



2
CONG ATTACKS PM, SAYS HE SHOULD ANSWER WHY PAHALGAM ATTACKERS STILL AT LARGE



11
GOLDEN DOME MISSILE DEFENSE PROGRAM: WHO WILL LEAD IT?



16
MARSH'S TON PROPELS LUCKNOW SUPER GIANTS TO 235 AGAINST GT

PM MODI MINCES NO WORDS WHILE WARNING PAK

Playing with the blood of Indians will cost Pakistan dearly, asserted the PM.

ARVIND PALAWAT
BIKANER

After inaugurating and laying the foundation stone of projects worth Rs 26,000 crore in a meeting at Palana (Deshnok), Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday asserted that India, after Operation Sindoor, made it clear that Pakistan will have to pay a heavy price for every terrorist attack and said that "there is no blood flowing in Modi's veins, but hot Sindoor."

In a fiery speech PM Modi said Operation Sindoor is not a game of research and revenge, but it is a new form of justice.

The Prime Minister said those who had set out to erase Sindoor have been reduced to dust. "Those who shed the blood of India, our army has taken revenge of every drop from them. Those who thought that India would remain silent, are hiding in their homes today. Also, those who were proud of their weapons, are buried under the rubble today," he said.

PM Modi noted that it is not just anger this is the fierce form of an able India and its new form. Com-

menting on the airstrike, he said earlier "we had attacked by entering the house and this time we have directly attacked on the chest".

"This is the policy, this is the way of crushing the hood of terrorism, this is India, this is the new India," he asserted

The Prime Minister said Pakistan can never win a direct fight with India. Whenever there is a direct fight, Pakistan has to face defeat again and again. That is why Pakistan has made terrorism a weapon to fight against India for the last several decades. After independence, Pakistan used to spread terror, kill innocent people. An atmosphere of fear was created in India by Pakistan, but Pakistan forgot one thing that now Mother India's servant Modi is standing here with his head held high.

The Prime Minister said that Modi's mind remains cool, but his blood remains hot and now hot sindoor is flowing in Modi's veins. He warned that playing with the blood of Indians will cost Pakistan dearly. "There will be neither trade

■ P3



Prime Minister Narendra Modi addresses the gathering at the inauguration and foundation-laying event of development programmes worth Rs 26,000 crore, at Deshnok in Bikaner on Thursday. ANI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi along with Union Minister for Law and Justice Arjun Ram Meghwal, Rajasthan Governor Haribhau Bagade and state Chief Minister Bhajanlal Sharma offer prayers at Karni Mata Temple in Deshnok, Bikaner on Thursday. ANI

'Bhajan Lal Sharma is popular CM'

ARVIND PALAWAT
BIKANER

The Prime Minister in his Bikaner speech on Thursday said the money spent by the government to build infrastructure increases employment as well as business. Also, when this infrastructure is ready, the farmer's produce reaches the market at a lower price, new industries are set up and tourism gets a boost. He said that Rajasthan is also getting a big benefit

from the work being done on infrastructure. Today, good roads are being built in every village and border areas of Rajasthan.

Addressing Chief Minister Bhajan Lal Sharma as the popular Chief Minister of Rajasthan, Modi said that the double engine govern-



PM Modi being presented with a memento by Rajasthan CM Bhajan Lal Sharma, in Bikaner on Thursday. ANI

ment of the Centre and the State is working rapidly for the industrial development of Rajasthan. The work of Rajasthan's refinery is also in the final stage. This will make Rajasthan a major hub of petroleum based industries. Amritsar-Jamnagar Economic Corridor and Delhi-Mumbai Expressway will take industrial development in Rajasthan to new heights.

Increasing electricity production is also giving new

■ P3

Quotable quotes of PM Modi

“ The world and the enemies of the country have seen what happens when 'sindoor' turns into 'barood' (gunpowder)

Ab toh Modi ki naso mein labu nabi garam sindoor beh raba hai (Not blood but sindoor runs in Modi's veins),

India's response to the terror attack was a "new form of justice" and there will be no trade or talk with Pakistan, there will be talk only about Pakistan-occupied Kashmir.

Modi's mind remains cool but his blood is hot...

In response to the attack of April 22nd, "we destroyed 9 biggest hideouts of terrorists in 22 minutes

If Pakistan continues to export terror, it will have to beg for every penny. Pakistan will not get India's rightful share of water.



President Droupadi Murmu confers Shaurya Chakra upon Major Aashish Dhonchak, (Posthumous) at Rashtrapati Bhavan. ANI



President Droupadi Murmu confers Shaurya Chakra upon Shri Pawan Kumar (Posthumous) at Rashtrapati Bhavan. ANI

No proof yet of Jyoti Malhotra accessing defence info: Police

Hisar police says no information suggests she married a PIO or converted her religion

NEERAJ MOHAN
CHANDIGARH

A local court in Haryana's Hisar on Thursday extended the police custody of YouTuber and travel blogger Jyoti Malhotra for four days as investigations continue into



serious allegations that she shared information with Pakistani intelligence.

Malhotra, 33, runs a YouTube channel called Travel with JO with over 3.77 lakh subscribers, was arrested on May 16 for allegedly being in touch with Ehsan-ur-Rahim

alias Danish, a Pakistani official at the High Commission in Delhi, who was expelled from India on May 13 over spying charges.

Officials associated with the investigation revealed that the police have seized three mobile phones, a laptop, and other electronic items from Malhotra. Her four bank accounts are being checked. Investigators found that she visited Pakistan multiple times since 2023 and also traveled to China and Bangladesh. Authorities

■ P3

Mann fumes as CISF deployed at Bhakra Dam



CHANDIGARH: Slamming the BJP-led Union government for 'hatching conspiracies to ruin Punjab', Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann said the state government will oppose the draconian move of the Centre to deploy CISF at Bhakra Dam. "The Centre should understand one thing: we neither have any drop of surplus water for other states nor any single penny to pay the MHA for the unwarranted CISF," said CM Mann.

DETAILS ■ P2

Saini calls Mann 'arrogant' as supply is cut



CHANDIGARH: Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini on Thursday launched fresh attack on Punjab CM Bhagwant Mann, accusing him of being "arrogant and ignoring people's needs" over the ongoing water crisis after Punjab curtailed Haryana's supply from Bhakra Dam.

"Mann is not following the teachings of the Gurus. His arrogance will break soon," the Haryana Chief Minister said.

DETAILS ■ P2

SC reserves interim order on Waqf law

Reiterates that presumption of constitutionality in favour of the law

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

Reiterating its observation on the presumption of constitutionality in favour of the law, the Supreme Court on Thursday reserved interim orders on three key issues after hearing both sides in the waqf case.

One of the issues relate to the power to denotify properties declared as "waqf by courts, Waqf-by-user or Waqf by deed" prescribed in Waqf (Amendment) Act, 2025.

Before reserving the interim order, a bench com-

prising Chief Justice B R Gavai and Justice Augustine George Masih heard senior advocates including Kapil Sibal, Rajeev Dhavan, Abhishek Singhvi and Huzefa Ahmadi for those challenging the amended waqf law and Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, representing the Centre, on three consecutive days.

On the last day, the CJ said, "I have already said that there is a presumption of constitutionality."

On May 20, the CJ noted the same and said, "For interim relief, you have to make out a very strong and glaring case. Otherwise, presumption of constitutionality will be there."

The bench previously identified the three issues, on which a stay was sought by the petitioners, for pass-

■ P3



CBI files chargesheet against ex-J&K Guv

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on Thursday filed a chargesheet against Satyapal Malik, former Governor of Jammu and Kashmir, and six others in connection with the Kiru Hydro Electric Project of Jammu and Kashmir.

The chargesheet was filed against Satyapal Malik, his two private secretaries and four others. Malik served as the governor of Jammu and

■ P3

Mamata sees red as BCCI shifts IPL final to Ahmedabad

SUPROTIM MUKHERJEE
KOLKATA

The Mamata Banerjee government is bristling at the Board of Control for Cricket in India's (BCCI) decision to shift the IPL final and a play-off match from Kolkata to Ahmedabad, in contravention of conventions that dictate that the final is played at the home city of last year's winners. The playoff match is scheduled for June 1, and

the final on June 3.

Aroop Biswas, West Bengal Sports Minister and a close aide of Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, on Thursday accused the BJP of engaging in "cheap politics" following the BCCI's decision to relocate an IPL playoff match and the final away from Kolkata's Eden Gardens.

Addressing a press conference along with Kolkata Police Commissioner Manoj



Verma, Biswas expressed displeasure over the revised schedule, which he said has

"deprived" Kolkata of hosting the IPL final. The final has been shifted to Ahmed-

abad, while the Mullanpur Stadium in Punjab will host one playoff match.

Aroop Biswas pointed to discrepancies between the reasons cited by a BJP leader and the BCCI.

"BJP leader and Union Minister Sukanta Majumdar posted on X that the matches have been shifted due to law and order problems. The BCCI and IPL's governing body have

■ P3

PUNJAB CM MANN SLAMS CENTRE’S MOVE TO DEPLOY CISF AT BHAKRA DAM

TARUNI GANDHI
CHANDIGARH

Slamming the BJP-led Union government for hatching conspiracies to ruin Punjab, the Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann said that the state government will vehemently oppose the draconian move of the centre to deploy CISF at Bhakra Dam and will not give a single penny as expenditure on it.

“Centre should understand one thing: we neither have any drop of surplus water for other states nor any single penny to pay the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) for the unwarranted CISF”, said the Chief Minister while interacting with the media persons here today.

The Chief Minister said that the state government will never pay this amount as it is a move aimed at stealing the water of the state by deploying the central forces on the dam. He said that they need everything from Punjab in terms of food grains and others, but on the other hand, they are



“Centre should understand one thing: we neither have any drop of surplus water for other states nor any single penny to pay the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) for the unwarranted CISF”

trying to snatch the waters of the state through this action. Bhagwant Singh Mann said that instead of giving any special package to Punjab for its immense contribution, the BJP is meting out step-motherly treatment to the state. The Chief Minister said that he will flag this issue before the Prime Minister in the meeting of the NITI Aayog slated to be held on Saturday. Bhagwant Singh

Mann said that the BJP is resorting to such tactics as they are against the state, as people of Punjab have never voted for them. He said that it is surprising to note that though Punjab leads the country in contribution to the food pool, besides giving maximum representation in the Indian Army but the BJP-led centre has always ignored the state. The Chief Minister said that the Modi

government is suffering from anti-Punjab syndrome, due to which they are hell bent on ruining the state. Bhagwant Singh Mann said that if the will of the BJP-led NDA government prevails, then they will omit the name of Punjab from the national anthem also. He quipped that the Congress leaders in the BJP should not remain mum over this issue and clear their stand on this high-handedness of the saffron party.

The Chief Minister said that the BJP-led government has no respect for the federal structure or the constitution, adding that every constitutional body has been diluted. He said that the Governors are being used to stall the working of the democratically elected governments, which is a serious threat to democracy.

Bhagwant Singh Mann said that such repressive and autocratic moves of the saffron party will be opposed tooth and nail to ensure that the interests of the state are safeguarded by all means.

The Chief Minister said that

Bhakra Beas Management Board (BBMB), is a puppet in the hands of the centre, leaves no stone unturned to harm the interests of the state, and the fresh order of MHA is a part of it. He said that 296 cops of the CISF will be deployed at the Bhakra Dam, which will cost Rs 8.58 crore to the state. Bhagwant Singh Mann said that why we should not pay this money to the BBMB when the Punjab Police is already ensuring the safety of the dam free of cost.

The Chief Minister said that this will not be allowed as it is a nefarious design of the BBMB and the BJP to steal the waters of the state by deploying CISF. He said that the BJP leaders, including self-proclaimed savior of Water Captain Amarinder Singh, Sunil Jakhar, Manpreet Singh Badal, Union Minister Ravneet Singh Bittu, and others should make their stand clear on it.

Bhagwant Singh Mann said that this is a clear attempt by the BJP and BBMB to dilute the stake of Punjab over the waters.

Punjab CM ignoring people's needs: Haryana CM Saini

NEERAJ MOHAN
CHANDIGARH

Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini on Thursday launched fresh attack on Punjab CM Bhagwant Mann, accusing him of arrogance and ignoring people's needs over the ongoing water crisis after Punjab curtailed Haryana's supply from Bhakra Dam.

“Mann is not following the teachings of the Gurus. His arrogance will break soon,” Saini said. He added that Punjab's people are watching and predicted that AAP will lose power there, with BJP's “lotus” symbol rising instead.

Saini's reaction came a day after the Bhakra Beas Management Board (BBMB) restored Haryana's supply of water from the Bhakra-Nangal Dam under the new annual water-sharing cycle.

He also accused Aam Aadmi Party of playing politics during a serious water shortage in Delhi. “In summer, water demand rises. AAP, which runs the Punjab government, cut the supply to Delhi. They didn't think about the common people,”



Haryana CM Nayab Singh Saini with Delhi CM Rekha Gupta.

he said. He went further to say that AAP's days in Punjab are numbered. “The people of Punjab are watching everything. I believe AAP will be removed from Punjab too, and the lotus (BJP's symbol) will bloom there as well,” he added.

Criticising Punjab CM Bhagwant Mann directly, Saini said, “He is full of arrogance and not following the teachings of the Gurus. This arrogance will soon break.”

Earlier in Ladwa Saini again slammed the Punjab government for refusing Haryana's rightful share of

drinking water.

He called it “inhuman” to politicize something as essential as water, especially when giving water is considered a noble act in Indian culture.

He urged the Punjab government to follow the decisions of the Supreme Court and High Court and to stop blocking Haryana's water. “The Punjab CM must rise above politics and fulfill his constitutional duty,” Saini said. In an interaction with media persons CM Saini also talked about his recent meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Modi sends strong message to Pakistan at Bikaner rally

AJIT MAINDOLA
BIKANER

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, known for his composed demeanour, expressed rare and intense anger during a public meeting in Palana near Deshnok, Bikaner. Speaking from the land of Rajasthan, famous for its heroism and sacrifice, Modi delivered a strong and clear message to Pakistan and those supporting terrorism. For the first time since the Pahalgam attack, the Prime Minister's anger was visible in full force. The crowd witnessed moments of silence and thunderous applause, interspersed with chants of “Modi-Modi”, as the Prime Minister con-



demned terrorism with passion and conviction. While Modi had visited the Air Base Camp in Punjab following the successful Operation Sindoor, where he boosted the morale of the armed forces, it was in Palana that he publicly unleashed his fury. His message was direct—India will no longer tolerate terror and will respond with decisive strength.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi showed an unusually angry and powerful side during a public rally in Palana, near Deshnok in Rajasthan, sending a strong and clear message to Pakistan and supporters of terrorism. The crowd responded with silence at times and thunderous applause at others, clearly moved by his fierce words. This was the Prime Minister's first public address after the Indian Army's successful Operation Sindoor. Speaking passionately, Modi said that the dignity of ‘Sindoor’ must be protected, which filled citizens across the country with pride and anger against terrorism.

Jawan killed in ongoing gunfight with terrorists

TDG NETWORK
KISHTWAR

A “braveheart” of the Indian Army made the supreme sacrifice during an ongoing counter-terror operation in the Singhpora area of Chhatru in Jammu and Kashmir's Kishtwar district, where a “fierce gunfight” is underway between security forces and terrorists, Army officials confirmed on Thursday.

In an official statement on X, White Knight Corps said, “During the ongoing operation, fierce gunfight is continuing. One of our Brave hearts sustained grievous injuries in the exchange of fire and has succumbed despite best medical efforts. Operation is in progress.”

India-Pak engagement has to be bilateral: MEA

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Ministry of External Affairs emphasized that any engagement between India and Pakistan has to be bilateral, excluding third-party involvement.

Addressing the weekly briefing on Thursday, MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal also highlighted that any “any bilateral discussion” on Jammu-Kashmir will only be on the “vacation of illegally occupied Indian territory by Pakistan.”

Jaiswal stated, “Our position is that any India-Pakistan engagement has to be bilateral. At the same time, I would like to remind you that talks and terror don't go together.”

Jaiswal also noted that India is “open to discussing the handing over to India of not-



ed terrorists whose list was provided to Pakistan some years ago.”

Highlighting the Indus Waters Treaty, Jaiswal said that the treaty will remain in “abeyance” until Pakistan “credibly and irrevocably abjures its support for cross-border terrorism.”

Meanwhile, Jaiswal declined to elaborate on US President Donald Trump's claim of brokering the understanding of cessation of hostilities between India and

Northern Army Commander meets Ladakh LG to review UT’s security situation

AJAY JANDYAL
LEH/JAMMU

Northern Army Commander Lieutenant General Pratik Sharma met Ladakh Lieutenant Governor Brigadier (Dr) B D Mishra (Retd.) in Leh on Thursday to discuss the overall security scenario in the Union Territory.

This was Lt Gen Sharma's first visit to Ladakh after taking charge as General Officer Commanding-in-Chief (GOC-in-C) of the Northern Command on May 1.

According to a statement issued by the Office of the LG of Ladakh on social media platform X, Lt Gen Sharma was accompanied by GOC 14 Corps Lt Gen Hitesh Bhalha and other senior of-

This was Lt Gen Sharma's first visit to Ladakh after taking charge as General Officer Commanding-in-Chief (GOC-in-C) of the Northern Command on May 1.

icials from the Northern Command. The Army delegation paid a courtesy call on the Lieutenant Governor, during which key security matters pertaining to the strategically sensitive region were reviewed

Cong attacks PM, says he should answer why Pahalgam attackers still at large

ANAND SINGH
NEW DELHI

Congress on Thursday once again trained its gun at Prime Minister Narendra Modi saying that instead of throwing out grand sounding but hollow filmi dialogues in public rallies as he has done in Bikaner he should answer why Pahalgam attackers are still at large and the government should convene special session of Parliament.

The Congress also dubbed sending of delegations to foreign countries as a PR stunt and said that nation security is not a reality show.

The Congress launched the attack after the Prime Minister in Rajasthan's Bi-



kaner said that how India gave befitting reply to Pakistan following the Pahalgam terror attack.

Modi also said that although he remains calm and composed, his blood runs hot with passion and determination when it comes to nation. He added that in his veins flows not just blood,

but hot sindoor, symbolising his deep sense of commitment and energy.

In a post on X, Congress general secretary and communications in-charge Jairam Ramesh said, “Instead of throwing out grand sounding but hollow filmi dialogues in public rallies as he has done in Bikaner today, the Prime Minister should answer serious questions that are being asked of him.”

Firing salvos at the government, Ramesh, who is also a Rajya Sabha MP said: “Why are the brutal killers of Pahalgam still free-according to some reports they had been responsible for three earlier terror at-

We have to make world understand truth: Kanimozhi

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The All-Party delegation bound for Russia, Slovenia, Greece, Latvia and Spain arrived at the New Delhi airport to begin their visit. The delegation is led by DMK MP Kanimozhi Karunanidhi and is part of the multi-country delegation visiting key partner countries as an outreach initiative aimed at fostering international solidarity against terrorism after Operation Sindoor. Speaking to the media ahead



An all-party delegation led by Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam MP Kanimozhi departs from Delhi airport, in New Delhi on Thursday. ANI

of her departure, Kanimozhi, said the primary objective of the visit is to communicate

India's unified stand on terrorism and counter misinformation being spread globally.

“Our objective is to take the message of India to different countries, to explain what has happened here, and to make the world understand the truth. We have to resolve this problem, and the world has to stand together against terrorism,” she said.

Highlighting the need to present India's stance clearly, Kanimozhi added, “We lost 26 lives to terrorism, and we want to talk about what happened and what is happening in this country because of terrorism. We want to put a stop to that. There are vested inter-

ests trying to create different stories, so the truth has to be told.”

Kanimozhi underscored the bipartisan nature of the initiative, saying, “The most important thing is that all of us stand together when it comes to the security and sovereignty of this country. I think there is no difference of opinion on that.” She further stated that India's position has been clear and consistent: “India has already spoken about what has happened. There are no two stands. We have openly said how we were attacked,

how we responded, and how we want to find a solution. We are only going to repeat what we have already said.”

AAP MP Dr Ashok Kumar Mittal, who is part of the all-party delegation led by Kanimozhi, said that he is confident that the World community would show solidarity with India's stand.

“We want to tell the world about Pakistan's false propaganda. India fights only for its own security, and we have never intended to cause injustice to the people of any country.

INLD calls off highway blockade plan after water released by Punjab

TDG NETWORK
CHANDIGARH

The Indian National Lok Dal (INLD) on Wednesday announced that it has withdrawn its plan to block highways leading to Punjab after water was released to Haryana from the Bhakra dam as per the scheduled roster. The party had earlier warned of a major protest over the non-release of Haryana's share of 9,000 cusecs of water.

The INLD had planned to hold a symbolic protest on May 25 and a complete blockade of roads into Punjab from June 1. However, the party has now rolled back its agitation plans, citing the fulfillment of its demand.

INLD's national president Abhay Singh Chautala, who led a 15-member delegation to meet Haryana Governor Bandaru Dattatreya earlier in the day, said, “We had made it clear that if we didn't receive the agreed 9,000 cusecs of water, we would block roads. But now Punjab has understood our point. Water is being released as per the roster, and there is no need to trouble the public unnecessarily.”

Later, while addressing a press conference after a national and state executive meeting at Jat Bhawan, Chautala lashed out at both Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann and Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh

The INLD had planned to hold a symbolic protest on May 25 and a complete blockade of roads into Punjab from June 1.

Saini, calling them “dummy chief ministers”. “Bhagwant Mann takes orders from Arvind Kejriwal in Delhi, and Nayab Saini too is remote-controlled by Manohar Lal Khattar. Neither of them is working in the interest of their people,” Chautala alleged.

INLD state president Rampal Majra welcomed Punjab's decision to release Haryana's full share of water and credited the “struggle” of party workers for the victory. “People and livestock in Sirsa, Fatehabad, Hisar, Bhiwani, Jind, and Kaithal were facing an acute shortage of drinking water. The AAP government in Punjab showed a very narrow-minded approach by cutting off water supply,” he said. Majra also welcomed the central government's decision to deploy CISF forces at the dam to ensure fair water distribution. “This was our long-standing demand. Though late, the Centre has finally curbed Punjab's high-handedness,” he said.

PM INAUGURATES, LAYS FOUNDATION STONES OF RS 26,000-CR PROJECTS

TDG NETWORK
BIKANER

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated and laid the foundation stone of multiple development projects worth Rs 26,000 crore in Rajasthan's Bikaner on Thursday. Addressing the occasion, PM Modi welcomed the large gathering at the event, acknowledging the significant participation of people from 18 states and union territories who joined online. He highlighted the presence of several Governors, Chief Ministers, Lieutenant Governors, and other public representatives.

PM Modi stated that he arrived at the event after

seeking the blessings of Karni Mata, emphasising that these blessings further strengthen the nation's resolve to build a developed India. Mentioning the inauguration and foundation stone laying of development projects worth Rs 26,000 crore, he underscored their significance in advancing the country's growth. He extended his congratulations to the citizens for these transformative initiatives, according to the release.

The Prime Minister highlighted the ongoing transformation of India's infrastructure, emphasising the nation's commitment to modernisation, and pointed to the rapid advancements in roads, airports, railways,



Prime Minister Narendra Modi along with Union Railways Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw, Union Minister for Law and Justice Arjun Ram Meghwal, Rajasthan Chief Minister Bhajanlal Sharma, and other dignitaries at Deshnok in Bikaner on Thursday. ANI

and railway stations over the past 11 years.

"India is now investing six times more in infrastructure development compared to previous years, a progress that has captured global

attention", remarked the Prime Minister, pointing out iconic infrastructure projects across the country, citing the remarkable Chenab Bridge in the north, the Sela Tunnel in Arunachal

Pradesh, and the Bogibeel Bridge in Assam in the east. In western India, he noted the Atal Setu in Mumbai, while in the south, he highlighted the Pamban Bridge, India's first of its kind.

Emphasising India's continuous efforts to modernise its railway network, PM Modi underlined the introduction of Vande Bharat, Amrit Bharat, and Namo Bharat trains as symbols of the country's new speed and progress.

He remarked that nearly 70 routes now operate Vande Bharat trains, bringing modern rail connectivity to remote regions. He further pointed out the significant infrastructure advancements over the past 11 years, including the construction of hundreds of road overbridges and underbridges, as well as the laying of over 34,000 kilometres of new railway tracks.

18 railway stations in Gujarat to be redeveloped

TDG NETWORK
GANDHINAGAR

Under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Amrit Bharat Station Yojana was launched. Under this initiative, over 1,300 railway stations nationwide are being redeveloped. In Gujarat, 87 stations are being modernised at a cost of Rs 6,303 crore, said an official statement from the Gujarat Chief Minister's Office (CMO).

PM Modi virtually inaugurated 18 redeveloped railway stations of Gujarat, developed at a cost of Rs 164

crore, during a program held in Bikaner, Rajasthan.

Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel graced the inauguration ceremony of the redeveloped Limbdi station under the Amrit Bharat Station Scheme.

On this occasion, the Chief Minister remarked that since former Gujarat CM Narendra Modi became Prime Minister, he has consistently prioritised infrastructure development and modernization to enhance the convenience, readiness, and welfare of both the armed forces and citizens.

Vibrant village programme to mainstream border areas: Bhajan Lal

TDG NETWORK
JAIPUR

During a public meeting of Prime Minister Narendra Modi held in Palana, Chief Minister Bhajan Lal Sharma said that "the country has laid the foundation of a new India with the resolve of 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas, Sabka Prayas'" under the leadership of the Prime Minister.

