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Taj Dal View, Srinagar



**NORWAY'S MARITIME** authority said on Thursday that Norwegian-flagged ships will not be permitted to enter the Strait of Hormuz until further notice.

**THE WAR** in West Asia is creating the biggest oil supply disruption in history, the International Energy Agency said on Thursday.

**THAILAND'S FOREIGN** ministry has demanded an apology from Iran over damage caused to a Thai vessel that was hit by a projectile in the Strait

**CITIBANK WILL** close most of its United Arab Emirates branches and financial centres until March 14 as a precaution amid war.

# As oil tankers burn, Iran says ships can pass Strait if they 'coordinate with us'

**More Iranian drones seen flying into Iraq, Kuwait and UAE**

**Reuters**  
Dubai, Hebron, March 12

MANY SHIPS can still pass through the Strait of Hormuz if they coordinate with the Iranian navy, Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmail Baghaei said in comments carried by *Mehr* news agency.

"After the current events, generally we cannot return to conditions before February 28 (start of current Iran war)...as we have understood how important the safety of the Strait of Hormuz is, and so did the others," the spokesperson added.

Oil prices rose about 8% on Thursday as Iran stepped up attacks on oil and transport facilities across West Asia, and the country's supreme leader said the closure of the vital Strait of Hormuz should continue. Brent futures were up 8% at \$99.38 at 1655 GMT, pulling back from a session high of \$101.59. US Energy Secretary Chris Wright told *CNBC* on Thursday that the US Navy could not escort ships through the Strait of Hormuz now but it was "quite likely" that could happen by the end of the month. Global oil prices are unlikely to hit \$200 a barrel, Wright said, even as Iran continues to strike merchant ships.

Two tankers were ablaze at an Iraqi port on Thursday after

a hit by suspected Iranian explosive-laden boats, a step up in attacks that have cut off oil from the Middle East and defied Donald Trump's claim to have won the war he launched two weeks ago.

Images verified by *Reuters* as having been filmed from the shore of the port of Basra showed ships engulfed in massive orange fireballs that lit up the night sky, after the attacks which Iraqi authorities blamed on Iranian boats. At least one crew member was killed.

Lebanon's Iran-backed militia Hezbollah fired its biggest volley of rockets into Israel of the war, prompting fresh Israeli strikes on Beirut.

**Trump says 'We Won'**

US President Donald Trump, whose Republican Party is trying to hold on to Congress in an election later this year, has repeatedly tried to calm energy markets this week by saying the surge in oil prices will be short-lived.

But he has not explained how the war will end, or presented a plan to reopen the blockaded strait. US and Israeli officials say the aim is to destroy Iran's missile and nuclear programmes, but Trump has also demanded Iran's "unconditional surrender" and the power to determine its leaders.

"You never like to say too early you won. We won," Trump told a campaign-style rally in Hebron, Kentucky, on Wednesday. "In the first hour it was over." The United States had "virtually destroyed Iran", he said. But he added: "We don't want to leave early, do we? We got to finish the job."



An oil tanker burns after being hit by an Iranian strike in the ship-to-ship transfer zone at Khor al-Zubair port near Basra, Iraq, late Wednesday. AP

## Israel strikes heart of Beirut as it widens evacuation warnings in southern Lebanon

**Reuters**  
Beirut, March 12

ISRAELI AIRSTRIKES hit a building in the heart of Beirut on Thursday and Israel ordered residents out of another swathe of southern Lebanon, intensifying its offensive against the Iran-backed Hezbollah group.

The airstrike at around 5:30 pm hit a building in the Bachoura neighbourhood, around 1 km from the Lebanese government's Grand Serail headquarters in downtown Beirut.

Before the strike, the Israeli military issued a warning tell-



Smoke rises after Israeli strikes on southern suburbs of Beirut, Lebanon, on Thursday. REUTERS

ing residents they were near a Hezbollah facility against which it intended to action.

Israel launched an air and

ground offensive last week against Hezbollah, which launched attacks at Israel on March 2 that it said aimed to avenge the killing of Iran's supreme leader at the start of the US-Israeli war on Iran.

Hezbollah has fired rockets and drones at Israel every day since, including its largest barrage late on Wednesday that triggered heavy Israeli strikes on Beirut's southern suburbs.

Israel has pounded Lebanon's south and east and the capital's southern suburbs, killing more than 600 people, according to Lebanese authorities.

It has also ordered mass evacuations in those same areas, pushing more than 800,000 people out of their homes.

Israeli Defence Minister Israel Katz said the military had been instructed to expand its operations in Lebanon. "We promised quiet and security to the communities of the north, and that is exactly what we will deliver," he said at a meeting with senior military officials.

Israel's military has warned residents of a large area of southern Lebanon to leave their homes, saying it would act "forcefully" against Hezbollah.

To avoid attacks, ships passing Strait of Hormuz pose as 'Chinese'

**Associated Press**  
Hong Kong, March 12

SOME COMMERCIAL ships near or in the Strait of Hormuz and Persian Gulf have declared themselves as China-linked since the Iran war began, marine traffic data show, as their operators apparently try to reduce risks of being targeted in attacks.

At least eight vessels or near the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman changed their declared destination signals to short messages such as "CHINA OWNER" or "CHINA OWNER & CREW," according to data on the ship tracking platform MarineTraffic analysed by *The Associated Press*.

"The main goal of vessels publicly identifying themselves as Chinese while transiting the Gulf or the Strait of Hormuz is primarily to reduce the risk of being attacked rather than to facilitate passage through the strait itself," said Ana Subasic, a trade risk analyst at data and analytics firm Kpler, which owns MarineTraffic.

Some of the vessels passed through the strait and headed for their destinations. Others were still in the area.

