

Classifieds

BEDKHALI NOTICE

I, Ram Nath, son of Pajaba Ram, resident of village Deeg, Tehsil Shahabad Markanda, District Kurukshetra, Haryana, declare that our my son Sanjeev Kumar and his wife Kamlesh Devi are out of My control. So i disowned from them movable and immovable properties. Anybody dealing with them on their own risk.

We, Bhim Sain S/o Hans Raj and Smt. Sarla Singla W/o Bhim Sain both R/O House No. 3104, Block-D, Airport Road, Aero City, SAS Nagar, Mohali, Punjab declare that We Disown Our Son Varun Singla By Giving A Disown Publication in The Pioneer Newspaper On Dated 01-02-2025. But Now Our Son is Under Our Control So We Accept Him Back as Our Son & Legal Her and Revoke That Disown.

I, Dharmpal S/o Tuihya Ram R/o Kalanaur Kalan, Distt Rohtak, and currently residing at Kamala Colony, Bhim Nagar, Bhiwani declare that my wife Sunita and my daughter Sanjana are out of my control. I evict them from my movable and immovable properties. If anybody deals with her shall do their own risk in future.

I, Murti Devi W/o Late Sh. Ram Chand Goyal R/O H.No. 368/24, Old ITI Ground, Jagdish Colony, Rohtak Haryana declare that my daughter Santosh Goyal is out of my control. So I disown her from my all moveable/immovable properties. Any body dealing with her at their own risk. I or my family are not responsible for any type of their any legal or illegal acts.

I Rohtash S/o Sh. Devi Chand R/o Jagdambe Colony Village Matloda District Panipat declared that my son Sonu is not obedient to me. We hereby disown my son from my movable and immovable properties. In the future, if he enters into any transaction, he will be solely responsible, and we will not be liable.

I, Sonu S/o Dharam pal # 3929, Sector 25-D, Chandigarh, my Son Arun Kumar his wife Shivani are out of my control. I, disown them from my movable / immovable property. anybody deal with them at their own risk.

We, Sarbjit Singh S/o S. Teja Singh and Satnam Kaur W/o S. Sarbjit Singh, residents of H. No. 1567, Sector 7-C, Chandigarh, hereby declare that our son Samdarsi Sandha is out of our control. We have disowned our son Samdarsi Sandha from all our movable and immovable properties. Anybody dealing with him will do at their own Risk.

I, Ronki Ram S/o Surjan R/o Hamira Farm,Siana Saidan Tehsil Pehowa Distt.Kurukshetra My Son Shiv Kumar is out of my control I, disown him from all My movable and immovable properties. If Anybody deals with him at their Own Risk.

I, Sanjay Kumar S/o Milap Chand Rana R/O H.No. 2680 Sector 22-C Chandigarh declare that my son Akshay Kumar (aged 23 Years) is out of my control. so I disown with him from my moveable/immovable property. If anybody dealing with him at his/her own risk.

I, Amritpal Singh S/o Mithu Singh R/O Khokhar Kalan Teh & Distt. Mansa Declare that my two daughter's Manjot Kaur and Harmanpreet Kaur is out of my control. So I disown with them from my moveable/immovable property. If anybody dealing with them at his/her own risk

ਮੈਂ ਬਲਦੇਵ ਕੌਰ ਕਲਸੀ ਖਤਨੀ ਲੇਟ ਮੰਗਲ ਸਿੰਘ ਕਲਸੀ ਵਾਸੀ ਮਕਾਨ ਨੰ:-743 ਨਵਰ ਨੰ:-03 ਗਲੀ ਨੰ:-5ਟੇ ਦਸਮੇਸ਼ ਨਗਰ ਮੇਰਾ ਜ਼ਿਲ੍ਹਾ ਮੇਰਾ ਜ਼ਿਲ੍ਹਾ ਕਰਦੀ ਹਾਂ ਕਿ ਮੇਰਾ ਲੜਕਾ ਗੁਰਮੇਲ ਸਿੰਘ ਅਤੇ ਇਸਦੀ ਖਤਨੀ ਕਰਮਜੋਤ ਕੌਰ ਜੋ ਕਿ ਮੇਰੇ ਕਹਿਣ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਹਰ ਹਨ ਨੂੰ ਮੈਂ ਆਪਣੀ ਸਾਰੀ ਚੱਲ-ਅੱਚਲ ਜਾਇਦਾਦ ਤੋਂ ਬੇਦਖਲ ਕਰਦੀ ਹਾਂ। ਉਹ ਮੇਰੇ ਅਤੇ ਮੇਰੀ ਬਾਨੀ ਪਰਿਵਾਰ ਦੇ ਕਹਿਣੇ ਵਿੱਚ ਨਹੀਂ ਹਨ। ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਲੈਣ-ਦੇਣ ਕਰਨ ਵਾਲਾ ਖੁਦ ਜ਼ਿੰਮੇਵਾਰ ਹੋਵੇਗਾ।

ਮੈਂ ਅਨੂਪ ਸਿੰਘ ਪੁੱਤਰ ਰਫ਼ਘਾਲ ਸਿੰਘ ਵਾਸੀ ਪਿੰਡ ਕੋਟੇਵਾਲ ਡਾਕਖਾਨਾ ਪਿੰਡਗੀ ਬੋਸਾਂ ਜ਼ਿਲ੍ਹਾ ਗੁਰਦਾਸਪੁਰ ਆਪਣੇ ਲੜਕੇ ਜ਼ੇਜ਼ਨਪੁੱਤ ਸਿੰਘ, ਉਸ ਦੀ ਖਤਨੀ ਅਤੇ ਬੰਦੇ ਨੂੰ ਆਪਣੀ ਚੱਲ-ਅੱਚਲ ਜਾਇਦਾਦ ਤੋਂ ਬੇਦਖਲ ਕਰਦਾ ਹਾਂ। ਉਹ ਮੇਰੇ ਅਤੇ ਮੇਰੀ ਬਾਨੀ ਪਰਿਵਾਰ ਦੇ ਕਹਿਣੇ ਵਿੱਚ ਨਹੀਂ ਹਨ। ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਲੈਣ-ਦੇਣ ਕਰਨ ਵਾਲਾ ਖੁਦ ਜ਼ਿੰਮੇਵਾਰ ਹੋਵੇਗਾ।

PUBLIC NOTICE

I Gurdish Kaur, late Jasbir Singh, resident of House No. 386, Sukhna Colony, Sub Tehsil Ziraipur, District SAS Nagar, Punjab, hereby declare that I had evicted my son Rameet Singh and his wife Jasmeet Kaur from my movable and immovable property on 23rd April 2026. Now my son Rameet Singh and his wife Jasmeet Kaur are under my control, therefore I withdraw the earlier eviction of my son Rameet Singh and his wife Jasmeet Kaur with my full consent and without any pressure. From today onwards, he will be my legal heir.

I, Gurmeet Singh Bawa S/o Amar Singh R/O Village-Shiampur, Near Water Tank, Shiampur, S.A.S. Nagar, Mohali, Punjab have changed my name from Gurmeet Singh Bawa to Gurmeet Singh.

I, Chander Sharma S/o Inderjit Sharma resident of Kothi No. 19, Phase-2, SAS Nagar (Mohali), I have changed my mother name from Jaswinder Sharma to Jaswinder Kaur.

I Seema Devi D/o Chhotu Singh R/O Village Kurari PO Manauli Distt SAS Nagar Mohali Punjab have changed my name from Seema Devi to Simran kaur

I, Dharminder S/o. Mewa Ram R/o. # Jagdhauri, Jagdhuli, Tehsil-Saraswati Nagar, Distt Yamunanagar have changed my minor Son name from Yatin to Yatin Saini.

I, No. 2470219M, HAVILDAR BALBIR SINGH (RETD) S/O TARA SINGH R/O VILLAGE MUBARKABAD, P/O BASTARA, DISTRICT KARNAL, HARYANA declare that correct the spelling of my wife's (spouse) name from Lakhvinder Kaur to Lakhvinder Kaur and date of birth 26.01.1964 in my SPARSH PPO No. 229199500531 as per her Aadhaar Card and PAN CARD which is true and correct.

I Ankit Bhardwaj s/o Santosh Bhardwaj r/o Bhiwani Road Near Kali Mata Mandir Jind Teh. & Distt. Jind declare that in my all documents my name is Ankit Bhardwaj but in my School Certificate my name is Ankit. That I want to register my name as Ankit Bhardwaj in my Passport.

I MINA DEVI (existing name) W/o No. 14401340Y Ex Havaldar Ajit Singh S/o Chander Singh resident of VPO Bhagwatipur, Tehsil Rohtak, District Rohtak (Haryana) declare that I have changed/amend my name in my husband Disch. Book / Defence Records from MINA DEVI (existing name) to MEENA DEVI (correct name) in future I shall may be known / written/ called as MEENA DEVI for all work purposes Vide Affidavit dated 08 Sept 2026 before Ist Class Magistrate (Rohtak).

I PARMJIT KAUR W/O HARNAM SINGH D/O BAG SINGH R/O VILL DAHRINA, TEHSIL RAJPURA, DISTT PATIALA have changed my name to PARAMJIT KAUR

I, Sandeep Dhiman S/o. Sheo Ram R/o. #Koolpur, PO Saran, Tehsil-Saraswati Nagar, Distt Yamunanagar have changed my minor Daughter name from Aayushi to Aayushi Dhiman.

I, Amit Kumar S/O Om Parkash Singla R/O Ward No 2, Near Mata Chintpurni Mandir, Nai Dabwali, Distt Sirsa, Haryana-125104 Have Changed My Name From Amit Kumar To Amit Singla.

I, Arti legally spouse of No.18014896M Spr Deepak Kumar presently residing at Vill-Dalampur, Distt. Meerut, State-Uttar Pradesh- 250502 declare That I have changed my name from Arti to Aarti vide Affidavit No. IN-PB88705600959140Y dated 08.09.2026 before notary public district court Bathinda.

I, Priyadarshini Sarangi legally spouse of No.15741143N NK Subrat Sarangi presently residing at PO: Chakradhar Prasad, PS: Fategarh Distt. Nayagarh , State- Odisha- 752063 declare That I have changed my name from Priyadarshini Sarangi to Priyadarshini Satapatha vide Affidavit No. IN-PB88703165795287Y dated 08.09.2026 before notary public district court Bathinda.

I, Ranjeet Singh son of Sh. Karam Chand resident of Village Mandlay Tehsil Raipur Rani Distt. Panchkula have changed my minor son's name from Baby One of Mamta Devi To Bhavneet Choudhary

I, Ranjit Singh, son of Harbhaj Singh, resident of Patti Lamian Di -V P O, Khadoor Sahib, District Tarn Taran, Punjab, have changed my name from Ranjit Singh to Singh Ranjit.

I Anup S/o Rammehar r/o H.No. 286/30 Bhiwani Road Teh. & Distt. Jind declare that I have changed my name from Anup to Anoop Singh for all future purposes.

I, Amir Khan S/o Darbara Singh R/o VPO- Ramgarh(232), Panchkula Haryana have changed my name from Amir Khan to Kalraj Bawa.

I Kuldev Singh Batht S/o Balvir Singh R/o Near Cooperative bank Mandi Lakhwali, Sri Muktsar Sahib have changed my name to Kuldev Singh.

I, Poonam W/o Parmod Kumar R/o H.No.881, Shanti Colony Jagadhri, Distt Yamuna Nagar, have changed my minor son's name from Tanish to Tanish Tanish.

I, Sajanpreet S/o Rajinder Singh R/o 334 Raja Ram Colony, Distt. Yamuna Nagar, Jagadhri, have changed my name from Sajanpreet to Sajanpreet Singh.

I, Ex-Serviceman No. 15769437X, Rank Hav. Sanjeev Kumar, S/o Sh. Kishori Lal, R/o Vill. Kohlwin, P.O. Gahli, Teh. Galore, Distt. Hamirpur (H.P.), declare that in my Army record my daughter's name wrongly entered as Navya. Whereas her correct name is Navya Kumari. Please note.

I, Smiksha Thakur W/o Sanjeev Kumar, resident of 213 Housing Board, Ward 16, Sector 19 Panchkula, Haryana, have changed my name from Smiksha Thakur to Samiksha Thakur

I Sazal S/o Shree Niwas R/O H.no.390, gali no.5, near shiv mandir, R.K puram Panipat have changed my name from Sazal kumar to Sazal for all future purposes.

I Shree Niwas S/o Raghubir R/O H.no.390, gali no.5, near shiv mandir, R.K puram Panipat have changed my name from Shri Niwas to Shree Niwas for all future purposes.

I Nidhi Arora W/o Anil Kumar R/O H.no.84 A Bhatiya colony Ward no.3 Panipat have changed my name from Nidhi to Nidhi Arora for all future purposes.

I Parveen Malhotra S/O Darbari Lal Malhotra R/O H.No. 545, Sector 12, Huda, Panipat(Hr)-132103 I Have Changed My Name Parveen Kumar To Parveen Malhotra For All Future Purposes.

I, No 3404427X Rank Ex Nk Name Paramjit Singh son of Sh. Bachan Singh resident of Vill – Bhangwan, PO – Qadian, Tehsil & Distt – Gurdaspur (Punjab) PIN – 143516 have changed the name of my daughter from Amanit Kaur to Amneet Kaur vide Affidavit dated 02 Sep 2026 e-Stamp Paper No IN-PB87034930027462Y before Executive Magistrate Sub Tehsil Kahnauwan, Distt - Gurdaspur (Punjab).

I Sneha D/o Gurnam Masih, VPO Pasnawal, Distt. Gurdaspur, have changed my name from Sneha to Sneha Sahota. Concerned note.

I, Sarita W/o Sh Satyawar R/O 4th Mile Stone, Sirsa Road, VPO Dhandoor Bir, Dist Hisar, declared that I have changed my name from Sarita to Monika for all future purpose.

I, Bhanu Seth W/o Vaibhav Seth R/o 33A, V V Homes, Imperial City, Loharka Road, Amritsar, Punjab have changed my name from Bhanu Seth to Ambica Seth.

I, Nancy Gupta, W/o Sh. Ankush Gupta, R/o H.No 12, Sector 24, Part 1, Huda, Panipat, declares that I have changed my name from Nancy Garg to Nancy Gupta. for all future purposes.

I, Deesha Kinha W/o Naveen Kumar R/o 81, D.C Colony, Near Shanti Niketan School, Hisar (Haryana) 125001 declared that I have changed my name from Diksha Kinha to Deesha Kinha for all future purpose.

I, Mitar Pal (Old Name, which is to be changed) S/o Badri Ram R/o Sanghwa Dhamshala and Patwar Khana, Kaimri Teh. & Distt. Hisar Haryana, 125001 hereby declare that I have changed my name from Mitar Pal to Mittarpal for all purposes. I shall be known as Mittarpal for all official and legal purposes. This declaration is made for updating the other official records, and for publication.

I, Sandeep Kumar S/o Satpal R/o VPO Satrod Kalan, Tehsil and Distt. Hisar (Haryana) declared that I have changed the name of my minor daughter from Yashika to Yashika Poonia for all future purpose.

I, Mukesh S/o Sunder Singh R/o BPR School, Fatehpur, Tehsil Pundri, Distt. Kaithal (Haryana) declares that I have changed my name from Mukesh to Mukesh Kumar. In future, I will be known by the name of Mukesh Kumar. All concerned please note.

I, Gourav Zood S/o Ajmer Singh R/O Village Ahun, Tehsil Pundri, Distt. Kaithal (Haryana) declares that I have changed my minor son's name from Anav to Anav Zood. In future, he will be known by the name of Anav Zood. All concerned please note.

I Lavish S/o Anil Kumar R/o Makan No. 900, Hudda, 13-17, Panipat, Haryana- 132103, have changed my name to Lavish Arora for all future purpose.

I Rupesh Kumar Nagpal S/o Hargopal R/o Villa No. E-1/12, Sector -04, Eldeco Estate One, Panipat, Haryana- 132103, have changed my name to Rupesh Kumar for all future purpose.

I, WALTER C/o William H. No.4162, Mauli Jagran, Chandigarh-160102, have changed my name from Walter to Walter.

I, Harish Chander Verma Son Of Ram Prayag R/O House No. 1452/27 Sector 29-B Ut Chandigarh That I Have Changed My Name From Harish Chander Verma To Harish.

I, Santosh Rani W/o Sh. Satdev Datta is resident of House No. 1335 Sector 4 Panchkula. That my name written in my Aadhar card No. 401763817771 as Satosh Rani is incorrect. My correct name is Santosh Rani for all intents & purposes

I, Sunil Verma S/O Krishan Verma, R/O 883/18 Ghani Pura, Near Gandhi Ashram, Rohtak, hereby declare that my mother's correct name is Santosh Devi and not Santosh Verma. Due to a mismatch in official records, I am publishing this notice for correction of her name in my Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) Service Record.

I Dheeraj S/o Sh. Rakesh Sehgal R/O H.No. 614, Main Road, Sector-1, Rohtak-124001, Haryana declare that I want to change my name Dheeraj to Dheeraj Sehgal. In future I may be known as a Dheeraj Sehgal for all purpose.

I, Sukhi Bai W/o Gurdeep Singh R/O 445, Poharka, Phorka (Pohrakan)(109), Po: Poharkan, Sirsa, Haryana-125102 have changed my name to Sukhvinder Kour.

I, Shilpa Kapoor W/O Ajay Sappahia residing at #3241, Sector-47-D, Po-Sector-47, Chandigarh-160047 have changed my name to Shilpa Sappahia.

I, Devo Rani W/o Banarsi Dass R/O Vill Gugran, Po Narot Jaimal Singh, Teh And Distt Pathankot, Punjab-145026 have changed my name to Devi Rani.

I, Susheel Kumar Singla S/O Bhoj Raj R/O House No. 5425, 3, Birla Mill Colony, Bathinda, Punjab-151001 have changed my name to Susheel Kumar.

I, Kavita Arora W/o Balwinder Thukral R/O 81-R, Model Town, Karnal, Haryana-132001 have changed my name to Sangeeta Thukral.

I, Gurmit Kaur W/O Gurdev Singh R/o P.O Bhamri, Gurdaspur, Punjab-143527 have changed my name to Satnam Kaur.

I, Hardev Singh S/o Chanan Singh R/o P.O Bhamri, Gurdaspur, Punjab-143527 have changed my name to Gurdev Singh.

I, Niharika D/o Parveen Gupta R/o #693, Sector 9, Panchkula Sector-8, District. Panchkula, Haryana-134109 have changed my name to Niharika Gupta.

I Dupinder Kaur W/O Gurmali Singh R/O VPO Nangal Lubana tehsil bholath district Kapurthala declare that have changed my name from Dupinder Kaur to Depinder Kaur. Please note.

I, Sonia Sharma W/o Rajdeep Sharma R/O H.No. 270, Gali No. 6, Near Badi Nadi, Jujhar Nagar, Patiala (Pb.) have changed my name from Champa to Sonia Sharma.

I, Surinder Kaur W/o Amrik Singh R/O H.No. 75, Opp. Income Tax, Dhaliwal Colony, Patiala (Punjab) have changed my name from Surinder Kaur to Surinder Kaur Arora.

I hitherto known as Dhananjay Gupta S/o Vikrant Gupta Resident at House No.1, Near 22 No. Phatak, Punjabi Bagh Patiala, District Patiala, Punjab-147001 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Dhananjay Chaudhary.

I, Manjeet Kaur Sandhu S/o Pohala Singh R/o VPO Kohar Singh Wala, Distt. Ferozepur Have Changed My Name from Manjeet Kaur Sandhu to Manjeet Kaur.

I, Prabhtot Kaur D/o Late Gurjanak Singh Soin, House No. 1020, Sector 36-C, Chandigarh have changed my name from Prabhtot Kaur to Peya Soiin.

I, Priya Kuppasamy W/o Balu, House No. 6299, Near Govt High School Maloya, Chandigarh have changed my name from Priya Kuppasamy to Priya

I, Vishali Sharma W/o Varun Sharma, resident of H. No. 1130, Sector 5, B Block, Eco City-1, Mullanpur, New Chandigarh, Distt. Mohali, have changed my name from Vishali Sharma to Mriinalini Sharma.

