

A bench of Justices Surya Kant and Joymalya Bagchi was told by Solicitor General Tushar Mehta that the Aircraft Accident Investigation Board (AAIB) probe team into the plane crash was formed under the international regime and there was a statutory provision for it.

"There is an international convention. There's an international civil aviation organisation. They have prepared mandatory steps to be taken in case of an investigation into air crashes.

There is a regime in place. "Some foreigners are also victims. Those countries also send their representatives in the investigation. I understand the feelings of the father but there is no blame attributed to anyone in the interim report," Mehta said.

He added that blame has not been attributed to anyone in the preliminary report of AAIB and stated there was some misconception about the pilot's error after the release of an interim report.

"The Ministry of Civil Aviation has issued a press note saying that blame was not attributable to anyone. There is no question of blaming anyone in the report," he submitted.

Justice Bagchi said, "The AAIB inquiry is not for apportioning blame on anyone. It is only to clarify the cause so that the same does not

happen again." The Supreme Court was hearing three petitions filed by an NGO, a law student and the father of the deceased pilot seeking an independent, court-monitored investigation into the crash of Air India Flight near Ahmedabad. Among the 241 dead were 169 Indians, 52 Britons, seven Portuguese nationals, one Canadian and 12 crew members.

The lone survivor of the crash was Vishwashkumar Ramesh, a British national.

On November 7, the Supreme Court said no one blamed the chief pilot of the Air India Dreamliner for the June 12 crash, which claimed 260 lives, and asked his 91-year-old father not to carry any emotional burden.

"There is no insinuation against him even in the preliminary report," the Supreme Court had said while emphasising that if necessary, the court will clarify that the pilot is not to be blamed for the "unfortunate" plane crash.

During the hearing, advocate Prashant Bhushan, appearing for an NGO 'Safety Matters Foundation', said that a parallel inquiry should be done like a court of inquiry into the accident of such a major scale.

Bhushan submitted that serious accidents require a court of enquiry and not just an investigation by AAIB.

"It is very alarming. There have been many system failures in these 787s. Everybody flying in these aircraft is at risk. The pilots' association has said that these aircraft need to be grounded immediately," he said.

He said that a pilot federation has stated that these aeroplanes cannot be trusted and there is a huge risk to people flying in their aircraft.

Justice Kant said these proceedings should not become a fight between one airline and another and asked Mehta to file the response to the plea filed by the father of the deceased.

Senior advocate Gopal Sankaranarayanan, appearing for the deceased pilot's father, said that rules for a fair probe were not being followed.

"The regime that Mr Mehta has mentioned has not been followed. That's the problem. It has not been properly followed," Sankaranarayanan submitted and urged the court to ask the Centre to file their replies to the petition of the deceased pilot's 91-year-old father.

The bench adjourned the matter for further hearing after two weeks as it clarified that it was not interested in hearing a plea of the law graduate on the issue.

The plea of deceased pilot Captain Sumeet Sabharwal's father seeks directions for the constitution of an independent committee, also comprising aviation and technical experts, to probe the crash.

The approach of the investigation has failed to adequately examine, or rule out, other more plausible technical and procedural factors relating to Boeing that could have contributed to the tragic incident, the plea said.

The probe team is dominated by officers from DGCA and the state aviation authorities whose procedures, oversight and possible lapses are directly implicated in the investigation, it added.

The plea filed by the NGO alleged that the official probe violates citizens' fundamental rights to life, equality and access to truthful information.

The plea says the AAIB issued its preliminary report on July 12, attributing the accident to "fuel cutoff switches" being moved from "run" to "cutoff", effectively suggesting a pilot error.

On September 22, while entertaining the plea of the NGO, the Supreme Court termed as "unfortunate and irresponsible" the selective publication of a preliminary report on the June 12 Air India crash which outlined lapses on the part of pilots and paved the way for a "media narrative".

SC bans mining activities near sanctuaries

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
New Delhi

The Supreme Court on Thursday banned mining activities within an area of one km from national parks and wildlife sanctuaries, noting that such activities will be hazardous to the wildlife .

A bench comprising Chief Justice of India BR Gavai and Justice K Vinod Chandran was considering pleas on issues related to the notification of areas under Saranda Wildlife Sanctuary (SWL) and the Sasangdaburu Conservation Reserve (SCR) as a conservation reserve in Jharkhand.

"It has been the consistent view of this court that mining activities within one km of the protected area will be hazardous to the wildlife. Though in the case of Goa Foundation, the said directions were issued with respect to the State of Goa, we find that such directions need to be issued on a pan-India basis.

"We direct that mining within national parks and wildlife sanctuaries and within an area of one km from boundary of such national park or wildlife sanctuary shall not be permissible," the bench said. The Supreme Court also directed the Jharkhand Government to notify the region as a wildlife sanctuary. It clarified that the rights of the tribals and forest dwellers in the region should be protected as per the Forest Rights Act and asked the State Government to widely publicise it.

Earlier, the bench had asked the Jharkhand Government to take a decision to declare the ecologically-rich Saranda region as a reserve forest.

The matter pertained to a long-pending proposal to notify the Saranda and Sasangdaburu forest areas in West Singhbhum district as a wildlife sanctuary and conservation reserve, respectively. The State Government, in its affidavit, had earlier said it proposed to notify an area of 57,519.41 hectares, as against the original proposal of 31,468.25 hectares, as wildlife sanctuary.

Court clerk held for accepting bribe for sessions judge

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
Mumbai

Civil clerk-cum-typist was arrested for allegedly accepting a ₹15 lakh bribe, prima facie on behalf of an additional sessions judge in Mumbai in exchange for a favourable verdict in a land dispute case, Anti-Corruption Bureau officials have said.

The anti-graft agency said that the judge has been named as a wanted accused.

This may be the first such incident in recent years where an additional sessions judge has been booked under the Prevention of Corruption Act, the official said on Wednesday.

The ACB arrested the clerk, identified as Chandrakant Vasudeo, on Tuesday. The additional sessions judge of the civil court in Mazgaon, Ejazuddin Salauddin Kazi, has been named as a wanted accused in the case, according to an official release.

The ACB stated that a demand of ₹25 lakh was initially made from the complainant, whose wife had filed a writ petition before the Bombay High Court alleging forceful possession of company-owned land. The amount was later negotiated down to ₹15 lakh.

Of the ₹25 lakh demanded, ₹10 lakh was allegedly Vasudeo's share, and ₹15 lakh was meant for Judge Kazi.

In April 2016, the High Court had stayed the creation of third-party rights on the disputed land.

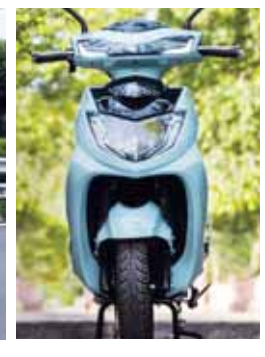
As the land's valuation was below ₹10 crore, the commercial suit was transferred to the civil sessions court in Mazgaon.

On September 9, 2025, an office associate of the complainant received a call from Vasudeo while he was at Court No. 14 of the civil sessions court, the ACB stated.

Vasudeo allegedly met the complainant at a coffee shop in suburban Chembur, where he demanded ₹25 lakh.

SC asks Centre for implementation of 2020 electric vehicles policy from metropolitan city

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
New Delhi



The Supreme Court on Thursday asked the Centre to revisit its 2020 electric vehicles policy and incorporate changes that have taken place over the past five years as it sought its implementation from a metropolitan city.

A bench of justices Surya Kant and Joymalya Bagchi asked Attorney General R Venkataramani, appearing for the Centre, to look at the changes that have happened in five years and incorporate them in the National Electric Mobility Mission Plan (NEMMP) 2020 meant to promote and adoption of electric vehicles.

The Attorney General submitted that 13 ministries of the central Government are at present deliberating over the feasibility of the policy and soon a decision will be taken in this regard.

"The policy needs to be revisited as several changes took place over the years and could be implemented through a pilot project starting from a metropolitan city," the bench said. It said that there are various aspects like incentives for adopting electric vehicles, Government institutions adopting these EV vehicles and availability of charging points, which needs to be looked into.

Venkataramani said that the inter-ministerial group is looking at these aspects only and soon a decision will be taken. Advocate Prashant Bhushan, appearing for the NGO Centre for Public Interest Litigation (CPIL) said it was a 2019 petition in which a direction has been sought to the Government to implement its 2020 policy on electric vehicles and create necessary infrastructure such as charging stations.

He said Niti Aayog and other bodies have suggested the Government for implementation of the National E-Mobility Mission Plan (NEMMP), 2020.

The bench said that nowadays the electric vehicles are being readily adopted by people and very high-end models have entered into the market due to the demand. It gave the Centre time to come up with a roadmap on implementation of the EV policy. The PIL has sought a direction to the Centre for faster adoption of electric vehicles to safeguard citizens' fundamental rights to "breathe, health, and clean environment".

On April 22, the Supreme Court expressed concern over job losses particularly of those in the automobile industry with the advent of artificial intelligence.

On February 19, 2020, the Supreme Court while hearing the PIL had expressed desire to interact with the transport minister Nitin Gadkari on the proposal for gradual conversion of all public transport and Government vehicles into electric vehicles to curb air pollution.

The Pioneer
BHOPAL | FRIDAY | NOVEMBER 14, 2025

Editor's TAKE

The clock is ticking on carbon & climate

The Global Carbon Budget 2025 warns that global emissions are at record highs even as the planet's natural carbon sinks weaken

Planet Earth is the only place we have to live, yet it is the place we are damaging on an alarming scale. Sooner than we can imagine, we will make it uninhabitable and may be forced to leave – the irony is, we have nowhere to go! We humans are the proverbial frog in simmering water, which boils to death rather than jump out because it cannot comprehend the slow rise in temperature.

The Global Carbon Budget 2025 report, released at COP30 in Belém, Brazil, yet again sounds the alarm, but no one is listening. Though, on one hand, it offers a glimmer of hope: India's carbon dioxide emissions are projected to rise by only 1.4 per cent in 2025 – a slower pace than in previous years. On the other hand, it confirms that the world's total fossil-fuel CO_2 emissions will hit a record 38.1 billion tonnes this year. This effectively means the goal of keeping global warming to 1.5°C is now out of reach. Though Indian data is encouraging, it is not a respite in the long run. It owes itself to two key factors – an early monsoon that reduced energy demand for cooling, and a rapid expansion in renewable energy capacity that helped keep coal consumption low. However, it reveals that clean energy investments and climate-conscious policy interventions are steps in the right direction and are making a difference in real terms. Yet, emissions are still growing in absolute terms. The nation remains among the top four global emitters – alongside China, the United States, and the European Union – who together account for nearly 60 per cent of all fossil-fuel CO_2 emissions. The present pace of carbon emissions shows that the global carbon curve has yet to bend downward. The report also paints a worrying picture of the planet's weakening ability to heal itself.

Moreover, there are real issues that are not even being discussed – natural carbon sinks such as forests and oceans are losing their efficiency in absorbing CO_2. About 8 per cent of the rise in atmospheric CO_2 since 1960 is attributed to climate change itself eroding the capacity of these sinks.

In essence, nature's buffers are depleting just when humanity needs them most. Indeed, the Indian story offers some relief – climate resilience and economic growth can indeed go hand in hand, a model to be emulated by other developing countries. Between 2015 and 2024, 35 countries – twice as many as a decade ago – managed to expand their economies while cutting emissions. However, incremental progress will not suffice in a world where the remaining carbon budget to stay below 1.5°C is a mere 170 billion tonnes – just four years' worth of emissions at current levels.

The window is closing fast. India's success story, while commendable, must accelerate into a full-scale green revolution. The onus lies squarely on the developed nations - the biggest polluters – who still shy away from their responsibility to save the planet. They forget that Earth has only one atmosphere and one climate; we either swim together or sink together. Unfortunately, at this point, the odds of sinking seem far greater.

Red Fort blast: Time for firm action

India's security forces have dealt with cross-border terror for decades. But the Red Fort blast and related arrests signal a new internal threat — radicalisation within professional spaces. The remedy must begin with education and vigilance at home

KRIPA NAUTIYAL

PHOTO: PANKAJ KUMAR

The explosion near Delhi's Red Fort earlier this month shocked the nation not only because it struck a heritage site, but because of what early investigations suggest — the alleged involvement of educated professionals, including doctors, in a sinister terror plot.

The case, still under investigation, has sparked an uncomfortable debate: What happens when radicalisation penetrates elite, seemingly benign professions? How should India respond — firmly, but within the bounds of its Constitution?

A disturbing pattern emerges

Initial reports from investigating agencies point to a "white-collar terror" network — individuals with professional qualifications allegedly collaborating with radical elements to target civilians and religious institutions. Parallel to this, Gujarat's ATS recently exposed a chilling plan involving attempts to procure toxic substances such as ricin, allegedly to contaminate prasad at temples. Equally disturbing are claims of a cleric's role in recruiting and indoctrinating these professionals. While the courts must establish guilt, the trend is alarming: radical thought cloaked in respectability, using social trust as camouflage.

Yet, amid outrage, it is essential to separate verified fact from conjecture. Many names and institutions have surfaced — hospitals, universities, NGOs — but until evidence is proven in court, we must avoid the trap of communal generalisation. Justice must be swift, but fair.

A test for India's constitutional balance

India's Constitution guarantees freedom of religion under Article 25 and simultaneously directs the State to work towards a Uniform Civil Code under Article 44. These two ideals — protection of faith and pursuit of equality — are not contradictory but complementary when interpreted correctly.

However, public debate has often reduced them to opposing camps: one accusing the other of bias, the other fearing cultural erasure. The present crisis reopens that debate, as some argue that the coexistence of a Uniform Civil Code (UCC) proposal and a Ministry for Minority Affairs is inconsistent.

Law enforcement must be scientific and neutral

While the ideological challenge is serious, the practical response must be precise and evidence-based. Blanket suspicion of communities or professions will harm national unity. Instead, India must strengthen investigation, regulation, and intelligence cooperation along these lines:

- Targeted institutional audits — Where evidence links hospitals or universities to subversive activity, the state must audit their finances, staffing, and affiliations; however, these actions must follow due process, not political impulse.
- Professional oversight — If medical professionals are found complicit, medical councils must act decisively, reviewing ethical vetting and licensing norms. Yet, the entire medical fraternity must not be tarred with the same brush.
- Scientific investigation — Allegations involving bio-toxins or chemical agents demand forensic verification, independent lab confirmation, and transparent reporting. Panic and misinformation only aid enemies of the state.
- Intelligence presence with accountability - Intelligence agencies may need closer engagement with sensitive institutions. But permanent infiltration without oversight risks civil liberties. Coordination and legal supervision are better tools than uncontrolled surveillance.
- Transparent public communication — Official silence breeds rumours. Regular press briefings, judicial monitoring, and publication of verified data will prevent both panic and prejudice.

INDIA'S STRENGTH LIES IN ITS ABILITY TO CONFRONT THREATS WITHOUT COMPROMISING ITS PRINCIPLES. IF PROFESSIONALS HAVE INDEED JOINED HANDS WITH RADICALS, THE RESPONSE MUST BE UNCOMPROMISING IN LAW AND PROPORTIONATE IN EXECUTION

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Opposition silence and political hypocrisy

The muted response of several opposition parties has not gone unnoticed. When such a grave security threat unfolds, selective outrage undermines democratic credibility. National security cannot be filtered through electoral convenience. At the same time, government spokespersons must resist framing this as a clash of faiths. Terror has no religion; its ideology is hatred and nihilism. Political capital built on division weakens the Republic from within.

Security without prejudice

India's security forces have dealt with cross-border terror for decades. But the Red Fort blast and related arrests signal a new internal threat — radicalisation within professional spaces. The remedy must begin with education and vigilance at home. Parents, teachers, and community leaders must instil civic ethics and respect for pluralism. Hospitals and universities, often targeted for infiltration, need integrity checks not just of finances but also of their core mission. The call for "intelligence presence" in minority-run institutions must be measured. Monitoring suspicious funding and foreign ties is legitimate; painting all minority institutions as suspect is unjust and counterproductive.

The road ahead — firm, fair, and fearless

India's strength lies in its ability to confront threats without compromising its principles. If professionals have indeed joined hands with radicals, the response must be uncompromising in law and proportionate in execution. Investigate thoroughly, prosecute swiftly, and reform institutional loopholes that allowed infiltration.

But justice cannot be collective. The guilty must face exemplary punishment; the innocent must not become collateral victims of public anger. Our enemies would rejoice most if India allowed internal division to replace unity.

Global reactions and India's sovereignty

After earlier terror episodes, India often hesitated, weighing international opinion before acting decisively. That hesitation is fading. The post-Sindoor experience has shown that many nations now openly back India's right to defend itself. It is time we acted on national interest with confidence, rather than apology. Global respect follows strength — but moral strength comes only from constitutional fidelity.

"Our answer must be firm against terror, faithful to the Constitution, and unsparing in protecting the innocent."

PIC TALK

A pair of greater flamingos captured inside their enclosure at Jaipur Zoo.
PHOTO: PTI

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The Bhagavad-Gita reveals God's active presence

AJIT KUMAR BISHNOI

2ND OPINION
THE PIONEER

Most of us imagine God as a distant and detached being-watching us from afar but rarely intervening. Yet, Lord Krishna in the Bhagavad-Gita offers a very different understanding. He describes God as one "who has eyes and ears everywhere" (13.13) — an omnipresent witness to all that we do, think, and desire.

However, His help is not automatic; it comes when we consciously seek it. Take the example of a student who neglects his studies all year but prays fervently before his exams for a good result. God does not grant such prayers because the boy has not fulfilled his duty. Still, his prayer is a beginning-a spark of awakening. Once he becomes diligent and dutiful, divine help naturally follows. God's mercies are abundant, extending even to the material world. Every act we perform-through thought, word, or deed-produces results or karmaphala. These are governed by divine authority under God's supervision (9.10). Yet, when we sincerely seek His shelter, God can bless us beyond what our karma alone dictates. As Sanjay declared at the end of the Mahabharata: "Where there is Yogeshwar Krishna and Arjuna, there will be opulence, victory, wealth, and righteousness" (18.78). The key is to be like Arjuna-devoted, disciplined, and surrendered. For us, this surrender means daily spiritual practice: prayer, chanting, meditation, or even a simple act of devotion, such as gazing at God's image with faith. One casual visit to a temple, like the boy before exams, is not enough. Devotion is a relationship that must be nurtured through constancy. Material blessings-wealth, success, power, fame, good health — are all forms of divine favour. Money itself — a karmaphala — can bring comfort and security when used wisely.

God does not condemn material prosperity; He regulates it and blesses those who use it for good. Power, too, when guided by virtue, can serve society-as seen in King Janaka, cited by Lord Krishna (3.20), who ruled selflessly for the welfare of his people. Good health and moderation are also divine gifts. The Gita advises, "He who is temperate in eating, recreation, sleep, and activity attains yoga that destroys suffering" (6.17). Thus, even physical well-being is a reflection of spiritual balance. Underlying all divine favours is God's guidance. He directs us-through intuition, through people around us, and sometimes even through dreams. Those who pray sincerely will recognise these subtle signals. God rarely speaks directly, but His communication is unmistakable to those who listen with faith.

We, as Indians, are especially blessed. God has chosen this land for His many incarnations. Lord Hanuman's eternal presence, Lord Shiva's ceaseless chanting of "Rama," and the timeless wisdom of the Bhagavad-Gita are living proofs of divine grace upon India. Despite our imperfections, our culture values tolerance, peace, and family bonds-qualities born from the divine light still shining in our collective spirit. From personal experience, I can testify to God's kindness. In every difficulty, I turn to Him first-and invariably, I receive an intuitive answer, a gentle nudge in the right direction. Research even supports this: Harvard studies found that the intuitions of spiritual individuals are often accurate. In conclusion, God is not distant but deeply involved in our lives. He wants to help us, guide us, and uplift us. The Gita teaches: take one step towards Him, and He will take ninety-nine towards you. Faith, devotion, and effort together awaken His grace — and when that happens, life itself becomes a dialogue with the Divine.

