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SIT TO PROBE ALLEGATIONS OF COMMISSION AGAINST PREVIOUS BJP GOVT IN KARNATAKA



11
HOW NASA PLANS TO TACKLE SPACE WASTE WITH A \$3M PRIZE



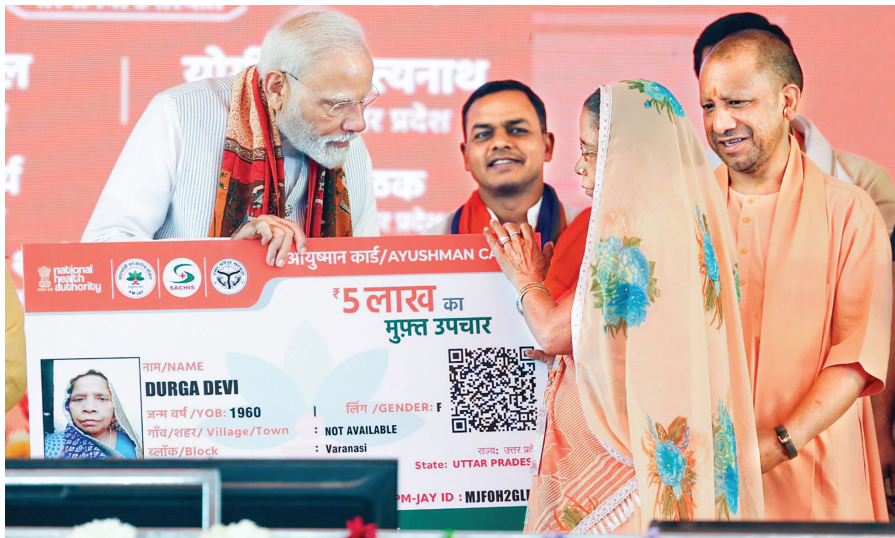
16
KKR CRUSH CSK IN DOMINANT EIGHT-WICKET VICTORY

PM MODI RENEWS 'PARIVAR' ATTACK ON OPPOSITION

■ Kashi is finest example of balancing development and heritage: PM

TDG NETWORK
VARANASI

In a veiled attack on the Opposition, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday said that some political parties are focused on gaining power than public service by following the mantra of 'Parivar ka Saath, Parivar ka Vikas.' whereas his government is committed to working for the people by following the idea of 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas'. "Our mantra is to serve for the country, 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas'. We take the country forward with that idea, whose dedicated belief is, Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas. Those who conspire only to grab power and remain in power work with the mantra 'Parivar ka Saath, Parivar ka Vikas.' I am working towards 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas,'" the



Prime Minister Narendra Modi hands over an Ayushman card to an elderly person during an event, in Varanasi on Friday. Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath also seen. ANI

Prime Minister said in Varanasi. PM Modi emphasised India's journey of balancing development and heritage and highlighted Kashi as the finest example of this model.

"Kashi is the most beautiful representation of India's soul and diversity. The unique culture in every neighborhood and the distinct colors of India visible in every lane of Kashi and expressed happiness over

initiatives like the Kashi-Tamil Sangamam, which continue to strengthen the threads of unity," he said. He announced the upcoming Ekta Mall in Kashi, which will showcase India's diver-

Today, we are carrying forward their ideas of Mahatma Jyotiba Phule and his wife Savitribai Phule, with new energy

— PM Modi

PM received a detailed briefing on alleged gang-rape of a young woman in his constituency and asked officials to take the strictest possible action against the culprits

AIADMK, BJP are friends again

To fight TN polls together

AGENCIES
CHENNAI

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Friday said that AIADMK, BJP and all the alliance parties will contest the upcoming Vidhan Sabha elections in Tamil Nadu together under the National Democratic Alliance. The significant political development comes ahead of the TN Assembly election to be held in 2026,



Home Minister Amit Shah addresses a press conference in the presence of BJP leader K Annamalai and AIADMK General Secretary Edappadi K. Palaniswami, in Chennai on Friday. ANI

"AIADMK and BJP leaders have decided that AIADMK, BJP and all the alliance parties will con-

test the upcoming Vidhan Sabha elections in Tamil Nadu together as NDA,"

■ P3

List of 'tainted' teachers in 10 days

SUPRATIM MUKHERJEE
KOLKATA

After hours of deliberation with the State Education Minister Bratya Basu and the School Service Commission Chairman Siddhartha Mazumdar, the protesting teaching and non-teaching staff returned with the assurance that the administra-

tion was working towards segregating the "tainted" and "untainted" candidates. In more than 20 hearings before the Calcutta High Court and the Supreme Court, the State Government had claimed it was not possible to segregate the two. Basu said the process should be completed within

two weeks. "We went to the meeting with two main demands. Segregation of the list of candidates into tainted and untainted, and publish the mirror image of the OMR sheets," said Sujay Sardar, a non-teaching staff member who lost his job after last week's

■ P3

Rains, storms wreak havoc in Bihar, 80 die

PATNA: As many as 80 people lost their lives in Bihar following the devastating storm and rains that struck the state, Bihar Minister of Disaster Management, Vijay Kumar Mandal, said on Friday. "So far, the death toll stands at 80.. CM has announced compensation, we are providing Rs 4 lakh each to the bereaved families. People have suffered losses to thun-



Representative image. derstorm and rain, farmers too have suffered losses. ..." Mandal said. Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar has expressed grief.

■ DETAILS P2

22 killed in rains and thunderstorm in UP

LUCKNOW: At least 22 people and 45 animals were killed across the Uttar Pradesh following the destructive thunderstorms and rains in the state. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has announced Rs 4 lakhs ex-gratia to the kin of the deceased. "UP government declares Rs 4 lakh ex-gratia to kin of deceased in thun-

derstorm and rain that occurred today. According to the Office of Relief Commissioner, a total of 22 people and 45 animals died and 15 houses were damaged across state," an official statement said. CM Yogi has expressed condolences to the bereaved families of the deceased.

■ DETAILS P2

Forex kitty swells by \$676.268 bn

MUMBAI: Forex reserves jumped USD 10.872 billion to USD 676.268 billion during the week ended April 4, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) said on Friday. The overall kitty had jumped USD 6.596 billion to USD 665.396 billion in the previous reporting week. This is the fifth consecutive week of an increase in the kitty, which had seen some decline recently.

Sensex, Nifty gain 2% on tariff pause

MUMBAI: The BSE benchmark Sensex surged by 1,310 points while Nifty closed above 22,900 level on Friday on gains in banking, oil and metal shares as investors rejoiced the 90-day suspension of additional import duties by the US. Trump paused reciprocal tariffs on many countries that have engaged in negotiations with the US administration.

■ DETAILS P7

Gold prices shoot up amid trade war

NEW DELHI: Gold prices surged by Rs 6,250 to hit a record high of Rs 96,450 per 10 grams in the national capital on Friday, according to the All India Sarafa Association. Analysts said the precious metal hitting lifetime high level on safe-haven demand amid US-China trade tensions boosted the prices.

Factory output falls to 6-month low of 2.9%

NEW DELHI: India's industrial production growth decelerated to a six-month low of 2.9 per cent in February 2025, mainly due to poor performance of the manufacturing, mining and power sectors, according to official data. The factory output, measured in terms of the Index of Industrial Production (IIP), had risen by 5.6 per cent in February 2024. Manufacturing output growth slowed to 2.9 per cent down from 4.9 per cent in the year-ago month.

■ DETAILS P7

Rana wanted Pak gallantry award for LeT terrorists in Mumbai attack

AGENCIES
WASHINGTON

The US Department of Justice (DoJ) has revealed that Tahawwur Rana who was extradited to India to face trial for his alleged role in the 2008 Mumbai attacks had following the attacks in which over 160 people died, told David Coleman Headley that the Indians "deserved it."

In an intercepted conversation with Headley, Rana allegedly commended the nine LeT terrorists who had been killed committing the attacks, saying that "They should be given Nishan-e-Haider"--Pakistan's "highest award for gallantry in battle," which is reserved for fallen soldiers, the DoJ said.

In a statement dated April 10, the US Department of Justice said that India alleged that Rana facilitated a fraudulent cover so that his childhood friend David Coleman Headley (Headley), a US citizen born Daood Gilani, could freely travel to Mumbai for the purpose of conducting surveillance of potential attack sites for the proscribed

According to US Department of Justice, Rana told David Coleman Headley that Indians "deserved it".

LeT. "As India alleges, Headley had received training from LeT members in Pakistan and was in direct communication with LeT about plans to attack Mumbai," the US Department of Justice statement read.

"Among other things, Rana allegedly agreed to open a Mumbai branch of his immigration business and appoint Headley as the manager of the office, despite Headley's having no immigration experience. On two separate occasions, Rana allegedly helped Headley prepare and submit visa applications to Indian authorities that contained information Rana knew to be false. Rana also allegedly supplied, through his unsuspecting business

■ P3



Mumbai attacks accused Tahawwur Rana being produced at Patiala House Court, following extradition from the US, in New Delhi on Thursday. ANI

NIA gets custody of Rana for 18 days

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

Mumbai attack mastermind Tahawwur Husain Rana will be questioned in detail by the National Investigation Agency to unravel the conspiracy behind the deadly 26/11 terror strike and his role as a planner of the attacks after a court here granted the agency his 18-day custody early Friday. The anti-terror agency had produced Rana before the NIA Special Court at Patiala House after formally placing him under arrest on his arrival here on Thursday evening, following his extradition from the US. Special National Investigation Agency (NIA) judge Chanderjit Singh sent Rana to 18-day custody while the NIA sought 20-day custody.

Mumbai attack mastermind Tahawwur Husain Rana will be questioned in detail by the National Investigation Agency to unravel the conspiracy behind the deadly 26/11 terror strike and his role as a planner of the attacks after a court here granted the agency his 18-day custody early Friday.



A child being rescued by the residents of Parishkar 1 apartments in the Khokhra area where a fire broke out, in Ahmedabad on Friday. No casualty reported. ANI

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

Strong dust storms and gusty winds followed by rain hit the national capital on Friday evening, causing trees to be uprooted in several parts of Delhi-NCR. The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has issued an orange alert, which indicates that residents should "be prepared" and "take action" as per its colour-coded advisory.



A tree falls on vehicles due to a dust storm, at Canning Lane in New Delhi on Friday. ANI

Red alert in Delhi as capital taken by storm

The IMD recommended that people stay indoors, secure windows and doors, and avoid unnecessary travel, among other things.

According to the IMD, wind speed data showed that IGI Airport reported gusts of wind at 74 kmph, Pragati Maidan at 70 kmph, and Lodhi Road at 69 kmph. Wind speeds ranged from 37 kmph in Najafgarh to 56 kmph in Safdarjung.

Civic bodies have received more than 20 calls on uprooted trees in several parts, including Feroz Shah Road, Ashoka Road, Mandi House, and Connaught Place, and it led to traffic congestion.

Thunderstorms led to power disruptions in several parts of the city, primarily due to trees and branches falling on electricity cables. An electric pole has also fallen at ITO.

■ P3

RAHUL TAKES JIBE AT CENTRE'S JOB INCENTIVE SCHEME, CALLS IT 'JUMLA'

BJP hits back at Congress leader, says he is 'weaponising' ignorance

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

Rahul Gandhi on Friday accused the government of not even defining the Employment Linked Incentive scheme announced a year back by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and asked if it was just another jumla, as the BJP retorted that the Congress leader was weaponising ignorance.

Addressing Modi, Gandhi said on X that while he creates new slogans every day, the youth are still waiting for real opportunities. He said, "What is your concrete plan to generate the crores of jobs India desperately needs, or is this just another jumla?" Hitting back, BJP's Amit Malviya said either Gandhi's team has completely failed to brief him on the facts or, far more likely, he is "weaponising his trademark ignorance to gaslight India's youth".

The ruling party's IT department head said, "This isn't a gaffe; it's a calculated strategy to

'WHERE IS ELI SCHEME?'

- The way to create crores of jobs is through large-scale investment in MSMEs, fair markets where competition can thrive, support for local production networks and youth equipped with the right skills, Rahul said.
- The PM won't agree with these ideas. But I must ask him directly: Prime Minister ji, you announced ELI with great showmanship - but where has this Rs 10,000 crore scheme disappeared? Have you abandoned our unemployed youth along with your promises?, said Congress leader
- BJP's Amit Malviya said the Modi



government has delivered on-ground programmes and measurable results while the Congress' legacy remains of empty slogans and broken promises.

distort reality, using his platform to spread misinformation under the guise of cluelessness." The Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha said that after the 2024 election, PM Modi announced the "Employment Linked Incentive" scheme with much fanfare, promising to provide employment to our youth.

"It's been nearly a year since announcing the scheme, the government hasn't even defined it, and has returned the Rs 10,000 crores allotted to it. This shows how serious the PM is about unemployment," he alleged without elaborating the claim. Malviya claimed that only 2.9 crore jobs were created during 2004-14 under the

Congress-led UPA government, while the corresponding figure for the Modi government during 2014-24 was 17.19 crore. He added, "In just the last year alone (2023-24), 4.6 crore jobs were created - more than the entire decade of Congress rule."

In his criticism of the government's employment policy, Gandhi said jobs

Will extend Haryana's pro-farmer policies to Punjab if BJP wins: Saini

TDG NETWORK
CHANDIGARH

With an eye on Punjab's 2027 Assembly elections, Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini on Wednesday reignited the BJP's outreach to Punjab's rural heartland, promising to bring Haryana's farmer-centric policies across the border if the party is voted to power.

In a post on X, CM Saini wrote, "If the BJP forms the government in the upcoming Punjab Assembly elections, then every farmer-friendly decision of the Modi government, just like in Haryana, will be implemented in Punjab as well."

He added that BJP's proposed government in Punjab would "not only procure all crops from farmers at MSP but also give them the same respect and dignity that farmers are receiving in Haryana."

This isn't Saini's first at-



tempt to court Punjab's agrarian vote bank. During the farmers' agitation, he had made a similar pitch, assuring that the BJP would bring a law guaranteeing MSP procurement of all crops in Punjab if given the mandate.

The Haryana CM's statement comes at a time when rural distress remains a key issue in Punjab politics, and disillusionment with successive state governments has created space for new narratives. BJP is actively trying to fill that void, using Haryana's development model as a political calling card. Last month, while

addressing a political rally, Saini shared a telling anecdote about Punjab farmers visiting him at his Chandigarh residence. "They were astonished," he recalled, "They told me, 'You met us directly, but our own CM never did.' I assured them — don't worry, lotus will bloom in Punjab in 2027."

Saini's statement also comes in the backdrop of his recent visit to the residence of senior BJP leader Manoranjan Kalra in Jalandhar, following a grenade attack at Kalra's home. The visit was not just an expression of solidarity but also seen as a political message aimed at strengthening BJP's ground connection in Punjab. With repeated visits and press statements tailored for Punjab, the Haryana CM appears to be spearheading the BJP's long-term strategy of translating its development narrative.

Centre 'virtually eliminating' FDI: Jairam

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Congress MP Jairam Ramesh on Friday accused the Narendra Modi government in the centre of "virtually eliminating" the Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), which, he said, reduced to less than 1.4 billion dollars from April 2024 to January 2025 as compared to total FDI recorded at 19 billion dollars from April 2012 to January 2013. He alleged that the central government has also "destroyed" domestic investment (DI).

Taking a dig at the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)-led government, Ramesh said they have replaced the FDI policy with another type of FDI, representing Fear, Deceit, and Intimidation.

can't be created by focusing only on large corporates, promoting cronies over fair-play businesses, prioritising assembly over production, and disregarding India's indigenous skills.

"The way to create crores of jobs is through large-scale investment in MSMEs, fair markets where competition can thrive, support for local production networks and youth equipped with the right skills," he said.

"The PM won't agree with these ideas. But I must ask him directly: Prime Minister ji, you announced ELI with great showmanship - but where has this Rs 10,000 crore scheme disappeared? Have you abandoned our unemployed youth along with your promises?"

"While you create new slogans every day, our youth are still waiting for real opportunities.

What is your concrete plan to generate the crores of jobs India desperately needs, or is this just another jumla?" he said.

80 killed as rains, storms wreak havoc in Bihar, kin of deceased to get Rs 4 lakh

TDG NETWORK
PATNA

As many as 80 people lost their lives in Bihar following the devastating storm and rains that struck the state, Bihar Minister of Disaster Management, Vijay Kumar Mandal, said on Friday.

"So far, the death toll stands at 80... Chief Minister has announced compensation, we are providing Rs 4 Lakhs each to the bereaved families. People have suffered losses to thunderstorm and rain, farmers too have suffered losses.

We are making arrangements for that too. The government is very serious about this, and we will work on it," Mandal said. Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar has expressed grief and directed officials to extend Rs 4 lakh compensation to the families of each deceased person. Earlier today, Rashtriya

Varanasi gang rape case: PM Modi instructs officials to take strictest action

TDG NETWORK
VARANASI

Immediately upon landing in Varanasi, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday received a detailed briefing from the Police Commissioner, Divisional Commissioner, and District Magistrate of Varanasi regarding the recent criminal rape incident in the city. He instructed them to take the strictest possible action against the culprits and to implement appropriate measures to prevent such incidents in the future.

In the case, a total of nine accused were sent to judicial custody by the District and Sessions Court. The police found the victim on April 4 in an unconscious state. A total of 23 people have been accused in the case.

The police had said that the 9 were arrested in connection with the case and the rest of the accused would be arrested soon. The case has been registered under relevant sections at the Lalpur Pandeypur police station. According to the police the girl was lured and taken



The police had said that the 9 were arrested in connection with the case and the rest of the accused would be arrested soon.

away and raped for several days. The victim alleged that 23 people raped her over a span of 7 days. Meanwhile, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has arrived at the venue, where PM Modi will address a public meeting, to take stock of the preparation. In line with his commitment to infrastructure development, particularly enhancing

road connectivity in Varanasi, PM Modi will inaugurate and lay the foundation stone for various road projects in the region. Furthermore, he will lay the foundation stone for a road bridge between Varanasi Ring Road and Sarnath, flyovers at Bhikharipur and Manduadih crossings of the city and a highway underpass road tunnel on NH-31 at the Varanasi International Airport worth over Rs 980 crore.

According to the Prime Minister's Office, the Prime Minister will inaugurate two 400 KV and one 220 KV transmission substations and associated transmission lines in the Jaunpur, Chandauli, and Ghazipur districts of the Varanasi division, worth over Rs 1,045 crore.

He will also lay the foundation stone of a 220 KV transmission substation at Chaukaghat, Varanasi, a 132 KV transmission substation in Ghazipur and augmentation of the Varanasi city electricity distribution system worth over Rs 775 crore.



People have suffered losses to thunderstorm and rain, farmers too have suffered losses. The RJD leader further demanded that the government compensate all farmers

Janata Dal (RJD) leader and Bihar LoP Tejashwi Yadav expressed condolences on the loss of lives in Bihar following devastating thunderstorms and rains that wreaked havoc in the state. Taking to social media post on X, Yadav demanded that the government provide 'proper' compensa-

tion to all the affected families.

"I am deeply saddened by the tragic deaths of more than 50 people in various incidents of storm, rain, lightning, tree and wall collapse in Bihar. I express my deepest condolences to all the deceased. May God provide strength to the families affected by

the disaster in this hour of grief. There is a demand from the Bihar government to provide proper compensation to all the affected families," Yadav posted on X. The RJD leader further demanded that the government compensate all farmers who lost their wheat crop due to the sudden rain. "The wheat crop kept in the barns of the farmers was also destroyed due to the sudden heavy rain.

The Bihar government should compensate all such farmers for their loss and give them proper compensation," he added.

The powerful storm, which uprooted trees and brought down structures across the region, led to fatalities in multiple blocks of Nalanda.

In addition to the loss of human lives, significant damage has also been reported to homes, livestock, and agricultural crops.

22 killed in thunderstorms, rains in UP

TDG NETWORK
LUCKNOW

At least 22 people and 45 animals were killed across the Uttar Pradesh following destructing thunderstorms and rains in the state. The devastating incident that occurred on Thursday also led to the damage of 15 houses in the state. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, the lead state government, announced Rs 4 lakhs ex-gratia to the kin of the deceased in the incident. In a statement, the state government said, "UP government declares Rs 4 lakh ex-gratia to kin of deceased in thunderstorm and Rain that occurred today. According to the Office of Relief Commissioner, a total of 22

CM Yogi announces Rs 4 lakh ex-gratia for deceased

people and 45 animals died and 15 houses were damaged across state." The Chief Minister has expressed condolences to the bereaved families of the deceased who lost their lives due to storms and lightning.

Taking to social media post on X, the office of Yogi Adityanath wrote, "Chief Minister @myogiadityanath Ji has expressed deep condolences on the loss of life due to storm and lightning in the state and expressed his condolences to the bereaved families. Maharaj Ji has given instructions to immediately distribute the permissible relief amount

of Rs 4 lakh to the families of those who died in this natural disaster and to provide proper treatment to the injured. Maharaj Ji has also directed the provision of permissible assistance to those affected by animal loss."

The Regional Meteorological Department has issued an orange alert for several districts of the state, especially for the eastern part of the state for today (April 11). The regional MeT centre has predicted thunderstorms, lighting and squall like conditions for the districts of Lucknow, Varanasi, Ayodhya, Chandauli, Barabanki, Shrawasti, Balrampur, Maharajganj, Siddharthnagar, Kushinagar, Gonda, Basti, Gorakhpur, Deoria, Unnao, Pratapgarh among others.

Another Hurriyat-affiliated group rejects separatism, commits to unity: Amit Shah

AJAY JANDYAL
SRINAGAR

In a significant development, another constituent of the separatist Hurriyat Conference — the Jammu and Kashmir Mass Movement — has distanced itself from secessionism and declared full allegiance to the unity and Constitution of India, Union Home Minister Amit Shah announced on Friday.

"With this, as many as 12 Hurriyat-linked organisations in Jammu and Kash-



mir have now broken away from separatist ideology," Shah said in a post on X, terming the move a testament to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of Ek

Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat. "Under the Modi government, the spirit of unity rules J&K. Another Hurriyat affiliate, Jammu and Kashmir Mass Movement, has rejected separatism, declaring complete commitment to the unity of Bharat. I sincerely welcome their move," Shah said.

On April 8, three more organisations — the Jammu Kashmir Islamic Political Party, the Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Democratic League, and the Kashmir

Freedom Front — announced their disassociation from the Hurriyat Conference.

Earlier, several other groups had taken similar steps, including the Jammu and Kashmir People's Movement led by Shahid Saleem, the Jammu and Kashmir Democratic Political Movement headed by advocate Shafi Reshi, and the Jammu and Kashmir Freedom Movement under the leadership of Mohammad Sharief Sartaj.

India, ASEAN review free trade agreement in goods as India hosts AITIGA joint panel meet

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Senior officials of India and 10-nation bloc ASEAN have held talks here for the review of free trade agreement in goods between the two regions, the commerce ministry said on Friday.

The 8th meeting of the AITIGA Joint Committee to review the ASEAN-India Trade in Goods Agreement (AITIGA) hosted by India

at Vanijya Bhawan, New Delhi, concluded on Friday. The meeting, which began on April 7, was conducted in a hybrid format.

The meeting was co-chaired by Rajesh Agrawal, Additional Secretary, Department of Commerce, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, and Deputy Co-Chair Sugumari S. Shanmugam, Senior Director Ministry of Investment, Trade and

Industry, Malaysia, according to release by Ministry of Commerce & Industry. The meeting saw participation from delegates representing ASEAN countries, including Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam. The committee's primary objective was to advance the ongoing review of the



AITIGA, aiming to modernize the agreement to be more

effective, user-friendly, and conducive to trade. Five out

of eight Sub-Committees (SCs) under the AITIGA JC also conducted hybrid meetings on the margins of the 8th AITIGA JC.

Out of which, four SCs, namely Sub-Committee on Customs Procedures and Trade Facilitation (SC-CPTF); Sub-Committee on Economic & Technical co-operation (SC-ETC); Sub-Committee on National Treatment and Market

Access (SC-NTMA); and Sub-Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SC-SPS) met in New Delhi, India, while the Sub-Committee on Rules of Origin (SC-RO) met in Jakarta, Indonesia, facilitating progress in textual discussions and progressing in groundwork for tariff negotiations, the release stated. ASEAN remains a pivotal trade partner for India, ac-

counting for approximately 11% of India's global trade.

In the fiscal year 2023-24, bilateral trade between India and ASEAN reached USD 121 billion.

The next AITIGA JC meeting is scheduled for June 2025 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, continuing the collaborative efforts to enhance ASEAN-India economic integration, the release added

THE DAILY GUARDIAN SURVEY ON WAQF AMENDMENT BILL

59% of respondents expressed support for the new Waqf law.

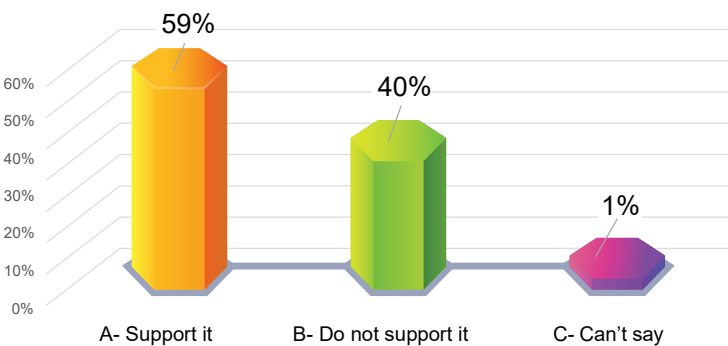
A recent survey on the Waqf Amendment Bill shows that 59% support the new law, while 64% believe recent

riots were a planned conspiracy. Additionally, 61% think misinformation is being spread by opposition

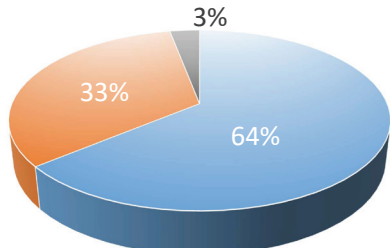
and Muslim leaders. 56% feel BJP's awareness campaign can counter the opposition's narrative effectively.