I Chandi Parshad alias Chandi Parsad Sharma S/o Jyoti Ram, H.No. 3177, Sector 19-D, Chandigarh have changed my name from Chandi Parshad alias Chandi Parsad Sharma to Chandi Parshad Sharma

I, JASVIR KAUR spouse of Service No 14364265 A EX NAK (TS) HARINDER PAL SINGH, Residing of HOUSE NO 2, RAIPUR, KALAN MAULI JAGRAN, CHANDIGARH Pin code -160102 have changed my name from JASVIR KAUR to JASBIR KAUR vide affidavit dated 08.09.2026 before Notary Chandigarh

I, Shila Devi W/o Shamsher Singh, R/O House No. 250, Nilokheri, Raipur Roran, Distt. Karnal, declare that Shila Devi and Sheela both names are mine, same and one person.

I, Randeep Kumar S/o Magat Ram R/O 45, Shamsher Nagar Kale Ghanupur, Amritsar 143105 have declare that Randeep is my Given name and Kumar is my given name

I, Gurpartap Singh S/o Arjan Singh R/O VPO Sur Singh Tehsil Patti District Tarn Taran have declare that Gurpartap is my Given name and Singh is my Surname

I, Maninder Kaur W/o Maninder Singh R/O H.No.337, Shastri Nagar, Lawrence Road, Amritsar have declare that Maninder is my Given name and Kaur is my Surname

I, Prabhjeet Kaur W/o Kuljinder Pal Singh Bhangu R/O H.No. 1972, Gali Khoo Bhalla, Islamabad, Amritsar have changed my name from Prabhjeet Kaur to Prabhjeet Kaur Bhangu

I, Manpreet Singh Sohail S/o Nishan Singh R/O Pati Fulu Di, Village Vallah Amritsar have changed my name from Manpreet Singh Sohail to Manpreet Singh

I, Paramjit Kaur W/o Manmeet Singh R/O 36, Gali No 6, Ganda Singh Colony, Tarn Taran Road, Amritsar have changed my name from Paramjit Kaur to Paramjeet Kaur

I, Manmeet Singh Babra S/o Surinder Singh R/O 36, Gali No 6, Ganda Singh Colony, Tarn Taran Road, Amritsar have changed my name from Manmeet Singh Babra to Manmeet Singh

I, Charanjit Singh S/o Balwinder Singh R/O H.No.10-A, Mahindra Colony Sultanwind Road, Amritsar have changed my name from Charanjit Singh to Charanjeet Singh

I, Preeti W/O. Sahib Singh R/o. Village Balsarai, Tehsil Baba Bakala, Amritsar have changed my name from Preeti to Preet Kaur. All concerned noted.

I, Gurpreet Singh S/o Nirmal Singh R/O E-13/975, Dhyan Singh Machina Wali Gali Village Kale Kala Ghanupur, PO Chheharta, District Amritsar have declare that Gurpreet is my Given name and Singh is my Surname.

I, Mandeep Kaur D/o Jaswant Singh R/o VPO Ludhra Jalandhar Rural have changed my minor daughter Mandeep Kaur name. Mandeep is her Given name and Kaur is her Surname

I, Mandeep Kaur D/o Jaswant Singh R/O VPO Ludhra Jalandhar Rural have changed my minor daughter Hargun Kaur name. Hargun is her Given name and Kaur is her Surname

I, Bhawani Devi Mother of No.13779271H Nk Ramin kumar R/o Village. Chaddi, Post office Gadagusain Teh, Bali chowki, Dist Mandi, Himachal Pradesh have changed my name from Bhawani Devi to Bhavna Devi and Date of Birth from 01.01.1968 to 01.01.1971 vide Affidavit No.IN-PB88510794479425Y Dated 08.09.26 before Notary Public Amritsar

I, Gokul Kunwan mother No 14943849P Hav Doulat Singh R/o Govindpura, Richhawan, Jhalawar, Rajasthan-326023 now at 15 Mech Inf C/o 56 APO have changed my name from Gokul Kunwan to Gokul Bai and date of birth from 20.10.1962 to 01.01.1963 vide Affidavit No.IN-PB8885609958537Y Dt.08.09.2026 before notary public Amritsar

I, Kumari Anchal daughter of No JC 425270N Nb/Sub Pintu Singh Yadav R/O Kanjehara, Asana, Chandauli, Uttar Pradesh-232110 now at 15 Mech Inf C/o 56 APO have changed my name from Kumari Anchal to Anchal Yadav vide affidavit No.IN-PB8885122167092Y Dt.08.09.2026 before notary public Amritsar

I, Arpita Singh Yadav daughter of No JC 425270N Nb/Sub Pintu Singh Yadav R/O Kanjehara, Asana, Chandauli, Uttar Pradesh-232110 now at 15 Mech Inf C/o 56 APO have changed my name from Arpita Singh Yadav to Arpita Yadav vide Affidavit No.IN-PB8884451060246Y Dt.08.09.2026 before notary public Amritsar

I Shivani W/O Harvinder Singh R/O H.No.545 B Block New Amritsar G T Road Amritsar Have Changed My Name To Shivani Arora

I Sehajpal Singh S/O Harwinder Singh R/O Vill.Ahmedpur Po Kacha Pacca Tehsil Patti Tarn Taran Have Changed My Name From Sehajpal Singh To Given Name Sehajpal Surname Singh

I, hitherto known as ARJINDER SINGH S/O GURNAM SINGH residing at 127, Jarman State, Khunda Colony, Batala, Distt.Gurdaspur-143505 Punjab have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as RAJINDER SINGH.

I, No 15164814F Hav Md Yunus Shah S/o Late Anwar Hussain R/o Village and Post office Betabur Kallan, District Gazipur Uttar Pradesh 232341 have changed my daughter's name from Shama Parbin to Shama Parveen Vide Affidavit No.IN-PB887884303409124Y Dt.05.09.2026 before notary public Amritsar

I, No. 15503617W Rank DFR (OPR/GNR) Name BASAVARAJ CHAVALAGI resident of Village - Kamsinakoppa, PO - Devalatti, Tehsil - Khanapur, Distt - Belgaum, State - Karnataka, presently serving with 50 Armd Regt, C/o 56 APO, have changed name of my daughter from MUKTI BASAVARAJ CHAVALAGI to MUKTA BASAVARAJ CHAVALAGI vide Affidavit No IN-PB88840206455580Y DATED 08-09-2026 before Notary Public Pathankot (PB).

I, Gagan son of Shri Suresh resident of Jattal Road, Near R. S. Public School, Sondhapur Panipat, Haryana, India state that I have changed my name from Gagan to Gagan Kumar Puhall.

I, Suman W/o Satish Kumar R/o Ward No. 1, Rajiv Colony, Safidon District Jind-126112 (Haryana) have changed my name from Suman To Suman Devli.

I, Sushil Kumar S/o Jogi Ram R/o Village Rampura Tehsil Safidon District Jind-126112 (Haryana) have changed my minor daughter name from Sneh To Vanshika.

I, Bala Devi Spouse of Subhash Chander R/o Village Etal Kalan Tahsil & District Jind (Haryana) have declare that my husband army service record wrongly mentioned my name Balla Devi But my actual & Correct name Bala Devi vide affidavit dated 08.09.2026 attested by Notary Public Jind

I, hitherto Known as Nitam W/o Maninder Singh R/O H.No. 1171, Sect.- 6, Bahadurgarh Distt. Jhajjar (Haryana) 124507 declare that have changed my daughter name from Adarsh Joon to Pragya Joon and Shall hereafter be known as Pragya Joon for all purposes. It is certified that I have complied with other legal requirements in this connection.

I, Hitesh S/o Rakesh Kumar R/O H.No. 2415, Urban Estate Ward No. 20, Jind-126102 (Haryana) have changed my minor daughter name From Dhwti To Dhwti Bansal.

I, Judge Singh S/o Narain Singh Vill.Jalbhara, Kurukshetra have changed my given name Judge Surname Singh

I, Sajjan Kumar S/o Labh Singh Vill.Sienh, Kaithal have changed my name Sajjan Kumar to Kumar Sajjan

I, Shailendra Bhaskar, S/o Jagdish Rai Sharma, R/o H. No. 418/18, Onkar Nagar, Gurdaspur, Tehsil/District Gurdaspur, Punjab, India, declare that I am known by both names, Shailendra Bhaskar and Shailender Bhaskar, and both names refer to one and the same person.

I, Amanbir Singh S/O Harjinder Singh R/O Vpo. Fazlabad, Tehsil Batala District Gurdaspur, Punjab, India Pin Code 143505, I Have Changed My Name From Amanbir Singh To Singh Amanbir Please Note . Surname As Singh And Given Name As Amanbir.

I Anita Rani w/o Harminder Kumar R/o H. No. 5, Phase 1, Mansa vide complex, Swastik vihar, MDC, sector 5, Panchkula, Haryana 134114 that I have changed my name from Anita Rani to Anita GoeL.

I Jeet Singh S/o Mehma Singh R/O house no.289 Phase -1, Ramdarbar Chandigarh declare that due to typographical mistake my wife Sheela Devi's name mentioned as Sheela Kaur in family pension record PPO No. C/AF/16798 of 2002. The deponent affirm that Sheela Devi and Sheela Kaur is one and same person. The name of the deponent's wife considered Sheela Devi for all intends and purposes

I, Sandeep Kaur Wife of SITA RAM Resident of village KHAH, Tehsil Ratia (Fatehabad) Haryana, Declared that I have changed my Name to Sandeep Rani. All concerned Please Note.

I Gurpal Singh S/O Lakhwinder Singh VPO Sekhwan, Distt Gurdaspur, Punjab 143518 have changed my given Name Gurpal and Surname is Singh.

I, RANNOO DEVI mother of No : 10363359M Rank Hav/Chef Name BHEEM SEN of 126 Inf Bn (TA) JAK RIF, C/o 56 APO, resident of VPO – Nibhaur, Distt - Banda, State – Uttar Pradesh, PIN - 210121, have changed my name from RANNOO DEVI to RANNO DEVI vide Affidavit No. IN-PB88615897438232Y Dated 08-09-2026 before Notary Public Pathankot (PB).

I, BADKOO father of No : 10363359M Rank Hav/Chef Name BHEEM SEN of 126 Inf Bn (TA) JAK RIF, C/o 56 APO, resident of VPO – Nibhaur, Distt - Banda, State – Uttar Pradesh, PIN - 210121, have changed my name from BADKOO to SHIV POOJAN vide Affidavit No. IN-PB88618076239448Y Dated 08-09-2026 before Notary Public Pathankot (PB).

I, No. 15503617W Rank DFR (OPR/GNR) Name BASAVARAJ CHAVALAGI resident of Village - Kamsinakoppa, PO - Devalatti, Tehsil - Khan

Questioned Minister Over ‘Chitta’, Pressured to Apologise; Sangrur Man Dies by Suicide

MONIKA MALIK ■ Chandigarh

What began as a public confrontation over the unabated availability of ‘chitta’ has ended in the death of Sangrur’s 47-year-old daily wager, with his family alleging that he was pressured to apologise for questioning Punjab Finance Minister Harpal Singh Cheema and subsequently consumed poison. Police have booked five people for alleged abetment to suicide, harassment, and caste-based offences, putting the spotlight on what happened after Gulzar Singh raised the drug issue before the Minister at a village gathering.

The case has acquired added significance as it comes barely days after another Sangrur resident, anti-drug activist Mohanjit Singh, alleged that he was beaten in custody after displaying a black flag and questioning the government’s handling of drugs during Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann’s programme in Sunam. The two incidents have brought renewed scrutiny to the manner in which people raising the drug issue

publicly are being dealt with.

Gulzar, a resident of Tur Banjara village in Dirba constituency, reportedly confronted Cheema during his September 6 visit to the village and questioned him about the easy availability of ‘chitta’ in his constituency. He also told the Minister that his son was addicted to the drug and had been selling household belongings to sustain his addiction.

The exchange took place in a public gathering, making Gulzar’s question a direct challenge to the government’s claims on its campaign against drugs.

According to his family and villagers, trouble began after the programme. They alleged that local panchayat members came to Gulzar’s house and pressured him to apologise for raising the issue before the Minister. A purported video recorded before his death shows Gulzar alleging that he had been threatened and naming people he held responsible if anything happened to him.

He subsequently consumed a poisonous substance on September 7. His condition deteriorated despite treatment and he

was eventually shifted to DMC Hospital, Ludhiana, where he died.

On the complaint of Gulzar’s son Lakhwinder Singh, police registered a case against village sarpanch Baljinder Kaur, her husband Baljeet Singh alias Raj, panchayat member Vicky Singh, Sukhdev Singh alias Sukha, and Gona Singh. The FIR invokes Section 108 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita relating to abetment of suicide, besides the relevant provisions of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act. Cheema has not been named in the FIR. Police said the case was registered on the basis of the family’s allegations and material gathered during the inquiry. The accused’s side has denied intimidating Gulzar. Baljeet Singh maintained that the panchayat had listened to Gulzar’s concerns and assured him that help would be provided for his son.

Cheema has denied any role in the events leading to Gulzar’s death. He said he had listened to Gulzar’s complaint during the village visit and had directed police to take action against those

involved in drug supply. The minister said he was unaware of what happened subsequently and described the circumstances of Gulzar’s death as a matter requiring investigation. He maintained that anyone found guilty would face action under law.

NHRC TAKES NOTE, SEEKS REPORT FROM PUNJAB GOVERNMENT

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has taken cognisance of the death of Sangrur’s Gulzar Singh and sought a report from the Punjab Government. NHRC member Priyank Kanoongo said the Commission had received a complaint alleging that Gulzar was harassed after raising the issue of drug abuse before Finance Minister Harpal Singh Cheema. The Commission has issued notices to Punjab’s Chief Secretary and Director General of Police, seeking a detailed report on the facts of the case and action taken by the authorities. Kanoongo said the allegations that Gulzar was subjected to pressure and harassment after raising the drug issue were serious and warranted examination.

Opposition Mounts Joint Attack on AAP Govt, Demands Cheema’s Arrest, CBI Probe
PNS ■ Chandigarh

The alleged suicide of 47-year-old daily-wager Gulzar Singh, who Opposition parties claimed had held Finance Minister Harpal Singh Cheema and others responsible in a statement before his death after publicly questioning the alleged open sale of ‘chitta’, has turned into a major political flashpoint in Punjab. Congress demanded Cheema’s dismissal and arrest, the BJP sought a CBI probe, while the SAD called for an abetment-to-suicide case against the Finance Minister and others named by Gulzar.

The Opposition stepped up the pressure on the Bhagwant Mann Government on Tuesday, with Congress workers taking to the streets in Chandigarh and attempting to march towards the Chief Minister’s residence. Police used water cannons to stop them. AT the same time, the BJP delegation led by state president Kewal Singh Dhillon met the Governor and submitted a memorandum seeking an independent investigation into Gulzar’s death and the alleged custodial assault of another Sangrur resident, Mohanjit Singh. SAD president Sukhbir Singh Badal separately visited Gulzar’s family and vowed to pursue the matter until those responsible were punished.

Two Days’ Coal Left at Punjab Private Plants, Power Crisis Deepens

PNS ■ Chandigarh

Punjab could face prolonged power cuts within days if fresh coal supplies do not reach its private thermal plants, which reportedly have only about two days of stock left. The warning has come amid a sharp political blame game, with Power Minister Taranpreet Singh Sond blaming inadequate coal supply from the Centre, the BJP accusing the AAP government of poor management, and the PSEB Engineers Association flagging a separate Rs 7,800-crore projected revenue gap in PSPCL.

The stakes are high as Punjab’s five thermal plants have a combined generation capacity of 5,680 MW – 2,300 MW in three state-owned plants and 3,380 MW in two private plants. Any shutdown or further curtailment at the private plants would force the state to buy more expensive power from the central pool and energy exchanges.

A day before, PSEB Engineers Association general secretary Ajaypal Singh Atwal, in his communication to the Chief Minister, said PSPCL’s finances had become a matter of concern, with an estimated revenue shortfall of around Rs 7,800 crore against its actual expenditure requirements this financial year.

He attributed the pressure partly to delayed payment of government power subsidies and unpaid electricity bills by government departments. He also pointed to a lower-than-required assessment of expenditure in the recent ARR, resulting in tariff reductions that have further squeezed the corporation. The Association warned that during peak summer demand, Punjab’s own generation falls well short of requirements, leaving PSPCL dependent on

costly market purchases. Even hydro-rich Himachal Pradesh, it said, is increasingly preferring open-market sales over power banking with Punjab.

Power disruptions have also triggered concern among Ludhiana’s industrialists. They have conveyed that continued unreliable supply could force businesses to shift operations to other states, putting investment and employment at risk.

The engineers warned that demand is set to rise sharply with industrial expansion, agriculture, data centres and growing household consumption. Without timely capacity addition, prolonged blackouts could become a recurring problem.

The association has proposed immediately starting three 800-MW units at Ropar thermal plant, already approved by the PSPCL board, and developing a 250-MW solar project on vacant GNDTP land using existing infrastructure.

It has also sought strict action against private IPPs that fail to maintain the 26-day coal stock mandated by CEA norms, including cuts in fixed charges and financial penalties under PPAs. Alongside this, it called for a long-term generation expansion plan and greater investment in state-sector projects to create thousands of direct and indirect jobs for Punjab’s youth.

Sond, in a social-media video two days ago, had said that private plants were receiving inadequate coal from the Centre and operating at less than half capacity, resulting in cuts. He warned consumers to brace for longer outages if supplies did not improve.

The Union Coal Ministry, however, has maintained that there is no coal shortage and that adequate quantities have been allocated.

Women’s Participation Makes Democracy More Inclusive and Accountable: CM Saini

PNS ■ Faridabad

Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini on Tuesday said that the active participation of women in decision-making is essential for making democracy more sensitive, inclusive and accountable. Women representatives are not merely witnesses to change but are the architects of change, playing an important role in shaping society and strengthening grassroots governance.

He was speaking at the concluding ceremony of the ‘She Is a Change Maker’ programme, where he felicitated women representatives for their contributions and leadership. This programme was organized under the aegis of National Commission for Women at Surajkund in Faridabad.

Women MLAs and Legislative Council members from 20 states and two Union Territories participated in the workshop. Various sessions were organised on a range of subjects, including

deliberations, innovation, legislative procedures, leadership, communication, policy-making and the effective role of elected representatives.

He said that over the past two days, women representatives from different states had shared their experiences, ideas and working methods. Successful innovations being implemented in different states could serve as inspiration for other states. Good practices are not confined by boundaries; learning from one another helps strengthen good governance.

He said the role of a woman MLA is even broader, because when a woman MLA speaks in the House, her voice carries not only the expectations of a constituency, but also the concerns of a mother, the dreams of a daughter, and the voices of women’s struggles and aspirations.

Women’s participation in Panchayati Raj Institutions in Haryana has been strengthened by providing them 50 per cent

representation. Development picture cannot be complete without the effective participation of half the population. Today, daughters and daughters-in-law in villages are playing an important role in determining the direction of development of the entire village along with their families. Wherever there is women’s leadership, transparency, sensitivity and accountability are promoted.

Saini said that the state government is giving the highest priority to the economic, social and educational empowerment of women and girls. He said that 500 women cultural centres have been established in the state to provide an appropriate platform to women’s talent, art and culture. Technology and social media have completely transformed the way elected representatives communicate with the public. Through digital platforms, representatives can convey their views to millions of people within moments. However, every power also comes with responsibility.

Himachal CM meets Union Finance Minister; Seeks Additional Financial Assistance

PNS ■ New Delhi / Shimla

Himachal Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu on Tuesday met Union Finance and Corporate Affairs Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in New Delhi and apprised her of the current financial position of Himachal Pradesh and the financial challenges being faced by the state. He urged the Union Government to provide additional financial assistance, keeping in view the state’s unique geographical and economic condition.

According to a statement, the Chief Minister said that with the discontinuation of the Revenue Deficit Grant (RDG) from the financial year 2026-27, following the recommendations of the 16th Finance Commission, Himachal Pradesh is facing an annual financial gap of around Rs. 8,000 crore. He said the continuous reduction in the Revenue Deficit Grant over the past few years had further increased pressure on the

state’s finances.