The writer is a spiritual teacher

AMITABH'S VISIT TO DHARMENDRA REKINDLES OLD FRIENDSHIP

The viral video of veteran star Amitabh Bachchan driving his BMW to meet his long-time friend and co-star Dharmendra, who has recently been discharged from hospital after recovering from health issues, is truly delightful and heart-warming.

The friendship between these two legends-fondly known as Big B and the He-Man of Bollywood-is iconic not only on screen but also in real life. Their portrayal of Jai and Veeru in the timeless classic Sholay remains the ultimate symbol of friendship in Indian cinema. The film, which rec ently celebrated its fiftieth anniversary, still resonates deeply with audiences, and its evergreen song "Yeh Dosti Hum Nahin Todenge" continues to be celebrated as Bollywood's greatest friendship anthem.

Beyond Sholay, the duo collaborated in several memorable films, including Chupke Chupke and Ram Balram, as well as in a few cameo appearances. Their enduring bond, spanning decades, stands as a rare example of loyalty and affection in an industry often defined by competition and change.

In today's fast-paced world, where genuine friendship often takes a back seat, this simple yet touching gesture of one old friend visiting another rekindles faith in one of life's most beautiful gifts - true friendship. Their friendship shows that some bonds outlast fame, time, and distance – shining brighter with age. Amitabh and Dharmendra's camaraderie is a timeless lesson in love, loyalty, and friendship.

M PRADYU | KANNUR

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In not more than 250 words. We appreciate your feedback.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Double Duty: The weight of obligation

Anybody can surely be entrusted with any national duty-be it Electoral or Census — beyond their regular job assignment. However, shouldn't the concerned individual be relieved from their routine responsibilities so that they can render quality service to the nation with full concentration? Otherwise, the Himalayan pressure of performing "double duty" is bound to crush the overburdened individual, both physically and psychologically. The immense stress of visiting innumerable homes to distribute forms, provide instructions and answer endless queries is overwhelming. Such a large-scale operation should have been granted more time to ensure thorough and humane execution, sparing officials the ordeal of meeting targets in a rushed and exhausting manner.

If the Electoral Rolls are indeed "corrupt", then the NDA government at the Centre must also face a legitimacy test, since the 2024 General Elections were based on these very rolls. Yet, the third Modi government will continue till 2029. Meanwhile, the West Bengal Government faces extreme urgency as if there is no tomorrow. Who is to be held accountable for the untimely death of a booth-level officer on duty? When will such "dignified slavery" end, and these workers be treated as human beings instead of mere machines?

KAJAL CHATTERJEE | KOLKATA

Public Health at Risk under PPP

The Andhra Pradesh government's push to establish medical colleges under the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model deserves a nationwide debate. Even the Chairman of the National Medical Commission (NMC) has described PPP as the "future" of medical education, citing Gujarat's brownfield medical college policy.

However, this approach is flawed in both principle and practice. Health and medical education are fundamental responsibilities of the state.

Tamil Nadu, with a government medical college in every district, and Karnataka, where private and public institutions coexist, demonstrate that the state need not abdicate its role. The PPP model risks commercialising healthcare and education, allowing private players to prioritise profits, inflate fees, refer patients to corporate hospitals, and exploit trainees as low-cost labour.

The COVID-19 pandemic proved the indispensability of public hospitals. When private care became unaffordable, government institutions provided life-saving treatment. Handing over this vital sector to private hands endangers equity and affordability. With adequate faculty and resources now available, the state must strengthen its own institutions.

KATTAMREDDY ANANTH RUPESH | ANDHRA PRADESH

Ensuring clarity and fairness in nomination

Nomination is an essential facility offered by financial institutions in India, enabling account or policy holders to designate one or more individuals to receive the proceeds of their financial instruments upon their death.

This mechanism enhances customer convenience, streamlines claim settlements, and supports institutional risk management. Recent regulatory reforms have strengthened this facility, allowing customers to nominate up to four individuals, thereby making succession planning more transparent and efficient. A nomination is a regulated safeguard designed to uphold both the depositor's intent and institutional accountability.

Under Simultaneous Nomination, a depositor may name four persons, specifying each share, for example, spouse (40 per cent), son (30 per cent), daughter (20 per cent), and mother (10per cent). Upon the depositor's death, all four may claim their respective portions. Under Successive Nomination, nominees are listed in order of priority, with the next nominee becoming active only if the previous one is deceased. While nominees are entitled to receive proceeds, ultimate ownership remains subject to succession and inheritance laws. Institutions must ensure nominations comply with all relevant banking, insurance, company, and regulatory laws.

CK SUBRAMANIAM | MUMBAI

The Pioneer
BHOPAL | FRIDAY | NOVEMBER 14, 2025

A model of harmony in an uneasy Asian neighbourhood

The 2007 India-Bhutan Treaty of Friendship, negotiated under K4's guidance, redefined the partnership for a democratic era. It replaced the 1949 clause stating that Bhutan would be "guided by India" with the principle of sovereign equality and mutual respect

FIRST Column

HEMANGI SINHA

PRAVIN KUMAR SINGH

The former King of Bhutan, Jigme Singye Wangchuck — revered as K4, the Fourth Druk Gyalpo — turned 70 on November 11. In Bhutan, the Bodhisattva King, as he is fondly known, is remembered not merely as a monarch but as a visionary who transformed a secluded Himalayan kingdom into a modern, democratic, and contented nation. His reign from 1972 to 2006 marked an era of wisdom, self-reliance, and reform, blending tradition with progress in a way few leaders in history have achieved.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Thimphu to join the celebrations was far more than a ceremonial gesture. It was an affirmation of a relationship that has stood as a beacon of stability in a region marked by shifting loyalties and power rivalries. India and Bhutan have not simply coexisted — they have complemented each other, building a partnership rooted in trust, cultural affinity, and shared destiny.

K4 and the Modernisation of Bhutan

When K4 ascended the throne at the age of 17, Bhutan was still emerging from centuries of isolation. His father, King Jigme Dorji Wangchuck, had already launched Bhutan's first Five-Year Plan with the support of Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru in 1961. The young king continued this developmental journey, deepening ties with India and strengthening institutions that would guide Bhutan into the 21st century.

As Chairman of Bhutan's Planning Commission in 1971, K4 learned early that India's partnership was not one of dependence but of shared growth. His 1974 decision to peg the Bhutanese Ngultrum to the Indian Rupee at a 1:1 exchange rate was a masterstroke of economic foresight, guaranteeing stability and seamless trade. He also invited India's Border Roads Organisation (BRO) to construct and maintain Bhutan's strategic road network under Project DANTAK, laying the foundation for economic transformation.

Today, Bhutanese firms have taken charge of their own infrastructure — an outcome K4 envisioned decades earlier.

INDIA'S CONTINUED ENGAGEMENT IS THEREFORE NOT SENTIMENTAL BUT STRATEGIC — CENTRAL TO ENSURING PEACE AND STABILITY IN THE EASTERN HIMALAYAS

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Hydropower Diplomacy: The Energy of Friendship

Among the enduring legacies of India-Bhutan friendship is their hydropower cooperation — a pillar of mutual prosperity. The commissioning of the 336 MW Chukha project in the 1970s marked the beginning of a partnership that illuminated both nations. Subsequent ventures such as Tala, Kurichhu, and Mangdechhu deepened this bond, while the 1,020 MW Punatsangchhu-II project, to be jointly inaugurated by Prime Minister Modi and King Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck (K5), stands as a symbol of enduring collaboration.

Built on a grant-loan model, these projects have provided Bhutan with sustainable national income and India with clean energy.

As both sides look ahead, private-sector participation — from Tata Power to Adani Power — signals a new era of joint ventures extending beyond state-led models. India's development partnership also spans infrastructure, health, education, and digital connectivity, including the Digital Drukyul initiative under Bhutan's 13th Five-Year Plan (2024-29).

In December 2003, Bhutan demonstrated the true meaning of friendship. Militants from India's North-East, including ULFA and NDFB, had established bases in Bhutan's southern jungles. When diplomacy failed, K4 personally led Operation All Clear, directing the Royal Bhutan Army to eliminate the threat. Supported logistically by India, the operation was swift and decisive — marking Bhutan's first modern military campaign and reaffirming its sovereignty. On the Indian side, security forces sealed the border to capture fleeing militants. The episode remains a textbook example of neighbourly trust and joint security.

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K4's deep understanding of India's democratic ethos and his nuanced grasp of China's strategic behaviour continue to shape Bhutan's policies. Even today, his counsel guides King K5's national security and foreign policy deliberations — especially amid evolving Bhutan-China negotiations.

Diplomacy, Democracy, and Mutual Respect

The 2007 India-Bhutan Treaty of Friendship, negotiated under K4's guidance, redefined the partnership for a democratic era. It replaced the 1949 clause stating that Bhutan would be "guided by India" with the principle of sovereign equality and mutual respect. Since then, India has remained Bhutan's largest trading partner and leading investor, with a duty-free transit regime through Indian ports — an arrangement unique in South Asia.

The upcoming Gelephu Mindfulness City — a visionary 2,500 sq. km zero-carbon, multi-sectoral development zone integrating spirituality, technology, and green energy — epitomises the shared aspiration for a sustainable and harmonious future.

Cultural and Spiritual Kinship

At its core, the India-Bhutan relationship is a civilisational partnership. The two nations are bound by a shared Buddhist heritage manifesting in pilgrimage, philosophy, and art. India's loan of the Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyal statue, the unifier of Bhutan, symbolised this timeless bond. Equally, the Transboundary Manas Conservation Area (TraMCA) linking Bhutan's Royal Manas and India's Manas Tiger Reserve reflects shared ecological stewardship. Bhutan's Gross National Happiness aligns deeply with India's Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam — the belief that the world is one family.

In Contrast to Asia's Fractured Geopolitics

While Asia is witnessing increasing friction — from the South China Sea to the Himalayas — the India-Bhutan partnership remains a model of stability. Bhutan's measured approach to China, guided by transparency with India, contrasts sharply with the opportunistic balancing often seen in other regional capitals.

For India, Bhutan is not merely a buffer but a trusted partner in ensuring that the Himalayas remain a zone of peace. For Bhutan, India is not a dominant neighbour but an anchor of security and an ally in development.

Navigating the China Challenge

As China tightens its grip on Tibet, Bhutan must balance sovereignty and strategic autonomy with quiet pragmatism. The first-ever Bhutanese Foreign Minister's visit to China in 2023, coupled with China's growing share of Bhutan's trade and the 2021 Three-Step Roadmap for boundary resolution, underscores a cautious yet notable outreach.

Beijing's invocation of the Five-Finger Policy — an apparent expansionist vision that views Tibet as the palm and Ladakh, Nepal, Sikkim, Bhutan, and Arunachal Pradesh as its fingers — adds to India's unease, particularly concerning Doklam, overlooking the strategic Siliguri Corridor. For Bhutan, which maintains no formal diplomatic ties with China, this presents both opportunity and risk.

India's continued engagement is therefore not sentimental but strategic — central to ensuring peace and stability in the eastern Himalayas. Despite occasional friction points, including insurgent activity and environmental hesitations over the BBIN Motor Vehicle Agreement, both nations continue to navigate differences with maturity and mutual respect.

A Celebration of Friendship and Faith

As Thimphu celebrates K4's 70th birthday, it is not merely an occasion to honour a monarch — it is a celebration of a friendship that has matured through trust, sacrifice, and shared vision. Prime Minister Modi's presence is both symbolic and substantive — a reaffirmation that India and Bhutan will continue to walk together, as equals and as family. In an increasingly fractured Asian neighbourhood, India and Bhutan stand as proof that geography need not breed rivalry - it can nurture harmony. Their partnership, built on faith rather than fear, remains South Asia's most enduring example of Neighbourhood First in action. In the India-Bhutan story, friendship is not strategy — it is destiny.

25 years of Uttarakhand: Between promise, progress and precarious reality

RITIKA JOSHI

Uttarakhand became a separate state on November 9, 2000 after years of public demand for governance suited to mountain life. People wanted schools, hospitals and markets closer to remote valleys. They wanted decisions shaped by local voices, terrain and culture rather than by models designed for the plains.

Twenty-five years later, the state has built its own institutions and identity. Yet the core demands that fuelled the statehood movement remain partly unmet. Distance, fragility and uneven development still define life in much of the hills.

Population and Mobility

Uttarakhand has about 11.6 million people, roughly 0.8 per cent of India's population. It records about 1 per cent annual growth, close to the national average. The population density — 213 people per sq km — seems comfortable, but it hides the lived reality of fragile terrain, forest cover and scattered settlements. Large parts of the state comprise mountains, glaciers, steep slopes and river valleys. People cluster in the plains and larger towns; many hill villages have only a few households. This means a child seeking schooling, a patient seeking medical care, or a farmer seeking a market may travel long distances. "Normal" density does not translate into easy or equal access.

Literacy in 2011 was 78.82 per cent. Male literacy was 87.40 per cent, female literacy 70.01 per cent. The gender gap remains wide and shapes long-term access to opportunity. A recent projection puts the sex ratio at 886 women per 1,000 men, well below the national average. This reflects deeper concerns about social norms, unequal access and migration patterns. Migration, in fact, is one of Uttarakhand's most persistent realities. Young people and families move out for education, work and healthcare. "Ghost villages" in remote hills continue to haunt policymakers. As people leave, remote areas lose not only numbers but energy and aspiration. The plains and urban centres draw talent and resources; the hills watch communities shrink.

Economy and the Fragile Mountain

Uttarakhand's economy has expanded over two decades. About 47.4 per cent of workers depend on agriculture, forestry and fishing; 31.4 per cent work in services; and 20.3 per cent in industry and construction. Exports reached ₹13,239 crore in FY25 (till February), and FDI from 2019-24 totalled ₹1,691 crore. The nominal per-capita income is about 40 per cent higher than India's average.

But progress is uneven. Most industrial activity is concentrated in the plains — in Dehradun, Haridwar and Udham Singh Nagar — where the land is flat, connectivity smooth and markets accessible. Remote hill districts remain marginal to investment and job creation. Capital continues to concentrate where terrain is easy and infrastructure predictable.

High-altitude and remote districts still receive very little investment. This gap is evident in agriculture. The sector employs almost half the workforce, yet incomes remain low. Farms are small in size, irrigation facilities are scarce, and market access is weak. More labour does not necessarily lead to higher income.

The mountain environment provides vital resources — water, forests, medicinal plants and tourism — but also faces landslides, flash floods and glacial events that disrupt life and limit growth. Despite 13.6 per cent growth in FY25, environmental fragility continues to constrain development. Nearly half the workforce remains in farming, forestry and fishing, while only a fifth works in manufacturing and construction. Industry struggles in scattered terrain, and private investment between 2019 and 2024 — about ₹1,691 crore — remains low. Roads, hydropower and tourism projects have improved access but often lie on fragile slopes or near key water sources, increasing the risk of landslides. Economic expansion frequently carries an ecological cost.

Public service delivery in higher districts demands more time and money. Schools and clinics take longer to build. Staff must be willing to serve in distant areas. Electricity lines and utilities must travel farther. Even short road stretches can take years to complete. Policies designed for flat, dense regions do not meet the needs of scattered mountain settlements.

Investment and services thrive in accessible districts such as Haridwar and Udham Singh Nagar. Remote hill districts see fewer jobs. Many young people migrate in search of work and education. Over time, these areas lose both population and capacity. This reflects a centre-periphery pattern: places with good roads and markets grow, while remote areas fall behind.

Uttarakhand has gained economic momentum, but its mountain districts still bear the burden of distance, environmental risk and uneven state presence. A more grounded development approach must recognise these constraints if growth is to be shared more evenly. Future policy must address these structural limitations rather than apply models designed for the plains. Only then can growth translate into meaningful inclusion across the highlands. Sustainable development in such terrain demands tailored policy frameworks that recognise altitude, fragmentation, ecological fragility and dispersed settlement — rather than simply replicating plains-based models.

Governance: Capacity and Delivery

Statehood promised governance that recognised mountain life. Uttarakhand has made measurable gains on paper. Fiscal rules maintain discipline; the deficit is capped at 3 per cent of GSDP for 2023-26. National reviews place the state among the better performers in public finance. Yet institutional strength at the top has not fully translated into delivery on the ground. In remote places, many trips are delayed or cancelled because transport is unreliable. Broadband connectivity is irregular. Schools and colleges are sparse beyond district towns.

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A centre-periphery pattern is evident. The plains act as the centre of services and authority. The hills remain peripheral — marked by higher costs, slower delivery and a weaker institutional presence. Panchayats carry local knowledge but lack budgets and trained staff. Rules often assume flat land, dense settlement and stable weather — conditions common to plains but not to mountains. Effective governance must account for altitude, seasonality, scattered villages and disaster risk.

Beyond the Silver Jubilee

Uttarakhand now needs a second phase of development. The mountains are not one uniform space. The high Himalayas, mid-hills and plains each face different realities. Planning must reflect these distinctions. Travel takes longer, and services cost more. Livelihoods are intimately tied to altitude and season. Policy must recognise these layers.

Young people should have real choices at home. Local crops, herbs and forests can anchor value chains. Digital work hubs can reduce migration. Tourism must support small enterprises rooted in local culture. When skills grow locally, communities thrive. Roads, power projects and hotels should be planned with safety in mind. More construction should not mean more risk. Sometimes, restraint signifies progress. Uttarakhand's silver jubilee is a turning point. A mountain state should build in ways that protect its people, culture and land.

The writer is the Head of the Department of History and Civilisation at Gautam Buddha University, Noida. She specialises in South Asian history and international relations, with a focus on the Himalayan borderlands
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Behaviour change for climate

TANMOY CHAKRABARTY

TANUSHREE CHAKRABARTY

When the Hon'ble Prime Minister introduced Mission LiFE at COP-27, he did more than announce an environmental initiative — he reframed the moral compass of development. "*Mission LiFE turns individual action into global climate impact*," he declared, reminding the world that sustainability is not born of regulation but of responsibility.

In India's context, this philosophy could become the foundation of a new governance model-one that makes citizens, corporations, and communities equal stakeholders in climate action. Having worked across government, industry, and citizen-facing projects, we have seen firsthand that policy can set direction, but behaviour builds momentum.

LiFE 2.0 - Mainstreaming Sustainable Lifestyles

India's next evolution must be LiFE 2.0: embedding sustainability into every facet of public and corporate life-from energy use and water management to mobility and waste.

Government ministries, PSUs, and enterprises can undertake institutional LiFE audits to assess their behavioural impact. Citizen-driven Smart City reforms already demonstrate how small shifts in awareness and accountability can deliver outsized results. LiFE 2.0 can now turn those pilots into a national standard.

The Pioneer SINCE 1865

Behavioural Economics for Energy Efficiency

To truly shape new habits, India must marry behavioural economics with digital infrastructure. Imagine Green Nudge Platforms integrated into the Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI)-rewarding households, commuters, and retailers for sustainable choices. Tiered electricity pricing, default renewable options, and gamified dashboards can help India export policy innovation to the Global South, transforming behavioural design into diplomatic strength.

For instance, a state electricity board could use a digital "Green Saver" dashboard that automatically compares a household's monthly energy use with that of similar homes in the neighbourhood. Homes that maintain consumption below the local average could receive cashback on digital utility payments or credits redeemable for solar appliance purchases. Over time, this simple peer-comparison mechanism-proven successful in countries like the U.S. and Singapore-can subtly yet powerfully nudge citizens to adopt energy-efficient habits without imposing penalties or mandates.