Q1.▶

What is your opinion about the new Waqf law?

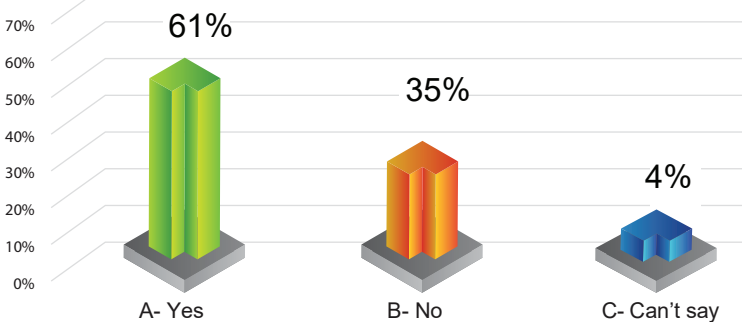


A- Yes
B- No
C - Cannot say



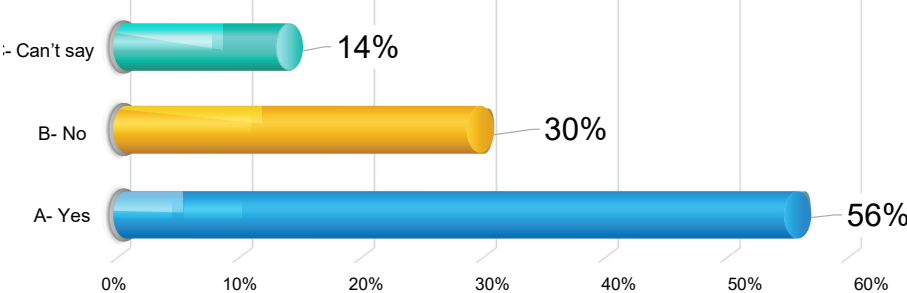
Q2.◀

The day after the Waqf law, there were riots in many cities. Do you think it was a planned conspiracy?



Q3.▶

Are the opposition and some Muslim leaders spreading misinformation among Muslims about the Waqf law?



Q4.◀

Will BJP be able to break the opposition's narrative through a public awareness campaign on Waqf reform?



Prime Minister Narendra Modi offers prayers at Guruji Maharaj Temple, at Isagarh in Ashoknagar on Friday. ANI

Haryana wakes up as female foeticide comes to light

NEERAJ MOHAN
CHANDIGARH

After a sting operation exposed an alarming female foeticide racket in Haryana, the state government has launched a major crackdown with the Health Department has issued show-cause notices to the senior medical officers (SMOs) in-charge of 12 Community Health Centres (CHCs) located in districts with poor sex ratio.

The government has also cancelled or accepted voluntary surrender of licences from 300 abortion centres out of 1,500 across the state. These actions come as Haryana's sex ratio at birth dropped from

923 girls per 1,000 boys in 2019 to 910 in 2024, despite the central government's 'Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao' campaign launched in Panipat.

A State Task Force (STF), led by Dr Virender Yadav, Director of the National Health Mission (NHM)-Haryana, has been set up to tackle the issue. It includes top officials from the Health Department, Women and Child Development, Police, Drug Control, AYUSH, and PCPNDT divisions. The team meets every Tuesday for reviews and field visits.

So far, 23 abortion centres have been raided and served notices, and FIRs have been lodged against

17 online sellers of abortion kits. The PNDT nodal officer in Hisar has been suspended, and SMOs at CHCs in Rewari, Bhiwani, Jind, Karnal, Nuh, Faridabad, Fatehabad, Mahendergarh, Hisar, and Kurukshetra have been issued notices due to low sex ratios.

Three of the CHCs with the worst sex ratio have seen their medical officers chargesheeted. In five districts Charkhi Dadri, Rewari, Rohtak, Gurugram, and Faridabad the PNDT nodal officers have been replaced. The government has also increased surveillance on IVF and ultrasound centres. Unregistered IVF centres will be

shut down and those with suspiciously low girl child birth rates will be investigated.

To support positive change, the state is counselling around 62,000 pregnant women who already have one or more daughters. ASHA workers are being assigned to monitor such pregnancies and will get a Rs 1,000 reward for every successful birth of a girl child. According to Yadav the department was strictly enforcing the Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (PCPNDT) Act. Action will continue against centres breaking the law and those involved in illegal abortions."

PM Modi renews 'Parivar' attack

CONTINUED FROM P1

sity under one roof, offering products from various districts across the country.

Addressing a gathering after laying the foundation stone of 44 projects worth Rs 3,880 crore here, PM Modi elaborated on his constituency's makeover over the last 10 years: He said: "Earlier, Purvanchal lacked health facilities but today, Kashi is becoming the region's health capital. About 10-11 years ago, there were problems related to availing medical treatment in the region. Today, my Kashi is becoming the health capital too."

"Major hospitals from Delhi and Mumbai have now not only become accessible for the people of the region, but they have also ensured dignity for patients," he said, referring to several prominent hospitals opening branches here.

Highlighting the city's transformative journey over

the last 10 years, Modi said, "In the last 10 years, the development of Banaras has gained a new momentum. Kashi has always preserved its heritage and taken steps towards a bright future. Today, Kashi is not just ancient, but my Kashi is also progressive."

Speaking on the region's contribution to development, he said, "Today, Kashi is pulling the Purvanchal's chariot of development." purposes and also mentioned the commencement of the trial for the city rope-way.

"Today, India is moving ahead with both development and heritage together and our Kashi is becoming the best model for this," Modi said, adding that "the soul of India resides in its diversity and Kashi is its most beautiful picture."

He also spoke about initiatives like the Kashi Tamil Sangamam that help strengthen national unity.

On the economic front,

the prime minister underlined Uttar Pradesh's changing trajectory. "Uttar Pradesh is no longer just a land of possibilities. Now, it is capable and a land of resolutions," he said, noting how "Made-in-India" products are gaining global recognition.

"Today, Uttar Pradesh is number one in GI tagging in the entire country. That means our culture, our things, our skills are rapidly getting international recognition," he said, observing that dozens of products from Varanasi and its surrounding districts have received GI (Geographical Indication) tags, including the city's famous tabla and shehnai, wall paintings and sweets like red peda and barfi.

The Prime Minister highlighted the transformation in Uttar Pradesh over recent years, noting that the state has not only changed its economic landscape but also its outlook.

AIADMK, BJP are friends again

CONTINUED FROM P1

Shah said.

Shah was addressing a press conference with BJP's K Annamalai and AIADMK's Edappadi Palaniswami in Chennai.

Shah added, "These elections will be contested under the leadership of PM Modi on a national level and under the leadership of AIADMK leader Edappadi K. Palaniswami on the state level..."

The BJP is eager to improve its prospects in Tamil Nadu following a determined effort in the last Lok Sabha elections, where it failed to win a seat in the southern state.

The Union Minister said he BJP will have no interference in the internal matters of the AIADMK and added that this alliance is going to be beneficial to both NDA and AIADMK.

"AIADMK has no conditions and demands. We will have no interference in the internal matters of the AIADMK. This alli-

ance is going to be beneficial to both NDA and AIADMK," Shah said.

Shah also expressed confidence in securing a victory in the upcoming assembly polls saying that NDA will again secure a landslide majority and form government in Tamil Nadu.

"I am confident that in the upcoming elections, NDA will again secure a landslide majority and NDA government will be formed in Tamil Nadu once again," he said. In the previous two elections--the Lok Sabha and the last assembly polls--the AIADMK has struggled to perform strongly.

The AIADMK entered into an alliance with the BJP after the passing of J Jayalithaa in 2016.

During the 2021 state elections, the AIADMK and the BJP were in alliance, which resulted in the BJP winning four seats. However, the AIADMK severed ties with the BJP in 2023.

Red alert in Delhi

CONTINUED FROM P1

The national capital saw a sudden change in weather in the evening, with sharp temperature drops at weather stations. At Palam, the temperature dropped by 10 degrees Celsius and at Safdarjung weather station, the mercury dipped by 7 degrees Celsius due to the dust storm, the weather office said.

The New Delhi Municipal Council received eight calls related to tree falls in Connaught Place, Jor Bagh, Patel Marg, and Sardar Patel Marg, among others. The Municipal Corporation of Delhi received four calls for fallen trees in New Delhi, Kalkaji and Shahdara between 6 pm and 8 pm. The PWD said it has received 10 complaints, while the fire department received two calls on tree falls.

The dust storm and isolated rain during the evening led to localised disruptions in power supply in some parts of North

Delhi, primarily due to branches of trees and other objects falling on electrical lines, said a spokesperson of Tata Power Delhi Distribution Limited (TPDDL). Parts of Narela, Bawana, Badli and Mangolpuri were affected. Additionally, some disruptions were observed in high-tension and low-tension networks, he said.

The maintenance teams were immediately mobilised to address the situation. Power supply has been restored in most areas, with efforts ongoing to resolve issues in a few remaining pockets, he added. BSES Operations and Maintenance teams were also on high alert. In most cases, the power supply was restored promptly. However, in some areas, it took slightly longer in view of safety concerns, a BSES spokesperson said.

Given the weather situation in the city, the IMD advised people to stay indoors and avoid unessential travel.

It said that there was a risk of injury to people and cattle in open areas, partial damage to vulnerable structures, minor harm to 'kutcha' houses and huts, and the possibility of loose objects being blown away.

It also recommended taking shelter in safe places -- not under trees -- and avoiding contact with concrete surfaces. People are urged to unplug electrical appliances, exit water bodies immediately, and stay away from objects that conduct electricity till the weather improves. Delhi witnessed sunny weather during the day but by evening, the sky turned cloudy. The maximum temperature was recorded at 35.8 degrees Celsius, 0.3 notches below normal, while the minimum temperature settled at 22.8 degrees Celsius, 1.8 notches above normal, according to the Met office. Humidity levels ranged between 69 and 61 per cent. The IMD has predicted thunderstorms with rain on Saturday.

List of 'tainted' teachers in 10 days



A teacher who lost her job holds a placard saying 'I am a cancer patient' before meeting with West Bengal CM Mamata Banerjee, in Kolkata. File photo

CONTINUED FROM P1

Supreme Court verdict. "They have assured us that the Government is working on segregating the two and it will be published by April 21."

Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee had claimed the State Government was not given time to prepare the list.

On Friday, Basu and Mazumdar held a meeting with 13 representatives from the teaching and non-teaching staff who had been selected in the 2016 State Level Selection Test (SLST). Last year, a Calcutta High Court Division Bench had scrapped the entire selection panel following a probe into jobs-for-cash scam.

It was upheld by the bench of Chief Justice of India Sanjeev Khanna and Justice Sanjay Kumar last week. "The Chief Minister wanted legal protection for the deprived teachers who had qualified. They came to meet me with several demands. There is a Supreme Court directive, so we cannot proceed without taking legal shields. We are seeking legal counsel," said Basu.

"The School Service Commission has the list of the tainted and untainted teachers which they re-

ceived from the CBI. The SSC had submitted three affidavits before the court. We have no problems with releasing this list. SSC has no problems releasing this list provided there are no legal hassles. Within 10-15 days we should be able to publish it."

The commission has already sought clarification from the apex court on the directive. Basu said the Government will file a review petition before the SC at the earliest.

Last Monday, Mamata Banerjee had told the teachers to return to their schools to give "voluntary service". Basu said he too had made the same request before the protesters who met him.

At Netaji Indoor Stadium, Mamata Banerjee had assured the affected teachers: "No one will lose their jobs," promising that the State Government would first seek a clarification from the Supreme Court. "If the response is unfavourable, the Government will ensure alternative arrangements for the eligible candidates within a specified timeframe."

Minister Basu said he could not comment on whether these 25,753 appointees will continue to receive salaries as the matter was still pending before the apex court.

Rana wanted award for terrorists

CONTINUED FROM P1

partner, documentation in support of Headley's attempt to secure formal approval from Indian authorities to open a branch office of Rana's business," the DoJ statement read.

Over the course of more than two years, Headley allegedly repeatedly met with Rana in Chicago and described his surveillance activities on behalf of LeT, LeT's responses to Headley's activities, and LeT's potential plans for attacking Mumbai," it read.

US Marshals in the Central District of California on Tuesday (US local time) transferred custody of Tahawwur Rana, a Pakistani national and Canadian citizen, to representa-

tives from India's Ministry of External Affairs.

The United States Department of Justice has termed the extradition of convicted terrorist Tahawwur Hussain Rana as "a critical step" toward seeking justice for the victims of the 26/11 heinous Mumbai terror attacks.

"Rana's extradition is a critical step toward seeking justice for the six Americans and scores of other victims who were killed in the heinous attacks," the Department of Justice said in a statement dated April 10, 2025. Rana, 64, a Canadian citizen and native of Pakistan was extradited to stand trial in India on 10 criminal charges stemming from his alleged role in the 2008 terrorist attacks in

Mumbai the DoJ statement said.

He is charged with numerous offences, including conspiracy, murder, commission of a terrorist act, and forgery, related to his alleged involvement in the 2008 Mumbai terrorist attacks by Lashkar-e-Tayyiba (LeT), a designated terrorist organization.

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) successfully secured the extradition of Rana after years of sustained and concerted efforts to bring the key conspirator behind the 2008 mayhem to justice. According to the NIA, Rana was being held in judicial custody in the US pursuant to proceedings initiated under the India-US Extradition Treaty for his extradition.

SIT TO PROBE COMMISSION ALLEGATIONS AGAINST PREVIOUS BJP GOVT IN K'TAKA

State Cabinet sets up SIT after Justice Nagmohan panel submits report


TDG NETWORK
BENGALURU

Karnataka Minister HK Patil, addressing the media on Friday, revealed that the state cabinet has taken serious note of the allegations made by the Karnataka Contractors' Association regarding several public works projects. The allegations were detailed in a Justice Nagmohan Das Commission inquiry commission report submitted to the government and reviewed by the Karnataka Cabinet. The cabinet has decided to set up a Special Investigation Team to probe the 40 per cent commission allegations against the previous BJP government in the state in the light of report.

The SIT will complete the investigation in two months and submit the report to the state government, Karnata-

'SERIOUS ALLEGATIONS'

- The allegations by the Karnataka contractors were detailed in a Justice Nagmohan Das Commission inquiry commission report submitted to the government and reviewed by the Karnataka Cabinet.
- The report was discussed in the cabinet. Out of 3 lakh works, 1,729 works have had several allegations made against them. The cabinet has taken serious note of this, said Karnataka Minister HK Patil
- Special Investigation Team to probe the 40 per cent commission allegations against the previous BJP government in the state in the light of the report.



ka Law and Parliamentary Affairs Minister H K Patil told reporters.

Subsequently, the probe report will be presented in the cabinet meeting

Patil stated, "21 decisions have been made and resolutions passed. The Karnataka Contractors' Association had made allegations. They

have submitted a commission report to the government. That report has been presented. The report was discussed in the cabinet. Out of 3 lakh works, 1,729 works have had several allegations made against them. The cabinet has taken serious note of this."

He went on to highlight

irregularities in some projects: "In some cases, lesser grants were released, but more work was done. In some places, more grants were released, but less work was done."

The Minister added that the cabinet has recommended the formation of a Special Investigation Team (SIT) to

probe these allegations and suggested that action should be taken within the next two months.

Patil further explained Nagamohan Das's involvement; he had been tasked with investigating the contractors' complaints in detail. "Today, the report of Nagamohan Das, who went into the details of the complaints lodged by contractors, has been submitted. He found several serious lapses. We have decided to constitute an SIT to investigate further and find the truth," Patil said.

Ahead of this, responding to allegations of the Karnataka State Contractors Association following growing interference by middlemen in government departments, BJP leader and LoP R Ashoka said that it is 200 per cent correct and there is no doubt at all.

Nagenthiran set to replace Annamalai as TN BJP chief

TDG NETWORK
CHENNAI

Tamil Nadu BJP Vice President Nainar Nagenthiran is set to take over as the BJP President of Tamil Nadu after he filed his nomination for the post. Nagenthiran was the only nominee for the post and will take over from K Annamalai.

The Union Home Minister Amit Shah made the announcement on Friday, saying, "The nomination for the post of Tamil Nadu BJP State President has been received only from Nainar Nagenthiran. As the Tamil Nadu BJP President, Annamalai K has made commendable achievements. Whether it is taking Prime Minister Narendra Modi's policies to the people or taking the party's projects village by village, Annamalai's contribution is immense. The BJP will utilize Annamalai's organizational skills



in the party's national structure."

Following his nomination for the Tamil Nadu state president post, Nainar Nagenthiran said that he had filed the nomination as per the party's suggestion and stated that senior party leaders would take the final call on the Tamil Nadu state unit president.

"As per the party's suggestion, I have filed a nomination for the State President post. You have to ask senior leaders about the final decision", Nainar Na-

genthiran told reporters.

BJP MLA and Mahila Morcha National President Vanathi Srinivasan revealed that everything is going on swiftly, and around ten party leaders proposed his name.

"Everything is going smoothly. Right now, Nainar Nagenthiran (Tamil Nadu BJP Vice President) has filed his nomination... around 10 senior leaders have proposed his name...", Srinivasan said.

While Nainar Naginthiran is all set to replace K Annamalai as the next BJP state president, the BJP and AIADMK on Friday announced that they will fight the next assembly elections together as the NDA in the state.

The announcement of the alliance was made in Chennai in the presence of Union Home Minister Amit Shah and AIADMK General Secretary Edapadik K Palaniswami.

Kanimozhi slams DMK Minister Ponmudy for derogatory remarks against women

TDG NETWORK
CHENNAI

Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam's (DMK) Deputy General Secretary and Lok Sabha MP Kanimozhi condemned her own party's Minister K Ponmudy on Friday for making alleged derogatory and "vulgar" remarks against women and certain sects of Hinduism. Ponmudy has been relieved from his duties as the party's Deputy General Secretary since then.

"Minister Ponmudy's recent speech is unacceptable. Regardless of the reason for the speech, such vulgar remarks are condemnable," DMK's Deputy General Secretary said in a post on X.

Meanwhile, opposition parties, such as the AIADMK and the BJP, condemned the remarks of the DMK Minister.



"He is a disgrace to the public, and people like him are the true representation of a particular sect and that too particularly with respect to Hindu religious beliefs...We strongly condemn it," AIADMK National spokesperson Koval Sathyan said.

The DMK Minister had purportedly made a 'joke' about two different sects of Hinduism, Shaivism and Viashnavism, drawing criticism from

multiple leaders.

Earlier today, Tamil Nadu BJP's Vice President, Narayanan Thirupathy welcomed Kanimozhi's condemnation of the remark, and urged for legal action to be taken against the DMK Minister. The BJP has also called for the minister to be sacked from his post.

"It is a shame that Minister Ponmudi is still in office..... MK Stalin, will you order the arrest of K Ponmudy?" BJP's stae vice president said in a self made video.

"Let's burn the foolishness that humiliates the mother," said Bharathi. Mrs. Kanimozhi's condemnation of Ponmudi for speaking disparagingly of women is welcome and commendable. Will our Chief Minister M.K. Stalin at least remove the idiots who insulted him from office? Will he order legal action?" the BJP Vice President said in another post.

Cabinet approves Gondia-Balharshah railway line doubling project in Maha

TDG NETWORK
MUMBAI

Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw on Friday announced the doubling of the Gondia-Balharshah railway line in Maharashtra, which is 240 kilometres long and will cost Rs 4,819 crore.

This transformative project is set to play a pivotal role in enhancing passenger and freight connectivity between northern and southern India.

"The Prime Minister recently approved doubling the 240 km Gondia-Balharshah railway line in Maharashtra at a cost of Rs. 4,819 crores. This project will play a pivotal role in enhancing passenger and freight connec-




tivity between northern and southern India... Aspirational districts in the region will witness rapid development," Vaishnaw told reporters in a presser here.

He said Maharashtra has received railway projects worth Rs 1.73 lakh crore, including the Mumbai-Ahmedabad bullet train and the dedicated freight corridor.

Fadnavis favours merger of Konkan-Indian Railways

TDG NETWORK

MUMBAI



Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis on Friday highlighted the multiple problems faced by Konkan railway and requested the Union government to merge the Konkan railway corporation with the Indian Railways, citing similar demands made by Goa and Karnataka state governments.

"We have requested union government that Konkan railway should

be inducted in railway itself as Konkan railway. At present, it is only a corporation, and that is why it is facing issues of development and extension in terms of doubling of lines and other infrastructure."

Tirumala denies cow deaths rumour at its Gaushala

TDG NETWORK
TIRUPATI

Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) has categorically rejected the rumors circulating on social media about recent cow deaths at its Gaushala and clarified that the images of deceased cows being widely shared are not connected to its Gaushala.

In an official statement on Friday, TTD clarified and said, "The rumours being spread on social media by a few individuals about recent cow deaths at the TTD Gaushala are completely false. The photos of deceased cows being circulated are not related to the TTD Gaushala. With malicious intent, a few individuals are sharing these unrelated images and falsely claiming they are from the TTD Gaushala in an attempt to hurt the sentiments of devotees. TTD strongly condemns such false propagan-



da. TTD appeals to devotees and the public not to believe such baseless rumours"

The controversy has also gained momentum due to statements made by Bhumana Karunakar Reddy, the former Chairman of TTD and a prominent leader of the YSR Congress Party (YSRCP).

Reddy has alleged that cows in the Gaushala managed by the temple trust are dying in large numbers due to the "neglect" of the TTD-led Andhra Pradesh government and has demanded an inquiry to be held to bring out the facts and upkeep the

sanctity of Tirumala.

Speaking to media here on Friday, he said that in the past three months, over 100 cows have died due to poor maintenance and caretaking, and the number could go up as the number given is only what has come to our notice.

"The coalition government (TDP-BJP) is busy levelling false allegations on our leader YS Jagan Mohan Reddy and attempting to erase his good efforts," the former chairman said.

Demanding an enquiry into the death of the cows, he added, "We demand an

inquiry into the death of cows in large numbers and the lack of maintenance of Gaushala, which is been looked after by a District Forest Officer who is not qualified in veterinary matters, and this is sheer neglect of the coalition government and its appointed TTD governing body."

Talking about the significance of cows, the statement released by YSRCP pointed out, "Cow is being considered a holy animal, and legend has it that Lord Venkateswara has survived on cow milk. Cows are worshiped with reverence. The coalition government has put the Gaushala under total neglect, though the Chief Minister (Chandrababu Naidu) and Deputy Chief Minister (Pawan Kalyan) talk tall about Sanatha Dharma and its upkeep."

"The sudden outbreak of deaths of cows is an indication of divinity against the

coalition government, which has levelled baseless allegations against our leader, YS Jagan Mohan Reddy," he said.

He further pointed out that during the tenure of former Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy's, the gaushala had "flourished," and over 550 cows had been brought in.

"The Guashala flourished 550 cows of indigenous breed from Gujarat, Rajasthan, and Punjab were brought. During our term, 1,700 litres of milk were being sent to Tirumala from gaushala for daily rituals and now under the coalition government, not even 500 liters of milk are going up, he said.

He alleged that cows had been gifted to farmers and use of its medicinal, spiritual and other day to day activities was also made but now the same animal is "under threat."

MP 'fake' doctor case: Lab where patients were operated on sealed

TDG NETWORK
DAMOH

The health officials of Damoh, Madhya Pradesh, have sealed the cath lab of the Mission Hospital where patients were operated on by the 'fake' doctor who allegedly performed heart surgeries on patients and killed atleast seven.

"On the directions of the district administration, only the cath lab has been sealed, as all the operations and cases have happened here. There is evidence in this area, so we have sealed the lab. The angiography and angioplasty of several patients who died were performed in this cath lab only," District Health Officer Vikrant Singh Chauhan told reporters on Wednesday at the hospital.

The lab has been sealed after Madhya Pradesh police arrested Narendra Vikramaditya Yadav, who allegedly

posed as a British Doctor, N John Camm and performed multiple heart surgeries in Damoh's mission hospital, allegedly killing atleast 7 people. Yadav has been accused of forging documents, too.

One of the victims' relatives, Jitendra Singh Rajput, recounted that he took his father to the hospital after he experienced chest pain, and doctors recommended surgery.

"My name is Jitendra Singh Rajput. I took my father to the hospital as he was experiencing chest pain. The doctors said it was a heart attack and that he needed to be operated on. I told them I did not have money, and they said the Ayushman card could be used," he said.

Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav and Minister Prahlad Patel have ensured strict action from the government for this case.

"In the incident that came

to light in Damoh, our government is taking strict action. Our government does not make any delay in taking action against such cases. Our government has built its own credibility. I have instructed that if there is any other such case, the health department should take strict action against them," Chief Minister Yadav told reporters.

State Minister Patel said on April 9 that the missionary hospital had been embroiled in controversies earlier as well.

Patel said, "That institution (missionary hospital) has been controversial since past... This is a serious case, and that place has had ongoing controversies, and this is why strict investigation should ensue... There should be no politics in the matter, and the focus should be on relieving the victims and punishing the culprits."