### SHIPWRECK: The Casualties So Far



A foreign tanker carrying Iraqi fuel oil damaged after catching fire near Basra on Thursday. REUTERS

**MARCH 1**

**MARSHALL ISLANDS** Flagged crude tanker *MKD VYOM* was hit by a projectile off the Omani coast

**GIBRALTAR** Flagged oil bunkering tanker *Hercules Star* was struck off the coast of Oman

**A PALAU** Flagged tanker was attacked in the Strait of Hormuz

**MARCH 2**

**US** Flagged products tanker *Stena Imperative* was struck by projectiles in the port of Bahrain

**MARCH 3**

**MARSHALL ISLANDS** crude oil tanker *Libra Trader* and Panama-flagged tanker *Gold Oak* sustained minor damage off the coast of UAE

**MARCH 4**

**MALTESE** Flagged container ship *Safeen Prestige* was damaged by a projectile as it sailed towards the top of the strait, north of Oman

**MARCH 5**

**CRUDE OIL** tanker *Sonangol Namibe* was hit by a blast while

anchored near Iraq port

**MARCH 6**

**A TUGBOAT** was hit by projectiles in the Strait of Hormuz, six nautical miles north of Oman

**MARCH 7**

**UNITED KINGDOM** Maritime Trade Operations reported a possible drone attack 10 nautical miles north of Saudi Arabia

**MARCH 11**

**THAILAND** Flagged bulk carrier *Mayuree Naree* was attacked by a projectile off the coast of Oman

**JAPAN** Flagged container ship *One Majesty* sustained minor damage after it was hit by a projectile northwest of UAE

**MARSHALL ISLANDS** Flagged bulk carrier *Star Gwyneth* was damaged after being hit by a projectile northwest of Dubai

**Marshall Islands** Flagged fuel tanker *Safesea Vishnu* and the Maltese-flagged *Zefyros* were attacked in the Gulf near Iraq

'Active shooting' at Temple Israel synagogue in Detroit, says FBI

**Reuters**  
Washington, March 12

THE MICHIGAN State Police reported an active shooting incident on Thursday at the Temple Israel Synagogue in West Bloomfield, Michigan, and law enforcement authorities rushed to the scene.

No official details were immediately available, but aerial news footage from over the synagogue showed plumes of smoke rising from the roof of the building, with police and fire department vehicles nearby.

Oakland County Sheriff Michael Bouchard said on *CNN*: "Nobody at the moment has been confirmed to be hurt except potentially the shooter."

FBI Director Kash Patel wrote on X: "FBI personnel are on the scene with partners in Michigan and responding to the apparent vehicle ramming and active shooter situation out of Temple Israel Synagogue in West Bloomfield Township, Michigan."

The Jewish Federation of Detroit posted a message on its Facebook page saying its affiliated agencies were "currently in precautionary lockdown" in response to the Temple Israel incident.

## Outdated intel likely behind deadly US strike on Iran school

**Associated Press**  
Washington, March 12

OUTDATED INTELLIGENCE likely led to the United States carrying out a deadly missile strike on an elementary school in Iran that killed over 165 people, many of them children, in the opening hours of the conflict, according to a US official and a second person briefed on findings of a preliminary US military investigation into the incident.

The bombing of the school and its casualties involving children has become a focal point of the war, and it ultimately confirmed to be at the hands of the US, would also stand among the highest civilian casualty events caused by the American military operations in the last two decades.

President Donald Trump initially blamed Iran for the attack, later said he wasn't certain who was to blame, and then said he would accept the results of the Pentagon's investigation.

The issue took on added urgency on Wednesday after the *New York Times* first reported that a preliminary investigation found that the US was re-

sponsible.

US Central Command relied on target coordinates for the strike using outdated data provided by the Defense Intelligence Agency, according to the person familiar with the preliminary finding.

The agency did not respond to a request for comment.

The preliminary finding prompted immediate calls for more information from the Pentagon. White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt said that "the investigation is still ongoing."

Both the US official and the person familiar with the matter spoke to *The Associated Press* on the condition of anonymity to discuss the sensitive matter.

Dozens of Democratic senators demanded answers from the Trump administration on Wednesday as a growing body of evidence suggested that the US was likely responsible for the strike.

The letter from more than 45 senators pressed Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth on whether the US was culpable for the strike and what previous analysis of the building had been done.

RENE REDZEPI HAS BEEN DOGGED FOR YEARS BY REPORTS OF MISTREATING HIS STAFF AT THE DANISH RESTAURANT OFFERING 'NEW NORDIC' CUISINE

## Celeb chef Redzepi leaves iconic Noma amid abuse charges

**James Brooks & Stefanie Dazio**  
Copenhagen, March 12

RENÉ REDZEPI, founder and celebrity chef at the iconic Danish restaurant Noma that won three Michelin stars and other international accolades for its innovative "New Nordic" cuisine, has stepped down from his post following allegations of abuse and assault at the Copenhagen landmark.

Redzepi has been dogged for years by reports of mistreatment of his staff as well as his years-long use of unpaid interns to staff the pricy restaurant, which was ranked first on the World's 50 Best Restaurants List five

times. But the criticism recently came to a head on social media, and an article in the *New York Times* detailed former employees' accounts of abuse just days ahead of the opening of a Noma pop-up in Los Angeles.

Sponsors have since pulled their funding for the Southern California residency, which opened Wednesday to a small gathering of protesters and where a meal will cost diners \$1,500. Redzepi announced his resignation on Instagram with a tearful video soon after.

"I have worked to be a better leader and Noma has taken big steps to transform the culture over many years," he wrote in the post's caption Thursday. "I



Chef Rene Redzepi at a restaurant in Copenhagen in 2024. AP

recognize these changes do not repair the past. An apology is not enough; I take responsibility

for my own actions." Jason Ignacio White, a former head of Noma's ferment-

ation lab, collected anonymous testimonies of alleged abuse at the restaurant and posted them to his Instagram page. The accounts, which range from verbal abuse to physical assault at the hands of Redzepi and his deputies, have gone viral.