He said that Himachal Pradesh, being a hill State, faces difficult geographical conditions, high vulnerability to natural disasters and higher costs of creation and maintenance of infrastructure, making the delivery and operation of public services comparatively more expensive.

Sukhu said that despite limited resources, the state government has been making sustained efforts to improve its financial position through various financial reforms and revenue-generation measures. He emphasized that, in view of the state’s geographical conditions and the heavy losses caused by natural disasters in recent years, additional support from the Union Government is essential.

He urged the Union Finance Minister to assess Himachal Pradesh’s financial challenges in the context of its unique geographical and economic circumstances and sought generous financial assistance and necessary approvals from the Union Government in the larger interest of the state.

Sitharaman assured the Chief Minister that the demands raised by the Himachal Pradesh Government would be considered sympathetically, keeping in view the state’s financial requirements and developmental priorities. Acknowledging the financial challenges faced by the state, she assured that the Union Government would extend necessary support to meet its legitimate financial requirements.

Punjab Police hosts 10th Northern Regional Police Coordination meeting

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

To reinforce internal security and foster inter-state coordination, Punjab Police on Tuesday hosted the 10th Northern Regional Police Coordination Committee (NRPCC) meeting to devise joint strategies against cross-border terrorism, gangster syndicates, organised crime networks, and cybercrime.

The high-level meeting, held in a hybrid mode, was chaired by Director General of Police (DGP) Punjab Gaurav Yadav and attended by Special Director General of Western Command Border Security Force (BSF) Chandigarh Satish S. Khandare, IG Headquarters Western Command Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) Rajesh Kumar, IG Punjab Frontier BSF Dr Atul Fulzele and DGP Chandigarh Sagarpreet Hooda, while, DGP Uttarakhand Deepam Seth and DGP Ladakh Anand Kumar Jain joined the meeting virtually. Senior representatives from Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), National Investigation Agency (NIA) and Subsidiary Intelligence Bureau (SIB), besides State Police forces from Haryana, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Chandigarh, and other central and security agencies also joined the deliberations.

HARYANA YOUTH CONG HOLDS PROTEST AGAINST UNEMPLOYMENT, FIR AGAINST RAHUL GANDHI

CHANDIGARH: The Youth Congress on Tuesday held a protest here in Chandigarh against various issues, including unemployment and the police case against party leader Rahul Gandhi in Uttarakhand, as police used water cannons to stop the demonstrators trying to gherao Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini’s residence. A

heavy police force was deployed to prevent the protesters from heading towards the CM’s residence. As the Youth Congress leaders and workers tried to breach barricades, police used water cannons to disperse the protesters. Later, several youth Congress workers and leaders were briefly detained.

BRIEFS

OPPOSITION PLAYING POLITICS OVER DEAD BODIES: AAP CHANDIGARH: The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) on Monday lashed at the BJP, Congress and Akali Dal for their attempt to exploit a tragic death for political gains, asserting that the bereaved family must be allowed to grieve with dignity and that politics over dead bodies cannot be permitted. The AAP asserted that the opposition parties in Punjab are indulging in an extremely insensitive “vulture politics”, as the traditional parties are rushing to politicalise every tragedy and even seeking to derive political mileage from a family’s grief. In a video message, AAP Punjab State General Secretary Organisation and Media In-charge Baltej Pannu said, “Punjab’s Opposition parties are doing such dirty politics at present that it can be called the politics of vultures. Wherever someone has committed suicide or wherever a dead body is found, they reach there and try to bake their political bread over the funeral pyre.”

700 CONDUCTOR POSTS TO BE FILLED SOON IN HARYANA ROADWAYS: ANIL VIJ
Chandigarh: Haryana Transport Minister Anil Vij on Tuesday said that 700 conductor posts would be filled soon in Haryana Roadways, while a proposal for the recruitment of 2,072 regular conductors has been submitted for the Chief Minister’s approval. Vij made the announcement after chairing a meeting with office-bearers of the Haryana Roadways Karamchari Sanjha Morcha in Chandigarh to discuss various demands of Roadways employees. He said the recruitment process for 700 conductor posts would be taken up shortly. At the same time, the proposal for appointing 2,072 regular conductors has been sent to the Chief Minister for approval and would subsequently be forwarded to the Haryana Staff Selection Commission.

FARIDABAD IMPROVES 33 PLACES IN FOUR YEARS, RANKS 14TH IN CLEAN AIR SURVEY
Chandigarh: Faridabad has made remarkable progress in improving its air quality, climbing 33 places over four years to secure the 14th position in the Clean Air Survey conducted across the country, Haryana Urban Local Bodies and Revenue Minister Vipul Goel said on Tuesday. Faridabad was ranked 47th in the survey in 2023. Its position improved to 21st in 2024 and 19th in 2025, before reaching 14th in 2026. The 33-place improvement in four years, he said, was a matter of pride for the city.

STRICT ACTION AGAINST CYBERCRIMINALS: HARYANA DGP
Chandigarh: Haryana Director General of Police Ajay Singhal on Tuesday directed police officers to take strict and effective action against cybercriminals and ensure timely relief to victims of online fraud. During a meeting with senior police officers, Singhal reviewed pending cybercrime cases and complaints and directed officials to expedite their disposal. He said every cybercrime complaint must be investigated seriously within the stipulated time and action taken in accordance with the law.

DON’T ACT AGAINST SANITATION WORKERS, RESOLVE DEMANDS THROUGH DIALOGUE: MP SELJA
Sirsa: Sirsa MP and senior Congress leader Kumari Selja on Tuesday urged the Haryana government to resolve the demands of sanitation workers through dialogue instead of taking punitive action against them. In a statement, Selja said the government should immediately stop dismissals, suspensions and arrests of sanitation workers and engage with their representatives to find a mutually acceptable solution. She said issuing show-cause notices to employees would not resolve the ongoing dispute and that meaningful negotiations were the need of the hour.

HIMACHAL CM MEETS UNION ENVIRONMENT MINISTER BHUPENDER YADAV
Shimla: Himachal Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu on Tuesday met Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change Bhupender Yadav in New Delhi and discussed various important issues related to scientific dredging in flood-affected river areas of Himachal Pradesh. Sukhu said that excessive rainfall, floods and flash floods lead to the accumulation of large quantities of debris, boulders, stones and sand in river channels, adversely affecting their water-carrying capacity and increasing the risk of flooding to human settlements, roads, bridges, forests and other critical infrastructure. He said that the scientific and time-bound dredging in such vulnerable areas is essential from the perspective of disaster risk reduction. He urged the Union Minister to issue clear and enabling guidelines based on the decisions and recommendations of the Forest Advisory Committee, so that proposals related to dredging could be processed and disposed of in a time-bound manner. Union Minister Bhupender Yadav assured the Chief Minister that clear and enabling guidelines would be issued for scientific dredging in Himachal Pradesh to minimize losses caused by floods and other natural disasters. He said that while facilitating the necessary procedures, the practical requirements and interests of Himachal Pradesh would also be duly taken into consideration.

PUNJAB WOMEN COMMISSION TO HOLD MARATHON SHE RUNS-2026
Bathinda: The Punjab Women Commission will organise a Marathon She Runs - 2026 on Sep 9 at Maur, an exclusive women’s marathon to promote quality, health and women empowerment. Chairperson Punjab Women Commission Raj Lalli Gill said that the 2.5 kms long marathon will be held at the grain market in Maur wherein women from all age groups will participate.

PM Modi: Working to provide free online coaching to students

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ Vadodra

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday said the Government was working to reduce the burden of fees faced by the families of students preparing for competitive examinations by providing free online coaching.

Speaking at the 'NaMo for Viksit Bharat' programme here where he inaugurated or laid foundation stones for ₹35,000 crore-worth development projects, the PM referred to the announcement he had made in this regard in his August 15 Red Fort speech.

"You are aware that lakhs of young people prepare for competitive examinations. Every year, a significant



Prime Minister Narendra Modi addresses the inauguration and foundation stone laying of ₹35,000 crore development projects at an event, in Vadodra, Gujarat

PTI

portion of our families' earnings is spent on coaching for these students," Modi said.

"We aim to save money for the families of poor and middle-class students. Consequently, the Government is moving towards providing free online coaching, allowing our youth

to prepare under the guidance of India's best teachers. The Government itself will oversee this coaching arrangement," he added.

Changing global needs had also changed the approach to education, with skills being given equal importance alongside degrees, the prime minister noted.

Hence, the Government was reshaping the education policy and institutions, he said. Artificial Intelligence expertise would not be limited only to the IT sector and it could be used in agriculture, healthcare, manufacturing and robotics startups, he noted.

India was witnessing an "extraordinary era", Modi said, and called upon the youth to prioritise the goal of a 'Viksit Bharat' by 2047.

Election petition, SIR delay bypolls to 2 LS seats

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

An election petition and the ongoing special intensive revision (SIR) of electoral rolls have delayed bypolls to two Lok Sabha seats, while a by-election to another parliamentary constituency has already been announced.

The Basirhat seat in West Bengal, the Shillong seat in Meghalaya and the Nagaon constituency in Assam fell vacant on different dates.

The Election Commission on Monday announced a bypoll to the Nagaon Lok Sabha seat but not to the other two.

Responding to a query on why bypolls to the Shillong and Basirhat parliamentary seats were not announced, senior EC functionaries said the ongoing SIR in Meghalaya and a pending election petition in the Calcutta High Court were behind the deci-



sion. An election petition was filed challenging the election of TMC's SK Nurul Islam from Basirhat. But months after taking the oath as a Lok Sabha member, he died on September 25, 2024.

Despite his death, the petition challenging his election remains pending. An election petition can be filed against the victory of a candi-

date in the concerned high court within 45 days of the declaration of results.

EC officials said an "election petition with second prayer" is pending.

The second prayer in an election petition usually asks the high court to declare the petitioner or another candidate as duly elected, after the first prayer declaring the

winning candidate's election as void.

The Shillong Lok Sabha seat was vacated following the demise of Voice of the People's Party MP Ricky Andrew Syngkon on February 19 this year.

Poll authority functionaries said the SIR is in progress in Meghalaya, where the final electoral rolls will be published on October 21.

The lone Lok Sabha bypoll will be held in Assam's Nagaon constituency, which was vacated by Pradyut Bordoloi. Votes will be cast on October 6, and counting will take place on October 9.

Bordoloi had won Nagaon on a Congress ticket in 2024 but quit the party in March this year and joined the BJP ahead of the Assam assembly elections. He subsequently resigned from the Lok Sabha, contested the assembly polls as a BJP candidate from Dispur and won.

Congress seeks FIR over purification ritual at UK Haldwani rally venue

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ New Delhi

A Congress leader on Tuesday sought registration of an FIR against Shri Ram Dharmarth Seva Nyas president, Girish Chandra Pandey and 15 others over an alleged "purification" ritual performed at Ramila Maidan in Uttarakhand's Haldwani after the party president Mallikarjun Kharge's address.

In his complaint at Parliament Street police station, MP Mallu Ravi alleged that Pandey and 15 unidentified persons entered into a "criminal conspiracy" and performed a yajna and sprinkled Gangajal at the venue on August 10, two days after Kharge addressed the meeting there on August 8.

Ravi alleged that the act was aimed at insulting and



Police stop Congress leaders during a protest march towards the Uttarakhand CM's residence over an FIR filed against Rahul Gandhi in Haldwani over the 'purification' row, in Dehradun

PTI

humiliating members of the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe communities and was contrary to constitutional guarantees of equality and the abolition of untouchability.

He said the incident had deeply hurt his feelings and those of his community, adding that he had received

calls from several people expressing concern over the alleged practice.

Ravi urged the police to register a case, arrest those responsible and take strict legal action under the SC/ST Act, the Prevention of Insults to National Honour Act and relevant provisions of the BNS.

CWMA directs Karnataka to release 6,000 cusecs to TN

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

The Cauvery Water Management Authority (CWMA) on Tuesday upheld the Cauvery Water Regulation Committee's (CWRC) recommendation directing Karnataka to ensure a flow of 6,000 cusecs of water to Tamil Nadu for 15 days. The decision was taken at the 57th meeting of the CWMA held in Delhi under the chairmanship of SK Haldar. Officials from Tamil Nadu and Karnataka among others participated in the meeting.

"Karnataka has released 33 TMC of Cauvery water towards Tamil Nadu's Biligundlu border point so far in accordance with the directions issued by the CWMA and CWRC," Cauvery Neeravari Nigama Limited Managing Director Mahesha told reporters after the meeting. He added that



despite Karnataka being in a "distress situation", the state has been following the orders of the CWMA and CWRC and there has been no violation so far. "If the situation were normal, it would be different. But now that we are in a distress situation, we have to follow the distress-sharing proportion as per the orders

issued by the CWMA and CWRC. We have been following those orders so far and, accordingly, have released water," Mahesha told reporters.

Earlier in the day, the CWRC had recommended that Karnataka release water to Tamil Nadu at a rate of 6,000 cusecs for the next 15

days. The recommendation was upheld by the CWMA later in the afternoon, Mahesha said.

"The people of Tamil Nadu are demanding nearly 20,000 cusecs. They made this demand at the meeting, but at the same time, the CWMA's direction is restricted to 6,000 cusecs," he added. This

follows the CWMA's earlier order on August 25 when, upholding the CWRC's recommendation, it had directed Karnataka to ensure a flow of 9,000 cusecs of water to Tamil Nadu for 15 days.

The meeting was held following the Supreme Court's direction to the Tamil Nadu Government a day earlier to raise before the CWMA its grievance over the release of its proportionate share of Cauvery water by Karnataka.

At its 141st meeting on August 24, the CWRC had directed Karnataka to release water from its reservoirs and ensure a flow of 9,000 cusecs at the Biligundlu border point. The flow had to be maintained continuously for 15 days, during which Tamil Nadu was expected to receive approximately 11.66 TMC of water.

The release is expected to benefit Kuruvali cultivation and meet Tamil Nadu's drinking water requirements.

Rahul questions Amit Shah over Manipuri musician's death

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Tuesday lashed out at the Modi Government over the beating to death of a musician from Manipur here, asking what Home Minister Amit Shah's ministry is doing to stop this "growing lawlessness" and demanding a swift investigation into the incident.

Vikram Singh, a 54-year-old Manipuri musician, died after a group of delivery workers and dhaba staff allegedly assaulted him when he objected to their shouting and drinking alcohol outside his Kilokari village apartment early Monday, officials said.

Police arrested seven men and apprehended one juvenile in the case. "Chongtham



LoP in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi meets Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan at 10 Janpath, in New Delhi

PTI

Vikram Singh ji, a renowned musician from Manipur, went downstairs to ask some men to lower the noise outside his home. He was beaten to death for it," Gandhi said on X. A father, killed outside his

own home, in his own country's capital, he said.

"After many such incidents, every Northeast family in Delhi is asking the same question today - are we safe here?" the Leader of

Opposition in the Lok Sabha said. "What are Shah's MHA and Delhi Police doing to stop this growing lawlessness, especially against people from the Northeast?" Gandhi said. There must be a swift investigation, and the culprits must be brought to justice, he asserted and expressed condolences to Vikram's family, he said. The Sunlight Colony police station received a PCR call regarding the beating of Singh, who has been residing in Kilokari village for several years.

A preliminary enquiry revealed that Singh, who belonged to the Meitei community, objected to men creating a nuisance outside his house. He sustained injuries during the attack, in which the men rained blows and punches on him, police said.

Singh's son Yaiphaba rushed him to Holy Family Hospital, where he later succumbed to his injuries, they said. Police initiated an investigation into the circumstances leading to the assault and Singh's death.

The North East Students Society, Delhi University (NESSDU) condoled Singh's death and described him as a "respected Manipuri musician". "According to reports, Singh went downstairs from his residence in Kilokari, New Delhi, after a group of six men were allegedly drinking and creating a disturbance outside his apartment. When he requested them to lower the noise, he was reportedly attacked by the group and sustained severe injuries, to which he later succumbed," the students' body said.

ED action against Haque part of Operation Lotus 2.0: TMC

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

Trinamool Congress on Tuesday said the Enforcement Directorate's search of its Rajya Sabha MP Nadimul Haque's Delhi residence was part of "Operation Lotus 2.0" to put pressure on party lawmakers who do not cross over.

TMC sources claimed a former leader of the party had been in touch with



Haque as part of an attempt to pressure him, but the MP refused to "strike a deal".

The ED on Monday searched seven premises linked to Haque and his Urdu newspaper Akhbar-E-Mashriq in Kolkata, Delhi and Ranchi as part of a money-laundering probe. Officials had said the probe relates to allegations concerning the publication and dissemination of material promoting communal disharmony.

MPSC aspirants protest in Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar

Scores of MPSC aspirants staged a protest in Maharashtra's Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar on Tuesday, alleging widespread corruption and paper leaks, and demanded a high-level probe into the recent recruitment examinations.

Protesters gathered at the Kranti Chowk area of the city, demanding the immediate appointment of officers with a "clean image" to the top posts in the Maharashtra Public Service Commission (MPSC). A similar march was held in Pune on Monday.

National Green Tribunal's (NGT) Central Zone Bench in Bhopal has directed authorities to replace all saplings that died during compensatory plantation undertaken over the past five years and ensure 100% survival of the new plantations.

The direction came during the hearing of a petition filed by Nitin Saxena concerning tree felling and compensatory plantations linked to development projects in Bhopal. The bench, comprising judicial

member Justice Shyo Kumar Singh and expert member Sudhir Kumar Chaturvedi, expressed serious concern over the extremely low survival rate reported by the Bhopal Municipal Corporation (BMC) and the Forest Department's Environmental Forestry Division. The tribunal observed that compensatory plantation is intended to offset the environmental impact of trees felled for development works. However, the death of planted saplings due to inadequate maintenance defeats the purpose and results in



environmental loss.

The NGT directed the authorities to immediately replace saplings that have died over the last five years and ensure regular watering and protection until the plants are fully established. It also sought details of the

average height and girth of saplings planted during the period, rejecting reliance solely on plantation figures recorded on paper.

The tribunal has sought site-wise photographs of 10,000 trees planted along roadsides and medians and 70,000 trees on land allotted by the Bhopal Collector in Huzur tehsil. The Principal Chief Conservator of Forests and Madhya Pradesh Pollution Control Board have been given 30 days to submit the required information.

In a separate matter, the NGT issued directions for

stricter management of biomedical waste in Bhopal. The case involved alleged dumping and burning of expired medicines, medicine strips, syrup bottles and injection vials at an open site in Rani Avantibai Transport Nagar behind the RTO premises. A joint committee reported that the waste had been removed and handed over to an authorised Common Biomedical Waste Treatment Facility (CBWTF). The facility confirmed receiving 5.2 kg of expired medicines, which were disposed of through incineration. A sub-

sequent inspection on August 27 found the site clear of biomedical waste and related residues. The tribunal directed that biomedical waste transport vehicles have GPS-based online real-time tracking, separate cabins for staff and colour-coded waste containers, leak-proof waste compartments and bio-hazard markings.

The NGT directed that biomedical waste must be collected, transported and treated within 48 hours of generation. The MPSCB was asked to ensure that healthcare establishments have the

required authorisations and memberships of authorised CBWTFs and take action against violators.

The municipal corporation was also directed to strengthen source-level segregation and separate collection of household healthcare waste and ensure its regular handover to authorised facilities. It was asked to prevent mixing, unauthorised disposal and open burning or dumping of waste. The next hearing in the tree plantation matter has been scheduled for October 6. Advocate Harpreet Singh Gupta represented Saxena.

Editor's
TAKE

When negligence turns into a death trap

A five-storey hostel in Delhi collapsed after years of regulatory neglect and dangerous construction. Once again, it took a collapse for authorities to wake up

On Sunday afternoon, a five-storey building in Delhi's Satya Niketan collapsed. It housed a private student hostel, incongruously named Hostel Daze, packed with young men who had left home to study. At least seven are confirmed dead as rescue teams dig through the debris; the toll is still climbing, and dozens more spent the night trapped or in intensive care.

This was not an act of God. It was the foreseeable consequence of a system that has normalised looking away. The proximate causes are already visible. The structure was roughly fifty years old, built as a residential property and then quietly converted into paying-guest accommodation without the clearances that conversion demands. It reopened to tenants in August even as renovation work continued around them – labourers were reportedly excavating the basement, removing load-bearing walls, while students slept two floors above.