Chhattisgarh CM lays foundation stone of state's first semiconductor plant

TDG NETWORK
NAVA RAIPUR

Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai on Friday laid the foundation stone for the country's first Ultra-edge technology-based Gallium Nitride (GaN)-based semiconductor fabrication unit in Nava Raipur.

Managing Director of Polymatech Electronics Limited Eswara Rao Nandam during the event announced an additional investment of Rs 10,000

crore in Chhattisgarh. He said that commercial production from the plant will start in April- May 2026.

Developed by Polymatech Electronics Limited with an investment of Rs 1,143 crore, the state-of-the-art facility will produce high-frequency GaN chips designed to operate between 5.925 GHz and 13.75 GHz (Nodes N102-104), catering to advanced 5G and 6G telecommunications infrastructure and marking a major milestone in India's technological journey.

The project is expected to create significant employment opportunities for local talent while attracting foreign direct investment (FDI) and boosting regional economic development. Its biggest social impact will be seen in Bastar and other Naxal-affected areas, where youth will be linked to this modern industry by giving them technical training.

The plant aims to manufacture 10 billion chips annually by 2030, with the potential to generate thou-

sands of direct jobs and lakhs of indirect employment opportunities.

It directly supports the Government of India's 'Make in India' and 'Digital India' initiatives by



reducing dependency on imported semiconductors and promoting domestic innovation.

"This isn't just a plant; it's the identity of the new Chhattisgarh," said CM

Vishnu Deo Sai. "Our aim is not only to attract investments but to ensure that youth from tribal, rural, and backward regions receive technical training and become active participants in India's technological revolution."

Polymatech will handle the advanced packaging of these high-frequency chips at the Raipur facility, which will also serve as a hub for innovation in RF systems, defense electronics, artificial intelligence, data analytics, and high-

performance computing.

Gallium Nitride is globally recognized as a superior alternative to silicon in high-power, high-frequency applications, due to its efficiency, thermal performance, and durability. The establishment of this facility marks India's entry into a high-value, strategic segment of the global semiconductor market.

The Chhattisgarh government has shown its commitment towards not just 'ease of doing business, but also delivering 'speed of do-

ing business'. The state government took swift action to prevent any hindrance in setting up this unit.

The Chhattisgarh government had signed an investment proposal with Polymatech Electronics during the 'Chhattisgarh Investor Connect' held in New Delhi in December 2024. Now with the foundation stone laying ceremony, the Chhattisgarh government is set to set up the state's first advanced semiconductor unit with an investment of Rs 1143 crore.

MAYORAL POLLS TO BE HELD ON APRIL 25

Current Mayor, Mahesh Kumar Khichi (AAP) won in Nov 2024 after defeating the BJP’s Kishan Lal by 3 votes.

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) will hold elections for the post of Mayor and Deputy Mayor on April 25. The deadline for filing nominations is April 21.

The election will be held during the April meeting of MCD on April 25 at 2 pm

According to a notice from MCD, “The ordinary April (2025) Meeting of the Municipal Corporation of Delhi will be held on Friday, the 25th April 2025. In which election of Mayor and Deputy Mayor will also be held.”

Currently, the mayor is Mahesh Kumar Khichi of the Aam Aadmi Party. He was elected in November of last year after defeating the BJP’s Kishan Lal by a narrow margin of three votes.

Out of a total of 265 votes,

ELECTION SCHEDULE

- Nomination deadline is April 21.
- Khichi got 133, BJP’s Lal got 130, and 2 votes were invalid.
- Mayor changes yearly; terms rotate by category (women, open, reserved).
- BJP won 48 seats in 2025 Assembly polls; AAP got 22, major leaders lost.
- Khichi urged CM to withdraw user charges for poor waste services.



Khichi got 133, and Lal secured 130, while 2 votes were declared invalid.

Khichi then succeeded AAP’s Shelly Oberoi, who assumed office in 2023.

The post of mayor in the national capital has five single-year terms on a rotational basis. The first year is reserved for women, the second for the open category, the third for the reserved

category, and the remaining two again for the open category. Delhi gets a new mayor after the end of a financial year.

The AAP took control of MCD in December 2022, ending the BJP’s 15-year rule. However, with the BJP back in the national capital this year after 27 years, the MCD polls can also sway their way.

BJP won the Delhi Assembly Election by gaining a majority in 48 seats. AAP was limited to only 22 seats; its prominent leaders, including former Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and former Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia, as well as former minister Satyendra Jain and Saurabh Bharadwaj, lost the polls.

Delhi to adopt Centre’s system to review CAG reports

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Delhi Assembly has decided to adopt the Central government’s audit para monitoring system (APMS) application to fast-track scrutiny of CAG reports tabled in the recent budget session, Speaker Vijender Gupta said on Friday. Gupta said the move will help tabling of the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) and Committee on Government Undertaking reports on the CAG findings, in the Monsoon session of the Assembly in July.

A high-level review meeting on Controller and Auditor General (CAG) reports and APMS adoption was held in the Assembly. Gupta directed the departments concerned to submit action taken notes (ATNs) on the supply and regulation of liquor by April 20 and other CAG reports by April 30.

Out of 14 pending audit reports of the CAG on the performance of the previ-



The Finance department will submit the ATNs by April 30. The Accountant General (Audit), Delhi, will give her comments on the ATNs by the second week of May.

ous AAP government in Delhi were tabled in the Assembly. These were related to health, supply and regulation of liquor, Delhi Transport Corporation (DTC), air pollution, and two each on public accounts and appropriation accounts of the Delhi government. In the meeting a detailed presentation was

made by the Accountant General (Audit), Delhi, Roli Shukla, highlighting key findings and observations from the tabled CAG reports. A comprehensive review of the status of implementation of the Audit Para Monitoring System (APMS) was also held. “We are going to adopt the Centre’s APMS within a week.

JNUSU elections to be held on April 25, results on April 28

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Jawaharlal Nehru University Students’ Union (JNUSU) elections for the academic year 2024-25 will be held on April 25, with the final results scheduled to be declared on April 28, according to a notification released by the JNUSU Election Committee on Friday.

As per the official schedule, the election process begins with the display of tentative voters list on April 13, followed by corrections in the list and the issuance of nomination forms on April 14. Filing of nominations will take place on April 15, while the final list of candidates will be published on April 16.

A press conference and briefing about the candidates will also be held on April 16 at 4 pm, followed by school-level general body meetings (GBMs) on April 17 and 21. The university-wide GBM is slated for April 22, while the presidential debate will take place on April 23. April 24 has been marked as a no-campaign day. Polling will be conducted on April 25 in two sessions—from 9 am to 1 pm and 2:30 pm to

5:30 pm. The counting of votes will begin the same night at 9 pm, and the final results will be declared on April 28.

The upcoming JNUSU polls come after sustained student agitation over the delay in announcing the election schedule. In March, students held protests and locked the Dean of Students’ office, demanding immediate issuance of the notification. However, the administration had cited a pending Delhi High Court case concerning implementation of the Lyngdoh Committee recommendations as the reason for the delay. The case was scheduled for hearing on March 27.

Last year’s JNUSU elections were held on March 22 after a four-year gap, and saw the United Left alliance winning three of the four central panel posts. The Birs Ambedkar Phule Students’ Association (BAPSA) had secured the remaining post. Dhananjay was elected as the president, Avijit Ghosh as vice president, Priyanshi Arya as general secretary, and Mo Sajid as joint secretary.

50-year-old man shot dead in Paschim Vihar East

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

A 50-year-old property dealer was allegedly shot dead inside his car by unidentified assailants in outer Delhi’s Paschim Vihar East on Friday morning, a police officer said.

The deceased, identified as Rajkumar, was allegedly driving his SUV when the assailants surrounded him in different vehicles and fired at him, the officer said.

A purported video showing the victim lying in a pool of blood in the driver seat has gone viral on social



media. The officer said at around 7.15 am the police received a PCR call informing them of multiple gunshots fired near SBI Colony.

Police, who reached the spot, rushed the injured man to the hospital but doctors declared him brought dead. The officer said a forensics team has been called to inspect the spot.

PWD to install barriers to protect 150-year-old Mangi bridge

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Public Works Department (PWD) of Delhi has announced plans to install height barriers on the Ring Road stretch near Kashmir Gate to protect the 150-year-old Mangi Bridge from damage.

The old bridge that connects Red Fort to Salimgarh Fort is an Archeological Survey of India (ASI)-protected structure. The ASI

earlier wrote to the PWD to put up height barriers to protect the arch of the bridge.

“The road beneath the bridge is used by large heavy vehicles like buses, trucks, etc. that have damaged the arch of the bridge. We have written to the PWD to put up height barriers so that heavy vehicles do not pass through (the Ring Road),” a senior ASI official said.

Tenders have now been

Women to get Rs 36,000 subsidy under Electric Vehicle Policy 2.0

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

The Delhi government is likely to provide a subsidy of up to Rs 36,000 on purchase of an electric two-wheeler to women under its proposed Electric Vehicle (EV) Policy 2.0, officials on Friday said. The benefit can be availed by the first 10,000 women, who are holding a driving license, according to the policy draft accessed.

The proposal is under the government’s consideration and it will be approved soon.

To encourage female participation in the EV shift, the women in Delhi will receive a purchase incentive of Rs 12,000 per kilowatt-hour (kWh), up to Rs 36,000 on electric two-wheelers.

Designed to complement the Centre’s PM E-DRIVE scheme, the EV Policy 2.0 aims to accelerate electric vehicle adoption across Delhi.



To encourage female participation, the women will receive a purchase incentive of Rs 12,000 per kilowatt-hour (kWh), up to Rs 36,000 on electric two-wheelers.

The scheme, which will remain valid until March 31, 2030, outlines a series of incentives targeting not just electric two-wheelers but also three-wheelers and commercial vehicles.

To boost the adoption of electric two-wheelers in the city, the government may offer a purchase incentive of Rs 10,000 per kilowatt-

hour (kWh), capped at Rs 30,000 per vehicle.

In addition, the registered owners who scrap their fossil fuel-driven vehicles -- two-wheelers -- will be eligible for an additional incentive of Rs 10,000 provided the scrapped vehicle is not older than 12 years.

For electric auto-rickshaws in the L5M category,

which are intended to replace existing CNG autos, the policy is likely to offer a purchase incentive of Rs 10,000 per kWh, up to Rs 45,000.

A scrapping incentive of Rs 20,000 is also likely to be given to those scrapping old ICE (Internal Combustion Engines) auto-rickshaws that are less than 12 years old. The policy may mandate that all CNG auto-rickshaws completing 10 years of registration during the policy period must be replaced with e-autos.

In such cases, a replacement incentive of Rs 1,00,000 per vehicle is likely to be provided.

However, beneficiaries availing this incentive will not be eligible for any other scheme under the policy.

For commercial goods carriers, the government may propose incentives for both three-wheeler and four-wheeler electric vehicles.

2 injured as signboard falls on car amid gusty winds in Gurugram

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Two people got injured after a huge pillar signage fell on a car on the Dwarka Expressway here as thunderstorm and gusty winds hit the Delhi-NCR area on Friday evening, officials said. The car got stuck under the pillar and two occupants got injured. Passers-by helped them get out of the car and admitted them to the hospital, they added.

This resulted in a traffic jam on the Dwarka Expressway and police were deployed to manage the traffic.

A strong storm started around 6:30 pm, resulting in heavy congestion on the Dwarka Expressway, NH-48, Southern Peripheral Road, Sohna Road Elevated Highway, Kundli-Manesar-Palwal Expressway and other major routes.

Incidents of hoardings falling and trees uprooting due to the storm were reported from several places, including Signatur tower, Sheetla Mata road and sec-

tor 31 Sector 21. Near Sector 22, a tree got uprooted and fell on two cars, they said.

An electric pole also fell near a Kendriya Vidyalaya on Delhi road, resulting in a power cut in the surrounding areas, including Sector 14, the police said.

Meanwhile, at least three persons sustained injuries after some construction material fell on them from the roof of a house in the Chander Vihar area following a dust storm on Friday, the Delhi Fire Services (DFS) said. The DFS received a call informing about the incident at 7:27 pm and dispatched three teams to the spot.

“Some bricks fell from the roof of a house where construction work was going on, leaving at least three persons injured. They are being treated at a nearby hospital,” a DFS officer said. “We have secured the site. Construction work was going on to build a sixth floor on the five-storey building. We have sent the injured to the hospital.

15 flights diverted, Air India issues travel advisory

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Fifteen flights were diverted, and several were delayed at the Delhi airport on Friday due to dust storms and gusty winds, as per the Airport sources.

Delhi experienced dust storms on Friday evening. Several parts of Delhi were impacted due to the change in weather that also provided relief from scorching heat.

Air India issued a travel advisory for their passengers after the sudden change of weather in Delhi and northern areas.

According to the advisory, heavy thunderstorms and gusty winds, have affected flight operations across parts of Northern India, due to which some of the Air India flights from Delhi have either been diverted or are delayed.



A branch of a tree breaks due to a dust storm, in New Delhi on Friday. ANI



floated to construct the height barriers. They have to be constructed in line

with different heights in each lane of the arch, a PWD official said.

While the central entrance beneath the bridge has a height of five to six metres, the side entrances have less height of two to three metres.

Last year the ASI had installed height barriers near the bridge to stop heavy vehicles from passing through but they got damaged.

There are marks visible underneath the bridge due to the use of the road by heavy vehicles. Last year,

there was also a plan being considered to reduce the height of the road underneath this arch. But that plan is on hold, said the official from ASI.

The old bridge is situated before the Hanuman Temple flyover, which connects to the entrance of the Kashmir Gate Inter State Bus Terminal (ISBT). Due to its proximity to the bus terminal, the area experiences heavy traffic congestion daily.

INSIDE 'OPERATION RANA' - A HIGH-STAKES, TOP-SECRET EXTRADITION MISSION

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Following the successful extradition of the 26/11 Mumbai terror attack accused Tahawwur Hussain Rana from the United States, the National Investigation Agency (NIA) faced a major challenge: keeping the entire transit operation under wraps due to credible threats from Pakistan-based terror groups.

Acting swiftly, a special team comprising senior NIA officials and NSG commandos departed from Los Angeles on a specially designated aircraft. To ensure Rana's safety--and prevent any self-harm--one NIA official reportedly held his hand throughout the journey.

During the flight, elite intelligence personnel, air traffic control units, and commandos monitored the



Police personnel stand guard outside Patiala Court ahead of 26/11 accused Tahawwur Rana's appearance before the court, in New Delhi. ANI (File Photo)

aircraft in real time, ensuring seamless coordination between Indian and U.S. agencies. The high-value extradition was handled with the utmost secrecy and precision.

According to sources, the plane made a refuelling halt

before its final leg. It landed in Delhi later in the afternoon on Thursday.

In Delhi, extraordinary security protocols were enforced. As Rana was brought from Palam Air Base, Delhi Police's security wing staff were asked to

submit their mobile phones to prevent any leaks or unauthorized communication.

To avoid media glare, Rana was taken out of the airport through an alternate gate and transported in a non-transparent jail



Mumbai attacks accused Tahawwur Rana being produced at Patiala House Court, following extradition from the US, in New Delhi. ANI (File photo)

van. He was subsequently produced in court, where strict restrictions on cameras and mobile devices were in place.

'Operation Rana' is being seen as a significant intelligence and diplomatic victory, showcas-

ing deep coordination and high-level security execution.

The 26/11 Mumbai attacks accused Tahawwur Rana will remain in the custody of the National Investigation Agency (NIA) for 18 days, where

he will be questioned in detail about the "complete conspiracy" behind the deadly 2008 attacks, said the agency.

The anti-terror agency has presented compelling evidence, including emails sent by 26/11 Mumbai at-

“Today, the accused is before us, and things will become clearer as we know that only Tahawwur Rana and David Headley were not the conspirators, but more were involved. It will become clear who else from Pakistan's establishment was involved in that attack. I congratulate the UPA government for their efforts and also our government for their efforts, which have been successful. We have Tahawwur Rana in India today”

— Congress leader Kapil Sibal

tacks accused Tahawwur Rana, to justify his police custody. The agency informed the court that custodial interrogation is crucial to uncovering a sinister plot. Investigators will also examine Rana's role in orchestrating the deadly terror attacks.

Choubey's hint about Nitish creates buzz, Sachin's words shake RJD confidence

AJIT MAINDOLA
NEW DELHI

The political statements given by two prominent leaders from the BJP and Congress have stirred the Bihar Politics. Two significant statements made on Friday have further intensified the political buzz in the state, just six months before the general elections

The first came via social media platform X, where senior BJP leader Ashwini Kumar Choubey suggested that Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar should be elevated to the national stage as the Deputy Prime Minister of India and made the convenor of the NDA. The second statement came from Congress leader Sachin Pilot, who, while in Bihar, said that a decision on who will be the Chief Minister will be taken only after the elections.

These statements carry considerable political weight. From the BJP's perspective, Choubey's suggestion is being seen as a well-crafted political offer to Nitish Kumar. It appears as a respectful way of indicating a possible shift in leadership dynamics post-elections. While no formal discussions between the BJP and JDU have been made public regarding any



change in Nitish's position, the speculation is gaining traction. Earlier, during his visit to Bihar, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had categorically stated that Nitish Kumar would continue as Chief Minister after the elections. BJP leaders also echoed the same sentiment, affirming Nitish's leadership in the state.

However, after the BJP's successes in states like Haryana, Maharashtra, and Delhi, the scenario seems to be evolving. Recently, when Union Home Minister Amit Shah was asked about Nitish Kumar's future, he responded vaguely, saying that the elections are being fought under Nitish's leadership—without directly committing to his continuation as CM. In this context, Choubey's statement raises fresh questions: Is Nitish Kumar being prepared for

a national role? Could he move to Delhi either before or after the elections?

The posts of Deputy Prime Minister or NDA convenor are significant. Furthermore, with presidential and vice-presidential elections scheduled in the coming years, there is growing curiosity about the NDA's internal plans. As a result, political watchers believe that Bihar NDA politics will remain full of speculation and maneuvering until the elections are over.

Meanwhile, confusion reigns within the opposition alliance, the Mahagathbandhan. Sachin Pilot's statement has sparked fresh debate about the Chief Ministerial candidate. The Congress seems reluctant to offer a clear endorsement of Tejashwi Yadav. In fact, even before Pilot's remarks, Congress in-charge Krishna Allavaru and other senior leaders have kept a noticeable distance from Tejashwi.

While the RJD remains confident and continues to project Tejashwi as the CM face, Congress appears to be playing its own political game. Though publicly committed to staying within the alliance, the mixed signals from Congress leaders suggest that all is not well behind the scenes.

AI can be used for applications in agriculture, health, logistics, education: MeitY official

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

With India having attained success in the spread of its Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI), a senior MeitY official said on Friday that AI can be used for developing applications in key sectors like healthcare, agriculture, logistics, education which can transform lives.

"Given the DPI work that has happened, we believe that AI can be used for developing applications in key sectors like healthcare, like agriculture, like logistics, education, that can transform our lives," Abhishek Singh, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) said at Carneige India

World Technology Summit.

"It can increase the productivity of people at all levels. Farmers' income will go up. MSME businesses will be able to do their jobs more efficiently. So ultimately it will be a big enabler in our quest towards becoming a developed country," he added.

Stressing on need for a bias-free AI model, which is trained on Indian data sets, he said the country's researchers and starters are trying to build their own foundation models.

"Currently, the foundation models are all from Western countries or China, which have built them, but all these models have biases because they are trained on non-Indian data sets."

CM Gupta chairs meet on women safety

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta on Friday chaired a review meeting to assess the key issues related to public safety, traffic congestion, lighting infrastructure and shelter facilities for the homeless in the capital, officials said.

Emphasising women's safety, Gupta directed officials to upgrade lighting in nearly 4,000 poorly-lit areas across the capital.

According to an official statement, these spots are considered vulnerable and are currently being cleaned and fitted with proper lights.

At the meeting, the officials highlighted 129 "mobile dark spots" -- areas with weak or no mobile network -- in the city, the statement said.

In response, the chief minister directed the telecom companies and concerned departments to improve connectivity in those locations to ensure quick emergency response, it said.



The meeting also highlighted traffic congestions across the city.

"A total of 233 traffic choke points have been identified, out of which 123 fall under the Public Works Department (PWD)," the statement said.

So far, 41 of these have been cleared and the chief minister has set a deadline to resolve the remaining issues by June, it said.

Gupta also directed the DMs and SDMs to carry out regular inspections of shelter homes in the city, besides asking Delhi Police to monitor them and verify the identities of the inmates, the statement said.

Providing shelter is not

just about offering a roof, it's about ensuring dignity and basic living standards, the chief minister said, as she asked the concerned departments to ensure that shelter homes are equipped with sanitation, food, lighting, health services and security arrangements.

A total of 445 waterlogging-prone areas have been identified and instructions have been given to resolve the issue within 15 days.

The government will also crack down on polluting vehicles -- especially diesel vehicles older than 10 years and petrol vehicles older than 15 years -- the statement said.

To ensure better coordination between the public and the authorities, Gupta has ordered the formation of Jan Samitis (citizen committees) to gather feedback and address public grievances effectively, it said.

She also said that at a meeting with Union Home Minister Amit Shah, clear directions were given to strengthen security in the capital.

Crime, Vikram Singh.

The interrogation of the accused revealed that the duo was working under Marc's instructions.

"Muwong, a mechanical engineer by profession, had previously been arrested under the NDPS Act in 2023 and was out on bail. Muwong and Umeh have been living in India since 2019," the DCP said.

the girl allegedly said, "Tum kya kar loge agar mai lu? Zyada bologe to tumhe marwa dunga (What will you do if I take it? If you talk too much, I'll get you killed.)"

Enraged and intimidated by the threat, Amit planned to end her life and when she called him to meet her at the bus stop. He allegedly took a knife with him.

After stabbing the girl, Amit also stabbed himself in the stomach, the officer said, adding that he is now out of danger and shifted to the hospital ward.

The police have taken his statement and are waiting to corroborate it with the victim, who has been admitted to ICU again after initially being taken out of it.

In her initial statement to the police, the girl had asked the police not to take any action against Amit.

"Amit, in his statement, has said that he was in a relationship with the victim for the past year. However, she had distanced herself from him, straining their relationship.

On the day of the incident, they even shared a meal together in a community kitchen; however, later, things took a turn for the worse, the officer said.

"We are waiting to corroborate Amit's version with the victim, who is not in the condition to give a statement right now," the officer said.

The police said the accused will be arrested once the doctors declare him medically fit and discharge him.

A case under section 109(1) of the BNS was registered against the accused at Delhi Cantonment police station.

4-year-old girl crushed to death by car in Gurugram

TDG NETWORK
GURUGRAM

A 4-year-old girl was crushed to death by a car on Friday, police here said.

According to police, the incident occurred in the Sector 4 area while the car driver was reversing his vehicle.

Annu was on her way

home when she was crushed by the car, police said. She was rushed to a hospital in critical condition where the doctors declared her dead, police said.

The girl's father, Hari Shankar had filed a case against the driver who would be arrested soon. Further investigation is underway, police added.

Verma orders probe into Govt school construction

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Delhi Public Works Department Minister Parvesh Verma on Friday ordered a vigilance inquiry into the construction of government-run schools. Verma was on an inspection visit to Palam where the local residents complained about waterlogging in the area and



Delhi Public Works Department Minister Parvesh Verma on Friday ordered a vigilance inquiry into the construction of government-run schools.

a government school principal highlighted the problem of leakage in classrooms.

"I visited a school where the principal complained to me about the flood-like situation inside the school building, which was built by the previous government," Verma told reporters.

"I have ordered a probe regarding this, not only this

school but all that have been constructed by the previous government," he added.

The minister, who will also visit Najafgarh Surakpur Road, said the vigilance investigation would involve looking at the aspects of the tender awarded, maintenance contracts and other details of the work executed at the time.

Man shot by unknown assailants in Mustafabad

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

A man sustained injury after being allegedly shot by some unknown assailants in Delhi's Mustafabad area, following which he was admitted to a hospital where he is currently undergoing treatment, Delhi police said on late Thursday evening.

Delhi police said that a firing incident was reported at Dayalpur police station at about 10:00 pm

Upon receiving the in-

formation, a police team immediately reached the location at Gali No 15, Mustafabad, where the caller, Ateeq Ahmed, stated that his son, Mehraj (25), had been shot by some unknown assailants, Delhi police said.

"As a result, Mehraj sustained injury and was taken to GTB Hospital, where he is currently undergoing treatment," police said.

A case under sections 109(1)(3/5) of the BNS and 27/54/59 of the Arms Act

has been registered at PS Dayalpur, and an investigation is underway, as per police.

Assistant Commissioner of Police (ACP) Gokulpuri and Station House Officer (SHO) Dayalpur are present at the scene. The Crime Team and FSL are conducting a thorough inspection of the crime scene. Teams have been deployed to identify and apprehend the accused.

Further investigation is in progress, police said.

Marc, who had previously lived in India, is believed to have built a strong narcotics distribution network operating from Tilak Nagar, a senior police officer said.

The cartel reportedly misused student visas as a cover for illegal activities, bringing African nationals to India under the guise of pursuing higher education

at private universities in Delhi-NCR and Punjab, police said.

"On April 3, after a 20-hour-long watch-and-wait operation at Krishna Park Extension in New Mahavir Nagar, the two accused were nabbed and 700 grams of heroin was recovered from their possession," said Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP),



Muwong (33) from Uganda and Chukwu Ebuka Umeh (36) from Nigeria, have been arrested and 700 grams of high-grade heroin worth over Rs 1 crore has been seized, he said.