"I got punched in the face during service there," one unnamed person wrote to White.

Another said: "Noma destroyed my passion for the industry. I struggled with intense anxiety, bad enough to give me panic attacks in the middle of the night. The trauma, abuse and idea that nothing would ever change all led me to walk away from the career."

Redzepi has publicly ad-

ressed his aggression over the last decade. In response to Saturday's *New York Times* article, which included interviews with 35 former employees who worked at Noma between 2009 and 2017, the chef apologized on Instagram and said he has worked to change his behavior.

He was knighted in 2016 to Denmark's Order of Dannebrog by then-Queen Margrethe II.

Noma, Redzepi and the Danish royal family's press department did not immediately return requests for comment. Kristoffer Dahy Ernst, editor in chief of Danish food magazine *Gastro*, said Redzepi had to step down for the restaurant to have a chance of survival. AP



Chinese President Xi Jinping addresses the closing session of the National People's Congress at the Great Hall of the People, in Beijing on Thursday. AP

## Beijing adopts ethnic unity law that 'erodes' minority rights and cements assimilation

**Associated Press**  
Beijing, March 12

CHINA ADOPTED a sweeping law Thursday to promote what it calls "ethnic unity," a measure that critics say would further erode the rights of some minority groups as authorities cement a push toward assimilation.

The law, approved by the country's ceremonial legislature, is designed to foster "a stronger sense of community among all ethnic groups in the Chinese nation," said Lou Qian, a delegate to the National People's Congress who introduced the proposal to the whole body.

The proposed law lays out the need to promote ethnic unity by all government bodies and private enterprises, including local governments and state-affiliated groups like the All-China Women's Federation.

"The people of each ethnic group, all organizations and groups of the country, armed forces, every Party and social organization, every company, must forge a common con-

sciousness of the Chinese nation according to law and the constitution, and take the responsibility of building this consciousness," it reads.

Academics and observers say the new provision represents a setback for the identity of ethnic minorities because it mandates the use of Mandarin Chinese in compulsory education, among other things.

The majority of China's population is Han Chinese and the official language is Mandarin. The country has 55 ethnic groups, making up 8.9% of the 1.4 billion population.

The constitution states that "each ethnicity has the right to use and develop their own language" and "have the right to self-rule," while the Law on Regional Ethnic Autonomy promises limited autonomy to those groups, including allowing them to create flexible measures to develop their economy.

"It puts a death nail in the party's original promise of meaningful autonomy," said James Leibold, a professor at Australia's LaTrobe University.

### BRIEFLY

#### THE VATICAN

### Pope Leo appoints trusted ally to run Vatican's charity office



Cardinal Konrad Krajewski in St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican.

POPE LEO XIV on Thursday entrusted the Vatican's charity works to a fellow Augustinian, signalling a line of continuity with Pope Francis who had elevated the centuries-old job to a position of action and prominence that helped define his legacy. Leo named Archbishop Luis Marin de San Martin, a Spanish member of Leo's religious order and an undersecretary in the Vatican's synod office, as his chief almsgiver and prefect of the Vatican's charity office. Marin replaces Polish Cardinal Konrad Krajewski, 62, who becomes the

Archbishop of Lodz, in Poland, his home archdiocese that has been without an archbishop for a year. Francis had redefined the role of the Vatican's chief almsgiver. REUTERS

#### ETHIOPIA

### At least 50 dead, 125 missing after landslides

AT LEAST 50 people have died and 125 others are missing after landslides hit three districts in southern Ethiopia following a week of heavy rains, a local official said Thursday. The landslides happened in Gamo Zone and affected the Gacho Baba District, Kamba District and Bonke District, according to Gamo Zone director of disaster response Mesfin Manuqa. AP

#### UNITED STATES

### Gunman killed after injuring 2 at Virginia varsity

A GUNMAN opened fire on Thursday morning at Old Dominion University in Norfolk, Virginia, injuring two people before being shot dead, according to the university. In an emergency alert, the university said the two injured individuals were transported to hospital and classes and campus operations were cancelled for the rest of the day. It wasn't immediately clear how the shooter died. REUTERS

### NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

#### PAKISTAN

### PM Sharif visits Saudi amid Gulf security concerns

PRIME MINISTER Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday left for a brief official visit to Saudi Arabia with Pakistan's role coming under scanner due to its defence agreement with the kingdom. The two countries signed a mutual defence pact in September last year with the commitment to come to the defence of each other in case of attack by a third country. It was signed when Israel had attacked Hamas leaders. PTI

#### NEPAL

### 16 rescued from Cambodia e-scam centres

SIXTEEN NEPALESE nationals trafficked to Cambodia on the pretext of getting lucrative jobs were rescued and repatriated on Thursday, according to the foreign ministry. They were taken to Cambodia by various agents and employed in illegal jobs, including online scamming and online casinos. The Nepal embassy in Bangkok aided their rescue with cooperation of Cambodian government. PTI

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JOURNALISM of COURAGE

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IN FIRST STATEMENT AS NEW SUPREME LEADER, MOJTABA KHAMENEI VOWS TO AVENGE DEATHS

## Strait of Hormuz to remain closed, shut US bases or attacks continue: Iran leader

As oil tops \$100 a barrel again, more Iran drones head to Persian Gulf countries

Parisa Hafezi  
Dubai, March 12

IRAN WILL fight on and keep the Strait of Hormuz shut, new Supreme Leader Mojtaba Khamenei said on Thursday in a statement read out on state television, the first remarks attributed to him since he succeeded his slain father.

In a defiant address, Khamenei said Iran's neighbours should close all US bases on their territory, which Iran would continue to attack. "I assure everyone that we will not neglect avenging the blood of your martyrs," he said.

"The popular demand is to continue our effective defence and make the enemy regret! The lever of blocking the Strait of Hormuz must continue to be used," he said of the shipping route, where a fifth of global oil normally runs past Iran's coast.

