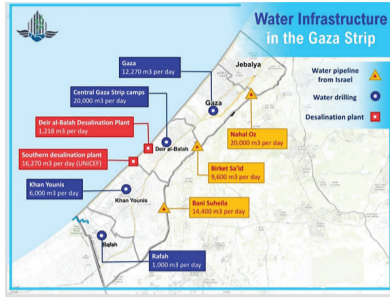




2 FOLLOW HOUSE RULES, DON'T PROTEST AT PARLIAMENT GATES: BIRLA



11 ISRAEL DEBUNKS CLAIMS OF USING WATER FOR 'ACTS OF GENOCIDE' IN GAZA



16 DHIRAJ, DEEPIKA EMERGE NATIONAL CHAMPIONS

OP Chautala no more

Last rituals today at Teja Khera farm in Sirsa

NEERAJ MOHAN
CHANDIGARH

Five-time Haryana chief minister and veteran Indian National Lok Dal (INLD) leader Om Prakash Chautala passed away on Friday morning. He was 89 years old.

As per the initial reports, he suffered a cardiac arrest at his home and was immediately rushed to the Medanta hospital in Gurugram but could not be saved. He breathed his last in the hospital around 11.50am.

The state government has declared three-day State Mourning in Haryana from December 20 to December 22 and December 21 will be observed as a public holiday across the state. No official entertainment programmes will be held in the state during the mourning period from December 20 to December 22. The state government has declared holiday on Saturday in all



OM PRAKASH CHAUTALA (1935-2024)

schools.

Family members said the mortal remains will be taken to his residence at Teja Khera farm in Sirsa and the last rituals will be performed at 3pm on Saturday. Soon after the news of his death was shared by the family members, condolence messages started pouring in. Prime Minis-

ter Narendra Modi shared a file photo with Chautala wrote on his account on X, "Deeply saddened by the demise of former Haryana Chief Minister Shri Om Prakash Chautala. He remained active in the state's politics for many years and made consistent efforts to carry forward the legacy of

P3

He remained active in state's politics for many years and made consistent efforts to carry forward the legacy of Chaudhary Devi Lal. My heartfelt condolences...

- Narendra Modi
Prime Minister

Om Prakash Chautala ji served the state and society throughout his life. This is an irreparable loss for the politics of the country and Haryana state.

- Nayab Singh Saini
Haryana CM

End of an era in Indian politics. I pray to the Almighty to grant the departed soul eternal peace and provide strength to the bereaved family to bear this immense loss. My humble tributes.

- Kartikeya Sharma
RS MP

LPG TANKER-TRUCK COLLISION LEAVES 12 DEAD NEAR JAIPUR

The crash sparked a massive fireball that turned a stretch of the Jaipur-Ajmer Highway into an inferno

Kin of victims raise many questions over road safety measures

SHALU SACHDEVA
JAIPUR

An LPG tanker collided with a truck on Friday, sparking a massive fireball that turned a stretch of the Jaipur-Ajmer highway—about 20km from Jaipur city—into an inferno in which 12 people were killed, and over 40 people were injured. The fire engulfed 37 vehicles.

According to Rajasthan health minister Gajendra Singh Khimsar, nearly half of the injured are "very criti-

cal."

"A total of 11 people have died. Five were brought dead to SMS hospital. Five succumbed during treatment. One death was reported from Jaipuria hospital," Dr Deepak Maheshwari, Principal, SMS Medical College, said.

The LPG tanker was taking a U-turn near Delhi Public School in Bhankota when truck coming from Jaipur hit it. The collision caused a gas leak, with 18 to 20 tonne of LPG spilling out. In no time, the gas



Firefighters extinguish the fire at the site of the accident after a massive fire started due to a collision between a gas tanker and multiple vehicles near a petrol pump on the Jaipur-Ajmer Highway, in Jaipur on Friday. ANI

caught fire. Fireball were seen along a kilometre engulfing 30-35 vehicles.

The gas leak spread the fire in a flash, leaving no scope for those in nearby vehicles to come out. People were seen rushing and taking off clothes.

NBC employee succumbed to burns

Eye witnesses were shaken by the accident. While some of the victims ran in panic while others pleaded for help.

Radhe Shyam Sharma, an NBC employee on his way to work, was engulfed in flames. His brother Akharam Choudhary, devastated by the loss, recounted the

incident. Radhe Shyam, whose work shift was from 6 AM to 3 PM, left for work on his bike at 5:30 AM. At 5:40 AM, the family received a shocking call that his body had caught fire. His family rushed to the scene and took him to a nearby hospital, from where he was

P3

India raises Pannun's threat to Ambassador Kwatra with US

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Following the threats issued by US-based Khalistani terrorist Gurbatwant Singh Pannun against Indian Ambassador to the US, Vinay Mohan Kwatra, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) emphasized India's serious approach to such security threats.

MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said that these matters are promptly raised with the government of the United States.

At the weekly MEA press briefing in New Delhi on Friday, Jaiswal said, "As in when such threats are issued, we take the threats very seriously and we raise it with the US government."

"We take the threats very seriously... it is our expectation that the US will take our security concerns seriously -Ministry of External Affairs"

nun is an India-designated terrorist who holds American and Canadian citizenship.

Earlier in October, the MEA had confirmed that the individual named in the US Justice Department's indictment case in a foiled assassination plot against Khalistani terrorist Gurbatwant Singh Pannun was no longer an employee of the government of India.

"The US State Department informed us that the individual in the Justice Department indictment is no longer employed by India. I confirm that he is no longer an employee of the Government of India," Jaiswal had said.

The US Justice Department

P3

He also expressed confidence in the US addressing India's security concerns.

Jaiswal added, "In this case, also, we have raised it with the US government, and it is our expectation that the US government will take our security concerns seriously."

Gurbatwant Singh Pan-

'MSP guarantee law or martyrdom', says Dalawal

NEW DELHI: Farmer leader Jagjit Singh Dalawal's indefinite hunger strike reached its 25th day today, with his health deteriorating to critical levels.

According to farmer leaders, Dalawal refrained from meeting anyone, focusing on his steadfast commitment to the cause. In a statement the farmer leader stated, "For 25 days, I have been on the path

of sacrifice, and this journey ends either with the enactment of an MSP guarantee law or my death. I will continue walking this path until my last breath." In support of Dalawal six farmers from Haryana—Bijender Mahra, Surender Singh, Baljeet Singh, Bijender Singh, Ravinder Singh, and Dalbir Singh—began a 24-hour hunger strike on Friday. DETAILS P4



AAP's Raghav Chadha, Sanjay Singh and other MPs stage a protest in Rajya Sabha in support of Farm leader Jagjit Singh Dalawal. ANI

P3

SC: No toll for commuters on DND flyway

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Friday ruled that no tax will be levied on the Delhi-Noida Direct (DND) flyway for commuters and dismissed an appeal of Noida Toll Bridge Corporation Limited (NTBCL) against 2016 order of the Allahabad High Court.

A bench headed by Justice Surya Kant said the Noida Authority could not delegate toll collection to NTBCL, as the company had already recouped its project costs.

The bench said that Noida "overstepped its authority" by delegating its power to levy toll on the company and that there was "unjust enrichment of the company at the cost of the public".

P3

Yunus, Sharif call for strategic ties between Dhaka and Islamabad

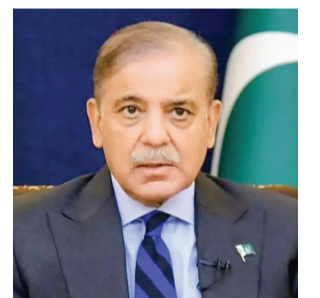


AGENCIES
DHAKA

Bangladesh has asked Pakistan to settle the issues of 1971 to help Dhaka move forward with its relationship with Islamabad "once and for all for the future generations," state-run news agency has said.

Bangladesh Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus and Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif also discussed the revival of the SAARC and called for a strategic relationship between Dhaka and Islamabad.

Yunus and Sharif met



on the margins of the D-8 Summit at Cairo on Friday when the two leaders agreed to strengthen relations through increased trade, commerce, and exchange of sports and cultural delegations, state-run news agency Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha (BSS) said.

Yunus urged Sharif to settle the issues of 1971 to help Dhaka move forward with its relationship with Islamabad and said, "The issues have kept coming again and again. Let's settle those issues for us to move forward." Sharif said the 1974 tripartite agreement involv-

P3

States list slew of demands in pre-budget meet with FM

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

States have raised several demands in the pre-budget meeting with Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in Jaisalmer on Friday evening.

According to sources, some States asked the central government to bear a larger share of land acquisition costs for projects.

Some have demanded before the Centre to increase allocation for 50-year interest-free loans.

Some have also urged for

an increase in borrowing limits to support fiscal activities, sources added.

Among others, a request was made to increase the honorarium paid to Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHA) workers.

Punjab and Kerala sought special financial packages. Demands included more loans, grants, and borrowing flexibility.

States emphasised the need for additional funding for disaster relief. They requested more allocation for the State Disaster Response

Fund (SDRF).

More funds were also sought for the Jal Jeevan Mission. They want funds for tanks and storage to enhance water supplies.

As part of the pre-budget consultations, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Friday chaired a meeting with States and Union Territories in Jaisalmer.

Along with Union Minister for State for Finance Pankaj Chaudhary, the meeting was also attended by CMs of Goa, Haryana, Jammu and Kashmir, Meghalaya and Odisha.

WHO SAID WHAT
IN PARLIAMENT

BJP'S CHAUDHARY
TO LEAD JPC ON
'ONE NATION, ONE
ELECTION' BILLS



NEW DELHI: Co Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla has appointed Bharatiya Janata Party MP P. P. Chaudhary as the chairperson of the Joint Parliamentary Committee on the two bills on 'One Nation One Election.' "The Hon'ble Speaker has been pleased to appoint Shri P. P. Chaudhary MP, Lok Sabha as the Chairperson of the Joint Committee on the Constitution (One Hundred and Twenty-Ninth Amendment) Bill, 2024 and the Union Territories Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2024," the notice by Lok Sabha General Secretary Utpal Kumar Singh read.

PARLIAMENT
PRODUCTIVITY
WAS 100% FOR US:
CONG'S JAIRAM



NEW DELHI: Congress MP Jairam Ramesh on Friday stated that the FIR against Lok Sabha LoP Rahul Gandhi was just a drama enacted by the BJP to distract from the real issues at hand. "For us, Parliament's productivity was 100 per cent because today the entire country knows what the Union Home Minister (Amit Shah) and (Prime Minister) Narendra Modi think about Dr Ambedkar. We assess the Parliament's productivity by the intention of the government. Union Home Minister has insulted Babasaheb Ambedkar," he said.

CABINET APPROVES
RS 11,582 PER QTL
MSP FOR MILLING
COPRA, RS 12,100
FOR BALL COPRA
FOR 2025 SEASON

NEW DELHI: The Union Cabinet on Friday approved the minimum support price (MSP) for copra for the 2025 season. The new MSP for Fair Average Quality of milling copra has been fixed at Rs 11,582 per quintal and for ball copra at Rs 12,100 per quintal for the 2025 season. Approval in this regard was given by the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA). "A series of decisions have been taken for the welfare of farmers. It reflects our commitment, the Prime Minister's commitment towards improving the lives of farmers... In our country, Karnataka has the highest share of Copra production... For procurement of Copra, both NAFED and NCCF will be the central nodal agencies and apart from this, the state governments will have a

FOLLOW HOUSE RULES, DON'T PROTEST AT PARLIAMENT GATES: BIRLA TO MEMBERS

LS Speaker urges members to maintain decorum, dignity of House

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla again urged the MPs on Friday to follow the rules of the House and not to protest at any of the Parliament gates, warning them of appropriate action of any deviation from the rule. Birla's orders come amidst the parallel protests of both the Opposition and ruling parties alleging that both sides have insulted B R Ambedkar. During the protests, few MPs were pushed around, and two were injured, namely Mukesh Rajput and Pratap Sarangi. "I request everyone, to maintain the decorum and dignity of the house is the responsibility of every member. Protesting in front

of the gates is not right. You all have to ensure that it doesn't happen," Birla said amid sloganeering by MPs in the Lok Sabha. Earlier, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju expressed outrage over the conduct of Congress leader Rahul Gandhi during the Winter Session of Parliament. Rijiju revealed that BJP MPs were deeply agitated by Gandhi's actions on the floor, specifically a scuffle that resulted in injuries of the two MPs. Speaking to the media, Rijiju said, "This is the last day of the Winter Session. Both Houses will be adjourned sine die today... NDA MPs are very agitated over the conduct of Rahul Gandhi yesterday." "He insulted one of the MPs from Nagaland and then injured two other



Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla leaves his chair after adjourning the House on the last day of the Winter Session of Parliament, in New Delhi on Friday. ANI

MPs. Speaker has said that no protest should be done at Parliament gate. So, our MPs protested at the Mahatma Gandhi statue," he added. Rajya Sabha LoP Mallikarjun Kharge, Congress MP Priyanka Gandhi Vadra and other INDI alliance MPs staged a protest at Vijay Chowk over the remarks of Union Home Minister Amit

Shah's remarks over Dr. BR Ambedkar in Rajya Sabha. Meanwhile Congress MP Priyanka Gandhi Vadra condemned the Home Minister's remarks about BR Ambedkar and asserted that such insults would not be tolerated in the country. Speaking to the media, Priyanka Gandhi Vadra said, "They know that their true

sentiments for Ambedkar ji have come out. So, they are now scared of the Opposition because we are raising this issue. National interest is related to this matter. Our Constitution has been given by Ambedkar ji, the people of this country and our freedom struggle. Such insult to him will not be tolerated by India."

Blatant misuse of criminal law, says Cong's Manish on FIR against Rahul

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Congress MP Manish Tewari on Friday condemned the FIR against Rahul Gandhi, calling it an "blatant misuse of the provisions of criminal law." "It is a blatant misuse of provisions of criminal law," said Tewari. The Congress MP also demanded that anyone who has insulted the architect of the Constitution should resign. "The fundamental thing is that those who advertently or inadvertently insulted the founder of the Indian



Constitution, Dr Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar, must resign," he added. His remarks come after the Delhi police registered an FIR against Lok Sabha Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi yesterday, in connection with an alleged scuffle that took place at Parliament premises.

Tensions erupted when members of the opposition and the ruling BJP-led NDA held separate protests, resulting in a face-off. Senior Congress leader Mallikarjun Kharge alleged that he was pushed, and two BJP members were injured during the incident. Earlier, Congress MP and General Secretary in-charge Communications, Jairam Ramesh slammed the FIR, calling it an FIR "against Ambedkar." He also alleged that the ruling party is trying to attract attention from Home Minister Amit Shah's remarks on B.R. Ambedkar.

LS productivity 54.5%, RS 40% in this session: Rijiju

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Union Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju on Friday said that the productivity of Parliament's Winter Session had declined due to disruptions by the Opposition and urged them to avoid similar interruptions in the upcoming Budget session. Addressing a press conference, Kiren Rijiju said, "The productivity of the Parliament went down due to disturbances created by the



Opposition. We tried a lot to make the Parliament run. I expect and also request Opposition not to create similar disturbances in the Budget session of Parliament." Rijiju said in the winter session of the parliament

54.5 per cent of work was done in Lok Sabha while only 40 per cent of work was done in Rajya Sabha. "In Lok Sabha 54.5 per cent and in Rajya Sabha almost 40 per cent work has been done. We are not satisfied with this because people elected us all and made us members of Parliament, Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha. We should have worked as much as we could for the country and left no stone unturned in service to the nation. But we have seen such activities

in Parliament which have affected the work and also damaged the dignity of the Parliament. Members of the opposition parties have hindered our work progress due to which the productivity rate has reduced considerably," he said. Parliamentary Affairs Minister Rijiju said that more than 100 per cent should be done in the parliament and urged the opposition parties to work together to address this issue of frequent disruption of the proceedings of the house.

People have right to know truth behind ECI: Cong's Gaurav Gogoi

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Congress MP Gaurav Gogoi on Friday said that the people of India had the right to know the truth behind the Election Commission of India (EC) if the former Election Commissioner was sharing an article doubting the integrity of the election process. Taking to social media X, Gogoi wrote in a post "When a former Chief Election Commissioner shares an article doubting the integrity of the election process, then the people of India have the right to know the truth be-



hind the Election Commission of India." This comes after former Election Commissioner S.Y. Quraishi shared a post on social media X where he cited an article in a media outlet that cast doubts on certain electoral victories of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in the 2024 elections.

Taking to X, the former Election Commissioner shared the article and wrote in a post, "Shocking if true! Exclusive: Farrukhabad, Meerut & Chandni Chowk. Three Lok Sabhas won by BJP in 2024 Lok Sabha elections saw massive targeted deletions of voters from communities who were less likely to vote for the party. Like Muslims, Yadavs & Jatavs..." Earlier on December 11, a delegation of the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) led by Arvind Kejriwal had met the EC and accused the BJP of orchestrating a 'mass voter deletion' conspiracy in Delhi.



Opposition MPs raise 'Jai Bhim' slogans on the proposal of the Bill related to 'One Nation, One Election' during the Last day of the Winter Session of Parliament, in New Delhi on Friday. ANI

GLIMPSES OF THE LAST DAY OF WINTER SESSION



Priyanka with others during protest Arjun Ram Meghwal BJP MP S. Phangnon Konyak PM Modi and other MPs stand for the national song 'Vande Mataram' in Lok Sabha on the last day of the Winter Session MPs coming out from the Parliament during the Winter Session

Measures put in place to protect interest of kirana stores, RS told

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Minister Of State for Commerce & Industry Jitin Prasada said the government has been focusing on protecting the interests of small retailers and traditional kirana stores while safeguarding local business interests, promoting fair competition. The government has put in place various measures in the form of Acts, Rules, and Policies to ensure a level playing field and address anti-competitive practices by e-commerce platforms. In reply to a query by Rajya Sabha MP Kartikeya Sharma, the minister said the e-commerce sector operates under a comprehensive legislative framework. Key Acts applicable to the sector include the Consumer Protection Act, 2019, the

Consumer Protection (E-commerce) Rules, 2020; and the Competition Act, 2002, among others. The Competition Act, 2002 mandates the Competition Commission of India (CCI) to prevent practices having adverse effect on competition, to promote and sustain competition in markets, to protect the interests of consumers and to ensure freedom of trade carried on by other participants in markets, in India. The CCI looks into matters relating to anticompetitive agreements and abuse of dominance by enterprises in all the sectors of the economy. Additionally, the minister informed the House, the Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) policy on e-commerce and retail sectors reflects the Government's intent to safeguard local business interests. The FDI Policy on

e-commerce prohibits FDI in inventory-based models of e-commerce, where the inventory of goods and services is owned by the e-commerce entity and sold directly to consumers. To safeguard and promote local business interests, the FDI Policy for Single Brand Retail Trade (SBRT) mandates that for foreign investment beyond 51%, 30% of the value of goods purchased should be sourced from India, preferably from Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), village and cottage industries, artisans, and craftsmen across all sectors. Similarly, the FDI Policy on Multi-Brand Retail Trading (MBRT) outlines several conditions to ensure that the benefits of FDI in the sector create commensurate forward and backward linkages.

SC ORDERS PUNJAB GOVT. TO MOVE DALLEWAL TO MAKESHIFT HOSPITAL

NEERAJ MOHAN
CHANDIGARH

Asserting that the health of fasting farmer leader Jagjit Singh Dallewal was the responsibility of the Punjab government, the Supreme Court on Friday asked the state government to shift Dallewal to a nearby makeshift hospital at the Khanauri border where his health can be monitored round-the-clock.

During a resumed hearing the bench of Justices Surya Kant and Ujjal Bhuyan asked the Punjab government Advocate General Gurminder Singh to file an undertaking during the course of the day with regard to shifting of the 70-year-old farmer leader to the makeshift hospital setup near the protest site at the Punjab and Haryana border. The court's directive came as the health of Dallewal deteriorated as his fast unto death entered the 25th day. On Thursday Dallewal fainted for 8-10 minutes and doctors examining him said that his life was "hanging by a thread".

Dallewal has been on an indefinite fast since November

SUPREME COURT DIRECTIVE

- The Court asked Punjab to ensure farmer leader Jagjit Dallewal's health by moving him to a makeshift hospital if needed.
- Dallewal's health worsened after 25 days of fasting, with doctors warning his life is at risk.
- Dallewal's fast is part of ongoing farmer protests demanding a legal guarantee for MSP.



26 to press the Centre to accept the demands of protesting farmers, including a legal guarantee of minimum support price (MSP) for crops.

However, the Punjab AG informed the apex court that with Dallewal's cooperation, an echocardiogram (ECG) and blood and other tests have been conducted and his health appears to be stable. He also added that the Punjab chief secretary has constituted a panel of doctors to monitor his health. The court then set January 2 as the next date of hearing and asked the

Punjab chief secretary and the medical superintendent of the makeshift hospital to submit an affidavit by then.

The Supreme Court on Friday said that it is the Punjab authorities' responsibility to ensure the stable health condition of farmer leader Jagjit Singh Dallewal, who has been on a fast-unto-death for over 20 days at the Khanauri border between Punjab and Haryana to press the Centre to accept the agitating farmers' demands.