The official said that the two accused were allegedly part of a larger cartel working under the instructions of Dagri Jean Marc, a Nigerian national based in Africa.

Marc brought African nationals into India under the guise of pursuing education and then deployed them in the narcotics trade, he added.

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Delhi Police has busted an international drug cartel allegedly targeting students by bringing African nationals to India on the pretext of pursuing education and using them to peddle heroin worth over Rs 1 crore, an official said on Friday.

Two foreign nationals, identified as Humphrey

MARKETS RALLY ON TARIFF PAUSE, BUT FRAGILE SENTIMENT PREVAILS

Gold prices in India surged to an all-time high of Rs 91,500 per 10 grams.

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Indian stock markets opened sharply higher on Friday, following a strong rally in the US markets on Wednesday.

The surge came after US President Donald Trump announced a 90-day postponement of reciprocal tariffs for 75 countries, including India, amid an escalating trade war with China.

The BSE Sensex jumped 1,061.26 points to open at 74,941.53, while the NSE Nifty climbed 354.90 points, starting the day at 22,754.05. The sharp uptick in Indian equities reflected improved investor sentiment after the temporary easing of global trade tensions.

Ajay Bagga, banking and market expert, explained, "Indian markets will open with a gap up largely due to the Wednesday US market surge following the Trump



The midweek rally in US markets came after President Trump announced an immediate increase in tariffs on Chinese goods to 125 per cent.

reciprocal tariffs postpone-ment for 90 days. However, the Thursday fall in the US markets led to a fall in the Gift Nifty as well. Hence, versus a 700 plus rally on Wednesday, on Friday morning, the Gift Nifty premium to the domestic Nifty future close of Wednesday afternoon is down to 400 points, Si posi-

tive open but momentum is reduced."

He added, "With Monday again being an Indian market holiday, positions will be reduced this afternoon. So a gap-up open could end with a flattish Indian market. The US dollar index falling to 100 levels (DXY) is positive for EM flows eventually, but

the sentiment is fragile and frayed. So, caution is advised. Gold has seen sustained inflows as safe haven buying has gone into gold, Japanese yen and Swiss Franc."

The midweek rally in US markets came after President Trump announced an immediate increase in tariffs on Chinese goods to 125 per cent, in response to China's decision to hike its tariffs on US goods from 34 per cent to 84 per cent, effective April 10.

At the same time, Trump announced a 90-day pause on imposing higher tariffs on 75 countries engaged in trade negotiations with the US, including India.

However, the optimism was short-lived. US markets reversed course on Thursday, with the Dow Jones Industrial Average falling 1,014 points and the Nasdaq dropping by 4.5 per cent. The continued uncertainty surrounding global trade policy weighed heavily on investor senti-

ment.

Amid rising market volatility, gold prices in India surged to an all-time high of Rs91,500 per 10 grams as investors turned to safe-haven assets. The Japanese yen and Swiss franc also saw increased inflows.

The US Dollar Index (DXY) fell to 100, which could eventually benefit emerging markets, but analysts warned that sentiment remains fragile.

On the corporate front, Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) reported earnings below market expectations, leading several brokerages to slash their target prices for the IT giant.

Adding to the global concerns, a White House official confirmed that China's average tariff rate would rise to 145 per cent, further intensifying trade tensions.

With uncertainty looming large, experts are advising investors to proceed with caution despite the short-term rally in equities.

Industrial output growth slows to 6-month low of 2.9% in February

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

India's industrial production growth decelerated to a six-month low of 2.9 per cent in February 2025, mainly due to poor performance of the manufacturing, mining and power sectors, according to official data released on Friday.

The government also revised upward the industrial growth figure to 5.2 per cent for January 2025 from the provisional estimate of 5 per cent released in March.

The factory output, measured in terms of the Index of Industrial Production (IIP), rose by 5.6 per cent in February 2024.

The previous low was recorded in August last year when the growth remained flat at zero per cent.

"As expected, the leap year base pulled down the YoY (year-on-year) growth of the IIP to 2.9 per cent in February 2025 from 5.2 per cent in January 2025....the deceleration



was broad-based, with all the use-based categories, as well as two of the three sectors barring electricity, witnessing a slower growth in February 2025 vis-a-vis the previous month.

"While the growth performance of mining is expected to deteriorate in March 2025 relative to February 2025, this is likely to be offset by an uptick in electricity generation, amid steady manufacturing growth," Icrs Chief Economist Aditi Nayar said.

The data released by the National Statistics Office (NSO) showed that the manufacturing sector's output growth slowed to 2.9 per cent in

February 2025, down from 4.9 per cent in the year-ago month.

Mining production growth dipped to 1.6 per cent from 8.1 per cent a year ago.

Power output growth also slowed to 3.6 per cent in February 2025 from 7.6 per cent in the year-ago period.

In the April-February FY25, the IIP grew 4.1 per cent, down from 6 per cent recorded in the corresponding period of the preceding fiscal.

As per use-based classification, the capital goods segment growth accelerated to 8.2 per cent in February 2025 against 1.7 per cent in the year-ago period.

Mauritius seeks India's help in energy sectors

TDG NETWORK
PORT LOUIS

With growing pressure to meet its rising power needs and transition towards cleaner energy, Mauritius has reached out to India seeking technical assistance and collaboration in the energy sector particularly in renewables, ANI has learnt.

The Indian government is also expected to send a team of principal experts in May to assist Mauritius' Central Electricity Board (CEB) in energy planning and regulatory development, officials at the Mauritian Energy Ministry said.

According to Zeenat Guness-Gooljar, the Permanent Secretary at Mauritius'

Ministry of Energy, the expert visit likely in May will mark the first concrete step forward following the submission of proposals.

"This is already one soon-to-materialize concrete action following our proposals," she said, adding that further engagement is expected in the energy domain.

"What was discussed and what was agreed during the discussion is that Mauritius is facing some challenges. In terms of energy security. We've been witnessing very high power demand. So in terms of our planning, generation planning, we would need to have some sort of support and assistance," she said. As of February 2025, Mauritius experi-

enced its highest recorded peak electricity demand of 567.9 megawatts (MW).

"The issue is to ensure we have sufficient power to meet the country's growing needs. But when we speak of power, it encompasses generation, transmission, distribution and increasingly, battery storage. We have ambitions for a green transition and we want Indian technical experts to assess our systems, guide us and share best practices," she said.

Another official at the Mauritian Ministry of Energy confirmed that the outreach to India includes around 10-15 proposals, submitted via the Mauritian Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Indian High Commission here.

Can't compromise national interest to meet trade deal deadlines: Goyal

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Union Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal on Friday said one cannot compromise with national interest just to meet trade agreement deadlines. The Minister said that at the end of the day, trade agreements have to be win-win for both sides.

"You always need to have timelines for all deadlines for whatever work you do. We do that in business all the time, don't we? Every action should be defined in terms of a responsibility that takes a timeline, but in the case of retail agreements, these are indicated timelines....," the Commerce Minister said, speaking at the Carnegie Global Technology Summit here in the national capital.

"But at the end of the day, it has to be a win-win for both sides. It has to be a fair, equitable, and balanced solution. Just to meet the deadline, you cannot com-



Union Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal and Italy Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Antonio Tajani during a joint press conference, at Vanijya Bhawan in New Delhi on Friday. ANI

promise national interest," he added.

India is currently working on trade agreements with many countries and blocks of nations, including with the EU, the UK, and the US. India-US trade deal is expected to inked by the fall of 2025. India-EU FTA is expected by the end of 2025.

On the trade deal with the EU, Goyal said the severity of the non-tariff barriers that Europe has created, particularly on climate regulations, have created

road blocks.

"Unless Europe recognizes the path that they are going down, if I can say it down a little bit, I see serious difficulty for Europe to be able to do trade with any country to get India. I am actually a worried man for the very future of the European Union and their position, given the kind of dramatically difficult non-tariff barriers that they have set up, both for their own benefit and for the benefit of the people," he explained.

India must ramp up R&D capabilities: NITI Aayog

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Debjani Ghosh, a fellow at the NITI Aayog and the former president of industry body Nasscom, on Friday said there are "important opportunities" facing India, and the country must ramp up its R&D capabilities.

Ghosh, speaking at ANI on the sidelines of the Carnegie Global Tech Summit, said India must build world-class R&D capabilities to disrupt some of the strategic supply chains—semiconductor and bio-engineering, among others.

"These are going to be very impactful from a security perspective, compute perspective," she said.

As AI adoption rises, energy requirements will incrementally grow, and Ghosh believes India can become a market for the world to source renewable energy.

Electronics manufacturing value addition set to reach 90% by 2027

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

India is strengthening its position as a global manufacturing hub, with value addition in electronics manufacturing having increased from 30 per cent to around 70 per cent, and is projected to reach 90 per cent by FY27, according to Axis Capital report.

With a new components

policy in place, the country is aiming to increase value addition from the current 15-16 per cent to 40-50 per cent. Mobile phone exports have grown 77 times in the last 10 years.

India has cut down its imports of fully built air conditioners (CBUs) from 35 per cent in FY19 to just 5 per cent in FY25. Key parts like compressors, copper tubes, and aluminum coils

are now being made in India.

In FY24, about 8.5 million RAC compressors were imported, but within the next 2-3 years, all of them are expected to be made locally.

The demand for Printed Circuit Board Assembly (PCBA) has jumped in both business and consumer sectors, helped by higher import duties.

Until 2016, India imported more electronics than it produced. But things have changed. Thanks to the "Make in India" push, local production is now about 24 per cent higher than imports (as of FY24).

Electronics exports are growing at a fast pace, with a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of about 26 per cent from FY16 to FY25.

GLOBAL TECH SUMMIT 2025

India's AI moment: From startup surge to global governance vision

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

India's accelerating digital transformation, combined with growing global scrutiny on artificial intelligence (AI) governance, was at the heart of discussions at the Carnegie Global Tech Summit 2025 in New Delhi this week. The event brought together global policymakers, tech leaders, and diplomats to explore the possibilities and responsibilities of AI-driven futures under the theme Sambhavna (Possibility).

Among the headline speakers was Nandan Nilekani, Chairman and Co-founder of Infosys, who both championed India's readiness for rapid AI adoption and cautioned against the euphoria surrounding it.

Despite the caution, Nilekani was bullish on India's prospects. The past 15 years of building robust digital public infrastructure—Aadhaar, UPI, and platforms like DigiLocker—have laid a solid foundation for India to leapfrog into the AI era.

THE SHORTER GAP BETWEEN INDIA AND THE WORLD

Nilekani noted that unlike previous technology revolutions, India won't lag for decades this time. "The gap between global developments and AI adoption in India is going to be very short," he said, crediting the country's rapid technological maturity and its growing ecosystem of digital users and startups.

From just 2,000 startups in 2015, India now boasts over 150,000 startups, with projections to reach one million by 2035. "They will solve problems in climate, energy, space," Nilekani said, describing a "virtuous cycle" of innovation that is beginning to self-perpetuate through success stories, IPOs, and reinvestment.

"India's space story is a fabulous public narrative," he added, hinting at the increasing role of private innovation in areas once reserved for the state.

AI'S REAL CHALLENGES: TRUST AND STRUCTURE

But AI's complexity lies beyond access or ambition. "This is the first time we are placing



I will be deeply evasive about the answer. My honest answer is, I don't think at this time there is any determination," Jaishankar said on the fact if the government was considering a possible ban on the Chinese AI platform DeepSeek.

trust in non-human intelligence," Nilekani observed. "We are more forgiving of human error, much less so of machine error."

Consumer-facing AI applications may get a pass when they make occasional errors, like a chatbot hallucinating. "But enterprise AI is harder, and public sector AI is the most difficult," he stressed, pointing to territorial data silos and the ethical weight of public trust. "If data is the lifeblood of AI, then we must find a way to unify data across departments while maintaining ethics and accountability."

FROM DIGITAL DIVIDE TO DIGITAL COMPACT

Amplifying the global stakes of AI governance was Amandeep Singh Gill, the United Nations Secretary-General's Envoy on Technology. Gill emphasized the need for an inclusive, global framework to govern AI, warning that a fragmented digital landscape would deepen inequalities.

He called the newly adopted Global Digital Compact a "landmark agreement" offering the first truly international commitment to digital cooperation.

"AI must be governed inclusively, by and for all," Gill said, laying out five guiding principles: inclusivity, public-interest orientation, data commons, multi-stakeholder collaboration, and adherence to the UN Charter and human rights. "AI is not just a tool—it shapes systems, opportunities, and voices," he added.

narrow priorities to build the economic partnership our people deserve."

Amid the backdrop of volatile US markets and a rising dollar crisis, Tellis acknowledged the pain being felt in the US economy. "This is a trifecta—tanking equity markets, bond turmoil, pressure on the dollar—it's painful."

On a separate note, Tellis welcomed the extradition of Tahawwur Hussain Rana, a key accused in the 2008 Mumbai attacks. "Justice will be served," he said, lauding the development as "long overdue."

BUILDING THE INDIA-AI FUTURE, RESPONSIBLY

Nilekani's optimism on AI's

Everybody is talking about AI, so the whole thing is much more hyperventilating," said Nilekani, urging a sobering look at the deep structural and behavioral shifts that effective AI deployment still demands. "The challenges of implementation are the same—habits must change, workflows must adapt."

Nandan Nilekani



Nandan Nilekani, Chairman and Co-founder of Infosys, addresses the inaugural session of the ninth edition of the Global Technology Summit (GTS), at Oberoi Hotel in New Delhi on Friday. ANI

Chairman and Co-founder of Infosys

Gill warned of the risks posed by divergent national AI strategies: "We are seeing fragmentation. Countries are competing for control over data and infrastructure. This risks limiting AI's potential to serve inclusive development."

INDIA, US URGED TO SAFEGUARD COMPLEMENTARITY

Addressing the economic dimension of global tech collaboration, Ashley J. Tellis, a senior fellow at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, urged India and the US to preserve the complementarity of their economies.

"I hope we can accelerate trade negotiations and not do anything that undermines this complementarity," Tellis said, cautioning against tariff wars. "We must look beyond

potential to deliver personalized, multilingual, voice-driven, and context-aware experiences to a billion people was underscored by one key message: it all hinges on responsible implementation.

"AI doesn't make things easier," he warned. "It makes the stakes higher."

He envisioned a future where India's next wave of growth would not be built on borrowed frameworks but on homegrown digital solutions refined through years of quiet groundwork. "Events happen because the foundation is built well. That's what gives hope," he said.

As global AI governance frameworks emerge and India's startup ecosystem matures, the next decade could see India not just adopting AI—but shaping its evolution.

CAN DELIBERATIONS AT AHMEDABAD LEAD TO SOME COURSE CORRECTION FOR CONGRESS?

OPINION

RASHEED KIDWAI



‘A political ideology is a very handy thing to have. It’s a real time-saver, because it tells you what you think about things you know nothing about.’

— Hendrik Hertzberg

As the Congress meets at Ahmedabad for its all-India session on April 8 and 9, the grand old party stares at an uncertain future and existential crisis. Prospects of a split, revolt, mutiny or disquiet are real and not without reasons. Since 2014, a series of defeats in Lok Sabha and in most of the assembly polls have shaken Congress’ self-belief and faith in ideology.

Take for example Congress handling of the waqf bill. As if the absence of Gandhis from the heated debate was not enough, party ideologue Jairam Ramesh and AICC spokespersons did little to counter the BJP on key issues. Much of the parliamentary debate was left to Gaurav Gogai, Syed Naser Hussain and Imran Pratapgarhi indicating once again that the Congress’

socio-economic thinking has been reduced to a near farcical “sab chalta hai” in Sonia-Rahul-Mallikarjun Kharge era.

In May 2022, the Congress was locked in an ideological debate at Udaipur, Rajasthan where the party’s in-house ‘Chintan Shivir’ was held. A section of the party delegates had demanded an outreach programme leading to a sharp north-south divide among the delegates.

On the second day of the camp, that was May 14, 2022 discussions were held on whether the Congress, as part of its revival plan, should conduct a ‘religious outreach’ programme? Or, should the thrust be on sociocultural and political issues? The delegates from states like Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat and Bihar were vocal that the primacy of negating religion should be replaced by ‘pro-active’ gestures. These delegates suggested that Congress leaders should conduct ‘Dahi Handi’ contests, place Ganesh idols at pradesh (state) and district Congress committee offices and celebrate the Navadurga festival in their respective areas of influence.

But a section of leaders from southern India, including a Congress Working Committee (CWC) member, Dr Chinta Mohan, Jairam Ramesh and other reportedly objected to it pointing that the party should stay away from mixing religion

with politics. “Avoid getting into the BJP pitch,” a senior leader is said to have commented. But those from Uttar Pradesh seemed convinced that unless the Congress showed its ‘genuine’ Hindu credentials, the party’s electoral fortunes would continue to suffer. The prophecy came true when the Congress performed below par in MP, Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh.

These differences continue but the Congress leadership is reluctant to confront ideologically tricky situations it has found itself for the past eleven years.

CULTIVATING THE MAJORITY

Historically, the Congress’s bid to mix religion and politics has remained problematic. There was a huge contradiction in the way Jawaharlal Nehru, independent India’s first Prime Minister, and Mahatma Gandhi viewed religion and politics. For Mahatma Gandhi, religion was integral to secularism. Gandhi, who otherwise agreed with his disciple Nehru on a range of issues, felt that The Nehruvian secular prescription would not work for India. “Politics bereft of religion” is “absolute dirt”, Gandhi would often say.

But Nehru, as I have mentioned in my book, 24, Akbar Road (Hachette), was firm in his definition of secularism that meant separation of religion from the political, economic, social and cultural aspects of life. Religion, in Nehru’s scheme of things, was a personal matter that the State should disassociate from at all costs. In a letter to his home minister Kailashnath Katju in 1953, Nehru had written, “The fate of India is largely tied up with the Hindu outlook.



Contrary to popular perceptions, the Congress fancies itself as a pro-Hindu party. When Indira Gandhi returned to power in 1980, she tried to cultivate the majority community and had accepted an invitation to launch the Vishwa Hindu Parishad’s ‘Ekatmata Yatra’.

If the present Hindu outlook does not change radically, I am quite sure that India is doomed.”

It was the observation of a man who had realised that the communalism of the majority community had the potential to resemble nationalism.

In September 1951, Nehru got all the CWC members of Purushottam Das Tandon’s team to resign, thus obliging Tandon, a right-wing Congress president, to resign. It may have been a mere coincidence that in the same month, the Bharatiya Jana Sangh, the BJP’s forerunner, was formally launched, with both Atal Bihari Vajpayee and L.K. Advani being present at the occasion.

Nehru, who had become the Congress president after Tandon’s resignation,

pronounced the bottom line of the party’s secular creed at a meeting at the Ram Lila grounds on Gandhi Jayanti in 1951. “If any man raises his hand against another in the name of religion, I shall fight him till the last breath of my life, whether from within the government or outside,” he had said.

Contrary to popular perceptions, the Congress fancies itself as a pro-Hindu party. When Indira Gandhi returned to power in 1980, she tried to cultivate the majority community and had accepted an invitation to launch the Vishwa Hindu Parishad’s ‘Ekatmata Yatra’.

The VHP was then a nascent outfit and such mass-contact programmes had the potential to tap into religious sentiments and mobil-

ise favourable opinion.

According to bureaucrat and author S.S. Gill, Indira’s final stint as Prime Minister revealed a lack of social solicitude towards Muslims. A hint of that had come from CM Stephen, an Indira loyalist. In his book, The Dynasty — A political biography of the premier ruling family of modern India (1996), Gill quotes Stephen, who had declared in 1983,

“The wave-length of Hindu culture and the Congress culture is the same.”

Earlier, Indira had bitterly opposed the creation of a separate Punjab state on linguistic lines as she closely identified with her minority Hindu supporters in the undivided state, which then included modern-day Haryana too. Indira had just taken over as Prime

Minister for the first time in 1966 when a demand for the creation of a Punjabi Suba, or Punjabi-speaking state, was conceded. In her book, My Truth (Vision Books), Indira had recalled her concerns of 1965 when she was minister for information and broadcasting in Lal Bahadur Shastri’s cabinet and a committee under the then Lok Sabha Speaker, Sardar Hukum Singh, had favoured the creation of a Punjabi Suba. Indira wrote that she was opposed to the formation of Punjab on the basis of language as it had let down the Congress’s Hindu supporters. “To concede the Akali demand would mean abandoning the position to which it (the Congress) was firmly committed and letting down its Hindu supporters in the projected Punjabi Suba... this startling reversal of Congress policy was totally unexpected.”

Barely six months before her assassination in October 1984, Indira had sought to assure the majority community that, “if there is injustice to them or if they did not get

their rights, then it would be dangerous to the integrity of the country”.

Five years later, in 1989, her son Rajiv Gandhi, who was the Prime Minister then, would launch his Lok Sabha campaign on the banks of the river Sarayu in Ayodhya, promising a Ram rajya.

A clear articulation of where the party stood on secularism came from V.N. Gadgil, the late Congress ideologue who served as All India Congress Committee spokesperson during the regimes of Narasimha Rao and Sitaram Kesri. Gadgil had told Congress activists at a seven-day training camp in Kurla, Maharashtra, that he disapproved of the Congress leadership’s policy of appeasing Muslims. At the training camp in 2000 to select ‘future Congress leaders’, Gadgil had asked,

“Do minorities mean only Muslims? What about Buddhists, Sikhs and others? When thirty-six Sikhs were killed in Kashmir, not a single Congressman condoled their deaths,” he said, referring to the March 2000 Chittisinghpura massacre.

When Gadgil was asked why he was saying all this, he had replied, “I have said this earlier. Muslims constitute only 18 per cent of the vote share. Even if all of them vote for the Congress, the party will not return to power. We cannot go on ignoring the sentiments of the other 82 per cent.”

Congress leaders, oblivious of realities, live in the past and nostalgia thinking, hamare baap dada ne ghee khaya tha , hamari hatheli soongh lo’ are bound to be in for a rude shock.

Can deliberations at Ahmedabad lead to some course correction?

Hanuman Janmotsava

OPINION

PRIYA TANDON



Today, 12th April, 2025 is Hanuman Janmotsava, the birthday of Hanumanji. It is celebrated on Chaitra Poornima (full moon day in the Chaitra month).

Hanuman Janmotsava shall be celebrated yet again on 19th October, 2025. This is because Hanuman Janmotsava is also celebrated on Kartik Chaturdashi (fourteenth day of Krishna Paksh in the Kartik month). Some believe that Hanumanji was given a new life after being hit by the Vajra of Indra on this day. Some texts say that Mother Sita blessed Hanumanji with

immortality on this day.

We celebrate the day as Hanuman Janmotsava and not Hanuman Jayanti. Because Jayanti is celebrated of a noble person who was born and has now left the body; whereas Janmotsava is celebrated of one who is born and is alive at the moment.

When Bhagwan Rama took jala-samadhi, he instructed Hanumanji to stay on the Earth till people sang the name of Rama. Since the name of Rama is sung even today, Lord Hanuman lives on; because he does not have the permission of Bhagwan Ram to leave the Earth. Hence we celebrate Hanuman Janmotsava. Many a devout soul claims to have had glimpses of Hanumanji in the higher Himalayas.

Lord Rama’s favourite and most staunch devotee was Hanumanji. He was blessed with Ananya bhakti. Hanumanji was born to the couple Anjana and Ke-

sari. The Ramayana tells us that King Dashratha did not have progeny, so he performed the Putrakameshti Yagna. A celestial being emerged from the Yagna fire and offered him an urn full of kheer, for the king to give to his queen, saying that the queen would become pregnant thereafter. King Dasharatha, having three wives, divided the kheer into three equal portions and gave them to his queens; Kaushalya, Kaikeyi and Sumitra.

The story goes that Sumitra left her bowl of kheer on the windowsill and went to bathe. While she was bathing, an eagle picked up the kheer from her windowsill and flew off. The eagle dropped the kheer, while flying over a mountain. (The mountain is now called Anjanadri or Hanuman Halli, near Hampi in Karnataka.) Anjana was meditating, when the bowl of kheer, dropped down into her lap. Anjana thought that the Lord had sent prasadam for her and she consumed it with devotion. She gave birth to a son who was named Anjaneya. He was also called Kesari Nandan (being born in the house of Kesari.) Since the prasad had come along with a gust of wind, the



child was also called Vayu Putra (son of wind).

Meanwhile, when it became known that Sumitra’s share of kheer was ‘taken away’, Kaushalya and Kaikeyi gave a portion each, of their own share of kheer to Sumitra. Rama was born to Kaushalya and Bharat was born to Kaikeyi. Sumitra bore twins who were named Lakshmana and Shatrughana. It is believed that the portion of kheer that was given to Sumitra by Kaushalya, led to the birth of Lakshmana and Kaikeyi’s portion led to the birth of Shatrughana.

There are many stories that tell about the naughtiness of the child Anjaneya. He often made mischief in the Guru’s ashram where he was sent to study. All the Rishis in the ashram were at their wits end about how to channel the energy of Hanuman and discipline him. One day, when Anjaneya was really hungry, He saw the sun in the sky and thought it was an apple. He started to fly towards the sun, wanting to eat the bright, shining apple in the sky. Indra was devastated, thinking that if Anjaneya ate the Sun, there

would be no light left for the world. In order to stop him, Indra attacked him with his Vajra (thunderbolt) and gave him a mighty blow on the face. Due to this blow on the face by Indra, Anjaneya’s chin got twisted to one side and his face got disfigured. This is when he came to be known as Hanuman (one with a disfigured face). When Hanumanji fell down to the ground, deeply unconscious with the impact of the Vajra, Anjana, Kesari and Vayu and begged for their son to be revived. Shiva brought Hanumanji back to consciousness. Hanuman ji is believed to be an Ansh-Avatar (miniscule part) of Shiva himself.