Community Engagement - The Real Engine of LiFE

Real transformation begins not in conference rooms but in mohallas, villages, and campuses.

We propose the creation of Climate Community Clusters-local governance hubs linking district administrations, panchayats, youth organisations, and civil society.

By leveraging digital storytelling, local dashboards, and open data, India can democratise climate action, giving communities ownership over their sustainable futures.

Women and Youth - Frontline Climate Catalysts

India's women and youth represent the social capital of Mission LiFE. Eighty million self-help group members can be repositioned as green entrepreneurs through renewable micro-enterprises and rural water governance.

Parallelly, LiFE Youth Fellows can form a leadership pipeline that connects innovation, entrepreneurship, and civic responsibility-aligned with NEP 2020 and Skill India. When women and youth lead, sustainability becomes scalable.

Public Communication and Education

Information alone cannot transform societies; inspiration does.

Mission LiFE must make sustainability aspirational, not sacrificial.

A National LiFE Awareness Grid linking academia, media, and ed-tech can amplify behavioural change through curriculum design, storytelling, and digital challenges.

Sustainability should not feel like a compliance metric — it should feel like national pride.

From Awareness to Architecture

India's long-term goals-Net Zero 2070, Atmanirbhar Bharat, and Viksit Bharat 2047-rest on one foundation: behavioural transformation.

Mission LiFE provides that blueprint by aligning policy, technology, and human behaviour into a single, measurable architecture.

Institutionalising LiFE across schools, workplaces, and public systems will make responsible consumption second nature-not an act of sacrifice but of self-respect. Behavioural change is not a constraint on growth — it is the catalyst of Viksit Bharat. If policy is the skeleton of transformation, people are its soul.

Tanmoy Chakrabarty is the Founder and Director of Chakrabarty Consulting Services Pvt Ltd, and Tanushree Chakrabarty is the Head of Strategy and Chief of Staff at CCSPL
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The Pioneer
BHOPAL | FRIDAY | NOVEMBER 14, 2025

FROM THE WORLD

SOUTH SUDAN

President fires VP Bol

South Sudan's President has dismissed Vice President Benjamin Bol, who had been considered a prospective successor, without explanation after growing concerns about renewed violence in the country. President Salva Kiir's decision to remove Bol was announced in a decree on state television on Wednesday night. Calls to Bol's spokesperson were unanswered. Bol was a close business associate of Kiir and had been sanctioned by the US for corruption. His dismissal is expected to reignite tension in the Capital, Juba. There had been speculation of tension in the ruling party after the number of Bol's bodyguards was reduced, but his office dismissed it as "unfounded rumors." Bol was also removed as first deputy chairman of the ruling party, a position he received in May, which had demonstrated his growing influence.

UK

Delhi blast condemned

Britain's Deputy Prime Minister, David Lammy, and British Indian minister for the Indo-Pacific Seema Malhotra have expressed their condolences to all those impacted by the terrorist attack in Delhi, which claimed 12 lives after a car explosion near Red Fort Metro station. At a special event in honour of the bilateral partnership hosted by the UK's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development (FCDO) in London on Wednesday evening, Lammy described India as one of the UK's most important partners . He said the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) clinched during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's UK visit in July marked a new chapter for the partnership, "not just economically, but in securing a safer, more prosperous future for both our countries".

Botswana handsover cheetahs to President Murmu

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
GABORONE

President Droupadi Murmu with Botswana's President Duma Gideon Boko and others during the release of captured cheetahs at a nature reserve in Gaborone, Botswana. The event marked the symbolic handing over of 8 Cheetahs to India PTI

President Droupadi Murmu on Thursday was symbolically handed over eight cheetahs by her Botswana counterpart Duma Gideon Boko at a nature reserve near here on the last day of her State visit.

The two heads of State reached the Mokolodi Nature Reserve, about 10 kms south of capital Gaborone, earlier in the morning and took a safari vehicle to witness the event of two captured big cats being released into a quarantine pen.

Wildlife officials from India and Botswana also briefed Murmu and Boko about the procedure. Officials said all the eight cheetahs are in the reserve and only two were released for quarantine in the presence of the heads of state as a symbolic gesture of handing over them to India by Botswana.

The cheetahs, a mix of adult and sub-adult males and females, have been brought to the nature reserve from the Ghanzi town located in the Kalahari desert, that forms 70 per cent of the landmass of this southern Africa located country.

The Mokolodi reserve, spread over 3,700 hectares, is a private not-for-profit game reserve that was created in 1994. It is inhabited by rhinoceros, giraffes and a variety of indigenous African bird and reptile species, some of which are rare and vulnerable to the threat of extinction, as per official information. All eight cheetahs are expected to reach India in the next few weeks after completion of their quarantine process. Murmu is on a three-day state visit to Botswana which concludes on Thursday.

The translocation of the cheetahs from Botswana to India as part of the Project Cheetah was announced by the two presidents on Wednesday during a press briefing after holding delegation level talks at Boko's office. Murmu thanked the African nation for the endeavour in wildlife conservation and assured that India will take "good care" of the cheetahs. Boko said his country's move to donate the cheetahs will assist regeneration of the population of the big cat in India. India's cheetah re-introduction story began on September 17, 2022 when Prime Minister Narendra Modi released eight cheetahs brought from Namibia into a special enclosure at Kuno National Park in Madhya Pradesh, marking the world's first intercontinental relocation of a large wild carnivore species.

India later imported 12 more cheetahs from South Africa in February 2023. Three years into the ambitious revival programme, the country now has 27 cheetahs, including 16 born on Indian soil. Of them, 24 are at Kuno and three are at the Gandhi Sagar Wildlife Sanctuary (GSWS), located on the boundary of Mandsaur and Neemuch districts in Madhya Pradesh. Nineteen cheetahs - nine imported adults and 10 cubs born in India - have died from various causes since the project began, while 26 cubs have been born in Kuno so far. After importing 20 animals from Africa, India currently has a net gain of seven cheetahs over the initial number.

Murmu leads Indian community in Botswana

President Droupadi Murmu on Thursday led the Indian community Botswana to pay condolences to the victims of the recent blast in Delhi. A high-intensity blast outside the Red Fort in Delhi on Monday claimed at least 13 lives. President Murmu, during her interaction with the members of the Indian diaspora on the last day of her three-day State Visit, expressed her heartfelt condolences to the families of those who lost their lives and wished for a quick recovery of the injured.

After the National Anthem and an introductory welcome by Indian High Commissioner to Botswana, Bharath Kumar Kuthati, Murmu asked the members of the Indian community in the hall to pay respect to the departed souls. The gathering stood up and remained silent for a minute. The Indian community in Botswana is about 10,000 strong and engaged in sectors such as education, health and other trades.

President Trump signs bill ending shutdown

President Donald Trump signs the funding bill to reopen the Government, in the Oval Office of the White House in Washington AP

ASSOCIATED PRESS
Washington

President Donald Trump signed a government funding bill on Wednesday night, ending a record 43-day shutdown that caused financial stress for federal workers who went without paychecks, stranded scores of travellers at airports and generated long lines at some food banks.

The shutdown magnified partisan divisions in Washington as Trump took unprecedented unilateral actions — including cancelling projects and trying to fire federal workers — to pressure Democrats into relenting on their demands.

The Republican president blamed the situation on Democrats and suggested voters shouldn't reward the party during next year's midterm elections. "So I just want to tell the American people, you should not forget this," Trump said. "When we come up to midterms and other things, don't forget what they've done to our country." The signing ceremony came just hours after the House passed the measure on a mostly party-line vote of 222-209. The Senate had already passed the measure Monday. Democrats wanted to extend an enhanced tax credit expiring at the end of the year that lowers the cost of health coverage obtained through Affordable Care Act marketplaces. They refused to go along with a short-term spending bill that did not include that priority.

"We told you 43 days ago from bitter experience that government shutdowns don't work," said Tom Cole, the Republican chairman of the House Appropriations Committee. "They never achieve the objective that you announce.

G7 diplomats publicly show support for Ukraine

ASSOCIATED PRESS
Niagara-on-the-Lake

Top diplomats from the Group of Seven industrialized democracies publicly showed their consensus on Ukraine and Sudan on Wednesday, but stayed away from contentious issues like the US Military strikes on boats in the Caribbean and trade.

The foreign ministers of the G7 met with Ukraine's foreign minister on Wednesday as Kyiv tries to fend off Russian aerial attacks that have brought rolling blackouts across the country. Andriy Sybiha said Ukraine needs the support of its partners to survive what will be a "very difficult, very tough winter." "We have to move forward to pressure Russia, to raise the price for the aggression, for Russia, for (Russian President Vladimir) Putin, to end this war," Sybiha said. The G7 ministers said in a joint statement at the conclusion of the two-day gathering that they are increasing the economic costs to Russia and exploring measures against those who finance Russia's war efforts.

Canada announced more sanctions against Russia, including targeting those involved in the development and deployment of drones, and Britain, a day earlier, pledged money for Ukraine's energy infrastructure.

U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio made no immediate announcements about new U.S. Initiatives but said on social media that the meeting delved into ways "to strengthen Ukraine's defense and find an end to this bloody conflict." "We are doing whatever is necessary to support Ukraine," Canadian Foreign Minister Anita Anand said.

Ukraine: Army chief visits besieged city as Zelenskyy confronts graft scandal

ASSOCIATED PRESS
Kyiv

Ukraine's top military commander said on Thursday he visited troops holding the front line in a key eastern city besieged by Russian forces, while Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy grappled with the fallout from a corruption scandal that has engulfed his administration.

After Zelenskyy's justice and energy ministers quit on Wednesday amid the investigation into alleged energy sector graft, the Government fired the vice president of Energoatom, the state-owned nuclear power company believed by investigators to be at the centre of the kickback scheme.

The heads of Energoatom's finance, legal and procurement departments and a consultant to Energoatom's president were also dismissed in the clear-out, Prime Minister Yuliia Svyrydenko said late on Wednesday. A Kyiv court has begun hearing evidence from anti-corruption watchdogs whose 15-month investigation, including 1,000 hours of wiretaps, has brought the detention of five people and implicated another seven in the scheme that allegedly earned about $100 million.

Tymur Mindich, a co-owner of Zelenskyy's Kvartal 95 media production company, is the conspiracy's suspected mastermind. His whereabouts are unknown. The investigation has prompted questions about what the country's highest officials knew of the scheme. It has also awakened memories of Zelenskyy's attempt last summer to curtail Ukraine's anti-corruption watchdogs. He backtracked after widespread street protests in Ukraine and pressure from the European Union, which has pushed the country to address entrenched corruption.While Ukrainians expressed anger and disbelief at the unfolding scandal, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said the EU would disburse on Thursday a 6 billion euros ($7 billion) loan to Ukraine and promised more money for Kyiv.

"We will cover the financial needs of Ukraine for the next two years," she said in a speech to the European Parliament. The EU and other foreign partners have poured money into Ukraine's energy sector. Russia has relentlessly bombarded the power grid, which requires repeated repairs. The EU is looking into how it can come up with more money for Ukraine, either by seizing frozen Russian assets, raising funds on capital markets, or having some of the 27 EU nations raise the money themselves. Russian President Vladimir Putin "thinks he can outlast us" in the battle over Ukraine's future, nearly four years after Russia's all-out invasion of its neighbour, von der Leyen said. "And this is a clear miscalculation," she said. "Now is therefore the moment to come, with a new impetus, to unlock Putin's cynical attempt to buy time and bring him to the negotiation table."

Meanwhile, Gen. Oleksandr Syrskyi, Ukraine's top military commander, visited units fighting to hold Pokrovsk in the eastern Donetsk region and coordinate operations in person, he said on the messaging app Telegram. Ukrainian troops are locked in street battles with Russian forces in the city and fighting to prevent becoming surrounded by a bigger Russian force as Russia's war of attrition slowly grinds across the countryside.

Rubio terms Delhi blast a terrorist attack

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
New York

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio has said the car explosion near Red Fort is "clearly" a terrorist attack as he commended India for being "very measured" and "very professional" in the way it is investigating the deadly incident.

A high-intensity blast outside the Red Fort in Delhi on Monday claimed at least 13 lives. India on Wednesday termed the car explosion as a "heinous terror incident."

Rubio said Wednesday in remarks to the press in Hamilton, Canada: "Yeah, we're aware of the potential that that holds. But I think the Indians are – need to be commended; they have been very measured and cautious and very professional in how they're carrying out this investigation."

"That investigation continues. Clearly, it was a terrorist attack. It was a car loaded with highly explosive materials that detonated and killed a lot of people," Rubio said.

Philippine leader threatens jail for corrupt politicians

ASSOCIATED PRESS
Manila

Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr said Thursday that many of at least 37 senators, members of Congress and busnismen implicated in a corruption scandal involving flood control projects would be locked up in jail by Christmas. Marcos said an independent fact-finding commission he created has filed criminal complaints for graft and corruption and plunder, a non-bailable offense, against the 37 suspects.

Bank of Maharashtra
(A Govt. of India Enterprise)
www.bankofmaharashtra.in

ZONAL OFFICE,
1/14, ADMINISTRATIVE ZONE,
ARERA HILLS, BHOPAL, 462011.

POSSESSION NOTICE [Rule – 8 (1)]

WHEREAS,
The undersigned being the Authorised Officer of the Bank of Maharashtra under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002, and in exercise of the powers conferred under Sub-Section (12) of Section 13 read with Rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rule, 2002, issued a Demand Notice dated mentioned below calling upon the borrower and guarantor to repay outstanding Amount (mentioned below) within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said Notice. The notice was sent by Regd AD Post and hand delivery.
The borrower having failed to repay the amount, the undersigned has taken **Symbolic Possession** of the properties described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under section 13 (4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules on dates mentioned below. The borrower in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the properties will be subject to the charge of **Bank of Maharashtra, Ashok Nagar Branch** for an amount herein above mentioned. The borrower's attention is invited to the provisions of sub-section 8 of Sec 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.

Name & Address of Borrowers & Guarantor (s)	Details of Property	Demand Notice Dt / Possession Notice	Outstanding Amount ₹
Borrower: **M/S Shree Hari Dairy Farm Prop.- Mrs. Neetu Yadav W/o Mr. Ramnaresh Yadav** Guarantor: **Mrs. Neetu Yadav W/o Mr. Ramnaresh Yadav Address of All : Address 1 :-** Ward no. 7, Khalasa Colony, Ashoknagar, M.P.-473331 **Address 2 :-** PH. No.6, Survey No. 152/1/1, Village-Padariya, Gopal Dham Colony, Tehsil & Dist.- Ashoknagar, M.P.-473331	**1) All those pieces and parcels of land situate at Survey No. 152/1/1/1 (105/209 share of Survey No. 152/1/1/1) in the name of Neetu Yadav at village Padariya in the registration Dist. Ashoknagar Sub-Dist. Ashoknagar** whose admeasuring area 1050 Square Meters **Boundaries:** North: Land of Smt. Neetu Yadav, South: Land of Smt. Neetu Yadav, East: Agri Land of Survey No. 151, West: 30 feet wide unpaved road leading to the village, This property is owned by Mrs. Neetu Yadav W/o Mr. Ramnaresh Yadav. **Cersai ID-200086522368** **2) All those pieces and parcels of land Survey No. 150/1/2/2 area 0.031 hectare and Survey No. 150/1/2/1/2, area 0.022 hectare - total area 0.053 hectare i.e. 5764 sq.ft. situated at village Padariya in the registration Dist. Ashoknagar Sub-Dist. Ashoknagar Boundaries:** North: 20 feet Wide Public Path, South: Land of others, East: other's land, 15 feet wide public path and others plot no. 93, West: Land of Shri Hariom Sharma, This property is owned by Mrs. Neetu Yadav W/o Mr. Ramnaresh Yadav. **Cersai ID-200086551423** **3) All those pieces and parcels of land situate being and lying at village Padariya in the registration Dist. Ashoknagar Sub-Dist. Ashoknagar admeasuring 900 Square Meters and bearing CTS/Survey Nos. 152/1/2/1 Boundaries:** North: Land of Nagar Ji, South: Unpaved mud road leading to Nagarji's dairy, East: Land of Dubey Ji, West: Unpaved mud road, This property is owned by Mrs. Neetu Yadav W/o Mr. Ramnaresh Yadav. **Cersai ID-200086552757**	13/08/2025 / 11/11/2025	₹ 49,05,168.42 + applicable unapplied interest and penal charges thereon w.e.f. 13/08/2025

Date : 14.11.2025
Place : Ashok Nagar

(SANJEEV SAJJAN)
Chief Manager & Authorized Officer, Zonal Office Bhopal

Aadhar Housing Finance Ltd.
Aadhar Housing Finance Ltd

Corporate Office: Unit No. 802, Natraj Rustomjee, Western Express Highway and M.V. Road, Andheri (East), Mumbai - 400069
Damoh Branch : 1st Floor, Matra Chaya, Killai Naka Chouraha, Balakot road, Damoh - 470661 (Madhya Pradesh)

POSSESSION NOTICE Appendix IV (for immovable property)

Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorized Officer of **Aadhar Housing Finance Limited (AHFL)** under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002, Demand Notice(s) issued by the Authorised Officer of the company to the Borrower(s) / Guarantor(s) mentioned herein below to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within **60 days** from the date of receipt of the said notice. The borrower having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrower(s) / Guarantor(s) and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under Sub-Section (4) of the Section 13 of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the Security Interest Enforcement rules, 2002. The borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets. The borrower in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of AHFL for an amount as mentioned herein under with interest thereon.

S. N.	Name of the Borrower(s)/Co-Borrower(s) (Name of the Branch)	Description of Secured Asset (Immovable Property)	Demand Notice Date & Amount	Date of Possession
1	(Loan Code No. 13100000190 / Damoh Branch) Harishanker Ravat (Borrower) Mamta Bai Ravat (Co-Borrower)	All that part & parcel of property bearing, Na House No 1 130 PH No 12 33 Ward No 1 Indra Gandhi Ward Jabalpur Road Near Taradehi Tiggda, Narsimhapur, Madhya Pradesh- 470880 **Boundaries:** East- House of Dwarka Rawat, West- Land of Seller, North- Common Way, South- Seth Gulabchand	10-04-2024 & ₹ 8,18,941/-	10-11-2025

Place : Madhya Pradesh
Date : 14-11-2025

Authorised Officer
Aadhar Housing Finance Limited

WEST CENTRAL RAILWAY
COMMERCIAL DEPARTMENT

DRM (Commercial) Jabalpur, on behalf of president of India invited e-Auction for the earning and leasing contracts from Jabalpur Division. Details are as under:- **Category:** Parking, **Catalogue No. :** JBP-C-Par-25-14, **Lot No.:** PARKING-JBP-MML-MX-68-25-2(Parking - Mixed), **Assets Details :** Parking Lot for Two wheelers & Four Wheeler at Madanmahal station for Three years only,**Auction Start:** 26.11.2025 12:00 hrs., **Auction End :** 26.11.2025 12:30 hrs, **Category:** Parking, **Catalogue No. :** JBP-C-Par-25-14, **Lot No.:** PARKING-JBP-PHA-MX-60-25-3(Parking-Mixed), **Assets Details :** Parking Lot for Two wheelers & Four Wheeler at Pathariya station for Three years only **Auction Start :** 26.11.2025 12:00 hrs., **Auction End :** 26.11.2025 12:40 hrs, Prospective bidders are requested to visit e-Auction Leasing module on IREPS website (www.ireps.gov.in). The Lot-wise details are available therein under the above mentioned catalogue No. E-Auction information is also available on the notice board of Divisional Railway Manager (Commercial), West Central Railway, Jabalpur.