Two days of monsoon rain had pooled in that same basement. Delhi's chief minister said waterlogging and ongoing repairs likely triggered the collapse. Each of these facts, alone, is a violation.

Together, they describe a building that should never have held a single tenant, let alone dozens. But blaming the collapse on one absentee landlord, now arrested and charged, lets everyone else off too lightly. Somebody had to license this hostel, or fail to notice it operated without one. Somebody had to inspect this building, or sign off without inspecting it. The Municipal Corporation of Delhi has suspended five officials from its safety wing – a tacit admission its oversight regime existed on paper and nowhere else.

This is not the first ageing structure Delhi has lost to a monsoon season that arrives, with its casualties, like clockwork. The complacency here is not incidental; it is the system's steady state, interrupted only by the occasional funeral.

What follows a collapse like this is depressingly scripted: condolences, an arrest, a magisterial inquiry, promises of audits. Delhi's government has already announced mandatory structural audits and safety certificates for hostels, nursing homes and schools. That is necessary and overdue, and worthless if enforcement fails the same way again.

Audits mean little without independent inspectors insulated from the bribery that residents in Satya Niketan already allege. Certification means little without a public registry that a student or parent can check before signing a lease. And suspension cannot be the ceiling of accountability – officials who cleared or ignored illegal conversions must face the same liability as the men who built them. Delhi does not lack rules for who may run a hostel. It lacks the will to enforce them before, rather than after, the bodies are counted. Nor is this a Delhi problem alone - millions of students across India's university towns live in hostels converted the same way, licensed loosely if at all, and inspected on the same schedule: never, until something falls down. Seven families now know the cost of that gap. The only honest tribute is to close it before the next monsoon, not after the next collapse.

Delhi: A bipartisan record of neglect

In Delhi, illegal construction, ignored safety norms and regulatory complicity have become a deadly cycle. From Uphaar and Lalita Park to Mundka, Old Rajinder Nagar, Hauz Rani and now Satya Niketan, the names change but the story remains the same: buildings fail because enforcement does



KUSHAN MITRA

The death toll in the Satya Niketan building collapse has touched seven. Seven young lives snuffed out in an instant when a decades-old, code-violating building simply gave way. It came down barely a few metres from where a near-identical collapse killed two workers in 2022, in a structure the civic corporation had already declared dangerous, a warning nobody acted on. And every few years the story repeats: building-code violations and entrenched corruption killing Delhi's own citizens, with no political will to fix it.

Three UPSC aspirants drowned in July 2024 in an Old Rajinder Nagar basement the MCD's own inspection found had been illegally converted from parking into a coaching-centre library. In 2022, investigators found the Mundka building where 27 workers burned to death had no fire clearance and one exit for roughly a hundred employees.

Delhi Police told the Delhi High Court that at least 43, by some counts 45, died in the 2019 Anaj Mandi fire, in a factory that had deliberately avoided a legal power connection. Officials attributed the 2010 Lalita Park collapse, which killed around 65 people, to an unauthorised construction the civic body had cleared without scrutiny. And court records from the Uphaar Cinema case found illegally installed extra seating blocked exits during the 1997 fire that killed 59.

Earlier this year, fire tore through an illegally expanded bed-and-breakfast in Hauz Rani, killing at least 22 people – among them members of two Indian families and medical tourists from Africa, Central Asia and Bangladesh who had come to Delhi's hospitals for treatment. The building was licensed for six rooms and was running twenty-five, with a single entry-exit point. Delhi's building-safety failures are no longer a domestic story alone; foreign embassies are now watching too.

Seven documented disasters across three decades – Uphaar, Lalita Park, Anaj Mandi, Mundka, Old Rajinder Nagar, Hauz Rani and Satya Niketan – now account for well over 200 deaths tied, on the official record, to unauthorised or non-compliant construction. No party can be credibly absolved of a share, based on who held power when each regulatory failure occurred.

Congress-led governments ran Delhi for fifteen consecutive years under Sheila Dikshit, during which unauthorised colonies climbed into the thousands and regularisation became routine policy. When the Supreme Court ordered sealing of illegally-used premises in



DELHI POLICE TOLD THE DELHI HIGH COURT THAT AT LEAST 43, BY SOME COUNTS 45, DIED IN THE 2019 ANAJ MANDI FIRE, IN A FACTORY THAT HAD DELIBERATELY AVOIDED A LEGAL POWER CONNECTION. OFFICIALS ATTRIBUTED THE 2010 LALITA PARK COLLAPSE, WHICH KILLED AROUND 65 PEOPLE, TO AN UNAUTHORISED CONSTRUCTION THE CIVIC BODY HAD CLEARED WITHOUT SCRUTINY

The writer is Director and the Printer & Publisher of *The Pioneer*

2006, a Congress-led central government pushed the Delhi Laws (Special Provisions) Act through Parliament to stay those orders - legislation the Court itself later held was beyond the legislature's competence.

The civic bodies that were BJP-controlled for the fifteen years before the 2022 municipal unification whose engineers issue, or fail to withhold, building and fire clearances, were in charge when both Anaj Mandi and Mundka occurred. Successive central governments, including BJP-led ones, kept re-enacting the same "special provisions" shield in 2014, 2017, 2021 and 2023, and the current BJP-led Delhi government has launched yet another "as-is-where-is" regularisation drive rather than a safety audit.

The AAP governed Delhi from 2013 and took charge of the unified MCD from December 2022. On AAP's watch, over both the state government and the civic body, the Old Rajinder Nagar basement - per the MCD's own findings – had been operating in violation of building bylaws for some time before the deaths occurred.

None of this requires speculation about motive: across three decades, Congress, BJP and AAP administrations have each presided over enforcement systems that repeatedly failed to prevent buildings that later killed people. A plausible reason is on the record too - when the MCD tried to seal illegal premises under Supreme Court orders in September 2006, trader protests turned violent and four died in police firing during a bandh.

That episode is widely cited as the moment enforcement became politically costly enough that governments have since preferred renewable moratoria to sustained implementation – a pattern the Supreme Court itself called a "cat and mouse game... to protect the vested interests of those having little or no respect for the rule of law". Delhi's own disaster management author-

ity does not dispute the scale of this unaddressed risk. The DDMA states plainly that the National Capital Territory falls in Seismic Zone IV, where shaking of intensity up to VIII on the Medvedev-Sponheuer-Karnik (MSK) scale is "quite probable," with two active fault systems – the Delhi-Haridwar Ridge and the Delhi-Moradabad fault – running through the territory .

The Ministry of Earth Sciences told Parliament this "severe intensity zone" rating stems from Delhi-NCR's proximity to the Himalayan seismic belt and its Main Central Thrust, Main Boundary Thrust and Himalayan Frontal Thrust systems, where the Indian and Eurasian plates continue to collide.

On what this means for buildings, the DDMA's own assessment is unambiguous: "till date there is no legal framework to require that all constructions in Delhi must implement seismic code provisions," so "most buildings in Delhi may not meet codal requirements on seismic resistance". A gap the authority itself says leaves "a real potential for a great earthquake disaster in Delhi".

Even where the government tried, follow-through fell short: the NDMA told Parliament in 2025 that a structural safety audit it commissioned for Delhi's public buildings "could not be continued further due to the unsatisfactory quality of reports submitted by the implementing agencies". This is not a hypothetical for dramatic effect; it is the Delhi and central governments' own documented assessment of a risk a fire department can contain and a seismic event will not.

Three decades, seven documented mass-casualty events, and one official, unresolved seismic warning have outlasted every administration that has governed Delhi. That is public record, not partisan conjecture – and it is one voters and courts alike are entitled to keep asking every party in office to answer for.

Daiv Vani

WISDOM FOR A MEANINGFUL LIFE

The Limits of Self-Reliance

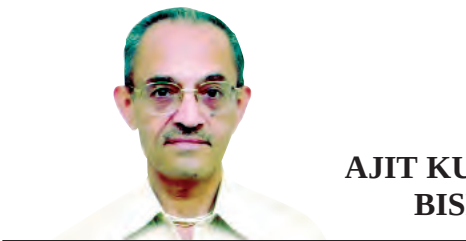
We live in a time that celebrates self-sufficiency, teaching us to solve every problem through our own effort, strategy, and willpower, often treating the need for help as a kind of failure. The story of Gajendra, king of elephants, offers a gentler truth.

Gajendra was bathing in a lake when a crocodile seized his leg, dragging him toward the depths. For years, he fought with all his strength, using every trick his herd and instincts offered. Nothing worked. Exhausted, defeated, and finally without any strategy left, he stopped struggling and called out to Vishnu in total surrender, not as a king, but as a being with nothing left to offer except his faith. Vishnu appeared instantly and freed him.

We often try to fix our deepest struggles through sheer effort alone, control, planning, willpower, refusing to admit when we are simply out of strength. Gajendra's rescue came not when he fought hardest, but when he surrendered completely, without conditions.

Surrender is not weakness; it is the recognition that some battles are not won by grip, but by letting go. Today, identify one struggle you have been trying to control entirely on your own, and allow yourself, just once, to ask for help without holding back.

—DAIV



AJIT KUMAR BISHNOI

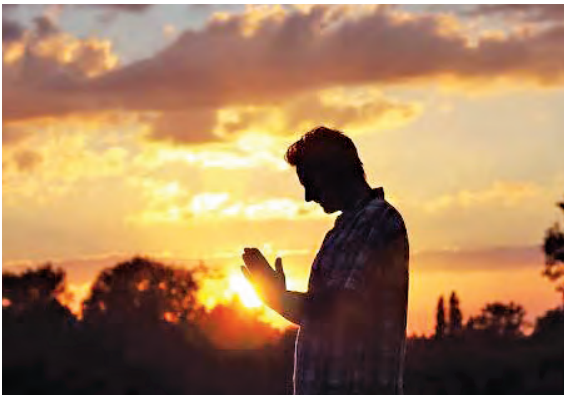
2ND OPINION

Sanjaya of the Mahabharata fame summarised at the end of the Bhagavad-Gita, "Where there is the Yogeshwara Shri Krishna and where there is the archer Arjuna, there will be opulence, victory, wealth and morality" (18.78). Don't we want all these? I certainly do and much more.

Lord Krishna has offered a lot in the Gita. Sample these. In verse # 18.54, the Lord offers supreme devotion to Him to get started.

This will ensure supreme peace (18.62), which we all crave desperately; I do. Additionally, we can become 'jeevan mukta', that is, liberated while living in the present body (5.28). Liberation will follow at the end of the present life (18.62), if we stay focused. All troubles will come but go due to generous help from God (18.58).

We will experience eternal bliss (5.21). We will be



appointed to a very special position as a God's 'nimitta' (instrument), as Arjuna was (11.77), empowered to do big tasks. There will be nothing to fear (18.66); life will run smoothly ('theek chalegi').

How did Arjuna become so deserving? The very first step he took was to accept the position of a disciple of God (2.7). Additionally, he took shelter of Lord Krishna (2.7). In the same verse, he prayed for guidance. This culminated in Arjuna accepting what Lord Krishna had instructed him to do (18.33). Such devotion to the Lord had qualified him to receive the most confidential knowledge (9.1).

And Arjuna was wise enough to keep on enquiring,

God has his door open for all of us

asking questions throughout the course of the Gita. Arjuna had good lineage. Most importantly, he was born with divine qualities (16.5). He was respectable (2.33). Arjuna was a follower of dharma - a necessary quality required to fight for it. Thus, he became very dear to Lord Krishna, Who called him His friend.

This is a lot. Still, we don't have to get discouraged; I am not. Therefore, I started on this divine path. Before I give a brief description of it, let me brief you about my status then. I was confused and depressed. I had lots of attachments, especially to my material body. I was ignoring my duty towards my own self - a soul. I was not realising the real position of the Omnipotent, Omniscient, Omnipresent and really everything God (7.19).

Now good sense prevailed, and I cut a large photo of Lord Krishna from a calendar, got it framed, and hung it on the right side of my bed. The spiritual journey had started in the right earnest.

I began to pray for guidance and help. It was a humble, sincere and hopeful practice. I was prepared to learn and practise what I was learning. Intuitions began to come. Reformations followed. I began to get what I really needed; protection was being granted to what was valuable to me (9.22). To cut a long story short, now I feel liberated (5.28). I am hopeful of getting liberated in this life itself (18.62).

The writer is a spiritual teacher and columnist

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

When negligence costs lives

The tragic collapse of a five-storey building housing college students in Delhi is a chilling reminder of how casually human safety can be compromised. Five lives are lost and several people got injured, not because risks were unforeseeable, but amid repair work in the basement of an ageing building.

When students living away from home for education become victims of unsafe accommodation, the issue goes far beyond one building; it raises serious questions about regulatory vigilance, accountability and the value we attach to human life.

If safety norms were violated, responsibility cannot end with the property owner. The role of municipal authorities, engineers, inspectors and other agencies entrusted with ensuring structural safety must also be examined.

Delhi urgently needs a time-bound audit of buildings being used as paying-guest accommodation, hostels and student housing. Structural safety certification, fire preparedness, safe electrical systems and periodic inspections should be mandatory, with violations attracting stringent penalties. Young students come to cities to build their future, not to lose their lives under unsafe roofs. Preventing the next tragedy must become a regulatory responsibility, not just a post-disaster reaction.

BJRI BHUSHAN GOYAL | LUDHIANA

Biogas can strengthen energy security

This refers to the article "How are India and Japan reimagining energy security?" (September 8).

The proposal to develop 1,000 compressed biogas plants in India by 2030 is a welcome step towards a more secure and diversified energy system. The partnership with Japan is particularly useful because it combines India's abundant biomass with Japanese technology and financing. However, the success of this initiative will depend less on the number of plants announced than on how reliably they operate.

India's agricultural and municipal waste is widely dispersed, and collecting it economically remains a challenge. Small farmers may also find it difficult to supply feedstock regularly unless they are offered fair prices and timely payments. The government should therefore support local collection networks, transparent procurement systems and long-term supply agreements. Cooperative models can help ensure that the benefits reach farmers and rural communities. The programme should avoid becoming another infrastructure scheme where plants remain underused. Authorities must assess feedstock availability, transport costs, water requirements and the market for biogas and digestate. The partnership deserves support, provided its promises are matched by sound planning.

SM JEEVA | CHENNAI

ISRO must evolve, not retreat

It is with reference to the editorial "ISRO must evolve, not retreat" – September 8.

The Indian Space Research Organisation is a source of pride for India as it drives technological self-reliance, boosts socio-economic growth and establishes the country as a cost-effective leader in global space exploration. ISRO builds rockets and spacecraft at a very low cost compared to other nations. Launching Chandrayaan-3 and Aditya-L1 to study the Moon and the Sun are scientific milestones in the history of ISRO.

ISRO has also launched hundreds of satellites for other countries. Very recently, ISRO successfully launched EOS-05 aboard the GSLV-F17 rocket, marking an important milestone in Indian Earth observation programmes. The success of the 2,037-kg EOS-05 has put behind the failures ISRO encountered in August 2021 and in subsequent launches.

ISRO has scripted history by achieving a soft landing on the Moon through Chandrayaan and advancing space-docking technology through SpaDeX. The Indian Human Spaceflight Programme is an ongoing project to develop the technology needed for crewed spaceflight into low Earth orbit.

P VICTOR SELVARAJ | TAMIL NADU

PIC TALK



Devotees take part in the religious procession of Lord Mahakal, in Ujjain

PHOTO: PTI

Himalayan Day: Guarding the roof of the world

Himalayan Day is a reminder that the mountains are more than a symbol of natural beauty. Emptying villages, climate-driven instability, unchecked tourism and fragile infrastructure are reshaping the region, turning an environmental and demographic crisis into an urgent national security challenge



KRIPA NAUTIYAL

Every year on Himalayan Day, we pause to celebrate a mountain system that has shaped civilisations, sustained economies, and defined the northern edge of the Indian subcontinent for millennia. Yet this year, celebration alone feels insufficient. Behind the postcard images of snow-capped peaks and terraced valleys lies a quieter, more urgent story - one of emptying villages, sinking towns, warming glaciers, overwhelmed hill stations, and a national security question that has crept up on us largely unnoticed.

The Himalayas are part of a vast highland arc running nearly four thousand kilometres from Kyrgyzstan to Myanmar, encompassing the Pamir, Hindukush, and Karakoram ranges. Every one of the roughly four hundred mountains on earth that exceed seven thousand metres, including all fourteen that top eight thousand, lies within this system. Far from being an uninhabited wilderness, the Himalayas support around fifty million people, spanning an extraordinary range of ethnicities, languages, and faiths, with Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islam all converging across its length.

In India, the Himalayas cover Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, and the northeastern states, extending into Tibet, Bhutan, and Nepal. In Uttarakhand, communities like the Jaunsari trace their lineage to the ancient kingdom of Kuninda, remembered even in the Mahabharata — a reminder that these mountains have never simply been geography. They have been home, sanctuary, and civilisation, sustained by generations of traditional knowledge in farming, ethno-medicine, and reading the land itself. There is now a warning of crumbling mountains. Nowhere was this made clearer than on 26 August 2026, when a section of glacier atop Langtang Lirung in Nepal collapsed without warning, sending a catastrophic surge of ice, rock, and water nearly a hundred kilometres down the Trishuli River. More than 390 people were killed and 1,500 reported missing after the glacial collapse triggered catastrophic flooding across the Nepal-Tibet border region, with entire settlements in Nepal's Rasuwa and Nuwakot districts buried or swept away, and the strategic Gyirong border crossing with China destroyed. Satellite analysis showed the glacier moving at an accelerating rate in the months before it finally gave way - a pattern scientists link directly to warming temperatures and thawing permafrost in the high Himalaya. This was not an isolated freak event. Uttarakhand's own history includes the 2013 Kedarnath disaster and repeated glacial lake outburst warnings across Chamoli, Pithoragarh, and Uttarkashi. As glaciers retreat and permafrost weakens, the mountains that sustain a fifth of humanity are becoming measurably less stable - and the communities living closest to them are the first to pay the price. Joshimath's case is a warning from within.

Instability is not confined to remote glaciers. In early 2023, the town of Joshimath — gateway to Badrinath and home to around 20,000 people — began visibly sinking, with cracks spreading through homes, hotels, and roads until construction had to be banned across the area. Experts at the time stressed that resettlement must balance risk, impoverishment, and reconstruction carefully, with fair compensation so displaced families are not left destitute. Joshimath was a warning that unplanned construction and disregard for fragile mountain geology can turn any Himalayan town into a slow-motion disaster. The Himalayas are also being affected by the weight of too many feet visiting them. Char Dham pilgrimage numbers and hill-station visits have surged into the millions annually, straining water supplies, waste systems, and roads never designed for such volume. Even international pilgrimage routes are exposed: the Gyirong crossing destroyed in the 2026 floods carried over 100,000 crossings in just the first half of the year, much of it tied to the Kailash pilgrimage. Unregulated construction for resorts and homestays, hillside deforestation, and vehicles idling for hours on narrow roads add further pressure to a landscape already destabilised by climate change — turning affection for these mountains into one more force degrading them.

There is a crisis behind the celebration as well. Over the past two decades, Uttarakhand has lost lakhs of people from its remote hill districts to outmigration. State records now classify more than 1,800 villages as



HIMALAYAN STATE, DEMOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY ARE BOTH DESTINY. RECOGNISING THAT TRUTH — THROUGH SUSTAINED INVESTMENT, DISCIPLINED REGULATION, AND GENUINE PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN DEFENCE, DEVELOPMENT, SCIENCE, AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES — IS NO LONGER OPTIONAL. IT IS A NATIONAL SECURITY AND SURVIVAL IMPERATIVE THAT CAN NO LONGER BE IGNORED

The writer is an anthropologist and defence and strategic studies expert. He has undertaken research on a unique Himalayan tribe

“ghost villages” — completely abandoned - with another 1,000 having lost more than half their population. Villages once celebrated for their crafts, such as one in Pithoragarh once renowned for wood carving, now stand hollowed out. The causes are painfully mundane: no roads, no schools within reasonable distance, no healthcare, and no reliable livelihood.

What makes this crisis different from ordinary rural-to-urban migration elsewhere in India is geography. These are not interior villages - they sit along India's most sensitive and contested frontiers with China and Nepal. That is where a demographic and developmental issue becomes a national security one.