A bench of Justices Surya Kant and Ujjal Bhuyan asked the Chief Secretary of Punjab and Chairperson of the

Medical Board (constituted to monitor the health of Dallewal) to file an affidavit on the health condition of Dallewal as well as the steps taken to ensure that no harm is caused to his health.

It is the entire responsibility of the state of Punjab to ensure the stable health condition of Dallewal, for which, if he requires hospitalisation, the authorities will take a call as to whether he can be shifted to a make-shift hospital which is said to have been set-up at a distance of 700m from the protest site,

the bench said.

"A fresh medical report about the health stability of Mr. Dallewal and the necessary steps taken meanwhile to ensure that no damage is caused to his health shall be filed by Chief Secretary, Punjab as well as the Chairperson of the Medical Board constituted to monitor the health condition of Mr. Dallewal," the bench stated in its order.

The apex court now posted the matter for compliance with its order on January 2, 2025.

Solicitor General of India Tushar Mehta urged the apex court to pass an order to shift the farmer's leader to a hospital, saying his health was deteriorating. However, the Punjab Advocate General Gurminder Singh said that a coercive direction might create difficulties in the ground situation.

Dallewal, the convener of the Samyukta Kisan Morcha (Non-Political), has been on a fast-unto-death at the Khanauri border.

The top court has been asking the Punjab government to ensure Dallewal gets proper medical aid during fast unto death.

'MSP guarantee law or martyrdom', says Dallewal

NEERAJ MOHAN
CHANDIGARH

Farmer leader Jagjit Singh Dallewal's indefinite hunger strike reached its 25th day today, with his health deteriorating to critical levels. According to farmer leaders, Dallewal refrained from meeting anyone, focusing on his steadfast commitment to the cause. In a statement the farmer leader stated, "For 25 days, I have been on the path of sacrifice, and this journey ends either with the enactment of an MSP guarantee law or my death. I will continue walking this path until my last breath."

In support of Dallewal six farmers from Haryana—Bijender Mahra, Surender Singh, Baljeet Singh, Bijender Singh, Ravinder Singh, and Dalbir Singh—began a 24-hour hunger strike on Friday.

In a statement the farmer leader stated, "For 25 days, I have been on the path of sacrifice, and this journey ends either with the enactment of an MSP guarantee law or my death. I will continue walking this path until my last breath."

However, the farmer leaders claimed that despite his fragile health, Dallewal participated in Supreme Court proceedings via video conferencing on Thursday, although he could not express his views. On Friday, he issued a statement conveying his concerns and demands to the Supreme Court through an emailed and mailed letter, underscoring the urgency of the situation. In his letter addressed to the Justices of the Supreme Court, Dallewal expressed gratitude for their concern about his health

but emphasized the plight of farmers who have lost their lives due to flawed government policies. He highlighted the issues of the farmers accusing the union government of not fulfilling promises made to the farmers of the country.

Dallewal urged the Supreme Court to direct the central government to honor its commitments, adopt the recommendations of the parliamentary committee, and implement a legally guaranteed MSP law to prevent further farmer suicides.

'They treated me like a terrorist,' says BJP's CT Ravi after securing bail

TDG NETWORK
BENGALURU

BJP leader CT Ravi has been granted bail by the Karnataka High Court on Friday following his arrest in a 'derogatory' remarks case filed by Minister Lakshmi Hebbalkar.

The decision came after the court's single-judge bench, headed by Justice MG Uma, issued an interim order for his release. Ravi had been arrested following allegations stemming from a complaint by Karnataka Minister Lakshmi Hebbalkar, which led to the legal action.

Speaking after securing release CT Ravi in a statement said, "Our custodian was Chairman, when our custodian clearly said and gave ruling a false case was filed against me and they treated me like a terrorist, let them introspect what have they done, I'm not doing well as I didn't eat properly last night and in the morning. Its a win



for the truth, this High Court order clear message that we all must follow law. Though there was no proof against me I was arrested."

Earlier, the BJP leader was brought to Bengaluru to produce before the People's Representative court in connection to the case earlier in the day. The BJP leader accused the Congress-led Siddaramaiah government of acting like 'dictators' following his arrest in the case.

"They (state government) have acted like dictators, there is a full stop to everything, dictatorship will not

last long," said CT Ravi after he was arrested.

On Friday, Belagavi's Fifth JMFC court on Friday directed BJP leader and MLC CT Ravi to appear before the Special Court for People's Representatives in Bengaluru. The Hirebagewadi police presented their case before the court, seeking a transit warrant for Ravi. The court granted their request and ordered the police to take him into custody as part of the legal process. Former Karnataka Chief Minister and BJP MP Basavaraj Bommai responded to the case and

said, "When there was a slogan Pakistan zindabad, they never arrested anybody, they took time for FCL report for 2 months and then made arrest. Here, no procedure has been done. There is a Police Raj in Karnataka. Investigation must be done and truth must come out and then action must be taken. Police are being misused nowadays."

CT Ravi also filed a counter-complaint at the Khanapura police station in Belagavi, accusing Congress leaders Lakshmi Hebbalkar, Chamaraja Hattiholi, DK Shivakumar, Saddam, and others of attempting to kill him. He alleged that the police brought him to the Khanapura police station without providing a reason.

Karnataka Minister Lakshmi Hebbalkar earlier in the day addressed the alleged derogatory remarks made by CT Ravi during the Karnataka Legislative Assembly session.

There is proof that Ravi abused Lakshmi Hebbalkar: DK Shivakumar

TDG NETWORK
BENGALURU

Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar on Friday lashed out at BJP leader CT Ravi over his alleged derogatory remarks about Minister Lakshmi Hebbalkar and dismissed Ravi's claims that the police are attempting to murder him.

Referring to CT Ravi's alleged remarks, Shivakumar said, "There was a discussion over disrespect to Babasaheb Ambedkar. There was a protest over it as he called Rahul Gandhi a drug addict. There is proof that he has used abuse for the lady MLA Lakshmi Hebbalkar, you have all the videos and documents. Why did he call Rahul Gandhi a drug addict? Is it Chikkamagaluru's culture, BJP culture, and Indian culture? Show everything, I'll give you proof." In response to CT Ravi's



allegations that the police are trying to murder him, Shivakumar dismissed the claims. He said, "No one is murdering anyone. I saw one video clip, when the Police allowed them to meet, they had a BJP meet. Is the Police station the place for holding such a meeting? The Police behaved very well. We are not interfering in anything; the Police allowed all of them inside. I'm asking the Police how they allowed such a meeting. Family members or 1-2 people can meet, but why did they have

a meeting inside? Who is murdering them? It's natural that supporters of Lakshmi Hebbalkar protested; it happened out of emotions because such filthy words were used against their leader."

Meanwhile, State BJP chief BY Vijayendra criticized the way the situation is being handled, alleging that the police were pressured by the state government. "The Speaker has already given the ruling on what CT Ravi said on the Floor of the House. We have to wait for the FSL report also. At the same time, the attitude of the Police Department, probably the entire department, has succumbed to the pressure from the Minister and the State Government. Yesterday, there was a severe injury on the head of CT Ravi. Even then he was not taken to the hospital. All night he was not offered

even a drop of water... Is CT Ravi a terrorist? He is a respected MLC, former minister," the BJP leader said.

Vijayendra also stated that a statewide protest has been called over the issue. He said, "The way the state government has handled this entire issue is unpardonable. They have treated CT Ravi as a terrorist. They will probably produce him before the magistrate; all our advocates and experts are there. We will discuss and take further action... We have called for a protest across the state, in all the district HQs. We have taken this issue seriously."

Earlier in the day, BJP leader CT Ravi filed a counter-complaint at the Khanapura police station in Belagavi, alleging an attempt to kill him by Congress leaders Lakshmi Hebbalkar, Chamaraja Hattiholi, DK Shivakumar, Saddam, and others.

ASI team inspects five shrines and 19 wells in Sambhal

TDG NETWORK
SAMBHAL

A 4-member team from the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) inspected five 'teerth' (shrines) and 19 wells in Sambhal, Uttar Pradesh on Friday, officials said. DM Dr Rajender Pensiya informed that the inspection continued for 8-10 hours adding that a total of around 24 areas were surveyed.

"It was a 4-member team. In Sambhal, 5 'teerth' and 19 wells were inspected by ASI. The new temple that was found was also inspected. The survey took place 8-10 hours...the ancient temple that was opened was also surveyed. ASI will submit its report to us...total around 24 areas were surveyed," DM Pensiya said.

Meanwhile, the Shiv-Hanuman Temple in Sambhal, which was uncovered during an anti-encroachment campaign by the district police and administration on December 14, held its morning aarti on December 20. Heavy security has been



deployed outside the temple. Geeta Pradhan, a former member of Uttar Pradesh's Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Commission and a BJP leader visited the temple to offer prayers on Wednesday. The temple, which had remained closed since 1978, was reopened on December 14 following efforts by the administration.

Pradhan shared, "We are very happy. With the efforts of Honorable Yogi ji, an ancient temple has been rediscovered with the support of the administration. Everyone is here to offer prayers, and there is a wave of happiness among people. Many idols were installed outside the temple, all of which were demolished, and houses were built on the temple land."

She further explained, "When the police administration came to investigate an electricity theft, they found the ancient temple. Today, the Hindu community is very happy."

Three idols were recovered from a well near the ancient Shiva-Hanuman Temple in Sambhal, Uttar Pradesh, following the temple's reopening during an anti-encroachment drive. The temple premises were cleaned, electricity connections were restored on Sunday, and CCTV cameras were installed for security purposes.

Vishnu Sharan Rastogi, patron of the Nagar Hindu Sabha, confirmed that the temple had reopened after 46 years, explaining that the closure had been due to the absence of a resident priest.

Bombay HC dismisses plea challenging Adani's Dharavi redevelopment tender

TDG NETWORK
MUMBAI

The Bombay High Court on Friday dismissed a plea challenging the tender awarded to the Adani Group for the Dharavi Redevelopment Project.

The petition was filed by a private firm that had contested the award, which followed the cancellation of a previous tender in 2019. The petitioner had called for a fresh tender, but the court dismissed the plea, granting significant relief to the Adani Group.

The Dharavi Redevelopment Project, one of the largest 'urban renewal' projects in India, has been surrounded by controversy. Adani Group's involvement in the project has raised questions, but the group maintains that it aims to restore the dignity of over a million residents of Dharavi.

Earlier this year, Adani Group Founder and Chairman Gautam Adani stated that the Dharavi redevelopment is not just about "urban renewal," but about "restoring dignity to over one million residents of our country." He underlined that the project



is about creating an unmatched ecosystem of sustainable living and transforming the world's largest slum over the next decade. The Adani Group is working in partnership with the Maharashtra government on the project. According to the agreement, the redevelopment will provide eligible residential tenants in Dharavi with flats that include independent kitchens and toilets. The minimum size of the new homes will be 350 square feet, which is reportedly 17 per cent larger than the average size in Mumbai's other slum redevelopment projects. The project, valued at Rs 23,000 crore, has faced opposition,

with some alleging that it would disproportionately benefit the Adani Group. However, DRPPL sources clarified that the railway land was acquired at a premium of 170 per cent above the prevailing market rates. Regarding concerns raised by Dharavi residents, they assured that the project follows government resolutions to ensure no displacement. Residents with tenements existing on or before January 1, 2000, are eligible for in-situ rehabilitation within Dharavi, while others will receive homes under the Pradhan Mantri Awa Yojana outside Dharavi.

The project also reportedly follows strict Environmental,

Social, and Governance (ESG) standards, aiming to plant thousands of trees to enhance green cover. Additionally, the project's focus on sustainability is evident, with over four million trees already planted across India, and the group is reportedly committed to planting one trillion trees.

In response to concerns about land allocation, sources close to the project clarified to ANI that the land will not be transferred to Adani directly but to the Dharavi Redevelopment Project (DRPPL). They assured that the prescribed procedures under the Maharashtra Land Revenue (Disposal of Government Lands) Rules, 1971, were followed.

Furthermore, it was suggested that the survey for the redevelopment should be conducted by the government instead of Adani. DRPPL also sources clarified that, as with other Slum Rehabilitation Authority (SRA) projects in Maharashtra, the DRP, along with SRA, is surveying with third-party experts.

DRPPL's role is limited to facilitation, ensuring that the survey process is impartial and aligns with government standards.

AAP UNVEILS FIFTH LIST FOR DELHI

AAP dropped 17 sitting MLAs, re-nominated leaders like Manish Sisodia and Rakhi Birla.

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) on Friday released its fifth list of candidates for Delhi Assembly elections 2025 and fielded Mahender Chaudhary from Mehrauli. On December 15, AAP released its fourth list of 38 candidates for the Delhi Elections 2025.

As per the list, the party's national convener and former Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal will contest from New Delhi, CM Atishi from Kalkaji, Minister Saurabh Bharadwaj from Greater Kailash and Minister Gopal Rai from Babarpur.

Additionally, Satyendra Kumar Jain will contest from Shakur Basti, Durgesh Pathak from Rajinder Nagar, Ramesh Pehalwan from Kasturba Naga, Raghuvinder Shokeen from Nangloi Jat, Som Dutt from Sadar Bazar, Imran Hussain from Ballimaran, Jarnail Singh from Tilak Nagar.

As per the list Minister

GEARING UP FOR POLLS



Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader Avadh Ojha addresses a press conference in the presence of party National Convener Arvind Kejriwal and party MP Sanjay Singh, at party HQ in New Delhi. ANI

- Mahender Chaudhary to contest from Mehrauli.
- Arvind Kejriwal (New Delhi), Atishi (Kalkaji), Saurabh Bharadwaj (Greater Kailash), Gopal Rai (Babarpur).
- Ramesh Pehalwan and wife Kusumlata join AAP on December 15.
- Satyendra Jain (Shakur Basti), Durgesh Pathak (Rajinder Nagar), Raghuvinder Shokeen (Nangloi Jat).
- Pooja Naresh Balyan, wife of Naresh Balyan, fielded from Uttam Nagar.

FIGHT FOR CAPITAL DELHI ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS

Saurabh Bharadwaj will contest from Greater Kailash and Minister Gopal Rai will contest from Babarpur. Additionally, Satyendra Kumar Jain will contest from Shakur Basti,

Durgesh Pathak from Rajinder Nagar, Raghuvinder Shokeen from Nangloi Jat, Som Dutt from Sadar Bazar, Imran Hussain from Ballimaran, Jarnail Singh from Tilak Nagar.

There are two new names in the list of 38 candidates released today, all the remaining 36 MLAs have been repeated.

AAP has fielded Ramesh Pehalwan from Kasturba Nagar. Naresh Balyan's wife Pooja Naresh Balyan has been fielded from Uttam Nagar.

Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader Ramesh Pehalwan and his wife Kusumlata Ramesh joined the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) on December 15. The couple

joined the party in the presence of Arvind Kejriwal, the party's national convener.

On December 13, AAP released its third candidates' list for Delhi Assembly elections 2025 and fielded Tarun Yadav from Delhi's Najafgarh Assembly.

On December 9, the party released its second list. In its second list of candidates, the Aam Aadmi Party has dropped 17 sitting MLAs, opting to replace them with new faces.

BJP state election panel picks around 230 names

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The BJP's state election committee formed for the upcoming Delhi Assembly polls has shortlisted the names of around 225-230 potential candidates for the total 70 seats, party leaders said on Friday. The panel headed by Delhi BJP president Virendra Sachdeva met for over four hours on Thursday to screen the names of suitable candidates from among a list of over 700 compiled by the Central observers, said a top party leader associated with the exercise.

"The election committee shortlisted 3-4 names of potential candidates on each of the 70 seats. These names will be further discussed and shortlisted in the next meeting of the committee likely to be held on Saturday," he said.

The names of the candidates are likely to be declared next week after the list of shortlisted candidates is discussed by the BJP's central election committee, he added.



The first list of the BJP's candidates for the 2025 Delhi Assembly elections is likely to be announced during, or a little later than, this weekend. X

BJP'S UPCOMING LIST

- BJP follows a decentralized selection process, allowing wider input from leaders and workers.
- Prominent BJP leaders and recent defectors are front-runners for tickets, including Parvish Verma and Virendra Sachdeva.
- BJP's candidate selection is slower than AAP and Congress, with final decisions expected soon.

The BJP is slow in completing the candidate selection process even as its main rival and ruling Aam Aadmi party (AAP) has already announced all its candidates.

The Congress too has declared its candidates on 21 seats so far.

"Unlike those parties where one leader or a group of leaders call the shots, the BJP follows an established decentralised process of candidates selection giving every worker a chance to stake his claim for the party tickets," said the party leader.

In the names shortlisted so far, several senior leaders of Delhi BJP, prominent faces of other parties who recently switched sides and the sitting party MLAs have emerged as the front runner contenders for the ticket, he said.

Kejriwal accuses BJP of targeting Purvanchali community, vows resistance

TIKAM SHARMA
NEW DELHI

Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) National Convener and former Delhi Chief Minister, Arvind Kejriwal, launched a scathing attack on the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) over recent remarks made by BJP President J.P. Nadda in Parliament. Kejriwal accused the BJP of conspiring to strip Delhi's Purvanchali community of their dignity and voting rights. "While we have spent a decade working for the upliftment of Purvanchalis, BJP's J.P. Nadda insults their hard work and sacrifice by labeling them as Rohingyas," stated Kejriwal, vowing to oppose any attempts to disenfranchise the community.

Kejriwal highlighted that BJP President J.P. Nadda recently made highly offensive



Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) National Convener Arvind Kejriwal addresses a press conference, at party HQ in New Delhi. ANI

comments in Parliament, comparing Purvanchalis living in Delhi to Rohingya infiltrators and Bangladeshis. He alleged that BJP workers were actively working to remove their names from voter lists, a claim backed by a video where Nadda purportedly admitted to voter deletions targeting

"Rohingyas, Purvanchalis, and Bangladeshis."

"This is a calculated and deliberate conspiracy against the Purvanchali community," said Kejriwal. "On one hand, BJP leaders defame Purvanchalis as infiltrators, and on the other, they try to deprive them of their citizenship by targeting their voter cards." He emphasized that voter cards are not only crucial for voting but also for accessing essential government services, and BJP's actions effectively deny Purvanchalis their rights and benefits.

Kejriwal condemned the BJP's move, stating that Purvanchalis, who have lived in Delhi for 30-40 years and contributed to its growth, are being unjustly targeted. He presented examples of names removed from voter lists, such as Vivek Mishra, Priya Dubey, and Arun Ku-

mar Mishra, and challenged BJP to justify their actions. "Are these individuals Rohingyas?" he questioned, highlighting their roots in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar.

The AAP leader accused BJP of pursuing this strategy because the Purvanchali community largely supports AAP. He cited past instances where BJP submitted lists with thousands of names from constituencies like Shahdara for deletion. "This is not just voter manipulation but a direct attack on an entire community," he declared.

Kejriwal contrasted BJP's actions with AAP's efforts to uplift Purvanchalis. He recounted how, since its formation, AAP has worked tirelessly to improve living conditions for the community, many of whom reside in unauthorized colonies.



An Indian Navy contingent takes part in a rehearsal for the Republic Day Parade 2025, at Kartavya Path, in New Delhi. ANI

Court issues notice to Bansuri in Satyendra Jain's defamation case

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

A Delhi court on Friday issued a fresh notice to BJP MP Bansuri Swaraj on a criminal defamation complaint filed against her by AAP leader Satyendra Jain. Additional chief judicial magistrate Neha Mittal passed the order after being informed the notice issued on December 16 could not be served.

The judge directed Swaraj to file her response to Jain's complaint by January 4, 2025, when matter would be heard.

Jain has alleged in his complaint that Swaraj made defamatory remarks against



(Left) Satyendra Jain, (Right) Bansuri Swaraj



Jain has alleged in his complaint that Swaraj made defamatory remarks against him during a TV interview on October 5, 2023, which he claimed was watched by millions.

him during a TV interview on October 5, 2023, which he claimed was watched by millions.

The former Delhi minister alleged Swaraj falsely claimed that Rs 3 crore was recovered from his house.

She also stated that 1.8 kilogram gold and 133 gold coins were recovered from the house, he claimed.

Jain said Swaraj made the remarks to defame him and to gain undue political advantage, according to the

complaint. Swaraj further defamed Jain by calling him "corrupt" and "fraud", the complaint alleged.

AAP ignores Dalits, alleges JD(U)

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Janata Dal (United) on Friday accused Aam Aadmi Party leader Arvind Kejriwal of not giving representation to Dalits and backward classes, and said a leader tainted with corruption charges has no right to give suggestions to someone like Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar.

The attack on the former Delhi chief minister from two key JD(U) leaders, Union minister Lalan Singh and Sanjay Jha, came a day after Kejriwal wrote a letter to Kumar asking

Kejriwal had written a similar letter to another key BJP ally, Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu.

him to "deeply reflect" on Union Home Minister Amit Shah's alleged insulting comments for B R Ambedkar.

Kejriwal had written a similar letter to another key BJP ally, Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu.

Jha responded to the AAP leader by writing he did not send a single leader from the Dalit and backward

castes to the Rajya Sabha and accusing him of backtracking on his promise of picking a Dalit deputy chief minister in Punjab.