Sd./-
For Divisional Railway Manager (Commercial),
West Central Railway, Jabalpur

स्वच्छ भारत अभियान
एक कदम स्वच्छता की ओर

The Pioneer
BHOPAL | FRIDAY | NOVEMBER 14, 2025

Dhaka braces for verdict on Sheikh Hasina

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
Dhaka

A special tribunal in Bangladesh on Thursday said it will deliver judgement on November 17 in a case against deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina over alleged crimes against humanity committed during the July Uprising.

Hasina, 78, faces multiple cases in Bangladesh after being ousted in August last year following the mass student-led agitation. According to a UN rights office report, up to 1,400 people were killed between July 15 and August 15 last year (dubbed as July Uprising) as Hasina's government ordered a security crackdown on protesters.

"Justice Golam Mortuza Mozumder, chairman of a three-member panel of the International Crimes Tribunal (ICT-BD), set November 17 for delivering the verdict," a lawyer, attending the tightly secured special court in the capital, told. Hasina, her home minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal and then inspector general of police (IGP) Chowdhury Abdullah Al-Mamun were tried in the tribunal. The ex-premier and Kamal were tried in absentia, with the court declaring them fugitives. Chief prosecutor Mohammad Tajul Islam has demanded the death penalty for Hasina, alleging that she was the "mastermind and principal architect" behind the crimes against humanity committed during the mass protests last year.

Hasina's supporters say the charges against her are politically motivated. Mamun faced the trial in person but emerged as an approver or state witness. The former police chief appeared on the dock as the ICT-BD chair Justice Majumder fixed the date. The tribunal on October 23 concluded the hearing on the case after over 28 working days, when 54 witnesses testified before the court describing how efforts were made to tame last year's student-led movement called July Uprising that toppled Hasina's now disbanded Awami League government on August 5, 2024.

Hasina fled Bangladesh on August 5 last year amid escalating unrest and is currently residing in India. Kamal reportedly also took refuge in the neighbouring country. The interim government led by Muhammad Yunus has sought Hasina's extradition, but India has yet to respond to the request.

Security in the capital was heightened over the "Dhaka lockdown" call by the Awami League, coinciding with the tribunal's announcement of the verdict date.

Authorities called up army troops, paramilitary Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) and police in riot gear to spread a security blanket in and around the International Crimes Tribunal (ICT-BD) complex at central Dhaka.

Witnesses and reports said Dhaka streets looked unusually empty, though many commuters stepped out of their homes and cautiously headed for workplaces and schools. However, many private institutions, including private universities, preferred to operate online, fearing the outbreak of violence. Transport operators said passenger numbers on long-haul buses leaving Dhaka dropped sharply, while the capital's major Gabtoli bus terminal remained largely empty with fewer trips and delayed departures.

Hasina and the two others were accused of committing crimes under five counts, with the first one alleging the defendants of murder, attempted murder, torture, and other inhumane acts.

The second count accused Hasina of ordering the "extermination" of protesters. Under the third count, she was accused of making inflammatory remarks and ordering the use of deadly weapons against protesting students.

Under the rest of the counts, the defendants were charged with the shooting and murder of six unarmed protesters, including students in Dhaka and its suburbs. In several recent interviews with major international news outlets and the Indian media, Hasina called the ICT-BD a kangaroo court run entirely by men linked to her political opponents.

Travel restriction on Nepal's ex-police chief Khapung

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
Kathmandu

A high level commission formed to investigate the incidents related to Gen Z protests on September 8 and 9 that led to regime change in Nepal on Thursday restricted the country's former police chief from travelling abroad.

A meeting of the commission, headed by Gauri Bahadur Karki, decided to impose the travel restriction on former Inspector General of Police (IGP) Chandra Kuber Khapung, whose term ended on Monday, prohibiting him from leaving the Kathmandu Valley without the commission's permission. "Since former IGP Chandra Kuber Khapung may be required to appear before the commission at any time in connection with the investigation into the incidents of September 8 and 9, restrictions have been imposed on his foreign travel and movement outside the valley with immediate effect," read a statement issued by the commission's spokesperson Bigyan Raj Sharma.Khapung cannot travel without prior approval from the commission.

The commission has already restricted the then prime minister K P Sharma Oli and then Home Minister Ramesh Lekhak from leaving Kathmandu valley. On September 8, the first day of the Gen-Z protests, as many as 22 protesters were killed during the police firing on youths demanding lifting of a ban on social media and protesting corruption and political disorder in the country. In total, 76 people were killed during the September 8 and 9 violent protests that ultimately led to the ouster of the Oli Government.

British chefs appeal to save Indian restaurant

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
London

Some of Britain's leading chefs across cuisines on Thursday came out fighting in favour of one of London's oldest Indian restaurants, Veeraswamy, which is battling the threat of losing its iconic central location on Regent Street in a lease extension stand-off.

In an open letter in 'The Times', well-known chefs and restaurateurs such as Cyrus Todiwala, Raymond Blanc and Michel Roux appealed to the Crown Estate, landlord of Victory House, which houses the Michelin-star restaurant for nearly 100 years since April 1926, to "act responsibly".

Last summer, Veeraswamy owners MW Eat were informed that its lease would not be renewed because the Crown Estate wants to extend the ground floor reception area for the offices on the building's upper floors.

The chefs write that converting "such a restaurant into offices would be sacrilege, representing a profound loss, both for London's restaurant scene and for our tourism economy, which thrives on the city's unique and diverse landmarks".

"As the Crown knows, heritage cannot be relocated, nor can history be replaced. Keeping Veeraswamy alive is an act of responsibility by the Crown worthy of London's reputation as one of the world's great dining and tourist cities," they say in the letter to the newspaper.

The Crown Estate is owned by the British monarch "in right of the Crown", which means that the King owns the estate during his reign, though it is not his private property. Therefore, he does not directly manage or make decisions about its assets, and the estate pays its profits into the UK Government's coffers.

"We have nurtured it, nourished it, and kept it apace with the times. It's probably the oldest surviving restaurant in the world now with such a rich history, and will be a tragedy if it were to lose its location," said Ranjit Mathrani, whose MW Eat group with sisters Namita and Camellia Panjabi operates other popular Indian diners in London, including Chutney Mary and Amaya.

Veeraswamy was founded by Edward Palmer, the great-grandson of General William Palmer, who was the Military and private secretary to Warren Hastings – the first Governor General of India – and Mughal Princess Faisan Nissa Begum.

Palmer is said to have been greatly influenced by his great-grandmother when devising the first menu. "Our guests have included her late majesty the Queen (Elizabeth II), the Princess Royale (Princess Anne), and other overseas royals. The Crown Estate declined to extend our lease past 24 June, and require us to vacate, ostensibly to enable them to take back and use parts of our restaurant on the ground and first floors for their development plans," said Mathrani.

Suicide bomber was Afghan: Pakistan

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
Islamabad

Pakistan's Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi on Thursday said that the suicide bomber involved in the deadly Islamabad bombing was an Afghan national.

At least 12 people were killed on Tuesday when a suicide bomber detonated his explosives near the entrance of a court in the G-11 area of the capital. After visiting the attack site, Naqvi had announced to identify the bomber before pointing fingers in any direction. Addressing the Senate on Thursday, Naqvi said that authorities have identified the attackers as well as those involved in the Islamabad bombing. "We have traced the attacker. suicide bomber is an Afghan national," he said. The minister also said that the suicide bombers involved in the Wana Cadet College attack in South Waziristan district this week were also from Afghanistan.

He also announced that action would be taken at an appropriate level.

Six people were injured on Monday after a suicide bomber detonated explosives at the main gate of the Wana Cadet College in South Waziristan, bordering Afghanistan.

Replying to a question outside the parliament, Naqvi rejected the idea of talks with militants. "How can we talk to them when they are throwing bombs on us? It is not possible," he said. Separately, Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq said that terrorism increased after the Taliban came to power."There is total goodwill from Pakistan, but every week we have to shoulder the dead bodies of our soldiers and people," Dar told the Senate.

Turkey temporarily grounds C-130 planes after crash kills 20 military personnel

ASSOCIATED PRESS
Ankara(Turkey)

Turkey has temporarily grounded its C-130 military cargo planes as a precaution, the Defence Ministry announced on Thursday, following a crash in Georgia that claimed the lives of all 20 military personnel on board. The cargo plane was flying from Ganja, Azerbaijan to Turkey when it crashed in Georgia's Sighnaghi municipality, close to the Azerbaijani border, on Tuesday. The cause of the crash is being investigated.

The military personnel were part of a unit responsible for the maintenance and repair of Turkish F-16 jets that had flown to Azerbaijan to participate in that country's Victory Day celebrations. The event marked Azerbaijan's 2020 military success over Armenia for control of the Karabakh region, known internationally as Nagorno-Karabakh, a conflict that had lasted nearly four decades.

Bank of Maharashtra
(A Govt. of India Enterprise)
www.bankofmaharashtra.in

ZONAL OFFICE,
1/14, ADMINISTRATIVE ZONE,
ARERA HILLS, BHOPAL, 462011.

POSSESSION NOTICE [Rule – 8 (1)]

WHEREAS,
The undersigned being the Authorised Officer of the Bank of Maharashtra under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002, and in exercise of the powers conferred under Sub-Section (12) of Section 13 read with Rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rule, 2002, issued a Demand Notice dated mentioned below calling upon the borrower and guarantor to repay outstanding Amount (mentioned below) within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said Notice. The notice was sent by Regd AD Post and hand delivery.
The borrower having failed to repay the amount, the undersigned has taken **Symbolic Possession** of the properties described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under section 13 (4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules on dates mentioned below. The borrower in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the properties will be subject to the charge of **Bank of Maharashtra, Shivpuri Branch** for an amount herein above mentioned. The borrower's attention is invited to the provisions of sub-section 8 of Sec 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.

Name & Address of Borrowers & Guarantor (s)	Details of Property	Demand Notice Dt / Possession Notice	Outstanding Amount ₹
Borrower: **Mr. Rajendra Jain S/o Mr. Shankar Lal Jain** Co-Borrower: **2. Mrs. Saroj Jain W/o Mr. Rajendra Jain Address of All :** Address :- Ward No. 14 in front of Dr. Chandra Shekhar Sharma Krishnapuram Colony Shivpuri Tehsil-Shivpuri, Dist.- Shivpuri, M.P.-473551	All those pieces and parcels of house along with land situated at Krishnapuram Colony Shivpuri Ward No. 14, Shivpuri Tehsil & District Shivpuri (M.P.). The total area of the said property is 412.06 sq. ft. (38.33 sq. meters) and said plot of forming part of Survey No. 855 Boundaries: East : 08 feet wide road, West : Plot of Omwati Verma, North : Pataur of Jeevanlal, South : Pataur of Ramesh Ojha **This property is owned by Mr. Rajendra Jain S/o Mr. Shankar Lal Jain.** **Cersai Asset ID -200095985064**	22/08/2025 / 10/11/2025	₹ 11,93,585.36 + applicable unapplied interest and penal charges thereon w.e.f. 22/08/2025

Date : 14.11.2025
Place : Shivpuri
(SANJEEV SAJJAN)
Chief Manager & Authorized Officer, Zonal Office Bhopal

SYMBOLIC POSSESSION NOTICE

ICICI Home Finance | Registered Office: ICICI Bank Towers, Bandra-Kurla Complex, Bandra (East), Mumbai- 400051
Corporate Office: ICICI HFC Tower, JB Nagar, Andheri Kurla Road, Andheri East, Mumbai- 400059
Branch Office: 3rd Floor, Dhan Trident, Office No. 322-323, DPC Estate Pvt Ltd, Scheme No. 54, Vijaynagar, Indore, Madhya Pradesh- 452010.
Branch Office: Office No. 106, 1st Floor, Pukhraj Corporate, Navlakha Indore- 452001
Whereas
The undersigned being the Authorized Officer of ICICI Home Finance Company Limited under the Securitisation, Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of the powers conferred under section 13 (12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) rules 2002, issued demand notices upon the borrowers mentioned below, to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.
As the borrower failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/ her under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules on the below-mentioned dates. The borrower in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of ICICI Home Finance Company Limited.
The Borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower/ Co-Borrower/ Loan Account Number	Description of property/ Date of Possession	Date of Demand Notice/ Amount in Demand Notice (Rs.)	Name of Branch
1.	**Hakimuddin Saify (Borrower), Fatema Hakimuddin Saify (Co-Borrower), LHOVG00001632146.**	Flat No. 706, Crystal Apartment, Khasra No. 694/2, Ward No. 78, Village Bijalpur, District Indore, Madhya Pradesh- 452010. Bounded By- North: Open Mos, South: Corridor, East: Flat No.707, West: Open Mos./ Date of Possession- 11-Nov-25	23-08-2025 Rs. 43,65,281.66/-	Indore-Vijaynagar
2.	**Kapil Kaushal (Borrower), Hemlata. (Co-Borrower), LHIND00001646814.**	Flat No. 104, Anand Vrindavan Dham, Shree Kridhna Paradise, Plot No. M-6, Village Rau, District Indore,madhya Pradesh- 453331. Bounded By- North: Corridor, South: Plot No. M-7, East: Flat No. 103, West: Flat No. 105./ Date of Possession- 11-Nov-25	23-08-2025 Rs. 12,53,709/-	Indore-Navlakha

The above-mentioned borrowers(s)/ guarantors(s) are hereby given a 30 day notice to repay the amount, else the mortgaged properties will be sold on the expiry of 30 days from the date of publication of this Notice, as per the provisions under the Rules 8 and 9 of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002.
Date : November 14, 2025
Place: Indore
Authorized Office
ICICI Home Finance Company Limited

PHYSICAL POSSESSION NOTICE

ICICI Home Finance | Registered office: ICICI Bank Towers, Bandra-Kurla Complex, Bandra (East), Mumbai- 400051
Corporate Office: ICICI HFC Tower, JB Nagar, Andheri Kurla Road, Andheri East, Mumbai- 400059
Branch Office: 1st Floor, The Empire, Office No. F-05, 33- City Centre, Ward No. 30, Near Income Tax Building, Opposite Madhav Rao Scindia Park, Gwalior (MP)- 474011
Whereas
The undersigned being the Authorized Officer of ICICI Home Finance Company Limited under the Securitisation, Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of the powers conferred under section 13 (12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) rules 2002, issued demand notices upon the borrowers mentioned below, to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.
As the borrower failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/ her under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules on the below-mentioned dates. The borrower in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of ICICI Home Finance Company Limited.
The Borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower/ Co-Borrower/ Loan Account Number	Description of property/ Date of Possession	Date of Demand Notice/ Amount in Demand Notice (Rs.)	Name of Branch
1.	Himani Baghel (Borrower), Pramod Namdev (Co-Borrower), LHGWA00001342140.	Part of Plot No. 22, 23, 24 Part of Survey No. 1427 1 Min-2, 1427 1 Min-3,1427 1 Min-1 ,1427 2 Min-2, 1427 2 Min-3, 1435,1439 Min-2, 1440,1442 1 Min-1, 1442 1 Min-3, Ward No.61 Raising City, Gram Khureri, Morar, Gwalior, MP- 474001 (Ref Lan No. LHGWA00001342140). Bounded By- North: Plot No.25, South: Colony Road, East: Plot No. B-39,40,41, West: Plot No. A-22,23,24./ Date of Possession- 11-Nov-25	12-07-2023 Rs. 17,65,565/-	Gwalior
2.	Himani Baghel (Borrower), Pramod Namdev (Co-Borrower), LHGWA00001344755.	Part of Plot No. 22, 23, 24 Part of Survey No. 1427 1 Min-2, 1427 1 Min-3,1427 1 Min-1 ,1427 2 Min-2, 1427 2 Min-3, 1435,1439 Min-2, 1440,1442 1 Min-1, 1442 1 Min-3, Ward No.61 Raising City, Gram Khureri, Morar, Gwalior, MP- 474001 (Ref Lan No. LHGWA00001344755). Bounded By- North: Plot No.25, South: Colony Road, East: Plot No. B-39,40,41, West: Plot No. A-22,23,24./ Date of Possession- 11-Nov-25	12-07-2023 Rs. 1,05,173.99/-	Gwalior
3.	Chandra Shekhar Pathak (Borrower), Archana Pathak (Co-Borrower), LHGWA00001483922.	Kabir Mension Dargi Oli Pichhadi Nagar Laskar Ward No. 50 Shop No. 101 Gwalior MP. Middle Class Na Gwalior Madhya Pradesh- 474001 (Ref Lan No. LHGWA00001483922). Bounded By- North: Property of Kabeer Mension, South: Common Passage & Stair, East: Property of Sindhiya, West: Property of Rajan Pathak./ Date of Possession- 10-Nov-25	17-07-2023 Rs. 14,92,628/-	Gwalior
4.	Chandra Shekhar Pathak (Borrower), Archana Pathak (Co-Borrower), LHGWA00001483921.	Kabir Mension Dargi Oli Pichhadi Nagar Laskar Ward No. 50 Shop No. 101 Gwalior MP. Middle Class Na Gwalior Madhya Pradesh- 474001 (Ref Lan No. LHGWA00001483921). Bounded By- North: Property of Kabeer Mension, South: Common Passage & Stair, East: Property of Sindhiya, West: Property of Rajan Pathak./ Date of Possession- 10-Nov-25	17-07-2023 Rs. 74,926/-	Gwalior

The above-mentioned borrowers(s)/ guarantors(s) are hereby given a 30 day notice to repay the amount, else the mortgaged properties will be sold on the expiry of 30 days from the date of publication of this Notice, as per the provisions under the Rules 8 and 9 of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002.
Date : November 14, 2025,
Place: Gwalior
Authorized Officer,
ICICI Home Finance Company Limited

केनरा बैंक Canara Bank
भरोसे सरकार का उपक्रम
A Govt. of India Undertaking
सिंडिकेट Syndicate

Canara Bank, Specialised ARM Branch,
Plot no. 4, PSP Area, Near AIIMS,
Saket Nagar Bhopal Tel.: 8989014648

DEMAND NOTICE [SECTION 13(2)] TO BORROWER/ GUARANTOR/MORTGAGOR

Ref: NPA/SARF/BERASIA/ZAHOORMD/2025 Date: 10.11.2025
To,
M/s Zahoor Mohammad Proprietor Mr. Abdul Aziz s/o Mr. Zahoor Mohammad,
Address- 100, Categorized Market, Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh- 462001
Mr. Abdul Aziz s/o Mr. Zahoor Mohammad, Proprietor & Mortgagor in M/s Zahoor Mohammad
Address- B- 97, Housing Board Colony, Koh-e-fiza, Tehsil Huzur, District Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh- 462001
Mr. Shakeel Ahmad s/o Mr. Zahoor Mohammad, (Guarantor)
Address- B- 97, Housing Board Colony, Koh-e-fiza, Tehsil Huzur, District Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh- 462001
Dear Sir,
Sub: Notice issued under Section 13(2) of the Securitisation & Reconstruction of Financial Assets & Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002.
The undersigned being the Authorized Officer of Canara Bank, Specialized ARM, Bhopal appointed under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002, (hereinafter referred as the "Act") do hereby issue this notice to you as under:
That **M/s Zahoor Mohammad through its Proprietor Mr. Abdul Aziz s/o Mr. Zahoor Mohammad** has availed credit facilities from canara bank and the amount demanded as on date is as follows

S.No.	Loan No.	Nature of Loan/Limit	Liability with interest As On Date	Rate of Interest
1.	0360285000036	OD/ OCC	52,04,365.50/-	13.55%
2	0360755000041	GECL 1.0	12,94,308.30/-	8.85%
3	0360757000001	RFITL 2.0	3,30,334.07/-	11.90%
4	0360603002328	VEHICLE LOAN	2,69,631.96/-	10.20%
		Total	70,98,639.87 /-	

The above said loan/credit facilities are duly secured by way of mortgage of the assets more specifically described in the schedule hereunder, by virtue of the relevant documents executed by you in our favour. Since you had failed to discharge your liabilities as per the terms and conditions stipulated, the Bank has classified the debt as **NPA on 07.09.2022** Hence, we hereby issue this notice to you under Section 13(2) of the subject Act calling upon you to discharge the entire liability of **Rs. 70,98,639.87 (Rupees Seventy Lakhs Ninety Eight Thousand Six Hundred Thirty Nine and Paise Eighty Seven Only)** with accrued and up-to-date interest and other expenses, within sixty days from the date of the notice, failing which we shall exercise all or any of the rights under Section 13(4) (a) and (b) of the subject Act.
Further, you are hereby restrained from dealing with any of the secured assets mentioned in the schedule in any manner whatsoever, without our prior consent. This is without prejudice to any other rights available to us under the subject Act and/or any other law in force.
Your attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of Section 13 of the SARFAESI Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.
The demand notice had also been issued to you by Speed Post at your last known address available in the Branch record.
This demand notice is issued afresh in cancelation of earlier Demand Notice dated 08.02.2023 due to technical reasons.