Empty borders indeed are dangerous borders

Inhabited border villages perform functions no technology can fully replace. Locals have traditionally served as the eyes and ears of security forces, offering ground-level intelligence, informal early warning, and logistical support that satellites cannot replicate — a role documented as far back as the 1962 war and the 1999 Kargil conflict. As villages empty, this human network collapses, forcing security forces to stretch thin resources across larger, uninhabited zones, while depopulated areas also weaken India's claims of effective territorial control, a principle central to resolving border disputes.

The contrast with China is stark. Beijing has invested heavily in Tibet's border regions — new settlements, roads, military infrastructure, and deliberate population-settlement programmes — while comparable Indian forces are often based near sea level and require lengthy acclimatisation before deployment. Where China is repopulating its side of the Line of Actual Control as a strategy, India's border districts are demographically retreating. Outmigration further erodes the recruitment base for regiments like the Garhwal and Kumaon Rifles, prized for natural acclimatisation to altitude, while removing the community vigilance that has long helped monitor smuggling and trafficking along the open Nepal border, and the local knowledge and manpower that disaster response depends on most when a crisis strikes. None of this is irreversible. India's own experience during COVID-19 showed that reverse migration is possible when circumstances demand it, and mountain regions in Switzerland, Japan, Austria, South Korea, and Norway have all confronted similar decline and found ways to stabilise or reverse it - models Uttarakhand can adapt.

Addressing this requires treating border regions as both a developmental and a security priority, together. Practical steps include: creating “strategic border development clusters” with concentrated investment in roads, connectivity, healthcare, and schools; strengthening delivery of the Border Area Development Programme and Vibrant Villages Programme, which currently suffer gaps between allocated and released funds; adapting Japan's “Furusato” hometown-tax model, advocated by me in a number of forums, so migrants can direct part of their income tax to their ancestral villages; and mobilising retired soldiers as formal village defence volunteers. Equally urgent is building climate and disaster resilience directly into this agenda - glacial lake monitoring, stricter enforcement of seismic building codes, and an independent technical review of construction in towns like Joshimath and Dehradun — alongside regulating tourism growth through visitor caps, waste management mandates, and genuine enforcement of environmental clearances on the Char Dham and other pilgrim routes, so that the mountains are not loved to death even as they are repopulated. Himalayan Day should be more than a commemoration of natural beauty. It is a reminder that these mountains are inhabited, living, and fragile strategic spaces, where every abandoned village is a quiet retreat of India's presence at its most sensitive frontier, every unregulated tower and overcrowded pilgrim route is a disaster waiting to happen, and every warming glacier is a warning we can no longer treat as distant.

In this Himalayan state, demography and geology are both destiny. Recognising that truth — through sustained investment, disciplined regulation, and genuine partnership between defence, development, science, and local communities — is no longer optional. It is a national security and survival imperative that can no longer be ignored.

When parents need a break, society must step in



ARCHANA DATTA

A news story highlighted a recent initiative by New York City offering four hours of free, supervised childcare for children aged six to 13, to enable parents to do whatever they choose to do. Many consider it a radical shift in public policy stance in recognising the idea of leisure as a parental right, as against the conventional public policies that implement structurally supportive facilities for relieving their financial, temporal, and social pressures.

NYC's pilot project highlights the importance of parental wellbeing, emotional fulfilment, and the need for personal joy and rest, as ingredients of a happy society, going beyond the concept of affordability or efficiency. Globally, in the face of falling fertility rates, many governments resorted to cash incentives to check the trend which threatened long-term economic stability. However, empirical evidence revealed that cash benefits alone cannot remove 'invisible liabilities', the recurring burdens of modern parenting, and bring in long-term societal changes, but can generate only short-term demographic bumps or the 'tempo effect'. Countries with massive outlays like South Korea and Singapore continue to struggle with record-low birth rates despite multi-billion-dollar packages. While studies indicated that comprehensive structural support-affordable universal childcare, flexible parental leave for fathers, and job security-moderates the decline better.

The IMF and UN research also confirmed that expanding physical childcare infrastructure has roughly five times the positive impact on long-term fertility compared to equivalent spending on direct cash transfers. While parenting, from the perspective of sociology, is not merely a private or biological act of raising a child, but a socially constructed role and institutional practice. Parents, as agents of socialisation, act as primary links between the newborn and society. Parenting has come under intense focus as smartphones, algorithmic social media feeds, and immersive online gaming environments proliferate and completely rewrite the playbook for child development and family dynamics.

According to research, a staggering 66 per cent of parents state that parenting is harder today than it was two decades ago due to the onslaught of social media in everyday life. Many parents also encounter reverse socialisation as the rapid technological change flips the traditional family relationship, more so in developing countries because of structural inequalities, rapid infrastructure shifts and massive generational gaps.

Global scientific research confirms that 'digital parenting'-which encompasses how parents manage their children's screen habits as well as their own device usage-has evolved into a critical public health concern. The US Department of Health and Human Services found that nearly half of all parents feel completely overwhelmed by daily stress because of a multitude of unique factors which include not only financial strains, children's health, safety and future, technology and social media, but also parental isolation and loneliness. While a new study based on 42 countries found that parents in the developed world often experience higher rates of mental health strain and burnout largely due to cultural individualism and lack of communal support. On the other hand, meta-analyses of data between 2010 and 2021 from low- and middle-income countries (LMICs), comprising about 54 per cent of the world population, found that the children of parents with mental health problems were nearly twice as likely to have social-emotional development problems, compared to children of parents without them.

While India's rapid shift from traditional joint families to nuclear household structures has fundamentally altered the landscape of parenting, leaving modern parents to navigate unprecedented levels of psychological, financial, and emotional stress. Over the last few decades, urbanisation, professional migration, and a rising desire for individual autonomy have eroded the informal welfare networks that once shared the heavy lifting of childrearing. A research study from the Indian Journal of Paediatrics validated that nuclear families in India report the highest initial parenting stress levels, primarily because parenting has become a closed loop with no built-in safety net of grandparents or the extended kin.

Parental well-being, undoubtedly, forms the crucial foundation for a child's holistic growth. When caregivers experience high stress, poor mental health, or physical exhaustion, their capacity to nurture and stimulate the child diminishes (UNICEF). On the other hand, strong parent-child relationships act as a vital buffer against stress, and parents directly support the child's relational health (Van Leer Foundation). Multiple sociological and public health studies demonstrated that structured, guilt-free free time directly reduces parental burnout, strengthens couple dynamics, and fosters healthier parent-child relationships. When a society, workplace, or family ecosystem actively protects a parent's personal time, it sets off a positive chain reaction across the entire household. The right to leisure for parents is far more than a nice gesture; it is a fundamental necessity for parental welfare and sustainable family health. The state and society must stop viewing parenting as a purely private and individual responsibility, but look at it as a collective priority. The public policy interventions should go beyond alleviating primary logistical and financial stressors of raising a family, and must also support evidence-based community programmes that teach child development, stress management, and emotion regulation to help build parental resilience. Societal institutions and social networks must also evolve to reduce parental isolation and foster shared responsibility.

The writer is a former Director General of All India Radio, a retired Indian Information Service officer, and a media educator



The NCRB numbers challenge Akhilesh's crime narrative



VIKRAM SINGH

the process, he appears determined to dismiss or downplay the official figures released by the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB). This approach is unbecoming of a former chief minister. In India's democratic system, institutions perform their mandated roles, and senior political leaders are expected to respect them. Selectively accepting or rejecting institutional data based on political convenience runs counter to the spirit of democracy.

Clear improvement in crime rates

The NCRB's *Crime in India 2024* report presents unambiguous numbers. The national average crime rate under BNS/IPC cases stood at 252.3 per lakh population. Uttar Pradesh recorded a substantially lower rate of 180.2-nearly 28.5 per cent below the national average. Given that the state accounts for roughly 17 per cent of India's population, a higher absolute number of cases is only to be expected. The meaningful metric for comparison remains the crime rate per lakh popu-

lation. On that basis, Uttar Pradesh ranked 18th among all states and Union territories. This ranking reflects a tangible improvement in the law-and-order situation.

In 2024, a total of 35,44,608 cognisable crimes were registered across the country. Uttar Pradesh accounted for 4,30,552 of them. Relative to its population share, this figure is proportionate and lower than expected. The state's murder rate stood at 1.3 per lakh population against the national average of 1.9, placing it 29th in the country. Rates for dacoity, robbery and kidnapping for ransom were also well below the national averages. These are not abstract statistics; they reflect ground realities.

Stronger police performance on chargesheets

Registering cases is only one part of the picture. A key measure of police efficiency is the chargesheeting rate. Uttar Pradesh Police achieved a chargesheeting rate of 76.7 per cent, higher than the national average of 75.6 per cent. This indicates that investigators are completing inquiries and taking cases to court at a better rate



than the national norm. The chargesheeting rate in crimes against women has also remained robust.

Highest conviction rate in crimes against women

The most striking figure concerns convictions in cases of crimes against women. According to the NCRB 2024 report, Uttar Pradesh recorded a conviction rate of 76.6 per cent-the highest among major states. Of the thousands of cases that reached completion in the courts, the majority ended in conviction. This outcome is the result of sustained zero-tolerance policing, Anti-Romeo

rejection

When a leader of Akhilesh Yadav's stature continues to attack the policing system while ignoring or rejecting NCRB data, it undermines democratic norms. The NCRB is a central government agency that compiles figures supplied by the states. No data set is perfect, but dismissing official statistics for political reasons is neither constructive nor responsible. As a former chief minister, he should respect institutional findings. If he disagrees with the numbers, the proper response is to present alternative credible evidence or rigorous analysis-not blanket denial.

squads, dedicated women's help desks at police stations, fast-track courts and a strengthened prosecution system.

The rate of crimes against women itself remained below the national average. In 2024, it stood at 58 per lakh female population. The rape rate was 2.8, compared with the national average of 4.3. The data show not only better control over crime but also greater success in securing punishment for offenders.

Institutions deserve respect, not political

The Yogi government's zero-tolerance approach towards crime, decisive action against organised mafias, modernisation of the police force, expanded CCTV networks, the UP-112 emergency response system, and focused measures for women's safety have together produced measurable results. The downward trend in crime rates has continued over successive years. Even in the 2023 data, Uttar Pradesh remained well below the national average.

The numbers speak for themselves

The NCRB figures clearly endorse the improvement in Uttar Pradesh's law-and-order situation under the Yogi government. A lower overall crime rate, a stronger chargesheeting performance, and the country's highest conviction rate in crimes against women among major states together present a coherent and positive picture. Achieving this in India's most populous state was never going to be easy. Opposition parties have every right-and indeed a duty-to raise questions. Those questions, however, must be grounded in facts. Rejecting institutional data does not strengthen democracy or public trust. The evidence shows that law and order in Uttar Pradesh is better than it was. Accepting that reality and building on it is the more democratic course. Political rhetoric is no substitute for respect for facts.

The writer is a former Director General of the Uttar Pradesh Police and is currently the Chancellor of Noida International University



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Order Order

LG Saxena to administer oath to J&K, Ladakh HC CJ

For the first time since Ladakh became a Union Territory in August 2019, its Lieutenant Governor, Vinai Kumar Saxena, will administer the oath of office to Dr Justice Pushpendra Singh Bhati as Chief Justice of the High Court of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh on September 9, highly placed official sources said on Tuesday. The ceremony will take place at 11 am at the Convention Centre in Srinagar, the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir, the sources said.

On September 5, President Droupadi Murmu had appointed Justice Bhati, a judge of the Rajasthan High Court, as Chief Justice of the J&K and Ladakh High Court, with effect from the date he assumes charge of his office.

He will succeed Justice Sanjeev Kumar, who has been serving as the Acting Chief Justice since June 2.

(PTI)



Plea to review duration of law courses: SC bats for expert body

The Supreme Court on Tuesday said there should be an expert body on legal education while terming as “important” the issue raised in a plea seeking setting up of an education commission to review the curriculum and duration of law courses. “This is an era of expert bodies and there should be an expert body on legal education,” a bench of Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justices Joymalya Bagchi and V Mohana said.

“This is an important issue and the Union of India has an important role in this. They should come out with something,” the bench observed. The top court was hearing a plea filed by advocate Ashwini Kumar Upadhyay.

The plea said that the New Education Policy 2020 promotes four-year graduation courses in all professional and academic courses but the Bar Council of India has not taken appropriate steps to review the existing syllabus, curriculum and the duration of the Bachelor of Laws (LLB) and Master of Laws (LLM) courses.

It said the five-year duration of the BA-LLB and BBA-LLB courses was “disproportionate to the course material” and the long duration put an excessive financial burden on the students and their families. It has sought a direction to the Centre to set up a legal education commission or an expert committee consisting eminent educationists, jurists, retired judges, advocates and professors to review the syllabus, curriculum and duration of the LLB and LLM courses.

(PTI)



HC refuses to quash summons to Rahul over PM remarks

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Mumbai

The Bombay High Court on Tuesday refused to quash the summons issued to Congress MP Rahul Gandhi in 2019 by a magistrate court in a complaint over his alleged defamatory comments against Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

A single bench of Justice N R Borkar dismissed Gandhi's petition against the magistrate court's order, but extended by six weeks an earlier directive to the lower court to defer hearing on the defamation claim.

Gandhi, the Leader of

Opposition in the Lok Sabha, sought the extension so that he can file an appeal in the Supreme Court.

The direction to defer the hearing on the defamation complaint meant that Gandhi would not be required to appear before the magistrate.

Justice Borkar said it did not find any “perversity and illegality” in the magistrate's order and hence no reason to interfere. “This court finds no infirmity in the order. Hence, the petition is dismissed,” the HC said.

The complainant, M H Shrishrimal, had opposed Gandhi's plea in the High



Court, claiming that being a member of BJP, he too was aggrieved by the remarks made against his leader.

The court refused to accept Gandhi's contention that the complainant was not an

aggrieved party as the remarks were against a person and not the political party. BJP is a “determinate body with a class of members”, and complainant Shrishrimal is an active

member of the party since 2018, Justice Borkar said.

“Prime Minister Narendra Modi is a prominent face of the BJP, and any remarks made against him therefore cannot be said to be incapable of affecting those who are members of the party,” the court said.

The court added that whether the remarks made by Gandhi were of a personal nature intended against PM Modi alone could be determined only during the trial after examination of evidence and witness statements.

After the court passed its order, Gandhi's counsel Sudeep Pasbola urged it to

extend the interim order passed in 2021 for eight weeks so that the Congress leader could appeal in the apex court.

Shrishrimal's lawyer, however, opposed this and said the trial in the case has been at a standstill since 2021. Justice Borkar continued the interim order for six weeks. Gandhi had challenged a Girgaum magistrate's order of August 28, 2019, for a process against him on Shrishrimal's complaint. The complaint had alleged that Gandhi defamed PM Modi in a public speech on September 20, 2018, in Rajasthan.

SC rejects proposal of Parsvnath Developers for homebuyers

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

The Supreme Court on Tuesday rejected the proposal of Parsvnath Developers specifying details about handing over possession of flats or repaying monies with interest to hundreds of hassled homebuyers, saying that it seemed like “another device” to delay the proceedings.

The top court cautioned that unless a fresh proposal satisfying the claims of all the “allottees or homebuyers” in companies and their subsidiary firms is placed on record, it will be “constrained to appoint a High-Powered Committee for entrustment of all the responsibilities.”

The homebuyers' claims



refer to the refunds, compensation for delayed possession, and non-execution of RERA orders. Taking the proposal of Parsvnath on record, a bench comprising Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justices Joymalya Bagchi and V Mohana said, “We are satisfied that the proposal is nothing but another device to delay the compliance of possession of (flats) and

delay the repayment of monies (to homebuyers.”

The bench permitted the firm to file another proposal which may be acceptable to homebuyers who are waiting endlessly for their homes.

It observed that state authorities, which should have worked to secure the interests of homebuyers, apparently conspired with the builder, which did not even follow the orders of a quasi-judicial forum like Haryana RERA. The bench also refused to entertain a plea of the Insolvency Resolution Professional (IRP), appointed in the insolvency proceedings against the real estate firm, that at least one of the frozen bank accounts be allowed to be operated by him for running affairs of the firm.

Tenure of 248 members of tribunals extended under new law: Govt to SC

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

The Centre on Tuesday informed the Supreme Court that 248 members of different tribunals have been found eligible for extension under the Tribunal Reforms Act, 2026 and their services are being extended. The government said that eligible tribunal members would continue in office until they completed the five-year tenure prescribed under the new law or attained the applicable maximum age limit.

A bench comprising Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justices Joymalya Bagchi and V Mohana took note of the submissions that three



members, two judicial and one technical, of the National Green Tribunal are demitting offices during the day and it will have adverse impact on the functioning of the green tribunal.

The bench, as an interim measure, extended the

tenure of three NGT members till appointments are made to their posts.

“We have heard with respect to three members of NGT, whose term is expiring today. Even though these members may not be entitled to further extension in view

of age embargo. However, the Attorney General states that the selection process for appointment of new members will be completed very soon.

“To ensure that day-to-day functioning of NGT is not hampered, we direct that

three members continue as an interim measure till fresh appointments are made in their place,” the bench said.

With regard to other tribunals, the bench asked the Centre to take up the issue of appointment in accordance with 2026 Act without any delay. During the hearing, the attorney general informed the bench that 248 members of different tribunals had been found eligible for extension under Section 24 of the new law.

Of these, extension orders had already been issued for 229 members, while orders in respect of the remaining 19 were being issued on Tuesday, he said.

The bench recorded that

eligible members would continue in office until they completed the five-year tenure prescribed under the new regime or attained the applicable maximum age limit.

“In view of this, let a formal order granting extension subject to these two conditions be issued by the Government of India,” the bench said.

The issue had arisen against the backdrop of the earlier order of May 19, when the top court had extended until September 8 the tenure of tribunal chairpersons, presidents and members whose terms were due to expire before that date to ensure that the functioning of tribunals was not disrupted.

Graham Staines murder: SC asks Odisha to decide Dara's remission plea

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

“You can't keep it lingering like this,” the Supreme Court on Tuesday told the Odisha government, asking it to take a decision on the remission plea of Ravindra Pal alias Dara Singh, who is serving a life sentence for the murder of Australian missionary Graham Stuart Staines and his two minor sons in 1999.

A bench of Justices Manoj Misra and Vijay Bishnoi expressed displeasure over the state government's failure to inform the court whether a decision has been taken on Singh's remission plea.

“You want to reject it, you do it. You take a decision. We will deal with it. You can't keep it lingering like this,” the bench said. The counsel



appearing for the State told the bench that a letter seeking adjournment has been circulated in the matter as the advocate-on-record was unwell.

Referring to its August 19 order passed in the matter, the bench said it had directed the State Sentence Review Board to take a decision and apprise the court of it.

“Last time also, time was

granted to decide on the application. You convey to us the decision,” the bench said, adding that the top court had specifically said in its August 19 order that the authority take a decision on the remission plea. “You can't avoid taking a decision. For two years, you are delaying the matter. Yes or no, you take a decision,” the bench said. The counsel appearing for the state requested the bench to list the matter for hearing on September 17.

“We are not going to adjourn it on the next date,” the bench said, adding, “You take a decision and inform us, or we will summon your officer”. The court posted the matter for hearing on September 17 and directed the respondent to inform it about the decision taken pursuant to its August 19 order.

While hearing the matter on August 19, the top court had pulled up the Odisha government for not taking a decision on Singh's remission plea. It had noted that the matter had been adjourned repeatedly to enable the authority to take a decision on Singh's plea for remission of sentence. Singh, 63, has been incarcerated for more than 26 years.

He approached the top court in 2024 seeking premature release on the ground that he has served over 24 years in jail and “repented” for his action taken in a fit of “youthful rage”.

In his plea, he said he believed in karmic philosophy and prayed for an opportunity to reform his character and cure the effects of the

bad karma he has accumulated through his actions.

While hearing the matter in July, the top court had given the Odisha government a month to decide on Singh's remission plea.

A mob led by Singh attacked Staines and his two sons -- 11-year-old Philip and eight-year-old Timothy -- while they slept in their station wagon and set the vehicle on fire in Manoharpur village of Keonjhar district on the intervening night of January 22-23, 1999.