Jha asked if the AAP leader could not find anyone from these classes to replace him as Delhi chief minister when he resigned and cited Kumar's choice of Dalit leader Jitan Ram Manjhi to take his place in 2014.

Kejriwal had links with an organisation known for its stand against reservation, joined hands with the Congress after swearing to never ally with it, hates people from Bihar and poorvanchal as is clear from their poor living conditions in the national capital, he alleged.

Singh told reporters that Kejriwal had no right to question the JD(U) president and took a swipe at him over his incarceration in jail in a corruption case after entering politics through an anti-corruption movement headed by veteran activist Anna Hazare.

'BJP to release public-driven manifesto for Delhi polls', says Bidhuri

TIKAM SHARMA
NEW DELHI

Ramvir Singh Bidhuri, MP and Convener of the Delhi BJP's Election 2025 Manifesto Committee, announced that the party's manifesto for the upcoming February 2025 Delhi Assembly elections will be comprehensive and reflective of public aspirations. He revealed that the BJP, under the guidance of the state BJP president and senior leaders, has formed a manifesto committee that

includes young leaders. This committee has held six meetings so far, identifying various issues and deciding to shape the manifesto based on the aspirations of Delhi's citizens. To achieve this, the BJP engaged in extensive consultations with different sections of society over the past three weeks.

Bidhuri shared that the party gathered insights into public issues during these discussions, which will soon be consolidated. Senior members of the committee will finalize and present the



manifesto. As part of the initiative, the BJP launched an email ID (meridelhimerasankalpbjp@gmail.com) and a WhatsApp number (9958702025) to collect public suggestions, receiving over 40,000 responses: 3,259 via email and 36,742 via WhatsApp.

The party also deployed mobile manifesto vans across all 70 assembly constituencies in Delhi through its district organizations. These vans, launched by Delhi BJP election in-charge Bajjayant Panda and co-charge Dr. Alka Gurjar, have collected 60,754 sug-

gestions to date, which are now being compiled. Over the past three weeks, the BJP has conducted more than 40 meetings with various societal groups, gathering 3,567 written suggestions. Additionally, discussions were held with 24 departments associated with the party and the Sangh Parivar. As of now, the party has received a total of 1,04,322 suggestions, reflecting significant public engagement.

The BJP held consultations with Resident Welfare Associations (RWAs), small-scale industries, business groups, migrant organizations, labor unions, teacher groups, doctors' associations, gig workers, as well as youth, senior citizens, and women's organizations. Further, meetings were held with sanitation workers, the Poorvanchal community, and members of the Jat and Gurjar communities. The party also received inputs from Praja Foundation, an organization focused on public representative matters.

On Sunday, December 22, the BJP will conclude its public suggestion campaign with a meeting involving the prominent RWA URJA and other civic organizations. Bidhuri noted that public suggestions highlighted widespread dissatisfaction with the current government, particularly among women. He claimed that Arvind Kejriwal's free bus service promise is viewed as ineffective due to a lack of operational buses, forcing women to rely on alternative last-mile transport options.

DELHI CHILLS IN DENSE FOG, SEVERE AIR QUALITY

Delhi schools receive fresh bomb threats

As per IMD, the minimum temperature in Delhi dipped to 7 degrees Celsius on Friday as fog engulfed the city.

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The national capital's air quality was recorded in the "severe" category with an AQI index of 433 on Friday morning, according to data from the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB).

People in Delhi woke up to a layer of dense fog on Friday as cold wave gripped the city.

As per IMD, the minimum temperature in Delhi dipped to 7 degrees Celsius on Friday as fog engulfed the city.

People in several places including Yamuna Bazar area and New Delhi Railway Station took refuge in night shelter homes. The Air Quality Index (AQI) in the city also remained in the 'severe' category on Friday.

The AQI measured in the national capital was 434 at 8 AM as per the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB). The Air Quality Index in several areas in Delhi was hovering between the

SEVERE AIR QUALITY



A drone view of the AIIMS area covered in fog, in New Delhi on Friday. ANI

- Delhi's AQI was recorded at 433, placing the air quality in the "severe" category and affecting public health.
- Dense fog enveloped the capital, reducing visibility to just 250 meters and disrupting daily activities.
- Due to the freezing temperatures, night shelter homes were opened for those seeking refuge, particularly near the railway station and Yamuna Bazar.
- The IMD predicted cold wave and severe cold wave conditions across North India, including Delhi, with dense fog expected to persist.

'severe' and 'severe-plus' categories. RK Puram recorded an AQI of 453 and

452 at Rohini, 436 at Shadi-pur, and 451 at Vivek Vihar. An AQI between 0-50 is

considered good, 51-100 is satisfactory, 101-200 is moderate, 201-300 is poor,

301-400 is very poor, and 401-500 is severe.

Meanwhile, several parts of North India also witnessed cold wave as the temperature dips.

Additionally, as per the India Meteorological Department (IMD), cold wave to severe cold wave conditions are to prevail in most of North India.

"Today's Weather Warning: Cold wave to severe cold wave conditions at a few places over Himachal Pradesh. Cold wave conditions at a few places over Punjab, at isolated places over Jammu & Kashmir, Haryana and Rajasthan. Dense fog at isolated places over Punjab, Haryana, Delhi and Uttar Pradesh. Ground frost at isolated places over Himachal Pradesh. "IMD said. Earlier on Thursday, a cold wave in the national capital led to low visibility. With the minimum temperature dropping to 7.4 degrees Celsius, the visibility in Delhi was recorded as 250 m at 8 am.

2020 riots: HC to hear Umar Khalid, Sharjeel Imam pleas on Jan 7

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court will on January 7, 2025, hear the bail pleas of activists Umar Khalid, Sharjeel Imam and others connected in a UAPA case connected to February 2020 riots.

A bench of Justices Navin Chawla and Shalinder Kaur deferred the hearing after the Delhi police counsel said the case would be argued by additional solicitor general S V Raju, who was unavailable on Friday.

"How do we adjourn bail matters like this? Last time also these were heard by a bench and released," the bench said.

The court said it would hear the matter on the very first of its re-opening post the winter break.

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Delhi Police have confirmed that some schools in Delhi received bomb threats this morning. Indian Public School in South Delhi and a school located in Saraswati Vihar, North West Delhi, were targeted.

Upon receiving the threat, police, fire brigade, and bomb squad teams swiftly arrived at the locations. The school premises were immediately evacuated as a safety precaution. Authorities are now conducting thorough investigations to determine the origin and credibility of the threats.

"After receiving the information, police, fire brigade, and bomb squad were sent to the school. The school premises have been evacuated, and an investigation is being carried out," Delhi Police stated

This is not an isolated incident as several schools in Delhi received bomb threats via e-mail demanding a ransom of USD 30,000. This email came on December 8 at around 11:38 pm.

On December 14, Delhi Police Special Cell identified a private school student as



being responsible for sending a bomb threat email to a school in Paschim Vihar.

According to police, the student had sent the threat email to his own school, and after tracing the IP address, the police team traced his home. Upon questioning, the child admitted to the act and was later counselled. He was let off with a warning to his parents to keep a watch on his behaviour.

The threatening emails raised concerns among parents and staff, though the police assured that investigations are ongoing and safety remains their priority. No explosives or hazardous materials have been found in any of the schools so far.

Meanwhile, South East Delhi Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) Ravi Kumar Singh said that as many

as 30 schools across Delhi received hoax bomb threat emails on December 13.

The DCP said that the investigation into the fake threats revealed that the emails sent to the schools had been generated outside the country. Upon receiving the information, schools were evacuated and the Bomb Disposal Squad carried out checks at the locations.

"We received an alert around 5:30 AM that some schools have received bomb threats via emails in our district. Schools have been evacuated and the Bomb Disposal Squad checked the places. So far the investigation has revealed that it was a hoax call. 30 schools across Delhi including 3 from our district have received such emails," DCP told ANI.

HC denies quashing FIR against DU professor over 'Shiva Linga' post

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court has refused to quash an FIR registered against a DU professor for his alleged objectionable social media post on the presence of a 'shiva linga' in Varanasi's Gyanvapi Mosque.

Justice Chandra Dhari Singh dismissed the petition by Dr Ratan Lal, seeking to quash the FIR registered in May 2022 under sections Sections 153A and 295A of the Indian Penal Code and said, prima facie, the petitioner created disturbance in the harmony of the society and post was made with the intention to hurt the sentiments of a large number of the society.

The judge, who noted the etymology and belief associated with 'Shiva Linga'



in the judgement passed on December 17, emphasised that no person, being a professor or an intellectual, has the right to make "such type of comments, tweets or posts" as the freedom of speech and expression was not absolute.

The act and remarks made by the petitioner, Justice Singh opined, were contrary to the beliefs and customs followed and practised by the worshippers and believers of Lord Shiva/Shiva Linga'.

"Whatever content was

posted by the petitioner not only hurts the religious sentiments of the complainant but also promotes hatred, enmity and communal tensions among two different communities. Moreover, the act of the petitioner by making repeated comments, even after registration of the FIR further shows the deliberate and criminal act of the petitioner which definitely attracts the applicability of Sections 153A and 295A of the IPC," the court stated.

"Accordingly, the instant petition stands dismissed," it ordered. The court further said that as a historian and educator, the petitioner owed a greater responsibility to the society at large as he was a role model for the ordinary masses.

It stated that the petitioner should be "more conscious" as his statements carry

weight and power to influence others.

The court also opined that merely stating that no unrest or disharmony happened in the society was not a ground for quashing an FIR registered.

"Mere nonoccurrence of unrest in the society does not negate the criminality of the petitioner's act as the said act of the petitioner was done with the intent, foresight and possibility of creating disturbance and disharmony in the society, thereby, causing unrest," the court said. The FIR was registered against the petitioner after a complaint was made against him to the police.

The petitioner was arrested in relation to the FIR on May 20, 2022 and was granted regular bail by a court the next day.

1984 riots: SC directs Centre to file fresh status report on trials

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Friday directed the Centre to file a fresh status report within two weeks on the status of trials in the 1984 anti-Sikh riots.

A bench comprising Justices Abhay S Oka and Augustine George Masih asked additional solicitor general Aishwarya Bhati to file an affidavit and permitted the petitioners in the case to file detailed objections.

During the hearing, Bhati said recommendations of the special investigation team, set up by the top court, were carried out.

A counsel appearing for one of the petitioners submitted there were some glaring instances in the SIT report and said 500 cases were clubbed in one FIR and the investigating officer could not probe them.

"There were many instances where 498 cases were clubbed in one FIR and IO had to investigate all of them. Initially when the hearing began, the court felt that it should be confined to Delhi only. But we have done nothing about other states. We have given examples of Kanpur, Bokaro, etc., nothing has happened," he said.

The top court assured it will look into all these as-



Delhi witnessed large-scale violence and killings of persons from the Sikh community following former PM Indira Gandhi's assassination by her bodyguards in 1984 and the cases stemming from the incident have seen some major twists and turns 40 years on.

pects.

Delhi witnessed large-scale violence and killings of persons from the Sikh community following for-

mer PM Indira Gandhi's assassination by her bodyguards in 1984 and the cases stemming from the incident have seen some major twists and turns 40 years on.

According to those at the forefront of the legal fight on behalf of the victims and their kin, while there have been significant milestones -- re-opening of cases and prosecution of political heavyweights -- the road to justice is a long one.

According to the Nanavati Commission Report, there were a total 587 FIRs registered in Delhi in relation to 1984 riots that witnessed 2,733 people being killed. Of the total, the police shut about 240 cases as "untraced" and about 250 cases resulted in acquittals.

However, it was only in May 2023 that the central probe agency the CBI filed a chargesheet against Congress leader Jagdish Tytler for his alleged role in the killings of three people on November 1, 1984.

The CBI alleged Tytler "incited, instigated and provoked the mob assembled at Pul Bangash Gurdwara Azad Market area in the national capital on November 1, 1984. The incident resulted in the burning down of the gurdwara and killing of Thakur Singh, Badal Singh and Guru Charan Singh.

DU's 1st NEP batch can soon complete final year sem abroad

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The students of Delhi University's first batch of NEP 2020 will soon have the opportunity to complete a semester of their final year at a foreign university, pending approval of recommendations from a committee tasked with operationalising the initiative.

These students, who are also the first batch of the Four-Year Undergraduate Programme (FYUP), will have the option to undertake a semester abroad

at select Foreign Higher Educational Institutions (FHEIs) under a new twinning degree arrangement introduced by the university earlier this year.

A committee set up to determine the modalities for implementing the twinning degree arrangement has submitted its recommendations, which will be presented to the university's Academic Council for consideration on December 27.

According to the recommendations, the undergraduate students enrolled



at the Delhi University from the 2022-23 academic year onwards will be permitted to study at a foreign university during their seventh semester.

The students in their first year will have the opportunity to study abroad during their third or fifth semester, while those in their second year will have the option to

go abroad during their fifth or seventh semesters.

Under the arrangement, the students will be able to complete one semester abroad, earning a minimum of 12 credits and a maximum of 26 credits. Upon returning, the students will receive their degree from the Delhi University, the parent institution.

The twinning degree arrangement will also be accessible to the meritorious students from economically weaker backgrounds. The university plans to support

one or two students from this category to participate in the program at a foreign university. An objective selection process will be established to identify these students. The university's International Relations Office will be responsible for initiating collaborations with the foreign universities for the twinning program, which will include negotiations on matters such as course fees, curriculum, student medical insurance, accommodation and other logistical arrangements.

Noida airport: CM hikes land compensation by Rs 1,200/sqm for farmers

TDG NETWORK
LUCKNOW

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Friday announced an increase in land compensation rates for farmers providing their land for the Noida International Airport in Jewar area of Gautam Buddha Nagar district.

The compensation rate has been raised by Rs 1,200 per square meter, fulfilling long-standing demands from the farmers, according to an official statement from the Chief Minister's Office.

Adityanath held an open

dialogue with farmers at his official residence and announced the increase in the compensation rate for land acquisition under the third phase of the airport project from Rs 3,100 to Rs 4,300 per square meter, along with additional interest as per norms.

He assured that adequate measures will also be taken to address the rehabilitation, employment, and resettlement of affected farmers and their families, it stated.

Speaking on the occasion, Adityanath said that the airport, billed to be India's largest upon completion,

will be inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in the coming April.

During the dialogue programme, Adityanath interacted with farmers and addressed their queries, concerns, and demands.

He also invited the CEO of the Yamuna Expressway Industrial Development Authority (YEIDA) to brief the attendees about the progress of land acquisition and rehabilitation efforts under the first two phases.

CEO Arun Vir Singh informed the Chief Minister and farmers that compensation has been dis-



tributed except for cases pending due to inheritance disputes. The Chief Minister instructed the CEO to prioritize addressing every individual farmer's issues.

Adityanath highlighted the milestones achieved so far, including the successful validation flight landing on

December 9. He announced that flight operations from the airport will begin in April 2025.

The airport will also feature a Maintenance, Repair, and Overhauling (MRO) facility across 40 acres, enabling global aircraft maintenance operations.

The chief minister emphasised the project's role in boosting industrial infrastructure, creating jobs, enhancing exports, and promoting air travel and tourism. Several industrial sectors near the airport, within YEIDA's jurisdiction, have already been developed, further strengthening the region's industrial base. Adityanath also detailed the airport's improved connectivity. It will be linked to the Eastern Peripheral Expressway via an interchange at the Yamuna Expressway, and a station for the Delhi-Varanasi High-Speed Rail

will be built near the airport terminal. In addition, an RRTS (Rapid Rail Transit System) connecting New Delhi and Greater Noida has received state approval and awaits final clearance from the central government. Once completed, the high-speed rail connection will reduce travel time between Delhi and the Jewar airport to just 21 minutes. The airport has also been connected to the Delhi-Mumbai Expressway via a 30-km stretch, with portions in both Uttar Pradesh and Haryana.

The Noida International Airport, located in the Jew-

ar area of Gautam Buddha Nagar district, is one of Uttar Pradesh's most ambitious projects. Its site clearance was approved by the central government in July 2017, followed by principal approval in May 2018.

Adityanath praised the farmers for their cooperation, highlighting that 1,334 hectares (approximately 3,300 acres) of land have already been acquired over the past two years without disputes. He reiterated that the development of this world-class airport will propel Uttar Pradesh to new heights of economic and industrial growth.

UNDERSTANDING THE TRAGEDY OF ATUL SUBHASH: PERSPECTIVES AND LESSONS

PERSPECTIVE

NEW LOW IN PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY

Although the winter session of Parliament ended on Friday, yet the events that took place a day earlier leading to verbal exchanges between the treasury members and the Opposition following injuries to at least three MPs, should make our political class to introspect. Never before have such scenes been witnessed and the unsubstantiated charge against the Leader of Opposition, Rahul Gandhi was totally uncalled for. It is extremely unfortunate that such an incident took place in the premises of Parliament House and it is now for an impartial inquiry to ascertain as to who all were at fault. The only way of reaching the truth is by going through the CCTV coverage which must have recorded the entire sequence of events. To the naked eye after watching the TV coverage, it appears that there was a push from the back and this resulted in two BJP MPs being knocked down with another MP accusing Rahul Gandhi of doing this deliberately. It is unthinkable that Rahul would have done anything like that and though a FIR against him has been registered by the Delhi police, it would greatly help to unravel the truth through impartial investigation. It should also be ascertained how the MPs of both sides came so close to each other while demonstrating and how were sticks to placards allowed within the precincts of the Parliament. Somebody needs to be held accountable for this.

The relations between the Opposition and the Treasury benches in both the Houses have been tense and during this session, it was unprecedented when the Vice President who is also the Chairman of the Rajya Sabha was openly accused of taking sides while discharging his duties. The BJP has been quick to defend him but the conduct of both the presiding officers has been under scrutiny for some time, and their rulings have more often than not, raised questions about their unbiased judgment. The House also saw an open clash between the Congress and the BJP over allegations made against Industrialist Gautam Adani and also the attempts to implicate Sonia Gandhi and her family with anti-National forces allegedly prompted by American tycoon George Soros. Instead of focussing on many issues which needed immediate attention, the Parliament spent extra-ordinary time on the Adani-Soros matter and as result the Houses hardly functioned.

There was a debate on the anniversary of the Constitution and expectedly, the time was used by both sides to show each other in poor light. Matters came to a head when Home Minister while speaking in the Rajya Sabha, urged Opposition to stop chanting Ambedkar's name repeatedly and advised them that if instead they had invoked God with the same zeal, they would go to Heaven. This statement sparked a major controversy and the Congress as well as the entire INDIA bloc accused Amit Shah of insulting Ambedkar, the father of the Constitution. The Congress demanded his resignation and also asked the Prime Minister to sack him. This resulted in verbal clashes which led to the confrontation outside Parliament on Thursday. The point which has arisen is that the Congress and the BJP have both been trying to appropriate Ambedkar's legacy when both had opposed the legal luminary and National icon for many years. The Sangh Parivar had never endorsed Ambedkar's concepts which differed from those of the RSS and the Congress till Rajiv Gandhi's tenure, had not accepted his philosophy either. In fact, soon after Independence after a fallout with Ambedkar, the Congress had propped up Babu Jagjivan Ram as the Dalit hero and face. Babuji was an extremely competent politician and as long as he lived, he occupied his own space in National politics. However, this space, many believe was at the expense of Dr. Ambedkar who was humiliated by the Congress and also made to lose elections because the grand old party never allowed him to emerge on the national scene. Ambedkar was rediscovered and resurrected by Vishwanath Pratap Singh who also conferred the Bharat Ratna on him posthumously. The Socialists and many other leaders opposed to the Congress, backed Ambedkar fully and he was given his rightful place after many years. But had he been alive, he would have been a very sad man if he would have witnessed all that went on in his name. Dr. Ambedkar is like a God for many who follow Dalit politics and even beyond that he is viewed as someone who was so learned and perceptive, a truly a national icon. The latest instance where the two major parties clashed with each other was to misappropriate his legacy for the sake of votes. It is hard to imagine that the two outfits would play so much of politics in his name if it had not been beneficial to them for political purposes. Dr. Ambedkar was as tall a leader as anyone else has been during the freedom struggle and after that. His followers do not consider him, less than a God or a spiritual messiah who showed them the way of fighting for equality and similar rights with those who were more privileged.

The short point after watching the Parliament proceedings is that the political parties should stop indulging in political gimmicks and instead focus on matters that impact the people. Adani and Soros do not have any resonance with the common man and it is a futile exercise in one sense to make them the central theme of the proceedings. Parliament is supreme and its sanctity can only be upheld if its decorum is maintained and members conduct themselves with both dignity and orderly behaviour.

PANKAJ VOHRA

OPINION

CHAITANYA CHARAN



PSYCHOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

The suicide of 34-year-old techie Atul Subhash in Bangalore has shocked and angered the nation. It is disturbing that someone would feel so tormented and hopeless, allegedly due to domestic violence by his ex-spouse. Without prematurely assigning blame, let us examine this tragedy through psychological, historical, legal, and philosophical perspectives to understand what happened and how such incidents can be prevented.