No images have yet been released of Khamenei since the strike that killed his father, Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

»CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



Liberia-flagged tanker Shenlong, carrying Saudi crude, arrives in Mumbai Thursday after transiting the Strait of Hormuz. Another tanker also reached Mumbai and is headed to Paradip. AP

### Delhi in talks with Tehran to let fuel ships bound for India transit Strait

### Another Indian killed in attack on US-owned tanker

Shubhajit Roy  
New Delhi, March 12

DELHI IS in talks with Tehran to let India-bound fuel ships transit the Strait of Hormuz, closed by the Iranian military following

the outbreak of war in West Asia. "External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and Foreign Minister of Iran Seyed Abbas Araghchi have had three conversations in the last few days. The last one discussed issues

pertaining to safety of shipping and India's energy security. Beyond that, it would be premature for me to say anything," Randhir Jaiswal, spokesperson for the Ministry of External »CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

### PM speaks to Pezeshkian: Deep concern over loss of lives, escalation of tensions

Shubhajit Roy  
New Delhi, March 12

IN HIS first conversation with Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian since the start of the war in West Asia 13 days ago, Prime Minister Narendra Modi discussed Thursday the "serious situation" in the region and expressed "deep concern over the escalation of tensions and the loss of civilian lives as well as damage to civilian infrastructure".

In a post on X following the phone call, Modi said he "urged



PM Narendra Modi at the NXT Summit 2026 in New Delhi, Thursday. PTI

for dialogue and diplomacy" and "reiterated India's »CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

### LPG supply hit, Govt pushes kerosene & coal as options

Sukalp Sharma & Jatin Anand  
New Delhi, March 12

AMID GROWING concerns over liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) or cooking gas supplies in the country, which have been hit due to the West Asia conflict, the government is activating other fuel options like kerosene, fuel oil, biomass and even coal to ease pressure on LPG for

commercial users like restaurants and hotels.

The government has also decided to allocate for commercial use 20% of the average monthly commercial LPG requirement; this will be done in coordination with state governments. Moreover, as a demand management measure amid panic booking by household consumers, the minimum gap between cylinder »CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

### Delhi to Bengaluru, eateries feel the heat as LPG cylinder black marketing surges



People queue up for LPG cylinders in Patna, Thursday. PTI

### Prohibited for commercial use, domestic LPG cylinders are lifeline for roadside eateries across country

Soumyarendra Barik  
New Delhi, March 12

TWO FRIENDS who run a streetside food stall in Yusuf Sarai in New Delhi had reason to feel both relieved and robbed. After three days of searching, they had finally found an LPG cylinder. The price their distributor quoted stopped them in their tracks: Rs 2,500, nearly two-and-a-half times what they paid before. A war being fought thousands of kilometres away, in the cities and waters of West Asia, had

just hit their stall.

They are not the only ones. The blocking of the Strait of Hormuz, one of the world's most critical chokepoints for energy supply, has sent shockwaves through India's supply chains with a speed and intimacy that few anticipated. The factories in Gujarat have gone quiet. Restaurants across the country have shuttered or retreated to skeletal menus. And in the back lanes and food courts of Indian cities, a black market in cooking gas has

»CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

## US initiates Section 301 probe against India, China, 14 others

Claims India has excess capacity in petrochemicals, steel, solar units

Ravi Dutta Mishra  
New Delhi, March 12

THE US has launched an investigation under Section 301 (b) of the Trade Act of 1974 into more than a dozen countries, including India and China, citing

**E. EXPLAINED**

### Trade deficit with India a sore point

The US has targeted countries which have a trade surplus with it in goods. In 2025, India had a \$58 billion surplus with the US. The manufacturing sectors which contributed to this include textiles, health and auto.

structural excess capacity and over-production in certain manufacturing sectors. This is the first such probe launched by the Trump administration after the US Supreme Court last month declared illegal the reciprocal tariffs the President levied under the International Emergency Economic Powers Act.

Having initiated the investigations on March 11, the United States Trade Representative (USTR) said it will open dockets for submission of written comments on March 17. »CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Business as Usual  
By EP UNNY



Next Israel, then US... will displeasure extend in alphabetic order - just about the only world order left?

**NATION PAGE 9**  
**TERROR-FUNDING CASE: SHABIR SHAH GRANTED BAIL**

### Happening today

● **PRIME MINISTER** Narendra Modi is set to visit Assam. He will release the 22nd instalment of the PM-KISAN scheme.

● **FRENCH PRESIDENT** Emmanuel Macron will host Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy in Paris and discuss support of France and European partners to help Ukraine defend itself against Russia.

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## Attack on Farooq Abdullah: Delhi begins probe into security lapse

Arun Sharma  
Jammu, March 12

THE CENTRE has initiated an inquiry into the security lapse in the attack on Farooq Abdullah on Wednesday night, when a 63-year-old man armed with a loaded revolver walked right up to the former J&K Chief Minister at a wedding function and opened fire. Abdullah escaped as Kamal Singh Jamwal missed.



Kamal Singh Jamwal being taken to a court in Jammu, Thursday. PTI

»CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

● **BENCH SAYS LET HER STEP FORWARD, WILL ENSURE SENTIMENTS ARE TRANSLATED INTO LEGAL ACTION**

## Eight decades after Netaji disappeared, his daughter backs plea in SC for return of ashes

Ananthkrishnan G  
New Delhi, March 12

EIGHT DECADES after Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose disappeared, presumed dead in an air crash in Taihoku (Taipei, Taiwan) in 1945, his daughter, Anita Bose Pfaff, appeared before the Supreme Court Thursday in "support" of a petition seeking the return to India of his mortal remains, believed to have been preserved at the Renko-ji temple in Tokyo.