Congratulating the PM on the success of Operation Sindoor, he stated that "under Modi's leadership, the military power of New India destroyed terrorist bases and air bases in Pakistan." He added, "During Operation Sindoor, the entire nation felt proud of the Indian Army's bravery."



He further noted that PM Modi has approved Vibrant Village Program-2 for border area villages, "so that the standard of living can be improved and adequate livelihood opportunities can be provided by bringing these regions into the mainstream."

CM Sharma said that "the people of the state are receiving the full benefits of various public welfare

schemes from the double engine government led by the Prime Minister." He stated that "the foundation stone laying, inauguration, and dedication of important projects taking place will accelerate the development of Rajasthan and the rest of the country."

Referring to the Rising Rajasthan Global Investment Summit, he highlighted that "MoUs worth over 35 lakh crore were signed, and within a short time, proposals worth 3.25 lakh crore have already been implemented."

He further said that "due to the successful implementation of the KUSUM Yojana and installation of 1,500 MW capacity, farmers in 22 districts are now receiving electricity during the day-

time." Sharma expressed "gratitude to the Prime Minister on behalf of the people of Rajasthan for the Ram Jal Setu Link Project and the Yamuna Water Agreement." Chief Minister Bhajan Lal Sharma emphasized that "Prime Minister Narendra Modi envisions only four castes in the country — the poor, the youth, women, and food providers." Guided by this inclusive vision, the state government is committed to the upliftment of these sections.

He said, "To build a poverty-free Rajasthan, initiatives such as the Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya Garibi Mukta Gaon Yojana, Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, and Swamitva Yojana are being actively implemented."

TDG NETWORK
KOTA

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday inaugurated the Bundi railway station developed under the Amrit Station Scheme through virtual medium from Bikaner, Rajasthan. Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla attended the program organized in Bundi here. On this occasion, the Lok Sabha Speaker thanked PM on behalf of the people of the area and said that the redeveloped Bundi railway station under the Amrit Station Scheme is a symbol of a unique confluence of modern development and cultural heritage. This station is not only a modern passenger center, but it



also presents a picture of new thinking, new vision, and progress of the new India.

Birla said that Bundi is moving towards a new identity today. It is our constant effort that Bundi gets a new identity in the field of tourism. Many big works have been done in

this direction, and many are ongoing. Development with heritage, with this resolution, we aim to develop Bundi. Be it sports, health, education, tourism, or infrastructure, the picture of Bundi is going to change in the coming times.

Lok Sabha Speaker Om

Birla highlighted the significant improvements in rail connectivity under PM Modi's leadership. Over the past 11 years, major and suburban railway stations in the Kota-Bundi region have been redeveloped, offering modern, world-class facilities to passengers. The introduction of new rail services and MEMU trains has eased regional travel. Notably, the Vande Bharat Express now halts in Bundi, expected to boost local tourism. Enhanced connectivity is evident with 14 trains now stopping at key stations, including Kota, Ramganj Mandi, Modak, Keshoripatan, Bundi, Kapren, Digod, and Arnetha, benefiting thousands of daily commuters.

'Bhajan Lal Sharma is popular CM'

CONTINUED FROM P1

impetus to industrial development in Rajasthan.

The Prime Minister said that Bikaner will also get the benefit of new industrial policies issued by Chief Minister Bhajanlal Sharma's government for different sectors.

The taste of Bikaneri Bhujia and the sweetness of Bikaneri Rasgullas will further increase its recognition across the world. He said that today itself, founda-

tion stone and inauguration of schemes related to health, water and electricity have been done in many areas. The only goal of all these efforts is that Rajasthan should move forward rapidly and the youth here should get good opportunities in their city itself.

Prime Minister Modi said that more than 40 thousand people have joined the PM Surya Ghar Free Electricity Scheme in Rajasthan. Due to this, the electricity bill of the people has become zero

and people have also got a way to earn by generating solar energy. Recalling the contribution of Maharaja Ganga Singh Ji who brought greenery to western Rajasthan, he said that water is needed for the development of many areas of Rajasthan. For this, on one hand irrigation projects are being completed and at the same time rivers are also being linked. He said that many districts of Rajasthan will benefit from the Parvati-Kalisindh-Chambal link project.

CONTINUED FROM P1

nor talks with Pakistan. If there will be talks, it will be only about taking back Pakistan-occupied Kashmir. He warned that if Pakistan continues to export terrorists, it will have to beg for every penny. Pakistan will not get the water that is India's right," he said, adding that this is India's resolution and no power in the world can shake us from this resolution.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi said that Operation Sindoor has laid down three principles to deal with terrorism. First, if there is a terrorist attack on India, a befitting reply will be given, the time and method of which will be decided by our forces and the conditions will also be ours.

Second, India is not going to be afraid of the threats of atom bomb and third, "we

will not see the masters of terror and the government that patronises terror as different, we will consider them as one".

He noted that this game of Pakistan of state and non-state actors will not work anymore. The Prime Minister said that seven different groups are being sent all over the world, which include leaders of every party and experts of foreign policy. Now the real face of Pakistan will be shown to the whole world.

The Prime Minister said that on 22 April, the terrorists had destroyed the vermilion of our sisters by asking their religion. Those bullets were fired in Pahalgam, but those bullets pierced the hearts of 140 crore countrymen. After this, every countryman unitedly took a pledge that the terrorists will be razed to the ground and they will be given a punishment big-

ger than imagination.

He said that with the blessings of the countrymen and the valour of the country's army, we have all lived up to that promise. He said that our government gave a free hand to the three armies and together the three armies created such a chakravayuh that Pakistan had to kneel down. In response to the attack of April 22nd, "we destroyed 9 biggest hideouts of terrorists in 22 minutes. He said that through Operation Sindoor, the world and the enemies of the country also saw what happens when sindoor becomes gunpowder."

The Prime Minister said when he came here from Delhi, he landed at Bikaner's Nal airport. Pakistan had tried to target this airbase too. But it could not cause even a bit of damage to this airbase. At the same time, Pakistan's Rahimyar

Khan airbase, just a short distance from here, across the border, has been closed for the next several days. The accurate attack of the Indian Army has destroyed this airbase. Now, it is lying in the ICU. It is not even known when it will be operational. Prime Minister Modi said that both security and prosperity are necessary for building a developed India.

Earlier during the public meeting, the Prime Minister laid the foundation stone and inaugurated development projects worth 26 thousand crores. He said that today a very big maha yagya is going on to build modern infrastructure in the country. The world is also surprised to see development works like Chenab Bridge in the north, Sela Tunnel of Arunachal in the east, Bogibeel Bridge of Assam, Atal Setu built on the sea in

Mumbai in the west, Pamban Bridge in the south. He said that in the last 11 years, work has been done at an unprecedented pace to modernize the country's roads, airports, rail network and railway stations. Modi said that now 6 times more money is being spent on infrastructure works in the country than before. Trains like Vande Bharat, Amrit Bharat and Namo Bharat reflect the new speed and progress of the country.

Today modern rail has reached even the far-flung areas of the country. He said that more than 1300 railway stations in the country are also being modernized and developed as Amrit Bharat stations. More than 100 such Amrit Bharat stations, symbols of local art and culture, reflecting 'development as well as heritage', are ready today.

'No proof of accessing defence info'

CONTINUED FROM P1

are probing whether these trips were linked to spying.

The investigation is being led by Hissar Police with support from central agencies. Authorities are still trying to understand the full scope of Malhotra's alleged involvement. Hissar Superintendent of Police Shashank Kumar Sawan confirmed the case is being fully investigated by Hissar Police, and Jyoti Malhotra is in Hissar Police custody, while central agencies are questioning her, no central agency has taken custody of her.

"So far, there is no evidence that Jyoti had access to any military, defense, or strategic information", he added.

According to the Hissar SP,

the four bank accounts of Jyoti are under investigation but no comment can yet be made on any financial transactions, Jyoti knowingly remained in contact with people who were identified as PIOs. However, there is no direct proof so far linking her to any terrorist organization or any terror-related activity, added the SP. The police also made it clear that there is no information yet suggesting that Jyoti married a PIO, converted her religion, or made any such personal change.

Malhotra was booked under sections of the Official Secrets Act and 152BNS on May 15.

The National Investigation Agency (NIA), Intelligence Bureau (IB), and military

intelligence have also questioned Malhotra. So far, police say there is no evidence that she accessed or shared any military or defense secrets.

As per the initial interrogation the police believe she was being "groomed" as an intelligence asset by Pakistan. They say she was in touch with Danish during a four-day military standoff between India and Pakistan after a terror attack in Pahalgam on April 22 that killed 26 tourists.

Meanwhile, her Instagram account has been blocked, though her YouTube and Facebook pages are still live. The case has sparked concern about how social media platforms might be misused for spying.

Chargesheet against ex-J&K Guv

CONTINUED FROM P1

Kashmir between August 23, 2018 and October 30, 2019.

The case relates to alleged corruption in awarding a contract for the civil work for the Kiru Hydro Electric Power Project (HEP) worth Rs 2,200 crore in Kishtwar in 2019. In February 2024, the CBI conducted raids at more than 30 places, including the premises linked to

former Jammu and Kashmir Governor Satyapal Malik, as part of its investigation into alleged corruption in the awarding of a contract for a hydel project in the Union territory. The case relates to alleged corruption in awarding contract for the civil work for the Kiru Hydro Electric Power Project (HEP) worth Rs 2,200 crore in Kishtwar in 2019.

On 29 January 2024, the CBI has conducted searches at around 8 locations in Delhi and Jammu and Kashmir in the on-going investigations of a case related to alleged irregularities in the award of tender for civil works of the Kiru Hydroelectric Project being executed by Chenab Valley Power Projects Private Limited, the agency said.

BCCI shifts IPL final to Ahmedabad

CONTINUED FROM P1

claimed that a new venue for the playoff match and final has been decided based on the weather's condition. Who is telling the truth - BJP or BCCI? It is totally a politically motivated decision," he said.

Biswas refuted claims of law and order issues or adverse weather conditions as reasons for the shift, calling them "lame excuses" He added: "100 percent of matches in Kolkata have been played without a single incident."

City police commissioner Manoj Verma said: "Nine matches were scheduled to be played in Kolkata. A post on X pointed out that the match has been shifted due to law and order issues. As the Commissioner of Police,

I am here to say that seven matches have been played here, no incident has been reported. These matches saw a footfall of more than 60,000."

Verma claimed that neither the general public nor organizers had raised any concerns about law and order. He also noted that the BCCI's official communication did not cite law and order as a reason for the change, suggesting "there could be another intention". He recalled one instance during Ram Navami when a match date was rescheduled—from May 6 to May 8—so it could be played in Kolkata. "It shows there is no problem related to law and order in the city," he said.

Biswas further challenged the weather-related justifi-

cation, presenting documents indicating that specific weather forecasts for Kolkata between May 20-30 would only be available after May 14, and forecasts for June 1-4 only after May 26. "No forecast has been issued for the first week of June in 2025 in the public domain. Since when did the BCCI become a weather expert?"

"We register our protest. The CAB (Cricket Association of Bengal) should have raised their voice against it," Biswas said, adding: "It is the IPL's rule that last year's champions' home ground will host the final. But now there is an unwritten rule that the finals will be played in Ahmedabad. In the last four years, the finals have been played at the Ahmedabad stadium thrice."

SC reserves order

CONTINUED FROM P1

ing interim orders.

Apart from the issue of denotification, petitioners have raised questions over the composition of state waqf boards and the Central Waqf Council, where they contend only Muslims should operate except ex-officio members.

The third issue relates to a provision that says a Waqf property will not be treated as a waqf when the collector conducts an inquiry to ascertain if the property is government land.

The Centre strongly defended the Act, saying Waqf by its very nature was a "secular concept" and can't be stayed given the "presumption of constitutionality" in its favour.

Moreover, though Waqf

was an Islamic concept, it was not an essential part of Islam, it added.

Sibal, leading the petitioners, described the law as a "complete departure from historical legal and constitutional principles" and a means to "capture Waqf through a non-judicial process".

"This is a case about the systematic capture of Waqf properties. The government cannot dictate what issues can be raised," he said.

On Thursday, Mehta began his submissions by urging the court not to rush into staying a duly enacted law and said, "It is not difficult to raise a proposition, and only because it can be argued does not justify staying a statute passed by a competent legislature."

SC RAPS ED, STAYS PROBE AGAINST TASMAC IN LIQUOR SHOP LICENCES ROW

Raids at state-run body violates federal concept, says SC

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate is crossing “all the limits” and violating the federal concept of governance, the Supreme Court on Thursday said and stayed the money laundering probe against Tamil Nadu-run liquor retailer TASMAC over alleged corruption in grant of wine shop licences.

Issuing notice to the ED on the plea filed by the Tamil Nadu government and Tamil Nadu State Marketing Corporation (TASMAC), a bench comprising Chief Justice B R Gavai and Justice Augustine George Masih told Additional Solicitor General S V Raju, appearing for the anti-money laundering probe agency, that “Your ED is crossing all the limits.” The anti-money launder-

‘ED CROSSING ALL LIMITS’

- A bench comprising Chief Justice B R Gavai and Justice Augustine George Masih told Additional Solicitor General S V Raju “Your ED is crossing all the limits.”
- Raju opposed the order, saying the issue involved corruption over Rs 1,000 crore and the ED is not crossing the limits “at least in this case.”
- Advocate Kapil Sibal said that it is the state and the TASMAC, which have launched criminal prosecution into alleged illegalities in granting liquor shop licenses.



ing probe agency has been rapped by several benches of the top court for allegedly misusing the rigors of Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA). Opposition parties too have protested against the alleged abuse of PMLA provisions by the ED against the government’s political oppo-

nents.

Questioning the ED raids over TASMAC, a state government body, CJI Gavai said, “The Enforcement Directorate is violating the federal concept (of governance).” The CJI-led bench took note of the submissions of senior advocates Kapil Sibal and

Amit Anand Tiwari, appearing for the state government and the TASMAC, and stayed ED’s probe against TASMAC in the meantime. Raju opposed the order, saying the issue involved corruption over Rs 1,000 crore and the ED is not crossing the limits “at least in this case.” Sibal said that it is

the state and the TASMAC, which have launched criminal prosecution into alleged illegalities in granting liquor shop licences.

He said as many as 41 FIRs were lodged against purported wrongdoers in cases related to the allotment of liquor shop licences from 2014 and now the ED jumps in the picture and raids the TASMAC. “How can you raid the state-run TASMAC?” the bench asked.

The DMK-run state government and TASMAC moved the top court against the raids conducted by the ED at the premises of TASMAC. The petition challenged an April 23 order of the Madras High Court that upheld the ED’s actions, alleging grave violations of constitutional rights and the federal structure.

Prepared to cooperate: K’taka Min after ED raids colleges linked to him

TDG NETWORK
BENGALURU

Amid the Enforcement Directorate’s (ED) raids on the educational institutions linked to him, Karnataka Home Minister G Parameshwara asserted on Thursday that he is “prepared to cooperate” with whatever the outcome. The probe agency searched the educational institutions on Thursday morning for the second day in a row.

Speaking about the search operations by ED, Parameshwara informed that the probe agency visited Siddhartha Institute of Technology, Siddhartha Medical College at Tumkur, Siddhartha Medical College at Begur and Siddhartha Academy of Higher Education yesterday.

The Karnataka Home Minister said that he has instructed the institution’s staff to cooperate with the probing agency. “Yesterday, ED officers visited our institutions-



The probe agency searched the educational institutions on Thursday morning for the second day in a row.

-Siddhartha Institute of Technology, Siddhartha Medical College at Tumkur, Siddhartha Medical College at Begur and Siddhartha Academy of Higher Education. I instructed my staff to

cooperate with them and give whatever information they asked for...They questioned our accounts section. The search is still going on,” G Parameshwara said. “Being a person who believes in the law of the country, whatever comes out of the verification or search, I am prepared to cooperate,” he said. Parameshwara refused to comment when asked about the reports linking these searches to the Actor Ranya Rao gold smuggling case.

“I don’t want to comment at this point of time. Let the investigation be completed,” he said. Ranya Rao was arrested on March 3 at Bengaluru’s Kempegowda International Airport after officials from the DRI found her carrying gold.

On Tuesday, the Economic Offences Court granted conditional bail to the Kannada actor in the smuggling case.

TN farmers hold protest demanding relief for rain-hit crops, loan waivers, policy reforms

TDG NETWORK
CHENNAI

Members of the Tamil Nadu River and Tank Irrigation Farmers Association staged a protest near Rajarathinam Stadium in Egmore, Chennai on Thursday, demanding immediate government action on crop damage compensation, agricultural budget implementation, and policy reforms. The protesters, including farmers and their family members, raised slogans, urging Chief Minister MK Stalin to provide relief for crops such as maize, banana and small onions that were severely damaged



due to recent heavy rains. They also pressed for the implementation of schemes announced in the agricultural budget, loan waivers for distressed farmers, and a rollback of the proposed installation of digital electricity meters. Vishwanathan, President of the Tamil Nadu River

and Tank Irrigation Farmers Association, expressed the protesters’ grievances, stating, “Today, we are holding this half-nude protest to highlight our demands.”

The Tamil Nadu government announced an agricultural budget but has not released funds for the schemes. We de-

mand that the government ensure the budget is implemented and funds are released by June end.” The farmers also opposed the state’s plan to install smart meters, fearing it would threaten the free electricity scheme for agriculture.

“The union government’s new electricity law should not be implemented in Tamil Nadu. The state must drop the idea of fixing smart meters,” Vishwanathan added. Another major demand was compensation for crops damaged in the recent rains. “Corn, banana, and small onion cultivations have been severely affected.

NIA charges two more in 2022 Kerala PLGA Naxal terror recruitment case

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) has charge-sheeted two more accused in the 2022 Kerala case relating to the recruitment of youth into the armed wing of the banned Naxal terrorist organisation.

The supplementary chargesheet has been filed before the NIA Special Court, Ernakulam, against R Ragavendran alias Raghavendra alias Gautham alias Murukesh alias Raghavendran and B G Krishnamurthy alias Vijay alias Babanna alias Baskar alias Kumara alias



They have been charged under various sections of Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 and sections 120B, 121A and 122 of Indian Penal Code.

Gangadhara alias Gopal Rao. They have been charged under various sections of Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 and

sections 120B, 121A and 122 of Indian Penal Code. The People’s Liberation Guerrilla Army (PLGA) case was regis-

tered suo moto by the NIA in February 2022. It relates to the recruitment of cadres into the Naxal group and its armed wing, the PLGA.

“It also involved organising camps to further the activities of the Maoist organisation and its frontal outfit with the aim of destabilising the country,” said the NIA. B G Krishnamurthy, a Central Committee Member of the CPI (Maoist) or Naxal outfit, imparted arms and ideological training to other accused in the forest of the Western Ghats, to equip them to wage war against the nation, as per the NIA investigation.

All Naxals killed in Narayanpur encounter identified: C’garh DGP

TDG NETWORK
NARAYANPUR

Chhattisgarh DGP Arun Dev Gautam on Thursday said that all the 27 Maoists killed in the encounter in the Narayanpur district of the State on Wednesday have been identified. The CPI (Maoist) general secretary was among the killed. “All of them (neutralised Naxals) have been identified.

There will be a press briefing in Raipur. You know very well who Basava Raju (Naxal leader) was. He was the topmost leader of Naxalism,” Gautam told reporters. Gautam, along with IG Bastar P Sundarraj and other officials, inspected the bodies of the Naxals and the weapons recovered from them. The recovered arms and ammunition include BGLs, carbines, INSAS, AK 47, SLRs, 303 rifles and other firearms. “This is the resolve of our Home Minister. It is good if



Gautam, along with IG Bastar P Sundarraj inspected the bodies of the Naxals and the weapons recovered from them.

it happens before that,” the DGP said when asked about the resolve of the Centre to eradicate Naxalism from all over India by 31st March 2026.

Earlier in the day, IG Bastar P Sundarraj said that Basavaraju had a direct or

indirect role in all the attacks of the Naxalites in the Left-Wing Extremism-affected States in the last few years, as he was the Commander-in-Chief of the Central Military Commission (CMC) of the Maoists. “In the last two to three years, he had been the general secretary of CPI (Maoist). In many attacks against the members of the security forces and elected representatives, he had an active role in the conspiracy and planning.

He hails from Andhra Pradesh, Srikakulam district, and was around 70 years old. He was a B.Tech graduate.

We are collecting more information on him and other Maoists killed in the operation,” Sundarraj said. “The security forces carried out this operation very tactically, which resulted in the death of CPI (Maoist) general secretary Nambala Keshava Rao alias Basavaraju.

Maharashtra transfers 21 SP-rank IPS officers

AGENCIES
MUMBAI

The Maharashtra government on Thursday transferred 21 Indian Police Service officers in the rank of superintendents of police, including Somay Munde, who was awarded the Shaurya Chakra for leading an anti-Naxal operation, and Archit Chandak, who was injured in the communal violence in Nagpur in March. Among those transferred are SPs of 12 districts, the order issued by the state home department showed.

Munde, who was serving as SP of Latur, has been made Deputy Commissioner of Police in Chhatrapati Sambhaji Nagar, while Chandak, DCP in Nagpur, has been posted as SP of Akola. Ahilyanagar SP Rakesh Ola, Assistant Inspector General (AIG) Raj Tilak Roshan and Satara SP Sameer Shaikh have been posted as DCPs in Mumbai, the order said. Raigad SP Somnath Garge

has been made SP of Ahilyanagar, while Pune State Reserve Police Force (SRPF) commandant Anchal Dalal has taken Garge’s place. “Kolhapur SP Mahendra Pandit has been transferred as DCP Thane city. Mumbai DCP Mangesh Shinde, has been transferred as SP, Nagpur railway police. Tushar Doshi, who is currently SP, railway police, has been made SP of Satara,” the order said.

DCP Mohan Dahikar is the new SP of Sindhudurg, while Anti Terrorism Squad SP Jayant Meena has taken Munde’s place as SP in Latur, the order mentioned. “Palghar SP Balasaheb Patil has been transferred as SP Nashik Rural. Gadchiroli Additional SP Yatish Deshmukh will replace him in Palghar. IPS officer Yogeshkumar Gupta has been transferred as SP Kolhapur, Nilesh Tambe as SP Buldhana, Nitin Bagate as SP Ratnagiri and Ritu Khokar as SP Dharashiv,” it added.

CM Naidu not delivering on poll promises: Former Andhra CM

TDG NETWORK
VIJAYAWADA

Former Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister and YSRCP president YS Jagan Mohan Reddy on Thursday launched a scathing attack on the current TDP-led government in the State, accusing Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu of failing to deliver on pre-election promises and engaging in financial mismanagement.

The former chief minister also took aim at what he called the “yellow media” for biased reporting in favour of the ruling party. “I am not only fighting against Chandrababu Naidu but also against the ‘yellow media,’” Reddy said in a press conference. “Before the elections, Naidu promised development, welfare, and income generation. He even claimed that Andhra Pradesh was turned into Sri Lanka during my regime. But now,



let us examine what he has actually done in the last 11 months. He did not implement welfare schemes to the beneficiaries,” he added. He claimed that his government successfully managed the state even during the unexpected COVID-19 pandemic.

“Despite the crisis, both investments and GDP increased during that time and throughout our (YSRCP) tenure,” the YSRCP chief said. He said that in just 11 months, the state’s revenue saw a growth rate of 3.08%. This is an important figure the public should be aware of, he said.



“The gross tax and non-tax revenues of the central government in FY 2024-25 (up to February 2025) amounted to Rs36,97,545 crore. In FY 2023-24 (up to February 2024), it was Rs32,50,181 crore. This reflects a total growth rate of 13.76% at the central level,” he said. Reddy said that under the coalition government led by Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu, additional borrowings of Rs30,100 crore were made. “Capital expenditure declined by 17.80%, and most of the budgetary expenditure is being funnelled into the pockets of CM Chandrababu Naidu’s associates,” he said.

Promoting indigenous defence manufacturing must to boost combat strength: DRDO chief

TDG NETWORK
NAGPUR

Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) Chairman Dr Samir V Kamat visited Solar Industries in Nagpur on Thursday. Solar Industries is a leading indigenous defence manufacturing company contributing to India’s self-reliance in defence production.

During his visit, Dr Kamat reviewed the manufacturing processes of various defence products being developed by Solar Industries. Speaking to the media, Dr Kamat emphasised the growing role of private industry in strengthening India’s defence capabilities. “The private sector is playing a crucial role in the defence sector. To achieve the goals of ‘Aatmanirbhar



Bharat’ and to enhance our combat strength, it is

essential to promote indigenous defence manu-

facturing,” Kamat said. Referring to the recent conflict with Pakistan, Dr Kamat expressed satisfaction over the performance of DRDO-developed weapons systems, which were reportedly deployed during the operations. “Based on media reports and feedback from the armed forces, I am satisfied with the performance of our systems. However, we must

also learn lessons from this conflict to improve our systems further and introduce newer technologies to meet the emerging challenges of modern warfare,” he noted. Dr Kamat added that DRDO is currently working on several advanced systems, including missiles, air-based weapons, naval systems, and various sensors, particularly those designed for drone detec-

tion and neutralisation. “I am confident these systems will be inducted into service within six months to one year. They will significantly enhance the capabilities of our armed forces to fight future wars,” he said. He also mentioned upcoming projects like the Man Portable Anti-Tank Guided Missile (MPA-TGM), the Vertically Launched-Short-Range Surface-To-

Air Missile (VLR-SAM), heavy-weight torpedoes, precision-guided munitions, and a range of advanced land and sea mines, which are in advanced stages of development or trials. Satyanarayan Nuwal, Chairman, Solar Industries India Ltd, spoke on the role of solar industries and told ANI, “The war pattern is changing if we look at Azerbaijan, Armenia, Russia, Ukraine.