From a psychological perspective, what stands out about this suicide is the meticulous planning. Suicide is often a spontaneous act

driven by overwhelming despair and defeat. However, in this case, Atul's act involved considerable contemplation and preparation, as seen in his 24-page suicide note, an hour-long video, and detailed checklists. He seemed to view his suicide not merely as an escape but as a way to free his family from their suffering and to highlight what he saw as the failings of the legal system.

Atul ascribed a higher purpose to his action, seeing it as a sacrifice for a larger cause. This reflects not just hopelessness but a calculated intent to make his tragedy a form of protest. Philosophical traditions describe actions in terms of three modes: satvic (goodness), rajasic (passion), and tamasic (ignorance). While suicide is often categorized as tamasic because of its destructive nature, Atul's act was a mixture of modes, combining elements of calculated purpose and despair.

The philosophical context helps clarify the nature of such actions. Even seemingly noble activities like austerities can turn tamasic if they are destructive. Conversely, under certain conditions, actions like fasting to death might be seen as meaningful. Atul's calm deliberation before the act suggests that his decision was not a rash reaction but a deliberate attempt to spotlight his perceived grievances with the system.

ingly noble activities like austerities can turn tamasic if they are destructive. Conversely, under certain conditions, actions like fasting to death might be seen as meaningful. Atul's calm deliberation before the act suggests that his decision was not a rash reaction but a deliberate attempt to spotlight his perceived grievances with the system.

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

From a historical perspective, modern narratives often portray history as a chronicle of patriarchy, where men systematically exploited women. Feminist movements are seen as addressing these historical wrongs. While there is truth in the need to redress past injustices, this view oversimplifies history.

In pre-modern times, survival required intense collaboration between men and women. Life was too harsh for systematic exploitation based on gender. Exploitation often occurred along power lines, with the privileged exploiting the underprivileged, irrespective of gender. For instance, male laborers in farming, mining, and factories often endured grueling conditions under the hands of powerful elites.

Both men and women lacked autonomy in rigidly structured societies. Arranged marriages left men

with little say in choosing their partners, just as women were often confined to domestic roles. It was only after the Industrial Revolution that men began to gain significant autonomy, followed by similar freedoms for women in subsequent centuries.

Reducing history to a simplistic gender conflict ignores these complexities. The Bhagavad-Gita describes this as knowledge in the mode of ignorance, where one aspect is misrepresented as the whole. Such reductionism distorts the past and influences the present in harmful ways, particularly in the realm of legal frameworks.

LEGAL PERSPECTIVE

The legal dimension further highlights these issues. Historically, patriarchal norms often left women without recourse against domestic violence. Addressing these injustices is crucial, but it is equally important to avoid creating new imbalances. In some modern legal systems, this balance has tipped too far, neglecting the rights and struggles of male victims.

In India, for instance, domestic violence laws focus solely on violence against women, leaving male victims without legal remedies. While men are generally perceived as stronger, this does not mean they cannot suffer abuse. The

Bhagavad-Gita's 16th chapter emphasizes that divine and demonic qualities exist in everyone. Power, when concentrated, invites abuse regardless of gender.

The societal presumption that men are inherently tough further complicates their ability to report abuse. Men are often stigmatized for admitting victimhood, which compounds their struggles. As patriarchal norms loosen, statistics reveal alarming trends. In the U.S., nearly 44% of men report being victims of intimate partner violence. In Finland, male victims accounted for 31% of domestic violence cases from 2010 to 2022.

These figures underscore the need for balanced legal frameworks. Addressing female-to-male violence does not diminish protections for women; it broadens the scope of justice. Both male-to-female and female-to-male violence are significant issues that require acknowledgment and action. This is not a gendered battle but a human struggle against lower instincts.

Justice must transcend gender conflicts and ideological divides. Legal systems need not only robust laws but also a culture of fairness. Laws can be manipulated when enacted without consideration for balance. Exploitation of such laws by opportunist

tic individuals perpetuates unfairness and undermines justice.

PHILOSOPHICAL PERSPECTIVE

From a philosophical perspective, the Bhagavad-Gita emphasizes that true wisdom lies in cultivating virtues, not merely accumulating knowledge. Wisdom in law involves fostering an ethos of justice that transcends political and ideological divides. By focusing on cultivating the virtue of fairness for all, not just debating over the technicalities of specific laws and agonizing over which laws favour whom, society can address issues like domestic violence more comprehensively.

The Bhagavad-Gita's virtue-based approach offers a holistic vision for life and law. Cultivating virtues in individuals and systems is essential to countering the tragedies stemming from domestic violence, whether the victims are male or female. This ethos can guide society toward genuine justice, fostering harmony and fairness.

Chaitanya Charan has been a monk for nearly three decades. He gives around 400 talks across 100 cities in four continents every year and has written some thirty books on science and spirituality, life lessons from Indian epics and social commentary.

Bengaluru techie's suicide raises issue of misuse of Section 85 of the BNS, and a need to relook into the BNS laws

OPINION

DR.S.KRISHNAN AND MS. ARCHANA SHUKLA



Marriages in India are considered a highly revered union, which is believed to unite together not just two individuals, but two families as well. But unfortunately, due to the rise of materialistic mindsets among the people of today, this sacred bond is getting tarnished. Just to fulfil their greed or take revenge or fulfil ulterior motives, some people have fallen to such an extent that they do not hesitate even for a moment to file any frivolous case against someone.

The suicide of a 34-year-old man Atul Subhash in Bengaluru due to alleged harassment by his estranged wife and her family has led to an outrage on social media over the misuse of anti-dowry laws and domestic violence law under Section 85 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), previously Section 498A of the Indian Penal Code.

Shockingly, a significant chunk of this originates

from those laws which were made for the protection of the women who have to face unjust treatment or unreasonable demands from their in-laws or even her husband as well. Although there is a pressing need for such laws, but because of the presence of loopholes accompanied by several other external factors, have raised doubts in the minds of general public as to whether we should actually protect that section of society which is filing such false cases. Due to the actions of a few people, many genuine victims still continue to suffer. Therefore, it is crucial to understand and admit that there exists a problem in our country dowry laws and they have to be amended as soon as possible.

Men face significant challenges in our legal system, particularly in cases of false accusations under Section 85 of the BNS or rape laws. In these instances, men of-

ten lack protection and face severe societal judgment and legal repercussions. Additionally, under CrPC 125, husbands are compelled to pay maintenance to estranged wives without ensuring that the wives fulfill their responsibilities. This one-sided approach leads to considerable harassment, with men facing societal scorn, lengthy court proceedings, and even imprisonment for crimes they did not commit.

However, in recent years, as there has been a notable rise in matrimonial disputes across the country, accompanied by growing discord and tension within the institution of marriage, consequently, there has been a growing tendency to misuse provisions like Section 85 of the BNS as a tool for unleashing personal vendetta against the husband and his family by a wife. Consequently, this Court has, time and again, cautioned against prosecuting the husband and his family in the absence of a clear prima facie case against them.

LOOPHOLES IN THE LAWS

In the year 2005, in a landmark case named Sunil Kumar Sharma vs Union of India and Ors., the Supreme Court of India observed the misuse of Section 498A of the IPC as a 'legal terrorism'. It was said that "by misuse of the provision (Section 498A), a new legal terrorism can be unleashed. The provision is intended to be used as a shield and not an assassin's weapon". In the Rajesh Sharma v. State of UP (2017), Supreme Court

acknowledged misuse and issued guidelines to prevent arbitrary arrests.

Specifically considering the laws which were made for the protection of women, for example, rape or dowry, they were and till date, because of their wording, affected the other genders adversely. No doubt Article 15(3) of the Indian Constitution allows the State to make special provisions for women, but making special provisions does not in any way mean that the other genders (men and LGBTQ+) are to be neglected. The laws should be made in such a manner that, on one hand, they provide protection to all their citizens, and on the other hand, they prevent its misuse by and upon any other citizen. The initial step to deal with it can be to replace the words 'women' and 'men' with 'people' and 'wife' and 'husband' with 'spouse', wherever possible.

The biggest example of no strict implementation can be seen in the violation of anti-dowry laws itself. According to some researches, the cases of dowry demand have increased over the year, where before the year 1940, dowry was given in 35-40% of the marriages; this number grew to nearly 90% by the year 1999. These numbers clearly show that the give and take of dowry is being conducted without any fear of law or by using loopholes, like in the form of "presents" (last proviso of Section 3 of the Dowry Prohibition Act).

In 2003, the state of Andhra Pradesh made Section 498A compoundable, which is a major legal provision to deal with dowry

related cases, but whenever the same change is demanded at the central level, the foremost argument which is raised is that this will lessen the fear among the culprits and they might force the victim to take back their complaint. This happens because unfortunately, today, a common man does not feel himself safe in front of the police, and many times it is seen that the victim (usually woman's and/or their family) bribes the police to insert those legal provisions in their chargesheet, which are not at all true, just to harass the opposite party, and on the other side the accused party (usually husband's and/or their family) bribes the police to delay the process of law. This can be corrected a bit by having a strict check on the working of the police officials.

ARE THERE ANY LEGAL PROTECTION FOR MEN IN INDIA?

Recently, the Delhi High Court had granted divorce to celebrity chef Kunal Kapur on the grounds of "cruelty" by his wife. Chef Kapur had taken a restraining order against his wife as she entered the 'Masterchef India' sets and created a ruckus with his son in 2016. The Delhi HC had said, "It is relevant to mention here that within two years of marriage, the appellant has established himself as a Celebrity Chef, which is a reflection of his hard work and determination which would not have been possible had he been one who was dependent on his spouse or in-laws for his necessities." Article 14 mandates equality before the

law, states "everyone equal before the law". Article 15 prohibits discrimination based on gender and other forms of bias.

WAY AHEAD

Effective implementation is not just to punish the wrongdoer correctly; it must first be to identify who's the real wrongdoer. There must be no straight-jacket rule or preconceived notion to consider any specific gender guilty right from the beginning of the trial. The Advocate's prime duty is to protect the interests of their clients, but this should not be stretched to such an extent that the advocates, just for greed of more money, willingly fight a false case or assist their clients in making their case strong by putting those legal provisions which are in reality not required. Legislative reforms, judicial guidelines, and awareness campaigns are essential to curb misuse while maintaining the law's efficacy for victims. Greater emphasis on evidence-based investigations, gender-neutral laws, and alternative dispute resolution mechanisms can address the issue holistically. A fair and balanced approach will preserve the sanctity of the law and ensure that it fulfills its intended purpose without being weaponized as we don't want more men to face this tragic misuse faced by Atul Subhash in the matter of section 498A IPC. Dr. S. Krishnan is an Associate Professor in Seedling School of Law and Governance, Jaipur National University, Jaipur. Ms. Archana Shukla is an Advocate in Delhi High Court, Delhi.

FARMERS' MOVEMENTS

Farmers in India have protested against government policies for several reasons, primarily due to concerns about their livelihoods, land rights, and the economic sustainability of agriculture.



Farmers from the northern Indian states of Punjab and Haryana, angry at recently enacted farm laws, have been trying to stage protests on 1 Dec 2020 in New Delhi [File Photo]



Farmers agitating against government's three new farm laws on March 21, 2021.



A glimpse of the Naxalbari movement depicting majorly women farmers. (File Photo)

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Farmers' protests and movements in independent India have been a significant part of the nation's political history, driven by various economic, social, and political factors. These protests reflect the struggles of farmers to secure better prices for their produce, fair treatment, land rights, and better working conditions.

They primarily protest against government policies for several reasons, primarily due to concerns about their livelihoods, land rights, and the economic sustainability of agriculture. These protests reflect the deep-rooted struggles that farmers face in an agrarian economy.

Here's an overview of some of the key farmers' movements and protests since India's independence:

The Telangana Peasant Struggle (1946-1951): The Telangana region of what is now the state of Telangana was a part of Hyderabad State under the Nizam's rule. The peasants, especially in the rural areas, were heavily exploited by landlords (jagirdars), who levied high taxes and fees. The movement began in 1946 and was led by the Communist Party of India (CPI). Farmers in the region rose up against the landlords' exploitation, demanding better land rights and an end to feudal systems of taxation. It culminated in the formation of the Telangana Peasant Armed Struggle.



A glimpse of the Vinoba's Bhoodan Movement in 1951 (File Photo)

The movement succeeded in getting the Nizam government to address the exploitation, though it was also marked by intense violence and repression.

THE BHOODAN MOVEMENT (1951-1960S): Led by Vinoba Bhave, a close associate of Mahatma Gandhi, the Bhoodan (land gift) movement sought to address landlessness among farmers.

Vinoba Bhave urged landlords to voluntarily donate a portion of their land to

the landless peasants. The movement was symbolic of the Gandhian philosophy of non-violence and self-reliance. While it did not achieve widespread redistribution, it was an early effort to address land inequality and highlighted the need for land reforms in India.

THE PUNJAB AGITATIONS (1950S-1960S):

Punjab, an agrarian state, saw several farmers' movements from the 1950s onward, primarily focused on issues such as water rights, fair pricing, and land reforms. Farmers in Punjab, who were heavily dependent on irrigation, protested against the unfair distribution of water from the Ravi-Beas river system, especially after the partition

of India. They also fought for better agricultural policies and input subsidies.

These movements led to some reforms in water sharing and increased political attention on the challenges faced by farmers.

THE NAXALITE MOVEMENT (1967-1970S):

Originating in Naxalbari, West Bengal, this was a Maoist-inspired peasant rebellion that grew out of widespread dissatisfaction with feudal agricultural systems and exploitation. The Naxalites, led by Charu Majumdar, aimed to overthrow the existing social and economic systems through armed rebellion. The movement spread across various rural areas, with a significant focus on farmers' rights and land redistribution.

While the Naxalite movement was crushed by the state, it had a lasting impact on the discourse around land reform and rural poverty. It also led to the growth of left-wing radical politics in rural India.

THE KISAN SABHA (1980S-1990S):

The Kisan Sabha (Farmers' Associations) was active throughout the 1980s and 1990s, especially in states like Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, and Maharashtra. The movement was focused on issues like the rising cost of inputs, low agricultural prices, and inadequate credit facilities for farmers. Farmers demanded better prices for their crops, loan waivers, and more efficient government support for agriculture. The Kisan Sabha



Farmers' movement in Maharashtra on 12 March 2018. (File Photo)

was instrumental in mobilizing farmers for large-scale protests.

While it helped bring farmers' issues to the forefront, it also faced resistance from governments, which were often more inclined to focus on urban and industrial development.

Farmers' Movements in Maharashtra (2017-2018):

In Maharashtra, farmers faced severe droughts and agrarian distress due to falling prices of crops like cotton and sugarcane. In 2017, farmers organized large protests, including a "Kisan Long March" in which thousands of farmers marched from Nashik to Mumbai to demand loan waivers, better prices, and water rights.

The movement succeeded in forcing the Maharashtra government to announce a loan waiver scheme and address some of the farmers' demands, but long-term solutions to the agrarian crisis remained elusive.

THE FARM BILLS AND PROTEST (2020-2021):

In 2020, the Indian government passed three new farm laws, which were designed to deregulate the agricultural sector, promote private investment, and create a national market for farm produce.

Farmers, particularly from Punjab, Haryana, and

Uttar Pradesh, strongly opposed the bills, fearing that the laws would lead to the dismantling of Minimum Support Prices (MSP) and erode their bargaining power against large corporations. The protests were further fueled by concerns

over the lack of adequate consultation with farmers.

The protests culminated in massive demonstrations, with farmers camping at Delhi's borders for over a year. In December 2021, the government announced that it would repeal the

laws, marking a significant victory for farmers and a major political setback for the government.

The movement also highlighted issues like the agrarian distress, MSP guarantees, and the centralization of agricultural policy.

REASONS

Farmers in India have protested against government policies for several reasons, primarily due to concerns about their livelihoods, land rights, and the economic sustainability of agriculture. These protests reflect the deep-rooted struggles that farmers face in an agrarian economy. Below are the key reasons why farmers have protested against various government policies:

Minimum Support Prices: Many farmers in India grow crops with the expectation that the government will provide a guaranteed price (MSP) for their produce. However, in practice, the MSP is often not implemented effectively, and farmers are forced to sell their crops at much lower prices in the open market. Example: The protests against the Farm Laws of 2020-2021 were partly driven by concerns that these laws could lead to the dismantling of MSP and the rise of corporate monopolies, which would further harm small farmers.

Water Scarcity: Water availability for irrigation is a critical issue for farmers, especially in regions dependent on rain-fed agriculture. Poor management of water resources, disputes over water sharing, and inadequate irrigation infrastructure exacerbate the problem. Protests in Telangana, Punjab, and Maharashtra have been triggered by water disputes and the lack of proper irrigation facilities.

Land Acquisition and Land Rights: Many farmers protest against government policies that they believe threaten their land rights. In some cases, land is acquired for industrial projects or urbanization without adequate compensation or rehabilitation. The Narmada Bachao Andolan (Save Narmada Movement) led by Medha Patkar in the 1980s and 1990s opposed the displacement of farmers for the construction of large dams, calling for fair rehabilitation policies.

Agricultural Reforms and Privatization: Various government policies aimed at deregulating agriculture and encouraging privatization have been a source of contention. Farmers fear that these reforms will lead to a reduction in state support, such as subsidies, and leave them vulnerable to market fluctuations and exploitation by large corporations.

Government Policies: Farmers argue that government policies tend to favor large corporations, agribusinesses, and multinational companies over small, marginal farmers. For instance, policies that promote contract farming or the entry of large corporations into the agricultural supply chain are seen as detrimental to small-scale farmers. The Farm Laws of 2020 were seen as favoring corporate interests, which led to widespread opposition.

Labor Issues and Agricultural Reforms: Farmers also protest against labor laws that they feel do not adequately protect the rights of agricultural workers, particularly those who work on their farms.

DEEP IN THE HISTORY

India has a long history of farmers' movements that date back to the colonial period. These movements were a response to exploitation, oppression, and loss of rights over land. Some notable farmers' movements in India include:

Champaran (1917): A movement against the Tinkathia System, which was imposed on indigo cultivators by the colonial powers

Kheda Satyagraha (1918): A movement led by Gandhiji in Kheda, Gujarat, where Kunbi-Patidar farmers demanded tax relief from the government

Bardoli Satyagraha Movement (1925): A movement led by Sardar Patel in Bardoli taluka of Surat, Gujarat, where farmers protested the payment of "Lagaan"

Tebhaga Movement (1946-1947): A farmers' movement

Deccan riots (1875): A farmers' movement

Bhil Revolt (1822, 1823, 1837-60): A farmers' movement

Mopilla Revolt (1921): A farmers' movement

The Muslhi Satyagraha (1921-24): A farmers' movement

Struggle of Wartis (1945): A farmers' movement

Birsa Munda revolt: A farmers' movement

Nagar Peasant Uprising (1830-33): A farmers' movement

The farmers' movement of 2020-2021 was one of the largest in India's history after independence. It was a resistance to the corporatization of Indian agriculture and neoliberalism.

ALLAHABAD HIGH COURT STAYS ARREST OF MOHD ZUBAIR TILL JANUARY 06 IN YATI NARSINGHANAND 'X' POST CASE: 'NOT A DREADED CRIMINAL'

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Allahabad High Court in the case stayed the arrest of Mohammed Zubair, co-founder of Alt-News, till January 6, 2025 in connection with an First Information Report, FIR lodged against him over his post on 'X' (formerly Twitter) regarding an alleged inflammatory speech by Yati Narsinghanand.

The bench comprising of Justice Siddhartha Varma and Justice Nalin Kumar Srivastava was hearing the present matter.

The bench in the case granted him the relief while restraining him from leaving the Country till the next date of hearing i.e., January 06, 2025.

The court also said to him to cooperate with the police in the investigation.

The bench passed the said order after it could not conclude the hearing in the case today, and the State Government is yet to conclude its argument in the case.

The state government has been asked to file a detailed counter by January 06, 2025.



The court closes today and will reopen on January 02, 2025.

It has been submitted by the Uttar Pradesh government before the High Court that a series of X posts by Zubair on Yati Narsinghanand's alleged speech contained half-baked information and they damaged and threatened India's sovereignty and integrity.

The counsel, Additional Advocate General Manish Goyal submitted before the division bench that Zubair's X post, which intended to

provoke violence against Yati Narsinghanand, also promoted a 'feeling separatist activity'.

However, a detailed coverage of the State Government's submission could be read here: Mohd Zubair's 'X' Posts With Half-Baked Info Threatened India's Sovereignty, Promoted 'Feeling Of Separatist Activity': UP Govt To Allahabad HC. An 'X' thread of the hearing can be read here

It may also be noted that Zubair is facing an FIR, inter alia, under Section 152

BNS, based on a complaint by Uditia Tyagi, general secretary of the Yati Narsinghanand Saraswati Trust.

Zubair had posted a thread of videos on October 3.

The first tweet contained a video showing Yati Narsinghanand, the priest of Dasna Devi Temple, making alleged inflammatory remarks about Prophet Muhammad.

Zubair also tagged UP police, asking what actions had been taken against Yati. It has also been alleged by

the complainant that the old video clips were shared with the intent of inciting violence by Muslims.

Zubair was also blamed for the violent protests against Yati Narsinghanand at Dasna Devi Mandi. Challenging the FIR, Zubair has moved the High Court.