Singh, the main accused in the triple murder, was convicted and sentenced to death by a CBI court in 2003.

The Orissa High Court commuted his death sentence to life imprisonment in 2005, and it was upheld by the Supreme Court in 2011.

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Prefer death to being called coward: Judge in 23rd capital punishment verdict in 4 months

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Muzaffarnagar (UP)

Additional District and Sessions Judge Ravi Kumar Diwakar, while pronouncing his 23rd capital punishment in the last four months in a dowry death case on Monday, said in his verdict that he would prefer death to being called a “coward judge”.

In his judgment awarding the death penalty to a man who burnt his wife over dowry demands, the fast-track judge asserted that he would not discharge his judicial duties “under pressure from mafias, gangsters or criminals”.

Diwakar observed that his parents had taught him to fear God and no one else, and



that if he performed his judicial duties out of fear of strongmen, mafias, gangsters or criminals, public faith in the judiciary would erode.

In his judgment, Diwakar said he would prefer death to being known as a coward judge and would continue serving as long as he could follow his principles.

The judge also stated that

he had been receiving threats from mafias and criminals, and alleged that about 100 serious cases had been withdrawn from his court, allegedly to benefit mafias and criminals.

It is learnt that Diwakar has sought protection from senior officers, alleging that his security cover in Muzaffarnagar has been reduced.

‘Confidential’ label alone not enough to deny mine maps, CIC orders disclosure of permissible info

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

The Central Information Commission has directed the Indian Bureau of Mines (IBM) to revisit the denial of Digital Elevation Model (DEM) maps of three limestone mines in Telangana, observing that merely classifying the information as confidential was not sufficient to deny its disclosure under the Right to Information Act.

Information Commissioner Sudha Rani Relangi directed the IBM's Central Public Information Officer (CPIO) to provide relevant permissible information after



severing portions exempt from disclosure under the RTI Act.

If the information cannot be disclosed, the CPIO has been asked to incorporate relevant justification in a revised reply.

The RTI application sought certified DEM maps of three limestone mines in Suryapet district of Telangana from 2017 to 2025.

The mines identified in the application were Sulthanpur Reserved Forest Mine, Gundlapally Limestone Mine and Pedaveedu Limestone Mine. The CPIO, in its reply, said DEM maps from 2017 to 2022 were not available with the office.

It said data after 2022 was available but could not be disclosed under Section 8(1)(d) of the RTI Act, which exempts information including commercial confidence, trade secrets or intellectual

property where disclosure could harm the competitive position of a third party.

The First Appellate Authority upheld the denial, stating that the information could not be disclosed under Section 8(1)(d) as it contained “commercial confidence, trade secrets or intellectual property”, disclosure of which could harm the competitive position of the third party.

During the hearing, the appellant said the DEM maps were sought from the IBM to corroborate evidence in a court case in support of a claim of illegal mining carried out by a third-party company.

Religious bodies cannot assume authority of courts: HC

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Bilaspur

A religious institution or private body cannot assume the authority of a court established by law or use religious belief to determine or enforce an individual's rights, the Chhattisgarh High Court observed while nullifying a divorce order passed by a private Sharia body.

A bench of Justice Amitendra Kishore Prasad set aside an order issued by 'Idara-E-Shariya Islami Court' in Raipur declaring a 38-year-old woman divorced, holding that fatwas or decisions passed by such extra-judicial forums have no binding legal authority.

The court had reserved its



order on August 12 and pronounced it on Monday.

The petitioner, Nirosh Abbasi, had challenged an order dated January 18, 2022, issued by the 'Idara-E-Shariya Islami Court', by which it had purportedly declared that she had been divorced through 'triple talaq'.

She also challenged the very existence of the body,

contending that it was functioning in violation of the Constitution and had no legal authority to determine her marital status.

Abbasi's first husband died in 2015, and she subsequently married Mohammed Abid Khan of Raipur in 2020.

Khan claimed that Abbasi's children from her first marriage were unable to adjust

with the new family and, on that purported ground, she was subjected to 'triple talaq'.

Abbasi had contested the purported divorce, asserting that religious law could not override the law applicable in India. She had also alleged harassment, cruelty and ill-treatment by Khan and his family members and submitted a complaint to the Raipur Superintendent of Police in October 2021, following which a first information report was registered.

The High Court noted that despite the registration of the FIR and pendency of proceedings before competent authorities, the 'Idara-E-Shariya Islami Court' proceeded to issue its January 18, 2022 order.

INTERVIEW



A DEGREE MAY TELL EMPLOYERS WHAT A GRADUATE KNOWS, BUT IT DOESN'T ALWAYS SHOW HOW THEY WILL PERFORM AT WORK. THE REAL GAP IS JUDGMENT. WHEN FACED WITH INCOMPLETE DATA, UNCLEAR BRIEFS AND COMPETING DEMANDS, MANY GRADUATES STRUGGLE. INDUSTRY EXPOSURE CAN HELP BRIDGE THAT GAP



Universities prepare students for industry

As Indian higher education moves towards a more industry-aligned, flexible and employability-focused future, the relationship between universities and the world of work is undergoing a significant transformation. In conversation with *The Pioneer*, Vikas Rai Bhatnagar, Group Vice Chancellor, Chandigarh University, shares his perspective on the gaps between education and industry, the role of experiential learning, the impact of NEP 2020 and the changes needed to prepare students for an evolving professional landscape

India has expanded access to higher education significantly. Why is that still not translating into enough employable graduates?

Access used to be the biggest challenge for students outside Tier 1 cities. Online education has changed that in ways a physical campus never could on its own. But access without industry connection only creates more degree-holders, not more employable professionals. That is the real gap today: at Chandigarh University Online, we have expanded reach faster than we have built the bridge between education and industry.

Much of what is called industry-academia collaboration today is still limited to a guest lecture that is rarely revisited. What is actually missing is industry being involved in curriculum design from day one, helping decide what students learn, not simply commenting on it after the fact. When that connection is built properly, the difference is visible. Students stop asking, "What will be on the exam?" and start asking, "Would this solution hold up in a real client meeting?"

If higher education is serious about employability, the answer is not simply more access, more courses, or more degrees. It is building a system where industry shapes what is taught, assessment measures how students think and solve problems, and faculty are continuously equipped to teach what the market actually demands.

What are graduates still missing when they step from the classroom into the workplace?

Judgment. Employers aren't complaining that graduates don't know enough, most of them know plenty. The complaint I hear most is that graduates can't operate with

ambiguity. Give them a well-defined problem with a textbook method and they'll execute it well. Give them a messy brief, half the data missing, three stakeholders wanting different things, and they freeze. That's not a knowledge gap, it's an exposure gap, and the only way to close it is to stop treating industry exposure as a guest lecture and start treating it as a co-taught module.

That's the thinking behind bringing organisations like KPMG, Microsoft, PwC and PMI directly into the classroom at Chandigarh University Online, not as one-off speakers but as people who help shape what's taught and grade what students produce against a live brief. When a PMI-certified practitioner working on building a curriculum, the classroom stops being a simulation of work and starts being an early draft of it

Industry-academia partnerships have existed for years. Why have they largely failed



changed the way Indians access and experience higher education?

For online degree education specifically, NEP has done more than any single policy before it. Multiple entry and exit, the academic credit bank, and the formal recognition of ODLE and online programmes at par with on-campus ones have together made it legitimate and not a fallback option for a working adult to build a degree over time instead of in one uninterrupted stretch. I've watched learners in their thirties and forties, already employed, resume an education they'd abandoned a decade earlier so that they could move up in their careers. That's the policy doing exactly what it was designed to do.

If you could redesign Indian higher education from scratch, what are the three changes you would make first?

First, make industry-embedded, evaluated project work a mandatory graduation requirement for every degree not an optional internship a student can skip, a live external brief with real accountability built into the grade. Second, give online and on-campus degrees genuine parity in the eyes of employers and regulators, not just on paper - same rigour, same recognition, no asterisk. Third, build a funded national infrastructure for continuous faculty upskilling, with protected time attached, not another circular asking colleges to "encourage" it.

If I had to rank them, I'd start with the industry-embedded requirement, because it forces the other two to happen anyway. You can't run a mandatory live-project model without faculty who are current enough to supervise it credibly. Change what a degree requires students to actually do, and the rest of the system has no choice but to catch up.

Five years after NEP 2020, has the policy genuinely

Perspective turns knowledge into wisdom

D PARTHASARATHY

Dean, Office of Academics and Professor, Nayanta University

Imagine a city announces a new flyover to reduce traffic congestion. The traffic engineer is pleased: traffic will move faster. The economist calculates the savings in travel time. The politician points to a visible symbol of development. Pollution experts measure the reduced emissions due to smoother flow of traffic.

Now ask the shopkeeper whose storefront will disappear beneath the flyover. Ask the pedestrian who now has to cross six lanes of traffic. Ask the bus commuter who wonders why the money was not spent on public transport, as flyovers serve a minority of the population. Ask the residents of the neighbourhood who will live with the noise and pollution.

Suddenly, the problem looks very different. This is the paradox of complex problems: the more we know about them, the more we may discover that there is to know. Expertise tells us how to solve a particular problem; perspective provides clarity on what the problem actually is.

Universities trying to improve student learning, governments tackling inequality, companies managing organisational change or challenges posed by AI, and societies responding to climate change-all confront problems that cannot be adequately understood from a single vantage point.

A traffic engineer sees traffic, usually only vehicular traffic. A sociologist may observe patterns of inequality and access. An economist perceives incentives and trade-offs. A political scientist sees institutions and power. An environmental scientist sees ecological costs. The commuter, pedestrian,



shopkeeper and resident see something else again: the consequences of decisions made by others with little consideration for their well-being. Perspective begins with a deceptively simple question: Who is affected, and in what ways? Perspective is not merely about collecting different opinions. It requires empathy-the ability to imagine what a problem looks like from somewhere other than where we happen to stand. What is a solution to one group of stakeholders may actually be a problem to another.

And empathy alone is not enough. Different perspectives come with different amounts of power to serve populations and to design specific solutions.

Hence, we must also ask: Whose perspective is heard? Whose is missing? Who gets to define the problem? Who benefits from a solution, and who bears its costs? This is where perspective becomes a question of justice and equity.

That is also why education should be more than the accumulation of specialised knowledge. History, economics, sociology, political science, philosophy, liter-

ature and the sciences offer not merely different information but different ways of seeing. A broad education should teach us to move between these ways of seeing-and to recognise the limits of our own.

Diverse experiences-through fieldwork, community engagement, collaborative projects, literature, case studies and encounters with people whose lives differ from their own-can deepen this process. Classroom discussions, field experiences, community engagement, collaborative projects and encounters with unfamiliar social worlds can all become occasions for this kind of learning.

This requires the classroom to become a space where a diversity of experiences becomes a source of evidence, rather than merely something students are invited to mention. The teacher can deliberately design questions for which students' different locations, family backgrounds, social experiences, disciplines or observations produce genuinely different answers. That is a powerful moment of learning about perspective. The classroom becomes a small laboratory of perspective.

From classrooms to startup founders

RASHMI MITTALI

Pro-Chancellor, LPU

In 2014, India counted a few hundred startups. By January 31, 2026, the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade had recognised 212,283 of them; the count has since crossed 2.40 lakh, with over 23.36 lakh direct jobs created by the close of the financial year - enough to make India the world's third-largest startup ecosystem. FY26 alone added more than 55,200 recognised startups, the highest in any year since Startup India was launched in 2016, and a rise of nearly 52 per cent over the previous year. The Union Budget for 2026-27 has backed this trajectory with capital rather than applause: a further ₹20,000 crore for the ₹1 lakh crore Research, Development and Innovation Fund; a ₹10,000 crore SME Growth Fund; and a sharpened focus on deep tech, semiconductors and frontier sectors.

Behind that arithmetic lies a question higher education has not yet answered at scale: where do founders actually come from? They come from classrooms. Almost every founder in that 2.40 lakh was, a few years earlier, a student being prepared, quite deliberately, for employment rather than enterprise. That is the gap. India has built world-class instruments for funding a startup once it exists. What it has not built, uniformly, is a university system that treats the making of one as a legitimate academic outcome.

This is a design problem, not a resource problem - and design problems have solutions that can be copied.

For instance, institutional case studies from universities illustrate the impact of long-term academic restructuring around enterprise building. Students have earned over ₹20 crore through startups, freelancing, consultancy, paid internships and innovation grants, resulting in over 400 student-launched ventures. Additionally, more than 15,000 students now participate in experiential learning models rather than traditional classroom routes.

During a campus investor event, student-led startups raised ₹2.65 crore, while enterprises such as Femora AI and Macbease were featured at the India AI Impact Summit 2026. Notably, alumnus Anirudh Sharma co-founded space-tech company Digantara, securing \$12.5 million in venture funding to build space-surveillance satellite infrastructure.

None of that is accidental, and none of it came from motivational lectures. It came

from changing the rules of the degree itself.

A student can now earn up to half of their academic credits through experiential learning. Attendance is relaxed for founders whose ventures cross Technology Readiness Level Six, and academic relaxations follow DPIIT registration. Scholarships are calibrated not to examination marks but to

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FOR THIS APPROACH TO BECOME NATIONAL PRACTICE RATHER THAN AN INSTITUTIONAL EXCEPTION, FOUR THINGS MUST CHANGE:

- **Academic Credit for Enterprise:** Entrepreneurship must carry academic credit as a matter of course - a registered venture, a granted patent, or a shipped prototype should count towards a degree exactly as an examination does.
- **District-Tied Incubators:** Every institution should operate a functioning incubator tied to the industry of its own district, not a nameplate on a corridor.
- **Early Campus Risk Capital:** Risk capital must reach the campus at the stage where ₹5 lakh decides more than ₹5 crore later; the Budget's new funds need an explicit academic channel.
- **Academic Fail-Safes:** Failure must be made academically survivable so that a student whose venture folds in the sixth semester loses a company, not a year.

from changing the rules of the degree itself.

A student can now earn up to half of their academic credits through experiential learning. Attendance is relaxed for founders whose ventures cross Technology Readiness Level Six, and academic relaxations follow DPIIT registration. Scholarships are calibrated not to examination marks but to

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monthly startup revenue, grants received, private investment raised and intellectual property granted - a venture earning above 78 lakh a month or attracting 710 lakh in investment can carry a full programme fee waiver. Three incubators, from a NIDHI Technology Business Incubator to an MSME-supported facility, sit on the same campus as the classrooms. In short, the university stopped treating a company as a distraction from the degree and started treating it as evidence of one.

The return here is measurable. A generation trained to build rather than only to apply will create employment instead of queuing for it - and India's demographic advantage, the youngest large workforce in the world, will convert into an entrepreneurial one only if its campuses are wired for it.

A cap table is a short document listing who owns what and who was willing to build it. The task before Indian higher education, between now and 2047, is straightforward: make certain that the names on those documents are increasingly the students' - and that they got there because their university helped, not despite it.



India's examination system enters a new era of trust

SUMAN CHAKRABORTY

Director, IIT Kharagpur
Institute Chair Professor and JC Bose National Fellow

India's public examination system is not merely an administrative mechanism for conducting tests. It is one of the largest exercises of institutional trust and social mobility anywhere in the world. For a young person in a metropolitan coaching centre, a student in a village with intermittent connectivity, or a first-generation learner, the examination hall represents something profoundly democratic: the belief that where I come from should matter less than what I can demonstrate. That belief is precious, and it must be protected.

This is the larger context in which the Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Amendment Act, 2026 needs to be understood. The original 2024 legislation created a statutory framework against organised unfair practices in public examinations. The 2026 amendment, which received Presidential assent on July 31, 2026, strengthens that framework substantially. But its significance goes beyond punishment. It recognises that the architecture of examination malpractice has changed, and therefore the architecture protecting

examinations must change as well.

Today, vulnerability can exist anywhere along a complex chain-question preparation, digital storage, printing, transportation, examination centres, communication networks and organised intermediaries. Technology has made examinations more scalable and attacks more sophisticated. Artificial intelligence (AI) adds another dimension. AI can improve question-bank management, detect anomalies, strengthen cybersecurity and identify suspicious patterns. But the same ecosystem can amplify organised misconduct.

The answer cannot be technological retreat, nor can algorithms manufacture integrity. The principle for the AI era is clear: humans must set the rules; technology must strengthen their implementation. AI should be a value enhancer, not a value setter. An algorithm may identify an anomaly, but human institutions must determine what constitutes misconduct. AI may flag a suspicious pattern, but due process must decide culpability. Technology may strengthen surveillance and authentication, but society must determine the boundaries of fairness and justice.

For India, the consequential question is not what a perfect examination system looks like, but what is the fairest, most secure and humane system that can work reliably for millions of



people. National deployment must account for bandwidth limitations, power interruptions, language diversity, accessibility, geographical remoteness and digital preparedness. India must resist both the romanticism that technology can be avoided and the techno-utopianism that technology can solve everything.

A law intended to protect examinations

cannot depend only upon the severity of punishment. Deterrence also depends upon the probability and speed of consequences. But deterrence is not punishment alone; deterrence is consequence made credible. Speed must never replace fairness; it must support it. The amendment retains an appellate pathway to the High Court, including appeal against orders granting or refusing bail, while providing timelines for such appeals. Confidence comes not from severity alone, but from severity bounded by due process.

Every paper leak has consequences far beyond the leaked paper. It penalises the student who refused shortcuts, disadvantages families that invested scarce resources in preparation, damages confidence in merit and, when an examination is cancelled or repeated, disrupts preparation, travel, expenditure and emotional energy. Examination integrity is therefore fundamentally about protecting the honest candidate. The strongest message should not merely be, "Be afraid to cheat." It should be: "If you play fair, the system will protect your effort."

India now has the opportunity to move from examination security to examination resilience. Security asks how we prevent a question paper from leaking. Resilience

asks whether we can anticipate vulnerabilities, detect breaches early, contain their spread, establish responsibility quickly and recover without imposing disproportionate costs on innocent students. This requires secure-by-design infrastructure, controlled access privileges, cryptographic authentication, auditable chains of custody, intelligent anomaly detection, cybersecurity stress-testing and rapid-response protocols.

India is entering an era in which AI will increasingly participate in learning, assessment, administration and decision support. The question is therefore larger than whether examinations become more digital. It is whether they become more trustworthy while becoming more technological. The Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Amendment Act, 2026 is an important step in that direction because it recognises that organised attacks on examination integrity require stronger deterrence, specialised investigation and time-bound adjudication. Its ultimate success should not be measured by how many people are punished, but by how rarely these provisions eventually need to be invoked. Ultimately, an examination is not a test of our technology. It is a test of our collective commitment to fairness.

FROM THE WORLD

CHINA

Climate change behind flood

The massive flash flood that struck the Tibet-Nepal border on August 26 has put China's numerous hydropower projects in the region, including the mega dam on the Brahmaputra River, under renewed scrutiny, as Chinese experts said global warming and accelerating glacier retreat may have contributed to the recent gigantic mudslide.

The disaster was likely the result of a combination of factors, including rising temperatures and accelerated glacier melt according to Chinese climate experts.

"According to our monitoring, we can see the short-time rain days, or the imbalance of the rain pattern and the rising of the temperature in Tibet," said Sun Xiaoguang, head of the Meteorological Observatory of the Tibet Autonomous Region. (AP)

PAKISTAN

Hate banners target Ahmadis

Extremist elements on Tuesday displayed banners carrying derogatory and hostile messages against Ahmadis outside a university in Punjab province, a day after UN experts expressed grave concern over continuing discrimination, violence and legal restrictions targeting the minority community. Several banners, displayed along Sargodha University Road, called for the exclusion and social boycott of Ahmadis.

Some described Ahmadis as "disloyal to Pakistan", demanded their removal from key positions and called for their complete boycott. "We hate Qadianiyat," read one banner, referring to the community. Jamaat-i-Ahmadiyya condemned the display of banners, saying that differences in religious beliefs must never become a basis for spreading hatred against any sect or community. (PTI)

Rajnath arrives in Sri Lanka on three-day visit



Defence Minister Rajnath Singh is welcomed by Indian High Commissioner to Sri Lanka Santosh Jha upon his arrival at Bandaranaike International Airport, in Colombo, Sri Lanka

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Colombo

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh arrived in Sri Lanka on Tuesday for a three-day visit aimed at strengthening bilateral ties and expanding cooperation in defence and regional maritime security.