DELHI MOVING TOWARDS CLEANER YAMUNA: CM REKHA AFTER MEETING HM SHAH

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta on Thursday said her government is moving towards the goal of a clean Yamuna, as she stressed its commitment to the cause of cleaning the river.

Talking to reporters after a meeting with Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Yamuna rejuvenation efforts, Gupta said it is Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision to make Yamuna clean, right from its origin to its culmination point.

"The Centre and the Delhi government are committed to make Yamuna pollution-free. We are working on the segment of the river flowing through Delhi.

"Officials of the Jal Shakti Ministry and Delhi government were present at the meeting. We are moving step-by-step towards the goal of a clean Yamuna,"



"The Centre and the Delhi government are committed to make Yamuna pollution-free. We are working on the segment of the river flowing through Delhi."

the chief minister told reporters.

The 22-km stretch of Yamuna between Wazirabad and Okhla in Delhi, which

is less than 2 per cent of the river's total length, accounts for 80 per cent of its pollution load, according to official reports.

32 real-time water monitoring stations to be set up for Yamuna clean-up

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

In line with its commitment to clean the Yamuna river, the BJP-led Delhi government will install 32 real-time water quality monitoring stations to monitor the river water and the drains flowing into it. A senior official said ten stations will be set up on the Yamuna River and 22 on major drains. Some of the Yamuna river sites where Monitoring Stations will be set up include Palla, ISBT Bridge, ITO Bridge, Nizamuddin Bridge, Okhla Barrage, etc. The major drains that will be included are Najafgarh, Metcalfe House, Khyber Pass, Sweeper Colony, along with some border drains that include Singhu

Border (DD6, Sonapat), Bahadurgarh, Shahdara, Sahibabad and Banthia. These Monitoring Stations will monitor the river along with drains flowing into it and record the date of the cleaning procedure. All the monitoring stations are expected to be operational by the end of this year. The tender process has already been initiated. These stations will monitor water quality in real time and transmit the data directly to the Delhi Pollution Control Committee (DPC) server. These stations will monitor key pollutants, for instance, BOD (Biological Oxygen Demand), COD (Chemical Oxygen Demand), TSS (Total Suspended Solids), along with Levels of Nitrogen, Phosphorus, and Ammonia.

ISI sleeper cell network busted in city, 2 agents arrested

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

In a secret operation carried out from January to March 2025, Delhi Police busted a network of ISI sleeper cells and arrested two agents of the Islamic State, including a person of Nepali origin, police said on Thursday. As per Delhi Police officials, the operation was conducted in coordination with central agencies.

Police recovered classified documents related to the forces from the accused Nepali origin Ansarul Mian Ansari. The operation went on from January to March 2025, in which two people were arrested. Delhi Police filed the chargesheet in May and both were lodged in Tihar Jail. As per the police, Ansari was caught in Delhi when he was attempting to go to Pakistan. Sources said that Ansari had arrived in the national capital city at the behest of ISI. The ISI had asked Ansarul to make a CD of the confidential documents and send



Sources said that Ansari had arrived in the national capital city at the behest of ISI. The ISI had asked Ansarul to make a CD of the confidential documents and send it to Pakistan.

it to Pakistan. After his interrogation, another person was also arrested in Ranchi. As per sources, Ansari revealed that he used to drive a cab in Qatar, where he met an ISI handler. Later, Ansarul was taken to Pakistan, where he was trained by top ISI officials

for several days, and then sent to Delhi via Nepal. In the past few days, several people, including YouTuber Jyoti Malhotra, a resident of Hisar, Haryana, were arrested for allegedly sharing sensitive information and being in continuous contact with a Pakistani citizen.

Ex-Timarpur MLA appointed as AAP's overseas coordinator

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) appointed Former Timarpur MLA Dilip Pandey as the party's Overseas Coordinator. The main Opposition party in Delhi had on Wednesday released a list of new office bearers.

Jitender Singh Tomar was appointed as Madhya Pradesh's Prabhari. Rajesh Gupta, Rituraj Govind and Mahendra Yadav were appointed as Prabhari of Karnataka, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand, respectively. Dheeraj Tokas has been made the Prabhari of Rajasthan. Prakash Jarwal was appointed as the Prabhari of Maharashtra. Ghanendra Bhardwaj and



Vijay Phulara were appointed as Sah Prabhari of Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh, respectively. Four leaders were appointed as the Sah Prabhari of Uttar Pradesh: Dilip Pandey, Vishesh Ravi, Anil Jha and Ch. Surendra Kumar. On Friday, Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) national convenor Arvind Kejriwal announced a 'Nasha Mukti Yatra' amid the ongoing 'War Against Drugs' in Punjab, which has been initiated by the administration to eliminate drug abuse in the state.

Rahul interacts with SC, ST and OBC students on DU visit

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Thursday visited Delhi University's North Campus to interact with students from Scheduled Caste (SC), Scheduled Tribe (ST), and Other Backward Class (OBC) communities, focusing on issues of representation, equality and academic justice.

The interactive session held at the office of Delhi University Students' Union (DUSU) president witnessed enthusiastic participation of students from multiple colleges and departments. Engaging with the students, the Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha highlighted the importance of democratic participation and inclusive academic spaces, a DUSU



statement said.

The students raised concerns over caste-based discrimination, lack of representation of marginalised communities in faculty positions and top administrative posts, and their "exclusion" from hiring in top multinational corporations. They also voiced grievances about the disproportionate academic weightage of skill enhancement courses (SECs) and value addition

courses (VACs) under the National Education Policy (NEP), which they alleged gave excessive power to the faculty members.

Another key issue highlighted was the marking of ER (essential repeat), NA (not available), and absent statuses, which the students claimed were being used unfairly, affecting thousands.

Rahul Gandhi urged the students to draw inspiration from B R Ambedkar's message to "educate, agitate, and organise", as he encouraged them to play an active role in creating a just and inclusive educational ecosystem.

"The role of students goes beyond classrooms -- they must stand up for the rights of the oppressed and under-represented," the Congress leader said.

Education Minister Sood inspects schools in Shakur Basti

TIKAM SHARMA
NEW DELHI

Delhi Education Minister Ashish Sood conducted a surprise inspection of two government schools in the Shakur Basti Assembly constituency today — Sarvodaya Co-educational School, C Block, Saraswati Vihar, and Government Senior Secondary School, Rani Bagh. He interacted with students during the visit, holding a Q&A session to understand their concerns and experiences. MLA Karnail Singh, the Director of Education, PWD officials, and representatives from other relevant departments accompanied the Minister.

Sood said the inspections were part of a larger initiative prompted by complaints from MLAs, with the government committed to routine school visits and prompt corrective actions wherever shortcomings are identified.

During the inspection, he raised serious concerns about the condition of the swimming pools at both schools. Built in 2018 at a cost of Rs 2.5 crore each, the pools have never been used. They suffer from a lack of



water supply and appear to have been constructed using substandard materials. At Rani Bagh, the pool's floor was crumbling, and tiles were detaching. Taking swift action, the Minister instructed the Director of Education to launch a full investigation and initiate a vigilance and departmental inquiry into the PWD engineers responsible.

He strongly criticized the previous government for its neglect, accusing it of focusing on publicity through selective showcases while ignoring the real state of public schools. "Even in constituencies represented by leaders who claimed to bring an education revolution, the condition of schools is distressing," he remarked.

Police recovers 10 high-end stolen bikes, two arrested

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Outer North District Police have recovered 10 high-end stolen motorcycles, including six Royal Enfield Bullets, worth approximately Rs 13 lakh.

The successful operation was carried out under the ongoing special drive 'Operation Bullet' and led to the arrest of two repeat offenders involved in a string of motorcycle thefts across Delhi and adjoining areas. Among the recovered vehicles are six Royal Enfield Bullet motorcycles, one Yamaha R15, one Bajaj Pulsar and two Hero Honda Splendor bikes. The recovery has helped the police crack at



least ten cases registered in Swaroop Nagar, Narela, Burari, Model Town, and Gannaur (Sonapat, Haryana).

These include e-FIRs registered from January 2024 to May 2025 under various sections of the Indian Penal Code and BNSS. Speaking on the operation, Deputy Commissioner of Police of Outer North, Ni-

dhin Valsan, stated that, acting on specific intelligence received by the Head Constable from a confidential source, a trap was laid near Bhalswa Lake in Mukundpur on the evening of May 20.

"At around 6:00 PM, two suspects were intercepted while riding a Royal Enfield Bullet.



A huge tree falls on a vehicle due to thunderstorm and rain, at Nizamuddin Police Station in New Delhi. ANI

MNC employee dies in road accident in Hauz Khas area

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

26-year-old man working with a multinational company died in a road accident after his motorcycle skidded and hit the footpath in south Delhi's Hauz Khas area, an official on Thursday said. The victim, identified as Sushant, lost control of the vehicle and crashed into the side of the footpath, he said. The incident occurred around midnight on May 18 near a petrol pump in the Panchsheel Park area. "A PCR call reporting the accident was received at Hauz Khas Police Station on May 19. By the time the police team reached the spot, the injured man had already been shifted to a nearby hospital, where he was later declared dead," said a senior police officer.

LOST & FOUND

My name is Rinku, my father's name is Gopi Singh. I passed high school exam in 2018 and my marksheet roll number is 0939904. My address is village Dhanori, tehsil and post office Swar, district Rampur, pincode is 244924. My marksheet got lost somewhere on the way. If anyone finds it, please inform me by giving the number given below. mobile no-7534846826

BJP betrayed city's poor with JJ Cluster demolitions: Congress

TIKAM SHARMA
NEW DELHI

The Delhi unit of the Congress Party has strongly criticized the BJP-led Delhi Government for its demolition drive targeting JJ clusters during the intense summer heat. Delhi Congress President Devender Yadav accused the BJP of revealing its anti-poor stance within just 90 days of assuming power. He alleged that the government had launched a large-scale demolition campaign against JJ clusters and

street vendors, displacing the urban poor and robbing them of their livelihoods, contrary to the promises made during the Delhi Assembly elections.

Yadav pointed out that the BJP's election manifesto had promised the establishment of Atal Canteens in JJ clusters to provide meals at Rs 5, free education from kindergarten to postgraduate level for underprivileged children, and improvements in the quality of life for the poor through schemes like the Pradhan Mantri Awas



Yojana, PM SHRI, Pink Police Booths, affordable housing, world-class connectivity, and enhanced security. The manifesto had

also pledged to double the number of street vendor beneficiaries under the PM SVANidhi scheme. However, Yadav claimed, after gain-

ing control of the Municipal Corporation of Delhi, the so-called "Triple Engine" BJP Government launched a demolition spree, evicting slum dwellers and street vendors who had supported them with the hope of better governance following years of alleged corruption and misuse by the Kejriwal Government.

He further stated that the Congress-led UPA Government had enacted the Street Vendors (Protection of Livelihood and Regulation of Street Vending) Act in 2014,

aimed at safeguarding the rights and regulating the activities of street vendors in public spaces—a law that could benefit over five lakh vendors in Delhi. Yadav accused the AAP Government of failing to implement this law by not conducting surveys or designating vending zones, thereby neglecting to issue licenses that would regularize vendors' businesses and shield them from harassment by police and MCD officials. Now, he said, the BJP was forcefully removing vendors without

any legal or humanitarian consideration.

Yadav also highlighted that it was during the tenure of former Congress CM Sheila Dikshit that in-situ flat construction was initiated to rehabilitate JJ cluster residents, particularly in areas like Kalkaji. He criticized the BJP for falsely claiming credit, citing Prime Minister Modi's symbolic key handover under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban), and promises to build 3.5 lakh additional pucca houses.

ENTIRE WORLD REALISING STRENGTH OF COUNTRY AND VALOUR OF INDIAN ARMED FORCES: CHUGH

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Expressing his views on Prime Minister Narendra Modi's first public rally after the success of Operation Sindoor, BJP National General Secretary Tarun Chugh said that the entire world has realised the strength of the country and the valour of Indian Armed forces.

Tarun Chugh said, "PM Narendra Modi showed the world and our country's enemies that when Sindoor turns to gun powder, it can avenge the 22 April incident in 22 minutes by demolishing Pakistan's air bases and terror hubs. The entire world is realising



the strength of the country and the valour of Indian Armed forces can be seen clearly. India has made it clear that we will not differentiate between terrorists, their masters, and their masters' government in responding with strict action." He further hit out at the Congress and said that

they were insulting the Armed forces by calling the speech of Prime Minister inspired from films. "Congress leaders are insulting India's brave army by calling their valour filmy dialogues. If you want to listen to India's vigour, listen to it resounding in every street and market of

Pakistan. To become the star boy of Pakistani media, to become their blue-eyed boy, Congress leaders have resorted to cheap politics," he added.

Earlier PM Modi on Thursday asserted that India, after Operation Sindoor, made it clear that Pakistan will have to pay a heavy price for every terrorist attack and said that "there is no blood flowing in Modi's veins, but hot Sindoor."

"Pakistan has forgotten one thing: that now Modi, the servant of Mother India, is standing here with his head held high. Modi's mind is cool; it stays cool, but Modi's blood is hot. Now there is no blood flowing in Modi's veins, but hot

Sindoor. Now there will be neither trade nor talk with Pakistan. If there will be talk, it will only be about Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (PoK)," PM Modi said at a public rally in Bikaner. "Now India has made it clear... Pakistan will have to pay a heavy price for every terrorist attack. And this price... will be paid by Pakistan's army... will be paid by Pakistan's economy... Ye shodh pratishodh ka khel nahin, ye nyay ka naya swaroop hai, ye Operation Sindoor hai. This is not just an agitation; this is the 'Raudra Roop' of a strong India. Ye Bharat ka naya swaroop hai. Pehle ghar mein ghus ke kiya the vaar, ab scene pe kiya prahar hai.



A hippopotamus spotted with her calf inside their enclosure, at the National Zoological Park in New Delhi on Thursday. The female calf was born to her mother after a gap of four years. ANI

PM Modi inaugurates five Amrit Stations in Chhattisgarh



TDG NETWORK
RAIPUR

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi today virtually inaugurated 103 redeveloped railway stations across the country under the Amrit Bharat Station Scheme, including five Amrit Stations in Chhattisgarh. These stations have been upgraded with the aim of providing world-class amenities to passengers. On this significant occasion, Chief Minister of Chhattisgarh, Shri Vishnu Deo Sai, attended the inauguration ceremony held at Ambikapur Railway Station.

The five Amrit Stations in Chhattisgarh that were inaugurated today include Ambikapur station (Bilaspur Division), Urkura, Bhi-

lai, and Bhanupratappur stations (Raipur Division), and Dongargarh station (Nagpur Division).

Chief Minister Shri Vishnu Deo Sai expressed his gratitude to Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi for this valuable gift to Chhattisgarh. He stated that the Ambikapur station, the headquarters of the tribal-dominated Surguja district, along with four other stations, has now become a prominent part of the national railway map.

The event at Ambikapur was attended by Agriculture Minister Shri Ram Vichar Netam, Finance Minister Shri O.P. Choudhary, Health Minister Shri Shyam Bihari Jaiswal, Women and Child Development Minister Smt.

Laxmi Rajwade, Lok Sabha MP Shri Chintamani Maharaj, MLAs Shri Rajesh Agrawal, Smt. Uddheshwari Pekra, Smt. Shakuntala Porte, Chief Secretary Shri Amitabh Jain, Commissioner Shri Narendra Dugga, Inspector General Shri Deepak Jha, and many other public representatives and senior administrative officials.

It is noteworthy that a total of 1,337 stations across India are being modernized under the Amrit Bharat Station Scheme. Out of these, 103 stations have been completed and were inaugurated today. These stations feature a modern architectural design while incorporating elements of local art, culture, and traditions.

Himachal CM Sukhu seeks support for strengthening health infrastructure from Nadda

TDG NETWORK
SHIMLA (HIMACHAL PRADESH)

Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu met Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare J P Nadda in New Delhi on Thursday and sought central support for strengthening health infrastructure in the state. The Chief Minister apprised the Union Minister about the state's requirements in implementing schemes such as Ayushman Bharat and the National Health Mission. He said that there was a need for strengthening health facilities across the state.

He specifically requested the establishment of a dedicated cancer care centre in the state and the introduction of advanced medical technologies and modern equipment in government hospitals to ensure better healthcare for the patients. CM Sukhu also urged for relaxation in eligibility criteria for various central schemes and sought early



release of pending funds. Union Health Minister J P Nadda assured the Chief Minister that the interests of Himachal Pradesh would be fully safeguarded and that all necessary cooperation would be extended by the Centre.

Chief Secretary Prabodh Saxena, Principal Advisor to the Chief Minister Ram Subhag Singh, Resident Commissioner Meera Mohanty and Secretary to the Chief Minister Rakesh Kanwar accompanied the Chief Minister during the meeting. Earlier, CM Sukhu on

Wednesday urged Prime Minister Narendra Modi to increase the import duty on apples from 50 per cent to at least 100 per cent to discourage the import of apples from Turkey and to safeguard the interests of the apple growers of the state.

He also urged that quantitative restrictions should be imposed on imported apples, an official release said. In a letter to the Prime Minister, the Chief Minister said that Himachal Pradesh is known as the country's 'Apple Bowl' and is famous for producing delicious varieties of apples.

Union Minister announces launch of nationwide campaign against plastic pollution

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Bhupender Yadav on Thursday announced the launch of a nationwide mass mobilization campaign against plastic pollution in run up to the World Environment Day. In a post on X, the Minister wrote that the campaign named 'One Nation, One Mission: End Plastic Pollution' aimed to nudge citizens to adopt eco-friendly alternatives.

"In the run-up to #WorldEnvironmentDay, @moefcc has launched a nationwide mass mobilisation campaign against plastic pollution today. The campaign 'One Nation, One Mission: End Plastic Pollution' aims to nudge citizens to adopt eco-friendly alternatives as envisioned by PM Shri @narendramodiji under Mission LIFE. Let's move from aware-



ness to action collectively by embracing sustainable living and #EndPlasticPollution," the post read. Earlier on May 21, a national level workshop involving extensive stakeholder consultations on devising strategies for reviving India's oldest mountain range, Aravalis was inaugurated by Yadav at Udaipur. The event was also attended by Sanjay Sharma, Minister for Forest and Environment, Government of Rajasthan. According to a release from the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, the workshop focused on finalisation of a Detailed Action Plan for Aravalli Landscape Restoration.

NIMAS successfully concludes 'Har Shikhar Tiranga' mission

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

A team from the National Institute of Mountaineering and Adventure Sports (NIMAS) has successfully summited Mt Kangchenjunga (8,586 m), the third-highest peak in the world and the highest in India, on May 18. The expedition, led by renowned mountaineer Colonel Ranveer Singh Jamwal, marked the culmination of the landmark 'Har Shikhar Tiranga' campaign -- a patriotic mission to hoist the Indian national flag atop the highest peak of each of India's 28 states, a release said. This mission, conceptualised to celebrate the spirit of unity and national



pride through adventure, has now achieved its final milestone with the ascent of Kangchenjunga, the highest point in the state of Sikkim and the campaign's symbolic crown.

Notably, the NIMAS team is the only Indian expedition to achieve a 100 per cent summit success rate on Mt Kangchenjunga this season, a testament to the team's rigorous preparation, discipline, and unyielding spirit, the release said. In a season marked by extreme conditions and high attrition, every climber from the NIMAS team who attempted the summit made it -- an extraordinary accomplishment on one of the most formidable mountains in the world. "This wasn't just an expedition. It was a tribute to every corner of India. From the dense forests of the northeast to the icy ramparts of Kangchenjunga, our Tiranga has now flown atop every state's highest point," said Col Jamwal.

Delhi govt moves SC to withdraw 7 cases filed during AAP rule against Centre, LG

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The seven bitterly contested cases filed by the erstwhile AAP-led Delhi government against the Centre and the Lieutenant Governor (LG) over issues including the control over services in the national capital have been sought to be withdrawn from the Supreme Court following the change in regime. A bench of Justices Surya Kant and N Kotiswar Singh directed to list the application filed by the BJP-led Delhi govern-

ment for Friday. Appearing for the Delhi government, Additional Solicitor General Aishwarya Bhati said the application seeks the withdrawal of seven cases pending in the top court, which challenged the authority of the LG in several committees, including solid waste management, Yamuna cleaning and against the validity of Acts and ordinances.

"These matters should not trouble this court anymore," Bhati said. Justice Kant told Bhati, "We will list all these cases for Friday and take up

the application." The erstwhile AAP-led Delhi government had been involved in a bitter protracted legal battle in the top court over the powers including control over services in the national capital. The top court had in July, 2023 sought a response from the Centre on the then AAP government's plea challenging the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi (GNCTD) (Amendment) Act, 2023 which created an authority for transfer and posting of Group-A officers in Delhi.

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Thursday reserved order on the petition by a person who claimed to be the caretaker of Dargah Bhoore Shah's premises, seeking a direction for non-eviction from its site. A Demolition was carried out by the civic agency in the year 2023 ahead of the G20 Summit. Justice Sachin Datta reserved order after considering the



submissions and affidavits filed by the concerned authority. The petitioner has also sought a direction to restore the demolished

structure to its original position and give a compensation of Rs. 10 Lakh. The petitioner, Yusuf Baig, had filed two petitions in

2023 seeking direction to agencies not to evict/dispossess the petitioner from the place of Dargah Hazrat Bhoore Shah situated at Amir Khuro Park opposite Masjid Chakkar Wali, Neela Gumbad, Hazrat Nizamuddin. That the petitioner claimed to be the caretaker of Ancient Dargah Hazrat Bhoore Shah at Amir Khuro Park and has been doing work as a mutawalli for the past 26 years, and this monu-

ment has existed for 500 years at the opposite Masjid Chakkar Wali, Neela Gumbad, Hazrat Nizamuddin Mathura Road, New Delhi. On the other hand, the Delhi Waqf Board in its response stated that the Petitioner has no locus standi to present the instant Petition on behalf of Dargah Hazrat Bhoore Shah, as he is not the caretaker of Dargah Hazrat Bhoore Shah as per office records maintained by the Delhi Waqf Board.



asked for recommendations, not the immediate formation of the committee. The court had called for suggestions after noting that the earlier redevelopment plans for Chandni Chowk had not delivered the de-

sired results. It was intended to ensure that any new proposal would not conflict with previous schemes, and the committee's creation should have been aligned with its orders.

SENSEX TUMBLES 645 PTS ON GLOBAL SELL-OFF, RISING US BOND YIELDS

TDG NETWORK
MUMBAI

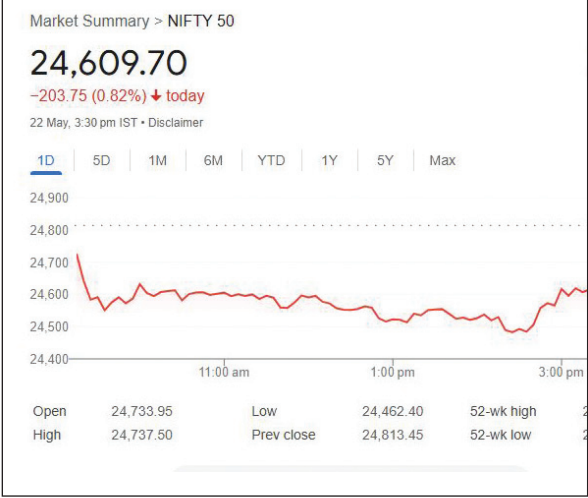
Benchmark Sensex declined by nearly 645 points while Nifty retreated to 24,600 level due to selling in IT, oil and FMCG shares amid a global equity rout triggered by surging bond yields and US debt concerns.

The 30-share BSE Sensex tanked 644.64 points or 0.79 per cent to settle at 80,951.99 with 27 of its constituents ending lower. The index opened lower and tanked further 1,106.71 points or 1.35 per cent to hit a low of 80,489.92 during the day due to across-the-board selling.

The NSE Nifty tumbled 203.75 points or 0.82 per cent to 24,609.70.

From the Sensex firms, Mahindra & Mahindra, Bajaj Finserv, Tech Mahindra, Power Grid, ITC, Hindustan Unilever, Reliance Industries and Maruti were the biggest laggards.

IndusInd Bank, Bharti Airtel and UltraTech Ce-



ment were the gainers. “The key benchmark indices witnessed declines amid US fiscal concerns that the proposed budget bill could significantly increase the national debt, pushing US treasury yields higher due to tepid long-term bond demand. Adding to the pressure, a major credit rating agency’s downgrade of the US credit outlook sparked broad-based selloffs across Asian markets,” Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Investments Limited, said.

US bond yields breached the 5 per cent mark while Japanese bond yields surged to 3.5 per cent which prompted sell-off in riskier assets and emerging markets like India. “Indian equities followed their global counterparts and witnessed major sell-off after a sharp spike in US and Japanese bond yields made investors risk averse towards equities,” Prashanth Tapse, Senior VP (Research), Mehta Equities Ltd, said.