The counsel appearing contended before the court that Zubair was simply exercising his freedom of speech by referring to the alleged speech of Yati Narsinghanand and highlighting his conduct.

Further, the counsel stated that not just Zubair but many new articles and social media accounts had posted about the same issue, and Zubair had not said anything different.

It has also been argued by the Senior counsel that the complaint by Dr. Tyagi was merely a publicity stunt.

It was argued before the court that when the X post was made, there was no prohibition order from the police or any other administrative authority to stop tweeting about Yati Narsinghanand's speech.

Accordingly, the court listed the matter for further consideration on January 06, 2025.

Supreme Court proposes to cancel sale deed of temple land: 'How temple ownership can be changed by minister?'

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court in the case Arun Baburao Phalke & Ors. v. State of Maharashtra & Ors observed and has directed a Collector to take possession of the subject land and has submitted a plan for temporary utilization thereof for the benefit of the temple and village community.

The court in the case was surprised at the change in ownership of a temple property facilitated by a Maharashtra Minister in September 2014.

The bench comprising of Justice Surya Kant and Justice Ujjal Bhuyan was hearing the present matter.

The bench noted that the ownership of the temple was changed without providing opportunity of hearing to the temple management and/or affected persons.

The court in its order stated that, 'How the ownership of the temple could be changed by the Minister, that too without according hearing to the temple Management or the other affected persons, is beyond comprehension...This



court directed the Collector, Ahmednagar to take physical possession of the land forthwith and submit a compliance report to this Court. The Collector needs to submit a plan for temporary utilization of the land, including through auction of the land on annual lease basis, for the benefit of the temple and village community, till the controversy is resolved.

In the present case, the subject land was owned by Devasthanie temple of the village.

The order dated 2014, the then State Minister (Revenue, Rehabilitation & Assistance Work) facilitated

its sale in favor of one Gorkh Parvati Phalke.

Further, Phalke sold the land to one Babu Raghunath Kapse, who in turn sold it (during the pendency of the present case) to one Vijay Deoram Gayake. As Gayake did not come forward for impleadment, the Court opined that there was a "calculated move to appropriate the temple property".

The court while considering the facts and circumstances of the case observed and has issued show cause notice to Gayake as to why the sale deed in his favor not be annulled till the rights of the parties are determined.

Supreme Court: Employee cannot remain absent from work citing pending VRS application

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court in the case State of Uttar Pradesh And Ors Versus Sandeep Agarwal observed that an employee cannot remain absent from service merely because its Voluntary Retirement Service, VRS application is pending.

The bench comprising of Justice AS Oka and Justice AG Masih was hearing the present matter.

The bench in the case was hearing the appeal of State of U.P. against the decision of Allahabad High Court, wherein the court directed for the reinstatement of the respondent employees who were being terminated from the service because of their absenteeism from the service under the garb of pending Voluntary Retirement Service, VRS application.

It has been submitted by the respondent employees, who were serving as doctors in the State of Uttar Pradesh that the VRS applications in 2006 and 2008 and subse-



In 2010, the Appellant terminated their employment along with over 400 other doctors over their long absenteeism, invoking clause (b) of the second proviso to Article 311(2) of the Constitution of India, citing the impracticality of holding a disciplinary inquiry.

quently remained absent from their duties after filing the applications.

In 2010, the Appellant terminated their employment along with over 400 other doctors over their long absenteeism, invoking clause (b) of the second proviso to Article 311(2) of the Constitution of

India, citing the impracticality of holding a disciplinary inquiry. In the present case, the writ petition is filed by respondents wherein challenging the termination orders and seeking decisions on their VRS applications.

The Allahabad High Court in the case quashed the ter-

mination orders and ordered reinstatement with consequential benefits.

Following the same, the appellant preferred an appeal before the Supreme Court.

The bench headed by Justice Okay, while allowing the State's appeal criticized the Appellant State of UP for keeping the VRS applications pending without justification. The court noted that the respondents' absenteeism was unjustifiable.

The court stated that it being true that the conduct of the appellants in not deciding the applications for VRS cannot be supported at all. Therefore, there being no such reason for the respondents to take recourse to absenteeism. When the respondents found that their applications were not decided within a reasonable time, they could have adopted remedies in accordance with the law.

The court while considering the facts and circumstances of the case observed and has found the High Court's direction for their reinstatement as invalid.

Supreme Court: Registration of gift not required under Mohammedan Law

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court in the case Mansoor Saheb (Dead) And Ors. Versus Salima (D) By Lrs And Ors observed and has reiterated that the registration of gifts (Hiba) is not required under Mohammedan Law.

The court in the case stated that it valid requisites of the gift (declaration, acceptance, and possession) are fulfilled, then the validity of the gift cannot be affected even if it remains unregistered.

The court also stated that the registration of gift is not required under Mohammedan Law and, the unwritten and unregistered gift executed by the donor in favour of donees is valid.

The essential requisites of a valid gift are: -

1. The gift has to be necessarily declared by the person giving the gift, i.e., the donor;
2. Such a gift needs to be accepted either impliedly

The court in the case stated that it valid requisites of the gift (declaration, acceptance, and possession) are fulfilled, then the validity of the gift cannot be affected even if it remains unregistered.

or explicitly or on behalf of the donee; and
3. Apart from declaration and acceptance, there is also a requirement of delivery of possession for a gift to be valid

The court stated that all the aforesaid conditions ought to be met necessarily to make a valid gift. Adding to it, the court stated that, 'Under Mohammedan Law, a gift is to be affected in the manner laid down under the law. If the conditions prescribed by that law are fulfilled, the gift is valid, even though it is not affected by a registered instrument. But if the conditions are not fulfilled, the gift is not valid even though it may have been affected by a registered instrument. Therefore, a valid

gift could be made by oral statements as well so long as the three requirements as discussed above are met thereby. This is because registration is not a requirement which obviates the need for a gift to be reduced in writing.' Background of the Case: The bench comprising of Justice CT Ravikumar and Justice Sanjay Karol was hearing an appeal filed against the decision of Karnataka High Court that affirmed the decision of trial court refusing to grant ownership rights to the Appellants based on the partition made by One Sultan Saheb via oral gift. It has been contended by the Appellant before the court that there was a valid gift even though it

was unregistered. The court in the case observed that while a gift under Mohammedan Law does not require registration and can be made orally, the partition of property during the owner's lifetime is impermissible.

Although an oral gift could have been valid, the essential condition of a clear and unequivocal declaration of the gift by the donor (Sultan Saheb) was not established. Accordingly, the court dismissed the appeal.

The counsel, Mr. Basava Prabhu S. Patil, Sr. Adv. Mr. Samarth Kashyap, Adv. Mr. V. N. Raghupathy, AOR Mr. Radhakrishna S Hegde, Adv. Mr. Rajeev Singh, AOR appeared for Appellant(s).

The counsel, Mr. S N Bhat, Sr. Adv. Mr. Tarun Kumar Thakur, Adv. Ms. Parvati Bhat, Adv. Mr. Abhay Choudhary M, Adv. Mr. Vivek Ram R, Adv. Ms. Anuradha Mutatkar, AOR Mr Rajeev Singh represented the Respondent(s).

Supreme Court rejects petition to levy toll on Delhi-Noida Direct flyway commuters: 'Defrauding public, NOIDA's agreement arbitrary'

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court in the case Noida Toll Bridge Company Versus Federation of Noida RWA observed and has rejected the petition filed by Noida Toll Bridge Company to impose tolls on the commuters of the Delhi Noida Direct, DND flyway.

The bench comprising of Justice Surya Kant and Justice Ujjal Bhuyan was hearing the present matter.

The bench in the case observed and has rejected the appeal of company against the Allahabad High Court's judgment of 2016 which

struck down the concessionaire agreement.

The High Court ruling came wherein the Public Interest Litigation, PIL is filed by Federation Of Noida Resident Welfare Association.

The Supreme Court, while concurring with the findings of High Court ruled that, 'NOIDA overstepped its authority by delegating its power to levy toll on the company' and that there was 'unjust enrichment of the company at the cost of the public'

The court in the case found that the general public has been forced to part with 100s of crores

and defrauded and there being no such reason for the collection of user fees to continue.

The bench stated that the language of the concessionaire agreement was such that it was perpetually in effect and thus forever enriching NTBCL at the cost of NOIDA.

Further, the court noted that there was no tender from other interested companies and no competitive bidding was done. Thus, the award of the agreement to the NTBCL was violative of Article 14 of the Constitution of India and illegal.

The Supreme Court while considering the facts and

circumstances of the case held that the Public Interest Litigation, PIL was maintainable as public money was involved, although it was regarding a commercial contract.

The court pronounced that, 'When state engages in public work it must be free of arbitrariness.'

Accordingly, the court rejected the petition.

The counsel appeared before the court: Senior Advocates Dr Abhishek Manu Singhvi and Gopal Jain; Mr. Raunak Dhillion, Ms. Madhavi Khanna and Mr Nihaad Dewan (Cyril Amarchand Mangaldas team)

SC permits ex-Jharkhand CM Madhu Koda to withdraw plea challenging his 3-year disqualification by ECI in 2017

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court in the case Madhu Koda Versus Election Commission Of India observed and has allowed the former Jharkhand Chief Minister Madhu Koda to withdraw the petition filed challenging his 3-yr disqualification by the Election Commission of India in 2017.

The bench comprising of Justice Surya Kant and Justice Ujjal Bhuyan was hearing the present matter. The counsel appearing for Koda submitted before the court that the matter



has become infructuous as the 3-yr period has lapsed. Koda, an independent MLA, served as Jharkhand Chief Minister from 2006 to 2008.

In 2017, Koda was disqualified by Election Commission Of India, ECI for

3 years for not filing accurate poll expenses during 2009 Lok Sabha election.

Challenging the disqualification of him, Koda approached the Supreme Court in 2019.

In November 2019, the Supreme Court issued

notice in the petition.

Koda in the plea prayed for permission to contest upcoming assembly polls, claiming that more than 2 years had passed since the disqualification order of Election Commission Of India, ECI.

The bench headed by Justice NV Ramana in the case refused to allow him to contest the assembly polls.

The court stated that, 'You yourself are responsible for the delay, we can't allow you to contest the election...This court issue notice and [will] hear your plea on merits.'

TOP OF THE DAY

NORTHERN SYRIA: 2 SCRIBES KILLED IN CLASHES

JERUSALEM: A journalists' association said Friday two reporters working for Kurdish media outlets have been killed in clashes between Syrian Kurdish militia and Turkish-backed fighters in northern Syria. Fighting in parts of Syria continues despite the fall of President Bashar Assad. Elsewhere in Syria, the transition following the government's fall has been smooth so far, although it's been less than two weeks since Assad was ousted by a lightning rebel advance on the capital, Damascus.

PAK COURT INDICTS IMRAN PARTY'S LEADERS FOR RIOTS

RAWALPINDI: Pakistani Anti-Terrorism Court (ATC) in Rawalpindi indicted former Pakistani Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood, Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Ali Amin Gandapur, and other Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf leaders in the General Headquarters (GHQ) attack case, which took place on May 9, 2023, ARY News reported. The Rawalpindi ATC heard the case and charged Ali Amin Gandapur and Shah Mehmood Qureshi, along with 14 other PTI leaders, ARY News reported. The court also announced that six more accused still need to be charged.

ISRAELI ATTACKS ACROSS GAZA KILL 77 PALESTINIANS IN A DAY

TEL AVIV: At least 77 Palestinians have been killed and 174 wounded in Israeli attacks across Gaza, according to the latest daily update by the besieged territory's Health Ministry. A new report titled "Gaza death trap" by Doctors Without Borders says there are "clear signs of ethnic cleansing" by Israeli forces in the Palestinian territory. More than 14 months of Israeli attacks on Gaza have killed at least 45,206 Palestinians. Among them are at least 644 athletes, including 359 football players, according to the Palestinian Football Association. At least 91 of them were children, it said.

US DIPLOMATS VISIT SYRIA SINCE ASSAD OUSTER

DAMASCUS: The first U.S. diplomats to visit Syria since President Bashar Assad's ouster earlier this month are now in Damascus to hold talks with the country's new leaders and seek information on the whereabouts of missing American journalist Austin Tice. Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs Barbara Leaf, former special envoy for Syria Daniel Rubinstein and the Biden administration's chief envoy for hostage negotiations, Roger Carstens, made the trip for talks with Syria's interim leaders, the State Department said early Friday.

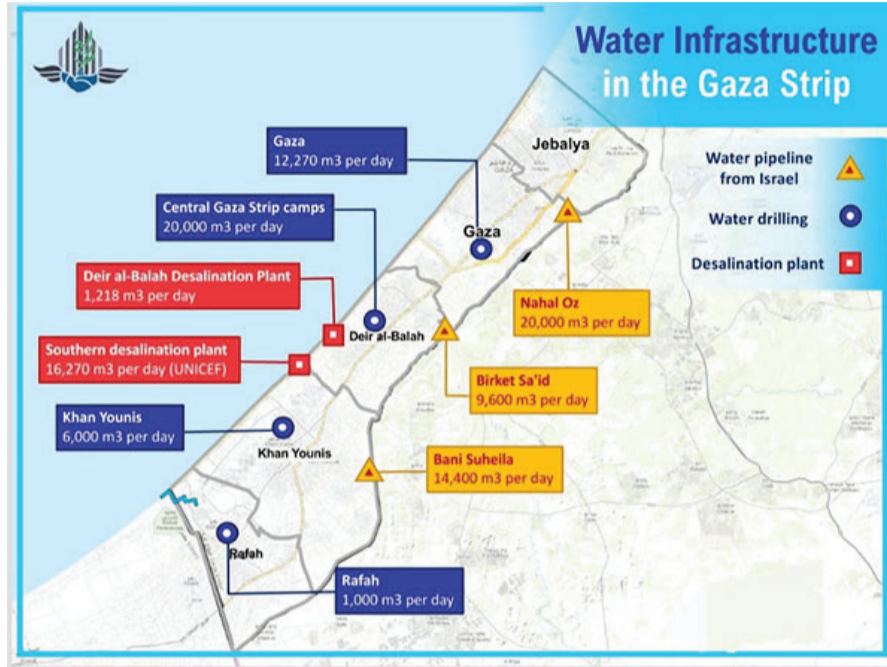
ISRAEL DEBUNKS CLAIMS OF USING WATER FOR 'ACTS OF GENOCIDE' IN GAZA

Recently, the Human Rights Watch has accused Israel of committing "acts of genocide" by denying clean water to Palestinians in Gaza.

AGENCIES
JERUSALEM

Israel debunked media reports stating that the country is using water in "acts of genocide" by denying clean water to Palestinians in Gaza. Israel's Unit for the Coordination of Government Activities in the Territories: Judea and Samaria and towards the Gaza Strip (COGAT) gave a comprehensive overview of the government actions in place and coordination with the UNICEF to ensure safe access to water for the residents of Gaza.

In a post on X, the COGAT shared, "This is the UNICEF water desalination plant in Khan Yunis. Israel coordinated the repair of the electricity line to the facility so it can operate at full capacity, providing water for residents in the area. When working at full capacity, the desalination plant provides 20,000 cubic meters of water a day." The announcement came after the Human Rights Watch has accused Israel of committing "acts of genocide" by denying clean water to Palestinians in Gaza, and called on the international



Map of water infrastructure in Gaza shared by COGAT (Photo: X/cogatonline)

Water becomes a scarce resource in Gaza: Report

RAMALLAH: The search for water is a "daily undertaking" for Palestinians as water in Gaza has become a "tool of war", Al Jazeera reported. As the war continued, access to clean water has become more difficult, with an individual now having to survive on "less than five litres a day", Al Jazeera reported. The systematic and deliberate destruc-

tion of Gaza's water infrastructure has left more than two million people in a state of constant struggle, Al Jazeera reported. Shadi Yassin, a displaced Palestinian in central Gaza, told Al Jazeera, "We need water for showers, dishes and cleaning. We also need drinking water and we can't easily afford that. The amount of water here is not enough."

community to impose targeted sanctions, Al Jazeera reported. As per Al Jazeera, in a new 184-page report released on Thursday, the New York-

'US has 2,000 troops in Syria'



US military convoy travels across northeastern Syria during a joint exercise with the Syrian Democratic Forces on December 8, 2021 (File Photo)

AGENCIES
DAMASCUS

Approximately, 2,000 American troops are currently deployed to Syria, up from the previously reported 1,100, the Department of Defense (DoD) has announced.

"We have been briefing [the media] regularly that there are approximately 900 U.S. troops in Syria," Pentagon Spokesperson Pat Ryder told reporters on Thursday.

"These forces, which augment the defeat-ISIS (Islamic State, banned in Russia) mission, were there before the fall of the Assad regime," Ryder said.

Ryder did not specify the type of troops that arrived in Syria to fight the Islamic State, describing them as "temporary rotational forces that deploy to meet shifting mission requirements,

whereas the core 900 deployers are on longer-term deployments."

He explained that such fluctuations in numbers of personnel are often quite common, and that the additional forces have been in place since before the December 8 downfall of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad's regime. At the briefing Ryder said the Defence Department is prepared to continue carrying out its mission despite the potential for a partial government shutdown beginning Saturday.

On November 27, Syria's armed opposition led by Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) launched a large-scale offensive against government forces in the provinces of Aleppo and Idlib.

By December 7, President Bashar Assad's opponents had seized several major cities, including Aleppo, Hama, Daraa, and Homs.

Bangladesh receives \$1.16 billion World Bank financing

AGENCIES
DHAKA

The World Bank's Board of Executive Directors approved three operations totalling USD 1.16 billion to help Bangladesh improve health services, boost water and sanitation services and achieve greener and climate-resilient development, said a World Bank statement on Friday.

"Bangladesh is among the most vulnerable countries to climate change and faces the greatest pollution challenges. Improving climate resilience in every sector and tackling the pollution scourge has be-



come a critical development priority," said Abdoulaye Seck, World Bank Country Director for Bangladesh and Bhutan.

"These new financing will bring to the people of Bangladesh essential services such as health and water and sanitation while laying the foundation for clean,

climate resilient and sustainable development."

The Second Bangladesh Green and Climate Resilient Development Credit worth USD 500 million will support reforms to help the country's transition to green and climate-resilient development. The financing supports policy reforms to improve public planning and financing and implementation for green and climate-resilient interventions at local and national levels and promote clean and resource-efficient production and services in key sectors.

After 10 years, Malaysia to resume hunt for Flight MH370

AGENCIES
KUALA LUMPUR

Malaysia has agreed to resume the search for the wreckage of missing Malaysia Airlines Flight MH370, its transport minister said on Friday, more than 10 years after it disappeared in one of the world's greatest aviation mysteries.

Flight MH370, a Boeing 777 carrying 227 passengers and 12 crew, vanished en

route from Kuala Lumpur to Beijing on March 8, 2014. "Our responsibility and obligation and commitment is to the next of kin," Transport Minister Anthony Loke told a press conference. "We hope this time will be positive, that the wreckage will be found and give closure to the families."

Jiang Hui, whose mother was a MH370 passenger, welcomed the decision to resume the search, but said the process to get there had taken too long and would be better if more players could take part. "We hope the Malaysian government can adopt a more open approach, such as offering a public reward system where anyone can participate in the search," he said.

MH370's last transmission was about 40 minutes after it took off from Kuala Lumpur for Beijing.

Martial law decree: S. Korean police questioned acting president

AGENCIES
SEOUL

South Korean police have questioned Prime Minister and Acting President Han Duck-soo as part of an investigation into the short-lived decision this month to impose martial law, an official at his office said on Friday.

The acting president was among 12 people present at a cabinet meeting on Dec. 3 shortly before President Yoon Suk Yeol's shock late-



South Korean Prime Minister and Acting President Han Duck-soo

night announcement on martial law. Nine of those people have been ques-

tioned by a special police unit investigating the case, the Yonhap news agency reported. Han, a career technocrat, became acting president after Yoon was impeached on Saturday following a parliamentary vote.

The official at Han's office did not say when he was questioned, but said it took place before Han was appointed acting president.

He was being investigated as a suspect, Yonhap reported.

'ASEAN will want inclusive polls in Myanmar'

AGENCIES
BANGKOK

Thailand has told Myanmar's junta that ASEAN members would want all stakeholders included in an election the military government plans to hold next year, even as the regional bloc seeks a common position on the polls, Thai officials said on Friday.

"If there is an election, ASEAN would want an inclusive process that included all stakeholders," Foreign Minister Maris Sangiampongsa said in a group interview in Bangkok, after meetings with counterparts and senior diplomats of the Association of Southeast Asian Na-



Maris Sangiampongsa, Foreign Minister, Thailand

tions (ASEAN) grouping.

Advertisement · Scroll to continue Myanmar has been in turmoil since early 2021 when its military overthrew an elected civilian government, triggering pro-democracy protests that morphed into

a widening armed rebellion that has taken over swathes of the country.

The military is fighting rebels on multiple fronts, struggling to govern and manage a crumbling economy that was seen as a promising frontier market before the generals ended a decade of tentative democracy.

Advertisement · Scroll to continue

Thailand this week hosted two separate regional meetings on the crisis in Myanmar, the first involving the junta and its neighbours, including China, Bangladesh and India, followed by one with ASEAN members.