The bench of Chief Justice of India Surya Kant and Justices Joymalya Bagchi and Vipul M Pancholi declined to entertain the plea filed by Ashis Ray, Netaji's grandnephew, saying Pfaff should "step forward" and file a petition herself.

Pfaff, 84, appeared before the bench via video conference from Austria. "We make it very clear, we respect their sentiments, and we would ensure her sentiments are translated into legal

»CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



A bust of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose at the Renko-ji temple in Tokyo

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## Air Power

Chief of Air Staff Air Chief Marshal A P Singh prepares to fly an upgraded MiG-29 during his visit to an Air Force Station in Punjab, Thursday. The IAF maintains three squadrons of upgraded MiG-29s—MiG-29 UPGs. PTI

## NCERT BOOK CONTROVERSY

# IIT Gandhinagar to decide on Michel Danino's position after SC directions

Abhinaya Harigovind  
New Delhi, March 12

ASTANDING committee at IIT Gandhinagar will review Michel Danino's guest professor role following the Supreme Court's directions for governments as well as public institutions to dissociate from him and two others involved in drafting a NCERT Class 8 textbook that has been withdrawn over a section on "corruption in the judiciary".

"There's a faculty standing committee that will look into the appointment in light of the Supreme Court judgment. The committee will deliberate on the matter, and a decision will be taken," said IIT Director Prof Rajat Moona.

"Prof Danino was a visiting faculty member till the end of January last year. Then he was appointed guest faculty to come to IIT Gandhinagar on a need basis, but he hasn't come since then. The appointment is still valid, but he has not come. Guest faculty members are paid for the time they come to the institute. This is usually on a need basis; if there is anything, we invite the guest faculty members," he said.

On Wednesday, the Supreme Court directed the Centre, states, Union Territories, universities, and public institutions to dissociate from three members of the textbook development team who drafted the chapter on the judiciary in the now-withdrawn

## Kerala HC disqualifies Natesan, son as SNDP Yogam directors

Shaju Philip  
Thiruvananthapuram, March 12

THE KERALA High Court on Thursday disqualified prominent Hindu community leader Vellappally Natesan and his son Thushar Vellappally as directors of the Sree Narayana Dharma Paripalana Yogam (SNDP Yogam).

A Bench of Justice T R Ravi issued the order after hearing a batch of petitions challenging the continuation of the Natesan family at the helm of the Yogam. One of the petitioners was literary critic M K Sanu, who died last year.

While Natesan is known for his pro-CPI(M) approach, his son is the president of Bharath Dharma Jana Sena (BDJS), an NDA ally in Kerala. On Republic Day this year, Natesan was conferred the Padma Bhushan. Petitions seeking its directions quashing the award are also before the court.

The order may have political implications as it may reshape internal power equations within the organisation and potentially affect how sections of the Ezhava community aligns politically, particularly at a time when both the ruling Left Democratic Front (LDF) and the NDA have sought to court the community, which makes up around 24% of the state's population, ahead of the coming Assembly polls.

### SNDP & Hindu unity

The SNDP Yogam, founded in 1903 to propagate the teach-

Class 8 social science textbook.

The court's direction was issued after NCERT Director D P Saklani named Danino, Suparna Diwakar, and Alok Prasanna Kumar in an affidavit, stating that the chapter was drafted by a team under Danino's chairmanship.

Danino did not respond to a query sent by *The Indian Express* on the matter.

Danino, 69, was the chairperson of the curricular area group that develops social science textbooks. As the chairperson, he has been a key part of the textbook development team for social science books for classes 6 to 8.

A 2017 Padma Shri awardee, Danino was born in France and studied there until he moved to India in 1977. He has had a long association with IIT Gandhinagar, where he began as a guest professor in 2011 and later served as a visiting professor until January 2025. At the institute, he was involved with a course on Indian Knowledge Systems and helped set up an Archaeological Sciences Centre.

A series of lectures he gave at IIT Kanpur in 2010 and 2011, and later in 2014, on topics like the "Indus-Sarasvati civilisation", early landmarks of science and technology in India, and exploring Indian civilisation, caught attention, even among faculty members at other institutes, including IIT Gandhinagar.

Danino had been a scholar-in-residence at IIT Kanpur.



Vellappally Natesan

ings of social reformer Sree Narayana Guru and represent the interests of the Ezhava community, is one of the largest caste-based organisations in Kerala. In recent years, Natesan has also been part of attempts to bring together major Hindu community organisations such as the SNDP Yogam and the Nair Service Society (NSS), which represents the influential Nair community, which constitutes around 12% of the population.

The proposed SNDP-NSS coordination, discussed in several meetings between Natesan and NSS leadership including general secretary G Sukumaran Nair, was seen as an effort to consolidate Hindu social groups in the state's political landscape, though it failed to evolve into a formal alliance after Nair withdrew from any unity efforts following the Padma Bhushan for Natesan.

## Strait of Hormuz to remain closed: Iran leader

Iranian officials have said the younger Khamenei was lightly wounded. He said in his address that his wife, sister and other family members were also killed.

Khamenei's remarks reinforce the message from Iran that its strategy now is to impose a prolonged economic shock to force Trump to back off. A spokesperson for Iran's military command said on Wednesday that the world should prepare for oil prices of \$200 a barrel.

Thursday's surge in oil prices came despite the announcement the previous day

that developed countries would release 400 million barrels of oil from their strategic reserves, nearly half from the US.

That is by far the biggest-ever coordinated intervention into the oil markets. But releasing the reserves will take months, and account for just three weeks of supply from the blockaded strait. "The only way to see oil prices trade lower on a sustained basis is by getting oil flowing through the Strait of Hormuz," ING analysts said. "Failing to do so means that the market highs are still ahead of us."

Shortly after his address, the Revolutionary Guards an-

nounced that, in keeping with his orders, they would keep the Strait shut. Two tankers were ablaze in an Iraqi port on Thursday after a hit by suspected Iranian explosive-laden boats, a step-up in attacks that have cut off oil from the Middle East. The attacks were a clear sign of defiance of US President Donald Trump, who said on Wednesday the US had already won the war.