SCHEDULE

Movable- Hypothecation of Vehicle
Name of Title holder M/s Zahoor Mohammad (Proprietor Mr. Abdul Aziz s/o Mr. Zahoor Mohammad)
Immovable- EMT of property situated at Plot No. 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111 at Mechanical Market, Chhola Road, Bhopal
The Plot is surrounded by (as per Mortgaged Papers)
Plot No. 104 admeasuring 200 Sq. Ft.-
East- Plot No. 103, West- Plot No. 105, North- Plot No. 06, South- Road
Plot No. 105 admeasuring 200 Sq. Ft.-
East- Plot No. 104, West- Plot No. 09, North- Plot No.10, South- Road
Plot No. 106 admeasuring 200 Sq. Ft.-
East- Plot No. 105, West- Plot No. 107, North- Plot No. 06, South- Road
Plot No. 107 admeasuring 200 Sq. Ft.-
East- Plot No. 106, West- Plot No. 108, North- Plot No. 06, South- Road
Plot No. 108 admeasuring 200 Sq. Ft.-
East- Plot No. 107, West- Plot No. 109, North- Plot No. 07, South- Road
Plot No. 109 admeasuring 200 Sq. Ft.-
East- Plot No. 108, West- Plot No. 110, North- Plot No. 07, South- Road
Plot No. 110 admeasuring 200 Sq. Ft.-
East-Plot No. 109, West-Plot No. 111, North-Plot No. 07, South-Road
Plot No. 111 admeasuring 200 Sq. Ft.-
East Plot No. 110, West Plot No. 112, North Plot No. 07, South Road
Name of Title holder M/s Zahoor Mohammad (Proprietor Mr. Abdul Aziz s/o Mr. Zahoor Mohammad)

Notice Date 10/11/2025
Place- Bhopal
Authorised Officer
Canara Bank

The Pioneer
BHOPAL | FRIDAY | NOVEMBER 14, 2025

India wary of South Africa's spin threat

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
Kolkata

India's captain Shubman Gill, second left, vice captain Rishabh Pant, third right, head coach Gautam Gambhir, third left, and batting coach Sitanshu Kotak, second right, with others during a practice session ahead of the first Test cricket match of a series between India and South Africa, at the Eden Gardens, in Kolkata PTI

India's awe-inspiring batting depth will face a stern test against South Africa's quality spin attack when the reasonably well-matched sides clash in an eagerly-anticipated two-match Test series beginning here on Friday.

India would be haunted by the ghosts of last year's home debacle against New Zealand when their home record was shattered by Kiwi spinners Ajaz Patel, Mitchell Santner and Glenn Phillips, who shared 36 wickets across three Tests, fashioning an unprecedented 0-3 whitewash.

Given South Africa's heavy reliance on tweakers right now, that collapse against sustained spin pressure will linger in the collective memory of the home side.

The reigning World Test champions are known for fiery pacers historically but are currently armed with one of the most potent spin groups in world cricket.

The Proteas arrive on the back of a morale-boosting 1-1 draw in Pakistan, achieved without inspirational captain Temba Bavuma.

South Africa's spin trio of Keshav Maharaj, Simon Harmer and Senuran Muthusamy accounted for 35 of the 39 wickets to fall across the series outperforming Pakistan's own slow-bowling contingent of Noman Ali, Sajid Khan and Salman Agha, who managed 21 wickets collectively.

It was little wonder then that India assistant coach Ryan ten Doeschate called the rival bowling line-up a "subcontinent-style attack".

"They have got four spinners at their disposal, and most likely they will play three. It's a little bit like playing against a subcontinent team," he said.

"We've addressed that early on. Hopefully, we've learned from the New Zealand series."

Simon Harmer, now 36 and holder of 1,000 first-class wickets, is no stranger to Indian conditions.

As a 26-year-old on the 2015 tour under Hashim Amla, he featured in two Tests — in Mohali and Nagpur — and claimed prized scalps such as Cheteshwar Pujara, Rohit Sharma and Wriddhiman Saha, all known for their spin-playing prowess.

A decade later, Harmer remains as wily. He arrives in Kolkata after an eight-wicket match haul in Rawalpindi last month that spun South Africa to a series-levelling win over Pakistan.

His control, drift, and subtle changes of pace make him an ideal foil for the left-arm spin of Maharaj, who is arguably one of the most accurate and attacking spinners in the modern game.

The Eden Gardens pitch has therefore become the most-watched element of this contest. While India batting coach Sitanshu Kotak and captain Shubman Gill have made multiple pitch inspections, Cricket Association of Bengal president Sourav Ganguly has assured that it "won't be a rank-turner".

That will please Jasprit Bumrah, who could be India's trump card on a surface that historically gives early movement and late reverse swing. India would look to go with two pacers and it appears that Akash Deep, the local 'boy', will have the edge with his knowledge of the conditions.

Over the last 15 years, pacers have taken 61 per cent (97 of 159 wickets) in Tests here as seam and swing play a major role, especially in the early and closing stages.

While a young Indian side under Shubman Gill's debut captaincy drew 2-2 in England this summer, showing resilience and adaptability in seaming conditions, it is the New Zealand debacle at home that continues to rankle.

The subsequent 2-0 win against a weak West Indies side in this WTC cycle did little to test India's revival.

For India, the focus will be on application and patience against spin.

With Rishabh Pant fit again and an in-form Dhruv Jurel set to play as a specialist batter, the middle order looks more stable. Washington Sundar, who topped India's spin charts in that New Zealand series with 16 wickets, provides drift and bounce and lends depth with the bat.

Ten Doeschate underlined the mental readiness required after a gruelling multi-format schedule.

"You've got to switch on mentally and be ready for 16–17 days of really tough work. The body will take care of itself — the mind has to be ready."

Given it's only a two-match series, the margin for error is slim.

Teams (from)

India: Shubman Gill (Capt), KL Rahul, Yashasvi Jaiswal, Sai Sudharsan, Rishabh Pant (WK and VC), Dhruv Jurel, Ravindra Jadeja, Washington Sundar, Jasprit Bumrah, Akash Deep, Mohammed Siraj, Kuldeep Yadav, Axar Patel and Devdutt Padikkal.

South Africa: Temba Bavuma (Capt), Aiden Markram, Ryan Rickelton, Tristan Stubbs, Kyle Verreynne, Dewald Brevis, Zubayr Hamza, Tony de Zorzi, Corbin Bosch, Wiaan Mulder, Marco Jansen, Keshav Maharaj, Senuran Muthusamy, Kagiso Rabada, Simon Harmer.

Winning in India would be second only to WTC: Bavuma

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
Kolkata

South Africa's captain Temba Bavuma addresses a press conference on the eve of the first Test cricket match between India and South Africa, at Eden Gardens in Kolkata PTI

The prospect of conquering India in their own backyard carries a special allure for the reigning World Test champion skipper Temba Bavuma who said winning the two-match series is almost on par with South Africa's World Test Championship triumph earlier this year.

South Africa have lost seven successive Tests in India across three tours, their last win coming back in 2010 at Nagpur.

But Bavuma believes this group, unbeaten in full-strength Test series since coach Shukri Conrad took charge in 2023, has the maturity and belief to mount a serious challenge and win their only second series in India after 25 years.

"I think, obviously, winning the World Test Championship... not much to trump that. But second to that, I think will be winning in India," Bavuma said ahead of the first Test at Eden Gardens.

"It's something that's I wouldn't even say it's eluded us,, but we haven't been able to do for the longest of time. So, I mean, that's definitely up there in terms of ambition."

"We understand the magnitude of the challenge. Some of us in the group, there have been moments of hurt. So we know what it's about," he said.

"We look forward to the challenge. It should be exciting looking at the makeup of both teams — fantastic players within the Indian team, but a little bit of inexperience. Similarly with our side, the guys want to match up to the best in the world."

Win the toss: Williamson's advice: The Proteas skipper also recalled a lighter moment shared with former New Zealand skipper Kane Williamson and his one tip —- "win the toss".

At an awards ceremony in Mumbai, Bavuma had sought Williamson's advice as New Zealand had stunned India 3-0 in their own conditions last year.

"I met up with Kane at an awards evening in India a couple of months ago. I tried to ask him for some pointers," Bavuma said with a chuckle.

"He wasn't too open about it, but he did say, make sure that you win the toss. So I've been practising it."

Having returned from a long injury lay-off with runs and time at the crease in the second unofficial Test against India A, Bavuma, who scored a second innings fifty after a golden duck in the first innings, said proving his fitness was a key step.

"For me, the biggest thing was having come off a long lay-off of Test cricket, getting back on the field, proving my fitness to myself and everyone around, spending some time at the crease. I think that was important," he said.

The Proteas skipper, who faced Kuldeep Yadav for the first time in that warm-up, said India's left-arm wrist spinner will be a handful.

"I'd rather face him in the A game than here in Kolkata — that's if he plays. He's not a massive turner of the ball, but he can obviously deceive you off the wicket," Bavuma said.

"You can see why India have a lot of faith in him. Definitely a guy who's a wicket-taker."

Spinners often decide game: Gill

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
Kolkata

India's captain Shubman Gill addresses a press conference on the eve of the first Test cricket match between India and South Africa, at Eden Gardens in Kolkata PTI

Skipper Shubman Gill acknowledged that the choice between a spinner and an extra seamer is nothing short of a "conflict" but the game-changing ability of tweakers at home will be a crucial consideration when India finalise their playing 11 for the first Test against South Africa, beginning here Friday.

The talismanic Jasprit Bumrah and Mohammad Siraj are certain to feature in the eleven at Eden Gardens, while Akash Deep is the third pacer in the squad. India have four spinners in Ravindra Jadeja, Axar Patel, Washington Sundar and Kuldeep Yadav. Jadeja, Axar and Washington also offer batting heft.

"It's always this time of the year, there is always a conflict if you want to go for an extra seamer or spinner. That's why we will see the condition tomorrow and decide on the XI," Gill said in the pre-match press conference here on Thursday.

But without giving away the full range of his thoughts, Gill said spinners have the game-deciding abilities. "It's more or less finalised. The wicket looks different from yesterday. We will see it tomorrow morning and then will finalise the spin combination, as spinners, more or less, will decide the game," he added.

He then touched upon the value that Washington, Jadeja and Axar bring to the table as batters.

"We are fortunate to have good batting all-rounders, be it Axar, Washington or Jadeja, their bowling and batting records are excellent, especially in India. It's going to be an exciting Test, and it's good to have more options," he noted.

However, Gill was not ready to rule out the role pacers could play if the pitch goes dry in Kolkata.

Regaining rhythm key for Kohli, Rohit: Pujara

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
New Delhi

Former India batter Cheteshwar Pujara on Thursday stressed that each and every bilateral assignment will be "very important" now for stalwarts Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma as India look ahead to the 2027 ODI World Cup.

In the twilight of their international career, Kohli and Rohit play just the ODI format, making it challenging to sustain form after long breaks.

The duo, who featured in ODI series in Australia, will be seen in the upcoming series against South Africa starting November 30 in Ranchi.

"For both of them, I think each and every series will be very important because when you are just playing one format. It is important for a player to be in touch with the game and they will be playing after a bit of a break which makes it a little more challenging," JioStar expert Pujara said during a Media Day ahead of the first Test against South Africa.

"Having that experience of playing just one format, I can talk from my experience that when you play international cricket after a long time, you are trying to find the rhythm. When it comes to white ball cricket, it's slightly easier," added the former Test specialist.

"But at the same time, because of the age they have to work hard and which they have been, they have seen the results recently that they have scored runs. And we are hopeful that they will carry on playing till their 2027 World Cup."

Rohit, 38, smashed 73 and 121 not out in the second and third ODIs in Australia to walk away with the Player of the series award, while Kohli, 37, scored an unbeaten 74 in third match.

"It will be their personal call. I don't think we should be looking that far ahead. It is also depending on how their body is responding, how they are enjoying just playing one format of the game and if they are enjoying it and carrying on and if they are having a good form then we will see what happens going forward," Pujara said. "But as of now I think each and every series becomes very important because for them to, one is to perform, to score runs, to maintain that rhythm and to sustain that form is very important and that's why I believe that each and every series, each and every match becomes very important for them."

Selectors should have honest conversation with Shami: Senior pacer Mohammed Shami, who had undergone an ankle surgery following the 2023 World Cup, has not featured in India's plans since the Champions Trophy in March. He didn't find a place in the home Test series against West Indies and was also ignored for the South Africa series, beginning at the Eden Gardens on Friday.

Asked if it is the end of the road for Shami, Pujara said: "I'm not the one to answer .. I mean, the selectors and the team management should have a very honest conversation with him. What's the plan going forward? Whether they want to pick him or they are looking at the young players."

"And if he is being informed that they are not looking at him, then it is always Shami's personal call whether he wants to carry on playing first class cricket, whether he still wants to, whether he wants to retire from international cricket, I mean he is part of the IPL as well.

8 Sri Lankan players set to exit Pakistan over safety concerns

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
Colombo/Rawalpindi

Eight Sri Lankan players currently touring Pakistan with the national team for a three-match ODI series want to return home due to security concerns following a deadly bomb blast in Islamabad that left 12 people dead and several injured.

The two teams are scheduled to clash in the second ODI of the three-match series in Rawalpindi on Thursday and the development raises doubts on whether the game would go ahead as scheduled.

Sri Lanka Cricket acknowledged the request from the players in a statement but said that for time being, it has instructed them and the support staff travelling with the team to continue with the tour as planned.

"Following this development the SLC immediately engaged with the players and assured them that all such concerns are being duly addressed in close consultation with the Pakistan cricket board and the relevant authorities to ensure the safety and well-being of every member of the touring party," the statement said.

SLC sources said replacements will be sent for players who insist on returning home. Sources in the Pakistan Cricket Board also confirmed the apprehensions of the touring players.

"It is not a good situation for Pakistan cricket because the players were given the option of wanting to stay and complete the tour or return home by the Sri Lankan board after the Sri Lankan High Commissioner met the Chairman of the PCB and Federal Interior Minister, Mohsin Naqvi and other government officials for a security briefing," a source close to the developments said. "These players took the option of returning home," the source added.

However, given the SLC's insistence, none of the eight members have as yet returned.

Sources in SLC added that the players are concerned because of Rawalpindi's the proximity to Islamabad.

Security beefed up: Security has been beefed up for the Lankans following the terror attacks in Islamabad and Wana with the island nation's High Commissioner also given the assurance that the touring players are being treated as "state guests".

The security issue was taken up at a meeting between the Sri Lankan High Commissioner, Admiral (retired) Fred Seneviratne, Naqvi and other Pakistan government officials in Islamabad.

Never easy to come back after injury: Rishabh Pant

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
Kolkata

Rishabh Pant will wear his India whites after a four-month hiatus in the first Test against South Africa here on Friday, and the wicketkeeper batter is understandably delighted to have made a difficult comeback from the latest injury setback.

Pant, who sustained a foot fracture during the fourth Test against England at Manchester in July, made his return to competitive cricket during India A's two unofficial Tests against South Africa A in Bengaluru.

"After an injury, it is never easy to come back. But God has been kind always and he has blessed me always, and this time also, and very happy to be back," said Pant in a video posted by the BCCI.

"See, every time I take the field, one thing I try to be is to be grateful. That's why I always look up and thank God, my parents, my family, everyone has supported me (during the recovery phase)," added the man who recovered from life-threatening injuries from a car accident to return last year. Pant said his focus was on keeping his mind in a good space during the rehabilitation period, rather than worrying about external speculation about his future. "One thing I do is to focus on controllables, luck is one thing that you cannot control.

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1. EOI No.: IRCTC/CO/INFR(EOI)/1/2023/Infra/CO-Part(1) (51068) GGM/Infra invites Expression of Interest for "Leasing of IRCTC Premises at Plot No. 73-74, Sector-20A, Faridabad". Last date of submission: **11.12.2025** upto **15:00 hrs.**

2. Open E-Tender No.: CO/NIT/FFU/2025/06 for Setting up, Operation and Management of Fast Food Units. Last date of submission: **25.11.2025** upto **15:00 hrs.**

3. E-Tender No.: 2025/IRCTC/Tourism/Golden Chariot/Onboard Services/OT/2025-26-II: Appointment of Service provider for providing comprehensive on-board services to guests of Golden Chariot Train for two seasons (2025-26 and 2026-27). Last Date of submission: **28.11.2025** at **11:00 hrs.**

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DEMAND NOTICE

DEMAND NOTICE UNDER SECTION 13 (2) OF THE SECURITISATION AND RECONSTRUCTION OF FINANCIAL ASSETS AND ENFORCEMENT OF SECURITY INTEREST ACT 2002, (SARFAESI ACT)

In respect of loans availed by below mentioned borrowers/Gurantors through **Bank of Maharashtra, Shivpuri Branch** which have become NPA with below mentioned outstanding amount. We have already issued detailed demand notice on below mentioned dates under Sec. 13(2) of Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002 by Registered post & Speed Post with acknowledge due to you which has been returned undelivered. We have indicated our intention of taking possession of securities owned by you as per sec. 13 (4) of the Act in case of your failure to pay the amount mentioned within 60 days.
The borrower's attention is invited to the provisions of sub-section 8 of Sec 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.

Name & Address of Borrowers & Guarantor (s)	Details of Property & Property Owner	Nature & Amt. of Credit facility	Present outstanding
1. M/s Jai Om Shiv Ayurvedic Store (Borrower) **Proprietor – Mr. Deepak kumar Paliya S/o Mr. Seetaram Paliya** **2. Shri. Deepak Kumar Paliya S/o Mr. Seetaram Paliya** (Guarantor) **3. Smt. Kajal Paliya W/o Mr. Deepak kumar Paliya** (Guarantor) **Address of All :** **Address 1-** Asmani Mata Mandir ke aage, Rathore Doodh Dairy ke pass, New Subhash Colony, Ward no 37, Tehsil & District Shivpuri, M.P. -473551 **Address 2-** Near Kothi No. 40, Purani Shivpuri, Tehsil & Dist.-Shivpuri,M.P.- 473551	**Primary Security- Hypothecation of Stock purchased.** **Cersai ID-200054561492** **Collateral Security-** All those pieces & parcel of property with construction & fixture there being & lying at House at part of Survey No. 176/1 whose admeasuring area 1012.6 Sq ft. ward no 37, Gram Jhingura, Jhingura Mohalla Tehsil and District Shivpuri, M.P.- 473551, **Boundaries:** East: - House of Smt. Sunita Maratha, West: - Home portion of Seller's, North: - Path, South:- Home portion of Seller's is located This property is owned by Mr. Deepak Kumar Paliya S/o Mr. Seetaram Paliya and Mrs. Kajal Paliya W/o Mr. Deepak kumar Paliya **Cersai ID-200054559791**	**Cash Credit Loan ₹ 07.00 Lakh (A/c No. 60385111024)** **Demand Notice Date: 13/10/2025** **NPA Date: 08/09/2022**	**as on 12/10/2025** Ledger Balance: **₹ 672587.99** Unapplied interest : **₹ 1666.00** **Total : ₹ 674,253.99**

You all are advised (1) To collect the original notice/cover addressed to you and / if returned by Postal Authorities from the undersigned for more and complete details (2) To pay the outstanding amount Interest and costs etc. within 60 days from the date of notice referred to above to avoid further action under the SARFAESI Act. & (3) To restrain from disposing of dealing with the securities without our prior written consent.