Myanmar's foreign minister on Thursday briefed attendees on the outline of

the junta's political road-map and progress towards holding an election, which critics have dismissed as a sham, largely due to the absence and sidelining of opposition groups.

"The neighbouring countries said we support Myanmar in finding solutions but the election must be inclusive for various stakeholders in the country," Maris said, stressing that Myanmar's neighbours would advise, but not interfere.

Their effort, he said, would also support ASEAN's Myanmar peace plan, the "Five Point Consensus", its strategy to diffuse the conflict that has made scant progress.

Imran warns of civil disobedience movement

AGENCIES
ISLAMABAD

Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan warned Pakistan's federal government of launching a civil disobedience movement if his "legitimate demands" including the release of under-trial political prisoners and a judicial probe into May 9 events and November 26 crackdown on PTI protesters are not met by Sunday.

The former Pakistani Prime Minister threatened that if the demands are unmet, the civil disobedience movement, "boycott of remittances", will be launched, Imran Khan said in a statement.

He also termed November 26 as the "darkest day" in Pakistan's history, as several PTI workers were allegedly shot at with snipers.

Sri Lanka to draft policy on visits by foreign vessels

AGENCIES
COLOMBO

Sri Lanka will soon formulate a national policy on allowing visits by foreign research vessels, Foreign Minister Vijitha Herath said here on Friday, amidst frequent docking requests from Chinese surveillance ships which raised concerns in India.

Herath's comments came days after Sri Lankan President Anura Kumara Dissanayake's visit to India.

In January, Sri Lanka enforced a year-long moratorium on foreign marine scientific research survey vessels operating in its waters and the Exclusive Economic Zone after strong security concerns were raised by India and the US following frequent docking requests from hi-tech Chinese surveillance vessels.

Sri Lanka's moratorium on allowing research vessels is still in force which would be reviewed appropriately, Herath said.

Upon his return to Colombo from India, Dissanayake held a meeting with a top Chinese government offi-

Sri Lanka Navy rescues 102 Rohingyas

COLOMBO: Sri Lanka Navy has rescued over 100 Rohingyas, including 25 children, from Myanmar distressed in the seas off the island's northeastern coast. They were spotted by local fishermen on Thursday in the Mullaithivu district's Vellamullivaikal area.

"We are still unable to verify the cause for their

distress in the sea or where they were heading," the Navy spokesman said on speculation that they could be heading to either Australia or Indonesia. The rescue mirrored a similar incident in 2022 when the Sri Lankan navy picked up 100 Rohingya refugees who were also found adrift aboard a fishing boat inside Sri Lankan waters.



Sri Lankan President Anura Kumara Dissanayake

cial who expressed China's wish to see Chinese research ships resuming their visits to Colombo.

Asked if India had raised concerns over such visits during Dissanayake's stay in India, Herath said Indian concerns were based on their national security and regional security threats.

"We assured that we will not allow any action to threaten Indian security concerns by using our land," Herath said.

"The visit has turned out to be one which has resulted in many achievements for the people of Sri Lanka," Herath said.

"It took the relationship to a new height," he said.

THE ARCHIPELAGO VISIT

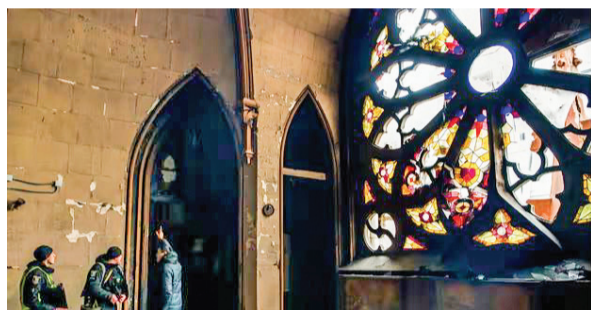


France's president, Emmanuel Macron, greets a local resident during a visit to the French Indian Ocean territory, five days after the archipelago was devastated by a cyclone in Pamandzi, Mayotte. Source: Ludovic Marin

Russia bombards Kyiv with eight ballistic missiles

AGENCIES MOSCOW

Russia has hit Kyiv with eight powerful ballistic missiles, a day after Vladimir Putin claimed his troops were winning on the battlefield and that his maximalist goals to seize more territory in Ukraine were unchanged. Several explosions were reported in Kyiv on Friday around 7am local time. Ukraine's air force said it had shot down eight Khinzal and Iskander-M missiles, with debris falling in several districts of the city. One person was killed and at least 12 were injured. Residents woke to the



The St Nicholas Roman Catholic church was damaged in the bombings. Photograph: EPA

sound of loud booms and wailing air raid sirens. One intercepted missile fell on the Toronto business centre, smashing its top storey, and setting fire to cars parked in the street beneath. A mangled vehicle was tossed over a fence. The complex was home to

Superhumans, a prosthetics and rehabilitation centre for wounded Ukrainian soldiers. Its founder Andrey Stavnitser said his office was devastated. "It's scary to think what would have happened if our glass room had been blown a couple of hours later," he posted.

International students urged to return to US campuses

AGENCIES CONCORD

A growing number of U.S. colleges and universities are advising international students to return to campus before President-elect Donald Trump is inaugurated, over concerns that he might impose travel bans like he did during his first administration.

More than a dozen schools have issued advisories, even though Trump's plans remain uncertain. At some schools, the spring semester begins before Trump will take office, so students may have to be back in class anyway. But for anyone whose ability to stay in the United States depends on an academic visa, they say it's best to reduce their risks and get back to campus before Jan. 20.

Trump issued an executive order in January 2017 banning travel to the U.S. by citizens of seven predominantly Muslim countries — Iraq, Syria, Iran, Sudan, Libya, Somalia and Yemen. Travelers from those nations were either barred from getting on their flights or detained at U.S. airports after they landed. They included students and faculty as well as business people, tourists and visitors to friends and family.

Trump later removed some countries and added others to the list — 15 nations were affected at some point during his presidency. More than 40,000 people were ultimately refused visas because of the ban, according to the U.S. State Department.

HOUSE REJECTS TRUMP-BACKED PLAN ON GOVT SHUTDOWN

It provides a preview of the turbulence ahead when Trump returns to the White House with Republican control of the House and Senate.

AGENCIES WASHINGTON

A day before a potential government shutdown, the House resoundingly rejected President-elect Donald Trump's new plan to fund operations and suspend the debt ceiling, as Democrats and dozens of Republicans refused to accommodate his sudden demands.

In a hastily convened Thursday evening vote punctuated by angry outbursts over the self-made crisis, the lawmakers failed to reach the two-thirds threshold needed for passage — but House Speaker Mike Johnson appeared determined to reassess before Friday's midnight deadline. "We're going to regroup and we will come up with another solution, so stay tuned," Johnson said after the vote. The cobbled-together plan didn't even get a majority, with the bill failing 174-235.

The outcome proved a massive setback for Trump and his billionaire ally, Elon Musk, who ramped against Johnson's bipartisan compromise, which Republicans and

THE REJECTION



Speaker of the House Mike Johnson (in Left) and US President-elect Donald Trump

■ **Trump and Musk's Influence:** Trump and his ally Elon Musk pushed back against the bipartisan compromise, with Musk's stance and Trump's warning that lawmakers supporting the deal would face consequences.

■ **Setback for Speaker Mike Johnson:** Speaker Johnson had to regroup and try to find another solution. His leadership faced significant challenges due to Trump's demands and the division within his party.

■ **Turbulent Politics:** The situation mirrors past conflicts, including the 2018 government shutdown during Trump's presidency. The political chaos underscored the power struggles within Washington.

Democrats had reached earlier to prevent a Christmas-time government shutdown. It provides a preview of the turbulence ahead when Trump returns to the White House with Republican control of the House and Senate. During his first term, Trump led Republicans into the longest government shutdown in history during the 2018 Christmas season, and interrupted the holidays in 2020 by tanking a bipartisan COVID-relief bill and forcing a do-over. And if not, the president-

elect warned of trouble ahead for Johnson and Republicans in Congress. "Anybody that supports a bill that doesn't take care of the Democrat quicksand should be primary and disposed of as quickly as possible," Trump told Fox News Digital. The tumultuous turn of events, coming as lawmakers were preparing to head home for the holidays, sparks a familiar reminder of what it's like in Trump-run Washington.

Musk and Vice President-elect JD Vance tried to blame Democrats, though rank-and-file Republicans helped sink Trump's plan. "They've asked for a shutdown," Vance said of Democrats. "That's exactly what they're going to get." For Johnson, who faces his own problems ahead of a Jan. 3 House vote to remain speaker, Trump's demands left him severely weakened, forced to abandon his word with Democrats and work into the night to broker the new approach.

Zelensky meets Czech PM for defence needs

AGENCIES BRUSSELS

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky on Friday held a meeting with Czech Prime Minister Petr Fiala and discussed the country's defence needs in the conflict against Russia. In his meeting with the Czech PM in Brussels, Zelensky emphasised Ukraine's need to bolster the air defence system to protect themselves from Russia's offensive. In a post on X, Zelensky said, "I am grateful for the comprehensive support of Ukrainians in their fight against Russian aggression. Ukraine is counting on making the upcoming



President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelensky and Prime Minister of the Czech Republic Petr Fiala (in Left)

year as productive as possible for Ukrainian-Czech relations."

"Today, we discussed Ukraine's current defence needs, with a particular focus on bolstering air defense systems to protect strategic energy facilities. Strengthening Ukraine and supporting

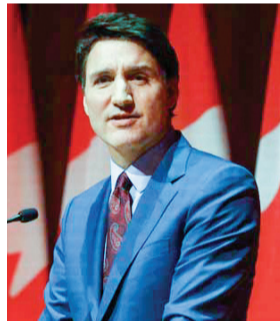
our soldiers on the frontline brings the end of the war and a just peace for all of Europe closer," he added. Zelensky arrived in Brussels on Wednesday to hold talks with European partners amid the ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict. On Thursday, Zelensky called for Europe to work closely with partners in the Global South, including China, India, Saudi Arabia, and Brazil, to end the ongoing war between Russia and Ukraine. "We must ensure that China, India, Saudi Arabia, Brazil, and other Global South partners not only respect Ukraine's territorial integrity but also use their influence on Russia.

'Trudeau reflecting on criticism amid leadership crisis'

AGENCIES OTTAWA

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau is reflecting on complaints about his leadership by legislators from the ruling Liberal Party who are unhappy that Finance Minister Chrystia Freeland quit, a close ally said on Tuesday.

Another Liberal parliamentarian said separately that Trudeau was "delusional" if he thought he could fight the next election, which is due by Oct. 20 next year. Polls show the Liberals would be crushed by the official opposition Conservatives. Freeland resigned on Monday amid a policy clash and released a letter savag-



Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau

ing Trudeau's leadership, prompting one of the worst crises since he took office in 2015. Trudeau later held a special meeting with his parliamentary caucus, which is already unhappy over the party's poor performance in the polls.

TRUDEAU EXPECTED TO RESHUFFLE CABINET

Ottawa: Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau is expected to announce a significant cabinet reshuffle today amid growing calls for him to step down, according to a report by CBC News. Sources from CBC News and Radio-Canada revealed that Ottawa MP David McGuinty and Toronto MP Nathaniel Erskine-Smith are set to join the cabinet. The reshuffle is expected to involve at least 10 members, according to insiders. CBC News reported citing a senior government source said, however, that the timing and size of

the shuffle should not be taken as a signal that the prime minister has made up his mind about his future, adding Trudeau is still "reflecting" on his position. The purpose of the shuffle is to make sure the cabinet is complete so the government can function properly, the source said. Notably, the move follows the resignation of Chrystia Freeland, the Former Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister. Earlier on December 16, hours before the statement on Canada's economy, Freeland announced her resignation from the Cabinet.

US Attorney Peace resigns ahead of Trump 2.0 takeover

AGENCIES WASHINGTON

US Attorney Breon Peace, has tendered in his resignation weeks before the Trump 2.0 administration is set to take over. In a press release by the US Department of Justice, it was announced, "Breon Peace is resigning as United States Attorney for the



US Attorney Breon Peace Eastern District of New York on January 10, 2025. Mr. Peace has served in the position since October 15,

2021". According to the Department of Justice, First Assistant United States Attorney Carolyn Pokorny will become the Acting United States Attorney for the Eastern District of New York upon Peace's departure. Peace had recently been among those who had announced charges against Guatami Adani and other executives linking them to an alleged bribery case.

TRUDEAU FACES GROWING RESIGNATION CALLS AMID POLITICAL CRISIS

Global affairs keep changing their shape based on the common multilateral objectives of various nations, their national interests and the political will of their leaders. Amid this complex criss-cross of personal political agenda of the leaders, national interests of their respective nations and the bilateral & multilateral developments, this week also emanated with various developments across the world. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau of Canada is experiencing increasing calls for his resignation from within his own Liberal Party following the sudden departure of a key minister, who publicly criticized Trudeau's management of

the budget. Having been in office for almost ten years, Trudeau's popularity has significantly declined in recent years, largely due to various challenges such as escalating living costs and surging inflation, and what he has done in context of India-Canada relations. If Trudeau were to step down, a possibility that political analysts deem plausible, the Liberal Party would be required to appoint an interim prime minister to govern the country until elections can take place. At this point, it remains uncertain who the frontrunner for such an interim position might be. Concerns regarding Trudeau's leadership intensified this week fol-

WORLD RECAP ANSHU JOSHI

lowing the resignation of Chrystia Freeland, the former finance minister, from his Cabinet. Freeland had been vocal in her criticism of Trudeau's economic management, particularly in light of the significant tariffs that Trump had threatened. Just prior to Freeland's announcement, the housing minister of the country also stepped down. Opposition parties have the potential to challenge Trudeau's hold on power. Given the widespread dis-

satisfaction among voters, Parliament possesses the capability to initiate a "no confidence" vote aimed at displacing Trudeau's Liberal party, which could lead to an early election. Should a majority within Parliament decide to oppose his government, it would result in Trudeau being removed from office in the subsequent elections. Due to the absence of a clear majority in Parliament, the Liberals have relied on the backing

of the left-leaning New Democratic Party for several years to facilitate the passage of legislation and maintain their governance. However, this support has significantly diminished, with the NDP's leader now urging Trudeau to step down. This situation paves the way for a potential "no confidence" vote in Parliament. Following Tuesday's session, Parliament will adjourn for the holiday season until late next month, at which point a "no confidence" vote may be arranged. It will be really interesting to see what unfolds for Trudeau now. I had commented in my previous writings that if Trudeau does not understand his

priorities well, he would face serious repercussions of his own decisions. He supported extremists and spoilt India-Canada relations. The diplomatic brawl between Canadian and Indian government started after Trudeau alleged Indian government for playing a pivotal role in the Khalistani terrorist Nijjar's killing. Due to Trudeau's false allegations, India-Canada relations suffered like never before. After a series of provoking diplomatic actions from Canada and a befitting response from India, the bilateral relations between the two nations faced the worst phase. It seems Trudeau has a habit of inviting problems for

himself. First, he called for early elections in Canada in 2021 that resulted in a minority government for Trudeau. At this juncture, Jagmeet Singh, the leader of the New Democratic Party helped Trudeau with his won seats, and played a significant role in his government formation. His support matters a lot to Trudeau. Jagmeet Singh is an open Khalistan supporter and critic of Indian government. It seems Trudeau tried to win the trust of Singh and the associated separatist leaders by making imprudent (read: foolish) statements against Indian government. This time, it backfired. Now, his detested policies have added to his unpopu-

larity among his own people. There is no doubt that Trudeau invited a political crisis for his own future! As I wrote previously also, it seems he does not understand the true meaning of power that comes with a lot of responsibility. Sometimes, these leaders fail in calculating the impact of their certain political actions that boomerang in future. Power could be intoxicating. If the leaders don't remember the true purpose of power, they may make fatal mistakes that can cost their power itself. Hope this week teaches the leaders to work for what they get elected for. The author is Professor, School of International Studies, JNU

REVIEW: VANVAAS ****

VANVAAS



PRAVEEN NAGDA

Blending Indian culture, tradition, values, and family bonds into this emotional drama, Vanvaas, directed by 'Gadar 2' fame Anil Sharma, surely reminds you of Baghban but offers much more of a Bollywood masala flick content. There is intense drama, some comedy, some action, and even a non-vulgar item number, making it a good family viewing experience.

Nana Patekar undoubtedly carries the film on his shoulders with his monologues, perfectly pronounced Sanskrit verses, and exhibiting versatility in his character. Nana's eccentricities, his dialogue delivery, and his multitude of expressions depicting a dozen emotions are impeccable. He is an elder, he is a child, he is angry, he is happy, and he is a fighter, he is a lover, he is a father, he is a husband, he is a grandfather, and he repeatedly makes his mark in the film keeping you hooked to the storyline.

Utkarsh Sharma, Simratt Kaur, Rajpal Yadav, and others have performed optimally in this film in their respective roles. The brilliant cinematography of Kabir Lal captures well the grandness of ghats, the boats of Benares, the hilly terrain of Shimla, Dalhousie, and Palampur, and the snow-clad Himalayas.

The storyline is set on how the children start ill-treating their parents who give their lives to raise them isn't new in cinema, but the storytelling has always made a difference. Vanvaas is a film that will provide you with a lumpy throat many times at various moments. An elderly Deepak Tyagi aka Baba (Nana Patekar) is abandoned in Varanasi by his 3 sons Somu (Hemant Kher), Bablu (Kettan Singh), and Chutka (Paritosh Tripathy) conspiring with their wives.

ANGELINA DETAILS DIFFICULT YEARS AWAY FROM ACTING

AGENCIES WASHINGTON

After a significant time away from the screen, Angelina Jolie is making her much-anticipated return to acting with a performance in 'Maria', Pablo Larrain's biographical film about the late opera legend Maria Callas. Jolie's portrayal of Callas has earned her nominations for the 2025 Golden Globe and Critics Choice Awards, marking a triumphant comeback.

However, the actress recently opened up about the dark period she endured during her years-long hiatus from Hollywood.

As per E! News, in a recent interview, the 49-year-old actress discussed the personal challenges she faced during her time away from acting.

"I went very dark for reasons I'd rather not explain, but I didn't have a lot of light and life within me," Jolie revealed, adding, "Your light's dim," as per E! News.

The actress, who is known for her work both on-screen and in humanitarian efforts, further explained that dur-

Baba suffers memory loss and starts reliving the moments of his younger days when he had lost his children. He starts believing that he has lost his children and comes in contact with a petty thief Veeru (Utkarsh Sharma), who initially robs him under the pretext of finding his children. A twist in the tale revolving around Veeru's lady love Meena (Simratt Kaur) brings Veeru and Baba closer, and they are on a mission to find their home.

In this mission, while they dig the government records to explore his pedigree it's a tragic landslide that shows the light to finding Baba's real home. Nana Patekar, being an ex-instructor of National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), reacts unknowingly like an instructor in the situation, leading to meeting one of his students and regaining his memory.

While Vanvaas succeeds in making a strong emotional statement Apne Hi Dete Hain Apno Ko Vanvaas (it's your own who abandoned you and put you in exile), it also presents many lighter moments filled with fun, humour, laughter, and love. With such a storyline, the end need not have been a sad one as the message would have gone home.

The music and lyrics are joyful and are perfectly placed in the sequence in this film making it a memorable watch. Thanks to the lyricist Sayeed Quadri, songs like playful Chhabili Ke Naina, sentimental Yaadon Ke Jarokhon Se, romantic Bandhan, and glamorous Geeli Machhis are bound to be an audio treat.

Vanvaas, a ZEE Studio release, explores intricate human relationships and their vulnerabilities and is a great watch for families sitting together.

Review by: Praveen Nagda, Festival Director of KidzCINEMA and CultureCinema Film Festivals



ing this period, she "also just needed to be home more," which limited her ability to take on long-term projects.

Jolie, who shares six children with ex-husband Brad Pitt, spoke candidly about the practical and emotional factors that influenced her choices during that time.

"The choice of what to work on and when was not a creative choice, often, the last few years, but sometimes the practical choice," she said, reflecting on the challenges of balancing personal and professional demands.

Jolie's time away from acting was largely marked by intense personal challenges, including ongoing legal battles with Pitt over their divorce.