Images verified by *Reuters* as having been filmed from the shore of the port of Basra showed ships engulfed in massive orange fireballs that lit up the night sky. At least one crew member was killed in the

attacks.

Hours earlier, three other ships had been struck in the Gulf. Iran's Guards claimed responsibility for at least one of those attacks, on a Thai bulk carrier that was set ablaze, which the Guards said had disobeyed their orders. Another container vessel reported being struck by an unknown projectile near the UAE on Thursday.

Oil prices soared back above \$100 a barrel, having come down earlier in the week when Trump said the war would be over soon. Iran has said it will not let oil through the Strait until the US-Israeli attacks cease. **REUTERS**

## LPG supply hit

bookings by households in rural and remote areas has been increased to 45 days, while for urban households, it continues to be 25 days. The minimum gap used to be 21 days earlier, but was increased to 25 days after the conflict started.

Noting that bookings for LPG cylinders have shot up manifold due to misinformation and concern, the government also appealed to consumers to not fall prey to panic and avoid rush-booking of cylinders.

"Alternate fuel options are being activated to ease pressure on LPG and gas channels. Kerosene is being made available through retail outlets and PDS channels, and fuel oil is being made available for industrial and commercial consumers. The MoEFCC (Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change) has advised State Pol-

lution Control Boards to permit, for the duration of this crisis period, the use of biomass, RDF (Refuse-derived fuel) pellets, and kerosene/coal as alternate fuels for the hospitality and restaurant segment for one month, which would enable a wider range of establishments to switch and free up LPG for priority consumers," Union Petroleum Minister Hardeep Singh Puri said in Lok Sabha.

In a briefing, Petroleum Ministry Joint Secretary Sujata Sharma said that in addition to the standard quarterly allocation of 1 lakh kilolitres, the government has released an additional 48,000 kilolitres of kerosene to state governments for distribution to identified beneficiaries. She said the Ministry of Coal has directed Coal India and Singareni Collieries Company to allot higher quantities of coal to states for use by small and medium consumers.

India has over 33 crore domestic LPG consumers. According to Sharma, measures to augment LPG supplies have already led to a 28% increase in domestic LPG output vis-à-vis the pre-conflict levels, and all of it is being diverted to meet household consumption demand.

"Commercial LPG has been regulated to prevent black marketing, not to penalise the hospitality sector. Commercial LPG is sold in a completely deregulated, over-the-counter market at market price, without any government subsidy. There is no registration system, no booking requirement, no digital authentication, and no delivery confirmation mechanism. Any business or individual can purchase cylinders in any quantity at the point of sale, with no government control in normal times. In a supply-constrained environment where public anxiety is elevated, this deregulated structure creates a direct and uncontrolled pathway for hoarding, diversion,

and resale at inflated prices. Had commercial supply been left entirely unrestricted, cylinders purchased over the counter could have been diverted to the grey market at the expense of genuine commercial consumers and domestic households alike," Puri told Parliament.

"The government has therefore taken the responsible course: to regulate this channel with clear priorities and a transparent allocation mechanism. A three-member committee comprising executive directors from IOCL, HPCL and BPCL was constituted on March 9... The committee has assessed genuine need by geography and sector to ensure available commercial volume reaches genuine users first. In a major decision, 20% of the average monthly commercial LPG requirement will be allocated from today by OMCs, in coordination with the state governments so that there is no hoarding or black marketing," he said.

## PM

commitment to peace and stability".

In their conversation, he also flagged the security of Indian nationals and the movement of maritime traffic — fuel ships bound for India are stuck in the Persian Gulf following Tehran's closure of the key Strait of Hormuz.

"The safety and security of Indian nationals, along with the need for unhindered transit of goods and energy, remain India's top priorities," Modi said.

A PMO statement said "President Pezeshkian briefed the Prime Minister on the current situation in Iran and shared his perspective on recent developments in the region". The two leaders "agreed to remain in touch," it said.

Ever since hostilities commenced, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar has had three conversations with his Iranian counterpart Seyed Abbas Araghchi — on February 28, March 5 and March 12.

On Monday, Jaishankar informed Parliament that while attempts have been made, "contacts with Iran at the leadership level are obviously difficult at this time", and that they will continue these "high-level conversations in the coming days".

So far, the Prime Minister has spoken to eight leaders in the region: UAE President Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Qatar Amir Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, Saudi Arabia Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, Kuwait Crown Prince Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Sabah, Bahrain King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, Oman Sultan Haitham bin Tariq Al Said, Jordan King Abdullah II and Israel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. He had condemned the attacks by Iran on these countries.

## US probe

and the Section 301 Committee will convene public hearings on May 5. This could mean that fresh tariffs could be imposed on India and other countries after May.

USTR Jamieson Greer said, "These investigations will focus on economies that appear to exhibit structural excess capacity and production in various manufacturing sectors, such as through large or persistent trade surpluses or underutilised or unused capacity: China, the EU, Singapore, Switzerland, Norway, Indonesia, Malaysia, Cambodia, Thailand, Korea, Vietnam, Taiwan, Bangladesh, Mexico, Japan, and India."

Targeting India, the USTR said India had a trade surplus of

\$58 billion with the US in 2025, and that the sectors include textiles, health, construction goods, and automotive goods.

"For example, evidence suggests the solar module sector is plagued by excess capacity, including that India's current module manufacturing is nearly triple the annual domestic demand. India also has created significant excess capacity in petrochemicals, steel, and other industries," the USTR said.

International trade experts said countries targeted in the investigation are those with which the US has trade deficits. Deborah Elms, Head of Trade Policy at Singapore-based Hinrich Foundation, in a social media post, said this is a "very fast" investigation with a short comment window and the mandated hearing in early May.