"Looking forward to a productive engagement with the leadership of Sri Lanka during the visit," Singh said ahead of his visit to the island nation.

He will also be interacting with the Indian diaspora.

"Besides our longstanding partnership as well as deep historical and civilisational ties, Sri Lanka is one of our most important partners under the Neighbourhood First and MAHASAGAR initiatives," he added. Singh was received at the Bandaranaike International Airport by Sri Lanka's Deputy Minister of Defence Maj Gen (Retd) Aruna Jayasekara and Indian High Commissioner to Sri Lanka Santosh Jha, the Ministry of

Houthi attacks on Saudi ignite fires at oil facilities, 70 hurt

SAMY MAGDY ■ Cairo

The Iranian-backed Houthi rebel group in Yemen launched a wave of attacks on Saudi Arabia on Tuesday, wounding more than 70 people and igniting fires at oil facilities and utilities in the kingdom, authorities said.

The attack was a major escalation in renewed fighting between an important US ally and the Iranian proxy group. It also threatened to further destabilise a region rocked by nearly three years of wars and deliver a new blow to the global economy.

Weeks of clashes have



added pressure to limited global oil supplies as the Houthis target a shipping route Saudi Arabia has used to transport oil to world markets while the Strait of Hormuz is throttled due to the

US-Iran war. Tuesday's attacks hit Saudi oil facilities connected to the alternative route, the Bab el-Mandeb, a strategic waterway off the southern tip of the Arabian Peninsula that connects the

Red Sea to the Gulf of Aden.

The conflict between Saudi Arabia, one of the US's closest Middle East allies, and the Houthis, a Shiite militant group armed and trained by Iran, goes back years.

The new fighting has threatened to reignite the country's civil war, which began in 2014 when the Houthis seized the capital, Sanaa, and much of northern Yemen and forced the Government into exile. A Saudi-led coalition intervened the following year to try to restore the Government to power. Fighting has greatly died down since a truce was reached four years ago. (AP)

Eiffel Tower shut as staff strike over controversial Hindu group visit

ADITI KHANNA

London/New Delhi

The Eiffel Tower was closed for a day after its staff went on strike over female employees being "moved away" for a visit by a Hindu religious group, according to the iconic Paris monument's management and staff.

The incident that triggered the strike took place on Saturday during a visit by around 100 people associated with BAPS (Bochasanwasi Akshar Purushottam) Swaminarayan Sanstha, Euronews reported.

When asked about the controversy, External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said at a media briefing in New Delhi: "We are aware of the opening of a temple by the BAPS Sanstha in the Paris area. As to the particular issue pertaining to the Tower, this is a matter purely between the entities concerned."

Diane Davoine, a union representative in France, said in a statement that female workers had been "moved away from their workstations as the delegation passed by". Eiffel Tower employees condemned what they described as "professional instructions that led to female employees being sidelined, replaced and made invisible because of their sex", the report said.

In a statement issued by the CGT trade union, the staff condemned "workplace instructions that led to female employees being sidelined, replaced and rendered invisible on the basis of their gender". "Some were asked to



leave their posts and withdraw to other areas. In some posts they were replaced by men," according to the statement quoted by France24.

"And all female employees were instructed not to go through or cross certain areas while the delegation was present." The popular tourist hub in the French capital, which witnesses nearly seven million visitors a year, opened as usual on Tuesday, after the operating company, Societe d'Exploitation de la tour Eiffel (SETE), acknowledged that limited "interactions with women" had been requested by a BAPS delegation, and that the "conditions should not have been accepted".

Paris Mayor Emmanuel Gregoire said the Eiffel Tower staff's anger was legitimate, added the reported conditions unacceptable and said an investigation would be launched to establish what happened. "I am taking note of the anger expressed by the employees of the Eiffel Tower,

and I want to tell them that their discontent is legitimate," Gregoire said on X.

"It is not acceptable that such conditions can be tolerated. These are neither my values, nor those that the Eiffel Tower should uphold, where everyone - regardless of gender - should be able to move about and act freely, without distinction between women and men.

It is urgent that full light be shed on the facts that led to this mobilisation." "Equality between women and men will never stop at the foot of our historical monuments, nor anywhere in this city.

It must be applied everywhere, for everyone," he added. "I will ensure this, everywhere and without exception. An investigation will be launched as quickly as possible." The BAPS Hindu temple in Paris has issued an apology and said it understood the concerns raised over the incident, adding that they took them "very seriously". (PTI)

Indian envoy Trivedi meets Bangladesh president

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

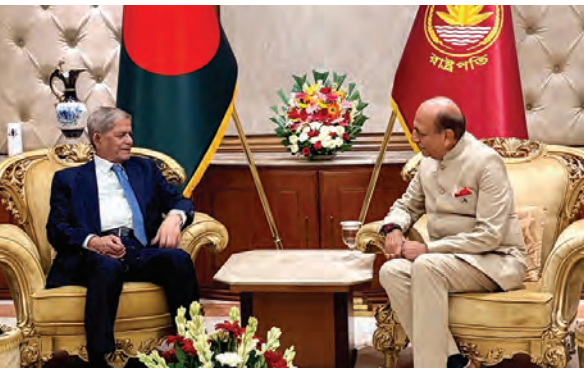
Dhaka

Indian High Commissioner Dinesh Trivedi on Tuesday met Bangladesh President Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir, in his first meeting with the newly elected head of State, and discussed strengthening the "deep-rooted" and multifaceted ties between the two countries.

Alamgir was sworn in as President on August 21. Trivedi paid a courtesy call on Alamgir at Bangabhaban and conveyed warm greetings to the president, wishing him success in his continued service to the people of Bangladesh, the



Union Minister JP Nadda and others during the 79th Session of the WHO Regional Committee for South-East Asia, in Delhi



Indian High Commission said in a social media post. "The discussion underscored the deep-rooted bonds between India and Bangladesh, built on shared history, close cultural ties

and strong people-to-people relations," it said. They emphasised the importance of strengthening the bilateral partnership for the mutual benefit of the peoples of the two countries, the mission

said. Later in the day, Trivedi met Minister of Shipping, Railways, Road Transport and Bridges Sheikh Rabiul Alam. State Minister for Road, Highways and Railways Habibur Rashid was also present.

During the meeting, the two sides discussed a range of issues of mutual interest relating to railways, shipping, connectivity and bilateral development projects.

"They underscored the importance of strengthening connectivity between India and Bangladesh as a key enabler of economic engagement and closer people-to-people ties," the mission said in another post.

Flights to Indonesia's Capital resume after volcano activity

NINIEK KARMINI/EDNA TARIGAN ■ Jakarta

Flights to and from Indonesia's Capital and nearby regions resumed Tuesday after ash from a volcanic eruption forced two days of airport closures that halted nearly 3,000 flights. Soekarno-Hatta International Airport and Halim Perdanakusuma Airport serving Jakarta and three other regional airports reopened just after midnight, Transportation Minister Dudy Purwagandhi said. Two resumed normal operations by late morning after one reopened Monday.

Purwagandhi said the airports were allowed to resume operations only after authorities determined conditions were safe for aviation. He said airport authorities and airlines were required to inspect all aircraft before flights resumed.

"Pilots and flight crews were also instructed to remain aware of restricted airspace zones established around areas affected by



volcanic ash," Purwagandhi said. Aviation authorities temporarily restrict aircraft from areas where ash has been detected because volcanic particles can damage engines and other critical systems.

The continuous eruption of Anak Krakatau with lava fountains and loud booms ended on Sunday but the volcanic island remained active Tuesday, with four eruptions recorded between dawn and midday. (AP)

Nepal death toll climbs to 1,357 as rescue efforts continue

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kathmandu

The death toll from the devastating flash floods in Nepal rose to 1,357 on Tuesday as more bodies were recovered from the affected areas, authorities said.

Rescue teams continued to search for 5,326 people, while 13,583 people have been rescued so far, the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Authority (NDRRMA) said on Tuesday.

The death toll from the devastating flash floods reached 1,357 after more bodies were recovered from different affected areas. The joint command of security forces have recovered 363 bodies from Chitawan district, 223 from Nawalparasi East, 222 from Nawalparasi West and 197 from Nuwakot. Similarly, 169 bodies were recovered from Rasuwa, 75 from



Gorkha, 70 from Dhading and 38 from Tanahu. So far, 102 bodies have been handed over to the family members after identification and fulfilling due legal formalities,

according to NDRRMA.

The floods, triggered by an ice-rock avalanche near the Nepal-Tibet border, sent the Bhotekoshi River raging downstream, washing

away homes, vehicles, roads and bridges and damaging hydropower projects across northern and central Nepal.

The disaster also killed at least 43 people on the Chinese side, while more than 500 people remain missing in Tibet, according to Chinese media reports.

Around 3,500 people were staying in Government-run holding centres across Rasuwa, Nuwakot and Dhading as of Monday, according to the NDRRMA. But many others displaced by the floods have sought shelter wherever they could, including schools, temples, monasteries, empty office buildings, community buildings and tents set up in forested areas.

Major rescue operations are also underway at hydropower projects in flood-affected districts, where 121 men are believed to be trapped in underground tunnels.

El Nino effect leaves over 115,000 in Sri Lanka facing drinking water shortage

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Colombo

Over 115,000 people in Sri Lanka are facing drinking water shortages as an emerging El Nino condition, coupled with high temperatures and scant rainfall, intensified dry weather across parts of the island, officials said on Tuesday.

Meteorology Department Director General Ajith Wijemanna said an El Nino condition was developing and could be contributing to the prevailing weather pattern. El Nino, a periodic warming of the central and eastern tropical Pacific Ocean, can alter tempera-



ture patterns across the region. Its development is being closely monitored for its possible impact on Sri Lanka as the dry spell continues.

The island nation, surrounded by the Indian Ocean, is likely to feel the effect more intensely, experts opine. According to the Disaster Management Centre (DMC), 115,586 people have been affected by the El Nino weather pattern across seven of Sri Lanka's 25 administrative districts.

The severe heat and lack of rainfall have affected many areas, creating serious challenges for the availability of water, it said in a

press release. Pragith Danansuriya, a DMC official, said 115,534 people are currently affected by the shortage of drinking water.

In the north-central Anuradhapura district, the water level in Eruwewa reservoir, which has a capacity of about 3,500 acre-feet, has fallen to around 1,000 acre-feet, irrigation officials said. Water levels have also declined in areas, including Matale in the central region and Nandikadal in the north-east, officials said.

The prolonged dry conditions are also affecting aquatic life and wildlife. Thousands of small fish have

been found dead in the Mullaithivu lagoon in the northeast, with officials attributing the deaths to the mixing of seawater and freshwater.

Natural water sources are drying up in several areas, forcing wild animals to move in search of alternative sources of water.

The drought has also affected agriculture, with crops including paddy, coconut, banana and guava facing damage due to lack of water.

Wijemanna said some rainfall could be expected from the end of September, raising hopes of relief from the prevailing conditions.



DCC approves TRAI’s satcom spectrum recommendations

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

The Digital Communications Commission (DCC), the apex decision-making body at the Department of Telecom, has approved most of the recommendations made by sector regulator Trai to allocate spectrum for satellite communications services, according to sources.

Elon Musk-led Starlink, Bharti Group-backed Eutelsat OneWeb and Reliance Industries Ltd's Jio Satellite Communications have received permission to start satcom services in India. The services, however, cannot be rolled out without spectrum allocation and the second stage of security clearance from security agencies. "DCC in its meeting held on September 3 has approved the majority of recommendations made by Trai on satcom spectrum," a source aware of the development said.

The Department of Telecom will now approach the Cabinet for final approval on the pricing and allocation process of radio waves for



the satellite communications (satcom) services. The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (Trai) in May 2025 recommended that satellite broadband spectrum be allotted for five years, which can be extended by another two years.

The regulator had recommended a levy of 4 per cent of annual revenues as a fee on satcom service providers like Elon Musk's Starlink, but sources said that DoT was of the view to levy 5 per cent instead of 4 per cent suggested by the regulator. Elon Musk's Starlink and Amazon Inc's subsidiary Kuiper Systems had, during con-

sultations with the Trai, urged it to keep spectrum charge below 1 per cent of AGR with no other charges.

The four per cent of adjusted gross revenue (AGR) spectrum charge would be for both geostationary orbit (GSO) and NGSO (non-geostationary orbit) operators. These would be subject to a minimum annual spectrum charge of ₹3,500 per MHz.

Trai, in its recommendations to the Department of Telecommunications, had said that operators offering services in urban areas would have to shell out an additional ₹500 per subscriber annually. No addition-

al levy would be applicable to services in rural areas.

The regulator has also favoured a subsidy for satcom user terminals in unserved/underserved regions of rural and remote areas (typically one-time hardware cost ranges between ₹20,000-50,000). It said high cost could be a barrier to adoption, potentially impeding the adoption of such services in difficult-to-reach areas. Once approved, a single satellite constellation can offer just 10,000-20,000 connections in areas like Delhi against a requirement of 50 lakh broadband connections.

The satellite spectrum pricing as a percentage of AGR is for both non-geostationary satellite orbit (NGSO) and Geostationary satellite orbit (GSO) based fixed-satellite service (FSS) and mobile satellite service (MSS).

NGSO refers to satellites occupying either a low-earth orbit (LEO) or medium-earth orbit (MEO). Unlike geostationary GSO satellites, LEO and MEO satellites do not occupy a stationary position but move in relation to the Earth.

Coal output rises 4.5%, enough stocks for power plant, says G Kishan Reddy

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

Union Coal Minister G Kishan Reddy on Tuesday said India has witnessed 4.5 per cent year-on-year growth in dry fuel production and assured that there is no need to worry about the stocks for power plants.

However, he admitted that there were issues related to coal production due to weather conditions (monsoon) for around ten days, but now there is no problem.

"We have 123 million tonnes of coal available with us, which is (sufficient) for 51 days (reserve) in the country. Therefore, there is no problem with power plants having critical coal stock," he said on the sidelines of Coal India's CSR Initiative event.

About the coal gasification scheme, the minister told reporters that September 7 was the last day to submit bid and as many as seven applications were received.

According to a Coal Ministry statement issued on Tuesday, bids were submitted by NTPC, Adani



Enterprises, Talcher Fertilisers, Gallantt Ispat and Shyam Sel & Power.

He also informed that the coal companies have 100 million tonnes of coal in transit, and power companies have 23 days of coal stock. The production of coal has increased with a reduction in rains in the country, he added.

There is no need to worry about coal stock in the country as the ministry is monitoring the situation, along with dry fuel firms, Reddy noted.

Coal production can be increased further if the weather continues to be

favourable. There is growth of 4.5 per cent in coal production so far compared to last year, the minister said.

However, according to the latest report by the Central Electricity Authority on coal stocks at power plants, there are 58 plants with a critical stock situation.

These 58 plant include 53 (domestic coal based), four imported coal-based plants and one plan based on washery rejects. Thermal power plants are shown as critical (in the report) if coal stock is less than 25 per cent of normative coal stock.

The round 1 of the ₹37,500-crore Scheme for Promotion

of Surface Coal/Lignite Gasification Projects has closed with an overwhelming response from industry, with seven (7) applications received from some of India's largest corporate houses and premier public sector undertakings, decisively vindicating the Ministry of Coal's confidence in the scheme, the statement said.

The response underscores growing industry confidence in coal gasification as a key pillar of India's energy security, import substitution and industrial development strategy, it stated.

A request for proposal was issued on July 7, 2026.

These projects have the potential to contribute significantly to the development of a robust domestic coal gasification ecosystem, with eight gasification projects already under implementation under the earlier ₹8,500 crore Financial Incentive Scheme.

The Scheme for Promotion of Surface Coal/Lignite Gasification Projects was approved by the Cabinet on May 13, 2026, with a total financial outlay of ₹37,500 crore.

IGDTUW, DMA sign MoU for academia-industry collaboration

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

Indira Gandhi Delhi Technical University for Women (IGDTUW) and the Delhi Management Association (DMA) entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), marking an important step towards strengthening academia-industry collaboration and creating greater opportunities for professional exposure, skill development, knowledge exchange and experiential learning for students.

The MoU was signed in the presence of Professor Ranjana Jha, Vice Chancellor, IGDTUW, and NK Sharma, President, Delhi Management Association. The occasion was also graced by Neelam Gupta, Vice President, DMA; Professor Brijesh Kumar,

Registrar, IGDTUW; and Meha Joshi, Head, Department of Management, IGDTUW, along with Deans and Heads of Departments, faculty members, staff and representatives of DMA. The department of Management spearheaded the MoU.

Welcoming the collaboration, Meha Joshi, Head, Department of Management, IGDTUW, highlighted the importance of translating partnerships into meaningful learning and professional opportunities for students. She expressed confidence that the DMA Student Chapter would create sustained engagement between students and the professional management community.

Professor Ranjana Jha, Vice Chancellor, IGDTUW, expressed her happiness at



the collaboration and extended her best wishes for the success of the DMA Student Chapter and the Department of Management. She emphasised that meaningful academia-industry partnerships should promote two-way learning and knowledge sharing, bringing together

industry's practical insights and contemporary challenges with academia's research, fresh perspectives and young talent.

NK Sharma, President, DMA, expressed his happiness at the collaboration and encouraged students to actively participate in DMA

initiatives and make full use of the opportunities offered through the association. He also invited students to attend an upcoming DMA seminar at the India Habitat Centre, providing them with an opportunity to interact with professionals and broaden their exposure beyond the classroom.

The MoU reflects IGDTUW's commitment to strengthening industry engagement and providing students with opportunities that complement academic learning. The collaboration will create avenues for expert interactions, professional development, experiential learning, and knowledge exchange and industry exposure, while fostering meaningful engagement among faculty, researchers and industry professionals.

Samsung India begins job cuts; trims workforce at senior level

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Noida

Samsung India Electronics, a leading player in the mobile phone and consumer appliances space, has laid off 8-10 mid-to-senior-level employees and plans to let go of another 40-50 staff in the coming weeks as part of a cost-rationalisation exercise amid rising input costs and muted consumer demand. The layoffs are taking place in the Consumer Electronics (CE) division of Samsung India, which houses its televisions, digital appliances, and home electronics businesses, said industry sources.

In the first phase, the company has laid off around



8-10 employees from the CE division, ranging from general manager, team lead and branch/area manager to even director level. In the second round, Samsung Electronics India may lay off another 40 to 50 people, industry sources told PTI.

The move is aimed at trimming the workforce and driving efficiency as

Samsung India faces stiff competition in the CE business from rival Korean and Chinese players, with competitive intensity running high in the segment. The team has around 500 to 600 executives. A query sent to Samsung India over the development remained unanswered till the time of filing of the story.

HDFC MF showcases Pharma and Healthcare Fund

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Mumbai

HDFC Asset Management Company Limited (HDFC AMC), the investment manager of HDFC Mutual Fund (HDFC MF) and one of India's leading mutual fund houses, referred to the performance of HDFC Pharma and Healthcare Fund, which delivered a CAGR of 30.19% since inception and a return of 19.01% over one year, as of July 31, 2026. The fund was launched on October 4, 2023, and seeks to generate long-term capital appreciation by investing predominantly in equity and equity-related instruments of pharma and healthcare companies.

The fund is diversified across pharmaceuticals, hospitals, healthcare service



providers, biotechnology, and medical equipment and supplies. India's pharmaceutical and healthcare sector presents a structural growth opportunity, supported by rising domestic demand, increasing healthcare expenditure, expanding export opportunities, and India's position as a global pharmaceutical manufacturing hub. The sector is also witnessing opportunities across complex generics, biosimilars, specialty drugs, contract devel-

opment and manufacturing, hospitals, diagnostics, and medical technology.

Longer-term trends, including an ageing population, a rising incidence of lifestyle-related diseases, increasing per capita income, and growing insurance penetration, are further supporting healthcare spending and creating opportunities across the broader healthcare ecosystem.

Commenting on the fund's performance, Navneet Munot, Managing Director &

Chief Executive Officer, HDFC Asset Management Company Limited, said, "At HDFC Mutual Fund, our focus remains on identifying businesses that are well positioned to participate in these long-term trends. HDFC Pharma and Healthcare Fund follows a research-led, bottom-up approach that provides the flexibility to identify opportunities across the breadth of the healthcare ecosystem and across market capitalisations."