Place : Shivpuri
Date : 14-11-2025

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POWER SHIFTS

From a low of below ₹35 a share to a high of over ₹70 in 12 months. From ₹3 five years ago to over ₹40 now, after touching even grander heights. Only a few stocks, especially of companies promoted by renowned and established names, can witness such a roller-coaster, whimsical, and random volatility like this. More than 20 times increase in 60 months. More than 1,300 per cent if one considers the end-to-end price over the period. But this is not the entire story. Since the end-2023, the spikes, the immediate ups and downs, are larger, and faster. They appear every few weeks, if not few days, even as the company gets embroiled in new and ever-growing controversies, and issues denials, and clarifications. Yes, we are talking about the Anil Ambani-owned Reliance Power. Both the promoter and company seem to zig-zag vertically.

Although there are several layers to this pattern, we will focus on three. The first is about Anil's tryst with official investigations, which relate to the charges of manipulations, siphoning off money, fraud loan accounts, interrogations by the Enforcement Directorate (ED), and arrests of key executives. Over the past few months, there are speculations about why the Government, its investigating agencies, and state-owned banks are going after the group with full energy. No stone seems to be left unturned to somehow push Anil to the wall. Observers talk about political backlash, business rivalries, banks' firming stance, and family's apathy. However, we are not interested in these issues. In terms of stock movement, we are concerned about how each day's events and developments pushes up, or pulls down, the share price in an unexpected, and logical manner. The banks or the Government does something, and price slumps. The group clarifies, or denies, and the stock moves up. It is a continuous yo-yo.

For example, between early September and early October 2024, the stock zoomed from below ₹30 to above ₹50. By the third week of November, it was down to ₹35, and then up to more than ₹47 by mid-December. In early March 2025, it stood at just over ₹33, and moved ₹10 within a fortnight. Between early May and early June, it was up from below 40 to above ₹70, down by ₹10 or so within weeks, up to over ₹70 by end June, and down to ₹42 in mid-August. Since then, it went into a series of going north, and going south over the next few months. There is no ending to understanding this topsy-turvy stock ride, which is likely to make investors giddy, heady, dizzy, woozy, shaky, wobbly, rickety, and wonky. You can choose more words, depending on the number of shares you own.

Second relates to Reliance Power's financials. Between 2023-24 and 2024-25, revenues from operations were down, but losses came down to less than a tenth, from nearly ₹2,000 crore to less than ₹200 crore. A one-off exceptional gain of more than ₹3,200 crore due to "de-consolidation of (a) subsidiary" in 2024-25 transformed the loss into a net profit of just under ₹3,000 crore. Obviously, the company did better in terms of expenses, which were down by more than 15 per cent, including lower finance costs by more than 20 per cent. Yet, revenues were down a bit. Quarterly results seem better. In the first quarter (April-June) in 2025-26, the net profit was down to below ₹45 crore, compared to a loss of nearly ₹100 crore in the same quarter the previous year. A quarter-on-quarter (Q-o-Q) comparison shows that the figure was down from ₹126 crore in January-March 2025 to ₹45 crore in April-June 2025. Revenues from operations were down both QoQ, and YoY (year-on-year).

Finally, there is the pure stock market dynamics. It is noticeable that when a stock goes up four per cent in a single day, or comes down by a similar percentage another day, and if this change happens sequentially, from one day to the next, there is a problem. This is especially so when the downward movement is dictated by some bad news, and reversed when the company provides some good news the next day. It does indicate that some investors are day-trading to benefit from the series of bad news, and good news. To cite an example, on November 7, 2025, the ED arrested Amar Nath Dutta, a resident of Kolkata, who was linked to bogus bank guarantees by a subsidiary of Reliance Power to Solar Energy Corporation, and the earlier arrest of Reliance Power's chief financial officer, Ashok Kumar Pal. The stock tanked, and recovered immediately when the company clarified that it had no connection with Dutta.

The interesting aspect is how Anil Ambani is fighting several battles. He grapples with the authorities, bankers, shareholders, and business community. Six years ago, he announced bankruptcy in a London court. Shares of his companies quoted miserably, like ₹3 for Reliance Power. The news of revival, and rebuilding the group, apart from new projects gave a shot in the arm. Once the Government trained its guns on him in the recent past, the shares were down. Over the past 20 years, since the public spat, and split with his elder brother, Mukesh, Anil's fortunes have fluctuated wildly.

OUR TAKE

Ola, take a swig, and blink it

The July-September quarter this year tells us a story of both the successes and failures of India's new-age tech firms. Backed by the growth in online insurance, PB Fintech, the parent of Policybazaar, an online insurance firm, reported a 38 per cent hike in revenue, and a higher 165 per cent in profit after tax. The revenue of FSN E-Commerce Ventures, better known as Nykaa, was up 25 per cent, and profit a higher 154 per cent. In the case of Eternal Brands, which owns delivery services like Zomato and Blinkit, revenue was up 183 per cent, but profit plummeted 63 per cent. India's EV (electric vehicle) marvel Ola Electric's revenue slipped 43 per cent, even as the quarterly loss widened to more than ₹400 crore.

Possibly, the lesson is that the disciplined firms gain, and exuberant ones derail. Probably, they are at different points in the evolution, and learning curves. PB Fintech has recurring revenue, cross-sells products, and earns higher premiums. Nykaa, once criticised for erratic profitability, focuses on gross margins, even as it adds new stores. When Eternal's Blinkit opts for a rapid rollout, it drives the top-line but compresses profitability. Ola Electric's weakness is structural, with factors that may be out of management control.

This is reflected in the stock market quotes, as some firms inch towards consistent profits, and others continue to burn cash, and convert growth into profits. A tracker by Inc42 estimates that while the profitable new-age firms saw post-listing gains of 31 per cent, the loss-making peers dropped 42 per cent since the debuts. The aggregate market cap of the new-age basket, however, declined a tad from $109 billion to $106 billion, according to WhalesBook, even though most reported double-digit revenue growths. Investors too take a more considerate, and considered approach.

Delhivery's numbers illustrate the combination of higher, and muted noise. Its shareholder letter shows that while the second quarter's (FY 26) revenue is up 16 per cent year-on-year, with a net profit of ₹59 crore, market reports cited a net loss of nearly ₹50 crore. Accounting for acquisitions possibly blurs the perception. The broader takeaway is that investors closely parse filings for evidence related to incomes, and operations. Analysts highlight such changes.

With high global and Indian valuations, and inflows from venture capitalists into Indian start-ups down nearly 60 per cent year-on-year in 2025, domestic investors are conservative. Growth is no longer what catches their attention. Cash flows do. Hence, Nykaa's decision to slow store expansion, PB Fintech's emphasis on renewals, and Eternal's focus on segmental disclosure signal positive signs. Competition adds another layer. Zomato, and Blinkit may dominate quick commerce, but Zepto and Swiggy grow 15-20 per cent quarter-on-quarter. Nykaa's first-mover advantage is tested by conglomerate muscle. In payments, PayTM's regulatory setbacks open spaces for PhonePe and Google Pay to deepen integration with UPI Lite and credit on UPI. In EVs, Ather and TVS iQube nibble at Ola's share. The once-clear line between "tech start-ups" and "traditional companies with tech ambitions" blurs.

Governance and disclosures, once peripheral, are central to the investor calculus. The central bank's actions against PayTM payments bank, questions related to related-party transactions in Honasa Consumer, and revenue-recognition adjustments in logistics companies shift attention from marketing narratives to management credibility. Investors read the fine print before assigning multiples. Two broad observations emerge, less as verdicts and more as plausible outcomes. First, the new-age sector is entering a sorting cycle. If profit growth sustains, capital may move towards platforms with proven track records. Asset-heavy or regulatory-exposed peers face multiple compression or strategic mergers.

Second, the definition of "tech company" may evolve. EV manufacturers and logistics players may trade like industrials, with valuations tied to utilisation and yield per shipment. Digital platforms with repeat-purchases may resemble FMCG players. The Q2-FY26 numbers are therefore less a scorecard than a referendum on business maturity. The next test will be consistency, and this will encompass profits, governance, and competitive resilience. For investors, the coming quarters will reveal which celebrated disruptors survive, and which do not, after the easy money runs out.

A recent article highlights the challenges. According to one of the experts quoted in it, the real story is not about revenues and profits, but of performance. If the "bread-and-butter businesses, the core units... are growing, and are profitable, and these companies are also adding new verticals, they will continue to attract investor interest." Ironically, the new verticals lead to losses. Hence, firms need to strategise in the sense that the contribution of old-core profitable businesses exceed those of the new verticals, which guzzle money initially. It is akin to having 2-3 verticals that make money, and one that is new, and requires money for the next 1-2 years.

For example, Swiggy's core food-delivery business, according to the article, generates cash, and subsidises the new verticals, like quick commerce. The company hopes to raise ₹10,000 crore to invest in the latter one. In the case of Urban Company, which offers professional household services, the quarterly loss was up from ₹2 crore to ₹59 crore, largely because of the investment in InstaHelp, which provides services to professionals. Minus this division, the company, says Abhiraj Singh Bhal, co-founder, earned an EBIDTA of ₹10 crore, which implies that the core business is profitable.

There is an issue with expectations among the initial investors, and the later ones, especially, when a start-up goes public. The early investors expect quick top-line growth, or scalability, so that a firm reaches a revenue level that is attractive to the latter investors, and allows the initial ones to cash out. But when a company opts for a listing, the later investors want to see profits. Hence, there is always a conflict between the top-line and bottom-line. As expectations change, the co-founders are caught in a quandary, whether to pursue growth or profits, or both. This results in mismatches.

More importantly, as recent IPOs indicate, there are variations between institutional and retail investors while the firms get listed. The former are willing to wait, and are not bothered about valuation issues. The latter wish to see instant gains, and believe in instant gratification, and bet on listing gains. Hence, the discounted post-IPO stock prices enrage, and worry the small investors. This leads to debates about valuations, and the role of the regulator, as has happened in India in the recent past. The listed start-ups begin a new journey that is saddled with quarterly demands.

The Cynical Optimist

Fifty shades of Indian poverty

Sutanu Guru
Author, Journalist and Academician

Back in the 1980s when I was a post-graduate student pursuing economics at the Gokhale Institute in Pune, we were perhaps the last of the batch to listen to guest lectures by the late VM Dandekar. Dandekar pioneered the art of measuring poverty in India in 1971, and used 1960-61 official data. His calculations focused on calorie consumption, or rather food consumption, as the primary barometer that defined the poverty line based on variable estimates in urban and rural India. By the time we were listening to his lectures, this was replaced by suggestions from other committees.

The issue is relevant decades later because getting a fix on poverty levels is still a tricky one, and includes varied approaches. Recently, Kerala announced that it had eradicated extreme poverty in the state. Official and global figures clash about the number of poor people in the country, or other nations. No one knows for sure. Experts cherry-pick the data to suit their conclusions. So do the policy-makers to justify their actions and decisions. Poverty is one of the most contentious and debatable subjects.

During my student days, perhaps along with poverty measurement, figuring out the size of the black economy, or black money, in India was another intense academic exercise. Since the economic reforms, the black economy does figure in some studies, and a few official reports exist, but there is a consensus of sorts, rightly or wrongly, that it has reduced in the past three decades. in the country. Yet, the figures that emerge from scandals and scams seem unbelievable.

But poverty is another issue. The Lakhdawala committee improved upon what Dandekar did, and proposed items of consumption that needed to be included in the poverty basket. A year after the Harshad Mehta scandal in 1992, another committee was formed, but the focus remained on calorie intake. In the 2000s, the Suresh Tendulkar committee was appointed, which was followed by the Rangarajan committee (2014). Over a period of more than four decades, poverty measurement underwent a radical change.

While calorie intake was considered a sufficient, though not complete, way to capture poverty, economists argued that families or households, rich or poor, consumed other goods apart from food. These included crucial areas such as transportation, education, and other important requirements. Some of them were put in the expenditure basket of a household to estimate the minimum budget. This position was adopted by the World Bank, which started from a need of $1 a day, and increased it to $4.2 per capita.

Kerala added a twist with the mention of extreme poverty, which entails a different definition. The World Bank states that a per capita spend of $2.15 or less implies a situation of extreme poverty. The $4.2 figure we mentioned earlier is a measure for middle-income nations. countries. By the latter figure, the number of poor in India is close to a quarter of its population. It implies that anyone who cannot spend more than ₹375 a day is poor. Which seems adequate, or higher, and depends on which side of the ideology you swing towards.

A spend of ₹375 a day translates into more than ₹11,000 a month. Since it is a per-person cost, it means an income of at least ₹20,000 a month, if there are two earning members. Now, a complexity enters if there are 2-3-4 dependents. However, central and state governments continue to generate newspaper and TV headlines, with claims of successful elimination of poverty from some regions, a dramatic decrease in the levels, or that 500 million Indians escaped poverty over the last three decades, which has transformed the country into a successful middle-income one.

I personally prefer the measurement developed and proposed by the NITI Aayog in 2021, which is called the Multidimensional Poverty Index. It does account for expenditures. It considers other elements such as health, education, and nutrition. But there are at least eight other parameters, which are related to access to basic services or infrastructure such as housing, electricity, piped drinking water, and bank accounts. By this definition, by the end of 2023 only 11 per cent of Indians lived in poverty. The state-level range varied from virtually zero in Kerala, and 30 per cent in Bihar.

Unfortunately, NITI Aayog has not updated the index after 2023. One hopes that the exercise has not been abandoned for political or economic, or other reasons. India has changed over the decades. The poor, like the rich and middle-class, have new aspirations and dreams, and pursue them too. Recently, I heard a story about a family in Mumbai, where a poor butcher father, who lived in a chawl, graduated to being a bus conductor, took education loans to make his daughter an engineer, who now works in Europe, and built a seemingly-palatial house in the chawl. This family may be poor once, but its expenditure, or budget, was not typical of a poor family.

As of now, according to a website that caters to IAS aspirants, there are several global and Indian measurements. The Global Multidimensional Poverty Index is released by the United Nations, and Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative, and puts India's poverty at just over 16 per cent in 2021. We have talked about the World Bank, and the NITI Aayog, apart from which the Indian Economic Survey constructs a Bare Necessities Index, which includes 26 indicators in five areas. Hence, what we have are different figures that are bandied around by interest groups to support their claims.

More importantly, as the pandemic proved, poverty is not static but a dynamic issue. Putting assumptions, which are updated after a few years does not help, when things change rapidly, and within days and weeks. Post-Covid, suddenly, the concept of the poor changes across the world, and especially in India. As employees lost jobs, and this was more prevalent among migrants and unorganised labour, incomes vanished. Even the middle-class families began to see themselves as poor, as they were unable to pay EMIs, or afford the normal goods and services that they took for granted.

Hence, there are biases that creep in inadvertently, or deliberately. For example, as per a recent article, poverty measures during Covid served two purposes: Tracking and treatment. Tracking was to count the numbers. Treatment was aimed to understand who qualified for the welfare schemes like free vaccination, and food rations. The latter leads to 'false negative,' when we "wrongly declare someone who truly needs assistance to be ineligible." It results in 'false positive,' when we "give assistance to someone who in reality is not needy, even though the numbers seem to fit the official definition."

The author has worked for leading media houses, authored two books, and is now Executive Director, C Voter Foundation

The Pioneer
BHOPAL | FRIDAY | NOVEMBER 14, 2025

Urgent Need for A National Mission to Harness Biogas Potential

DEEPAK GUPTA

We have seen both the tremendous potential of biogas and our underwhelming performance in exploiting it. This opportunity now requires a National Biogas Mission that aligns policy and implementation in a systematically coordinated and integrated manner.

Since the principal off taker and demand creator for biogas and the largest beneficiary in terms of import and subsidy savings — will be the petroleum sector, the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas should lead. MNRE should anchor technology standards, capital support and carbon accounting, and lead the decentralised household biogas programme.

MoHUA must enable municipal contracts for source segregation with escrowed tipping-fees and ensure land is made available for processing plants.

The Ministry of Agriculture must drive standards and pricing for digestate so fermented organic manure (FOM) has a reliable market and farmer"s benefit. The Ministry of Power can facilitate the sale and use of pellets or torrefied fractions derived from residues and support evening-peak biogas power where appropriate. A new bio-energy authority may be premature; instead, a high-level Mission Steering Committee at Secretary level, supported by a compact mission secretariat, should be constituted, with industry and technical experts co-opted for continuous feedback and course correction.

The Committee should meet monthly for the first three years, with quarterly reviews by a ministerial panel chaired by the Prime Minister; once policies and execution pipelines stabilise, this cadence can be relaxed. The mission document itself should be prepared within six months by an expert group and financed initially from the petroleum regulator"s budget. The document must set ambitious but arithmetic-sound goals that the system can deliver: by 2030, India will produce 5 million tonnes per annum (MMTPA) of CBG through 500–1,000 operating plants integrated with city gas and residue clusters; by 2035, production will rise to 10 MMTPA of CBG, driven by wider urban MSW and STP retrofits and scaled agricultural residue clusters.

These totals reflect realistic per-plant outputs and commissioning realities and will translate into substantial direct and indirect employment across collection, O and M, slurry processing, logistics and grid services. Project readiness should proceed in parallel, so execution begins the day the mission is notified.

Location-specific detailed project reports should be commissioned immediately — covering 200 agri residues potential hot spots, 100 cities for MSW-to-CBG, 100 sewage treatment plants for anaerobic digestion and gas-use (including retrofits), 100 rural residue clusters, and 200 slurry hubs for household-biogas catchments — using a panel of 10–15 qualified consultants working to standardised briefs and SOPs. These briefs must specify land identification and transfer modalities, interconnection to city-gas injection nodes, feedstock aggregation mechanics, operations and maintenance regimes and measurement, reporting and verification for both gas injection and methane-abatement benefits.

A best-practice manual should be issued and mandatory training and certification required for key plant roles, so capacity keeps pace with investment. Funding must be catalytic and performance linked.

Beyond initial support for the expert group and secretariat, a ring-fenced National Biogas Acceleration Fund should be established to crowd-in private capital using targeted instruments — capital financial assistance against verified commissioning, market development assistance for certified FOM, partial -risk guarantees for municipal PPPs backed by escrowed tipping-fees, viability-gap support for cluster spur pipelines and injection nodes and pass-through of eligible carbon revenues for verified methane abatement. Disbursements should be tied strictly to outcomes — gas injected into the grid, certified FOM sold to approved buyers and documented methane reductions — so public money pays only for real delivery.

With Governance, finance and execution thus aligned, the biogas mission can move from aspiration to scale: 5 MMTPA by 2030, 10 MMTPA by 2035, cleaner cities and fields, healthier soils, reduced import dependence and a robust domestic industry built on waste-to-wealth.