## Farooq

There were several VIPs present at the function, including two with Z-Plus security, Abdullah and J&K Deputy CM Surinder Choudhary.

AZ-Plus protectee is entitled to at least half-a-dozen NSG commandos, apart from two-three security rings including local police and other security personnel, besides a bullet-proof vehicle and escort. Every morning, a Z-plus protectee's programme, including his movement schedule, is sent to the security wing to ensure that the route to be taken and places mentioned are properly sanitized, and measures like metal detectors and frisking are put in place.

A senior police officer admitted "a security lapse to some extent in respect to the CPT (close protection) and the person (carrying the gun)".

Addressing media persons at his residence in Jammu, Abdullah, questioned the security measures at the site where the attack happened. "There was no policeman, nor any instrument (such as a metal detector) to check if anyone was carrying a weapon. Even after he (the attacker) was caught, he was sent to the police station in the vehicle of the Deputy CM."

He added that Union Home Minister Amit Shah had called him to inform that they had ordered an inquiry. "He expressed concern and assured me that he would keep me informed about the progress of the investigation."

With J&K a Union Territory, several powers are vested with the Central government through the Lieutenant Governor, including security.

LG Manoj Sinha also spoke to Abdullah, and held a meeting with senior police officers in Jammu, including Director General of Police Nalin Prabhat,

"The reason for this unusually rapid inquiry is that the statutory authority for existing US tariffs currently set by the Trump administration at 10% globally under a different legal power, Section 122 of the Trade Act of 1974, will expire on 27 July. The USTR's goal is to replace these Section 122 tariffs with new measures by July," Elms said.

Unlike other tariff authorities, Section 301 is unlikely to get overturned by US Courts or involve Congress, she said. "Any penalties that get applied are likely to be long-lasting, particularly since Section 301 empowers the executive branch to modify, adjust, or reopen cases at will in the future," she said.

The USTR move assumes significance as India and the US agreed to a trade deal but have not formally signed it.

Jammu IGP Bhim Sen Tuti, Jammu-Samba-Kathua range DIG Shiv Kumar Sharma and Jammu SSP Joginder Singh.

Sources said Sinha directed the officers to get to the bottom of the incident and guarantee airtight security for the protectees.

While police have ruled out any terror angle, officers said they will probe for any "deep-rooted conspiracy".

Eyewitnesses have told police that Abdullah along with Choudhary and other senior National Conference leaders reached the wedding venue in Jammu's Greater Kailash area around 9.15 pm Wednesday.

While Jamwal was present from the groom's side, the NC leaders were there for the bride, the daughter of senior party leader and advocate D S Chouhan.

The NC group stayed on for nearly 45 minutes, and were leaving when Jamwal opened fire at Abdullah.

## Eateries feel the heat

quietly taken hold.

The price of a 14.2-kg domestic LPG cylinder in Delhi has climbed to Rs 913, up from Rs 853 — a rise of Rs 60 — while commercial cylinder prices have jumped by Rs 115 to Rs 1,884.50 (for a 19 kg cylinder). The Centre has sought to reassure households that no shortage is imminent, pointing to a 25% increase in domestic LPG production.

But for the restaurants, dhabas, and cloud kitchens that keep urban India fed, those assurances have done little to ease conditions on the ground.

For commercial establishments, cylinders are simply not arriving through official channels. The eateries *The Indian Express* spoke to said the black market is now the only viable route to procurement — at prices that are frequently more than double the regulated rate. For smaller scale operations, like the one the two friends run in Yusuf Sarai, they rely on domestic cylinders largely, and even those cylinders are being sold at a 100-150% premium. Though using domestic LPG for commercial operations is not legally permissible, many roadside eateries rely on them as they are cheaper than commercial LPG.

The refrain throughout the industry is the same: that there is currently a lack of clarity from the government.

Indian Oil, Bharat Petroleum and Hindustan Petroleum did not respond to requests for comment.

Kawaljeet Singh, co-founder of Khadak Singh Da Dhabha, which has over 70 outlets across 15 cities, said, "We are being told to pay 2-2.5 times the regulated cost of a commercial cylinder on average in Delhi-NCR. It is mostly available in the black market, as it is very difficult to get

hold of a cylinder through the official route. In cities like Bengaluru, we have even been quoted prices ranging between Rs 8,000 and Rs 9,000 for a cylinder."

This has forced Singh to shut down his eatery in Bengaluru. In his remaining outlets, most have cut down on the menu and are serving four to five high demand dishes, he said.

For Singh's outlets, the daily cost of cylinders before the crisis used to be around Rs 30,000-Rs 50,000 a day. Today, it stands close to Rs 1 lakh, he said. Packaging costs, he said, have also shot up 20-25%, as plastic wraps have become more expensive, which has also led to an increase in prices of paper-based packaging material.

Gagandeep Singh Sapra, who runs a number of cloud kitchens, primarily selling items on online food delivery platforms, wrote on X that one of his kitchen brands called Tadka Rani has been shut down due to shortage in LPG, and several other of his brands are serving limited menus "till we can serve them".

The National Restaurant Association of India (NRAI), the sector's key industry body, has advised its members to adopt fuel conservation and operational measures amid disruptions in the commercial LPG supply chain. The industry body said the ongoing geopolitical developments could further tighten availability, creating operational challenges for restaurants across the country, and if the situation persists, the food service sector "may face difficulties in sustaining kitchen operations".

A delivery worker in Delhi's Vasant Kunj said he has received 20-25% less earnings than usual for the same hours of work in the last few days as order numbers seem to have depleted.

## Delhi in talks with Tehran to allow India-bound fuel ships pass Strait

Affairs, said Thursday.

Sources indicated that since the talks are underway, it is still "work in progress".

With maritime traffic through the Strait of Hormuz halted, India's LPG imports have been significantly impacted. The country depends on imports to meet around 60% of its LPG requirement, and 90% of its LPG imports come from West Asia through the Strait. This effectively means that roughly 55% of India's LPG consumption volumes are currently unavailable.