PICTURE PERFECT

Bollywood actor Varun Dhawan with actress Wamiqa Gabbi during a press meet for their upcoming film 'Baby John', in Gandhinagar on Thursday. (ANI)



OSCARS SHORTLISTED FILM 'SANTOSH' TO RELEASE ON JANUARY 10, 2025

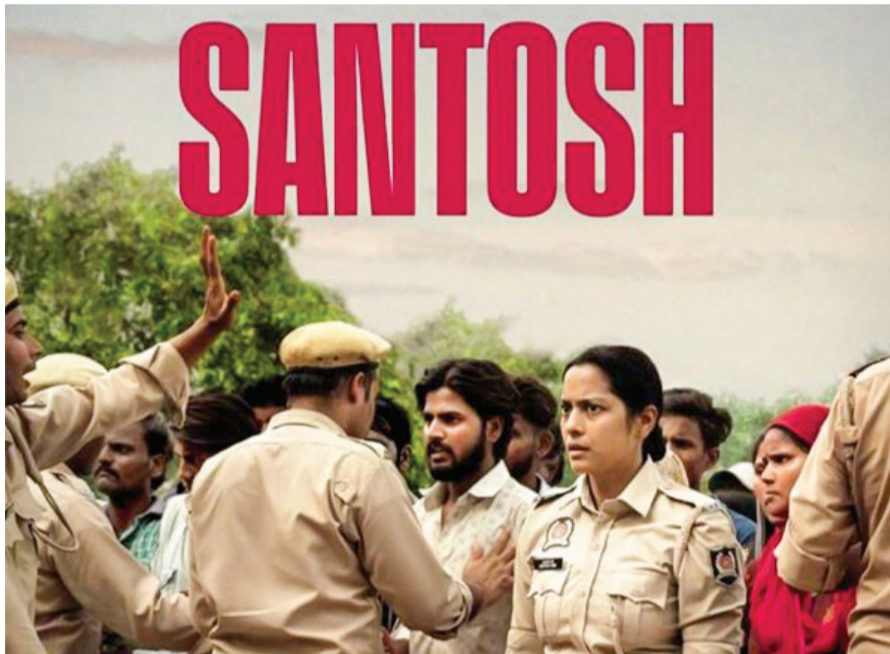
TDG NETWORK MUMBAI

After Hindi drama 'Santosh' made it to the Oscars shortlist, the makers on Friday announced the theatrical release of the film in India.

As per a press note, Shahana Goswami-starrer 'Santosh' will hit the theatres in the country on January 10, 2025.

'Santosh', a Hindi-language international co-production set in rural north India, has found a spot in the 'Best International Feature Film' category.

A total of 15 films have been selected for the Oscar shortlist in this category out of 85 total films submitted by countries all around the world. The film was sent by the United Kingdom as their official submission for the Academy Awards 2025. The



movie also premiered at the 77th Cannes Film Festival in May 2024 and was well-received by critics.

Reacting to this "little glory", Shahana took to In-

stagram and expressed her happiness.

"So happy for the team especially our writer-director Sandhya Suri for this little glory of recognition for our

film Santosh! How incredible to be shortlisted from amongst 85 films. Thank you to everyone who loved it, supported it and voted for it," she wrote.

Tom Holland reflects on working opposite Zendaya

AGENCIES WASHINGTON

Tom Holland and Zendaya are one of the adorable couples of Hollywood. They have starred in three 'Spider-Man' movies and will spend much of 2025 on film sets together as the stars of a fourth 'Spider-Man' film and Christopher Nolan's untitled film.

Tom Holland opened up about his experience of working with his girlfriend Zendaya. "Studios love it. One hotel room. Separate drivers. We're not crazy now. Listen it's work, alright?" said Tom Holland as quoted by Variety.

"Oh God, yeah. It's a saving grace. Yeah, the best thing that's ever happened to me," he added on a more serious note.

"It's just that perfect thing when you're on set and a director will give you a note that maybe you don't agree with, or I know that she doesn't particularly like,



and it's just that, like, familiar glance at each other of like, can't wait to talk about that later," said Tom Holland in 'Dish' podcast.

Zendaya also feels the same when asked about her working bond with Tom Holland, Zendaya shared, "Not really. It's actually strangely

comfortable. It's like second nature if anything. You feel extra safe with the person you're acting beside. I love working with him," as per Deadline.

Zendaya also praised Holland's dedication to his craft, noting his intense passion and unwavering commit-

ment to his work. "He's so talented and so passionate about what he does. He always gives things one thousand per cent, even if he's absolutely worn down. I really appreciate that about him," she said in a recent interview, as per Deadline.

Selena shares her pictures post-engagement

AGENCIES WASHINGTON

Selena Gomez and Benny Blanco announced their engagement a week ago, and currently both are enjoying this phase. Gomez is so excited that she couldn't stop herself from sharing new pictures of her engagement ring.

Taking to her Instagram stories, she posted several pictures posing with the ring. In the first picture, the focus was on the ring.

In the pictures, she was seen wearing a black top underneath a maroon trench coat. Her hair is styled in a side part. She is seen wearing large, dangly earrings, lavender-co-



loured eyeshadow, and soft pink lip shade, reported People.

"Sorry last post... I've just dreamed of this moment my whole life," Gomez wrote, according to People.

Earlier, Benny shared his fiancée Selena Gomez's announcement of their engagement on his Instagram Stories.

Blanco wrote, "still can't believe it." The photo featured him kissing Gomez on her head as they sat by a closet, while she held up her diamond ring, reported People.

The couple, who first sparked the dating speculations in 2023, shared the news on social media.

BRAIN PICKING



It is immensely enjoyable to work for an album because there's a lot more creative freedom. In films sometimes, all that the makers care about is making the music commercially appealing.



- SHREYA GHOSHAL (Singer)

SAIF CELEBRATES TAIMUR'S BIRTHDAY WITH SPORTY BASH



TDG NETWORK MUMBAI

Birthdays call for celebrations with loved ones, and Saif Ali Khan and Kareena Kapoor Khan went all out to make their son Taimur's special day memorable. On Friday, the dotting parents sporty-themed birthday bash for their firstborn, Taimur.

Several videos surfaced online in which Kareena and Saif can be seen engaging in fun games with Taimur and his friends, adding a lively touch to the festivities.

A while ago, a slew of B-towners including Taimur's "bua" Soha Ali Khan with husband Kunal Kemra was spotted arriving at Kareena and Saif's house. They looked extremely excited to celebrate the birthday of

Taimur, who is fondly called "Tim" by his loved ones.

Soha also took to Instagram and penned an adorable birthday wish for Taimur on behalf of her daughter Inaaya. She also dropped a video, showcasing the adorable bond shared between the cousins.

"From jumping on the bed to racing freestyle we have come a long way - here's to a lifetime of family, food and prezzies!! Happy Birthday Tim bhai," she captioned the post.

Filmmaker Karan Johar's kids were also spotted at the bash.

Meanwhile, several clips of Taimur from his school's annual day function have been doing the rounds on the internet.

SUNIEL CALLS SOHAIL HIS 'FOREVER LIL BROTHER' IN B'DAY POST



TDG NETWORK MUMBAI

Actor Sohail Khan celebrated his 54th birthday on Friday, and the special day has been filled with love and warm wishes from family and friends.

On this joyous occasion, fellow actor Suniel Shetty took to his Instagram account to wish Sohail a very happy birthday.

Suniel, who shares a close bond with Sohail, posted a picture with him on his Instagram stories. In his message, he referred to Sohail as his "little brother," expressing his affection and admiration.

He wrote, "Sooooo... my forever little brother... wishing you a happy happy birthday. Stay blessed, keep shining, and always keep that smile alive! Lots of love always @sohailkhanofficial."

Sohail reshared the post on his Instagram handle and wrote, "Thank you so much Anna."

The two actors, Sohail and Suniel, have worked

together in films like 'Laker - Forbidden Lines' and 'Fight Club: Members Only', and their camaraderie both on and off-screen is well known.

In addition to the heartfelt wishes from Suniel Shetty, Sohail Khan also shared a touching family moment on his own Instagram account, recently.

The actor-filmmaker posted a picture that showcased his family, featuring his siblings and parents. The picture captured a lovely family gathering from their mother Salma Khan's birthday, with Sohail posing alongside his brothers, Salman Khan and Arbaaz Khan, and their sisters, Arpita and Alvira.

Their parents, Salim Khan and Salma Khan were also present in the photo, with Salma looking elegant in a traditional outfit, while the rest of the family kept their looks casual.

Sohail captioned the beautiful family portrait as, "Blessed," accompanied by a red heart emoji.

THE IMPACT OF PCOS ON FERTILITY: ADVANCED TREATMENT STRATEGIES BEYOND LIFESTYLE CHANGES



DR. AMBIKA DATTA

Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS) is a hormonal disorder that affects women of child-bearing age. It leads to hormonal imbalances which may result in problem conception and can cause other health problems. But, he said PCOS can be controlled by modifying some lifestyles, which in turn can enhance its signs and fertility. In this article, you will learn about PCOS, how it impacts fertility and ways on how to deal with it through diet and exercise.

WHAT IS PCOS?

PCOD is a syndrome where amounts of androgens (male sexual characteristic hormones) are produced in the ovaries interfering with the monthly periods. Common symptom of PCOS in women include missed or irregular periods as well as frequent break ups in ovulation thus complicating chances of conceiving. It is sometimes associated with one's Shaun called insulin resistance, where the body is unable to process Insulin properly. This results in high levels of insulin which leads to increased production of androgens by the ovaries and therefore creates problems of ovula-

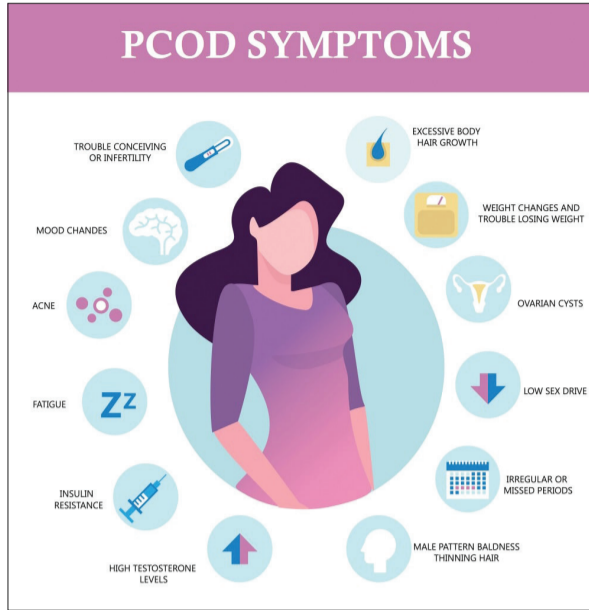
tion hence PCOS symptoms such as weight gain, acne and hairiness.

HOW PCOS AFFECTS FERTILITY

The main factors include irregular or absence of ovulation by women with PCOS and hence are unable to predict their fertile days accurately. If pregnant, women with PCOS have hormonal fluctuations which can lead to unwanted pregnancies, miscarriages, gestational diabetes, and preeclampsia.

SYMPTOMS OF PCOS

PCOS symptoms vary but



MANAGING PCOS WITH LIFESTYLE CHANGES

As much as PCOS may seem like a difficult disorder, it is actually one that can be lived with as long as one is willing to make those all-important changes to their lifestyle. Avoiding weight gain, eating right, reducing stress levels, and sleeping well are interventions that help to ameliorate PCOS and promote fertility. Protirocks have shown major differences between small, consistent changes to your normal schedule.

If you think you have PCOS or if you're having difficulty conceiving, talk to your doctor about a potential action plan. PCOS can be said to be controllable with certain interventions and modification of certain traits; the quality of the life can be enhanced and the chances of conceiving may also increase.

often include:

Irregular or missed periods

- Weight gain, especially around the abdomen
 - Acne or oily skin
 - Excess hair growth on the face or body (hirsutism)
 - Thinning hair on the scalp
 - Difficulty conceiving
- If you notice these symptoms, it's important to consult a healthcare professional for diagnosis and management.

MANAGING PCOS THROUGH LIFESTYLE CHANGES

PCOS is a chronic illness for which there is currently no cure, but its treatment can include removing some of inflammatory triggers that have been identified to cause the condition with a massive improvement in menstrual cycles and fertility. Here are some practical strategies:

1. MAINTAIN A



HEALTHY WEIGHT

Proper diets or weight loss may well help in re-establishing hormonal balance and by this way help to produce ovulation. Research indicates that achieving weight loss of 5-10 % guarantees them a regular menstrual cycle and fertility as well.

In order to attain correct weight loss and gain control on insulin levels, one must exercise at least thirty minutes a day. And Stay consistent with it.

2. FOLLOW A BALANCED DIET

Diet control is an important part of the treatment in PCOS. On this diet, there are lots of ALLEGIANT Fiber because fiber-rich foods such as whole grains, vegetables, fruits, and legumes are good for stabilizing blood sugar due to their slow digestion. Skip the sweets, candy, soda, cake, white flour products, as these foods make insulin resistance much worse. That is why it is recommended to use complex carbohydrate foods like brown rice, quinoa and oats among others. Choose meats that are low in fat, fish, eggs, and soybeans

meditation. Deep breathing exercises. Relaxation should be another domain of activity planning; therefore, planning should include reading, going for a walk or pursuing other hobbies.

4. GET ENOUGH SLEEP

It is well known that sleep quality meets all the requirements for the effective treatment of PCOS. Sleeping is crucial and lack of it may make the condition of insulin resistance and weight increase as well as the desire for evil foods worse. As individuals should attempt to get 7-8 hours of sleep every night, Set a sleep schedule, Avoid the consumption of caffeine products and Minimize the use of electronic devices close to bedtime.

PRACTICAL DAILY TIPS

To better manage PCOS symptoms, consider these simple day-to-day habits:

- Stay active throughout the day: Integrate regular, light exercise like walking around the office, or using the stairs instead of the elevator.

- Hydrate: Avoid taking foods that include a lot of diets and sugary snacks and drink more water in order to control your hunger pangs.

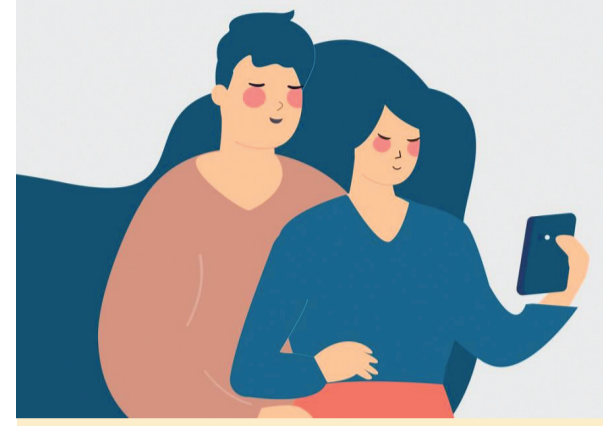
- Plan meals: It will help to cook balanced, healthy meals in advance to have no excuses to order fast food.

- Engage in self-care: Spend time clearing some of your activities off so that you make some time for relaxation in order to take care of your mental health.

The author is the MBBS, MD (Obstetrics and Gynaecology) at Benison IVF.

Why a soft launch might become irritating for women

JEEVIKA SHARMA



A soft launch in relationships refers to subtly introducing a partner to your social circle or online followers without explicitly announcing the relationship. This can involve posting hints like a picture of two hands holding coffee mugs or a silhouette shot of a couple without revealing the partner's identity. While soft launches are a common trend, they can sometimes lead to frustration or irritation, particularly for women, due to social and emotional implications.

● Ambiguity and Lack of Commitment

Some women view soft launches as unnecessary "relationship games." They may feel that the practice complicates something that should be straightforward, causing irritation over what might seem like performative behavior.

Women often find soft launches frustrating when they feel the gesture lacks clarity or commitment. A soft launch can come across as an unwillingness to fully embrace or claim the relationship, leaving the impression of half-hearted effort or lingering uncertainty.

● Fear of Being Hidden

If a partner consistently avoids revealing their identity, it might raise concerns about being hidden intentionally. This can create insecurities about whether the partner is embarrassed, unfaithful, or not fully invested in the relationship.

● Pressure of Perception

Women often face societal pressures around relationships, with expectations to meet certain milestones openly. A soft launch can feel like stalling or downplaying the seriousness of the connection, especially when others expect visible affirmation.

● Confusion in Communication

The ambiguity of soft launches might result in miscommunication. While one partner may see it as a fun, gradual approach, the other might interpret it as hesitation, creating tension over mismatched expectations.

● Comparison with Others

Social media plays a significant role in how relationships are perceived. Women may compare their soft-launched relationship to others' more openly displayed partnerships, leading to feelings of inadequacy or dissatisfaction.

● Frustration Over Game-Playing

Some women view soft launches as unnecessary "relationship games." They may feel that the practice complicates something that should be straightforward, causing irritation over what might seem like performative behavior.

Navigating the Soft Launch in a Healthy Way

To avoid friction, couples should communicate openly about their intentions behind a soft launch. Here are a few tips:

● Set Expectations Together

Discuss how each partner feels about publicly sharing the relationship and find a middle ground that works for both.

● Respect Individual Comfort Levels

Some partners are more private than others. Respecting this difference while ensuring the other feels valued is key.

● Move Gradually but Transparently

Transition from a soft launch to a more explicit acknowledgment when both partners are ready, ensuring clarity along the way.

● Focus on the Relationship, Not the Audience

Ultimately, the strength of the relationship matters more than how it is displayed. Keep the focus on building trust and mutual understanding.

Sahitya Kala Parishad hosts Vama to celebrate women empowerment

TGG NETWORK

Sahitya Kala Parishad, under the aegis of the Government of NCT of Delhi, hosted Vama: Showcasing Women Artists from Delhi, an inspiring eight-day art exhibition at Shridharani Gallery, Triveni Kala Sangam. This event spotlighted the creative brilliance of 20 eminent women artists from Delhi, offering a platform to amplify their unique voices and perspectives on culture, identity, and contemporary issues.

The exhibition was inaugurated by Shri Saurabh Bharadwaj, Hon'ble Minister of Art, Culture & Languages. Speaking at the opening, he emphasized, "Delhi has always been a hub of ar-

tistic expression, and this initiative reaffirmed our commitment to celebrating the immense talent of women artists. Vama was not just an exhibition but a testament to the power of women in enriching our cultural heritage."

Each artwork at Vama reflected the artists' distinctive journeys, offering a mosaic of perspectives through diverse mediums. Nilanjana Nandy's diptych This Side-That Side explored themes of alienation and division through grid-like spaces. Created over two years, her work delved into the complexities of separation and identity. Angelica Basak's Breathe series, crafted in ceramic, symbolized the delicate balance between chaos and tranquility,



while Rashmi Khurana's mixed-media creations combined paper mache and acrylic to showcase innovative techniques. Shampa Sircar's Mayura Series, a vibrant acrylic on canvas, celebrated life's interconnectedness, with the peacock symbolizing glory and the lotus representing spiritual growth. Aditi Aggarwal's

diptych Dream 6 and 7 reflected memory and uncertainty using the Gum Bichromate process. Her artwork, set in an unfinished studio at Kaladham, featured surreal and dystopian elements. Holding her late father's camera stand, Aditi's creation poignantly navigated themes of identity, change, and connection.

Durga Kainthola's Travelogue Diaries masterfully blended traditional and contemporary styles, exploring identity, trauma, and global interconnectedness. Rashmi Choudhary's photography combined storytelling with visual art. Her works, Goonj and Anant, depicted themes of resilience and hope, with Goonj symbolizing forgotten voices and Anant evoking the infinite layers of life and the cosmos.

Kavita Nayar's Transcending captured the human spirit through oil pastels, while Richa Navani's geometric abstract symbols addressed gender politics, sexuality, and ecology, drawing inspiration from nature and rituals. Pratibha Singh's Terraform series, influenced

by her childhood near the Banaras Ghats, reflected humanity's quest for alternative habitats, using mixed media like paper pulp and coir fibers.

Dipa Potwray's work, interweaving silk and cotton, drew on her Assamese heritage and childhood memories, while Vandana Kumar's photography celebrated the resilience of rural life and migrant stories.

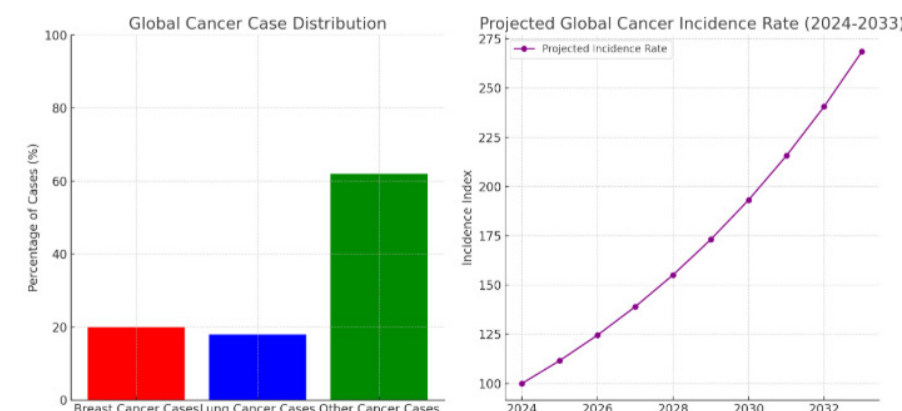
This empowering exhibition provided a platform for women artists to express their creativity and engage with art enthusiasts, critics, and patrons. By showcasing their artistic journeys, Vama reaffirmed the importance of women's contributions to the cultural landscape, leaving a lasting impression on all who attended.

A breakthrough in breast cancer treatment

TGG NETWORK

Shashvi Remedies has unveiled a groundbreaking formulation to combat breast cancer, offering a beacon of hope for patients worldwide. With breast cancer accounting for over 25% of female cancers globally and over 30% in India, this innovation addresses a pressing healthcare challenge.