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India's PVC resin imports contain carcinogens up to 5 times of safety limits, warns report

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
New Delhi

India faces a significant public health risk from poor-quality PVC resin imports containing carcinogenic compounds at levels up to five times higher than global safety limits, a report by the Centre for Domestic Economy Policy Research (C-DEP.in) said on Thursday. The report, launched at IIT Delhi, revealed that imported PVC resin contains high levels of Residual Vinyl Chloride Monomer (RVCM), classified as a Category 1A carcinogen by the International Agency for Research on Cancer. PVC currently accounts for nearly 30 per cent of India"s economy, with widespread use in water, sanitation, irrigation, healthcare, construction, and infrastructure sectors.

The Government"s proposed Quality Control Order (QCO) on PVC resin, first notified in August 2024, has been deferred three times and is now scheduled for enforcement in December 2025, the report said. "The Modi Government has been championing the Zero Defect, Zero Effect by adopting Quality Control Order. Such a policy step by the Government is strengthening consumer safety and industrial standards while promoting exports from India that are dependable and of high quality," said Dr Jaijit Bhattacharya, President of C-DEP.in.

Speaking at the launch, Anil Sharma of the *Swadeshi Jagran Manch* said, "Quality Control Orders should not be limited to finished goods alone, it is equally or more important to cover raw materials as the quality of a final product is only as strong as the materials that go into it," according to a statement. The C-DEP research indicates that over 39 overseas players have already procured the required BIS certification to export to India, making BIS-certified capacity 3.4 times the current domestic demand for PVC.

Full enforcement of the standard, therefore, would not disrupt supply, the report states. Countries such as the United States, European Union and Thailand regulate RVCM levels in PVC resin within a stringent range of 0.5 ppm to 3 ppm, ensuring safety in water and food-contact applications. India, however, does not yet have a binding national limit on RVCM, which has allowed imports of PVC resin from China with concentrations reported between 5 ppm and 10 ppm.

"The *Swadeshi Jagran Manch* is committed to achieving a self-reliant India. We are focused on prioritising the protection of domestic industries and actively encouraging the use of indigenous products," Sharma added.

Noida International Airport to commence operations soon: Tata Projects

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
New Delhi

Tata Projects, the infrastructure and construction arm of Tata Group, on Thursday said the upcoming Noida International Airport at Jewar, in Uttar Pradesh, will soon begin operations and asserted that the approvals are in progress.

Tata Projects Ltd was given the contract to build the Noida International Airport (NIA). "Noida International Airport Ltd is working with DGCA (Directorate General of Civil Aviation) to get safety, security clearances, the aerodrome license, as they call it. So now it is into more regulatory approval process rather than the construction.

"So by and large our work is ready for the Prime Minister to come and inaugurate," Vinayak Pai, the CEO and Managing Director of Tata Projects, said during a press meet. Replying to a question, Pai said that the airport is expected to begin operations "in a short period of time".

The company, he said, is definitely adding new projects to its portfolio, so it aims to maintain the order book in the range of ₹40,000 crore to ₹43,000 crore. The company is engaged in more projects in emerging areas such as 4th generation manufacturing, electronic semiconductor manufacturing, solar panel manufacturing and data centres. "So our average cycle time is reducing. Many of these projects get completed in 18 months to two years. We are known for our fast track project delivery, predictable project delivery and we want to maintain that special edge," he explained. The company had reported a net loss of ₹751 crore in the last financial year. On this, Pai said, "These losses are on account of the cumulative effect of projects which were going on during Covid and before that. So a lot of those projects are now getting completed.

"Our portfolio of new projects is steadily profitable. Old projects will be completed this year. From next year, it will be the new portfolio which will reflect in the result, and you will see a very good reflection of that in the profitability." Tata Projects, a technology-led engineering, procurement and construction (EPC) company, provides ready-to-deploy solutions for semiconductor facilities, giga factories, data centres, etc.

Warmer, more conversational: OpenAI rolls out GPT-5.1

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
New Delhi

OpenAI has announced the rollout of GPT-5.1 that the company promises is more conversational and warmer by default. The upgrade packs in more intuitive and effective controls "so ChatGPT can better match the tone users want in responses," OpenAI said.

"We're upgrading GPT-5 while making it easier to customise ChatGPT. Starting to roll out today to everyone, beginning with paid users," it said in a blogpost. According to OpenAI, GPT-5.1 improves on both intelligence and communication style.

It has two variants, the GPT-5.1 Instant, ChatGPT's most used model, that is now warmer by default, more conversational, and better at following instructions; and GPT-5.1 Thinking, the advanced reasoning model, that the company promises is easier to understand, faster on simple tasks and more persistent on complex ones.

GPT-5.1 Thinking offers responses that are clearer, with less jargon and fewer undefined terms, OpenAI said. In a post on X, OpenAI Co-Founder and CEO Sam Altman said "GPT-5.1 is out! It"s a nice upgrade".

Altman added that he particularly likes improvements in instruction following and the adaptive thinking. "The intelligence and style improvements are good too," Altman wrote.

OpenAI has made it easier to customise ChatGPT, he said, pointing out that users can pick from presets (default, friendly, efficient, professional, candid, or quirky), even tune it themselves.

Revoking QCOs to benefit textile sector: CITI

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
New Delhi

The Government's move to rescind the quality control orders (QCOs) on polyester fibre and polyester yarn is a "pro-growth measure" which will hugely benefit the country"s textile and apparel sector, the Confederation of Indian Textile Industry (CITI) said on Thursday.

The Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilisers on Wednesday issued a notification pertaining to withdrawal of the QCOs, a move which is expected to ease compliance burden for textile product manufacturers while sourcing raw material.

"The rescinding of the Quality Control Orders (QCOs) on polyester fibre and polyester yarn comes as a great relief, as it has been a long-awaited demand of all the user industries," CITI Chairman Ashwin Chandran said. "Polyester fibre and polyester yarn form most of the man-made fibre (MMF) products, and hence, this measure by the authorities will contribute to the growth of the MMF segment in India," he added. Chandran said the removal of these QCOs will improve the cost competitiveness of Indian textile and apparel products by making it easier to obtain raw materials at internationally competitive prices. "Coupled with the export package announced on November 12, the rescinding of these QCOs will act as a huge confidence-booster for the textile and apparel sector," the CITI Chairman pointed out. Although the global textile and apparel arena is dominated by MMF, it is the other way round in India, where cotton dominates.

Chandran said that given the Government"s steadfast commitment to the growth of the textile and apparel sector, it could be helpful if authorities could also consider providing similar relief on the QCO front for viscose fibre and other cellulosic raw materials.

India aims to create a $350-billion textile and apparel industry by 2030, with exports contributing $100 billion.

The Pioneer
BHOPAL | FRIDAY | NOVEMBER 14, 2025

PROSPECT

Godrej Agrovet to invest ₹70 cr in Andhra Pradesh

Godrej Agrovet Ltd on Thursday signed a non-binding memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Andhra Pradesh state government to invest ₹70 crore to expand dairy processing capacity and establish farmer support centres. The investment will go toward expanding dairy processing and value-added product facilities through its wholly owned subsidiary Creamline Dairy Products Ltd, which operates under the Godrej Jersey brand, and setting up five new Samadhan Centers – a one-stop service hubs for oil palm farmers.

The MoU was signed in the presence of Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu, along with Sunil Kataria, Managing Director and CEO of Godrej Agrovet, and Rakesh Swami, Group President of Corporate Affairs at Godrej Industries Group, according to a regulatory filing.

Minister felicitates winners at NDRF competition

MoS Home Affairs Nityananda Rai at NDRF function

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

The National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) successfully conducted the Closing Ceremony of the First-ever National-Level CBRN (Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear) Capacity Building Competition for State Disaster Response Forces (SDRFs) today at Adarsh Auditorium, Delhi Police Headquarters, New Delhi. Minister of State for Home Affairs, Nityanand Rai, graced the occasion as the Chief Guest.

The competition was organised to enhance the preparedness, operational efficiency and inter-agency coordination among SDRFs in managing CBRN emergencies. Total 18 SDRF teams from across the States and Union Territories participated in a structured, multi-stage competition featuring realistic, simulation-based challenges. Mentors were provided by NDRF to each team and 02 weeks focussed training was imparted to hone their skills.

In his address, Minister commended the NDRF's continued commitment to strengthen the nation's disaster response framework in alignment with the vision of a "Disaster-Resilient India and underlined the significance of adopting a "Zero Casualty" approach. He stressed the need for a scientific response mechanism, standardised training and seamless coordination among national and state-level response agencies.

The Chief Guest lauded the initiative by NDRF in skill upgradation of SDRF by creating an environment of learning and competitiveness.

He also reiterated the commitment of govt. of India in fulfilling ten points Sendai Framework on disaster management tasked by the Prime Minister of India and adequate resources to NDRF for strengthening disaster response.

He congratulated the NDRF for conceptualising this national platform for SDRFs to develop specialised CBRN response capabilities and assured all possible support from the Ministry to NDRF in strengthening its response capacities.

Soccer marks Walong Day commemoration

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Itanagar

The Final Match of the Lt Bikram Singh Football Tournament was conducted today at Hawai Stadium as part of the 63rd Walong Day Commemoration.

The event celebrated sportsmanship, teamwork and the rich cultural heritage of Arunachal Pradesh while paying tribute to the bravery and supreme sacrifice of Lt Bikram Singh, a hero of the Battle of Walong (1962).

The event commenced with a vibrant cultural showcase featuring Bhangra, Peacock Dance, Jazz Band, North East Warrior Performance and Gatka Martial Arts, creating an energetic and spirited atmosphere for the spectators and participants.

The Final match, played between Hayuliang Circle and Walong Brigade, was kicked off by Commander, Walong Brigade, marking the start of an intense and competitive contest. The Assam Regiment Pipe Band enthralled the audience with a special performance during the half-time break.

In a closely fought match, Hayuliang Circle emerged victorious with a 1–0 win, securing the championship title. During the prize distribution ceremony, the Winner team was awarded ₹1.5 lakh, while the Runner-up team received ₹1 lakh.

Bethang of Hayuliang Circle was adjudged the Best Player of the Tournament for his outstanding performance by scoring 3 goals during whole tournament. All participating players were also presented with medals in recognition of their sportsmanship and dedication.

The Lt Bikram Singh Football Tournament stands as a tribute to the courage, resilience and leadership embodied by Lt Bikram Singh and his troops during the 1962 War.

The event continues to inspire the youth, foster community participation and reinforce the enduring Spirit of Walong, a legacy of valour and national pride.

Assam to host CRPF's annual parade for the first time

HIMADREE CHUTIA
■ Guwahati

The Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) to hold annual parade first time in Assam in Febraury 2026. Director General Gyanendra Pratap Singh called on Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma at Lok Sewa Bhawan, Dispur on Thursday, where an initial discussion was held regarding the upcoming Annual CRPF Parade, to be held for the first time in Assam and the Northeastern region, in Guwahati.

The meeting was attended by Dr Ravi Kota, Chief Secretary, Assam; Harmeet Singh, DGP, Assam Police; and Dr KK Dwivedi, Additional Chief Secretary to the Chief Minister. The CRPF's Annual Parade in Guwahati marks a historic first for the region, underscoring Assam's growing prominence in national security and the CRPF's enduring bond with the people of Assam.

Through his visit and subsequent engagements, the DG CRPF reaffirmed the Force's deep commitment to honouring its Bravehearts, standing steadfast beside their families and his strong bond with the people of Assam. On Wednesday DG GP Singh visited Kuwari Ati village in Nagaon district, Assam, yesterday to pay homage to Veer Balidani Head Constable (GD) Mahendra Laskar of 60 Battalion, CRPF, who made the supreme sacrifice in the line of duty.

After courageously battling for his life at Apollo Hospital, Rourkela, HC/GD Mahendra Laskar attained martyrdom, succumbing to injuries sustained in an IED blast during a crucial anti-Naxal operation at Babudera–Samta Axis, Jharkhand, on October 10, 2025. The DG CRPF offered floral tributes at the martyr's ancestral home and met the Veer Nari, Veer Putra and bereaved family members, assuring them of the Force's unwavering support. He also sought blessings from the martyr's mother for the continued success of anti-Naxal operations.

CRPF DG GP Singh in discussion with Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma. Chief Secretary Dr Ravi Kota and DGP Harmeet Singh also seen

Later, speaking to the media, the DG said, "Havildar Mahendra Laskar sacrificed his life for the country on October 10, 2025.

As per the tradition of the CRPF, I have come here to pay my respects to the family and to ensure that whatever is due to them is provided by the Government and the CRPF.

The entire CRPF family stands with the family of the martyr and whatever is required in the future, we will continue to support them."

On the ongoing campaign to end Left Wing Extremism in the country, the DG shared, "We are committed to eliminating Naxalism by March 2026, as announced by the Union Home Minister Amit Shah.

The CRPF is committed." Earlier, condolences had poured in from the Chief Minister of Assam, Dr Himanta Biswa Sarma and the Assam Police, honouring the Braveheart's sacrifice.

The Chief Minister said the nation would forever remember the hero from Nagaon, while the Assam Police extended heartfelt condolences and reaffirmed solidarity with the CRPF fraternity.

Writer is JIO, Directorate of Information and Public Relations, Government of Assam; Currently attached as PRO to the Chief Secretary

Jitin Prasada to Inaugurate International Trade Fair

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

One of the most awaited B2B and B2C event in South Asian region, the India International Trade Fair 2025 (November 14-27) , will be inaugurated by Jitin Prasada, Union Minister of State for Commerce and Industry, Government of India at Auditorium -1 Bharat Mandapam New Delhi at 5.30 pm on Friday November 14,2025.

IITF 2025 is being organized by the India Trade Promotion Organisation (ITPO) under the aegis of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India. The first five days (November 14-18) are earmarked as the Business Days for B2B interactions, followed by the General Days from November 19-27 for all.

Reflecting the vision of the Prime Minister, Narendra Modi for a "Viksit Bharat by 2047", this year's fair is themed "Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat." The theme celebrates India's diversity, entrepreneurial energy and the nation's commitment to Aatmanirbhar Bharat, aligning deeply with the ethos of the Swadeshi movement promoting local enterprise, indigenous innovation and sustainable economic growth. We may quote the Prime Minister, "Promoting Swadeshi is not just an economic imperative, but a celebration of India's self-reliance."

The fair also stands as a premier platform for business collaborations, technology exchange, and investment partnerships.

As many as 11 countries including Thailand, Malaysia, Sweden, China, South Korea, Turkey, Egypt, UAE, Iran, Lebanon and Tunisia are presenting their products and innovations at the International Pavilion. Participating States and Union Territories are showcasing their distinct strengths, crafts and innovations across thematic halls.

Bihar, Rajasthan, Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh are the Partner States, while Jharkhand has been designated as the Focus State.

Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham highlights vision for Viksit Bharat 2047

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham, a multidisciplinary university, made a strong impression at the Emerging Science, Technology and Innovation Conclave (ESTIC 2025), held from 3 to 5 November at Bharat Mandapam, Pragati Maidan. Organised by the Department of Science and Technology (DST) under the guidance of the Office of the Principal Scientific Adviser to the Government of India and in collaboration with 12 key ministries and departments — DBT, CSIR, MoES, ICAR, ICMR, MeitY, DoT, AYUSH, DoS, DoAE, DRDO and MoE — the conclave served as a major national platform for sharing scientific achievements and technology-driven innovations, aimed at advancing the vision of Viksit Bharat 2047.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated ESTIC 2025 in the presence of distinguished scientists, including Nobel laureate Professor Andre Geim from the University of Manchester, along with policymakers and innovators from India and around the world.

In his inaugural address, Modi reiterated the nation's collective resolve towards Viksit Bharat 2047, emphasising that the 21st century marks a period of unprecedented transformation. He said the global order is undergoing a major shift and that the pace of change today is not linear but exponential. With this mindset, he added, India is advancing in all areas of emerging science, technology and innovation with unwavering focus and commitment. Modi also highlighted the establishment of the National Research Foundation to promote research and innovation in universities, alongside the launch of the Research Development and Innovation Scheme, backed by a budget allocation of ₹1 lakh crore.

Amrita's exhibition stall showcased innovative technologies and research prototypes in healthcare, artificial intelligence, renewable energy, sustainable agriculture, robotics and drones, climate resilience and other high-tech areas. It attracted top scientists, bureaucrats, industry veterans, researchers, innovators and global visionaries.

During the panel discussion on Artificial Intelligence, Professor P Venkat Rangan, Vice Chancellor of Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham, said, "Artificial Intelligence enhances human intelligence and address large-scale societal challenges such as healthcare delivery, disaster prediction, education and sustainable development.

At Amrita, we aim to make sure that AI research not only advances technology but also improves humanity through ethical and compassionate application."

Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar
Advertisement No.11/2025
Online applications are invited for the various Teaching posts in the University. Online registration of application for these posts will start w.e.f. **17-11-2025** and end on **08-12-2025.** Last date for submitting Hard Copy of the Online submitted application is **18-12-2025.**
For further details visit University Website: **http://www.gndu.ac.in.**
Amritsar Registrar
13-11-2025
2426/12/2025-26/4944
Dated CHD :- 13/11/2025

PARADIP PORT AUTHORITY
MARINE DEPARTMENT
No. MD/ACCTS/WK/R-09/2025/1444 Date: 10/11/2025
Name of the Work : Hiring of 01 (one) no. 70 Ton Bollard Pull ASTDS Tug for Handing Fully Loaded Cape Vessel and SPM Operation for a period of 07 (seven) years at Paradip Port Authority. Estimated cost put to tender : Total Estimated cost including Hire Charges & Fuel: Rs.140,00,49,552/- excluding GST. Estimated cost put to Tender towards Hire Charges only Rs.88,53,40,794/- excluding GST. Last date & time of submission of tender through online bidding is **15:00 Hours on 29/12/2025.** Date & time for opening of Technical Bid is **15:30 hours on dt.30/12/2025.** For further details, please log on to the Website: https://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app.
Sd/- Deputy Conservator, Paradip Port Authority
PPA/PR/52/2025-2026 dtd. 12.11.2025

GURU NANAK DEV UNIVERSITY, AMRITSAR
SHORT TERM E-TENDER NOTICE
Short Term E-Tenders are invited for the purchase of UPLC with Auto Sampler, Particle Size Analyzer for Solid Samples and Dispersion, Microscope System Image Analyzer with Accessories, Fully Automatic Cell Counter, UV VIS Spectrophotometer with Accessories, CO2 Incubator with Accessories, Audio-Video Recording Studio, Texture Analyzer and All in One PC be submitted online latest by **29/11/2025 upto 4:00 p.m.** Detailed information can be obtained from website **www.eproc.punjab.gov.in.** Any corrigendum/Addendum related to these e-tender will be uploaded, if required, on Punjab Govt. website: **eproc.punjab.gov.in**
Director of Research
2426/12/2025-26/4942 Dated CHD :- 13/11/2025

इचलकरंजी महानगरपालिका, जि. कोल्हापूर
बांधकाम विभाग
जाहीर ई निविदा सूचना क्रं. २०/२०२५-२६ दि. १३/११/२०२५
जाहीर ई निविदा सूचना क्रं. २२/२०२५-२६ दि. १३/११/२०२५
इचलकरंजी महानगरपालिकेकडील महाराष्ट्र सुवर्ण जयंती नगरोत्थान योजना (जिल्हास्तर) २०२५-२६ अंतर्गत कामे मक्त्याने पुर्ण करुन घेण्यासाठी पात्र मक्तेदारांकडून ई-निविदा मागविणेत येत आहेत.
• सदर तिन्हीही ई निविदा **http:mahatenders.gov.in** या संकेतस्थळावर दि. १४/११/२०२५ रोजी सकाळी ११.०० वाजले पासून दि. २०/११/२०२५ दु.१२.०० वाजेपर्यन्त पहावयास मिळेल.
• भरलेली निविदा सादर करणेची अंतिम दिनांक २०/११/२०२५ दुपारी १२.०० वाजेपर्यंत राहील.
• शक्य झालेस निविदा दिनांक २१/११/२०२५ दुपारी ०३.०० वाजता उपस्थित मक्तेदारांच्या समोर ऑनलाईन येईल.
तसेच निविदा संबंधी सर्व अटी व शर्तींची माहिती बांधकाम विभागात कार्यालयीन वेळेत व नोटीस बोर्डावर तसेच **http:mahatenders.gov.in** या संकेतस्थळावर पहावयास मिळतील.
सही/-
अति. आयुक्त
इचलकरंजी महानगरपालिका

M3M directors, legal team get relief in case of bench hunting

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Chandigarh/New Delhi

In a strong affirmation of procedural integrity, the Privilege Committee of the Bar Council of Punjab and Haryana has fully exonerated M3M India Directors Roop Bansal and Yateesh Wahal, along with 17 advocates representing them, from all allegations of bench hunting and forum shopping.