Hanumanji played many a role in assisting Bhagwan Rama in his sojourn on Earth. When Sitaji was abducted by Ravana; Rama and Lakshmana looked far and wide for her. The army of Sugriva, also joined in the search. Hanumanji leapt across the ocean and went to Lanka in search of Sitaji. He came back after finding her and reassuring her that Rama would come soon, to rescue her. Noteworthy is the fact that when Rama sent Hanumanji to Lanka, He did not give him detailed guidance and instructions, about how to conduct him-

self there.

Hanumanji entered Lanka, assuming the size of an insect. He checked the palace looking for Sitaji and through a congenial dialogue with Vibheeshana, found out that Sitaji was in Ashok Vatika.

When he saw Sitaji, sitting under a tree in the Ashok Vatika lost deep in thought, he realised that if he appeared before her, she would get intimidated and may not even believe his story because he was a monkey, not a human. Such was his presence of mind that he sat atop the tree and started singing, Ram Katha. When Sitaji heard the singing, she looked up, and Hanumanji dropped the ring of Lord Ram in front of her. That convinced her to believe that he was the messenger of Rama.

Hanumanji induced a confrontation with Ravana, just so that he could give Ravana a taste of the might of Rama’s messenger and invoke fear in the mind of Ravana’s army. He set Lanka on fire, scared the day-lights out of everyone there and returned in style, unscathed!

When Lakshman was unconscious after being hit by the Shakti fired by Inderjeet, during the battle

between Rama and Ravana he needed medical aid. Ravana’s Vaidya Raj Sushen did not want to treat Lakshman saying that he was the brother of the enemy of their king. Hanumanji counselled him, saying that a Vaidya’s first duty is to treat the patient who comes in his hour of need. At this time, Lakshman needs treatment. It does not matter who the enemy is. It only matters that you are a doctor; you should keep the well-being of your patient in the forefront. Vaidya Raj Sushen agreed to treat Lakshman, but he said that he needed some medicinal herbs that grew only on the Himalayas, and there was no way to make them available now.

He also said that if the sun rose and the treatment was not done, Lakshmana would not survive. Hanumanji took it upon himself to fly to the Himalayas and bring the requisite medicinal herbs. When he reached there, he couldn’t recognise the right herb, so he just picked up the entire Dronagiri mountain for the Vaidya to harvest the Sanjevani booti from. Such was his might and commitment towards his Lord Rama. Truly a role model, whose life is worth emulating!

HRISHIKESH MUKHERJEE'S TIMELESS COMEDY CHUPKE CHUPKE TURNS 50

You don't laugh at a Hrishikesh Mukherjee film. You smile through it, again and again, even fifty years later.



There was something about Hindi cinema in 1975. The range of genres that one witnessed in films that year was almost schizophrenic in nature – *Deewaar* and *Jai Santoshi Maa*, *Mausam* and *Ranga Khush*... one can go on. Nothing exemplified this better than two films that starred two of Indian cinema's biggest stars but in roles so disparate that it beggars belief they were the product of the same time.

Sholay, starring Amitabh Bachchan and Dharmendra, stunned audiences with its violence and ferocity. Approximately four months before *Sholay* fired the imagination of Indian viewers, the two stars – along with Jaya Bhaduri, who was a part of the film – featured in another film that could not have been more different. A laugh riot from the beginning to the end, *Chupke Chupke* is now considered a bona fide comedy classic of Indian cinema. Celebrating its 50th anniversary this month, marking half a century of its enduring appeal, *Chupke Chupke* continues to charm viewers with its wit, warmth and joie de vivre.

A UNIQUE CONCEPT IN A CHANGING CINEMA LANDSCAPE

Chupke Chupke was released in an era when the likes of *Sholay* and *Deewaar* were defining mainstream Indian cinema. The 1970s were a time when the Hindi film



Directed by Yash Chopra from a Salim-Javed script, *Deewaar* remains a career-high for everyone involved. File photo

industry was in the midst of transitioning from the more light-hearted, musical melodramas of the 1960s to socially relevant, action-packed blockbusters. Within this changing landscape, Hrishikesh Mukherjee's *Chupke Chupke* offered a refreshing departure with its blithe situational comedy and its focus on humour over spectacle. The film's narrative revolves around a newlywed couple, Parimal (Dharmendra) and Sulekha (Sharmila Tagore). The former plans an elaborate practical joke to fool Sulekha's *jijaji* (brother-in-law) of whom Sulekha thinks very highly. The plot is deceptively simple but provides a canvas for a series of comedic situations that unfold in a traditional, middle-class household. What makes *Chupke Chupke* stand out is not just its plot but the way it handles its characters, the subtleties of humour, and the human dynamics at play. Fifty years later, one cannot but look back with nostalgia for a lost world in the way the film goes about addressing family relationships. It examines the dynamics between in-laws, the misunderstandings that can arise in a family, and how love and laughter

can help resolve even the most tricky of situations. The theme of practical jokes – though central to the plot – also speaks to the importance of trust and mutual understanding in relationships. The humour is never mean-spirited or cruel; instead, it's built on the bonds that the characters share. In a sense, *Chupke Chupke* embodies the idea that laughter is the glue that holds families together.

A STELLAR CAST

Chupke Chupke is often remembered for its stellar ensemble cast, many of whom brought their own unique flavour to the film, making it a perfect blend of understated performances and comedic timing. At the heart of the film is the pairing of Dharmendra and Sharmila, who, despite not being the typical comic duo of the time, excelled in their roles as a newly married couple caught in a whirlwind of mischief and humour. Dharmendra, known for his rugged image in films like *Rakhtwala* and *Sholay*, portrayed Parimal with a mix of charm and vulnerability. His portrayal of a man in love who also has a playful side proved that his acting range went far beyond the action roles

he was often associated with. Sharmila, on the other hand, brought elegance and grace to her character, creating a subtle yet impactful performance that complemented Dharmendra's light-hearted performance.

The film also saw the comic brilliance of Amitabh Bachchan, who, during the mid-'70s, was transitioning from his early roles to the Angry Young Man persona he would later become known for. Bachchan's role as Parimal's friend who joins in his elaborate prank was a refreshing shift from his more intense roles and showcased his ability to master light comedy. His interactions with the ensemble cast are filled with delightful energy, turning each scene into a moment of pure comedic gold. Another iconic figure in *Chupke Chupke* was the veteran actor Om Prakash, who delivered an easy-going performance as Sharmila's brother-in-law. The entire supporting cast, which included actors like Jaya Bhaduri, Asrani, David and Lily Chakravarty, with Keshto Mukherjee in a brilliant cameo as, what else, a drunkard, also contributed to the



Jai Santoshi Maa (1975) film poster. File photo

film's appeal, with their comic timing and effortless performances.

THE MAGIC OF HRISHIKESH MUKHERJEE'S DIRECTION

Known for his skill in creating movies that depicted middle-class Indian life with a gentle yet humorous touch, Mukherjee's approach in *Chupke Chupke* was no different. The film is an excellent example of how he masterfully balanced upbeat comedy with emotional depth to create wholesome family entertainers. With films like *Anand* (1971) and *Bawarchi* (1972), Mukherjee was already known for his ability to create relatable, human-centric stories with warmth. In *Chupke Chupke*, he took the concept of a family gathering and transformed it into a web of misunderstandings, pranks and comic situations. His deft handling of the script, the timing of the jokes, and the way he allowed the actors to play off each

other resulted in a film that feels timeless, despite its reliance on traditional familial setups.

Additionally, the dialogue in *Chupke Chupke*, written by Gulzar, is often cited as being one of the key reasons for the film's enduring legacy. The lines are witty, sharp and reflective of the characters' personalities. Even the more mundane conversations are crafted to bring out humour, making each scene an enjoyable experience. In particular, the film's use of *shuddh* Hindi as a trope – in the dialogues between Dharmendra and Om Prakash – has become the stuff of legends. The running gags and banter on language – the ribbing of the illogicality of English versus the rationale of Hindi – is particularly relevant in today's era.

CINEMATIC STYLE AND MUSIC

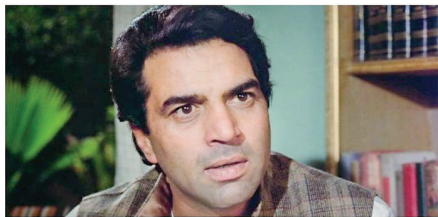
Led by Jaywant Pathare, the film's cinematography played a crucial role

in shaping its visual tone. *Chupke Chupke* was shot primarily in indoor sets, and the cinematography effectively brought out the warmth and familiarity of the characters' surroundings. The lighting and camera angles enhanced the cosy, familial atmosphere, complementing the intimate scale of the film.

The film's soundtrack, composed by the legendary Sachin Dev Burman, is delightful. The song *Chupke chupke chal ri purvaaiyya* became iconic, and its melody captured the essence of the film's light-hearted romantic atmosphere. There's also the classic Mohammad Rafi-Kishore Kumar duet *Sare ga ma* at the outset – with friends Dharmendra and Bachchan in fine form – that sets the tone for the two main characters as also the film.

In an era of fast-paced filmmaking and digital content, *Chupke Chupke* is a reminder of how classic storytelling, well-rounded characters and effortless humour can create an experience that transcends time. Its influence is evident in modern-day comedies, and the film has often been cited by directors and actors as an inspiration. In retrospect, while it might not have been a commercial success of the magnitude of *Sholay* and *Deewaar* at its time of release, *Chupke Chupke* has carved out a special place in the hearts of those of us who watch and rewatch it.

Written by Sundeep Bhutoria



An iconic scene from *Chupke Chupke* showcasing Dharmendra's character engaging in a humorous exchange with Om Prakash, highlighting the film's play on language.

Echoes of Laughter: The soft radicalism of Hrishikesh Mukherjee

TG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

When *Chupke Chupke* was released in 1975, it was a cinematic anomaly. The same year gave us *Deewaar* and *Sholay*, seismic films that split Hindi cinema into 'before' and 'after.' But while Bachchan was becoming the nation's Angry Young Man, Hrishikesh Mukherjee was building something quieter, something subtler—a language of middle-class comedy rooted not in chaos, but in calibration.

To fully appreciate *Chupke Chupke* and the ecosystem it belongs to, you need to understand what it resists. These films resist excess. They resist grandiosity. In an era inching toward operatic melodrama and vigilante justice, Mukherjee and his peers created small revolutions set in drawing rooms, kitchens, and government offices. Their rebellions were linguistic, domestic, and behavioral. Let's walk through five films that, like *Chupke Chupke*, turned civility into subversion and turned comedy into



Gol Maal is a 1979 comedy movie directed by Hrishikesh Mukherjee. It was produced by Mukherjee and N.C. Sippy with music by Rahul Dev Burman. File photo

cinema's gentlest art form. GOL MAAL (1979): THE FARCE OF FORMALITY

Mukherjee's own *Gol Maal* is arguably *Chupke Chupke*'s thematic sequel. It, too, hinges on performance—Amol Palekar's Ramprasad must don twin personas to survive the tyranny of an employer who fetishizes *sanskaar*. But where *Chupke Chupke*

used *shuddh* Hindi to mock linguistic purism, *Gol Maal* skewers cultural orthodoxy itself.

Utpal Dutt's Bhavani Shankar is not a villain; he is a system personified. The comedy, therefore, isn't slapstick but existential. Palekar's deception becomes a dance with patriarchy, with performative Indianness. Mukherjee laces every joke with a social mirror. That's

his genius. PADOSAN (1968): OPERATIC ABSURDITY WITH A METAFICTIONAL TWIST

At first glance, *Padosan* seems like an outlier—louder, broader, borderline cartoonish. But watch again. What Kishore Kumar does in *Padosan* is meta before "meta" became a buzzword. He parodies playback sing-



Saira Banu and Mehmoond in *Padosan* (1968). IMDb

ing, musical tropes, and the masculine performance of romance. Sunil Dutt lip-synchs to Kumar's vocals not just in a song but across an identity.

This is a film that understands the absurdity of cinematic conventions and leans into them with full-throated irony. Its DNA overlaps with *Chupke Chupke* not in tone, but in method—it, too, dissects role-playing. Only

here, the *mise-en-scène* is an opera of slapstick.

CHHOTI SI BAAT (1976): THE QUIET COMEDY OF HESITATION

Basu Chatterjee's *Chhoti Si Baat* feels like a sigh—warm, tender, and eternally relevant. Palekar returns as another everyday man, but this time his performance is internalized. His enemy is not a system or an ego; it is his own diffidence.

The film flirts with voyeurism, but never in the exploitative sense. Chatterjee's camera doesn't gawk—it observes. And in doing so, it allows the audience to watch someone learn to live. The comedy is gentle because the stakes are real. Just as *Chupke Chupke* disguised relational wisdom as prankster play, *Chhoti Si Baat* disguises existential angst as romantic comedy.

KHUBSOORAT (1980): MATRIARCHAL ANARCHY

Rekha's Manju is a comet crashing into a planet governed by tyranny in slippers. *Khubsoorat*, perhaps the most radical of

Mukherjee's comedies, is about breaking rules—but not through confrontation. Instead, it weaponizes joy. Dina Pathak's disciplinarian mother-in-law is undone not by argument, but by song, dance, and logic.

This is feminism rendered not as manifesto but as melody. It aligns with *Chupke Chupke* in how it dismantles authority with affection. Where Parimal breaks down Jijaji's ego with linguistic gymnastics, Manju breaks matriarchal rigidity with uncontainable charm.

BAWARCHI (1972): HARMONY AS REBELLION

If *Chupke Chupke* is about linguistic mischief and *Gol Maal* about performative piety, Bawarchi is Mukherjee at his most spiritual. Rajesh Khanna enters a broken home as a servant and leaves it transformed, but there's no hocus-pocus here—just emotional labor, culinary kindness, and invisible wisdom.

The film plays like a fable, almost Sufi in spirit. Its closest philosophical cousin is *The Bicycle Thieves*,

not for its content but for its conviction in human dignity. The comedy is infused with melancholy, a reminder that in India's most profound films, joy is often a survival strategy.

THE MUKHERJEE ETHOS: WHERE COMEDY MEETS CRAFT

What binds these films is not plot. It is their faith in character over caricature, warmth over wit, and nuance over noise. Hrishikesh Mukherjee's world is not utopia. It's ordinary India, sharpened by satire and softened by love.

There is a moral intelligence in these comedies, a dramaturgical finesse. Jokes aren't just setups and payoffs; they are arguments, critiques, acts of healing. And in a country where laughter is often used to silence, these films dared to use laughter to speak.

So, if *Chupke Chupke* made you laugh, go back to its cinematic cousins. Don't just watch them. Listen. Decode. Let them teach you how to laugh with your mind.

DR. B.R. AMBEDKAR: ARCHITECT OF MODERN INDIA'S PHILOSOPHY

TDG NETWORK

Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar (1891–1956) was a multifaceted personality—jurist, economist, social reformer, and politician—whose philosophies and actions have left an indelible mark on India's social and political landscape. Born into the Mahar caste, traditionally deemed “untouchable,” Ambedkar's life journey from social ostracism to becoming the principal architect of the Indian Constitution is both inspiring and transformative.

EARLY LIFE AND EDUCATION

Ambedkar's early life was marred by the oppressive caste system. Despite facing systemic discrimination, his intellectual prowess shone through. He was the first Dalit to enroll at Elphinstone High School in Bombay, and later, he pursued higher education abroad, earning multiple doctorates from prestigious institutions, including Columbia University and the London School of Economics.

PHILOSOPHICAL FOUNDATIONS

Ambedkar's philosophy was deeply rooted in social justice, equality, and rationalism. His academic pursuits in economics and law, combined with his personal experiences of discrimination, shaped his worldview:

Critique of the Caste System: Ambedkar viewed the caste system as a social hierarchy that dehumanized individuals based on birth. In his seminal work, “Annihilation of Caste,” he argued that caste was not a division of labor but a division of laborers, leading to forced occupations and social stratification. He believed that true social reform could only be achieved by dismantling the religious and social foundations of the caste system.

Advocacy for Social Equality: Drawing from his own experiences, Ambedkar championed the rights of the marginalized. He emphasized that political democracy was meaningless without social and economic equality. His efforts led to significant legal provisions for affirmative ac-



tion and the protection of Dalit rights in the Indian Constitution.

Rationalism and Buddhism: Ambedkar was a proponent of rational thought and empirical evidence. Disillusioned with the pervasive social injustices within Hinduism, he converted to Buddhism, advocating for a reformed, rational approach to spirituality. He introduced the concept of “Navayana” or “Neo-Buddhism,” emphasizing social action and equality.

POLITICAL AND SOCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Ambedkar's contributions were not confined to philosophy; he was a man of action:

Poona Pact: In 1932, the British government's proposal to create separate electorates for Dalits led to the Poona Pact between Ambedkar and Mahatma Gandhi. This agreement ensured reserved seats for Dalits within the general electorate, a compromise that sought to balance representation without fostering further division.

Constitutional Architect: As the Chairman of the Drafting Committee of the Indian Constitution, Ambedkar was instrumental in embedding principles of justice, liberty, equality, and fraternity. His vision ensured that the Constitution not only provided political freedom

but also addressed social inequities.

Labor Rights and Economic Reforms: Ambedkar's tenure as the Labor Minister in the Viceroy's Executive Council saw significant strides in labor rights, including the introduction of minimum wage laws and the recognition of labor unions. His advocacy for the rights of industrial workers highlighted his commitment to economic justice.

PHILOSOPHY OF SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION

Central to Ambedkar's philosophy was the belief that social transformation required both legal and cultural changes: Education as Empower-

ment: Ambedkar viewed education as the primary tool for social mobility. He established institutions and scholarships to promote education among Dalits and other marginalized communities, believing that knowledge was essential for asserting one's rights and challenging oppression.

Economic Independence: He emphasized the importance of economic self-sufficiency as a means to achieve social equality. By advocating for land rights, fair wages, and economic opportunities, Ambedkar sought to reduce the economic disparities that fueled social hierarchies.

Cultural Renaissance: Beyond legal reforms, Ambedkar believed in a cultural renaissance that would reshape societal values. His conversion to Buddhism was symbolic of this shift—a move towards a faith that preached equality and rejected the caste-based discrimination prevalent in Hinduism.

DR. B.R. AMBEDKAR'S LEGACY IS MULTIFACETED:

Educational Institutions: Numerous universities, colleges, and research

centers bear his name, perpetuating his commitment to education. These institutions continue to serve as beacons of learning and social justice.

Political Influence: Ambedkar's philosophies continue to influence political discourse in India. His ideas have inspired various political parties and movements that advocate for the rights of Dalits and other marginalized groups.

Global Recognition: Internationally, Ambedkar is recognized as a champion of human rights. His life and work have inspired global discussions on social justice, equality, and human rights, making him a significant figure in world history. So it can be said that Dr. B.R. Ambedkar has been instrumental in bringing about massive changes in the country's political and social landscape.

Till date he stands as an exemplary for all those who want to fight for their rights and contribute to the development of the country. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's life and philosophy embody the transformative power of knowledge, resilience, and justice. Born into systemic discrimina-

tion, he rose through sheer determination and intellect to become the chief architect of the Indian Constitution, a champion for the marginalized, and a global symbol of social reform. Ambedkar believed that political democracy must be accompanied by social and economic equality, and he spent his life fighting against the oppressive caste system that denied dignity to millions. He not only changed the legal framework of a nation but also awakened a consciousness that continues to inspire movements for justice and equality. Dr. Ambedkar's legacy is a guiding light for those striving to build a fair and inclusive society across the globe. His thoughts on education as a tool of empowerment, his advocacy for labor rights, and his commitment to gender and social equality laid a solid foundation for a progressive India.

His adoption of Buddhism was a powerful statement against caste-based inequality and a call for spiritual and social liberation. Ambedkar's vision for an inclusive, just, and educated society remains deeply relevant today.

Historical accuracy in Indian cinema: A double-edged sword



DR. SHWETA SHARMA

Cinema has long been more than just a form of entertainment in India. It is an integral part of our culture, a medium through which stories are told, emotions are expressed, and societal narratives are shaped. With over 1,500 to 2,000 films produced annually in more than 20 languages, the Indian film industry stands as one of the largest in the world.

Among its many genres, historical films have carved a unique niche. They not only entertain but also attempt to inform, educate, and instill a sense of pride in our collective past. However, in doing so, they often walk a tightrope between historical accuracy and creative liberty.

In recent years, we have witnessed a notable surge in films centered around historical events and figures. Be it the valor of Maharana Pratap, the strategic brilliance of Chanakya, or the spiritual legacy of Swami Vivekananda, Indian cinema has sought inspiration from its rich and varied history. But with this surge comes a responsibility—one that filmmakers cannot afford to overlook.

THE DOUBLE-EDGED SWORD OF REPRESENTATION

Historical films are a powerful medium for shaping public perception. For many viewers, a movie might be their first or only exposure to a particular historical event or personality. This positions filmmakers as quasi-historians, with the power to influence how history is remembered and understood. Consequently, the question arises: should filmmakers prioritize factual integrity over cinematic flourish?

Some filmmakers do indeed invest in rigorous research, consulting historical texts, archival records, and even subject matter experts. Films like Gandhi (1982), di-



rected by Richard Attenborough, or The Legend of Bhagat Singh (2002) are often praised for their commitment to authenticity and nuanced portrayal of historical figures. These films become more than mere entertainment—they are visual documents of historical interpretation.

However, not all films adhere to this ethos. Many take creative liberties in the name of dramatization. Characters are romanticized, timelines are altered, and sometimes entire events are fictionalized for the sake of a compelling narrative. While these choices may enhance entertainment value, they often distort historical facts, leading to public misinformation and controversy.

CREATIVE LIBERTY VS. HISTORICAL RESPONSIBILITY

One must understand that cinema, by nature, is a storytelling medium. A strict, documentary-style adherence to history may not always engage audiences accustomed to emotional arcs, dramatic climaxes, and visual spectacle. Thus, a certain degree of creative liberty is inevitable and, in many cases, necessary.

But where does one draw the line? This dilemma is at the heart of the ongoing debate between artistic freedom and historical authenticity. When films like Padmaavat (2018) or Panipat (2019) stir public uproar over alleged misrepresentation, it becomes evident that historical sensitivity remains a contentious issue.

While filmmakers defend their creative choices as artistic expression, critics and historians often accuse them of distorting facts, glorifying or vilifying characters based on contemporary ideologies rather than historical evidence.

THE COMMERCIAL CONUNDRUM



One cannot ignore the role of commercial viability in this equation. Historical films often come with hefty budgets, requiring grand sets, elaborate costumes, and extensive marketing campaigns. To ensure box office returns, filmmakers may resort to embellishments that cater to popular taste—action-packed battle scenes, love subplots, and melodrama.

These additions, while enhancing viewer engagement, may lead to oversimplified or exaggerated narratives. A complex historical figure may be portrayed as either a flawless hero or a heartless villain, erasing the grey areas that truly define historical reality. The commercial success of such films may encourage similar future endeavors, even if they compromise on factual integrity.

IMPACT ON PUBLIC CONSCIOUSNESS

The portrayal of history in cinema doesn't exist in a vacuum. It significantly influences how people understand their heritage and identity. For instance, younger audiences may derive their entire understanding of the Mughal era or the Indian independence movement from what they see on screen. This places an enormous ethical burden on filmmakers.

Misinformation in films can lead to long-term consequences. It may reinforce stereotypes, fuel regional or communal tensions, or propagate revisionist history. In extreme cases, it can overshadow scholarly discourse, replacing nuanced anal-

ysis with cinematic fiction.

Therefore, historical cinema must be approached with a sense of moral and academic responsibility. Filmmakers should view themselves as custodians of cultural memory, rather than mere entertainers.

STRIKING A BALANCE: A NEW WAY FORWARD

So, how can Indian cinema reconcile the need for dramatic storytelling with the obligation to historical truth? The solution lies in a middle path—what we may call “responsible creativity.”

Firstly, collaboration is key. Filmmakers should involve historians, researchers, and cultural experts early in the production process. This will not only lend credibility to the narrative but also prevent potential backlash. Secondly, transparency matters.

If a film deviates from historical fact, it should be made clear through disclaimers or post-film discussions. Audiences have the right to know which parts are dramatized and which are based on verifiable evidence.

Thirdly, academic institutions and cinema should work together. Seminars, workshops, and public discussions on historical films can foster critical thinking and educate viewers about the interplay between history and popular culture.

Finally, the media and film critics must play a proactive role. Instead of merely evaluating cinematic technique or performance, they should also examine the historical integrity of the film. This will elevate public discourse and encourage filmmakers to be more conscientious in their approach.

ENTERTAINMENT WITH INTEGRITY

In the grand theatre of Indian cinema, historical films occupy a stage that is both glorious and sensitive. Their power to inspire, inform, and unite is unparalleled—but so is their potential to mislead. As we continue to celebrate our rich past through the lens of cinema, let us remember that with great storytelling comes great responsibility.

History is not a canvas to be painted over at whim—it is a mirror to reflect upon. And when filmmakers look into that mirror, may they strive not only to captivate the eye but also to enlighten the mind.