HDFC Pharma and Healthcare Fund is managed by Nikhil Mathur. The fund's performance underscores HDFC AMC's focus on identifying and offering investment opportunities across emerging and long-term structural themes.

CM Sukhu meets Manohar Lal, discusses key issues

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh Sukhinder Singh Sukhu met Union Minister for Power and Housing & Urban Affairs Manohar Lal in New Delhi on Tuesday and discussed several important pending issues concerning Himachal Pradesh's power sector. He urged the minister to facilitate their early resolution in the interest of the State.

The Chief Minister strongly raised the issue of providing Renewable Energy Certificates (RECs) against Himachal Pradesh's free power entitlement. He said the State should receive due benefits against its free power share and sought necessary clarification and an early resolution in the matter.

He also raised the issue of nominating two Independent Directors from Himachal Pradesh on the Board of Directors of Satluj Jal Vidyut Nigam (SJVN) and urged that the process be completed at the earliest, keeping the



interests of the State in view. The transfer of the Shanan Hydropower Project to Himachal Pradesh was another key issue discussed during the meeting. The CM said necessary action should be taken keeping in view Himachal Pradesh's rights over the project and the interests of the State. The matter is presently sub judice.

The Chief Minister reiterated the State's demand for providing one per cent additional free power after commissioning as Local Area Development Fund (LADF) for Central Sector hydropower projects commissioned

prior to the Hydropower Policy, 2008.

He said that as per the assessment of the State Government, the proposed arrangement is expected to provide Himachal Pradesh a gross annual benefit of approximately ₹29.34 crore, while the estimated annual burden on other beneficiary states would be around ₹96.57 crore. He further raised the issue of land acquired by the Bhakra Beas Management Board (BBMB) in Himachal Pradesh that is presently not being utilised.

Union Power Minister Manohar Lal assured him of positive consideration of matters concerning Himachal Pradesh's power interests. He also assured that necessary directions would be issued to the concerned officials and that all possible cooperation would be extended for the early resolution of the pending issues.

Chief Secretary Kamlesh Kumar Pant, Principal Advisor to the Chief Minister Ram Subhag Singh, Principal Secretary (Finance) Devesh Kumar and Secretary to the Chief Minister Rakesh Kanwar were also present in the meeting.

Ghaziabad development gets boost with property auction

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Ghaziabad

Amid the rapidly expanding development activities and growing investment opportunities in Ghaziabad, the Ghaziabad Development Authority (GDA) has achieved a significant financial milestone through the auction of its properties.

The Authority conducted an auction of properties belonging to various categories on 7 September 2026 at Hindi Bhawan, Lohia Nagar, in which successful bids were received for a total of 10 properties.

The successful auction is expected to generate approximately ₹105.65 crore in revenue for the Authority. This achievement not only reflects the growing interest of investors in GDA properties but also clearly indicates the increasing demand for residential, commercial and institutional develop-



ment in Ghaziabad's rapidly evolving urban landscape.

The auction included one residential plot in Indirapuram Extension Scheme; one shop and one residential plot in Indirapuram Gyan Khand-3; one residential plot in Gyan Khand-2; one group housing plot and one primary school plot in Koyal Enclave; one community centre plot in Vaishali Sector-3; two shop plots in the UP Border (Chikamberpur) Scheme; and one constructed community centre in Brij Vihar Scheme.

The successful bids received for these properties

demonstrate the continued strengthening of investor confidence in residential, commercial and institutional activities across Ghaziabad's established as well as emerging growth areas. The entire auction process was conducted in a transparent, fair and competitive manner.

The GDA continues to work towards the effective and transparent disposal of its properties, while simultaneously focusing on the expansion of modern infrastructure and planned urban development across the city.

SBI plants 200 trees in Shahdara, Surajmal Vihar



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

The State Bank of India's (SBI) Home Loan Centre East Delhi (15811) has planted 200 trees/saplings at CBD Shadara and Surajmal Vihar areas on Tuesday. It is one of the key focus areas under the Bank's CSR initiatives. Plantation has been done at suitable, identified places in coordination with DDA and local authorities.

Adequate arrangements for post-plantation care, including watering, protection and regular monitoring, have been assured by the respective authorities.

The event was graced by AGM Rao Anil Singh, Chief Manager Nidhi, Manju and all staff members of HLC East Delhi (Karkardooma) unit. The event was successfully organised by Chief Manager VPS Rawat.

Tata Power Solarroof crosses five lakh rooftop solar installations

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

Tata Power Solarroof has surpassed 5 lakh rooftop solar installations across India and facilitated over ₹8,500 crore in solar financing in the country. According to a statement on Tuesday, the company has completed 5,19,673 installations (as of July 31, 2026), representing a 14 per cent market share, and is targeting 30 lakh installations by 2029.

Tata Power Solarroof has so far facilitated financing worth over ₹8,500 crore through a network of more than 25 financing partners, helping more consumers and businesses access rooftop solar solutions, it added.

Tata Power Solarroof, part of Tata Power Renewable Energy Ltd (TPREL), a subsidiary of Tata Power Company Ltd, has crossed the milestone of 5 lakh rooftop solar installations across India, marking a sig-



nificant step in the adoption of distributed renewable energy across residential, commercial and industrial segments.

With rooftop solar emerging as an increasingly attractive solution for reducing electricity costs and enhancing energy resilience, Tata Power Solarroof is expanding access through its nationwide ecosystem of over 700 channel partners and more than 250 authorised service partners.

This network enables the company to provide

localised support across the customer journey, from consultation and system design to installation, commissioning and after-sales service.

Under its 'Quality Lifelong' promise, Tata Power Solarroof combines high-efficiency solar modules with comprehensive warranties, financing options, insurance protection and service support.

Its solar modules come with 25/30-year performance warranties, while systems are backed by a minimum five-year warranty.

 BRIEFLY

Junior hockey: India men beat South Korea in Asia Cup



Captain Anmol Ekka struck twice as the Indian junior men's hockey team ripped through South Korea's defences in a late surge for a 7-3 triumph that left it within touching distance of a semifinal berth in the Asia Cup here on Tuesday. The contest remained finely balanced for much of its duration, with South Korea matching India goal for goal, but the defending champions raised the intensity with a decisive three-goal burst in the final quarter.

The victory took India's tally to seven points from three matches, including two wins and a draw. India will face Chinese Taipei in their last pool match on Wednesday, knowing that a victory will seal their place in the last-four stage. Anmol once again led India's scoring effort, netting twice to take his tournament tally to eight goals. The match was an even battle in the opening three quarters. (PTI)

Mumbai City FC rope in Lazar Cirkovic on one-year deal



Mumbai City FC on Tuesday roped in Serbia's Lazar Cirkovic on a one-year deal for the 2026-27 Indian Super League season. The 34-year-old defender has previously played for Chennaiyin FC and Jamshedpur FC in the Indian Super League, apart from spending time at various clubs in Serbia.

Cirkovic began his journey at Serbian SuperLiga club Rad in 2010 and later on moved to Palic on a loan. In 2014, Cirkovic joined FK Partizan and went on to make his debut at the UEFA Europa League fixture against Tottenham Hotspur.

During his four-year stint at FK Partizan, Cirkovic was a member of the sides which won two Serbian SuperLiga titles and one Serbian Cup. He has also represented FC Luzern in Switzerland, Maccabi Netanya FC in Israel and Kisvarda FC in Hungary, before moving to India to play for two different ISL teams. (PTI)



SHAKYA MITRA

There is perhaps no more difficult decision in sport than knowing when to walk away. For an ordinary athlete, retirement is often dictated by declining performance, injury or the emergence of a better player. For the truly great, however, the equation is considerably more complicated. When you have spent two decades redefining your sport, winning almost everything there is to win and becoming an institution rather than merely an athlete, when exactly are you supposed to say enough is enough?

Lionel Messi's decision to retire from international football brings that question sharply into focus.

At 39, Messi has decided that his journey with Argentina is over, following a 2026 World Cup in which Argentina reached the final before losing to Spain. Remarkably, his decision does not come because he can no longer compete. Messi was Argentina's standout player in the tournament.

His international career once appeared destined to be defined by disappointment. He lost the 2014 World Cup final and the Copa América finals of 2015 and 2016. After the latter defeat, at just 29, he even announced his international retirement.

He returned, of course, and what followed transformed his legacy. Argentina won the Copa América in 2021, the World Cup in 2022 and another Copa América in 2024.

Knowing when to go: The hardest decision for sporting greats

At 35, Messi arguably produced the finest international tournament of his career in Qatar.

Should he have retired then? Perhaps. It would have been a perfect ending. But Messi was still good enough to continue, and the desire to keep playing remained.

Four years later, at 39, he helped Argentina reach another World Cup final. His decision now is therefore less about an inability to compete and more about recognising that his journey with the national team has reached its natural conclusion.

Novak Djokovic finds himself facing a different version of the same dilemma.

Djokovic has achieved virtually everything tennis could offer him. In 2023, at 36, he won his 23rd and 24th Grand Slam titles, establishing himself as the record holder for singles grand slam titles in the

Open era. In 2024, he finally added the Olympic singles gold medal that had eluded him.

Yet the last two years have been different. Djokovic has not won a Grand Slam since 2024, while his 2026 US Open ended in extraordinary fashion with a first-round defeat, his first opening-round loss at a Grand Slam since 2006. Physical problems have also increasingly become part of the story.

At 39, the question is no longer whether Djokovic can still produce flashes of his old brilliance. Of course he can. The question is whether he can sustain the physical demands required to win seven matches at a Grand Slam.

That is a subtly different question, and one that another sporting giant confronted more than a decade ago.

Before the 2011 World Cup, Sachin Tendulkar was

still one of the most complete cricketers in the world. He had recently scored his 50th Test century, an unprecedented landmark, and yet one significant trophy remained missing from his cabinet: the ODI World Cup.

The 2011 tournament provided what seemed like the perfect ending. Tendulkar was India's leading run-scorer and, on April 2, 2011, India won the World Cup in Mumbai, his hometown. A few days short of turning 38, Tendulkar had finally achieved the dream that had eluded him through five previous World Cups.

It would have been almost cinematic had he announced his retirement that night.

But he didn't. And who could really have told him to?

Tendulkar was still good enough to play international cricket. He continued for another two and a half years, scoring his 100th international century in 2012 before eventually playing his 200th and final Test in Mumbai in November 2013.

More than a decade later, the retirement question will increasingly confront India's two modern batting giants, Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli.

Rohit is already 39, while Kohli turns 38 in November. Both have retired from Test and T20I cricket, leaving ODI cricket as their remaining international stage.

And, much like

Tendulkar in 2011, there is a major unfinished chapter ahead: the 2027 ODI World Cup.

Rohit has never won an ODI World Cup, while Kohli was part of India's victorious 2011 squad, albeit as one of its younger players, long before he became the batting giant he is today. The 2027 tournament (subject to selection) could therefore become their equivalent of Tendulkar's 2011 moment, a final challenge that makes continuing worthwhile.

What connects Messi, Djokovic, Tendulkar, Rohit and Kohli is not simply longevity. All were identified as exceptional talents remarkably young and have spent close to two decades operating at the highest level. Their longevity is a product not only of extraordinary ability but also of an almost obsessive competitive instinct.

And therein lies the paradox. The mentality that makes champions great can also make retirement almost impossible. They have spent their entire lives refusing to accept decline, constantly searching for another challenge, another record, another trophy.

For sporting immortals, the hardest part of retirement is not knowing whether they can still compete. It is knowing when they no longer need to.

The author is a sports management consultant with over a decade of experience in sports promotion and development. His work across both the private and government sectors gives him a well-rounded view of India's sports ecosystem.



Mandaviya asks hockey teams to target Olympic qualification

MONA PARTHSARATHI ■ New Delhi

Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviya has asked the Indian hockey teams to focus on identifying and rectifying their shortcomings rather than dwelling on World Cup performance, with the Asian Games now the priority to secure qualification for the Los Angeles Olympics.

Mandaviya held a review meeting on Monday with men's team coach Craig Fulton, captain

Harmanpreet Singh, women's team coach Sjoerd Marijne and captain Salima Tete and Hockey India officials following India's campaign at the recently concluded FIH World Cup.

According to a ministry source, the meeting at the SAI headquarters lasted around an hour and was attended by captains and coaches of both teams. Sports Secretary Hari Ranjan Rao, Hockey India president Dilip Tirkey, secretary general Bholanath Singh, TOPS CEO NS Johal and senior officials of SAI were present. (PTI)



Women's hockey team departs for Asian Games



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Bengaluru

Fresh from a historic fifth-place finish at the World Cup, the Indian women's hockey team on Tuesday departed for the Asian Games in Japan, with their sights firmly set on winning the gold medal and securing a direct berth at the 2028 Los Angeles Olympic Games.

Led by captain Salima Tete and coached by Sjoerd Marijne, India produced one of its finest performances in decades as the team finished fifth, its best World Cup result since the inaugural edition in 1974. The attention now shifts to the Asian Games, where the stakes are even higher.

Under the FIH's LA 2028 qualification system, the highest-placed eligible team in the women's hockey competition at the Asian Games will earn an Olympic quota place, provided it has not already qualified through another pathway.

"We are going into the Asian Games with a lot

of confidence, but we also know that every tournament brings a new challenge," said Tete, who has led India to the Nations Cup title and the historic World Cup fifth-place finish this year, in a release. "The Nations Cup and the World Cup have given us belief in what we can achieve together, and now our focus is on taking that one step further. "Our goal is very clear - we want to fight for the gold medal and earn direct qualification for the Los Angeles Olympics. We know it will require consistency, discipline and giving our best in every match, and as a team we are ready for that challenge," Tete said.

India has been placed in Pool B alongside Japan, Thailand, Singapore, Indonesia, and Uzbekistan. The team will open its campaign against Uzbekistan on September 20, followed by matches against Indonesia on September 21, Thailand on September 23, Japan on September 25, and Singapore on September 27.

India enter quarterfinals with 7-0 win over Japan in Women's Junior Asia Cup



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Moqi (China)

The Indian junior women's hockey team continued their dominant run at the Asia Cup, cruising to a commanding 7-0 victory over Japan in their third elite pool match to secure a place in the quarterfinals here on Tuesday. With nine points from three matches, India currently sit at the top of the Elite Pool. They will face China on Wednesday in their final pool match, which will determine the top position in the pool. China currently have six points from two matches.

Having opened their campaign with a 4-1 win over Korea before registering an 11-1 victory against Malaysia, India carried their attacking momentum into the clash against Japan and took control of proceedings right from the start.

India's early pressure was rewarded in the fifth minute when Krishna Sharma found the back of the net for a 1-0 lead. India doubled their advantage in the ninth minute after a foul by a Japanese defender inside the circle resulted in a penalty stroke. Supriya stepped up and made no mistake from the spot to put India 2-0 ahead.

India continued to dominate proceedings and

added a third goal just before the end of the opening quarter. Purnima Yadav scored a field goal in the 14th minute as India finished the first quarter with a commanding 3-0 lead.

Japan came out with greater attacking intent in the second quarter as they looked to find a way back into the contest, while India continued to search for opportunities to extend their advantage. However, neither side was able to add to the scoreline, and India went into the half-time break with a comfortable 3-0 lead.

Japan began the third quarter with renewed attacking intent, looking to register their first goal of the match. However, the Indian defence remained resolute and effectively nullified Japan's attempts. India then shifted the gears once again, scoring three goals in the space of five minutes. Geeta Yadav smashed a field goal in the 41st minute to make it 4-0 before completing her brace in the 45th minute, further strengthening India's commanding position.

India added another goal just a minute later. Purnima found the back of the net in the 46th minute to complete her brace and take the lead to 6-0 at the end of the third quarter. (PTI)

DAILY SUDOKU

5		8		3		2		
		3		5				
	8		1		7			5
	9	5						6
		7		1		9		
1						8	5	
9			7		8		3	
			4		5			
	4		2		5			9

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★☆

HOW TO SOLVE IT

Sudoku is a logic puzzle where you fill a 9x9 grid so that numbers 1 to 9 appear once in every row, column, and 3x3 box, using elimination and logical deduction - no maths involved.

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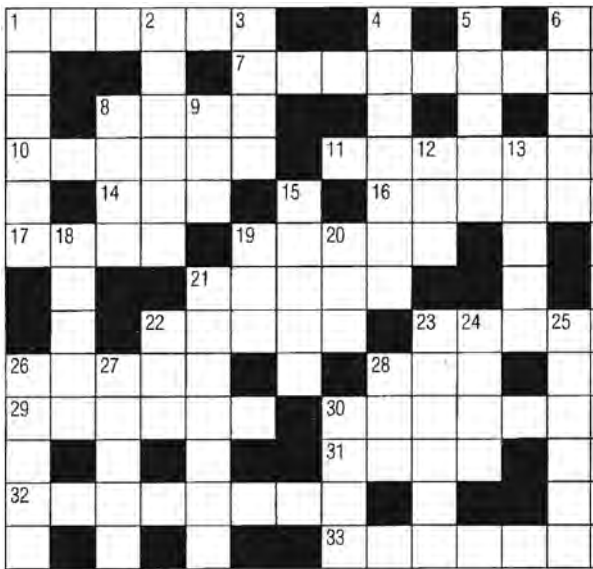


SOLUTION (8.9.26)

5	2	7	3	6	4	8	1	9
9	4	3	8	5	1	7	6	2
8	6	1	2	9	7	3	5	4
4	3	2	7	8	5	1	9	6
1	8	5	9	2	6	4	7	3
7	9	6	1	4	3	2	8	5
6	1	4	5	7	2	9	3	8
2	7	9	6	3	8	5	4	1
3	5	8	4	1	9	6	2	7

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DOUBLE CROSSWORD
WEDNESDAY | SEPTEMBER 9, 2026



ACROSS

- On the road, it's an honour to be in a car (7)
- There's nothing Oriental about it (8)
- Attorney given thanks for the facts (4)
- Out to succeed, Ted was a twister! (6)
- Hate having only half a side for a match (6)
- Give extra publicity to the grand finale (3)
- Drive the enemy out! (5)
- As expected, rather like Julie (4)
- A heady trophy (5)
- Take over (5)

DOWN

- Took a broken crate to the trading centre (6)
- Drink that goes snappily with a biscuit (6)
- Dora's eccentric way (4)
- At night, is seen to be a bright little thing (7)
- No, and that's final (5)
- Stipulate the condition (5)
- Face the possibility of being laid up (4)
- Just the chap to make hay? (3)
- It's best worn above the waist (3)
- Hit ten again? (5)
- For which cars can be broken up - at a

- Not a goldfish, but maybe silver or bronze (5)
- Finish work during September, making a beehive (4)
- African river longer than an English one (5)
- Fierce word of reproach? (3)
- Complete in diplomacy (6)
- His Pilgrim was Christian (6)
- Spheres in which one's little brothers circulate (4)
- Agrees the competition is dishonest (8)
- Makes edgy progress with boys (6)

- parking place? (5)
- Such guerrillas are less than urbane (5)
- Understand the sense (3)
- Member of a popular movement (3)
- Spot that's a bit ticklish in a permissive way (7)
- Every brazen hussy has one (3)
- Sailor whose crime is serious (6)
- To the House? (4)
- Are their tails specially hairy? (6)
- The nothing we get from America (5)
- Pieces written in difficult times? (5)
- It may fly somewhat furiously (3)
- An outstanding leader (4)

SOLUTION (8.9.26)

- ACROSS

1. Pleas
6. Bligo
9. Sh-opp-ed
10. Hussy
11. SE-N-SE
12. Knots
13. Florins
15. He-M
17. Eyot
18. Can-Ada
- DOWN

19. Damon
20. Lie-ere-d
22. A-ire
24. Sa-d
25. Jousted
26. Si-MO-n
27. Stea-L
28. Put in
29. Iron out
30. Truly
31. Penny
- DOWN

2. Loudly
3. Assert
4. Shy
5. O-pens
6. Best man
7. I'd-ES
8. G-ashed
12. Knead
13. F-els
14. O-ozed
15. H-AB-it
16. Mate-d
18. Colon
19. D-evil-ry
21. E-aster
22. Ast-u-te
23. Region
25. Joint
26. Sail
28. Pup (rev.)