Rupee falls 36 paise to close at 85.95 against US dollar

Mumbai: Rupee depreciated 36 paise to close at 85.95 against the US dollar on Thursday, on dollar demand from importers and foreign banks as well as surge in crude oil prices. Forex traders said surging US bond yields are rattling global investors. Moreover, the narrowing yield differential between India and the US, is making Indian assets less attractive.

Besides, elevated crude oil prices amid rising geopolitical tensions in the Middle East, further dented investor sentiments.

At the interbank foreign exchange market, the rupee opened flat at 85.59 then touched an intra-day high of 85.58 and a low of 86.11 against the US dollar. The domestic unit settled for the day at 85.95, lower

by 36 per cent over its previous close.

On Wednesday, the rupee settled at 85.59 against the greenback. “The Indian rupee has ebbed for a third straight session, influenced by importers’ appetite for the dollar and the unwinding of short positions after a key technical level was breached,” Dilip Parmar, Senior Research Analyst, HDFC Securities, said. Parmar added that “a prevailing inclination towards risk aversion, alongside carry trades involving the Japanese yen, additionally exerted downward pressure on the domestic rupee”.

“Dollar surged against the rupee as importers bought dollar and the RBI decided to let go its tight hold on the currency pair at 85.70.

Gold rises Rs 200 to Rs 98,650/10 g; silver rallies Rs 2,040 per kg

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Gold prices rose Rs 200 to Rs 98,650 per 10 grams in the national capital on Thursday due to a pick-up in local demand by jewelers and stockists, according to the All India Sarafa Association.

Gold of 99.5 per cent purity increased by Rs 200 to Rs 98,200 per 10 grams (inclusive of all taxes) on Thursday.

In contrast, silver prices in the local markets breached the crucial Rs 1 lakh per kg level by rallying Rs 2,040 to Rs 1,01,200 per kg (inclusive of all taxes) on Thursday.

Firm global trends and escalating tensions in the Middle East also supported the local prices, the association. “Gold prices extended their rally as the US dollar remained under pressure, following renewed concerns over economic stability,” Abans Financial Services Chief Executive Officer Chintan Mehta said.

US President Donald Trump’s proposed budget, which includes significant



tax reductions, is projected to add over USD 3 trillion to the national debt.

This has heightened fears of financial instability and weakened confidence in US government bonds, Mehta said.

Meanwhile, spot gold slipped 0.50 per cent to USD 3,298.69 per ounce in the international markets.

“Gold prices traded positive supported by a sharp decline in the US Dollar Index and renewed concerns over US debt sustainability.

“The weaker dollar and ongoing global geopolitical uncertainties have sustained investor interest in gold as a safe-haven asset,” Jateen Trivedi, VP Research

Analyst of Commodity and Currency at LKP Securities, said. HDFC Securities’ Senior Analyst of Commodities Saumil Gandhi said gold extended gains on Thursday, driven by safe-haven demand amid renewed tensions between the US and China, which dampened investors’ appetite for riskier assets, leading to increased demand for the safe haven.

According to Kaynat Chainwala, AVP – Commodity Research, Kotak Securities, market participants will be awaiting the release of key flash PMI data from major global economies, including the US and UK and US jobless claims, later in the day.

Getepay receives final RBI approval to operate as online payment aggregator

TDG NETWORK
JAIPUR

In a landmark development, Getepay, a digital payments and merchant enablement platform, has received final authorization from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to operate as a Payment Aggregator (PA) online under the RBI’s payment regulatory framework. This positions Getepay as the first company from Rajasthan to receive this coveted license, marking a significant step in the state’s contribution to India’s fintech ecosystem.

Since inception, Getepay has empowered over 1.5 million merchants across diverse categories, ranging from kirana stores, micro-retailers, Ecom Stores, education Institutes, service providers to small-scale manufacturers; delivering simple, secure, and accessible digital payment solutions. Rooted in Bharat,



Getepay’s mission has been to enable integrated payment solutions to different categories of merchants specially SME’S.

Now armed with the RBI’s final PA license, Getepay is poised to scale its operations pan-India, deepen its merchant offerings, and onboard millions of small businesses, especially from Tier 2, Tier 3, and rural India, under one seamless digital payments and commerce platform.

“This is more than just a regulatory milestone; it’s a validation of our unwavering commitment to building a truly inclusive digital economy,” said Pravin Sharma, Founder & CEO of

Getepay. “We started Getepay with the belief that every small merchant in India, whether in a remote village or a bustling city, deserves access to simple, secure, and scalable digital tools. With this RBI license, we are now ready to deepen that impact, scale across Bharat, and empower MSMEs with not just payments but complete commerce enablement. This is about building a digital foundation for India’s next wave of economic growth.”

“Getepay isn’t just another fintech, it’s a company that’s grounded in Bharat and solving real, structural problems,” said Mahavir Pratap Sharma, Angel Investor.

“The RBI license reinforces their credibility, and I believe Getepay is poised to become a key force in reshaping how small merchants participate in India’s digital economy.”

Walmart to cut 1,500 corporate jobs

TDG NETWORK
WASHINGTON

Retail giant Walmart is planning to cut around 1,500 jobs as part of a major reshuffle to make its operations more efficient. This move is part of the company’s larger plan to focus on long-term goals, as per an internal memo shared by Reuters.

The job cuts will affect several areas, including Walmart’s global tech team, the e-commerce section in US stores, and its advertising arm, Walmart Connect. While some roles will be re-

moved, new ones will also be added to better match the company’s future plans.

“To accelerate our progress delivering the experiences that will define the future of retail, we must sharpen our focus,” mentioned the memo, quoted Reuters. Walmart is the largest private employer in the United States, with around 1.6 million workers. Globally, it employs about 2.1 million people. It’s also the biggest US importer, bringing in nearly 60% of its goods, like clothes, electronics and toys, from China.



TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Union Minister Manohar Lal on Thursday took a milestone decision to provide a reservation of 4% in the allotment of central government housing for the person with disabilities.

The decision was taken with an aim to reaffirm the commitment to equal opportunities for all citizens under the Sugamya Bharat Abhiyan, the Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs said in a release.

“In alignment with the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPwD) Act, 2016, the Directorate of Estates has issued an Office Memorandum to ensure fair access to central government residential accommodations for persons with disabilities,” the release added.

According to the ministry, this initiative is a reflection

Furthermore, the RBI must clarify that customer onboarding through video-based KYC (V-CIP) does not require eye blinking, making the process more inclusive.

of “the government’s dedication to the empowerment of every citizen and also strengthens the foundation of an inclusive and accessible India.”

Recently, the Supreme Court ruled that the eKYC (digital Know Your Customer) process must be made accessible to people with disabilities. A bench of Justices JB Pardiwala and R Mahadevan, while pronouncing a judgement on PIL pleas seeking directions to the government regarding problems faced by acid attack victims and blind or persons with low-vision in being able to complete the eKYC process, stated that the right to

digital access is intrinsic to Right to Life under Article 21 of the Constitution of India.

Additionally, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) is directed to issue guidelines to ensure that alternative, inclusive methods are available for verifying customer “liveness” during Digital KYC or e-KYC processes, moving beyond methods like eye blinking, which may not be accessible to persons with disabilities.

Furthermore, the RBI must clarify that customer onboarding through video-based KYC (V-CIP) does not require eye blinking, making the process more inclusive.

NSE IPO: SEBI chairman says all outstanding issues will be resolved soon

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Sebi chief Tuhin Kanta Pandey on Thursday exuded confidence that all outstanding issues in the NSE (National Stock Exchange) IPO will be resolved soon.

The NSE’s IPO proposal has been pending with the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) as the regulator has certain concerns.

SEBI’s concerns include the compensation given to key management personnel,



technology and the majority ownership in Clearing Corporation, among others.

“All the outstanding issues will be resolved and we will move forward...NSE

“All the outstanding issues will be resolved and we will move forward...NSE and Sebi are talking, they are resolving the issues and I’m very hopeful, it will be cleared and will move forward,” Pandey told reporters at an event organised by Assocham.

and Sebi are talking, they are resolving the issues and I’m very hopeful, it will be cleared and will move forward,” Pandey told reporters at an event organised by Assocham.

Asked when the issues

India (Sebi).

It can be noted that NSE’s IPO plans have been stuck for over eight years now. The bourse first filed its draft papers in 2016 to mobilise Rs 10,000 crore through an offer for sale by existing shareholders, who were looking to offload 22 per cent shares to the public.

However, approval was not granted by Sebi due to regulatory concerns pertaining to governance and the co-location matter. Since then, NSE has approached SEBI several times for clearance.



Holdings SA and SoftBank Group to launch Twenty One Capital Inc., a company that emulates Strategy’s business model. A subsidiary of Strive Enterprises Inc. co-founded by Vivek Ramaswamy is merging with Nasdaq-listed

Asset Entities Inc. to form a Bitcoin treasury company.

“Unlike previous cycles, this rally is not momentum-driven alone,” said Julia Zhou, chief operating officer of crypto market maker Caladan. “It is quantitatively underpinned by measurable, persistent demand and supply dislocations.”

Bitcoin’s outperformance relative to smaller cryptocurrencies is widening. An index that tracks so-called altcoins is down about 40 per cent year-to-date, while

Bitcoin is up 18 per cent so far in 2025.

A group of 12 U.S. Bitcoin exchange-traded funds have drawn strong inflows, with investors pouring in about US\$4.2 billion so far in May. In options markets, traders built eye-catching Bitcoin positions earlier this week with the US\$110,000, US \$ 1 2 0 , 0 0 0 and US\$300,000 calls expiring on June 27 logging the most open interest — or number of outstanding contracts — on Deribit, the derivatives

exchange. Tony Sycamore, market analyst at IG Group, said in a note that the fresh record shows that Bitcoin’s steep decline from a previous high set on Jan. 20 to below US\$75,000 in April was “a correction within a bull market.” “A sustained break above US\$110,000 is needed to trigger the next leg higher towards US\$125,000,” he added. Bitcoin’s latest milestone comes as Trump prepares to meet with the biggest holders of his memecoin at a dinner at his golf

club just outside Washington on Thursday. The event has raised concerns among ethics experts, who argue that it offers access through transactions that directly benefit the president, and has sparked criticism over potential conflicts of interest. Such events “highlight crypto’s increasing cultural visibility, though they have not had a measurable impact on market dynamics at this stage,” said Yuan Rong Tan, a trader at QCP Capital Pte. Ltd.

Bitcoin tops \$111,000 for first time as US optimism lifts crypto

TDG NETWORK
WASHINGTON

Bitcoin surpassed US\$111,000 for the first time, with traders increasingly bullish on the prospects of the original cryptocurrency amid mounting institutional demand and support from U.S. President Donald Trump’s administration.

Bitcoin climbed as much as 3.3 per cent on Thursday to hit a record of \$111,878, before falling just below \$111,000 at 6:15 a.m. in New

York. Smaller tokens also rose in a broad rally, with second-ranked Ether at one point up about 7.3 per cent.

A wave of optimism is buoying Bitcoin after the advancement of a key stablecoin bill in the U.S. senate fuelled hopes of greater regulatory clarity for digital-asset firms under Trump, who is avowedly pro-crypto. Surging demand from Michael Saylor’s Strategy, the former software maker until recently called MicroStrategy Inc. — which has stockpiled more

than US\$50 billion worth of Bitcoin — and a growing list of token hoarders is another driving force behind the rally.

“It has been a slow motion grind into new all-time highs,” said Joshua Lim, global co-head of markets at FalconX Ltd. Buying by entities such as special purpose acquisition companies, or SPACs, is helping drive prices higher, Lim said.

An affiliate of Cantor Fitzgerald LP is working with stablecoin issuer Tether

INDIA'S GLOBAL LEADERSHIP IN BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION

OPINION

PANKAJ MISHRA



There is a deep and intrinsic connection between nature and life, and this bond becomes even more significant when we talk about biodiversity. Observed every year on May 22, the International Day for Biological Diversity not only reminds us of our environmental responsibilities but also reflects the direction in which our sensitivity towards nature is evolving. This year's theme is "Harmony with Nature and Sus-

tainable Development."

India, one of the world's 17 megadiverse countries, boasts a rich and proud legacy in terms of biodiversity. From the icy peaks of the Himalayas to the lush greenery of the Western Ghats and the marine coasts of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, India's landscapes shelter thousands of species and nourish life in diverse forms.

Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, environmental policies have moved beyond bureaucratic boundaries and transformed into people's movements. Campaigns like "One Tree for Mother" and the LiFE Mission (Lifestyle for Environment) are vivid examples that show how a lifestyle aligned with nature can lead to the organic conservation of biodiversity. Through his "Mann Ki Baat"

program, Prime Minister Modi has repeatedly emphasized the importance of wildlife, the climate crisis, and nature, thereby connecting with the public on these crucial issues.

India is the world's largest tiger range country. Over 70% of the world's tigers live in India—a matter of immense national pride.

In 2014, the tiger population stood at 2,226, which increased to 3,682 in 2023. More than 60% of wild Asian elephants are also found in India, making it the largest range country for Asian elephants. India's wild elephant population has reached 29,964, reflecting successful conservation efforts. There are 33 elephant reserves spread across 14 states, covering an area of 80,777 sq km.

India is the only country in the world with a wild population of Asiatic lions. According to the latest lion census conducted in May 2024, Gujarat now has 891 lions, up from 674 in 2020—a remarkable increase of 217. As of 2022, the UNESCO World Heritage Site Kaziranga National Park is home to 2,613 greater one-horned

rhinoceroses, representing approximately 68% of the global population of this species. This highlights Assam's significant role in global conservation. India now has 89 Ramsar sites, and the continuous rise in these wetland areas underscores India's firm commitment to both conservation and ecological enrichment.

Under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, India has witnessed positive and impactful changes in the fields of environment and wildlife conservation, garnering international appreciation. It is gratifying to note that in the past 11 years, the Modi government has successfully addressed a long-standing public indifference toward wildlife protection through clear intentions and dedicated action.

Today, there is a growing curiosity among people to learn about nature and wildlife. For us, nature and the environment are not just resources—they are embodiments of spirituality and sensitivity. Over the past decade, India has created remarkable examples in wildlife conservation,

significantly contributing to biodiversity. The success of initiatives like Project Tiger, Elephant, Lion, and Leopard, alongside efforts to protect other terrestrial and aquatic species, has inspired the world. The reintroduction of cheetahs in India in 2022—after independence—was a historic and proud moment for the country, receiving global acclaim. The cheetah population is now steadily growing. Since 2014, the central government has consistently worked to bridge the gap between forests and human life.

Strengthening biodiversity is essential for human survival, and Prime Minister Modi's unwavering commitment to this cause is evident. Protecting nature and the environment is crucial to securing our future. This vision of Prime Minister Modi is driving India towards rapid growth in both the economy and environmental conservation in the 21st century.

India's biodiversity is not just an ecological asset—it is deeply interwoven with our economic, cultural, and spiritual identity. The traditional knowledge of forest-dwell-

ing communities, the diversity of indigenous crops, and the abundance of medicinal plants all contribute to India's biological strength. However, climate change, unchecked urbanization, and overexploitation of natural resources now threaten the existence of many species. In response, we must raise awareness, actively protect wetlands and wildlife, empower Biodiversity Management Committees in villages and cities, integrate environmental education in schools, and nurture citizens as true "partners of nature."

During its G-20 presidency, India reiterated its commitment to environmental protection through the mantra "One Earth, One Family, One Future." Now is the time to transform this vision into a personal mission. We must understand that biodiversity conservation is not just about protecting ecosystems—it is about safeguarding human existence. And for that, collective action is essential.

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BOOK REVIEW

PMO - Through the Years

TDG NETWORK

Himanshu Roy's "Prime Minister's Office -Through the years" published by Rupa publications provides a historically grounded and analytically robust account of the evolution of the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) as one of the most influential institutions in Indian democracy.

Spanning 192 pages and published in April 2025, the book explores the PMO's institutional architecture, operational transformations, and shifting power dynamics across successive regimes—from Nehru to Modi. It offers a foundational understanding of how India's parliamentary system has, over time, gradually shifted toward a more prime ministerial form of governance. The book also sheds light on how, why, and to what extent the Prime Minister accrues greater power upon assuming office, with the PMO emerging as a 'ghost office'—an informal yet overwhelmingly dominant force within the democratic institutional framework. While Roy covers a broad range of themes and raises important questions, the book opens up valuable avenues for further theoretical exploration—particularly in understanding how and why the PMO has evolved into a more institutionalised body, even as constitutionally approved ministries and institutions appear to be witnessing a relative decline in their authority.

STRUCTURE AND THEMATIC OVERVIEW

The volume is organized into thematic chapters—Congress Years, Non-Congress Years, Comparison: England, Canada and Australia, and Conclusion—each offering a chronological and political analysis of the PMO's functioning. The inclusion of annexures, endnotes, a bibliography, and an index significantly enhances the

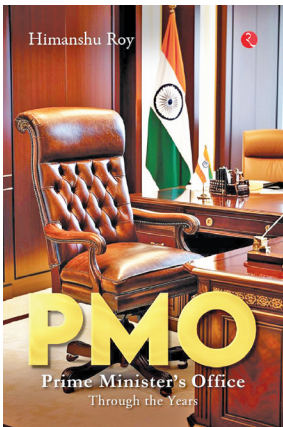
book's academic utility and accessibility. The introductory section effectively situates the PMO within the framework of India's institutional democratic governance, portraying it not merely as an executive office but as a critical node in the country's democratic architecture. The book is intellectually stimulating; after reading it, I was compelled to explore more literature on the subject—an experience that many readers are likely to share.

PMO AS BACKBONE OF DEMOCRACY

A core argument implicit throughout the book—and one that deserves greater emphasis—is that the PMO has emerged as a backbone institution of Indian democracy, playing a central role in policy formulation, inter-ministerial coordination, and articulating the Prime Minister's vision for national governance. From Jawaharlal Nehru to Narendra Modi, each Prime Minister has reshaped the office in accordance with their political priorities and administrative style, thereby reaffirming its institutional flexibility and centrality. Far from being a static entity, the PMO has evolved as a dynamic organ capable of adapting to the complexities of a postcolonial, federal, and increasingly technocratic polity.

HISTORICAL TRAJECTORY

Roy persuasively argues that the transformation of the Prime Minister's Secretariat into the PMO was not a mere bureaucratic adjustment but a symbol of the growing concentration of executive power. The divergence between Nehru and Patel—where Nehru envisioned the Prime Minister as a national executive in the mould of the Viceroy, and Patel upheld the idea of 'first among equals'—sets the foundational context for this institutional evolution. Following Patel's demise, Nehru



began expanding the PMO's scope. At that time, the post of Joint Secretary was its highest-ranking office; by contrast, under Narendra Modi, the Principal Secretary holds Cabinet-rank authority, reflecting the institutional ascent of the PMO.

INSTITUTIONAL MATURATION

Roy documents successive efforts by Prime Ministers to redefine the PMO's scope and composition. For instance, Morarji Desai's appointment of retired civil servant V. Shankar exemplified institutional innovation, marking a departure from earlier administrative norms. Indira Gandhi further centralised governance by transforming the Prime Minister's residence into the epicentre of national policymaking, thereby consolidating executive authority within the PMO.

While Roy briefly touches upon Rajiv Gandhi's more decentralised approach, further insights can be drawn from B.G. Deshmukh's memoir, A Cabinet Secretary Looks Back, which highlights the heterogeneous composition of Rajiv's PMO. It included technocrats and key advisors such as Montek Singh Ahluwalia, Shila Kaul, R.K. Dhawan (Officer on Special Duty), and others. In 1989, Rajiv Gandhi even permitted Deshmukh to undertake a foreign tour to the United States, the United Kingdom, and Canada—despite objections from the Ministry of External Af-

fairs—a practice of assertive PMO discretion that continued under Vajpayee and subsequent administrations.

Moreover, with the establishment of institutions such as the Economic Advisory Council, UIDAI, and others, a discernible trend emerged in which major policy-making bodies were brought under the direct supervision of the Prime Minister and operated through an increasingly dominant PMO.

COALITION YEARS

The era of coalition governments (1996–2014), especially under UPA rule, introduced institutional ambiguities that Roy treats with measured critique. The co-existence of the PMO and the National Advisory Council (NAC) during Manmohan Singh's tenure exemplified a "dual centre of power" in Indian governance. The author aptly terms Singh a "Principal Advisor" rather than an autonomous Prime Minister, drawing attention to the shifting legitimacy and authority of the PMO.

Further adding to the book's argument—but not explored within it—is the establishment of a Delivery Monitoring Unit (DMU) in the PMO in July 2009, which was tasked with tracking the fulfilment of commitments made in the President's Address to Parliament. This administrative mechanism reflected an effort to institutionalise outcome-based governance. The DMU's role in converting parliamentary intentions into measurable targets reinforces the PMO's evolving function as the custodian of democratic accountability.

SECURITY, FOREIGN POLICY

Roy's discussion of the PMO's role in security and foreign affairs is another strength. The establishment of the National Security Council and the appointment of a National Security Advisor (NSA) during Vajpayee's

tenure marked a structural deepening of the PMO's strategic functions. Successive NSAs, from Brajesh Mishra to Ajit Doval, have transformed the PMO into a parallel hub for geopolitical decision-making, reflecting a shift from departmental governance to integrated strategic centralisation.

INSTITUTIONAL MEMORY

A particularly insightful comparative lens is provided by Roy's chapter on the PMO in England, Canada, and Australia. However, this can be enriched by engaging with Anthony Seldon's The Impossible Office?, which explores the British Prime Ministership and laments the lack of institutional memory as a recurring cause of administrative error. In contrast, Himanshu Roy's book makes a valuable contribution by attempting to construct an institutional memory of the Indian PMO, documenting its transformations and operational logic across political regimes. This act of chronicling is critical for democratic continuity, especially in a context where each Prime Minister tends to reconstruct the PMO around personal priorities.

MODI ERA AND REINVENTING PMO

Roy analyses how Modi's Prime Minister's Office (PMO) differs significantly from that of his predecessors. While previous PMOs were powerful, they largely functioned as one-way communication entities. In contrast, Modi's PMO is characterized by a high degree of digitalization, responsiveness, and transparency. It has particularly adopted a pro-people orientation, exemplified by initiatives such as the MyGov platform and other participatory tools. The ordinance enabling the appointment of Nripendra Misra as Principal Secretary—despite contravening existing service regulations—illustrates the

government's capacity to circumvent procedural constraints in pursuit of administrative consolidation. Moreover, the PMO's expanding role in key sectors, including infrastructure and data governance, reflects a move towards a centralized and efficient executive model, akin to that of Singapore, which Modi is known to regard as an institutional ideal.

While these trends raise concerns about over-centralisation, Roy reminds us that the shift did not originate with Modi. Under Lal Bahadur Shastri, the PMO had already begun playing an active policy role—a trajectory intensified by Indira Gandhi. Modi's tenure, therefore, is part of a longer continuum of prime ministerial consolidation.

In conclusion, Himanshu Roy's PMO constitutes a commendable academic intervention that traces the evolution of one of the most powerful institutions in Indian democracy. While the book occasionally misses opportunities for deeper theoretical engagement, it nonetheless offers a rare and valuable institutional history of the PMO, emphasizing its central role in shaping national governance. The text persuasively argues that, although India continues to maintain the formal structures of Cabinet government, the practical dynamics of power are increasingly concentrated in the Prime Minister and the office that embodies their vision.

This volume will be of great significance to scholars of public administration and political science. Furthermore, it opens important avenues for future research by underscoring the necessity to examine the PMO's wider influence on other key institutions—such as Cabinet Secretariat, ministries, political parties affiliated with the Prime Minister, and various cultural, governmental and non-governmental bodies.

OPINION

TEACHERS AND BOOKS THAT SHAPED SUKHDEV THAPAR TO GIVE MARTYRDOM

Sukhdev Thapar was born on 15th May, 1907 in Naughara Mohalla of old Ludhiana to mother Ralli Devi and father Ram Lal. The family was blessed with another son Mathuradas Thapar after three months had passed to the death of their father and when elder Sukhdev was of three years of age then. The elder uncle Lala Chintaram Thapar of these young children took family and their mother to Lyallpur (Now in Pakistan) where Sukhdev studied in Sanatan Dharam School till 1922 to complete his matriculation. Mathuradas Thapar had written a very authentic account on the life of the martyr in his book titled "Mere Bhaai Shaheed Sukhdev" was published in the year 1992 from which facts are given here. Mathuradas died in the year 1999.

Sukhdev's uncle was already in touch with many a nationalist including the family of Shaheed Bhagat Singh who too was groomed in the fervor of nationalism. Both these martyrs ended up studying in National College, Lahore where Sher-e-Punjab Lala Lajpat Rai was also one among the founders and in the management. At the time of the non-cooperation movement, the children of nationalists entered this college where the whole atmosphere was filled with national consciousness. The sole objective of the college was to prepare the future generation for national leadership. The curriculum laid down for this filled the minds of the students with the spirit of dedication towards the freedom movement of the nation. From time to time, lectures of national leaders were arranged there, which infused wonderful enthusiasm among the students. Sukhdev's journey to the Indian freedom revolution started here with Bhagat Singh.

The eminent learned professor of the college Principal Acharya Jugal Kishor motivated the students for service to the nation. Bhai Parmanand, a teacher, had already served his sentence at Kalepani in connection with a political rebellion. A new frenzy broke out among the enthusiastic students on finding a rebellious professor in their midst. Bhagat Singh and Sukhdev would often visit Bhai Parmanandji's house and listen to his interesting memoirs. Sukhdev was greatly moved by his stories of the jail where prisoners had to run oil machines (Kolhu) like animals for long hours. His hatred against the British rulers began to grow in his mind in college.