Photographer Sudhir Kasliwal's State-of-the-Art Darkroom 2.0

TDG NETWORK

Renowned photographer Steve McCurry inaugurated the Darkroom 2.0 of Jaipur-based photographer Sudhir Kasliwal, recently. A state-of-the-art space for processing and developing film and making prints in the heart of the city, the darkroom is an upgraded version of the photographer's previous one. The event attended by photographers and photography enthusiasts marks a significant milestone in the city's photography scene, celebrating the art of analog photography in the digital age.

Sudhir Kasliwal, a passionate photographer and promoter of analog photography, has been keeping his darkroom alive at home despite the emergence of digital cameras, except for a brief hiatus. His dedication to the craft has inspired a community of young photographers who continue to honour analog photography while also leveraging digital technology to its full potential.

The Darkroom 2.0 is a tribute to Sudhir Kasliwal's hometown Jaipur, which holds a significant place in the advent of photography in India. The city was home to Photukhana, one of the famed 36 karkhane (royal workshops) in Jaipur, where Maharaja Sawai Ram Singh II, a pioneer of photography, introduced and popularized the art form in the region.

Steve McCurry, who stepped into a darkroom after over two and a half decades, was nostalgic on seeing the enlarger, film tank, timers, and chemicals. He congratulated Sudhir Kasliwal on the setting up of his darkroom 2.0. He wrote in his catalogue “Congratulations on a great career in photo. With friendship and best wishes - Steve McCurry”

The Darkroom 2.0 aims to showcase the joy of analog photography and provide a unique experi-



ence for photography enthusiasts to learn about darkroom processes. Sudhir Kasliwal plans to offer workshops, classes, and exhibitions at the darkroom, further solidifying Jaipur's position as a hub for photography.

In continuation of his analog journey, Sudhir Kasliwal is all set for an upcoming exhibition of photographs captured on film — both in black-and-white and colour — offering a nuanced portrayal of Rajasthan.

The exhibition includes rare cibachrome prints and black-and-white prints hand-printed by him in his darkroom, showcasing the richness and texture that analog processes bring to storytelling.

The exhibition will be held from 17th to 19th April 2025 at the Rajasthan International Center, Jaipur.

ABOUT SUDHIR KASLIWAL

In the world of contemporary Indian photography, Sudhir Kasliwal is perhaps the most eloquent emissary of the Rajasthan people. Internationally renowned for its majestic forts and palaces, Rajasthan has attracted many a photographer eager to capture their relics of a bygone era of pomp and splendour. Sudhir's photographs are different.

People oriented, they take the viewer away from the dusty past reflected in these inanimate architectural remains to a throbbing present, choosing images from life as it is

lived in rural Rajasthan. Sudhir's Rajasthan is the Rajasthan of the common folk, and the concerns that move them – a village fair, a woman baking her daily bread, a cow girl liltling homeward. In more senses than one Sudhir breaks away from stereotypes: if there is no enthusiasm to show the glory, there is not attempt to cash in on images of poverty and squalor either.

There is neither nostalgia nor undiluted melancholia. Says Sudhir “My effort is to capture things as they are, may be with a positive touch. Happiness is an attitude of mind and is not necessarily related to one's material circumstances. People can be happy and they are happy in our country and I want to show the outside world just that”.

ABOUT STEVE MCCURRY

Steve McCurry is one of the most celebrated photographers of our time. Known for his deeply evocative portraits and use of color, McCurry has documented cultures, conflicts, and human resilience across the globe. His most iconic photograph, The Afghan Girl, appeared on the cover of National Geographic and remains one of the most recognizable images in photographic history.

Over the years, McCurry has received numerous accolades, including the Robert Capa Gold Medal and the Centenary Medal for Lifetime Achievement from the Royal Photographic Society.

HOW NASA PLANS TO TACKLE SPACE WASTE WITH A \$3M PRIZE

NASA's LunaRecycle Challenge, with its \$3 million prize, marks a significant step towards addressing a critical issue in space exploration: waste management. While the legacy of the Apollo missions left behind 96 bags of human waste on the Moon, the Artemis program and future long-duration missions necessitate a sustainable and efficient approach to handling biological and other waste. This challenge isn't merely about cleaning up past messes; it's about pioneering technologies that will enable a circular economy in space, transforming waste into vital resources for future astronauts.

LUNAR LEGACY AND THE CHALLENGES

The Apollo missions, while groundbreaking in their achievements, prioritized immediate mission objectives over long-term environmental considerations. As a result, astronauts discarded various items, including bags containing urine, feces, and vomit, on the lunar surface. While seemingly a minor detail at the time, this practice highlights the inherent difficulties of waste management in space.

The challenge intensifies with the advent of long-duration missions to the Moon and Mars. Current methods of waste disposal, such as storing waste in bags on the International Space Station (ISS) and either returning it to Earth or allowing it to

burn up during atmospheric re-entry, are simply not feasible for extended space travel. The sheer volume of waste generated by a crew of astronauts over months or years necessitates a more sustainable solution.

NASA estimates that a four-person crew can produce approximately 2,500 kilograms of waste annually. This waste not only occupies precious storage space but also poses potential biological and physical hazards. The accumulation of waste can lead to the growth of bacteria and fungi, creating unsanitary conditions and potentially compromising the health of the crew. Furthermore, the transportation of waste from Earth to space and back is costly and resource-intensive, making it unsustainable for long-term missions.

A CALL FOR INNOVATION

Recognizing the urgent need for innovative waste management solutions, NASA launched the LunaRecycle Challenge. The competition aims to incentivize the development of technologies that can convert human waste, including feces, urine, and vomit, into valuable resources such as drinking water, fertilizer, and energy.

OBJECTIVES ARE MULTIFACETED

Sustainable Waste Management: To develop systems that minimize waste and maximize resource recovery in a space environ-



ment.

Resource Recovery: To transform human waste into usable products that support long-duration missions.

Environmental Stewardship: To minimize the impact of human activity on celestial bodies.

Technology Advancement: To foster innovation in waste processing and recycling technologies.

NASA's vision extends beyond simply cleaning up the Moon. The agency aims to establish a circular economy in space, where waste is not merely discarded but transformed into valuable resources that support human life and exploration. This approach is crucial for establishing a sustainable human presence on the Moon and beyond.

CURRENT SPACE WASTE MANAGEMENT

Currently, waste management on the ISS involves a combination of storage and disposal. Astronauts collect waste in bags, which are

then stored onboard until they can be transferred to a cargo spacecraft. These spacecraft either return to Earth, where the waste is processed, or are allowed to burn up during atmospheric re-entry.

While this method has been effective for short-duration missions, it is not sustainable for long-term space travel. The transportation of waste from Earth to space and back is costly and resource-intensive, and the storage of waste onboard spacecraft poses potential health and safety risks.

On the ISS, there are also some methods of processing waste. For example, some waste is metered into high temperature reactors. These burn the waste into water, oxygen, and other gasses. These byproducts are then reused or safely vented, and the remaining solid mass is reduced.

POTENTIAL OF WASTE RECYCLING IN SPACE

The LunaRecycle Challenge aims to unlock the



potential of waste recycling in space. By transforming human waste into valuable resources, astronauts can reduce their reliance on Earth-based supplies and minimize the environmental impact of their missions.

POTENTIAL APPLICATIONS

● Water Reclamation: Urine can be processed to extract potable water, reducing the need to transport water from Earth.

● Fertilizer Production: Human waste can be converted into fertilizer to support plant growth in space habitats.

● Energy Generation: Or-



ganic waste can be used to generate biogas, providing a sustainable source of energy.

CIRCULAR ECONOMY IN SPACE OFFERS

Reduced Reliance on Earth: By recycling resources, astronauts can reduce their dependence on Earth-based supplies.

Minimized Environmental Impact: Recycling waste reduces the need to transport resources from Earth, minimizing the environmental impact of space missions.

Enhanced Mission Sustainability: Resource recovery ensures that astronauts have access to the resources they need to sustain long-duration missions.

Increased Mission Efficiency: By recycling resources, astronauts can reduce the amount of waste they need to store and transport.

THE FUTURE OF SPACE WASTE MANAGEMENT

The LunaRecycle Challenge represents a significant step towards a more sustainable and efficient future for space exploration. As NASA prepares for its



Artemis missions and beyond, the development of innovative waste management technologies is crucial for establishing a long-term human presence on the Moon and Mars.

The winning solutions from the LunaRecycle Challenge will not only address the immediate issue of waste management but also pave the way for a circular economy in space. These technologies will transform waste into valuable resources, enabling astronauts to live and work in space for extended periods.

By prioritizing sustainable waste management, NASA is demonstrating its commitment to responsible space exploration. The agency's efforts will not only benefit future astronauts but also inspire innovation in waste management technologies on Earth. The lessons learned from the LunaRecycle Challenge will have far-reaching implications for our planet, as we strive to create a more sustainable future for all.

The challenge signifies a shift from a linear "take-make-dispose" model to a circular "reduce-reuse-recycle" model. This paradigm shift is essential for ensuring the long-term viability of human space exploration and for minimizing our impact on the cosmos. By trans-

forming waste into resources, we can create a cleaner, smarter, and more sustainable future for humanity, both on Earth and beyond.

● TDG NETWORK

How Foreign Media Covered The Extradition Of Tahawwur Rana

The extradition of Tahawwur Hussain Rana, a Pakistani-born Canadian citizen implicated in the 2008 Mumbai terror attacks, has garnered significant international attention. Major global media outlets have reported on this development, each highlighting different facets of the case.

CNN: STRESS ON LEGAL PROCEEDINGS

CNN referred to Rana as an "alleged co-conspirator" and focused on the "years of legal wrangling" preceding his extradition. This framing underscores the prolonged judicial process and maintains a neutral stance regarding the accusations. Notably, CNN's coverage did not delve into Pakistan's potential involvement in the attacks.

REUTERS: FOCUS ON IDENTIFICATION

Reuters identified Rana solely as a Canadian citizen, omitting mention of his Pakistani heritage. The report presented the extradition as a procedural update, highlighting the legal steps taken without exploring the broader implications for India's counterterrorism efforts. Details about Rana's connections to Lashkar-e-Taiba and the specific charges against him were notably absent.

BBC: HIGHLIGHTING LEGAL OUTCOMES

The BBC's coverage emphasized that a U.S. court had cleared Rana of a "direct role" in the Mumbai



National Investigation Agency (NIA) arrests Tahawwur Hussain Rana, the key conspirator in the deadly 26/11 Mumbai terror attacks, immediately after his arrival at IGIA, following his successful extradition from the United States, in New Delhi on Thursday. ANI

attacks, while acknowledging his conviction for supporting a militant group. This focus may serve to downplay the severity of his alleged involvement. Additionally, the report did not address the role of Pakistani state actors, an aspect central to India's perspective on the attacks.

THE GUARDIAN: LINK WITH LeT

The Guardian provided a detailed account of Rana's links to Lashkar-e-Taiba, noting his arrival in India under heavy security and reinforcing allegations of his support for the group. However, the article did not explore the potential involvement of Pakistani state actors, which is a significant element in India's narrative of the attacks.

DW AND FRANCE24: MIRRORING OTHERS

Both DW and France24 echoed The Guardian's emphasis on Rana's security-laden arrival and his alleged support for Lashkar-e-Taiba. Similar to other Western media, their coverage did not



Indian defence forces while combating the terrorists attack on Taj Hotel on November 26, 2008 in Mumbai. File Photo

context of Pakistan's potential role in the attacks, reflecting a common trend in international reporting.

CONTEXT OF THE EXTRADITION

Rana's extradition follows years of legal and diplomatic efforts. He was convicted in the U.S. in 2013 for providing support to Lashkar-e-Taiba but was acquitted of direct involvement in the Mumbai attacks. Indian authorities pursued his extradition, presenting evidence of his alleged role in the attacks, which resulted in 166 deaths. The U.S. Supreme Court's rejection of Rana's appeal against extradition paved

the way for his transfer to India.

ANALYSIS OF MEDIA COVERAGE

The varying media portrayals highlight differences in emphasis and geopolitical framing. While some outlets focus on legal proceedings and individual roles, others address broader geopolitical implications. Notably, many international reports, including those from CNN, Reuters, BBC, The Guardian, DW, and



France24, often omit direct references to Pakistan's potential involvement in the attacks. This omission may reflect sensitivities in international reporting and the complexities of geopolitical relations.

In summary, the international media's coverage of Tahawwur Rana's extradition presents a multifaceted picture, balancing legal details with geopolitical considerations. The differences in reporting underscore the complexities inherent in covering international legal proceedings with significant political and diplomatic ramifications.

● TDG NETWORK

Who is Ksenia Karelina? Russia Frees Her in U.S. Prisoner Swap

In a rare moment of diplomacy amid ongoing tensions, the United States and Russia executed a high-profile prisoner exchange that resulted in the release of Ksenia Karelina, a U.S.-Russian dual citizen. The deal also saw the U.S. release Artur Petrov, a Russian-German national accused of smuggling sensitive American technology. The swap, carried out in Abu Dhabi, marks a significant—if cautious—step toward re-engagement between the two countries.

WHO IS KSENIA KARELINA?

Born on December 13, 1991, in Yekaterinburg, Russia, Ksenia Karelina's early life revolved around dance and performance. A trained ballet dancer, she moved to the United States in pursuit of a new life and eventually transitioned into a career as a spa aesthetician in Beverly Hills, California. After gaining U.S. citizenship in 2021, she embraced her new identity and settled in Los Angeles, marrying an American citizen.

Her fiancé, professional boxer Chris van Heerden, was vocal throughout her detainment and celebrated the news of her release with deep relief. "I am overjoyed to hear that the love of my life, Ksenia Karelina, is on her way home from wrongful detention in Russia," he said.

ARREST AND TREASON CHARGES

In early 2024, Karelina traveled to Russia to visit family. During her stay, she was arrested by Russia's Federal Security Service (FSB) and charged with treason—a serious offense



under Russian law. Authorities claimed that she had made a donation of \$51.80 to a U.S.-based charity allegedly linked to support for Ukraine. According to Russian prosecutors, the charity's activities were interpreted as supplying aid to Ukrainian military efforts, which they deemed an act of betrayal.

Her attorney, Mikhail Mushailov, strongly denied the accusations, stating that Karelina had no idea her small donation could be construed as supporting hostile actions against Russia. "She did not assume that the funds she transferred would be used for anti-Russian actions," Mushailov said.

Despite the minimal amount of the donation, a Russian court sentenced her to 12 years in prison, sparking criticism both domestically and internationally. Many saw her case as emblematic of the Kremlin's increasingly hardline stance toward dissent and foreign influence in the context of the ongoing war in Ukraine.

U.S. REACTION AND DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS

Karelina's arrest quickly drew the attention of U.S. officials and human rights organizations. After months of negotiations, her release was finally secured

through a prisoner swap brokered in the United Arab Emirates. According to The Wall Street Journal, CIA Director John Ratcliffe led the American delegation in the talks, while a senior Russian intelligence official represented Moscow.

U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio confirmed the exchange and praised the successful resolution. "American Ksenia Karelina is on a plane back home to the United States. She was wrongfully detained by Russia for over a year, and President Trump secured her release," Rubio told Politico. He added, "Trump will continue to work for the release of ALL Americans."

WHO IS ARTUR PETROV?

In exchange for Karelina's freedom, the U.S. handed over Artur Petrov, a dual citizen of Russia and Germany. Petrov had been arrested in Cyprus in 2023 at the request of U.S. authorities. He was later extradited to the United States, where he faced charges of illegally exporting restricted U.S. microelectronics—potentially to Russian military-linked entities.

Petrov's case had been a priority for Moscow, which viewed his prosecution as politically motivated. By securing his return, Russia

achieved a symbolic and strategic win.

EXCHANGE IN ABU DHABI: DIPLOMACY

The swap took place at Abu Dhabi International Airport, with both nations' intelligence teams coordinating the operation. While prisoner exchanges between Russia and the U.S. are not unprecedented, they have become increasingly rare due to strained relations over Ukraine, cybersecurity, espionage allegations, and sanctions.

This latest swap marks the second such exchange since Donald Trump returned to the White House. Earlier, in February 2025, the U.S. secured the release of American teacher Marc Fogel, who had been jailed in Russia on drug charges. In that deal, Russian entrepreneur Alexander Vinnik was returned to Moscow.

WHAT THIS MEANS GOING FORWARD

Although the release of Karelina is a major relief to her family and supporters, the broader implications of the exchange remain uncertain. Some analysts see it as a potential thaw in otherwise frosty U.S.-Russia relations, while others caution that such deals are transactional and do not necessarily signal deeper cooperation.

Nevertheless, for Ksenia Karelina, the long and harrowing ordeal is finally over. Her return to American soil marks the end of a chapter defined by geopolitical strife and personal sacrifice—and for many, serves as a reminder of the human cost behind international tensions.

● TDG NETWORK

TRADE WAR: CHINA RAISES TARIFFS ON U.S. GOODS TO 125%

The retaliatory tariffs increase stand to make goods trade between the world’s two largest economies impossible, analysts say.

AGENCIES
BEIJING

The U.S.-China trade war entered a new and more intense phase on Friday as China announced a sharp increase in tariffs on U.S. goods, raising import duties to 125%. The move came in direct response to former President Donald Trump’s decision earlier in the week to raise U.S. tariffs on Chinese goods to a staggering 145%, while granting temporary relief to imports from dozens of other countries. The tit-for-tat exchange between the world’s two largest economies is now so severe that many analysts believe meaningful trade between the two is practically impossible.

China’s Finance Ministry condemned the U.S. action in a strongly worded statement, calling the tariff hikes “a joke” and an act of “unilateral bullying.” The ministry

TIT FOR TAT

■ China calls U.S. tariff strategy “a joke” and “unilateral bullying.”

■ Yuan dipped, rebounded slightly; tension spooks markets.

■ Tariffs now affect 100% of goods traded between U.S. and China.

■ Average U.S. tariffs on China now 135%, over 40x higher than pre-2018.

■ Hollywood films restricted; travel and study advisories issued by China.

■ China signals no more tariff retaliation.



tion, but may use other tools.

■ Xi calls for EU alliance, slams unilateralism in meeting with Spanish PM.

■ Xi to tour Southeast Asia to deepen regional ties.

added that Washington’s strategy violated international trade norms and basic economic principles. “Even if the U.S. continues to impose even higher tariffs, it would no longer have any economic significance,” the statement read.

Following the announcement, China’s currency, the yuan, dipped to levels not seen since the 2008 global financial crisis, before slightly rebounding. The financial markets responded nervously, with investors closely watching for signs

of further retaliation or economic fallout.

Full-Blown Trade Decoupling

With this latest development, both the U.S. and China are now imposing tariffs on nearly 100% of each other’s traded goods. Prior

Ukraine extends martial law, delaying elections amid ongoing conflict

AGENCIES
KYIV

Ukrainian lawmakers are preparing to extend martial law beyond its current expiration date of May 9, 2025, effectively postponing national elections amid ongoing conflict with Russia. Parliamentary Speaker Ruslan Stefanchuk emphasized the challenges of conducting free and fair elections while significant portions of the country remain under occupation and continuous attack.

Since Russia’s invasion in February 2022, martial law has been in effect, with extensions every 90 days as mandated by Ukrainian law. This state of emergency suspends electoral processes, including presidential, parliamentary, and local elections. Consequently, the presidential election, originally scheduled for March or April 2024, did not occur.

President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, whose five-year term concluded in May 2024, remains in office under the constitutional provision that allows the incumbent to

Volodymyr Zelenskyy

retain authority until a successor is elected. Zelenskyy has stated that elections will be feasible only after the cessation of active combat and the lifting of martial law.

The ongoing conflict has led to significant displacement, with nearly five million Ukrainians internally displaced and over four million residing in European Union countries. Approximately 800,000 potential voters are currently serving in the military or undergoing training, further complicating the logistics of organizing elections.

Despite international pressure, including calls from both the United States and Russia to proceed with elections, Ukrainian officials argue that

Since Russia’s invasion in February 2022, martial law has been in effect, with extensions every 90 days as mandated by Ukrainian law.

conducting elections under the current conditions would be neither practical nor legitimate. Preparations for future elections are underway, focusing on establishing legal frameworks and ensuring security measures, but no specific timelines have been set. In summary, the extension of martial law and the postponement of elections reflect Ukraine’s commitment to maintaining democratic processes while prioritizing national security and territorial integrity during the ongoing conflict. The situation remains dynamic, with continuous evaluations of security conditions influencing decisions regarding electoral timelines.

Hong Kong’s rocky democratic road under Chinese rule

AGENCIES
HONG KONG

Hong Kong’s Democratic Party, the city’s last major pro-democracy political organization, has announced plans to disband amid intensified political repression under China’s national security laws. Founded in 1994, the party has played a pivotal role in advocating for democratic reforms and civil liberties in Hong Kong.

Key Developments:

February 2025: The Democratic Party’s central committee initiated discussions on dissolution, citing the current political environment and ongoing crackdowns on opposition. A three-person task force was established to oversee the process, which requires approval from 75% of attending members at a general meeting.

April 2025: Chinese officials reportedly warned the Democratic Party to disband or face serious consequences, including potential arrests. These warnings, delivered by Beijing-linked intermediaries, underscore the intensified pressure on opposition groups.

to this, China had taxed 63% of two-way trade as of April 9, following the U.S. decision to broaden tariffs from 67% in February. Now, average U.S. duties on Chinese goods stand at 135%, according to the Peterson Institute for International Economics—more than 40 times higher than before the original trade war began in 2018.

Economists note that once tariffs exceed 35%, profit margins for exporters are often erased.

That means Chinese goods become uncompetitive in the U.S. market, while U.S. exports to China also become prohibitively expensive for Chinese consumers. UBS analysts described China’s statement that it would no longer respond to additional U.S. tariffs as “an acknowledgement that trade between the two countries has essentially been completely severed.”

Xi calls on EU to join China in jointly resisting ‘unilateral bullying’ by US

AGENCIES
BEIJING

As US President Donald Trump targeted China with heavy tariffs while pausing levies on other countries, Chinese President Xi Jinping on Friday appealed to the European Union (EU) to “jointly resist the unilateral bullying” by Washington.

“There is no winner in a tariff war, and going against the world will only result in self-isolation”, Xi said in his first comments since Trump began imposing tariffs on China and a host of other countries sending shockwaves around the world.

In his meeting with Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez of Spain which is part of the 27-member block, Xi called on China and the EU to fulfil their international responsibilities, work together to safeguard economic globalisation and the international trading environment, and jointly resist unilateral bullying, state-run Xinhua news agency reported.

“China and the EU are firm supporters of economic globalisation and free trade,” Xi said.

This is not only safeguards the legitimate rights and in-

Nepal Police held royalist leader absconding since March 28 violence

AGENCIES
KATHMANDU

Nepal Police has arrested Durga Prasai, controversial businessman and royalist leader behind the violence of March 28 in capital Kathmandu.

Prasai since the day of violence which resulted in death of two people had fled the country and arrested from Kakarbhitta, near the Nepal-India border.

“Prasai and his bodyguard has been arrested and is brought to Kathmandu,” a release from the Nepal Police stated.

After arrest the leader was kept at the District Police Office in Bhadrapur and is on the way to Kathmandu.

Upon arrival at Tribhuvan International Airport, Prasai will be transferred to the District Police Complex and then taken to the Bhadrakali custody facility. He will be presented at the District Court for a remand extension through the District Public Prosecutor’s Office.

Police officials have con-

Prasai since the day of violence which resulted in death of two people had fled the country and arrested from Kakarbhitta, near the Nepal-India border.

firmed that Prasai will be investigated for crimes against the state, similar to cases previously filed against political figures like Rabinendra Mishra and Dhawal Shamsher Rana.

The charges stem from the violent royalist protest led by Prasai and Nawaraj Subedi on March 28, which resulted in the deaths of two people and caused an estimated Nepal Rupees (NRs) 460 million in damages.

Authorities say they are preparing to demand strong legal action, holding Prasai accountable for inciting violence and causing significant public harm.

Nepal’s royalist party, the Rastriya Prajatantra Party (RPP), has announced a proposal to develop a new political system as it prepares to

launch a capital-centric protest from the third week of this month. On Tuesday, at a show of power in Kathmandu attended by hundreds, the president of the right-wing pro-monarchist party, Rajendra Lingden, proposed a new system that would also accommodate the monarchy.

“The country cannot remain in the condition it is now. The country needs to move forward, but not through the way it is standing now. That’s why the country demands a new agreement, and for that, a peaceful resolution through the consensus in between all the political powers needs to be agreed on,” Lingden said, addressing the mass of hundreds of monarch supporters holding the national flag and placards.

US President Donald Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping

“There is no winner in a tariff war, and going against the world will only result in self-isolation”, Xi said in his first comments since Trump began imposing tariffs on China and a host of other countries sending shockwaves around the world.

terests of China and the EU, but also serves to maintain fairness and justice within the international community while upholding international rules and order, Xi said.

Trump’s pause on the EU and other countries, including India, caught Beijing unawares as it was hoping to mobilise global opposition to Trump’s tariffs.

Trump earlier threatened three sets of US tariffs against the EU, including 25 per cent tariffs on steel and aluminum exports, 25 per cent levies on car exports, and 20 per cent so-called reciprocal tariffs on all other goods. The EU was important for China as it was the top three largest export destinations along with ASEAN and the US. Xi said over the past 70 years and more, China has achieved development through self-reliance and arduous struggle, never relying on others’ mercies, still less fearing any unreasonable suppression.

He said no matter how the external world changed, China was confident and focused on running its own affairs well, Xinhua reported.

including the EU, for 90 days, leaving Beijing isolated.