The formulation, developed after a decade of rigorous research, has shown remarkable results in preclinical studies. In-Vitro tests conducted on the MCF7 human breast cancer cell line in 2018 and 2024 demonstrated the elimination of over 80% of cancer cells within 72 hours. In-Vivo safety studies further confirmed the formulation's ability to target



Bar Graph: Displays the distribution of global cancer cases, with breast cancer now surpassing lung cancer as the most common malignancy.
Line Graph: Projects the global cancer incidence rate, showing an annual increase of 11.6% from 2024 to 2033.

cancerous cells without harming healthy tissue, showcasing an excellent safety profile. Breast cancer has surpassed

lung cancer as the most common malignancy globally, with WHO reports highlighting one in five cancer cases

worldwide linked to breast cancer. In 2022, the disease claimed approximately 670,000 lives, or one death

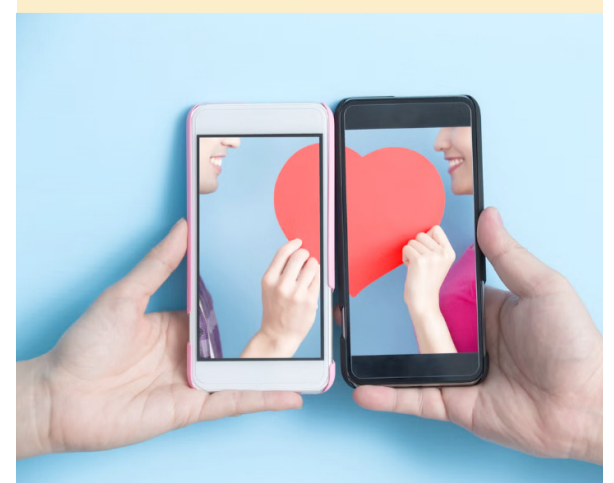


every 14 seconds. Shashvi Remedies' breakthrough offers a significant step forward in reducing these alarming statistics.

Sonal Bansal, Director of Shashvi Remedies, emphasized the formulation's potential to save countless lives. She outlined the company's vision of developing a universal

breast cancer vaccine, aiming for a future where cancer is not only treatable but preventable.

This innovation represents a critical milestone in breast cancer treatment, bringing hope to patients and their families while marking a significant achievement for the global medical community.



Embracing simplicity



ENRIQUE SIMÓ

Simplicity is a virtue of the soul, yet it is a virtue so little acknowledged or valued because it is such a humble virtue. If we were able to simplify our lives we could be so efficient and we could save energy for the most important things in life – our relationships and valuable time for the self. However, it requires effort to eliminate the unnecessary and retain the essential. It requires clarity and purpose.

We need to practise introspection to become clear about our purpose in life. We need to pay attention because we are being pulled all the time by distractions out there. Introspection is a deliberate and thoughtful process and we need to create time for this. Very often, in my work as a

corporate coach, I find that even though executives understand the need for introspection and reflection, the common refrain is “I don’t have time”. We all have the same 24 hours in a day, so if I say I do not have time, then I must be doing something I consider more important or urgent. But if we find time to simplify our lives then we find we use less energy for better results. It requires focus.

WE NEED TO DO LESS OF THREE THINGS

1. Act less – do less of the unimportant things. Use more time to reflect and recognise our purpose in living. Give time to reading, writing a journal, talking to people who matter. Then the mind will work in a more constructive way and we can focus. Know when to say no to things that do not fit in with your purpose. Stop just reacting and responding.

2. Speak less – we use so much energy talking. Many talk so much because of the need to receive the attention, love, and time of others. We need to think about what we are saying and ask ourselves if we are adding value, or bringing benefit. We can make the time we spend with others more



Simplicity is to think less, be present, and allow life to bring what is needed in the moment.

meaningful and withdraw from conversations that are superficial, critical, or just gossip. We save energy by avoiding those conversations. We develop an inner silence and the art of remaining neutral. The fuller we are, the happier we are,

and the more at peace we are, then the less we need to speak.

3. Think less – we need to stop using energy in unnecessary thoughts. We need to reduce the noise in our minds. There are five kinds of thoughts that

draw our energy the most: **a. Worries** – People tend to worry about things that have not even happened and work on solutions to situations that we imagine might happen. Instead, deal with what is happening now, at this moment.

Do whatever we need to do to live in the present moment; train the mind to do this. We need to pay attention to our thinking patterns during the day, to be able to have powerful meditation in the early mornings.

We need to practise introspection to become clear about our purpose in life. We need to pay attention because we are being pulled all the time by distractions out there.

b. Assumptions – When we notice someone, we instantly create all kinds of assumptions, based on imagination. This drains our energy and creates so many problems in relationships.

c. Expectations – How often do we find that we are disappointed in someone because they have not fulfilled our expectations? Yet, we never told them what our expectations were. We must keep things simple, be curious, and ask questions to clarify situations.

d. Judgements – When we meet others, we often make judgements about the clothes they wear, and their facial expressions. We

create thousands of stories according to our filters and experiences but not according to reality. It is better not to waste our energy with noisy judgements about strangers we will never see again.

e. Desires – We are pulled all the time by social media, marketing and advertising campaigns vying for our attention. We waste our time and money on things we do not need and never even wanted.

Imagine the space and clarity we can have in the mind if we stop all of these noisy, complicated thought patterns. Simplicity is to think less, really be present, and allow life to bring all we need in the moment, to deal with whatever is happening.

Meditation is the key to living a simple life. Spending time in the early morning to create thoughts of our spiritual identity and connect with the light of the Divine, puts us on a higher frequency. Our minds become divinised, and then, quite simply, magic happens.

Enrique Simó is an executive coach and coordinates the activities of the Brahma Kumaris' Spanish headquarters in Madrid.

Remaining stable in the face of challenges



B.K. SURYA

All of us face various challenges in life. Recurring challenges can make some people despondent and depressed. It need not be so. Instead of being overwhelmed by problems, we can overcome them, or at least remain unaffected, by learning to deal with them in such a manner that they leave us wiser and stronger. Adopting some principles in life helps in this.

The first principle is to accept and learn to live with what we cannot control or change. A lot many happenings in the world are beyond our control, and getting worked up over them does not help. Some of the events may be truly distressing, but when we are in no position to influence

them, it is better to recognise them as a reflection of the current state of the world and not allow our mind to be disturbed. We can keep our outlook positive, with good wishes for all concerned. That may be easy to do when we are not personally affected by events, but when it comes to our own life, a major cause of sorrow are unhappy memories of past experiences. Coming to terms with the past is necessary to have a strong footing, emotionally, and to be able to move forward in life. The past cannot be changed, so it is wise to accept it for what it was and remember that was a different time – the present is not the same and I can choose to do better now. It is crucial to put the past behind us, otherwise we pointlessly expend our time and energy agonizing over it, which leaves the mind disturbed and weak. The mind is strong when it is calm, and that is when it is able to make the right decisions.

When we look for the root causes of the problems confronting us, we find that our circumstances are not to blame: others may be coping with similar situations quite well. It is the way



No situation or person can break us mentally unless we give in.

we see the situation and respond to it that generates feelings of anger, frustration, sorrow, or resignation. It has been said that a problem is nothing but the creation of a weak mind. If a weak mind gives rise to problems, the opposite is also true – a strong mind resolves problems.

We can remain strong when we have the determination never to lose hope and give up. No situation or person can break us mentally unless we give in. The journey of life is like a movie playing on a screen. The scenes are continually changing and nothing remains as it is. The same is true of the difficulties before us today: they were not there earlier



When we look for the root causes of the problems confronting us, we find that our circumstances are not to blame: others may be coping with similar situations quite well.

and will not remain forever. They will pass with time and let them pass, without engaging too much with them emotionally. Knowing that no problem is permanent helps us remain strong and stable.

A powerful tool everyone can use to clear life's hurdles is the power of positive thoughts. Every thought carries with it subtle energy which shapes the future. We can create a good future by purposefully and regularly creating positive thoughts: 'I am stronger than the situations before me...', 'All will turn out well...', 'Tomorrow will be a better day...' 'Once we make it a habit to think in this manner, with an indomitable spirit, nothing can defeat us and stop us from moving ahead in life.'

B.K. Surya is a Rajyoga teacher at the Brahma Kumaris headquarters in Mount Abu, Rajasthan.

The power of kindness



JUDY JOHNSON

Kindness is the cornerstone of human existence. Beneath all the noise and sorrow, there is a bedrock that never moves. And that bedrock is love.

There are many words that describe this core energy of love: benevolence, care, compassion, concern, courtesy, gentleness, goodness, goodwill, grace, sweetness, tenderness, thoughtfulness, tolerance, understanding, and unselfishness.

Kindness is the all-purpose, everyday, all-round, in-every-situation expression of my natural state of love. It is versatile because it can be applied in any situation.

I may not be able to love everyone, but I can be kind.

J.R.R. Tolkien, author of 'The Hobbit' and 'The Lord of the Rings', believed that it was only the "small acts of kindness and love that combat evil."

Kindness is not only a moral imperative but also a spiritual practice. By choosing kindness, we align ourselves with the Higher Power and contribute to the creation of a more compassionate world.

When we are kind to others, we are basically being complicit with goodness and with God. God's ultimate goal is to awaken the inherent goodness within each soul. By practising kindness, we participate in this divine mission.

The God I understand is a God of pure love, devoid of punishment or fear. Turning to this divine love instantly fills me with a sense of my spiritual beauty, a beauty that God has always seen.

God is my constant companion, my partner, and my ally. When I doubt my own kindness or goodness, I turn to that Source of love. It is easier to feel full of love, even



When we are kind to others, we are being complicit with goodness, and with God.

when I am feeling down.

Kindness begins when I learn to be kind to myself. If I am unable to be kind to myself, I am unable to be genuinely kind to others. Being hard on myself is a major obstacle to self-kindness. It is self-judgment that stops me from being kind to myself. Past mistakes and perceived shortcomings can hinder self-compassion and lead to a negative self-image.

We all have memories of when we did not act in our own best interest. These past experiences can create a negative self-image, making it difficult to extend kindness to ourselves. But it is important to remember that we were doing the best we could at the time.

It is a challenge to maintain kindness in a world that often seems hostile.

Kindness is also cultivating a

mindset of compassion and understanding. By recognizing that everyone is struggling in their own way, we can respond with empathy and patience.

Everyone's bad behaviour is driven by their unkindness to the self, their negative beliefs about themselves. I can only see that if I stay a little quieter inside. By prioritising our inner peace and spiritual connection, we can offer

authentic and lasting kindness to others.

Beware of the pitfalls of over-involvement and people-pleasing, which can deplete our energy and hinder our ability to help others. It is wise to check the self, am I getting over-involved? Am I living with the illusion that I can fix someone? This is not kindness. Instead of trying to solve everyone's problems, I can cultivate an attitude of kindness that empowers others. I can give good wishes through my mind, and power. This kindness allows others to find their own solutions and grow from their experiences. We do this by developing the power of discernment. We become attuned to when to offer assistance and when to practise compassionate detachment.

Breaking old patterns of over-involvement can be challenging. True kindness involves establishing healthy boundaries and offering support without sacrificing our own well-being.

Judy Johnson coordinates the activities of Brahma Kumaris meditation centres in Atlantic Canada.

A THOUGHT FOR TODAY

Fixed lines of loyalty and kinship often define who we are willing to help. Historical and tribal boundaries are crossed when there is need. When extreme difficulties occur, people reach beyond the comfort of their perimeter (neighbourhood, race, or culture) to help others. It is uplifting and inspiring to witness this and feeds a growing sense of unity in our human family. Today let me stretch my heart and mind beyond my zone of comfort.

DHIRAJ, DEEPIKA EMERGE NATIONAL CHAMPIONS

AGENCIES
JAMSHEDPUR

Olympian duo Dhiraj Bommadevara and Deepika Kumari overcame tough challenges from their respective opponents to emerge men's and women's recurve champions in the Archery Senior National here on Friday.

Representing Petroleum Sports Promotion Board (PSPB), Deepika, who has returned empty-handed from four Olympics, defeated her Paris Games teammate Ankita Bhakat 6-2 in the women's final.

Kolkata's Ankita, who represents Jharkhand, took the second set as Deepika faltered but the seasoned archer regained her rhythm to seal the title.

Rising archer from Haryana, Divyansh Chaudhary also gave India international Dheeraj some anxious moments by holding the first two sets.

But the Services archer won the next two sets to clinch the men's title with a 6-2 margin. It was an upset of sorts for heavyweights Services in the team event as the second seeded team



had to settle for a bronze, (29-28). Railways took the Haryana 6-2. Deepika earned two gold pipping Rajasthan 5-4 men's team gold, defeating

Results (all recurve finals)

Men's individual: Dhiraj Bommadevara (SSCB) b Divyansh Chaudhary (HAR) 6-2; Bronze play-off: Atul Verma (UTK) b Chingakham Achanba Singh (ARU) 7-1.

Women's individual: Deepika Kumari (PSPB) b Ankita Bhakat (JHA) 6-2; **Bronze play-off:** Simranjeet Kaur (PUN) b Bhargavi Bhagora (GUJ) 6-5 (8-7).

Men's team: Railways b Haryana 6-2; Bronze play-off: SSCB bt Rajasthan 5-4 (29-28).

Women's team: Jharkhand b Madhya Pradesh 5-3; **Bronze play-off:** Maharashtra b Railways 6-2.

Mixed team: PSPB b Punjab 6-2; Bronze play-off: Madhya Pradesh b Maharashtra 5-1.

medals for PSPB, adding a second in the mixed team event where she partnered her husband Atanu Das to defeat Punjab 6-2.

South Africa suffer big blow, Baartman ruled out of 3rd ODI against Pakistan

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

After losing out on the ODI series, South Africa's woes increased, with Otneil Baartman being ruled out of the third ODI against Pakistan due to a problem in his right knee.

Baartman became the latest entry in South Africa's constantly growing list of injuries. He is the second player after spinner Keshav Maharaj to get sidelined in the ODI series. Overall, he is the sixth seamer to be ruled out with injury this summer, including Gerald Coetzee, Wiaan Mulder, Lungi Ngidi, Lizaad Williams and Anrich Nortje.

All-rounder Corbin Bosch, who earned his maiden call-up to South Africa's Test squad, will replace Baartman in the ODI squad for the final match of the series.

Cricket South Africa revealed that Baartman experienced discomfort during his run-up ahead of the second ODI on Thursday in Cape Town. He will return home and undergo further assessments for the problem he has faced in his right knee.

After the ODI-leg finishes on Sunday, Pakistan and South Africa will compete in a two-match Test series, beginning on December 26 in Centurion.

Delhi to host 2025 Para Athletics World Championships



AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

Marking a historic first for India, the national capital will host the Para Athletics World Championships in 2025, the global governing body WPA announced on Thursday, December 19, 2024.

The event, set to be staged between September 26 and October 5, will be held at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium, which will also host the World Para Athletics Grand Prix from March 11-13.

The Para Athletics World Championships will be the 12th edition of the event and it will be held in Asia for the fourth time.

Over 1,000 athletes from more than 100 nations are expected to participate, with the competition serving as a key event in the lead-up to the Los Angeles Paralympic Games 2028.

"The 2025 Para Athletics World Championships will be the largest international Para sport event ever to take place in India, representing a massive opportunity to grow our sport, our fan base, and to impact society's perception

of persons with disabilities in the world's most populous nation," Paul Fitzgerald, head of the World Para Athletics said in a statement.

India's progress in Para athletics has been impressive, with the country securing 17 medals, including six gold, at the 2023 World Championships in Kobe.

"This success reflects the work of the National Paralympic Committee of India and the investment being made in sports, particularly Para athletics, in the country.

"We have witnessed the impact major events can have and the legacy they can leave to make Para sports more visible and accessible to everyone. "We believe this can happen in New Delhi, and we look forward to welcoming the world's best athletes to India next year," he added.

The National Paralympic Committee of India emphasised that hosting this event is crucial in accelerating the Paralympic movement in the country.

"This prestigious championship will not only elevate India's position on the global sports map but also play a pivotal role in acceler-

ating the Paralympic movement within the country," NPC India stated.

"With a population of over 60 million persons with disabilities, this event is a crucial step in fostering inclusivity, empowering athletes, and expanding opportunities for athletes with disabilities.

"We are excited to welcome athletes, coaches, and officials from around the world to showcase India's unparalleled growth in the field of Para sports."

Additionally, the hosting of the 2025 Para Athletics World Championships is expected to serve as a significant boost to India's bid to host the 2029 World Athletics Championships.

World Athletics President Sebastian Coe has already expressed interest in India's anticipated bid for the 2029 World Championships, a key event in India's broader strategy to host the 2036 Olympics.

The Athletics Federation of India is expected to formally express interest in hosting the 2029 World Championships when the bidding process opens.

Sachin, Kapil Dev on caller list leaves recently retired Ravichandran Ashwin amazed

AGENCIES
CHENNAI

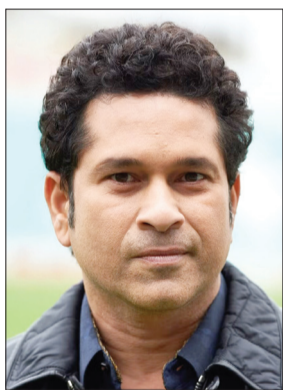
Former Indian off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin expressed his feelings after seeing the names of former India skipper Kapil Dev and legendary India batter Sachin Tendulkar on his call logs on the last day of his international career.

India's celebrated off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin revealed his decision to retire from international cricket moments after the Brisbane Test ended in a draw on Wednesday.

The 38-year-old took to his official social media handle and said that he would suffer a "heart attack" 25 years after knowing that this will be his call log on the day of hi

"If someone told me 25 years ago that I would have a smartphone with me and the call log on the last day of my career as an Indian cricketer would look like this, I would have had a heart attack then only.

Thanks, @sachin_rt and @therealkapildev paaji," Ashwin wrote in a post on X. Earlier on Wednesday, Ashwin appeared alongside India's captain Rohit Sharma at the post-match press conference to announce his decision. Speculation about his retire-



Ashwin played 106 Tests, taking a staggering 537 wickets, including 37 five-wicket hauls, and scored 3,503 runs.

ment began to build when he became emotional and was hugged by Virat Kohli.

Ashwin played 106 Tests, taking a staggering 537 wickets, including 37 five-wicket hauls, and scored 3,503 runs. His contributions to Indian cricket extend far beyond these impressive statistics.

He is the seventh-highest

wicket-taker in Test cricket history and the second-highest for India, behind Anil Kumble (619). He also has the second-most five-wicket hauls in Tests, after Sri Lankan legend Muttiah Muralitharan (67).

Ashwin was instrumental in India's dominance in Test cricket, especially during their rise to the top

between 2014 and 2019.

In limited-overs cricket, Ashwin played 181 matches, taking 228 wickets. He featured in 116 ODIs, claiming 156 wickets with best figures of 4/25 and scoring 707 runs. In 65 T20Is, he took 72 wickets, with best figures of 4/8, and scored 184 runs.

With 765 international wickets across formats, Ashwin is India's second-highest wicket-taker, behind Kumble (953). He was also part of India's 2011 World Cup-winning squad and the 2013 Champions Trophy team.

Ashwin's retirement marks the end of a remarkable era, leaving behind a legacy that will inspire future generations.

Son Heung-min scores rare direct goal win against Manchester United

TDG NETWORK
LONDON

Son Heung-min scored a spectacular goal directly from a corner to fire Tottenham into the English League Cup semifinals in a thrilling 4-3 win over Manchester United. Spurs will play Premier League leader Liverpool for a place in the final, and Arsenal were drawn against Newcastle in the other last-four match-up. Son's strike in the 88th minute at the Tottenham Hotspur Stadium came as Spurs tried to hold off a dramatic comeback from Unit-

ed, having led 3-0 in the second half. United had pulled it back to 3-2 and was pushing for an equalizer when Son whipped in a curling right-footed shot past goalkeeper Altay Bayindir. — PA010401 (@PA010401) "Obviously we made it harder than it should have been, for sure," Tottenham manager Ange Postecoglou said and added, "Are you not entertained?" United's players complained Bayindir had been fouled by Tottenham's Lucas Bergvall as Son's shot flew past him. Replays appeared to show contact between the two,



Having gone ahead through Dominic Solanke's goal from close range in the 15th, Tottenham took control after the break. Dejan Kulusevski doubled the lead a minute after the restart and Solanke fired in his second in the 54th.

but with no VAR at this stage of the competition, there was no chance of a review. Jonny Evans scored again for United in stoppage time, but Spurs held on for the win that had looked all but certain shortly after halftime. Having gone ahead through Dominic Solanke's goal from close range in the 15th, Tottenham took control after the break. Dejan Kulusevski doubled the lead a minute after the restart and Solanke fired in his second in the 54th. United head coach Ruben Amorim made a triple substitution - bringing on

Joshua Zirkzee, Amad Diallo and Kobbie Mainoo. It quickly had an impact with Zirkzee forcing Fraser Forster into a flying save and then capitalizing on a loose pass by the Tottenham goalkeeper to make it 3-1. Forster was guilty of another mistake in the 70th when his attempted clearance was closed down by Diallo and ricocheted over the line. United increased the pressure, but Son's unlikely goal gave Spurs a cushion again - and it proved to be the decisive strike after Evans' late header reduced the deficit again.