Another teacher was Jayachandra Vidyalankar who was a graduate of Gurukul Kangri. In fact, he was the one who kept the political buzz alive in the college campus. Some Bengali students who came to study at Lahore were his students also. It was here when Sukhdev first came in contact with Bengali revolutionaries in the making. Sukhdev and Bhagat Singh had rented a room and all young guys took their meals in a hotel. But they did not let their families at Lyallpur know about their activities in Lahore.

Meanwhile, Lala Lajpat Rai also had already started the Dwarakadas Library in Lahore. This library had become a gathering place for these enthusiastic nationalistic outlook youth. They spent hours studying books engaged in political debates and Sukhdev was an important member of this group. Rajaram Shastri was its Librarian who made available such books with great efforts. Being the center of youth activities, the C.L.D. started keeping an eye on this library. It was this atmosphere that led Sukhdev towards revolutionary feelings very fast. Sukhdev's canvas bag always contained many books. Sukhdev's cupboard used to be full of books too. Many books of Dwarakadas library, Panjab library and college library used to lie in the room.

Sukhdev touched the course books very rarely, but was often found glued to books on world revolutions, politics, sociology, Indian and world history. His interest in the revolutions of France, Italy and Russia and in these nations, freedom struggles in his conversations always. Sukhdev and Bhagat Singh would sometimes walk straight to the room from the college and for a long time would be engaged in recounting the adventures of the Kuka Rebellion, the Ghadar Party, Kartar Singh Sarabha, Sufi Ambarasad and the Babbar Akalis. He spent hours discussing great thinkers and writers like Gorky, Marx, Umer Khyam, Engels, Oscar Wilde, Bernard Shaw, Charles Dickens, Victor Hugo, Tolstoy and Dostoevsky.

In Sukhdev's wardrobe, were kept many other books like Ropchin's, Russian Democracy, Maxivini's Principle of Freedom, Marx's The Civil War in France, Bukharin's Historical Materialism 'and 1857 War of Independence. This has been written by Mathuradas Thapar in his book, Sukhdev and Bhagat Singh used to debate on anarchism from a book 'Anarchism and Other Essays' taken from the Dwarakadas Library.

"Except Bhagat Singh and Sukhdev, no one else had read or thought much about socialism. The knowledge of Bhagat Singh and Sukhdev was also more than ours". These words were said by Shiv Varma, another revolutionary working with them.

The present-day educators need to learn from the life and times of martyrs who were avid readers. Our youth is waiting to be explored by teachers who should have love for books and think for rejuvenation of our Punjab and India.

BRIJ BHUSHAN GOYAL

Organizing Secretary, SCD Govt. College, Ludhiana

Ludhiana’s land pooling policy offers farmers high returns, modern infrastructure, transparency, and faster development, aiming for fair urban expansion.

PUNJAB GOVT EYES TRANSPARENT URBAN EXPANSION WITH LUDHIANA LAND POOLING POLICY

TARUNI GANDHI
CHANDIGARH

Ludhiana was developed nearly 30 years ago. As the city has grown congested and unplanned over the years, the Punjab Government has introduced a new Land Pooling Policy, starting with Ludhiana, which may be replicated across the entire state based on its success. So far, only one city—Mohali—has been developed under a land pooling model, through projects like Aerocity, Aerotropolis, and Eco City under GMADA. The Ludhiana initiative thus marks a significant moment in Punjab’s urban transformation journey.

Punjab Finance Minister Advocate Harpal Singh Cheema announced this initiative, calling it the boldest and most pro-farmer land development model. It aims at fair, voluntary participation and a decisive break from past exploitation. “There will be no force, only fairness,” said Cheema at a press conference in Punjab Bhawan. “This is a model where landowners partner with the government and receive developed plots in return, ensuring prosperity, dignity, and freedom from builder mafia exploitation.”

VOLUNTARY LAND POOLING

The newly introduced policy signals a historic shift in how Punjab approaches urban expansion. For decades, land acquisition was associated with conflict, legal challenges, farmer displacement, and opaque dealings with private builders. Now, the Punjab Government is offering landowners a fair, voluntary, and profitable alternative.

Unlike the old land acquisition model under the LARR Act 2013, the new land pooling mechanism avoids coercion and delays. Instead of forcibly acquiring land and compensating landowners in cash, the Punjab Government will



Representative Image

now directly invite voluntary land pooling, allowing landowners to contribute their land and get back a portion of it after full infrastructure development.

Under this policy, for every 1 acre of land pooled, the landowner receives 1,000 square yards of developed residential plots and 200

longer mere spectators in urban development; they are stakeholders.”

This approach ensures that farmers not only retain ownership but also gain the benefits of modern infrastructure. These include well-laid roads, underground sewerage and drainage systems, clean water

“GLADA hasn’t developed a new urban estate in Ludhiana in over three decades,” Cheema said. “This vacuum has allowed the land mafia to flourish. Through land pooling, we are reversing that trend and restoring agency to the original landowners.”

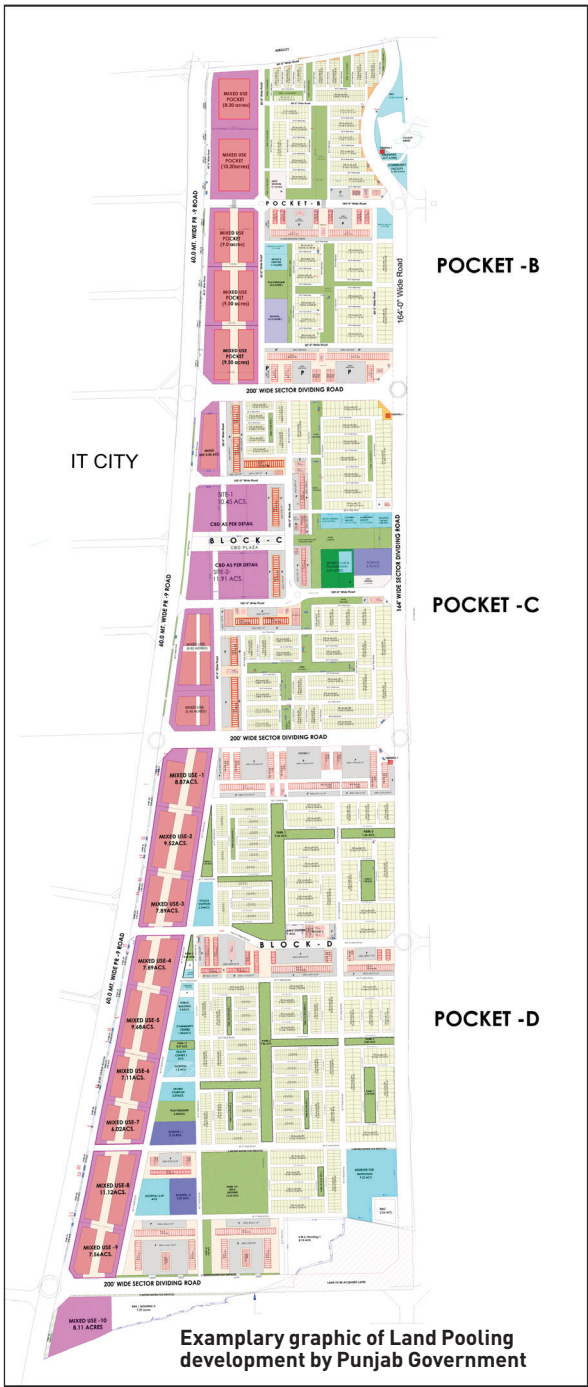
Ludhiana’s selection is

modern amenities in a city often known for its chaos rather than its planning.

ENDING EXPLOITATION

The new Land Pooling Policy is not just an administrative reform; it is also a direct political and economic confrontation with entrenched

governments used forceful acquisitions and secretive deals to push farmers off their land, only to resell it to private builders at massive markups. In contrast, the new policy brings transparency, ensures development happens through government agencies, and keeps the landowners in the pic-



estate practices.

ROLE OF THE BUILDER LOBBY

The Finance Minister also addressed widespread misinformation campaigns against the policy, which he said were deliberately planted by the builder lobby. “They thrived on distress sales and manipulated acquisitions. Now that farmers will get four times the value and retain control, these mafia elements are desperate to sow confusion,” he said. The Punjab Government plans to launch a statewide awareness campaign, complete with FAQs, helplines, legal aid, and public consultations to clarify details, address concerns, and encourage participation. These efforts will be particularly important in Ludhiana, where the history of forced or pressured sales has left many landowners skeptical of any new government initiative. Restoring trust is key to the policy’s success.

ECONOMIC AND LEGAL ADVANTAGES

The land pooling policy, Cheema said, will benefit Ludhiana’s farmers in multiple ways:

- **High Returns:** Farmers receive developed plots worth several times more than raw agricultural land.
 - **Litigation-Free:** As the policy is voluntary, it avoids the legal battles that often accompany land acquisition.
 - **Speed:** Projects can move faster since there is no need for prolonged acquisition processes.
 - **Urban Opportunity:** Farmers now get access to urban infrastructure and market economies.
 - **Freedom of Use:** They can lease, sell, or retain their plots according to their will.
- By turning farmers into stakeholders in urban growth, the government aims to build long-term economic security at the village level. Local economies around Ludhiana are expected to benefit too, with new roads, com-

mercial centers, and public utilities extending the scope of rural prosperity.

SCALING MODEL ACROSS PUNJAB

Cheema revealed that Ludhiana is just the beginning. The Punjab Government plans to replicate this model in other cities, including Jalandhar, Patiala, Amritsar, Bathinda, and more, wherever planned urban development is overdue. With urban population rising, Punjab needs housing, infrastructure, and city planning that doesn’t marginalize the rural population. Cheema believes land pooling offers just that—a win for cities, a win for villagers. Additional legislative and administrative measures may be introduced to support the expansion, including a digital portal for land pooling registration, redressal systems, and GIS-based land monitoring to ensure transparency. “We are not just creating infrastructure,” he said. “We are building equity, ending exploitation, and giving farmers a rightful stake in urban Punjab.”

This new Land Pooling Policy stands as a cornerstone in the Punjab Government’s vision for equitable development. From Ludhiana to the rest of Punjab, farmers will no longer be forced to sell; instead, they’ll be invited to partner. Through this policy, Punjab is witnessing a shift: from land grabbing to land sharing, from crony capitalism to grassroots prosperity, and from unauthorized colonies to world-class infrastructure. “We are laying the foundation for cities that don’t marginalize the farmer but are shaped by them. This is not just land pooling—it’s prosperity pooling,” concluded Harpal Singh Cheema. With Ludhiana leading the revival and Mohali offering proof of concept, Punjab’s cities are poised to become models of fair, participatory, and farmer-first urbanization.

TDG EXPLAINER

square yards of commercial plots, excluding parking and public area deductions. These developed plots are then free to be sold, rented, or retained by the landowners, offering them long-term economic benefits. Cheema emphasized that this policy is not only about land use—it’s about wealth creation for rural Punjab.

“The return on land is potentially over 400%, based on current market rates,” he stated. “And most importantly, landowners remain in control—they can sell, rent, or use the land as they wish. They are no

supply, and robust electricity connectivity—all to be developed by state agencies.

LUDHIANA ROLLOUT

The only city in Punjab developed under a similar land pooling framework is Mohali, particularly through the Greater Mohali Area Development Authority (GMADA), which successfully implemented projects like Aerocity, Aerotropolis, and Eco City. These projects showcased how pooling land and developing infrastructure before returning plots to landowners could create win-win situations—developers gained planned land, and landowners gained high-value plots in urbanized areas.

These Mohali-based projects are seen as a concept that land pooling can be both equitable and effective. Now, Ludhiana—a city of immense economic and cultural significance—has been chosen to pilot the next phase.



Punjab Finance Minister Advocate Harpal Singh Cheema

also strategic. As Punjab’s most densely populated and industrialized city, Ludhiana suffers from unregulated expansion and unauthorized colonies. The policy aims to bring these areas under planned governance, helping landowners and city residents. Through this initiative, the Punjab Government also aims to address the pressing need for affordable housing, regulated commercial growth, and

vested interests. Finance Minister Cheema stated in no uncertain terms that the policy will break the spine of the builder mafia. “For 30 years, Congress and the Akali-BJP alliance operated hand-in-glove with land mafias,” Cheema said. “They enriched their developer cronies and robbed our farmers. This policy is a direct and final blow to that corrupt nexus.”

He argued that previous

ture. “Their current outcry is nothing but crocodile tears, a last-ditch effort to protect their builder friends. They are rattled by the honesty and transparency that the Punjab Government has brought to urban policy,” said Cheema. This confrontational tone signals that the land pooling policy is not only an urban development tool but a clean break from what the government calls the “dark age” of crony real

IN A NUTSHELL
New Land Pooling Policy: Introduced in Ludhiana to encourage voluntary farmer participation in urban expansion, aiming for transparent and planned development.
Farmer Empowerment: Unlike the previous forced land acquisitions, farmers will now receive developed residential and commercial plots, retaining ownership and gaining up to 400% returns.
Infrastructure Development: The policy ensures that landowners benefit from well-developed infrastructure, including roads, sewerage, and electricity, without being displaced.
Ending Exploitation: The initiative directly challenges the builder mafia by cutting out middlemen and offering fair returns to landowners, eliminating secretive deals.
Ludhiana Pilot Project: The city is the first to adopt this model, with plans to extend it to other cities like Jalandhar, Amritsar, and Patiala, addressing urban expansion and rural prosperity.
Legal and Economic Advantages: The policy is voluntary, eliminating lengthy legal disputes associated with land acquisition and speeding up urban projects.
Government’s Long-term Vision: Punjab aims to create equitable urbanization by partnering with farmers, ensuring their active role in the urban development process while boosting local economies.

LAND POOLING VS. LAND ACQUISITION

To make the difference between the old and new approach clear, the Finance Minister gave a real-world example:

- Old Model (LARR 2013):
- Collector Rate: ₹30 lakh/acre
- 2x multiplier + 100% solatium = ₹1.2 crore/acre
- New Land Pooling Model:
- 1,000 sq. yds residential @ ₹30,000/sq. yd = ₹3 crore
- 200 sq. yds commercial @ ₹60,000/sq. yd = ₹1.2 crore
- Total = ₹4.2 crore per acre (approx. 400% return)

“This isn’t just numbers,” said Cheema. “It’s the difference between exploitation and empowerment.” This breakdown shows that the land pooling policy is far more than a land swap—it’s a way of ensuring that farmers earn the full market value from development without losing ownership or control.

HISTORIC SABHA NIWAS REOPENS, SHOWCASING JAIPUR’S REGAL LEGACY

TDG NETWORK

On the occasion of International Museum Day, the Maharaja Sawai Man Singh II Museum proudly announces the much-anticipated reopening of the Sabha Niwas, the historic Hall of Public Audience at the City Palace, Jaipur. Following a meticulous and extensive restoration process that began in July 2024, this iconic space—once a central venue for royal darbars, ceremonies, and political gatherings—has been revived to its full grandeur. The museum reopens the Sabha Niwas as an immersive gallery experience designed to transport visitors into the fascinating world of Jaipur’s royal history.

The restoration process unearthed significant architectural details, including open arches, intricately carved marble columns, and vibrantly painted ceilings with gold embellishments. These restored features offer a glimpse into the craftsmanship and artistic mastery that define Jaipur’s regal heritage.

Historically, the Sabha Niwas served as the heart of Jaipur’s political and cultural landscape. It was the venue where Maharajas held their darbars, welcomed visiting dignitaries, and made critical state decisions. Today, the space is not just a museum hall but a living, evolving symbol of Jaipur’s royal legacy, seamlessly blending traditional architecture with modern technology. It offers a window into the rituals, proceedings, and symbolism of the royal court, with storytelling enhanced by integrated technology that brings history to life.

A SPACE FOR ROYAL CEREMONIES AND PUBLIC DISCOURSE

The Sabha Niwas has al-

ways held profound significance for the Maharaja family, and Maharaja Sawai Padmanabh Singh of Jaipur is deeply connected to this historic hall. Reflecting on the restoration, he shares, “The Sabha Niwas holds immense meaning for me—it’s where my Raj Tilak ceremony took place, followed by the durbar on my eighteenth birthday. During the conservation process, the goal was never to freeze it in time, but to restore it in a way that allows it to continue serving its role, as a place of assembly, ceremony, and conversation. Its restoration ensures it remains a living, evolving part of how we engage with our shared history.”

Incorporating cutting-edge climate control and lighting systems, the Sabha Niwas is now equipped to protect its heritage for generations to come, while continuing its legacy as a space for public engagement and cultural dialogue. It has been transformed into a dynamic exhibition space that showcases Jaipur’s rich royal past.

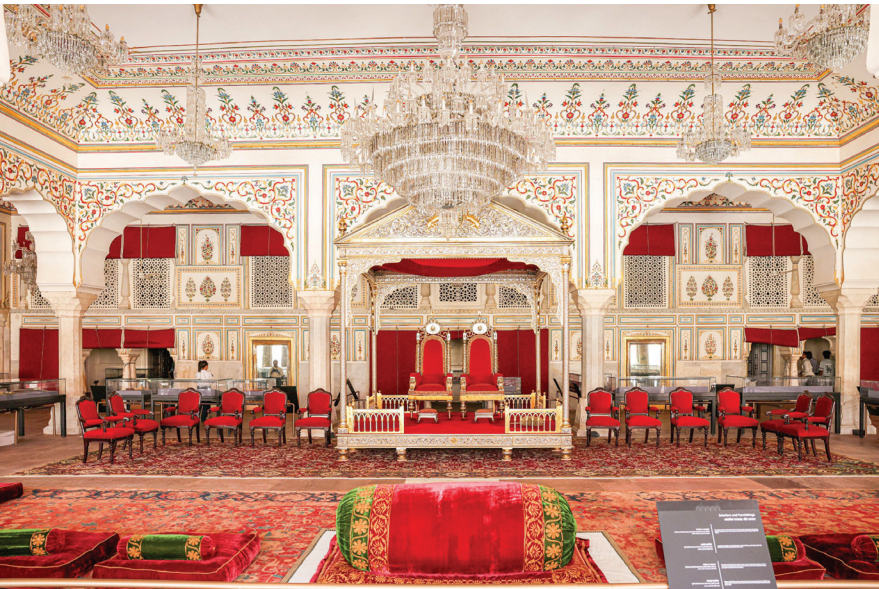
AN EXHIBITION OF ROYAL TREASURES

The revamped Sabha Niwas is home to an extraordinary exhibition, featuring a series of rare, historical objects—many of which are now being displayed to the public for the first time in decades. Among these priceless artifacts are:

Howdahs (19th century): These ceremonial elephant seats were once used in grand public processions, including one that carried Queen Elizabeth II during her 1961 visit to Jaipur.

Canopy (19th century): A powerful symbol of kingship, this ornate central canopy has been carefully restored and is being displayed for the first time in 65 years.

Throne (19th century):



Designed in the European style of the late 1800s, these throne chairs reflect the changing aesthetics of the Kachhwaha rulers. Two thrones are now placed in the Sabha Niwas, with one featuring in the museum’s recent We the People exhibition at the India Art Fair 2025.

Sahibram Portraits (18th century): This life-size series of court portraits by the master painter Sahibram were originally created for the Sabha Niwas and are now making a return to their rightful place. Executed in gouache on cloth and mounted on wood panels, these six-foot-tall works

Today, the space is not just a museum hall but a living, evolving symbol of Jaipur’s royal legacy, seamlessly blending traditional architecture with modern technology

are a rare and significant part of the hall’s legacy.

The reopening of the Sabha Niwas is a momentous occasion, marking a significant step in the ongoing evolution of the City Palace as both a historic site and a living institution. It symbol-



izes the fusion of the past with the present, where Jaipur’s history is not just preserved but actively engaged with by the public through innovative exhibitions and programming.

A LIVING, EVOLVING INSTITUTION

The Maharaja Sawai Man Singh II Museum, which has been a beacon of heritage since its founding in 1959, continues to evolve. Situated within the City Palace, the museum plays a vital role in sharing Jaipur’s tangible and intangible heritage with the world. The museum draws more than 1.5 million visitors annually and, as the city approaches

its 300th anniversary in 2027, it embarks on an ambitious transformation program that promises to take the museum’s cultural mission to new heights.

With its new exhibitions, conservation efforts, and public programming, the Maharaja Sawai Man Singh II Museum invites all to explore the rich, diverse history of Jaipur’s royal past while ensuring that future generations can engage with this heritage in meaningful ways.

ABOUT THE MAHARAJA SAWAI MAN SINGH II MUSEUM TRUST

The Maharaja Sawai Man

Singh II Museum Trust was established in 1959 to steward the rich heritage of Jaipur. Its mission is to preserve and share the city’s historical legacy with current and future generations through exhibitions, research, and public programming.

As part of its ongoing efforts, the museum continues to play a pivotal role in shaping conversations around history, art, and identity. Through its expanding transformation, the museum remains committed to offering visitors an immersive experience, blending heritage conservation with cultural engagement.

The Artistic Fusion of Heritage and Fashion



PRAGYA TIBREWAL

Heritage and history have always served as an endless source of inspiration for creative minds across different fields. Whether it’s fashion designers or filmmakers, the allure of culture and historical monuments has a special place in the hearts of those who channel their creativity into their work. Fashion, in particular, thrives on this blend of tradition and innovation. One designer who has successfully embraced this idea is Pragya Tibrewal. She has earned recognition for her unique approach to fashion, blending India’s rich cultural heritage with contemporary design to create stunning, soulful pieces.

Pragya Tibrewal’s latest collection, ‘Tehzeeb-e-Hindustan,’ is a beautiful tribute to love, legacy, and the intricacy of craftsmanship. The collection stands out as a heartfelt homage to India’s cultural history, inspired by the majestic beauty of the Taj Mahal. But, what makes this collection even more remarkable is the influence of one of the world’s most famous couturiers, Guo Pei, who is often referred to as the “Queen of Couture.”

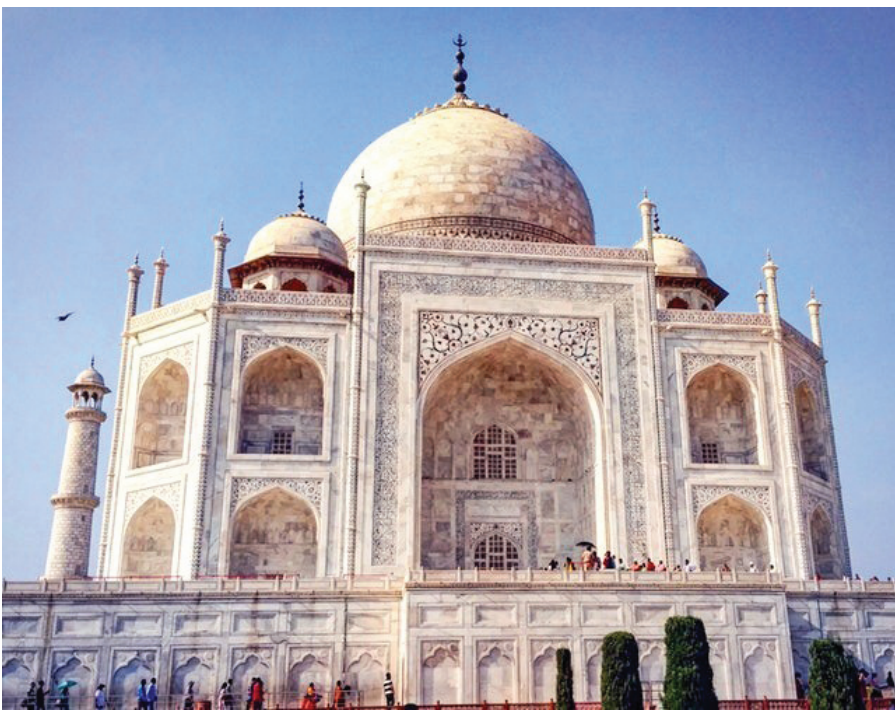
Known for her luxurious creations and impeccable attention to detail, Guo Pei’s designs reflect grandeur, intricate detailing, and technical brilliance.

Pragya’s fascination with Guo Pei’s work grew after she saw the designer’s creations at the Victoria and Albert Museum’s “Fashion in Motion” series. Guo Pei’s garments transcended the concept of fashion, transforming into true works of art. The combination of rich, lavish designs with an eye for technical precision captivated Pragya. Inspired by this innovative spirit and the historical elegance of Guo Pei’s couture, Pragya created ‘Tehzeeb-e-Hindustan.’ Through this collection, she aims to weave the eternal beauty of the Taj Mahal into the fabric of fashion, capturing its grace, love, and timelessness.

INSPIRED BY THE TAJ MAHAL: A COLLECTION ROOTED IN HERITAGE

At the heart of ‘Tehzeeb-e-Hindustan’ is the Taj Mahal—a symbol of eternal love and architectural brilliance. For Pragya, the Taj Mahal is more than just a monument; it represents the perfect balance between beauty and history. It is a place where love, craftsmanship, and culture converge. Pragya draws inspiration from the iconic structure, its domes, arches, and minarets, to design garments that embody these qualities.