On Friday, China increased its tariffs against the US goods from 84 per cent to 125 per cent in a tit for tat move, leading to a trade war between the world’s top two economies.

Earlier, the EU announced a 90-day pause on counter-measures against the US after Trump unveiled a simi-

TARIFF WAR STARTS BETWEEN THE US AND CHINA; GLOBAL ECONOMY TO SUFFER MASSIVELY


This week marks the beginning of a global tariffwar, with both China and the US imposing hefty tariffs on each other and showing no signs of retreat. The impact of these tariffs on China is already evident, as market values are experiencing a decline. The imposition of a staggering tariff by Trump on China, coupled with China’s retaliatory 84 percent tariffs on American goods, has once again unsettled the markets. Many are worried that a tariff war between the US and China could have detrimental effects on the global economy, given that these two nations collectively represent nearly 43 percent of the world’s economic output, according to the International Monetary Fund.

Though in light of the complex challenges posed by a global market downturn, Trump has now unexpectedly decided to suspend

tariffs on most countries for a period of 90 days, despite increasing the tax rate on Chinese imports to 125%. Following this announcement, US stock markets experienced a significant surge. Trump’s strategy includes a foundational tariff of 10% on all imports, which remains unchanged, while imposing steeper tariffs on nations identified by the White House as the ‘worst offenders’ in terms of unfair trade practices. This list encompasses European Union, Vietnam, South Africa, Canada and more. Additionally, he has reiterated the implementation of ‘reciprocal tariffs’ on India. The experts believe that this tariff conflict could lead to higher prices for American consumers on one hand, and hinder China’s efforts to stimulate its faltering economy on the other hand. The tariffs announced by

WORLD RECAP

ANSHU JOSHI



the US exert a considerable influence on the global economy due to the nation’s substantial economic power. As the largest economy in the world, the US represents approximately 20-25% of total global output. Serving as a crucial component of the international economic landscape, the imposition of tariffs by Trump may create widespread effects across supply chains, markets, and economies around the globe. Also, the US functions as a significant consumer market, importing goods like electronics from China, automobiles from Japan, and oil from Canada. The increase in tariffs may raise the prices of these imports, impacting the

pockets of the consumers. It is also speculated that the US may face inflation and an economic crisis. Also, there are rising apprehensions that a surge of Chinese goods entering other markets may threaten the viability of smaller domestic industries. Then, the nations that depend on exports to the US may experience significant repercussions when their sales decline, which can hinder their economic growth. The effects of US tariffs are exacerbated by the intricate connections within global supply chains. Foreign businesses reliant on the US market may also get affected in a cascading manner. The consequences of tariff dis-

putes extend beyond direct impacts, as they can also induce various indirect effects. For instance, if a tariff is imposed on steel, manufacturers in the US may encounter increased costs, leading to higher prices for a wide range of products that require steel, like automobiles. Elevated tariffs may also alter trade balances in the global economy and among the nations. Additionally, there is a political dimension to consider; Trump’s tariffs convey a message of asserting the US’ hegemony in global politics and hence provoking retaliatory measures from other nations like China or for that matter Russia. While India may not be directly affected, it is close enough to experience the repercussions of the ongoing situation. The country’s manufacturing sector may get impacted due to the ‘reciprocal tariffs. Additionally,

the pharmaceutical and steel industries may also face challenges due to these developments. This may result in inflation as the prices of the associated products may increase. However, when we look from a positive angle, India’s IT and technology services sector could benefit in the present situation. As American companies become increasingly concerned about rising costs and instability in China, they may choose to outsource more operations to India, particularly in areas like software development and technical support. India’s textile industry could also see benefits, given that the tariffs imposed on it are currently lower than those on competitors like Bangladesh. However, the extent of these potential gains remains uncertain at this time.

This week, Indian External Affairs Minister Dr. Jaishankar expressed similar thoughts, stating, “I don’t think it is possible to speak about the impact because we don’t know.” He further highlighted that India’s approach has been centred on fostering constructive engagement with the Trump administration, aiming to establish a bilateral trade agreement. In light of the ongoing discussions regarding the tariffs implemented by Trump, he reiterated India’s commitment to pursuing a trade deal with the US. He also acknowledged that the current tariff landscape presents an opportunity for enhanced engagement, asserting that negotiating a trade deal with the US is not detrimental to India. He remarked that when looked from the Indian perspective, working out a bilateral deal with the US is not a negative or unwanted situation; on the contrary, it is something

which has long been Indian objective. The global community is already experiencing the consequences of the two ongoing wars in Ukraine and the Levant region. In this context, Trump has launched a tariff war, raising questions about the future trajectory of his action plans.

It remains to be seen whether he will reverse his course or persist with his current strategy, as well as how the international community will react. This situation poses significant challenges for the global economy, and it is crucial for Trump to recognize that the US will also have to bear the costs of this indirect conflict he has instigated. One can only hope that he becomes aware of the implications and brings an end to the actions he has initiated.

The author is Professor, School of International Studies, JNU

'RRR' GETS A NOD FROM ACADEMY IN ITS STUNT CATEGORY ANNOUNCEMENT

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

A fight scene from SS Rajamouli's "RRR" is among the three images that the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences shared on Instagram to announce their new Oscar category - Achievement in Stunt Design.

The picture from "RRR", which won the Best Original Song Oscar in 2023, depicts Jr NTR flying towards a tiger during a fight sequence.

The other two photographs are from Michelle Yeoh-starrer 2022 multi-universe saga "Everything Everywhere All At Once" and the third one is from Tom Cruise-starrer 2011 "Mission Impossible - Ghost



Protocol". It shows Cruise's Ethan Hunt climbing Dubai's Burj Khalifa.

In a landmark announcement, the Academy introduced a new category for stunt design on Thursday. It will be for the films released in 2027, while the Oscars, for the first time under this category, will be announced in 2028 at its 100th edition, reported Variety.

Along with the Holly-

wood stunt community, filmmaker Rajamouli is also on cloud nine after his movie RRR got a special shout-out by the Academy, along with Tom Cruise's Mission Impossible, as they introduced the Best Stunt Design category for the Oscars.

Taking to his X handle, the RRR director expressed gratitude to director David Leitch, Chris O'Hara, and the stunt community for

their efforts in making this historic recognition possible.

He wrote, "At last!! After a 100-year wait !!! Ecstatic for the new Oscars stunt design category for the films releasing in 2027! Huge thanks to David Leitch, Chris O'Hara, and the stunt community for making this historic recognition possible, and to @TheAcademy, CEO Bill Kramer, and President Janet Yang for honoring the power of stunt work. Thrilled to see #RRRMovie's action visual shining in the announcement!"

According to Variety, the category rules for eligibility and voting for the inaugural award will be announced in 2027 with the complete 100th Academy Awards Rules.

Oscar announces new best stunt design category

AGENCIES
CALIFORNIA

The Board of Governors of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences announced the creation of an annual competitive Academy Award for achievement in stunt design on Thursday.

The inclusion of this novel category will begin with the 100th Academy Awards in 2028 for films released in 2027, reported Variety.

According to the outlet, Director and producer David Leitch led the initiative on behalf of the stunt community to institute the new official Oscar category.



Leitch had a special association with this category as he started his career as a stunt performer in the film industry before foraying into direction. He, stunt coordinator and designer Chris O'Hara of Stunts Unlimited, and others made several presentations to the Academy, leading to the Board of Governors

approving the new awards category today.

"Since the early days of cinema, stunt design has been an integral part of filmmaking. We are proud to honor the innovative work of these technical and creative artists, and we congratulate them for their commitment and dedication in reaching

this momentous occasion," said Academy CEO Bill Kramer and Academy president Janet Yang as quoted by Variety.

As per the outlet, the category rules for eligibility and voting for the inaugural award will be announced in 2027 with the complete 100th Academy Awards Rules.

The specifics of the award's presentation will be determined later by the Academy's Board of Governors and executive leadership. The last new award category created in the Oscars was achievement in casting, established in 2024.



Bollywood actress Sara Ali Khan poses for her picture. (ANI)

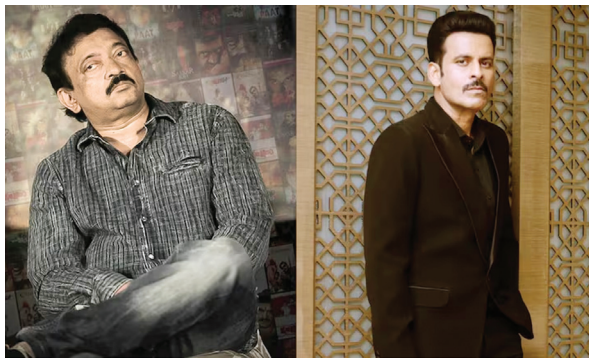
RGV announces 'Police Station Mein Bhoot' with Manoj Bajpayee

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

After collaborations like Satya (1998), Kaun (1999), Shool (1999) and Road (2002), filmmaker Ram Gopal Varma and actor Manoj Bajpayee are set to reunite once again. RGV announced on social media that they are teaming up for the horror-comedy Police Station Mein Bhoot.

Taking to his X (formerly Twitter) handle, Varma wrote, "After SATYA, KAUN and SHOOL I am thrilled to announce, me and @BajpayeeManoj are once again teaming up for a HORROR COMEDY a genre which neither of us did I have done horror, gangster, romantic, political dramas, adventure capers, thrillers etc but never a HORROR COMEDY. The film is titled POLICE STATION MEIN BHOOT."

"Tag line: You Can't Kill The Dead. Concept: We run to the police when scared, but where will



We are trying to find some time and figure out dates. He is not off the radar. He was just taking a long break. He was chilling out. We all envied him, in the manner he chilled out."

the police run to, when they get scared? STORY IDEA After a deadly encounter killing, a POLICE STATION becomes a HAUNTED STATION making all the COPS run in FEAR to escape the GHOSTS of the GANGSTERS. With cutting-edge VFX, spine-chilling horror effects, POLICE STATION MEIN BHOOT will

be a A FUN FILLED film that will TERRIFY YOU," he added.

During a recent edition of The Indian Express' Idea Exchange, Manoj Bajpayee had exclusively revealed that he will be reuniting with his Satya director for his next film. He said, "The good news is that he is going to make his next with me.

BRAIN PICKING



We should respect all religions and just believe in peace, kindness and harmony.
ANANYA PANDAY
(Indian Actress)

Akshay reacts to Jaya Bachchan's remark on his film 'Toilet: Ek Prem Katha'

TDG NETWORK
MUMBAI

Actor Akshay Kumar, who is busy promoting his upcoming film 'Kesari Chapter 2', reacted to comments on his films by other actors.

During a press conference in Mumbai on Friday, the actor was asked by a media person about veteran actress and politician Jaya Bachchan's reported comment about his 2017 film 'Toilet: Ek Prem Katha', where she said that she would not watch the movie because it had the word "toilet" in the title.

While reacting to the question, Akshay said,



"Ab agar unhone kaha hai toh sahi hoga, mujhe nahi pata. Agar 'Toilet: Ek Prem Katha' ek aisi film banake maine koi galat kaam kiya hai... agar woh keh rahi hai toh sahi hoga (Now, if she

has said so, then it must be right. I am not aware of it. If I have done something wrong by making a film like Toilet: Ek Prem Katha, then... but if she is saying it, then it must be right)."

AR Rahman to reunite with Shiamak Davar for his 'The Wonderment Tour'

TDG NETWORK
MUMBAI

Music maestro AR Rahman has joined hands with noted choreographer Shiamak Davar for his highly anticipated "The Wonderment Tour", to be held next month. The 'Wonderment Tour' will celebrate Rahman's musical legacy, taking audiences on a spec-



tacular journey through his timeless hits.

At the same time, Davar's choreography promises to elevate the experience with his signature style, a press release issued here read. "Our journey together on 'Taal' and 'Kisna' was an unforgettable one, and I've no doubt that in 'The Wonderment Tour' he will create some-

thing truly magical. The 'Wonderment Tour' is in every sense a celebration of music, dance, and the magic that happens when two art forms come together to create something extraordinary and who better than Shiamak for this?" Rahman said in a statement. Davar said he is thrilled to be working with Rahman again.

REVIEW: JAAT *****

JAAT

PRAVEEN NAGDA

Action, anger, and Sunny Deol's tryst with the system and the cops-criminals-politicians nexus have always created compelling cinema in previous decades. What Ghayal, Damini, Border, Gadar, and many other films have showcased as far as Sunny Deol's performance is concerned is once again reproduced with a touch of gold in JAAT, written and directed by Gopichand

Malineni (in his Hindi debut) and produced by Mythri Movie Makers and People Media Factory.

The film opens with the drone-shot aerial visuals of lush green forest and gradually dives into the trees woods on a road with Sri Lankan Army vehicles and mine blasts happening around. Circa 2009, when Indian Peace Keeping Forces left the Sri Lankan soil, the Sri Lankan army was digging the hidden arsenal and



treasures of Tamil Tigers. That's when Rana Tunga (Randeep Hooda) and three of his accomplices find the treasure of gold bricks, and the action begins as they eliminate Sri Lankan soldiers and flee away to India with the stolen gold.

And we come to the current

times, where we see the President of India receiving an SOS letter written by a little girl along with chopped-off thumbs triggering the Government to bring in a senior CBI officer Sathyamurthy (Jagapathi Babu) to investigate the matter and help villagers in remote coastal

Andhra.

Meanwhile, the Jaat (Sunny Deol) is traveling in a train of saffron-clad devotees on a pilgrimage, fully immersed in bhajans, and the train comes to a halt for a few hours. Sunny gets down from the train in search of some food lands at a roadside joint and ends up meeting some rowdy fellows. This chance meeting with the bad guys makes him explore the full criminal chain leading him to the main antagonist, Rana Tunga, who is running his evil empire in a large stretch in rural coastal Andhra Pradesh.

Rana Tunga's terror is full of bloodshed, chopping off the heads of the villagers, burying corpses in the fields, torturing and raping the women cops, and forcefully capturing the land and homes of poor villagers. He has been mandated by the international criminal mafia and corporations eyeing the rich Thorium deposits abundantly present under this coastal belt to clear this from civilians.

In the first half, which is much more engaging as layers after layers keep emerging along with the superb action intertwined with comical dialogues of

Sunny, who keeps bashing the baddies asking them to say sorry for dropping his plate while eating Idli. And yes, he brings his famous Damini dialogue into the narrative by delivering a punch "Dhai Kilo Ke Haath Ki Taakat North Ne Dekhi Hai, Ab South Bhi Dekhega. Aur, Jab Ye Haath Uth Gaya to Iski Gunj Pure Desh me Sunayee Degi."

The second half gets a bit mixed up with different narratives of respect for women, and care for farmland & farmers, etc., though the action of Jaat continues. As the story evolves Jaat turns out to be Brigadier

Baldeo Pratap Singh, an Indian Army war hero of Kargil and Balakot while Rana Tunga turns out to be high ranking commander of Tamil Tigers. Jaat the single man army finishes the entire bunch of Sunny Deol in his late sixties delivers a knocking performance and Randeep Hooda sharpens as a villain. Much of the repeated acts of goriness and even the misplaced item number could have been avoided.

Praveen Nagda is Festival Director of KidzCINEMA and CultureCinema Film Festivals

WWW REDEFINED: WEALTH IN WOMEN'S WALLET



NAMRATA KOHLI

WOMAN WISE

Why do women not make money or take money seriously? How many women in India have a concept of “my money” as different from family savings. Rather than a pragmatic view of money being a means to a good life, most women have an emotional relationship with money- one which is tied to guilt, control or sacrifice. Her money is still considered “supplemental” and as a bonus and never as priority. Even in cases where she is earning, there is a hesitation to invest. Women merely save, which is actually negative return- if you saved Rs 100 then next year its value is merely Rs 90 if you factor in inflation of 8-10%. Financial freedom needs to be a goal and not just a byproduct.

Last week, I was a speaker at an event on “Financial Empowerment of Women- Bridging The Gender

Wealth Gap” at the Talent-Nomics India's 9th Global Annual Conference, in partnership with Konrad Adenauer Stiftung's Regional Economic Programme Asia (SOPAS). The event titled “Restoring the Equiverse: From Vision to Action” explored various dimensions of financial empowerment or the lack of it. But before financial empowerment, let's talk about financial literacy. Every woman ought to know a few fundamentals about how they can generate wealth from income- Invest from Day 1 of earning. The younger you are, the greater time you have to reap returns.. say a 20-year-old has a 35-year-old window to earn and maximize return. In money matters, cumulative returns will generate wealth over a period of time. Even if you are a conservative investor who doesn't want to take many risks, you must still invest in things like the Public Provident Fund (PPF) or National Pension Scheme (NPS). Say if you invested Rs 1,000 today at the rate of 10 percent, next year the interest will be on 1,100 and then 1,210 and so on. As they say compounding is the eighth wonder of this world. Over time, you need to nudge yourself into increasing your risk appetite and also play in the equity market by investing in mutual funds and stocks. After all, greater the risk, greater the rewards. Also PPF and



FD etc offer returns of 6-8% which barely “meet” inflation (still better than saving) but a good investment is one which can “beat” inflation like the equity market.

For decades, decisions about income, investment, and even savings were largely managed by male members. Women were encouraged to be “good managers” of household expenses, not wealth creators. Even when we analyse the visual motifs and taglines in most advertisements, it mostly positions women as prudent savers (for festivals/weddings) than dynamic investors.. eg the Tanishq Golden Harvest talks about *saving for your favourite jewellery today* or Kalyan - Get Gold Coins in 24K Purity with a tagline- ‘Celebrate Festivals with Timeless Traditions’.



These jewellers have promoted schemes that position gold not just as an investment but as a safe, traditional asset- saving for festivals and family needs. Or if you closely examine the nature of media coverage – an Akshay Kumar selling two apartments or Amitabh Bachchan buying real estate in Ayodhya whereas you have stories of airport looks

and bags and shoes and holidays of female stars but rarely of their investments. There is a focus on their spending habits rather than their investment acumen. But how many of us know that Deepika Padukone is a serial investor in Blue Tokai Coffee Roasters, Epigamia, Bellatrix Aerospace, BluSmart Mobility or that Alia Bhatt invested an un-

disclosed amount in Phool. Co- a brand that makes incense sticks from discarded temple flowers or Shilpa Shetty is a key investor in MamaEarth.

Anyway money has no gender. “You complete me” – as legendary mediaperson Oprah Winfrey mentioned in her book “What I know for sure” .. is a very dangerous way to look at marriage or partnership- that you are incomplete without a partner. Two individuals need to be the best version of themselves to make for a successful partnership and not overtly dependent to the point of being handicapped. Eg there are some men who can't make themselves a cup of tea just as there are some women who have no interest in money matters. There were stereotypes – that man is a provider and women is the nurturer but today times are changing.

And so is the media coverage which is also “breaking” stereotypes. When tennis superstar and devoted mother Sania Mirza said- “I love doing chores but don't cook, so I have a chef. And that's okay!” Through small actions, like showing boys that cooking and chores aren't just “women's work”, Sania is proving that big change begins with simple steps. She's teaching her son, Izhaan, that chores and responsibilities aren't defined by gender. She's not just raising a child — she's

doing her bit in shaping a future where equality begins at home.

Media has been highlighting successful women in finance, business, and entrepreneurship by showcasing their achievements and leadership roles. And the stories are pretty diverse – from single moms (Forest Essentials' Mira Kulkarni) to women taking over family offices (Gitanjali Kirloskar who lost her husband Vikram Kirloskar a fourth generation entrepreneur to a heart attack) to corporate leaders (such as Arundhati Bhattacharya), to women who started business in the middle ages at age 50 (Nykaa founder) to women saving the business from bankruptcy through smart decisions like Malavika Hedge, CEO of Cafe Coffee Day (CCD) who turned the fortune of the coffee chain media has been breaking stereotypes.. Even reigning content in mainstream cinema such as Laapata Ladies which alludes to importance of education and employment of women -turning around the concept of invisibility of women to invincibility is noteworthy ... No wonder it won the Oscars.

The recent Franklin Templeton recent #ChangeTheSoch campaign or Dove's mothermonial campaign #TheBeautyTestStop-sWithMe which condemns matrimonials saying “slim, fair, beautiful bride” and

relooks daughter's profile from the eyes of her mom as the girl being “National level basketball player, intelligent, witty” is poised to change the narrative.

The COVID 19 pandemic was a jolt to many women who had to start managing money post-2020 out of necessity. I remember a woman in our society who suddenly lost her husband in the second wave not knowing where the money was kept – and she had to borrow money from fellow neighbours to even burn the pyre.

But today, slowly and surely things are changing. SIPs, mutual funds, real estate, crypto, gold – Indian women are no longer on the sidelines. You have a woman running the finances of the country as the finance minister. Plus the highest constitutional office of being the President is held by a woman today in the name of Draupadi Murmu.

Today there are more women as first-time homebuyers. And kudos to the government's policy push and incentives for female financial inclusion that deserves a lot of appreciation.

But ultimately the buck stops with you. You need to realize that money is so important. After all, paisa is “power”, paisa is “purpose” beyond being a means to fulfilling needs. So what is your money story- do you ignore or invest your money?

The Silent Struggle: Rising Incidence of Secondary Infertility

TDG NETWORK

Inputs by Dr. Shobha Gupta Medical Director and IVF Expert from Mothers Lap IVF Centre New Delhi and Mumma's Blessing IVF and Birthing Paradise Vrindavan

Incidences of secondary infertility are growing rapidly in number. While infertility is a topic discussed every day, secondary infertility is not much talked about, whereas it is quite a common form of infertility. Secondary infertility is defined as the inability to become pregnant second time, following the birth of one or more biological children. When Sachin Chawla (33 name changed) a banking professional and his wife Neha Chawla (30 name changed) a housewife had a boy in 2018 decided to complete his family with second child, got shocked to know that they can't have baby second time as he has low sperm count which is causing problems in conceiving hence suffering from Secondary Infertility.

CAUSES OF SECONDARY INFERTILITY IN BOTH PARTNERS COULD BE:

1. In women: Damage to fallopian tube due to ectopic pregnancies

Complications during prior pregnancies such as a C-section

Blockage which is caused by fibroids

Increased maternal age and less production of eggs

2. In men: increased age, weight gain, excessive smoking and drinking use of certain medications

IMPAIRED SPERM PRODUCTION AND DELIVERY

Approximately, 10.5% women have reported to experience secondary infertility. If you notice these causes of secondary infertility, you must immediately



consult with a specialist. Remember that you are not alone. More and more people are now facing the problem of secondary infertility in India and, therefore, it is better to be informed.

Similarly, Harveen Sethi in her mid 30's when she started trying or second baby surprised to know that she can't be pregnant now due to low ovarian reserve. “I didn't realise that chances of getting pregnant reduce with age,” says Harveen, now 39 and pregnant with her second child after two rounds of IVF treatment.

Though primary infertility normally receives attention, it is not the case with secondary infertility. Many women struggle to conceive their second baby after previously giving birth to their firstborn without difficulties.

Secondary infertility can be very frustrating and confusing for a couple who got pregnant quickly in the past. “I have seen lot of cases recently of secondary infertility. I would say inactivity in women along with wrong eating habits, increases chances of primary infertility as well as secondary infertility. With urban lifestyle and dependency on fast food adding to the problem” said Dr. Shobha Gupta.

If one had their first child at the age of 35, and they want to try out for a second child at 36 and above, it can be a bit challenging because this is a time where their fertility has naturally declined significantly

Also, blaming only women is not apt. Age of the male partner, men with

BMI's over 30, which is considered obese, have a lower sperm count and negatively impacted fertility overall.

According to a study titled Fertility: assessment and treatment for people with fertility problems, published in the March 2013, edition of NICE Clinical Guideline. London; about 15 percent couples with unexplained fertility conceive naturally within a year.

Couples need to plan their pregnancies in a timely manner in order to stave off Secondary Infertility. They should avoid spacing out kids for more than three years. Women should preserve their eggs if they are thinking of delaying parenting. Couples should keep trying since 35 percent still have a chance to conceive naturally within two years. If a woman is under the age of 30 years, she has a higher chance of conceiving than a woman aged 30 years or more. Let's not forget that age is an important factor and predictor of successful natural conception.

«The doctors would offer you treatments on the basis of the causes of secondary infertility. The treatments for secondary infertility range from infertility medications to intrauterine insemination (IUI) or artificial insemination (IVF).

Let's not forget that the fact that you have already had a baby will certainly work in your favour. If you're struggling with secondary infertility, know you're not alone and that with modern medicine, quite a bit can be done. Just Don't give up» concluded Dr. Shobha Gupta.



DR. JYOTI KAPOOR

Radhika Bhalla, who recently gave birth to her first child a couple of months ago, is facing emotional challenges that many new mothers experience. She is struggling with extreme sadness, anxiety, fatigue, frequent crying episodes, irritability, and withdrawal from loved ones. Radhika is also grappling with the constant fear of not being a good mother, which is impacting on her relationship with her husband and other family members. After speaking with her gynecologist about her mental state, she learned that she is suffering from postpartum depression, a condition that affects 22% of new mothers in the country. Though it can arise from multiple reasons, hormonal challenges post childbirth remains one of the most prevalent one.

During the birth of a child, the levels of oestrogen and progesterone in the body of the pregnant women go up by significantly to nurture the baby's growth and prepare the body for the pregnancy. However, the levels of these hormones suddenly drop after the childbirth, causing a dramatic shift in brain chemistry that can affect a woman's mood and emotions. And, experiencing symptoms like depression and hopelessness are quite normal in such a scenario. But,

Cultural Stigma and Silence Around Mental Health

Mental health issue, especially in women, is a culture stigma in India. When a woman is vocal about their mental health issues, she is often considered as weak and mad. Moreover, society puts an extra pressure on mothers. They want her to be patient and selfless nurturer, who cannot express her innate feelings, fears and apprehensions. If they focus on themselves, they are often judged for not being a good mother.