In its detailed 7-page order dated 12 November 2025, issued after an exhaustive inquiry, the Committee has categorically concluded that No mala fide intent existed on the part of any advocate or litigant. It further mentioned No credible evidence of any coordinated attempt to secure a favourable bench was found. "All withdrawals, re-filings, listings and objections were routine, bona fide and consistent with established legal practice. Media reports making contrary claims were factually incorrect and unsupported by judicial records," said the order.

The Committee scrutinised written submissions, affidavits, WhatsApp conversations, emails and also held multiple interactions including video-conferencing before reaching its conclusion. It noted the full and voluntary cooperation extended by all concerned. Importantly, the order also clarifies that any restricted listings of advocates before particular benches are confidential, internal matters of the High Court Registry, unknown to advocates or litigants—thereby ruling out the possibility of any deliberate attempt at forum selection. M3M India has welcomed the clean chit, reiterating its commitment to the highest standards of legal compliance and corporate governance. "We have unwavering faith in the judicial process and are grateful to the Privilege Committee for conducting a fair, impartial and comprehensive inquiry. This order reinforces that we have always acted within the four corners of law.

M3M remains committed to transparency, integrity and contributing positively to nation-building through ethical business practices." — Shrutidhar Paliwal, Vice - President, Corporate Communications, M3M India. The company has urged all stakeholders, including media platforms, to respect the findings of the Bar Council and avoid circulating unverified or misleading reports that undermine public trust in legal institutions.

NBT launches Hindi workshop

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Doimukh, Itanagar

The National Book Trust, India's (NBT) first-of-its-kind workshop to develop books for neoliterates in Hindi involving Hindi authors of Arunachal Pradesh was inaugurated today at the Department of Distance Education at Rajiv Gandhi University (RGU), Doimukh, Itanagar, by the Vice-Chancellor Professor Jayadev Sahoo and Chief Editor and Joint Director of National Book Trust, India, Kumar Vikram.

The first-of-its-kind workshop is being organized from November 12 to 14, 2025 through a collaboration between RGU's Hindi Department and National Book Trust, India. During the inauguration, Kumar Vikram welcomed the attending scholars and writers by presenting them with books and shawls, in keeping with NBT tradition. The workshop was conducted by the Workshop Coordinator, Dr Lalit Kishore Mandora, Hindi Editor, NBT, India. Addressing the participants, Professor Jayadev Sahoo commended the initiative and noted that writers and poets from Arunachal Pradesh are doing remarkable work in the field of Hindi literature. He appreciated NBT, India's efforts in recognising and encouraging their contributions and expressed confidence that the workshop would help foster a stronger culture of reading and learning among neo-literates.

Speaking on the role and objective of the workshop, Kumar Vikram, Chief Editor and Joint Director, NBT, India stated, " "We have not come here to teach you, but to learn from you.

The objective of this workshop is to embrace new ideas and perspectives.

The Pioneer
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BRIEFLY

SHANE WATSON JOINS KKR SUPPORT STAFF

Kolkata Knight Riders on Thursday named former Australian all-rounder Shane Watson as their assistant coach for the upcoming IPL 2026.

Watson represented Australia in 59 Tests, 190 ODIs, and 58 T20 Internationals, amassing over 10,000 international runs and taking more than 280 wickets across formats. "I am eager to work closely with the coaching group and players to help bring another title to Kolkata," Watson said in a press release.

Watson was an integral part of Australia's 2007 and 2015 ICC World Cup-winning squads and played a key role in numerous series victories around the world.

He even enjoyed a stellar IPL career spanning 12 years (2008-2020), with 145 matches and four centuries to his name. He has been a part of victorious IPL sides, including Rajasthan Royals and Chennai Super Kings.

Following his retirement from cricket, Watson transitioned seamlessly into coaching and mentorship roles within global T20 leagues. "We are thrilled to welcome Shane Watson to the KKR family. His experience as a player and coach at the highest level will add immense value to our team culture and preparation. His understanding of the T20 format is world-class, and we look forward to his contributions both on and off the field," Venky Mysore, KKR CEO said.

AGRA GIVES HERO'S WELCOME TO DEEPTI

Deepti Sharma, who helped India win their maiden Women's World Cup trophy with a stellar all-round performance, on Thursday returned home to a fitting welcome that included a 10-km roaring roadshow.

Thousands of Agra residents lined the streets for the roadshow organised by the District Cricket Association to honour Deepti, who was adjudged the player of the tournament.

School children, cricket enthusiasts, dignitaries, and members of various social and sports organisations joined the event, waving flags and showering flowers along the route.

More than 150 police and traffic personnel were deployed to manage security and traffic during the celebrations.

New Zealand beat West Indies by 8 wkts; wins series 3-1

ASSOCIATED PRESS
■ Los Angeles

Jacob Duffy took 4-35, disrupting the top order and taking a key wicket at the end, as New Zealand beat West Indies by eight wickets Thursday in the fifth Twenty20 international Thursday to win the series 3-1.

Duffy's three wickets in the third over saw the West Indies slump to 21-4 and he returned to neutralize the threat of Romario Shepherd, who made 36 from 22 balls, as the tourists were bowled out for 140 in 18.4 overs. New Zealand's reply was swift and emphatic as it reached 141-2 in the 16th over against a West Indies lineup that appeared to be out of sorts in cold conditions.

Devon Conway carried his bat for 47 and shared partnerships of 69 for the first wicket with Tim Robinson, who hit 45 from 24 balls, 37 with Rachin Ravindra (21) and 35 with Mark Chapman (21 not out).

The West Indies won the first match by seven runs, New Zealand won the second by three runs and the third on Sunday by nine runs. All three matches were decided in the final over.

The fourth match on Monday was abandoned due to rain.

Player of the seriesDuffy was voted Player of the Series for his 10 wickets.

"I guess in Twenty20 a huge asset of mine is that swing up top and taking wickets in the power play is always pretty important," Duffy said. "Maybe less so against the West Indies, such is the length of their batting lineup.

"I guess that's always my role in the team is to swing the ball up top and try to make things happen."

The West Indies began on a note of aggression after losing the toss and being sent in: Alick Athanaze hit a six from the first ball of the match bowled by Duffy.

ODI series: The teams will next play a series of three one-day internationals. Left-handed top-order batter John Campbell will be returning to the West Indies squad.

Matthew Forde, who was called up for the T20 squad to make his first white-ball appearance since rehabilitating from injury, and Johann Layne and Shamar Springer will provide support to the pace bowling unit.

West Indies will be missing Alzarri Joseph, Shamar Joseph, Ramon Simmonds and Jediah Blades due to injuries.

The first ODI match is Sunday at Hagley Oval in Christchurch.

Asian Archery: Gold for Indian women's and mixed team

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ Dhaka

India's compound archers enjoyed a stellar outing at the Asian Championships, winning two gold medals and one silver on a productive day here on Thursday.

The women's team of Jyothi Surekha Vennam, Deepshikha, and Prithika Pradeep led the charge with a thrilling 236–234 victory over Korea in the compound women's team final. The trio delivered near-flawless shooting, producing ends of 59 (10, 10, 10, 10, 9, 10) and 58 (10, 10, 10, 9, 10, 9) to outclass the Korean combination of Park Yerin, Oh Yoohyun, and Jungyoon Park.

In the compound mixed team final, Abhishek Verma and Deepshikha combined superbly to defeat Bangladesh 153–151, securing India's second gold of the day. The pair displayed consistency under pressure, shooting identical 38-point ends (10, 9, 10, 9 and 9, 10, 9, 10) to seal the title. However, in the compound men's team final, India fell agonisingly short against Kazakhstan, going down 229–230 to settle for the silver medal.

The Indian trio of Abhishek Verma, Sahil Rajesh Jadhav, and Prathamesh Bhalchandra Fuge was edged out by the Kazakh side of Dilmukhamet Mussa, Bunyod Mirzametov, and Andrey Tyutyun, who held their nerve in the closing arrows.

Lakshya enters quarters, Prannoy bows out in Japan Masters

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ Dhaka

Star Indian shuttler Lakshya Sen progressed to the quarterfinals with a straight game win over Singapore's Jia Heng Jason Teh but it was curtains for HS Prannoy in the men's singles competition of Kumamoto Masters Japan here on Thursday.

A 2021 World Championship bronze winner, Sen, seeded seventh here, prevailed over world No. 20 Teh 21-13 21-11 in another 39-minute contest.

The world No.15 Sen will clash with former world champion Loh Kean Yew of Singapore in the quarterfinals.

However, later in the day, Prannoy, 33, went down 18-21 15-21 to Denmark's Rasmus Gemke in a 46-minute second-round match.

Lakshya opened up an 8-5 lead early in the opening game. Teh managed to briefly take a slender 10-9 lead before the Indian had his nose ahead at the break.

The duo fought hard till 14-13 when Lakshya zoomed ahead with seven straight points. After the change of ends, it was a more dominating show from the Indian as he jumped to 5-0 and then 11-3 at the interval to quash his rival's hopes. Lakshya stayed steady to comfortably close out the match.

Birla Estates principal sponsors of Gujarat Titans in IPL 202

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ Ahmedabad

Gujarat Titans, on Thursday, named Birla Estates, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Aditya Birla Real Estate Limited (ABREL), as the team's principal sponsor for the 2026 Indian Premier League.

Birla Estates replaced fantasy gaming platform Dream11, which has massively curtailed its operations after a central government act led to a blanket ban on real money gaming in August this year.

KT Jithendran, MD and CEO of Birla Estates, said: "This collaboration allows us to connect with millions of fans across India and beyond, celebrating shared values of passion, perseverance, and progress. Together, we look forward to building something truly special that resonates both on and off the field." Colonel Arvinder Singh, COO of Gujarat Titans, added: "Partnering with Birla Estates not only enhances the Gujarat Titans' brand portfolio but also reflects our commitment to collaborating with iconic institutions that elevate our presence across geographies. Together, we look forward to creating unique experiences that strengthen our collective brand value and open new avenues for growth."

The financial aspects of the deal, however, were kept under wraps by both parties.

Captained by India's Test and ODI skipper Shubman Gill, Gujarat Titans had scripted history during the 2022 IPL by clinching the title in their debut season.

Harikrishna advances, Praggnanandhaa loses

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ Panaji (Goa)

Grandmasters Arjun Erigaisi and P Harikrishna had another good day as they sent veteran Peter Leko of Hungary and Swede Nils Grandelius packing in the fourth-round tiebreaker here Thursday. Arjun dumped Leko 3-1 in the first set of tiebreaker itself while Harikrishna drew the first and then won the second for an overall 2.5-1.5 victory that took him to round of 16.

R Praggnanandhaa meanwhile could not maintain the parity and lost to Daniil Dubov of Russia to mark his exit from this year's World Cup.

It may be recalled that in the previous edition held in 2023, the young Indian had made it all the way to the finals before losing to eventual winner Magnus Carlsen of Norway.

For Arjun the next round will be crucial as he will take on in-form Levon Aronian of United States. Aronian has been peaking at the right time and could be a tough opponent for anyone in the event. The former Armenian is the only player in his tory to have won the World Cup twice.

German Frederic Svane meanwhile continued with his brilliant run and ousted Shant Sargsyan of Armenia 2.5-1.5.

Svane who had earlier defeated world champion D Gukesh in the tournament did not disappoint his fans and scored another important victory to be in contention for a berth in the Candidates.

The USD 2 million prize money tournament also saw a big upset when Aleksey Grebnev defeated Maxime Vachier-Lagrave of France 2.5-1.5. The exit of Vachier-Lagrave also means that the road ahead could be easier for the last two remaining Indians if they cross the next hurdle. Arjun played a solid game with black pieces and took advantage as Leko got ambitious and went for some unwarranted complications. The Indian pocketed one pawn and then the ensuing rook and minor piece endgame was just a walk in the park.

Leko lost to the second game when he again tried to push hard to level scores. Arjun got a fine position with his better placed pieces out of a Nimzo Indian defense and did the needful in style.

Harikrishna showed why is a class act yet again. Having won two matches under standard time control, the Indian was stretched in to the tiebreaker first time in the event and outplayed Grandelius in the second game played under 15 minutes rapid section.

Praggnanandhaa for once, did not get the complexities in his favour as Dubov is a known expert in the faster time control. After a draw in the first game wherein Dubov played it safe as white, the onus was on Pragg to showcase his preparation with white pieces.

However, as things turned out the Indian fell short of time when he needed it and lost a pawn and a rook for a minor piece to end his campaign in the knockout event.

Arsenal loses 2-3 to Bayern Munich in Women's Champions League

ASSOCIATED PRESS
■ Los Angeles

Arsenal's defense of its Women's Champions League title is not going to plan after a second-half collapse against Bayern Munich.

Arsenal wasted an early two-goal lead as Bayern surged back to win 3-2 at Allianz Arena, handing the visitors their second loss in three games in Europe's elite club competition.

"It's not good enough," Arsenal coach Renée Slegers said. "We don't want to concede three goals in one half in the Champions League."

Arsenal fell to 11th in the 18-team Champions League standings led by Barcelona at the mid-point of the new format. Barcelona and Manchester United both won Wednesday to join OL Lyonnes — who won at Arsenal last month — as the only teams with three straight wins.

Barcelona cruised to a 3-0 at home over OH Leuven. The title winner in three of the the past five seasons had 43 attempts on goal compared to zero for the Belgian debutant.

Man United won 2-1 against Paris Saint-Germain, which has zero points in 16th place. The top-four teams in December enter the quarterfinals and teams placed fifth to 12th join the knockout playoffs round.

Bayern's bounce backBayern has answered with back-to-back wins after an opening-day 7-1 loss at Barcelona.

"Unbelievable feeling, these three points are so important for us," Bayern forward Pernille Harder said. "After the first half we were a little bit down and thinking, What's going on? Where are we at?'"

Bayern captain Glódís Viggósdóttir scored in the 86th minute from a cross that bounced into the goalmouth to complete the comeback.

Substitutes Alara in the 67th and Pernille Harder in the 80th, with a deft, looping left-footed shot, had tied a game that was in Arsenal's control. All three goals were from assists by Germany attacker Klara Bühl.

"It feels good but it's also a bit of a relief," Bayern midfielder Georgia Stanway said. "We were very unsatisfied with the first half and I think second half was just a completely different game, and a massive show of character."

Stanway suggested Bayern players have had trouble adjusting to playing in the club's main stadium and tend to get "a little bit over-excited" in the first half.

United States defender Emily Fox rose in the fifth minute to head in Arsenal's opening goal from a high-bouncing ball and Mariona Caldentey struck an exquisite second in the 23rd.

Caldentey, the Ballon d'Or runner-up in September, was perfectly balanced to find space on the edge of the Bayern penalty area and curl a rising right-footed shot.

Still, Arsenal lost again in Munich, one year after Harder's late hat trick keyed a 5-2 rout that proved just a footnote by the time the Gunners beat Barcelona in the final in May.

Barcelona dominates: Barcelona swept aside Leuven though took until first-half stoppage time to score first from a penalty kick by Alexia Putellas.

An own goal by left back Kim Everaerts made it 2-0 before center back Irene Paredes' deflected header into the net after a corner.

"We have to be happy," Paredes said. "It's true that maybe we deserved more (goals)."

French touchMan United took the lead against PSG when a France forward, Melvine Malard, scored past a former England goalkeeper, Mary Earps, at Old Trafford.

PSG's defender Olga Carmona — whose goal past her now-teammate Earps won the 2023 World Cup final for Spain against England — fired a stunning equaliser from 25 meters (yards) in first-half stoppage time.

The decisive goal for United was Fridolina Rolfö's header in the 58th.

Juventus rose to seventh in the standings, above Bayern, by winning 2-1 at Atletico Madrid. Benfica and Twente drew 1-1 in Lisbon to both stay in the bottom six elimination places.

Track to open LA Olympics with women's 100-m sprint

ASSOCIATED PRESS
■ Los Angeles

It will be a busy opening day of action at the Los Angeles Olympics for the fastest women in the world.

As part of a seismic schedule change for the 2028 Games, track and field, and not swimming, will lead off the Olympics. In releasing the detailed schedule Wednesday, organisers revealed that the first day at the LA Coliseum, July 15, will include all three rounds of the women's 100 meters.

Sprinters normally run a maximum of two races in a day at a major event. It's a change the men will not have to deal with, but that a women's field that could include the last two world champions, Sha'Carri Richardson and Melissa Jefferson-Wooden, and Olympic champ Julien Alfred are being given nearly three years to prepare for.

"To be the pre-eminent event on the first night of competition in the historic LA Memorial Coliseum, I think when we presented it to the athletes that way, there was excitement," said Janet Evans, the gold-medal swimmer serving as chief athlete officer for the Los Angeles Games. "A majority of athletes said to me, Just let me know. Let me know early, and I'll start training to run three 100s in one day."

Swimming to take place at SoFi: Swimming has traditionally kicked off the Summer Games, but because the opening ceremony is taking place at SoFi Stadium, same as the swim meet, organizers decided to make the swap. It was not feasible to set up the pool in the stadium so quickly after the ceremony. Evans, who won four Olympic gold medals in 1988 and 1992, said the prospect of

swimming in what is largely considered LA's best new stadium in front of 38,000 fans is an opportunity her sport embraced. Also, swimmers are often forced to miss the opening because they compete the very next day.

"I could probably name on my two hands the swimmers I know who have actually been to opening ceremonies," Evans said.

Schedule not set up for McLaughlin-Levrone double: The schedule also makes it virtually impossible for Sydney McLaughlin-Levrone to try to double in both the 400 meters and the 400 hurdles.

McLaughlin-Levrone is the world-record holder and two-time defending champion in the hurdles. She took a year off from that to run in the 400 sprint this year, where at the world championships she became the first runner since 1985 to run the lap in less than 48 seconds (47.78). (Second-place finisher Marileidy Paulino also broke 48.)

McLaughlin-Levrone's coach, Bobby Kersee, had hinted at the possibility she might go for the double. In the past — most notably in 1996 when Michael Johnson won the 200 and 400 — organizers have tailored the Olympic schedule to allow marquee track athletes to try for extra medals.

Not this time, though. The 400 hurdles semifinals and 400-meter final are each scheduled for July 20.

Chief of Sport and Games Delivery Shana Ferguson said LA consulted with World Athletics in designing the schedule.

"I can't speak directly to any particular athlete's schedule or how he or she is approaching the Games but we are arm and arm in the development of a contest schedule," Ferguson said.

Baseball moved up two days to fit into MLB All-Star breakThe Olympic baseball tournament at Dodger Stadium was moved up two days and will start on July 13 and run through July 19.

That lines up to fit into an extended Major League Baseball All-Star break that would include the All-Star Game on July 11, possibly at San Francisco, and allow the season to resume July 21.

MLB Commissioner Rob Manfred has expressed optimism major leaguers will be available for the Olympics, subject to negotiations with the players' association.