Each outfit in this meticu-



lously crafted collection features sheer sequin fabrics, adding a divine, glowing aura to the garments. The use of delicate embroidery, which mirrors the intricate details of the Taj Mahal’s architecture, brings an added layer of sophistication. The golden and earthy brown embroidery used throughout the collection reflects the warm glow of sunlight on the white marble of the monument. This rich detailing creates a visual link between the clothing and the historical grandeur of the Taj Mahal.

Pragya’s designs also feature flowing capes paired with elegant dresses, evoking a regal, romantic silhouette. This combination of elements makes the collection more than just fashion; it becomes a visual

narrative of love, art, and Indian pride. The garments aren’t just about style—but about telling a story—one that honors India’s cultural history and blends it seamlessly with contemporary fashion.

A FUSION OF TRADITION AND GLOBAL VISION

One of the most distinctive features of the ‘Tehzeeb-e-Hindustan’ collection is its ability to combine traditional Indian elements with global high-fashion aesthetics. Pragya believes that fashion is not merely about clothing but about creating a cultural expression, a feeling, and a story. Her approach to design reflects this belief by harmonizing local and international influences.

In this collection, Pragya channels the elegance and grandeur of Guo Pei’s couture, incorporating her signature silhouettes and cuts, while ensuring that the soul of the collection remains deeply rooted in Indian culture. The Taj Mahal’s beauty forms the foundation of the collection, but the style and craftsmanship reflect a broader vision. This is the essence of global fashion meeting local roots—a narrative of cultural exchange that transcends borders.

“I wanted to create a collection that was not just about fashion, but about embracing India’s rich heritage while integrating global influences,” says Pragya. “The Taj Mahal is an iconic

symbol of love, beauty, and timeless elegance, and I’ve worked to reflect these qualities in every ensemble. Each piece tells the story of love etched into the walls of this architectural masterpiece.”

This collection is a perfect example of how tradition and imagination can merge to create something extraordinary. It’s not just about what we wear but about how what we wear connects us to our shared history, our emotions, and our cultural roots. Pragya’s designs encapsulate this beautifully—each stitch, each motif, and each design element weaves the timeless love story of the Taj Mahal into the very fabric of the collection.

GUO PEI: THE QUEEN OF COUTURE

To understand the essence of ‘Tehzeeb-e-Hindustan,’ it’s important to recognize the influence of Guo Pei, the designer whose work inspired Pragya. Guo Pei is one of the most celebrated names in global fashion, known for her elaborate, meticulously crafted gowns. With a career spanning over three decades, she has earned worldwide acclaim for her opulent, artistic, and intricate creations.

Her designs often draw inspiration from China’s imperial heritage, architecture, and mythology. Pei is also recognized for blending traditional craftsmanship with contemporary high fashion. She is the first Chinese designer to become

a member of the prestigious Chambre Syndicale de la Haute Couture in Paris, a monumental achievement that solidified her place in global fashion history.

Guo Pei’s creations were particularly influential when Rihanna wore one of her breathtaking yellow gowns at the 2015 Met Gala. The gown, which weighed nearly 55 kilograms, became an iconic moment in fashion history and propelled Guo Pei to international fame. This combination of art, fashion, and heritage inspired Pragya to blend similar themes of history, culture, and technical excellence into her own work.

A WEARABLE TRIBUTE TO HERITAGE AND LOVE

Ultimately, ‘Tehzeeb-e-Hindustan’ is more than just a fashion collection. It is a living tribute to the Taj Mahal, to love, and to the cultural richness of India. Through her artful design, Pragya Tibrewal brings together two worlds—the grandeur of Indian heritage and the creativity of contemporary fashion. It’s a collection that invites us not just to wear beautiful clothes but to embrace and celebrate the love and history that inspired them.

This collection serves as a powerful reminder that fashion is not just about trends or styles—it’s a cultural expression, a way of storytelling, and an art form that connects us to our past and shapes our future.

GOLDEN DOME MISSILE DEFENSE PROGRAM: WHO WILL LEAD IT?

General Michael Guetlein will lead Golden Dome, a \$1 trillion U.S. missile shield integrating space and ground defenses against global threats.

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

President Donald Trump revealed that US Space Force General Michael Guetlein will command the \$175 billion Golden Dome missile defense shield. The ambitious scheme is to shield the United States against missiles from China and Russia by fusing new space-based technology with ground-based interceptors. The Golden Dome will unify existing systems such as THAAD and Aegis Ashore with new satellite monitoring capability.

At an estimated cost of close to \$1 trillion spread over 20 years, the project is a significant leap in US defense strategy. Led by General Guetlein, an accomplished Space Force veteran and holder of multiple distinguished awards, this key initiative will enhance national security and space defense capabilities.

WHO IS GENERAL MICHAEL GUETLEIN?

General Michael Anthony Guetlein has the appropriate experience to preside over the Golden Dome. He is the current second vice chief of space operations for the US Space Force. Before that, he commanded the Space Systems Command between 2021 and 2024.

TDG EXPLAINER

He also worked as deputy director of the National Reconnaissance Office between 2019 and 2021.

Born on November 22, 1967, in Oklahoma, Michael Guetlein enlisted in the Air Force in 1991 after graduating from Oklahoma State University.

His career is notable for great leadership and commitment. He has received high honors like the Defense Distinguished Service Medal and two Legion of Merit awards.

At the White House press conference, Guetlein described the Golden Dome as “a bold and aggressive strategy for rapidly defending the homeland from our enemies.” His appointment indicates a serious, concentrated effort to develop US missile defense.

WHAT IS THE GOLDEN DOME?

The Golden Dome is an ambitious missile defense shield. It is expected to cost nearly \$1 trillion over 20 years. The project aims to protect the US from potential missile attacks. It does this by combining advanced

space-based systems with ground-based missile interceptors.

The system will combine current technologies such as Lockheed Martin's THAAD and Aegis Ashore. THAAD intercepts intermediate, short, and medium-range ballistic missiles. Aegis Ashore employs shipborne radar and land-based missile interceptors.

In addition, the Golden Dome will install new technologies. Some of these include satellite-based surveillance and missile defense capabilities. Missiles will be detected early by satellites and track incoming threats real-time. This is important to enhancing response time. Defense contractors like SpaceX will likely be at the forefront.

SpaceX can offer rockets and satellites necessary in the space component of the project. Their sophisticated technology is consistent with the project's requirement for innovation and expediency. The Golden Dome would have a multi-layered defense. It would intercept the missiles at multiple stages of flight,



At an estimated cost of close to \$1 trillion spread over 20 years, the project is a significant leap in US defense strategy. Led by General Guetlein, an accomplished Space Force veteran and holder of multiple distinguished awards, this key initiative will enhance national security and space defense capabilities.

starting from launch to terminal stage. Such layering has a greater chance of neutralizing threats before they touch US ground.

WHY THE GOLDEN DOME?

The geopolitical situation in the world is undergoing tremendous transformation. China and Russia have made tremendous strides in missile technology. They have hypersonic missiles and long-range ballistic missiles. To counter these, the US has to upgrade its defense systems. This is the challenge that Golden Dome seeks to address.

Today's missile threats are more sophisticated and quick. They need to be detected and intercepted faster. Space is also an im-

portant battlefield now. Satellites are essential for communication, navigation, and observation. Securing them is crucial to national security. The Golden Dome project is indicative of this new reality. It uses advanced technology and established defense mechanisms. It aims to establish a multi-layered missile shield. This is a land, air, and space shield.

FINANCIAL SCOPE AND INDUSTRIAL IMPACT

The Golden Dome project entails huge capital investment. Research and development alone could cost between \$25 billion and \$35 billion in the initial stages. In the course of 20 years, the entire budget can go as high as \$831 billion, with



estimates as high as \$1 trillion. This humongous project will increase the defense sector. It will generate contracts and employment for various industries. These include aerospace, satellite production, and missile making. Public-private partnerships will be crucial. In addition to SpaceX, the other defense contractors will be joining forces. This collaboration will expedite development and deployment.

CHALLENGES AND CRITICISM

The Golden Dome project is not without challenges. The cost estimate has raised eyebrows among lawmakers and experts. Some wonder if such extravagant expen-

diture can be sustained. There are also technological challenges. Interfacing different missile defense systems is complicated. Creating dependable space-based interception technology is an engineering challenge.

There are geopolitical risks too. A strong missile defense system has the potential to ignite an arms race. Enemies such as China and Russia would retaliate with newer weapons. Despite all this, Trump's government feels that the advantages outweigh the disadvantages. The Golden Dome is a vital pillar of American national security.

\$1 TRILLION BET ON SPACE AND GROUND DEFENSE

General Michael Guetlein's appointment is a new era for US missile defense. The Golden Dome project is a daring, ambitious initiative to protect America from emerging threats. Its multi-level solution brings together space and ground technologies for enhanced protection.

The estimated \$1 trillion price tag is also a guarantee of major industrial development. It underscores the growing prominence of space in contemporary defense. As the Golden Dome advances, the US seeks to keep its strategic advantage. Guetlein's vision and the initiative of the project might just shape the future of missile defense.

Zelenskyy's leadership: A model of moral courage in troubling times

TDG NETWORK
KYIV

In a world marked by conflict, disinformation, and political upheaval, courage is often described as a moral necessity. Yet, as Alexander Hurst argues in his recent column, while acts of bravery abound among ordinary citizens, political and institutional courage appears to be in short supply.

This discrepancy raises an uncomfortable question: Why do so few of our leaders—those with power, platforms, and influence—show real moral courage?

THE NATURE OF COURAGE

Jean Jaurès, the French philosopher and politician, famously described courage as “seeking the truth and speaking it.” It's a definition rooted in both action and principle: not simply resisting lies, but refusing to join in when the world demands conformity. Jaurès paid for his commitment with his life in 1914. Today, the stakes for speaking out remain high, but the consequences often involve reputational damage or political fallout, rather than assassination. Still, many leaders retreat. Examples of courage do exist. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has become a global symbol of resistance in the face of authoritarian aggression. Pope Francis has consistently challenged conservative elements of the Catholic Church to embrace inclusivity and compassion,



regardless of backlash. These are rare figures who seem guided more by conscience than calculation.

WHAT HAS CHANGED?

Hurst suggests that while ordinary people—doctors in war zones, students facing arrest, or citizens resisting repression—demonstrate courage regularly, public institutions often choose safety over principle. Universities, corporate boards, and even courts frequently cave to political or market pressure rather than defend justice or truth. Harvard University's recent decision to resist Trump-era demands was, as Hurst notes, a delayed but necessary step. It also raised deeper questions:

What kind of values have these institutions promoted? For decades, elite universities have channeled graduates into consulting firms and investment banks. According to Harvard's own student paper, far more incoming students prioritize financial success over developing a meaningful life philosophy. The results speak for themselves.

THE MEDIA'S ROLE

The media landscape has contributed to this problem. Modern political journalism often treats public issues as electoral chess moves rather than moral choices. Coverage of policies tends to focus on their political implications—“How will this play in the polls?”—rather

than whether those policies are just, compassionate, or ethical.

This framing not only distorts public debate but also lowers expectations. Voters and readers are conditioned to assess leaders by their popularity or strategic skill, not by their integrity. In this environment, even the most egregious actions—corruption, cruelty, negligence—become just another move in the game.

WHAT ARE THE CONSEQUENCES?

The consequences of this erosion in moral leadership are not abstract. As Hurst points out, the world's wealthiest man has overseen cuts to humanitarian aid that will lead to the deaths of thousands of children. Yet such acts are rarely framed as moral failures. Instead, they're discussed in terms of policy shifts or budget priorities. When moral language disappears from public discourse, so does accountability. We begin to accept hypocrisy, greed, and injustice as normal—inevitable features of political life rather than deviations from it.

CAN THIS BE REVERSED?

Courage, like fear, is contagious. If moral action is rewarded—socially, professionally, politically—it can spread. But rebuilding moral courage in leadership will require more than individual acts of bravery. It means rethinking the incentives we create, the values we teach, and the standards we uphold.

UK risks falling apart: Starmer can mend it but time is running out

TDG NETWORK
LONDON

The United Kingdom stands at a crossroads, facing growing divisions that threaten to unravel its unity. As economic and political fractures deepen, the UK risks becoming an unsustainably fragmented country. The pressing question is whether Keir Starmer, the leader of the Labour Party and potential future Prime Minister, can reverse these divisions before it is too late.

Abraham Lincoln's famous warning that “a house divided against itself cannot stand” may have originally referred to the United States, but it rings true for the UK today. For much of the post-war era, Britain has been able to weather internal tensions. However, these divisions are becoming increasingly pronounced, and there is growing concern that the UK may struggle to maintain its cohesiveness without significant intervention. Starmer faces the formidable challenge of addressing this fragmentation and rebuilding public trust in the political system.

RIISING DIVISIONS IN THE UK

The scale of Britain's internal divisions has become evident in recent years. A recent government U-turn on winter fuel payments, in response to widespread public dissatisfaction, highlights the government's struggle to solve the people's problems



effectively. Public confidence in the political system has reached an all-time low, and there is little indication that the current structure is capable of resolving the nation's challenges.

Starmer, as leader of the Labour Party, has inherited this fractured political landscape. He has attempted to address it, notably through his remarks about Britain being an “island of strangers” – a comment that alluded to the increasing division and disconnection in the UK. However, while immigration is certainly part of the issue, it is not the sole cause. The centrifugal forces pulling the UK apart have been at work for decades, with increasing economic, social, and political disparities. The result is a fractured country where many feel increasingly alienated from Westminster.

The May local elections served as a wake-up call, showing just how deep these divisions run and how quickly they could worsen. For Starmer, the task of healing these rifts is urgent – the UK risks slipping into a state of irreparable disintegration.

THE COUNCIL OF NATIONS AND REGIONS: A POTENTIAL SOLUTION?

One of Starmer's responses to this fragmentation is the creation of the Council of Nations and Regions, a body designed to foster collaboration between the UK government, devolved administrations, and local authorities. While some critics view the council as little more than a symbolic gesture, Starmer's approach could prove pivotal in the effort to heal the UK's fractured governance.

The council, first proposed by former Prime Minister Gordon Brown, aims to address the growing demands for devolution across the UK. Brown envisioned it as a way to replace the House of Lords with a more federated upper house, but Starmer has reframed it as a body for cooperation between Westminster and the devolved nations and regions. The first meeting in October signaled a potential turning point, showing that Starmer is not opposed to devolution and may offer a more collaborative approach than his predecessors, Boris

Johnson and Liz Truss, both of whom had a strong aversion to devolution.

However, the council's success is far from assured. The second meeting, scheduled for Friday, will be a crucial test. While Starmer has positioned himself as a leader more open to devolution than the Tories, the political landscape has changed since the council's first meeting. In Scotland, the SNP has regained confidence, positioning itself as a formidable rival to Labour. Meanwhile, in England, Reform UK has made inroads, capturing key mayoralities in places like Hull and East Yorkshire. These shifts complicate Starmer's efforts to foster political unity.

THE NEED FOR COLLABORATION

Despite these challenges, the case for greater collaboration remains undeniable. As Professor Michael Kenny from Cambridge University points out, the council needs to be more than just a forum for discussion—it must be a decision-making body capable of addressing the real issues facing the UK. Without genuine collaboration between the UK government, devolved administrations, and regional mayors, the country will struggle to tackle its most pressing issues. Professor Nicola McEwen of Glasgow University highlights a key issue: the unequal distribution of powers between the UK's devolved nations and England.

ALL-PARTY DELEGATION MEETS UAE LEADERSHIP, BRIEFS ON OPERATION SINDOOR

The delegation met Sheikh Nahyan Mabarak Al Nahyan, Minister of Tolerance and Co-Existence. Sheikh Nahyan Mabarak Al Nahyan conveyed his deep condolences for the Pahalgam terrorist attack victims.

AGENCIES
ABU DHABI

A high-level all-party delegation led by Shiv Sena MP Shrikant Eknath Shinde arrived in Abu Dhabi today and held meetings with UAE leadership on the significance of Operation Sindoor and re-affirmed India's firm stance against cross-border terrorism.

UAE is the first stop of the broader four-nation diplomatic outreach by the all-party delegation.

"The delegations held meetings with UAE leadership and media to brief on the significance of Operation Sindoor and reaffirm India's firm stance against cross-border terrorism," Embassy of India, Abu Dhabi, said in a press release.

The delegation met Sheikh Nahyan Mabarak Al Nahyan, Minister of Tolerance and Co-Existence. Sheikh Nahyan Mabarak Al Nahyan conveyed his deep condolences for the Pahalgam terrorist attacks.

The delegation highlighted the perpetration of cross-border terrorism and efforts to cause social disharmony in

THE MEET

- All-party Indian delegation visits UAE, first stop in 4-nation tour
- Met UAE Minister Sheikh Nahyan; he condemned Pahalgam terror attack
- Delegation briefed UAE on Operation Sindoor and cross-border terrorism
- UAE reaffirmed solidarity with India against terrorism
- Discussed misinformation, presented facts countering Pakistan



All-party delegation led by Shiv Sena MP Shrikant Shinde with Director General of National Media Office Jamal Mohammed Obaid Al Kaabi during a meeting for Operation Sindoor global outreach, in Abu Dhabi on Thursday. (ANI Photo)

propaganda

Engaged with Indian

diaspora, praised community resilience

India by Pakistan. "India and UAE will tackle terrorism together. The UAE will always stand by India," UAE Minister said

The UAE was among the first countries to issue a statement categorically condemning the Pahalgam terrorist attack. UAE leaders, President Sheikh Mohamed Bin Zayed Al Nahyan and Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Abdullah Bin Zayed Al Nahyan personally conveyed their condolences to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and External Affairs Minister S

Jaishankar over phone calls.

The delegation comprises MPs Bansuri Swaraj, ET Mohmd Basheer, Atul Garg, Sasmit Patra, Manan Kumar Mishra, BJP leader Surendrajeet Singh Ahluwalia, and former Ambassador Sujan Chino.

The delegation held substantive discussions with Dr. Ali Rashid Al Nuaimi, Chairman of the Defence, Interior & Foreign Affairs Committee of Federal National Council and other senior Emirati parliamentarians.

The delegation underscored the precise, measured,

and non-escalatory nature of Operation Sindoor against the barbaric terrorist attack on the tourists in Kashmir on April 22.

"India- UAE relationship is beyond trade and culture, and encompasses security and strategic issues. Terrorism is against the whole of humanity and international community must act now," Nuaimi stressed.

The delegation held discussions with Dr. Jamal Al Kaabi, Director General, National Media Office and addressed concerns over misinformation campaigns emanating

India, Japan strengthen anti-terror ties during Misri's Tokyo visit

AGENCIES
TOKYO

Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri met senior Japan officials on Thursday with the two sides reviewing the salient issues in the multi-dimensional bilateral ties including defence and security and economic cooperation.

Misri met his counterpart Vice Foreign Minister Takehiro Funakoshi and exchanged views on issues of topical importance.

"The two sides reviewed the salient issues in the multi-dimensional bilateral ties between India and Japan, including political relations, defence and security, economic cooperation and people to people exchanges," a Ministry of External Affairs release said.

Foreign Secretary also met National Security Advisor of Japan Masataka Okano, and Senior Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs Hiroyuki Namazu to discuss regional and international issues of mutual interest.

During the visit, the Foreign Secretary delivered the

spotlight address at the 2nd edition of the Raisina Tokyo Dialogue, organized by the Observer Research Foundation, ORF America, Japan Bank for International Cooperation and Keizai Doyukai (Japan Association of Corporate Executives).

The release said that For-

FIGHT AGAINST TERRORISM

Misri appreciated the support to and solidarity with India demonstrated by the government and the people of Japan following the terrorist attack in Pahalgam.

Foreign Secretary's visit

as well as the support infrastructure behind acts of terror, the release said.

Members of the All-Party Parliamentary Delegation from India, that is in Tokyo as part of India's global outreach against Pakistan sponsored terrorism, met Takashi Endo, Chairman

tanks in Tokyo and briefed them on India's zero tolerance to terrorism. Regional security challenges including state backed terrorism was discussed during the interactive session. Participants expressed strong support for India's fight against terrorism."



Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri meets Japan's Vice Foreign Minister Takehiro Funakoshi. Agency

ign Secretary's visit was in continuation of the regular high-level contacts between the two sides in effort to further deepen the India-Japan Special Strategic and Global Partnership.

and his meetings on Thursday provided yet another opportunity to reflect on and reaffirm the two countries' shared determination to fight terrorism in all forms and manifestations



All-Party Parliamentary Delegation led by Janata Dal (United) MP Sanjay Kumar Jha meets Japan Foreign Minister Takeshi Iwaya for Operation Sindoor global outreach, in Tokyo on Thursday. (ANI Photo)

of the House of Representatives Committee on National Security, in Japan.

As per India's Embassy in Tokyo, the participants supported India's fight against terrorism. In a post on X, India's embassy to Japan stated, "All-Party Parliamentary Delegation interacted with leading Japanese think

Janata Dal (United) MP Sanjay Kumar Jha described the Pahalgam incident as a nefarious attempt to disturb development and peace in Jammu and Kashmir. He said India responded through Operation Sindoor "in a precise, targeted, proportionate and non-escalatory manner."

Turkey must lift war threat to get access to EU defence funds: Greece

AGENCIES
ATHENS

Turkey must lift a 30-year old war threat against Greece if it wants Athens to consent to Ankara accessing European Union defence funds, Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis said on Thursday.

Greece and Turkey, NATO allies but historic foes, have been at odds for decades over a range of issues from airspace to the extent of their maritime boundaries and ethnically-split Cyprus.

In 1995, the Turkish parliament declared a "casus belli", or cause for war, if Greece unilaterally expanded its territorial waters beyond six nautical miles in the Aegean Sea.

"If Turkey wishes access into European defence financing tools, the le-



Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis and Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan meet on the sidelines of NATO Summit in Washington, US July 10, 2024. File Photo

gitimate concerns of both Greece and Cyprus should be taken into account," Mitsotakis said, referring to projects such as the EU's new flagship arms-buying fund, Security Action for Europe (SAFE).

"It has been 30 years since the Turkish National Assembly voted on the infamous casus belli. I think

that 30 years later, the time has come to directly ask our Turkish friends to take it off the table," he told Skai radio.

Mitsotakis said he would convey the message to Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan soon, citing improved bilateral ties.

The Turkish government was not immediately available for comment.

War situation between Pakistan and India could have taken a 'very dangerous turn': PM

AGENCIES
ISLAMABAD

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday termed the Pahalgam terror attack as "unfortunate" and said the war situation between Pakistan and India could have taken a "very dangerous turn".

India on May 7 destroyed nine terror infrastructures in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir under Operation Sindoor.

Following the Indian action, Pakistan attempted to attack Indian military bases on May 8, 9 and 10. The Indian forces launched a fierce counter-attack on several Pakistani military installations.

The two sides reached an understanding on cessation of hostilities on May 10 after four days of conflict.



Pakistan PM Shehbaz Sharif.

"The Pahalgam incident was unfortunate, but the war situation between the two countries could have taken a very dangerous turn at any moment," Shehbaz said at an event held in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir's Muzaffarabad where he distributed cheques of compensation to the heirs of civilians killed and injured during the conflict.

The Prime Minister said that Pakistan offered a neutral probe into the attack, but India refused the offer.

Two Israeli Embassy staff shot, killed in US

AGENCIES
WASHINGTON DC

Two Israeli Embassy staff members were shot and killed on Wednesday night outside the Capital Jewish Museum in Washington, DC, officials said, according to local media.

"Two Israeli Embassy staff were senselessly killed tonight near the Jewish Museum in Washington DC," US Secretary of Homeland Security Kristi Noem posted on X social media platform.

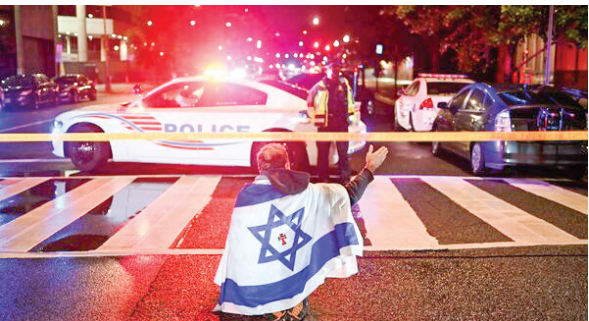
Law enforcement sources told CNN that two people were shot as they exited an event at the museum.

The shooting occurred at around 9:15 p.m. local time near an FBI office building on F Street, according to the news outlet.

The Israeli ambassador was not involved in the incident and was not at the location when the shooting happened, an embassy spokesperson told CNN.

US Attorney General Pam Bondi said in a post on social media that she and acting US Attorney for DC Jeanine Pirro have arrived at the scene of the shooting outside the Capital Jewish Museum.

According to CBS News, two people familiar with the investigation said a



A man draped in the Israeli flag, bearing a cross and the name 'Jesus' at its center, gestures as Police secures the area outside the Capital Jewish Museum where two people were killed in Washington, DC on Thursday. Agency

suspect believed to be the shooter is in custody. Two sources said the shooter yelled "free Palestine" prior to the shooting.

US ambassador to Israel Mike Huckabee took to X to post, "Horrific act of terror that the people of Israel are waking up to this morning. AG Pam Bondi called to let me know and was at the scene. 2 dead in shooting targeting Israeli embassy staffers outside Jewish Museum in Washington DC,"

Danny Danon, Israeli ambassador to the United Nations, also wrote in a social media post that the shooting occurred "outside the event that took place at the Jewish Museum."