Moreover, the lack of awareness around postpartum mental health further contributes to this silence. Forget men, many women themselves may not even recognise the symptoms of postpartum depression or anxiety. Such kind of emotional

struggles are often to the normal stresses of new motherhood. This lack of recognition prevents them from seeking the support and treatment they need, leading to prolonged suffering.

Understanding Postpartum Depression and Anxiety

The first step is to understand the postpartum depression (PPD) and anxiety are mental health conditions that affect most women after childbirth. The symptoms vary from person to person. While some women undergo frequent mood swings following the child birth, whereas, others feel a sense of disconnection from the child. If not diagnosed and treated in the initial phases, it can become more severe and long-lasting.

However, there is a sil-

ver lining of postpartum depression and anxiety as the condition is completely treatable. Women can return to their normal self with proper care, support from husband and family members and early intervention of the condition. Additionally, opening up public conversations around postpartum mental health is crucial. Society must embrace those who have mastered the courage to seek help and got a step closer healing. Since obstetricians and pediatricians are such women's first point of contact, therefore, medical professionals need to be trained to recognise the symptoms of PPD and anxiety and provide the appropriate referrals for psychological support.

Dr. Jyoti Kapoor, Founder-Director and Senior Psychiatrist, Manasthali Wellness

Stree Shakti Conclave 2025 makes History in Kashmir, Champions Women's Empowerment

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Women Leaders Conclave (WLC) 2025, held from April 7 to 9 in Srinagar, Jammu & Kashmir, created history as it became a powerful platform for women's leadership and empowerment. Organised by *Stree Shakti - The Parallel Force* and *She Leads*, the conclave brought together inspiring women from governance, business, literature, education, health, and the arts at SKICC, IIM Nowgam, and Royal Springs Golf Course.

The event was led by Rekha Mody, Founder of Stree Shakti, along with Dr. Nirja Mattoo and Co-Coordinator Farzana Mumtaz. It drew support from national leaders like Dr. Farooq Abdullah, Sakina Itoo, Dr. Jyotsna Suri, Aruna Oswal, Supriya Badve, and others.

The conclave opened at Royal Springs Golf Course with impactful addresses by Dr. Suri and Nuzhat Gull. Dr. Suri shared her journey in hospitality, while Gull highlighted how Kashmiri women athletes were breaking stereotypes. Author Alka Sarogi reflected on the overlooked contributions of women like Sarla Devi in India's freedom movement.

Rekha Mody emphasized the transformative power of women connecting with each other, calling such interactions a “source of solutions and solidarity.” She also affirmed that Kashmir symbolised peace and strength, aligning perfectly with the conclave's goals.

On Day 2, IIM Nowgam became a center of vibrant discussions on entrepreneurship, gender equity, health, and education. Experts talked about financial



literacy for rural women, new education models for girls, and sustainable leadership. Rekha Mody shared that prior demands—like free transport for women—were gaining traction and

more actionable steps were underway.

The final day at SKICC was marked by a major announcement. Dr. Farooq Abdullah pledged to allocate land for a permanent Women's Center in J&K under Stree Shakti's leadership. He urged women to take charge of their growth and seize opportunities without male interference.

Farzana Mumtaz received the Dayawati Modi Stree Shakti Award for her lead-

ership in journalism, while the Vidushi Vidyottama Award was given to Prof. Kashinath Nyupane for his Sanskrit scholarship.

India's first all-women rock band, *Meri Zindagi*, closed the event with a powerful performance. As the conclave ended, it left behind a renewed sense of mission—this was not the end, but the beginning of a stronger, united, and empowered women-led movement in India.

BEING A REAL HERO



B.K. GEETA

Audiences love to watch good actors perform in plays and movies. The actors portray various characters so convincingly that the viewers forget for a time that it is just acting. If the character on screen is in danger, then the actor's eyes, tense face, and body language transmit some of his 'fear' to those watching. The hearts of the viewers start racing and they move to the edge of their seats, eagerly awaiting the next scene. The actor exudes emotions and personalities so well that the audience identifies him with his role. But the actors do not forget who they are. They know they have to virtually become a different person while shooting

or performing on stage, but once that is over, they return to their own selves. Top actors carefully research the subject they will portray. If it is a well-known personality, they adopt the lifestyle of that person, copy their mannerisms, mimic their way of speaking, and walk like them in order to 'become' like them as much as possible. Such dedication and diligence bring rewards in the form of public appreciation, critical acclaim, and a big pay cheque. We must remember that the actor is paid for the quality of his acting, not for the role he plays. The actor is not paid more for portraying a king and less for the role of a beggar. A good actor knows this and gives his best to each role he plays. But we forget the fact that all of us are actors on the stage of the world, performing our unique individual roles. The scriptures tell us that we are souls, not bodies. It is the soul that thinks, feels, speaks, and acts. The body is the physical medium through which the soul, an invisible, sentient point



When we are aware of our spiritual identity and act on the basis of our innate virtues, we can be real heroes.

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of energy, expresses itself and connects to the world around it. Consciousness resides in the soul, which has some innate qualities, such as peace, purity, love, truth, and bliss. When the soul functions on the basis of these qualities, it feels happy and at ease. But when it encounters

anything that goes against these traits, it feels uncomfortable. When we forget that we are souls, we begin to identify ourselves with our body. The body carries numerous labels which we have created. Each of these labels produces images in the mind with which we

identify ourselves and others. The label could be of gender, race, nationality, religion, profession, or financial status. We see ourselves in terms of these labels, affix them on others, compare ourselves with them, and then decide how we should behave with them. Ignorance of our real identity disconnects us from our innate virtues. We forget our true selves and start acting on the basis of the temporary roles that we are playing. This gives rise to vices, which define human behaviour today. Ego, anger, greed, lust, hatred, and jealousy, all spring from seeing the self and others as bodies. It is as if an actor portraying a king starts to believe that he really is a king, and treats others as his subjects. He will certainly invite ridicule. But in real life we forget that we are souls and instead see ourselves as a husband, wife, boss, subordinate, rich, poor, smart, not-so-smart, better than others, or worse off than others. Our worth as a person is determined by our quali-

ties, not our gender, race, social status, religious beliefs, profession, or nationality. A charitable soul is respected everywhere, regardless of the colour of his skin, the passport he holds, the language he speaks, or the amount of money he has in the bank. That is why Mahatma Gandhi, Mother Teresa, and Nelson Mandela – three individuals from very different backgrounds – came to be respected the world over. They acted on the basis of truth, peace, compassion, and forgiveness, which enabled them to rise above parochial tendencies and work for the larger good. Their embrace of all humanity, without discrimination, earned them universal esteem. In other words, they showed us that when we are aware of our true identity and act on the basis of our intrinsic qualities, we can rise above the petty divisions created by body-consciousness, and become real heroes.

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

Light does not fight with darkness



ARUNA LADVA

"Light is to darkness what love is to fear; in the presence of one the other disappears."

- Marianne Williamson

The forces of light and darkness have been metaphors for millennia. Light represents the truth, virtues, and divine powers, whereas darkness is a metaphor for fear, ignorance, and negativity. The dark night of the soul in Christianity can be a synonym for a crisis of faith. More generally it describes a difficult or

painful period in one's life, feeling lost and perhaps even reaching a stage of depression and despair. This is when we are often forced to look at ourselves deeply. Night becomes the day, with the rising of the sun. Without the sun, life on Earth would perish. The sun rises and day begins, the sun sets and night falls. Hence, darkness is simply the absence of light. As conflict and animosity escalate across our world, this darkness infiltrates even further because we fail to understand the power of light. We remain under the illusion that we can fight darkness with darkness – but we cannot. Those who move away from the light for whatever reason, and prey on the vulnerable and the weak are those who feel powerless and empty inside. I find it hard to believe that



It is through a connection with the Divine that we can power up our inner light and remove the darkness within.

those who commit crime, actually feel good about it. I understand they generally feel powerless and want to feel powerful in the oddest of ways. Their actions are ego-driven, without compassion or empathy; somehow there is a psychological disconnect and distance from the Divine. They can suppress their conscience for now... but at some time the realisation will have to come to them about the consequences of their actions... even if it is in the next birth that they have to pay off that karma. As difficult as it may seem, and we may need to conjure up as much courage as the Himala-

yas, it is imperative that we ignite a light, no matter how small. Use the light of virtues in our actions, use kindness in our words and send loving thoughts to someone whom we may perceive as antagonistic or malevolent. Because firstly that is the need of the hour; the doomsday clock, symbol-

ising how near humanity is to destruction, has been moved one second forward to 89 seconds to midnight. Secondly, whatever energies we send out return to us. If we want to live in the light of peace and love then that is the energy we must share with the world. When I take

a stand to create those positive and powerful thoughts and feelings, I am empowering myself. Others will become the beneficiaries of my goodwill, but I am the first to benefit. In the spiritual world, when we share something of the Divine, it will naturally increase, there can be no loss to ourselves. Goodness attracts goodness. The Divine Consciousness has no sense of limitation, there is only abundance. True strength comes from gentleness. It is through our connection with the Divine that we receive light to power up our own inner light; this is how we can transform ourselves to remove the inner darkness.

Aruna Ladva is an author and Rajyoga meditation teacher based at the Global Retreat Centre, Oxford, UK.

A THOUGHT FOR TODAY

Sunflowers are 'heliotropic' or sun-seeking. They turn their large faces throughout the day to continually face the sun. When I commit to a life lived in the light, I commit to drawing only the energy that nourishes the soul. I choose to turn my attention away from darkness, not as denial, but like a sunflower, to stay in the light of positive influences. Today let me be like a sunflower and face the Light.

The cycle of time



B.K. ATAM PRAKASH

Scientific theories about time and the evolution of human life, and religious concepts about the same have for long been subjects of debate. Evolutionary theory says life on earth originated billions of years ago and then evolved, as Charles Darwin theorized, by a process of natural selection. Prehistoric man is said to have evolved from apes and progressed from the Stone Age to the Bronze Age and Iron Age, in terms of the ability to extract metals from ores and manufacture implements from them. Extending this chronology to the present times we can say that humanity is now in the space age. Rapid advances in science

and technology over the past century have transformed our lives, but at the same time, the challenges facing mankind have become more complex and varied, spurring humans to push the frontiers of science. However, nobody has a clear vision of where this 'progress' will lead eventually. There is just hope that science will find the answers to our problems and life will carry on. Religious concepts of time speak of the creation of humanity by God and a gradual moral decline of humankind, culminating in an apocalypse or Last Judgment, after which different theological traditions speak of various scenarios for human souls. These scenarios, too, do not give a convincing or complete picture of what will eventually happen to life on Earth as we know it. However, the spiritual concept of cyclic repetition of time is an exception. According to this concept, life is a drama taking place on the vast stage of the Earth, with souls as actors and the elements of nature too playing a role. This drama



The process of decay and renewal goes on eternally.

begins in the Golden Age, when human souls as well as nature are in their perfect state, ensuring a life of complete happiness. Not all souls are present in the world at this time, as each comes from the soul world to play its role in this drama

at its own appointed time. Through the Golden Age and the subsequent Silver Age, the souls lose some of their spiritual power but are still free from sorrow. By the time the Copper Age begins, the souls forget the subtle truth of who they are, and

start to identify themselves with their bodies. Since the body is perishable, body-consciousness brings with it fear of death, besides vices such as lust, anger, ego, greed, and attachment. The vices corrupt the souls, leading to wrong actions

and consequent suffering. The negative energy now radiating from the souls affects the forces of nature, which start becoming violent. By the end of the Iron Age, when the wheel of time is about to complete a full circle, the souls are com-

pletely in the grip of vices and desperately searching for ways to escape sorrow. This is when God intervenes to salvage humanity. He reminds souls of who they really are, and how they can fill themselves with His powers and virtues simply by being aware that they are souls and remembering Him, the Supreme Father. Such remembrance of God

ends and a new Golden Age dawns, marking the start of a new cycle of time. This process of decay and renewal goes on eternally, with rejuvenation taking place at the end of each cycle of time by the intervention of God. The memory of this renewal and the liberation from sorrow it brings, is imprinted in human souls. That is why across cultures

Religious concepts of time speak of the creation of humanity by God and a gradual moral decline of humankind, culminating in an apocalypse or Last Judgment, after which different theological traditions speak of various scenarios for human souls.

is called Rajyoga. Regular practice of Rajyoga makes us naturally soul conscious – aware that we are souls, sentient points of light, the living beings expressing themselves through the physical medium of the body. The process of spiritual change initiated by God eventually restores souls and nature to their original, pure state. The Iron Age

and religious traditions, souls call out to God for salvation. Deep in their hearts they know that God has granted it before, and trust that He will do so again as the wheel of time turns inexorably. B.K. Atam Prakash is a Rajyoga teacher at the Brahma Kumaris headquarters in Mount Abu, Rajasthan.

SUNIL NARINE’S ALL-ROUND DISPLAY HELPS KKR DEFEAT CSK BY 8 WICKETS

AGENCIES CHENNAI

The Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) delivered a commanding performance to defeat the Chennai Super Kings (CSK) by eight wickets in Match 25 of the IPL 2025 at the MA Chidambaram Stadium. This victory propels KKR to third place in the standings, while CSK continues to struggle with their fifth consecutive loss.

Sunil Narine was the standout performer, earning the Player of the Match award for his exceptional all-round display. With the ball, Narine dismantled CSK's batting lineup, claiming 3 wickets for just 13 runs, including the crucial dismissal of MS Dhoni. He then showcased his batting prowess by scoring a rapid 44 off 18 balls, steering KKR to a swift chase of the modest target.

Opting to bat first after losing



ing the toss, CSK's innings faltered from the outset. The team managed only 103 runs for the loss of 9 wickets in their allotted 20 overs, marking their lowest total at the Chepauk. Shivam Dube was the top scorer with 31 runs, but the rest of the lineup failed to make significant contributions.

KKR approached the

chase with aggression and precision. Narine's explosive batting set the tone, and with support from Quinton de Kock (23 runs) and Rinku Singh, KKR reached the target in just 10.1 overs, finishing at 107 for 2. This emphatic win not only secured two points but also significantly boosted their net run rate.

Ajinkya Rahane, KKR's captain, praised his team's comprehensive performance, highlighting the effective execution of their game plan. He acknowledged the bowlers' efforts in restricting CSK and commended the batsmen for their aggressive approach during the chase.

Conversely, MS Dhoni

expressed disappointment over CSK's performance, noting the team's inability to adapt to the conditions and the lack of substantial partnerships. He emphasized the need for the team to regroup and address the shortcomings in their batting lineup.

Following this match, KKR has moved up to third place in the IPL 2025 standings with 6 points from 6 matches and a healthy net run rate of +0.803. CSK, on the other hand, finds itself at the bottom of the table, having secured only 2 points from 6 matches and a concerning net run rate of -1.554.

KKR will aim to maintain their momentum in the upcoming fixtures, while CSK faces the challenge of reversing their losing streak. The team will need to reassess their strategies and make crucial adjustments to revive their campaign in the tournament.

Dhruv-Tanisha exit marks end of Indian challenge at Badminton Asia C'ships

AGENCIES NINGBO

The pair of Dhruv Kapila and Tanisha Crasto, India's last remaining representatives at the Badminton Asia Championships 2025, bowed out in the Mixed Doubles Quarterfinals on Friday.

As per a press note from Badminton Association of India (BAI), the pair lost 22-20, 21-13 to Hong Kong's fifth-seeded Tang Chun Man and Tse Ying Suet on Friday.

This marks the end of the Indian challenge at the Badminton Asia Championships, which will continue till Sunday.

Earlier, PV Sindhu (Women's Singles), Kiran George and Priyanshu Rajawat (Men's Singles), and Hariharan Amsakarunan/Ruban Kumar Rethinasabapathi (Men's Doubles) reached the Round of 16 before exiting the tournament.



ment.

In a clash of two former world champions, Sindhu, the world number 17, succumbed to Japan's Akane Yamaguchi, the world number four, in the round of 16 by 12-21, 21-16, 16-21 in one hour and six minutes, as per Olympics.com.

This marked Sindhu's 12th defeat to the Japanese in 26 matches and the third

successive against her as well. Sindhu had defeated Yamaguchi in the Tokyo 2020 Olympics quarterfinals. In men's singles, Priyanshu Rajawat lost to fifth seed Kodai Naraoka in two successive games by 14-21, 17-21. Also, Kiran George made a promising start against third-seed Kunlavut Vitidsarn of Thailand, but lost by 21-19, 13-21, 16-21.

India end ISSF World Cup Buenos Aires with 8 medals, including 4 gold



AGENCIES BUENOS AIRES

India concluded their International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) World Cup campaign with a total of eight medals, including four gold medals, two silver and two bronze medals.

On Thursday, India finished the tournament at second place finish in the points, behind China, who topped the standings with a total of 11 medals, including five gold,

three silver and three bronze, as per Olympics.com.

Saurabh Chaudhary and Suruchi Singh beat Manu Bhaker, a two-time Olympic medallist, and Ravinder Singh, 16-8 in the bronze medal play-off to claim their spot on the podium.

Bhaker did secure a bronze medal at the Paris 2024 Olympics in the 10m air pistol mixed team with Sarabjot Singh, who did not compete at the tournament.

During the qualifiers, Tokyo

ISSF World Cup 2025 Buenos Aires: India medal winners		
Sift Kaur Samra	gold medal in women's	50m rifle 3 positions
Rudranksh Patil	gold medal in the men's	10m air rifle
Suruchi Singh	gold medal in the women's	10m air pistol
Vijayveer Sidhu	gold medal in the men's	25m rapid-fire pistol
Esha Singh	silver medal in women's	25m pistol
Arya Borse/Rudranksh Patil	silver medal in the mixed	10m air rifle
Saurabh Chaudhary/Suruchi Singh	bronze medal in the	10m air pistol mixed team
Chain Singh	bronze medal in men's	50m rifle 3 positions.

2020 Olympican Saurabh and Suruchi earned a third-place finish with a total score of 581-26x, with Suruchi getting 291

and Saurabh managing 290. Manu (287) and Ravinder Singh (292) combined and made it to the fourth spot.

Indian Racing Festival to cover cities in northeast



AGENCIES NEW DELHI

"The Indian Racing Festival- a carnival of Total Control" is scheduled to be held from April 12 to 22, and will cover key cities including Kohima, Aizawl, Shillong, Guwahati, and Gangtok.

Indian Racing Festival is offering audiences an electrifying glimpse into the world of professional open-wheel racing,

a release said. The line-up features champions across generations from 9-year-old karting sensations to racing champions and rally legends, a release said.

"Enthusiasts can look forward to jaw-dropping drifting displays in high-performance machines like Lexus and BMW, alongside gravity-defying stunts on Superbikes. The showstoppers will be young karting prodigies

A key highlight of the tour will be blazing showcases of international Formula 4 and Wolf cars from the Indian Calendar:	
April 12	Kohima (Nagaland)
April 16	Aizawl (Mizoram)
April 19	Shillong (Meghalaya)
April 20	Guwahati (Assam)
April 22	Gangtok (Sikkim)

on their Rotax Karts who will push the limits of speed and skill, offering a powerful preview of India's racing future," the release said.

The festival is powered by JK Tyre & Industries and is taking the thrill of performance-driven action to new heights with a focused tour in the North-East region, the release said.

The JK Tyre National Racing Championship

(JKNRC)--is now in its 28th consecutive year and has grown into a premier platform for nurturing racing talent from across the country. Padma Shri awardee and India's first Formula 1 driver Narain Karthikeyan and Gaurav Gill, India's first motorsport athlete to receive the prestigious Arjuna Award--besides many others are proud prodigies of JK Tyre, the release said.

SRH vs PBKS: Will numbers tell new story?

SUNIL YASH KALRA NEW DELHI

Match 27 of IPL 2025 promises to be a riveting face-off as Sunrisers Hyderabad lock horns with the in-form Punjab Kings this evening. While Punjab has found its rhythm and is riding high on back-to-back wins, Hyderabad is desperately searching for answers after four consecutive losses. The stage is set for a contest where records and present form will clash head-on.

Punjab Kings have looked confident under the leadership of Shreyas Iyer. Out of their four games this season, they've won three -- the most recent being a thrilling last-over chase of 200 runs against



Gujarat Titans. That victory, sealed with just one ball to spare, reflects not just their batting depth but the team's belief in handling pressure situations.

On the other hand, Sunrisers Hyderabad have had a turbulent ride. While they did register a convincing 6-wicket win over Chennai Super Kings earlier in the season,

the momentum hasn't stayed with them -- four losses have left them languishing at the bottom of the points table.

Former Indian cricketer and current SRH mentor Noel David, speaking on Cricket Predicta presented by IxBAT, shared his thoughts ahead of the clash: "Yes, the pressure is real, but we've got match-winners who can change the

game in a single spell or a few big hits. We have to take full advantage of playing at home and stick together as a unit. Punjab is strong, no doubt, but we have history on our side -- and history can repeat itself."

And that history speaks volumes. In the 23 IPL matches played between the two sides, Sunrisers Hyderabad have dominated with 16 wins compared to just 7 for Punjab. Even in their last five encounters, SRH has come out on top four times.

Yet, this is the IPL -- where reputations often take a backseat, and form writes the headlines. At the moment, Punjab Kings are flying high in fourth place, while Hyderabad

is stuck at the bottom. On current form, the Kings certainly look like the favorites.

Tonight's match will be played at the Rajiv Gandhi International Stadium in Hyderabad -- a venue known for its batting-friendly conditions. High-scoring thrillers are common here, and with the expected evening dew, the toss could play a crucial role. Teams may prefer to bat first, build scoreboard pressure, and let the pitch aid their pacers later in the game with some seam movement. One thing's certain: this isn't just a game between two teams. It's a showdown between legacy and momentum -- and it might just be the turning point of the season for one of them.

KL Rahul reveals inspiration behind fiery celebration following DC's win over RCB

AGENCIES BENGALURU

Delhi Capitals (DC) wicketkeeper-batter KL Rahul opened up on his now-viral celebration following win over Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) and the movie which inspired it.

After his valuable knocks in India's ICC Champions Trophy campaign this year, KL has not looked back.

He played a knock of 93* in just 53 balls, laced with seven fours and six sixes in the IPL match against RCB.

After the win, KL, seen as a reserved and calm

personality on the field, was extremely animated, thumping his chest and pointing towards the ground and at his jersey as if saying that it (M Chinnaswamy Stadium) is his. He was also seen tapping his bat on the ground.

Speaking in a video by DC, Rahul said, "This is a special place from me. This celebration was from one of my favourite movies, Kantara. So, a tiny reminder that this ground, this turf, this place where I grew up, is mine."

Kantara is a 2022 Kannada movie starring Rishabh Shetty, Sapthami Gowda and Achyuth Kumar. In

the picture below, one of the characters is seen planting his sword into the ground. Being a Karnataka player, KL has played bulk of his domestic cricket at M Chinnaswamy Stadium and even played two IPL seasons for RCB, in 2013 and 2016.

In 20 T20s at Chinnaswamy Stadium, KL has made 544 runs at an average of 41.84 and a strike rate of over 145, with three half-centuries in 17 innings and best score of 93*. In 18 IPL matches here, he has made 475 runs at an average of 43.18 and a strike rate of almost 144, with three half-centuries in 15 innings.

India bag crucial win against Hong Kong, China at Billie Jean King Cup

AGENCIES PUNE

The Indian team carried on their winning run at the Billie Jean King Cup Asia-Oceania Group 1, delivering a strong performance to secure a 2-1 victory against Hong Kong, China, here on Thursday evening. The tournament, organized by MSLTA in association with ITF, AITA, and PMDTA,

is taking place at the Mahalunge Balewadi Tennis Complex in Pune, as per a release from Billie Jean King Cup.

India got off to the ideal start on day three, courtesy of Vaidehi Chaudhari's splendid performance against Ho Ching Wu in the Indian's first game of the tournament. The youngster, hailing from Ahmedabad, fought tooth and nail in a

tightly contested first set, winning the tiebreak 10-8.

She wasted no time imposed herself in the second set, eventually securing a 7-6 (10-8), 6-1 victory in 2 hours and 3 minutes to give India a 1-0 lead in the tie against Hong Kong, China.

In the second singles match between the two countries, Shrivalli Bhמידipaty carried on her fabulous run in the tournament,



maintaining a perfect record after three matches.

The young Indian star had to dig deep against Hong Yi Cody Wong in a three-set encounter that lasted 2 hours and 27 minutes. Shrivalli bagged the first set in a tiebreak, winning 8-6, before her opponent fought back. However, the Indian had the last laugh with eight aces, securing a crucial 7-6, 2-6, 6-3 victory to give India

an unassailable 2-0 lead in the tie.

In their final match of the day, the Indian duo of Ankita Raina and Prarthana Thombare fell short in a hard-fought battle against Eudice Chong and Hong Yi Cody Wong.

The experienced Indian pair secured the first set in a tiebreak before the Hong Kong, China duo fought back in the second set.

From there on in, Hong Kong, China had the better of the exchanges, winning the final set and the contest at 7-6, 3-6, 11-13.

The Indian team will play Chinese Taipei in the third match of the Billie Jean King Cup on Thursday. The Sports Authority of India (SAI) and the Ministry of Sports and Youth Welfare (Maharashtra) powered the tournament.