Danon wrote that two other Israeli Embassy employees were wounded in the shooting, but that number has not been confirmed

by authorities.

"The fatal shooting that took place outside the event that took place at the Jewish Museum in Washington, D.C. is a depraved act of anti-Semitic terrorism. Harming the Jewish community is crossing a red line. We are confident that the US authorities will take strong action against those responsible for this criminal act. Israel will continue to act resolutely to protect its citizens and representatives everywhere in the world," Danon posted on X.

Ben Williamson, an FBI spokesperson, posted to X that FBI personnel were responding to assist the Metropolitan Police Department with the situation.

"There is no ongoing threat to public safety," the FBI Washington Field Office wrote on X.

Japanese expert lauds India's Operation Sindoor

AGENCIES
TOKYO

Prominent Japanese strategic expert Dr. Satoru Nagao has hailed India's Operation Sindoor as a "responsible and proper" response to cross-border terrorism, explicitly calling out Pakistan for its long-standing support to terrorist outfits. Dr. Nagao, a Fellow at the Hudson Institute and a key analyst of US-Japan-India security cooperation, emphasized that terrorism cannot be controlled and Pakistan's continued backing of terror groups is akin to "suicide."

Dr. Nagao termed the April 22 Pahalgam terror attack — which killed 26 people — as "terrible" and stressed that Japan must understand the broader implications of Pakistan-sponsored terrorism. "We were emotionally moved by the visuals, and it's vital for the Japanese public to understand the real face of terrorism India is fighting against," he said.

Nagao praised India for the precision of Operation Sindoor, which targeted nine terror sites across Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Jammu and Kashmir (PoJK) on May 7.

Nagao praised India for the precision of Operation Sindoor, which targeted nine terror sites across Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Jammu and Kashmir (PoJK) on May 7. The strikes reportedly neutralized over 100 terrorists linked to groups like Jaish-e-Mohammed, Lashkar-e-Taiba, and Hizbul Mujahideen. "It was a very careful, military operation targeting only terrorist facilities. This is a good example of measured punishment," he stated.

Highlighting Pakistan's historic complicity in terrorism, Nagao warned that the global community cannot treat such incidents as regional conflicts. "Sup-

porting terrorism is not just a regional problem; it is a global threat. The international community must act responsibly," he added. While acknowledging that awareness of Pakistan's role is growing globally, he noted that sustained efforts are needed to change perceptions and policies.

Nagao also commended India for sending an all-party parliamentary delegation to Japan. "It's a smart diplomatic move. Without such visits, Japanese media and experts seldom get access to India's perspective. Delegations help bridge that information gap," he said, calling India "strong and right" in its anti-terror efforts.

Malaysia's PM calls BRICS a 'cohesive force within the Global South'

AGENCIES
KUALA LUMPUR

Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim has described BRICS as a "new initiative that represents a cohesive force within the Global South," highlighting the group's potential to enhance cooperation among emerging economies in an interview with TV BRICS.

Anwar underlined Malaysia's commitment to strengthening ASEAN's regional and global engagement as the country prepares to assume the ASEAN Chairmanship in 2025.

He stressed the importance of revitalising key dialogue platforms such as ASEAN+3 and the East Asia Summit, calling them "neutral and constructive spaces" where major powers can engage in dialogue,



Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim

cooperation, and conflict resolution amid increasing geopolitical uncertainty.

"We must ensure inclusivity and sustainability in ASEAN's development so that no member nation is left behind," the Prime Minister said, highlighting Malaysia's focus on equitable growth and regional solidarity.

On environmental priorities, Anwar reiterated Malaysia's commitment

to championing the green agenda within ASEAN. "Addressing climate change and promoting sustainable development are critical priorities for us," he said.

The Prime Minister emphasised Malaysia's leadership role in accelerating cooperation on environmental issues across ASEAN member states, aiming to build a more resilient and sustainable region.

DHANUSH TO PLAY KALAM IN OM RAUT'S BIOPIC

AGENCIES
CANNES

Actor Dhanush is all set to portray the Missile Man of India and the 11th President, Dr APJ Abdul Kalam, in a biopic, announced at the Cannes Film Festival 2025. The biopic, which is officially in production, will be helmed by director Om Raut, who is known for "Tanhaji: The Unsung Warrior". The screenplay is penned by Saiwyn Quadras, whose writing credits include acclaimed biopics Neerja, Maidaan and Parmanu: The Story of Pokhran. The ace director talked about the biopic. "In an era starved of true statesmen, Kalam stood above



politics and pettiness. He was a man who was known for the power of education, excellence and indigenous innovation," he said in a statement. "To bring his story to the screen is an artistic challenge and a moral and cultural responsibility. It's a story that's inspirational for global youth and especially the youth of the Global South. It's the most important experience of my life. His life is a lesson that is bound to connect with people no matter who they are and where they come from," Raut added. The film, "staying true to the values of Dr Kalam, will explore the man behind the missile programs and the presidency, the poet, the teacher, the dreamer whose every word carried both science and spirituality in

equal measures. More than a political biography, the project is positioned as an insight into leadership and nation-building," as per the press release. Producer Abhishek Agarwal also expressed his excitement, saying, "We are excited to bring the epic life of Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam to the big screen. This is an emotional moment for us." "Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam's life is a story that continues to inspire millions across generations....This is more than just a film it's a tribute to a man who showed us how dreams, dedication, and humility can shape a nation's future," added Bhushan Kumar. However, not much details have been shared by the makers of the biopic.

Mani Ratnam talks about him being 'dream director'

TDG NETWORK
CHENNAI

Over the past 40 years, veteran filmmaker Mani Ratnam has not only woven cinematic spells with thought-provoking narratives in different languages but also shaped the careers of numerous actors. In fact, time and again, many artistes, especially newcomers, have expressed their wish to collaborate with him and learn the art of filmmaking. He is amongst the dream directors every actor in the Indian film industry desires to work with. During a recent inter-



view with ANI, Mani Ratnam got candid about being called a "dream director". "Some people would like the dream to remain a dream," he quipped. Explaining his collaborative process with the actors, Mani Ratnam

work with you." "I should have something to offer," he said. The 'Kannathil Muthamittal' director feels he should have something substantial to offer to actors when they collaborate with him. "I can't just take a film because they want to work with me. I should be able to give them something a little more or almost as good as what they've done before," he said. Mani Ratnam has worked with a gamut of actors including Rajinikanth, Kamal Haasan, Shah Rukh Khan, Aishwarya Rai Bachchan, and R Madhavan among others.

Satyajit Ray's 'Aranyer Din Ratri' gets standing ovation at Cannes

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

It was a moment of pride for Indian cinema as Satyajit Ray's 1970 classic Aranyer Din Ratri was given a standing ovation at the Cannes Film Festival 2025. Restored to its former glory, the film was screened under the Cannes Classics section to thunderous applause from an international crowd. Sharmila Tagore and Simi Garewal, the cast of the classic film, were present at the special screening with Shivendra Singh Dungarpur, the initiator of Film Heritage Foundation. Saba Ali Khan, Sharmila Tagore's daughter, was also there,



sharing close behind-the-scenes details of the tearful evening. "A little more moments. Standing ovation. A beautiful celebration of life. The team that made it all possible. Congratulations!" Saba posted the captions of videos and photos from the night. One clip showed the crowd rising in applause as Sharmila walked gracefully to the center of the screening stage, smiling elegantly. Another photo caught Sharmila and Simi commenting on the legacy of the film. A separate, touching image featured the pair alongside director Wes Anderson.

BRAIN PICKING



Being the youngest sibling, I've always been the most pampered child.

— SOHA ALI KHAN
(Indian Actress)

Actor Ke Huy Quan to voice a mysterious snake in 'Zootopia 2'

AGENCIES
WASHINGTON DC

The much-awaited teaser trailer of 'Zootopia 2' has introduced an additional member to its cast. 'Everything Everywhere All at Once' star Ke Huy Quan will be voicing a pit viper in the movie who is set to play a lead role in the sequel as per the teaser trailer of the movie. Actress Ginnifer Goodwin and actor Jason Bateman reprised their animated roles as Judy Hopps and Nick Wilde, respectively, alongside a cast of new animal characters. In the sequel, Judy and Nick put their detective skills to use as they tackle another case. They are joined by a blue pit



viper played by actor Ke Huy Quan. As per Variety, he joins the cast as the snake Gary, as the 'Zootopia' world expands to include reptiles and other semi-aquatic creatures.

Cannes: Culture Takes Stage



ADITI RAO HYDARI
Dressed in a striking red saree, she posed against the picturesque backdrop of the Mediterranean

AISHWARYA RAI BACHCHAN
Dressed in a stunning custom-made Manish Malhotra-designed Banarasi white saree.



ISHAAN KHATTER
Dressed in a cool brown waistcoat, matching trousers and white shirt.

JANHVI KAPOOR
Draped in a delicate white chiffon saree by London-based label DI PETS, Janhvi paid a quiet, powerful tribute to her late mother, Sridevi



Iconic Bollywood bikini moments to inspire your summer wardrobe



TDG NETWORK

Bollywood has never shied away from making bold fashion statements, and over the years, some unforgettable bikini looks

of the most iconic Bollywood bikini moments to channel this summer.

Sharmila Tagore in *An Evening in Paris* (1967)

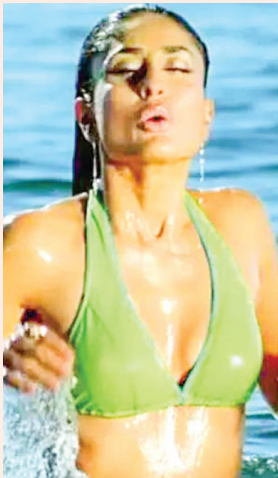
One of the earliest and boldest bikini appearances in Bollywood, Sharmila



have set the screens—and beaches—on fire. These iconic moments have not only redefined glamour in Indian cinema but also inspired countless summer wardrobes. Whether it's for a pool party, tropical getaway, or beachside relaxation, here are some

Tagore's blue two-piece swimsuit made headlines and set a benchmark for onscreen sensuality. Elegant and ahead of her time, her look still remains a classic for retro-inspired beach fashion.

Zeenat Aman in *Heera Panna* (1973)



*Kareena's lime-green bikini in *Tashan* became an instant sensation. Her size-zero transformation and toned beach-body aesthetic made this look one of the most talked-about bikini moments in Bollywood history.*

Zeena Aman carried off bikinis with effortless confidence. Her orange swimsuit in *Heera Panna* remains iconic, highlighting her free-spirited style. Add bold sunglasses and

a carefree attitude, and you have the ultimate vintage summer vibe.

Dimple Kapadia in *Bobby* (1973)

The teenage debutante made a splash in a red

polka-dotted bikini top paired with a sarong. Cute yet bold, this look set trends for playful beach fashion and still inspires cover-up and bikini pairings.

Kareena Kapoor in *Tashan* (2008)

Kareena's lime-green bikini in *Tashan* became an instant sensation. Her size-zero transformation and toned beach-body aesthetic made this look one of the most talked-about bikini moments in Bollywood history.

Priyanka Chopra in *Dostana* (2008)

Strutting down the Miami beach in a golden monokini, Priyanka Chopra



redefined modern Indian beachwear. Her glamorous yet sporty look is perfect inspiration for chic, metallic beach styles.

Deepika Padukone in *Cocktail* (2012)

In *Cocktail*, Deepika

rocked multiple beach-ready outfits, but her floral bikini and breezy cover-ups were pure summer goals. Think boho-chic meets seaside glam.

Katrina Kaif in *Baar Baar Dekho* (2016)

Katrina's pink and coral beachwear looks were vibrant, youthful, and effortlessly stylish. Her pastel swimwear choices are perfect for a soft, romantic beach look.

Body Aesthetics: An Evolving Segment in India's Aesthetic Landscape

TDG NETWORK

Body aesthetics is fast becoming a popular part of India's wellness and beauty scene. More and more people are looking for ways to shape and contour their bodies without surgery. Thanks to new technologies and growing awareness, treatments that once seemed out of reach are now accessible to many. This shift reflects a larger trend—people want effective, safe, and non-invasive options that don't take too much time to recover from. Whether it's to feel more confident, enhance a certain body area, or simply feel good, body aesthetics is helping people look and feel better in a healthy, balanced way. However, beyond just technology, the real transformation lies in how these treatments are changing the way people feel—inside and out.

Non-Invasive Treatments Are Changing the Game

For a long time, body shaping meant undergoing surgery, which often involved

pain, downtime, and risks. Today, non-invasive treatments are making things easier. These methods help reduce fat, tighten skin, and improve body contours, without cuts or stitches.

A well-known example is Coolsculpting, which uses controlled cooling to freeze and remove stubborn fat cells. This technique works best on areas like the belly, arms, thighs, and double chin, places where fat tends to stick around despite diet or exercise. The body then naturally clears out the frozen fat cells over time, showing visible results.

There are other options too that use heat or sound waves to target fat and tighten skin. For instance, laser and radiofrequency treatments help improve skin tone and reduce cellulite by boosting collagen. These solutions are safe, effective, and suitable for different body types.

A Boost in Confidence and Everyday Wellness

The impact of body aesthet-

ics goes beyond physical appearance. For many, it's about feeling confident and comfortable in their skin. A small change in how one looks can often lead to a big change in how one feels. This emotional boost is one of the key reasons why more people are exploring these treatments. In India, where beauty and self-care are deeply valued, body aesthetics is offering a new way for individuals to take control of their appearance, and with rising income levels and better access to wellness services, these treatments are no longer limited to celebrities or the wealthy; they are reaching people across cities and age groups.

More clinics are also offering a full range of services, from fat reduction to skin tightening, under one roof. Their approach is simple: provide safe, effective treatments, fitting into busy lives. Whether it's someone preparing for a big event or just wanting to look and feel better, body contouring options

are becoming a regular part of self-care routines.

Looking Ahead

As the demand for body aesthetics grows, individuals need to understand what each treatment can and cannot do. These procedures are most effective when done by trained professionals using certified equipment, and while results can be impressive, they work best when combined with a healthy lifestyle like regular exercise and good nutrition. Body aesthetics is not about changing who you are. It's about enhancing what's already there, safely and thoughtfully. With better awareness, new technologies, and a focus on overall well-being, India's body aesthetics segment is only going to grow stronger. As the country's wellness journey evolves, body aesthetics is not just a trend—it's becoming an empowering tool for people to feel their best, on their own terms.

By Ram, Founder & Managing Director of Spectra Medicals

NEW LAUNCH ALERT: 6 EVERYDAY NUDES FOR THE PERFECT POUT

Meet your new go-to for effortless elegance – the Everyday Nudes Lip Liner Pack from Love Earth.

This stunning set features 6 ultra-flattering matte liners in a universally curated nude palette – designed to complement every skin tone, mood, and moment. Whether you're heading to work, brunching with the

girls, or slipping into something glamorous for the evening, these liners have got your pout covered.

- Rich Matte Finish

- Highly Pigmented, Smooth Gliding Formula

- Waterproof & Long-Lasting; Stays put from AM

to PM

- Inspired by Iconic International Hues

Crafted for precision and ease, these liners offer seamless definition with every stroke – no tugging, no fading, just flawless lips all day long.

And the best part? This set

of 6 is yours for just 499 (that's a fabulous 60% off) as part of the exclusive launch offer!

Please note: Available as a set only. Individual shades not sold separately.

From everyday glam to last-minute touch-ups – these liners are about to become your beauty bag essential.



Tailored skincare with Ayurveda: A guide to different skin types

SHAHNAZ HUSAIN

As a pioneer in herbal beauty care and Ayurveda, I have always believed that true skincare begins with understanding your unique skin type. Each skin type has its own set of needs and challenges, and the key to radiant, healthy skin lies in a customised regimen—rooted in nature and backed by time-tested Ayurvedic wisdom.

Know Your Skin Type Before You Care for It

Nature has gifted us with different skin types, and recognising yours is the first step toward creating a regimen that brings out your natural beauty. Broadly, skin types fall into three categories: dry, oily, and combination.

Dry Skin

Dry skin often feels stretched, looks dull, and may show fine lines prematurely, especially around the eyes and mouth. This skin type is particularly sensitive to weather changes and needs constant hydration.

My Ayurvedic Recommendation:

Choose a gentle, hydrating face wash. Exfoliate once a week with a fine-grain scrub like Shasrub, formulated with herbal extracts that gently buff away dead cells. Use a rich



moisturiser and night serum with herbal actives to lock in moisture. Stick to chemical-free formulations, as dry skin reacts adversely to synthetic ingredients.

Oily Skin

Characterised by shine, enlarged pores, and a tendency for breakouts, oily skin attracts grime and pollutants, making it prone to blackheads and acne.

My Ayurvedic Recommendation:

Use oil-free products, particularly Shasilk Plus – Matte Moisturiser, to balance sebum production without clogging pores. Cleanse with a gentle herbal face wash enriched with neem and tulsi, nature's purifiers. Follow with a rose-based toner or face mist to soothe and tighten pores. Consistent cleansing and toning are essential to manage oily skin effectively.

Combination Skin

If your T-zone (forehead, nose, and chin) is oily, but your cheeks are dry or nor-

mal, you have combination skin—the most common yet complex type to manage.

My Ayurvedic Recommendation:

Choose a soap-free cleanser that maintains balance. Use a mild exfoliant twice a week and apply Shaglow Premium Moisturiser, which hydrates without making the skin greasy. Toners are essential—especially rose or cucumber-based ones—to refresh and balance your skin.

For Sensitive Skin

I have often seen individuals suffer from redness, irritation, or allergic reactions, which are signs of sensitive skin. These issues may stem from incompatible products, diet, or even weather changes.

My Ayurvedic Recommendation:

Stick to herbal, chemical-free skincare. Avoid harsh scrubs and opt for gentle exfoliation once a week. Use cooling ingredients like aloe vera, cucumber,

and mint to calm inflammation. Always patch-test a new product before use.

Universal Tips for Glowing Skin

Regardless of your skin type, there are golden rules you must never ignore:

- Never skip sunscreen. Sun protection is your first defence against ageing and pigmentation.
- Remove all makeup before bed. Your skin needs to breathe and renew at night.
- Use a night serum. It hydrates and revitalises the skin during its repair phase.
- Stay hydrated. Drink plenty of water, especially in hot weather, to maintain skin elasticity and glow.
- Avoid synthetic products. Trust the healing power of herbs and Ayurveda.

For over five decades, I have worked to bring the legacy of Ayurveda to modern beauty, believing that nature has the answer to every skin concern. By aligning your skincare routine with your skin type and using time-tested herbal remedies, you can achieve flawless, glowing skin—the Ayurvedic way.

Shahnaz Husain is a globally renowned pioneer of Ayurveda-based beauty and founder of The Shahnaz Husain Group.

ASHWIN SANGHI'S HISTORICAL THRILLER CAPTURES IMAGINATION



PROF. SHIV SETHI

In his famous work “The Monk Who Sold His Ferrari”, while dwelling on the definition of a book Robin Sharma pertinently remarks that some books are meant to be tasted, some books are meant to be chewed and, finally, some books are meant to be swallowed whole. Explaining it further if you really intend to get the greatest joy out of any literary work, you must not only stay on the surface rather dive deeper into its profundity to experience its true essence and derive the real pleasure.

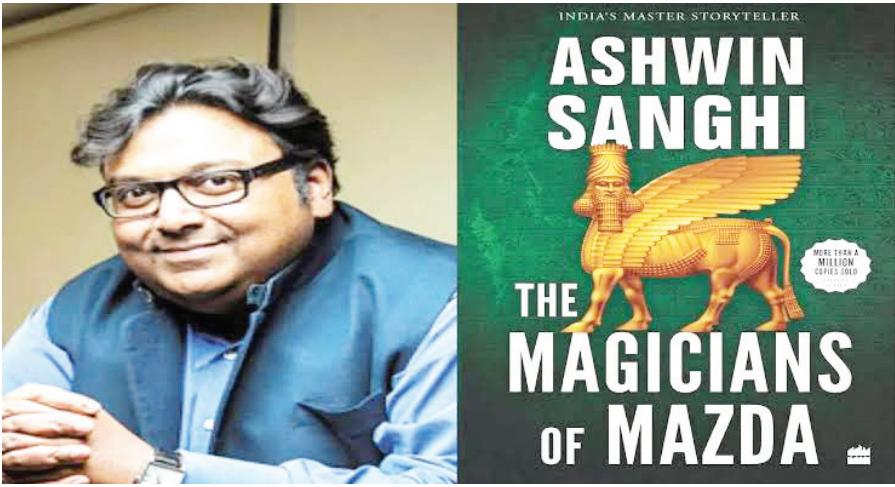
Here, Ashwin Sanghi’s new outpouring “The Magicians of Mazda” belongs to the class of books which is really meant to be read between the lines and relished with a voracious reader’s appetite. Undeniably, the author is endowed with an extraordinary knack and fantastic flair for infusing a new life to the ancient wisdom with his exhaustive research. Taking recourse to his fecund imagination and great ability to spin the yarn, he successfully weaves a fast-paced thriller in which facts have been so smoothly and subtlety blended with fiction. Therefore, the eminent author merits a plethora of admiration for such a deft blending.

What delightfully as-

ounds the readers is his selection of the central them of Zoroastrian faith and its devotees around which the major part of this thriller revolves. Only a few of the mortals among us are aware of the fact that Zoroastrianism is one of the world’s oldest monotheistic religions, the exponents of which have been brutally and barbarically persecuted by the dogmatic and savage followers of Islam. Brimming with utmost poignancy and pathos, the book chronicles the blood curdling and gruesome genocides of the devotees of this oldest religion. Their temples are razed to rubbles, the new mosques are built, forced conversions are done with the consequent painful downfall of Zoroastrianism and the ugly process of Islamization of the world picks up momentum. Had the book been created by a Parsi, it would have been a less arduous task. But Here the author hails from a Hindu community which reveals the fact how sensitive and secular India as a nation is!

The people of Parsi community have been living in india since time immemorial and rendering their unstinting services to elevate our nation in all of its spheres.

Undoubtedly, we profusely adulate them for their enormous contributions but we are fully oblivious of their rich cultural heritage and religious beliefs. Irrefutably, the author of this epical work plays a pivotal role and acquaints us with their rich legacy. Therefore, it would not be erroneous to state that this magnum opus is a befitting tribute



of a non- Parsi Indian to his Parsi comrades who had to flee their own home and hearth to ward off the ghastly atrocities.

Abiding by the norms it will not be an appreciable move to unfold the whole storyline of a thriller. However for its better understanding, a glimpse of it needs to offered to the prospective readers. Flipping the pages of the book we come across its chief protagonist Jim Dastoor who has an old relic of Zoroastrian community in his possession. Unaware of its importance, he keeps on leading a mundane life with his wife till the shrewd intelligence agencies from different nations begin to hound him with enormous ferocity. The man becomes all the more sought after as he is also a famous scientist by profession who has invented a miraculous drug. Therefore, he comes under the radar of a pharmaceutical company which prowls after him to extract the secret formula of that wonder drug. Soon a hot chase is initiated to ensnare him in the trap. Caught up in this

Book Name: The Magicians of Mazda
Author: Ashwin Sanghi
Publisher: HarperCollins
Pages: 468/
Price: 450/

traumatic state of affairs, his only prop is his loyal non-Parsi intellectual wife, a research scholar of history. But as we move ahead, we find that umpteen people are fervently aspiring to get hold of that relic which they believe retains certain magical properties called the Atharvan Star. What makes us chortle here is the rib-tickling fact that most of these aspirants have no real idea about the miraculous relic but their dogged pursuit to possess the piece is still quite ardently on. Hence we witness a thrilling game of run and seek which transports the readers in the territories of the counties of Iran, Afghanistan, America, Israel and India.

What finally lies in store for our chief protagonist should be left to readers to explore. The plot is in fact resplendent with parallel narratives in which one

is purely conversational whereas the other is loaded with hair-raising action.

A major chunk of the book indubitably contains an enormous amount of historical details which teach us several lessons and we begin to give credence to the fact that countries which have ignored their history often get wrapped in the shroud of mystery. While dwelling on the the historical sagas of the yore, the novel exquisitely depicts the similarities between Zoroastrian faith and Vedic religion, between Sanskrit and Avestan, the Vedas and Avesta. We really marvel at these absolute similarities which the scripture of various religions share and how they have an essentially common message of peace and harmony for the masses hailing from varied creeds.

The concluding segment of the book is also loaded with a host of astonishing revelations which enhance and intensify the suspense quotient lending a shape of a perfect thriller to this nail-biting narrative.

Fate, family, and the power of names collide in Anagram Destiny

A soul-stirring love story



GRISHMA SHAH

When culture, fate, and the ties that bind collide, can two hearts rewrite destiny? On April 30, 2025, Anagram Destiny, a luminous novel by Grishma Shah, was released in India by Simon & Schuster India in collaboration with The Sunflower Seeds, a literary consulting company dedicated to championing global voices and compelling narratives. Set between a roadside motel in Georgia and the majestic Taj Palace Hotel in Mumbai, this soul-warming love story explores identity, belonging, and resilience through the lens of two historic tragedies.

AT THE CROSSROADS OF CULTURE AND CONNECTION

In Anagram Destiny, Shah—an Indian immigrant and a global scholar—unspools a story of Aanya, an Indian-American expat in Mumbai seeking to outrun memories of her upbringing, in which her Indian-immigrant parents and their best friends

manifest the American dream by turning over a thirty-four-room motel as their children, Aanya and Ayaan, develop a bond and fate as entwined as their anagrammed names. Now, struck by Mumbai’s dazzling hospitality scene and its charismatic Taj Palace event director, Abhimanyu, Aanya is coerced to confront the past and decide whether history will repeat itself or finally surrender to fate’s design.

“Born in Vadodara, India and raised in America, I have always carried an unwavering love for my roots. This love has defined both my life and my work.

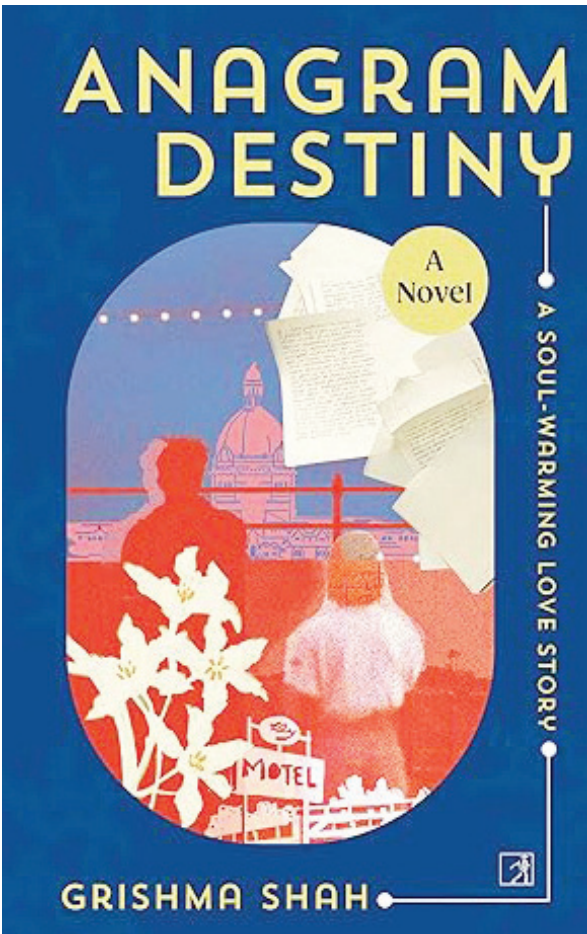
As a professor of global business and development, I have spent years studying India’s rise in a changing world. Through Anagram

Destiny, I extend that journey beyond data—into the timeless power of story. Anagram Destiny is a love letter to an ever-inspiring India, the America that shaped me, and the dreams that bridge the two.

At its heart, it is a tale of first love, human kindness, grief and the indomitable spirit that binds us across oceans and generations” says Grishma Shah. “In many ways, this book aims to humanize and simplify the growing complexity in our world.”

SYNOPSIS & THEMES

Shah’s richly drawn narrative bridges continents and cultures. Readers will dis-



Book name: Anagram Destiny
Author: Grishma Shah
Publisher: Simon & Schuster
Page: 320

cover:

- A dual setting that contrasts the glittering expanse of Mumbai’s luxury hotels with the humble warmth of an immigrant-family motel in Georgia.

- An exploration of the aspirational and embryonic Indian Dream at the turn of the millennium, juxtaposed

against the evolving narrative of the Indian-American Dream.”

- Interwoven destinies, symbolized by Aanya and Ayaan’s entwined names—an anagrammatic bond that neither time nor distance can fully erase.

- Resonant themes of identity, legacy, and the immigrant experience, as Aanya confronts the emotional architecture of home and belonging.

ADVANCE PRAISE

“Grishma Shah writes an achingly beautiful story of

lost love... While Anagram Destiny takes us on a journey through loss and grief, it is ultimately a compelling story of hope and of second chances

— Joani E Iliott, author of The Audacity of Sara Grayson

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Grishma Shah is Professor and Director of International Initiatives at Manhattan College, New York, where she explores culture, globalization, and narrative.

The daughter of Indian immigrants, Shah draws on her family’s motel-roots in Georgia to illuminate stories of diaspora, destiny, and human connection. Her insights into cross-cultural life infuse Anagram Destiny with authenticity and heart.

ABOUT SIMON & SCHUSTER INDIA

Simon & Schuster India, founded in 2011 and headquartered in Noida, is one of the region’s top five international trade publishers as part of publisher Simon & Schuster, LLC.

The imprint focuses on sales, marketing, and publicity, distributing a diverse catalog spanning fiction, non-fiction, and children’s literature under both local and global imprints such as Atria, Fireside, and Touchstone.

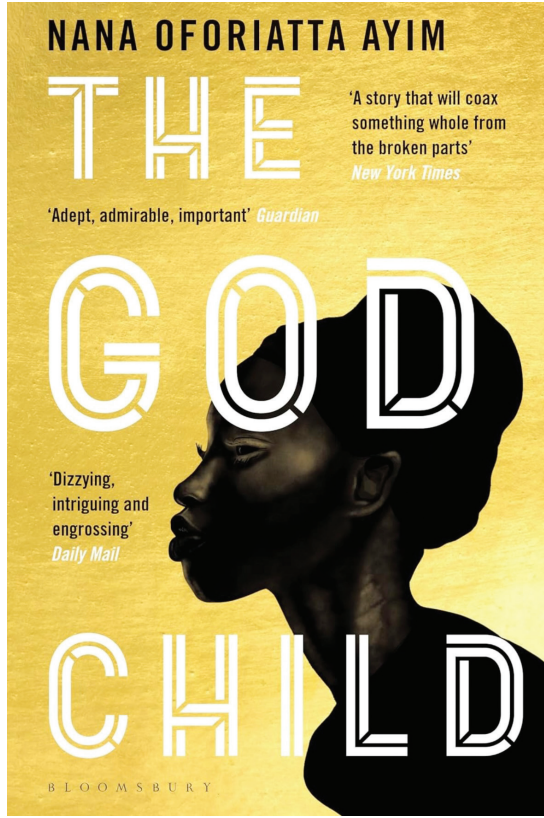
It also serves as the Indian sales and distribution partner for Inner Traditions, Andrews McMeel, and VIZ Media.

Tale of diverse cultural experiences

DR. NAVNEET KAUR

‘My mother was my first country, the first place I ever lived’. The author Nana Oforiatta Ayim opens the book The God Child with this catchy quote by Nayyirah Waheed. As one progresses through the book one realizes the profundity of this quote in terms of its relatability with the experiences of the chief protagonist Maya. Reading about Maya’s childhood in Germany and England and young womanhood in Ghana, this captivating novel expeditiously brings forth the psychological and emotional experiences of a young Ghanaian girl trying to construct her own identity. A lot has been written on the themes of colonialism, white supremacy and lingering effects of racism on society but still, this book successfully touches upon the nerve of these sensitive issues in such a way that keeps the reader hooked. The defalcation of the African art and the artifacts and the attempts of the key characters to restore their country’s lost history and culture is presented as one of the central themes in the work. From gender politics to living as a young black immigrant in Europe, the book is invigorated with rich characterization and brightly detailed scenes.

Maya, whose childhood and growing up years are torn between Germany, England and Ghana is perceived as a foreigner in her home country and outside too. She stands out in the former because of her mannerisms and in the latter because of her external attributes. She longs to be invisible at times but is too conspicuous not to stand out, sometimes by curiosity or by ridicule or regard. Maya’s parents are quite different from each other and also from the world where she is growing up. Her father is a reserved and educated man while her mother is a gregarious woman with a penchant for dressing up and lavish shopping. She loves spinning stories of the family’s former glorious past leaving the young Maya with more questions in her mind. As Maya seeks to find answers to her question from her learned father, his answers often leave her more puzzled. In one of the conversations with her father she asks him, ‘why does Mowgli have to leave his home, friends and family?’ The father



Book name: The God Child
Author: Nana Oforiatta Ayim
Publisher: Bloomsbury Circus
Pages- 256

replies, ‘because, he has to learn from the humans. Just like you have to learn from these people here’. It’s not very late when she realizes the fact that her father was like an unknown in an unknown land, that he was lost and that she was lost with him too.

Our roots and ancestral history affect us in subtle yet profound ways intensifying the quest in us to decipher our identity, our purpose and probable future. Listening to her mother’s stories, an intrigued Maya is desperately keen to quench her enquiries for which she turns to Kojo. Kojo her cousin and her mother’s god child arrives in the family one Christmas and both the children develop a strong sibling bonding marked by mutual love, disagreements yet superseded by strong concern and care for each other.

The arrival of Kojo changes everything. Kojo’s passionate talks about Ghana, its empire, plundering the country’s treasures by colonialists provides Maya with a sense of understanding of her identity. She observes that Kojo’s knowledge gave him the power to upset the order of things. She is left wondering if she could learn those secrets and codes even though she did not grow up in her home country. However, Maya and Kojo are separated and sent off to schools in England. Maya experiences the racism of peers in her regular interactions. In a day

outing with her friend Christine when Maya shares that her mother lived in a palace because her grandfather was a king, it makes Christine angry and upset and she calls Maya a liar. Kojo also gets bullied in school and the children are not left unaffected by the cultural imperialism in school as they struggle to fit in what Kojo describes as cold, wet Third World Country. While Maya is compliant and conformable and tries to ignore her peers’ racist remarks, Kojo’s continues to land in troublesome situations because of his impulsiveness.

The story moves between Germany and England, and Ayim paints each landscape perfectly.

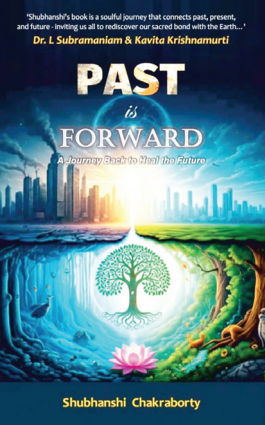
The way Ayim expresses the discriminatory aspects through the experiences of young Maya and Kojo evoking the emotional side of the reader is remarkable. The narrative culminates in an adult Maya’s visit to Ghana, where she reunites with her troubled and now powerful cousin Kojo. She witnesses Kojo’s despairing struggle to establish a museum in Accra that he hopes will restore the family’s dynastic cultural lineage and country’s heritage. Navigating through personal misfortunes, loss in family, cultural complexities, attempts to set up a museum, the chief protagonist Maya finds her purpose and voice.

Past is Forward

SHUBHANSHI CHAKRABORTY

In Past is Forward, 17-year-old Shubhanshi Chakraborty offers a powerful, poetic meditation on sustainability, identity, and India’s cultural soul. Rooted in the Sri Isopanishad’s call to live with restraint and reverence, this debut work is both an act of remembrance and rebellion. Drawing from mythology, tribal wisdom, and environmental science, Shubhanshi challenges the modern tendency to dismiss India’s ancient knowledge systems as outdated.

What makes this book resonate is its emotional



authenticity. Sparked by a classroom moment where a professor dismissed the concept of Swadesh, the author finds purpose in standing up for a heritage increasingly viewed with

either blind reverence or complete apathy. Through the frameworks of Dharma, Karma, and Ahimsa, Past is Forward urges Gen Z to view sustainability not as a trend, but as a tradition.

With lyrical prose and a quietly assertive voice, Shubhanshi reminds us that in a world chasing novelty, there is courage in looking back. Her work is a timely reminder that remembering is resistance—and that the future, if it is to be meaningful, must honor the wisdom of the past.

Past is Forward is not just a book—it’s a manifesto for mindful living in modern India.

MARSH’S TON PROPELS LSG TO 235 AGAINST GT

AGENCIES
LUCKNOW

Mitchell Marsh’s maiden IPL century came a trifle late but became the cornerstone of Lucknow Super Giants’s imposing score of 235 for 2 against league toppers Gujarat Titans in an Indian Premier League match here on Thursday. Marsh, who has already scored five half centuries this season, was slow off the blocks but then muscled the Titans bowlers with great gusto as he hit 10 fours and as many as eight maximums in his 64-ball-117.

As it has been a familiar story this season, LSG looked a different batting unit with their top three batters in Marsh, Aiden Markram (36 off 24 balls) and the mercurial Nicholas Pooran (56 not out off 27 balls) belting the Titans bowling unit clad in lavender jerseys.

Pooran’s fifth half century of the season came in just 23 balls.

Marsh and Markram added



Lucknow Super Giants’ Mitchell Marsh plays a shot during the match against Gujarat Titans in the IPL 2025, at Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad. ANI

ed 91 for the opening stand in the front 10 and with Pooran, the ‘Bison’ added another 121 runs for the second wicket in just 8.3 overs to beef up their team total. In all LSG batters hit 17

sixes, which is their highest in an IPL match.

The best part about Marsh’s hits was using his long levers to hit both straight and square off the wicket. After completing

his hundred, the disdain with which he dispatched a hard length delivery from Purple Cap holder Prasidh Krishna into the deep mid-wicket stands was an absolute treat.

If that was not enough, Marsh’s eighth six came off the very next delivery as he made room shuffling slightly towards leg-stump and lofted Prasidh down the ground.

Marsh’s century came off 56 balls and he was exceptionally severe on left-arm spinner R Sai Kishore, who has otherwise, been parsimonious in this tournament. He was put into the stands effortlessly with equal proportion of timing and muscle.

Finally, it was left-arm medium pacer Arshad Khan, who removed Marsh, who mistimed a delivery that was judged well by Sherfane Rutherford at deep backward point.

Rishabh Pant (16 not out off 6 balls), who has had a torrid season till date in his brief stay, hit a straight six off Kagiso Rabada in what seemed to be his most comfortable innings. It also had a signature “no look” six behind the square off the penultimate delivery of the innings.

Strong RCB in the playoff race, while Hyderabad fights for honour

SUNIL YASH KALRA
LUCKNOW

The league stage of IPL 2025 is now at the final stretch, and today at the Bharat Ratna Atal Bihari Vajpayee International Ekana Cricket Stadium in Lucknow, a very interesting match is set to take place. Royal Challengers Bangalore (RCB), having already secured a playoff spot and aiming to finish in the top 2 to reach Qualifier-1, will face Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH), who are out of the playoff race but will enter the game to save pride and finish the season on a positive note.

RCB’s batting lineup has shown excellent balance this season. The team’s most reliable player, Virat Kohli, has once again proven his worth by scoring 505 runs in 11 innings. He has an av-

erage of 63.13 and a strike rate of 143.47, contributing consistently and at a fast pace. Kohli hasn’t just hit boundaries but also rotated the strike well, as evident from his low dot ball percentage of only 26.7%.

His partner, Phil Salt, has played explosively at the top order, scoring 239 runs at a strike rate of 168.31. He has a boundary percentage above 30%, although his dot ball percentage is a bit high at 42%. In limited opportunities, Jacob Bethell has also shown potential to be a big match-winner in the future, scoring with a strike rate of 171.79 and a boundary percentage of 30.77% in just 2 innings, catching everyone’s attention.

In the middle order, Devdutt Padikkal has scored 247 runs with a

strike rate above 150. Rajat Patidar and Liam Livingstone have struggled a bit, especially Livingstone, whose dot ball percentage is over 45%. But if anyone has excelled in the finishing role, it is Tim David. In just 8 innings, he has scored 186 runs at an incredible average of 93 and a strike rate of 193.75. His boundary percentage is 31.25% — meaning he hits a boundary every third ball!

On the Cricket Predicta show powered by IXBAT, former Indian player Noel David said: “SRH’s young combination has been quite dangerous this season. But RCB always shows a difference in big matches. The Ekana pitch writes a new story every time — and that’s what makes the IPL so exciting.”

Khelo India Beach Games 2025: Maha’s Diksha Yadav clinches double gold in Open Sea Swimming

AGENCIES
DIU (DAMAN AND DIU)

Maharashtra’s Diksha Yadav continued her exploits at the inaugural Khelo India Beach Games, sweeping both gold medals on offer in the Open Sea Swimming event.

The 19-year-old from Maharashtra, picked up the yellow metal in both 10km and the 5km events at the Ghoghla Beach, Diu on Thursday morning. In the men’s 5km open swim for men, Karnataka’s Drupad Ramakrishna won gold, according to the SAI Media Release.

Diksha, who has fallen in love with long-distance swimming, started playing when she was in class 10, training at the Balewadi Stadium in Pune. This is just her second year in open

water swimming, having been inspired by the accomplished American swimmer Katie Ledecky.

“The double gold at KIBG 2025 is an achievement for all the practice I have undergone before coming here,” said Diksha after her 5km victory on Thursday morning. She recorded a time of 1 hour, 10 minutes and 12 seconds en route to her gold, as quoted from the SAI Media Release.

This was also her first time challenging the Arabian Sea. “The water was calm, and there wasn’t much difficulty. This Khelo India platform will help a lot going forward. Now I am focusing on getting the international selection this year and winning a medal for India at the World Championship open swimming category,” Diksha Yadav added.

TOURNAMENT



Karen Khachanov of Russia returns a ball to Sebastian Ofner of Austria during their quarter-final match, at the ATP 250 Geneva Open tournament in Geneva, Switzerland. Agencies

Ayush Mhatre to lead India U19 squad for England tour; Suryavanshi among key players

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

BCCI’s Junior Cricket Selection Committee has announced the Indian U19 squad for their upcoming tour of England, which is scheduled to take place from June 24 to July 23, 2025. The month-long tour will include a 50-over warm-up match, a five-match Youth One-Day series, and two Multi-Day matches against England U19, according to a media advisory from BCCI.

Chennai Super Kings’ (CSK) opening batter Ayush Mhatre will lead the squad. Mhatre has impressed in the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2025, scoring 206 runs in six games at a remarkable strike rate of 187.27. He narrowly missed out on a well-deserved century, getting dismissed for 94 against Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB).

The 14-year-old Vaibhav Sooryavanshi is also in the squad. The youngster made headlines this season when he smashed a 38-ball 101 against Gujarat Titans (GT) for Rajasthan Royals (RR) in Jaipur, becoming the youngest ever centurion in men’s T20 cricket. His century, which came in just 35 balls,



is now the second-fastest in IPL history. He finished the season with 252 runs in seven matches, averaging 36.00 with a phenomenal strike rate of 206.56, including one century and a half-century.

Abhigyan Kundu, who will also serve as the wicket-keeper, has been named vice-captain of the side. Another wicketkeeping option in the squad is Harvansh Singh. The team also features other talented players such as Vihaan Malhotra, Maulayarajsinh Chavda, Rahul Kumar, RS Ambrish, Kanishk Chouhan, Khilan Patel, Henil Patel, Yudhajit Guha, Pranav Raghavendra, Mohammed Enaan, Aditya Rana, and Anmoljeet Singh.

The standby players for the

tour are Naman Pushpak, D Deepesh, Vedant Trivedi, Vikalp Tiwari, and Alankrith Rapole, who is a wicket-keeper.

India will begin their tour with a 50-over warm-up match on June 24 at Loughborough University. The first One-Day match will be held on June 27 at Hove, followed by the second and third matches on June 30 and July 2 at Northampton. The fourth and fifth One-Day matches are scheduled for July 5 and 7 in Worcester.

Following the white-ball series, the team will play two multi-day matches. The first will take place from July 12 to 15 in Beckenham, and the second will be held from July 20 to 23 in Chelmsford.

BFI names 19-boxer squad for Thailand Open

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

The Boxing Federation of India (BFI) has announced a 19-member squad for the 4th Thailand Open International Boxing Tournament 2025, scheduled in Bangkok from May 24 to June 1.

The squad, comprising 10 men and nine women, has been selected from the ongoing elite national camp at the Netaji Subhas National Institute of Sports, Patiala, which is underway as the season builds toward key tournaments.

The BFI followed its selection criterion, providing



opportunities to silver medalists from the 2025 Elite Men’s and Women’s National Championships. Held under the aegis of Asian Box-

ing, the Thailand Open will see top national teams from across the continent compete, including powerhouses like China, Kazakhstan, Uz-

bekistan, Japan, Korea, and host nation Thailand. India’s men’s squad features Naathoi Singh Kongkham (47-50kg), Pawan Bartwal (50-55kg), Nikhil (55-60kg), Amit Kumar (60-65kg), Hemant Yadav (65-70kg), Deepak (70-75kg), Dhruv Singh (75-80kg), Jugnoo (80-85kg), Naman Tanwar (85-90kg), and Anshul Gill (90kg-plus). The women’s team includes Yasika Rai (45-48kg), Tamanna (48-51kg), Abha Singh (51-54kg), Priya (54-57kg), Sanju (57-60kg), Sane (65-70kg), Anjali (70-75kg), Lalfakmawii Ralte (75-80kg), and Kiran (80kg+).

Harmanpreet to lead Indian men’s hockey team in European leg of FIH Pro League

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

Hockey India on Thursday announced the 24-member Indian Men’s Hockey Team for the European leg of FIH Hockey Pro League 2024-25 (Men), which is scheduled to take place in Amstelveen, the Netherlands and Antwerp, Belgium from June 7 to June 22, as per a release from Hockey India.

Experienced drag-flicker Harmanpreet Singh will continue to lead the side as Cap-



tain, with midfield maestro Hardik Singh joining him as Vice-Captain. India will begin their European leg with two matches each against the Netherlands on June 7th and 9th, followed by the double-

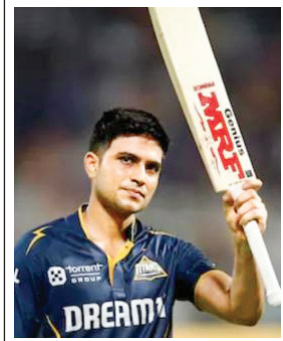
header against Argentina on June 11-12 at the Wagner Stadium in Amstelveen. The team will then travel to Antwerp to face Australia on June 14th and 15th before ending their campaign against hosts Bel-

gium on June 21st-22nd.

The squad includes Krishan Bahadur Pathak and Suraj Karkera as the goalkeepers. Sumit, Amit Rohidas, Jugraj Singh, Nilam Sanjeep Xess, Captain Harmanpreet Singh, Jarmanpreet Singh, Sanjay and Yashdeep Siwach will occupy the team’s defence.

In midfield, the team features Raj Kumar Pal, Nilakanta Sharma, Vice Captain Hardik Singh, young prodigy Rajinder Singh, Manpreet Singh, Vivek Sagar Prasad, and Shamsher Singh.

Playoff power rankings: Who’s the most balanced team in the race for IPL 2025 glory?



Gujarat Titans (GT)
Pros: Home advantage in remaining matches
Consistent opening pair (Gill & Sudharsan)
Prasidh Krishna in Purple Cap form
Cons: Weak middle order
Jos Buttler unavailable; Mendis still adapting



RCB
Pros: Kohli and Salt in top form
Tim David excelling as a finisher
Hazlewood available till final
Cons: Fragile middle order (Padikkal injured, Patidar out of form)
Siraj off-form with high economy



Punjab Kings (PBKS)
Pros: Strong, smart opening pair (Arya & Prabhsimran)
Middle-order rescue options (Shreyas, Nehal, Shashank)
Pace variety with Arshdeep & Jamieson
Cons: Unreliable middle under pressure
Spin options not as strong



Mumbai Indians (MI)
Pros: Best squad depth overall
Powerful middle order (Surya, Hardik, Tilak)
Strong pace and spin choices
Cons: Only one match left — less margin for error
 opener Ricketton’s availability uncertain

COMMENTARY BOX

MANOJ JOSHI

At present, the four teams that have reached the IPL playoffs — GT, RCB, PBKS, and MI — are all vying for a spot in the top two, as finishing in the top two provides a crucial advantage: even with one defeat, a team remains in contention for

the final. Among these teams, GT holds the most favourable position, as both of its remaining matches — against LSG and CSK — will be played at home.

RCB is set to face SRH and LSG in Lucknow, while Punjab Kings will play against DC and MI in Jaipur. Mumbai Indians, on the other hand, have just one match left — against

Punjab Kings, also in Jaipur. MI possess greater depth in both fast and spin bowling departments, and their batting line-up is notably strong. If opener Ricketton is unavailable, either Jonny Bairstow or Will Jacks can step in seamlessly. To counter left-handed batters like Priyansh Arya and Nehal Wadhwa, the Mumbai team may consider fielding

Charith Asalanka in place of Mitchell Santner. Asalanka offers better lower-order batting, though Santner’s bowling might be more effective against the other two teams.

Among the four teams, GT and Punjab have the edge when it comes to opening partnerships. Sai Sudharsan and Shubman Gill have been highly consistent, stitching

together seven 50-plus partnerships this season — making them the most effective opening pair. However, GT will miss number three batter Jos Buttler. Kusal Mendis is set to replace him, though he may need some time to adjust to the conditions.

On the other hand, Punjab’s opening duo of Priyansh Arya and Prabhsimran Singh has

also been impressive. Prabhsimran’s big innings against LSG, CSK, and KKR have raised expectations. He utilizes the gaps in the field with great precision. Notably, both openers seem to read the bowler’s grip at the moment of release — a sign that they have ample time to execute their shots.

GT’s biggest concern lies in the middle order. Batsmen like

Shahrukh Khan and Rahul Tewatia have had disappointing averages. RCB faces similar struggles. Rajat Patidar is out of form, and Devdutt Padikkal’s injury has been a major blow. Mayank Agarwal, who has replaced him, may serve as a steadying presence, but power-hitting cannot be expected from him. The team will heavily rely on Tim David

and Krunal Pandya to finish games.

Punjab, however, has a capable backup plan. Shreyas, Nehal, and Shashank Singh have all shown the ability to steady the innings when the top order fails. Mumbai, too, boasts a formidable middle order featuring Suryakumar Yadav, Hardik Pandya, Naman Dhir, and Tilak Varma.