Meanwhile, an Indian crew member of a US-owned oil tanker was killed after the vessel came under attack in the waters near Iraq's Basra — the third Indian seafarer to die in the ongoing war.

Confirming the death of the seafarer, the Indian embassy in Iraq said 15 other Indian crew members of the ship were evacuated.

"On March 11, 2026, a US-owned crude oil tanker, Safesaa Vishnu, sailing under the Marshall Islands flag, was attacked near Basra, Iraq, in which one Indian crew member unfortunately lost his life," the Indian embassy in Iraq said on social media. "The remaining 15 Indian crew have since been evacuated to a safe place," it said.

Extending its "deepest condolences to the family members of the deceased crew member", the embassy said it was in regular contact with Iraqi authorities and the rescued Indian sailors and was offering them all possible assistance.

With an India-bound ship coming under attack from suspected Iranian fighters, Delhi Wednesday "deplored" the targeting of commercial shipping in the Strait of Hormuz.

Jaiswal also said that Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Maldives have reached out to India for energy supplies.

"India is a major exporter of refined petroleum products, especially to our neighbourhood. We have received a request from the Government of Bangladesh for supply of diesel, which is being examined. Given our people-centric and development-oriented approach to relations with Bangladesh, we have been supplying diesel from the Numaligarh Refinery (in Assam) since 2007 through various modes which includes waterways, rail, and later through the India-Bangladesh Friendship Pipeline. A sale-purchase agreement was signed in October 2017 between Numaligarh Refinery and Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation for supply of high-speed diesel on mutually agreed terms."

"It bears mention that while diesel exports to Bangladesh have largely continued since 2017, India's refining capacity, our own requirements, and diesel availability will be factored in while making decisions. In addition, I would also like to say that we have received such requests from several other countries including Sri Lanka and Maldives, and these are being examined taking into account our own energy requirements and availability that we have," he said.

declaration on Netaji's death.

However, the CJI said the question of his death could arise "indirectly or directly", and "we also understand why this petition is coming up again after it was dismissed last year."

Justice Bagchi, too, said the question of ashes cannot arise unless the issue of death is discussed.

"First of all, where are the ashes? What is the proof?" the CJI asked.

Referring to the temple in Tokyo where the ashes are believed to be preserved, Singhvi said, "The fact that every Head of State from India, Prime Ministers, have paid obeisance to the Renko-ji temple is recorded."

The CJI said, "First, we have to know how many surviving

family members are there. He was the greatest leader of this nation... All of us bow before his supreme sacrifice."

Singhvi said Pfaff is the sole heir.

The CJI also questioned the "timing" of the petition. "...We know the timing also. Don't compel us to say something," he said.

Singhvi said, "There is no timing in this because she has been writing consistently... She has never said no."

With the bench not inclined to entertain the plea, Singhvi sought permission to withdraw it, with the liberty to return with a fresh petition. The court agreed to the request.

Ray's petition, filed through Advocate Ritika Vohra, stated: "Netaji's remains were kept at

Renko-ji Temple 'for a few months' but have remained there for over 80 years — preserved and honoured by successive head priests — forming a continuing state of affairs of 'posthumous exile' and non-closure for Netaji's now late wife and daughter Professor Anita Bose Pfaff."

"The petition is fully endorsed by Netaji's daughter and sole surviving heir Professor Anita Bose Pfaff, including by her most recent statements on her father's ashes and her desire expressed therein that these be brought to India for final rites with dignity and finality... The petitioner only seeks time-bound repatriation of Netaji's ashes by the Government of India or, in the alternative, facilitation to the petitioner and

Professor Anita Bose Pfaff to repatriate the ashes of Netaji from Japan to India," it stated.

"The petitioner invokes the extraordinary jurisdiction of this Hon'ble Court under Article 32 to enforce fundamental rights arising from a continuing constitutional wrong: the Union of India's prolonged failure to take a final, reasoned, and time-bound decision to repatriate (or at least facilitate repatriation) to India of the mortal remains/ashes attributed to Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, preserved at Renko-ji Temple, Tokyo, Japan, so that Netaji's daughter and sole surviving heir and direct lineal descendant, Professor Anita Bose Pfaff, may perform final rites in India with dignity and finality," it stated.

RGSSH, DSCI, IHBAS TO BE BROUGHT UNDER GTB HOSPITAL UNDER HEALTH DEPT'S PROPOSAL

## To set up another AIIMS-like institute, govt mulls integrating 4 big hospitals

Gayathri Mani  
New Delhi, March 12

IN A significant move aiming to enhance the healthcare facilities in the Trans-Yamuna area and develop the Capital as the hub of medical excellence, the Delhi government is mulling the integration of four big hospitals — Guru Tegh Bahadur Hospital, Delhi State Cancer Institute (DSCI), Rajiv Gandhi Super Speciality Hospital (RGSSH) and the Institute of Human Behaviour and Allied Sciences (IHBAS) — and set up an autonomous multispecialty advanced facility similar to the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), *The Indian Express* has learnt.

The proposal — prepared by an expert committee under the Delhi Health department — has suggested naming the advanced healthcare facility as the Delhi Institute of Medical Sciences, and bringing RGSSH, IHBAS and the DSCI under GTB Hospital as the leading institution. The four hospitals are located close to each other in Northeast Delhi's Dilshad Garden area.

Strengthening mental health services at IHBAS — emulating the standards set by National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro Sciences (NIMHANS) — has also been proposed.

Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta recently held a meeting to discuss the proposal, which was also attended by Health Minister Pankaj Kumar Singh, officials said. "The mode of governance may be autonomous in nature, similar to AIIMS," an official said, adding the new integrated facility is likely to be spread across hundreds of acres.

The move is expected to improve access to specialised treatment and expand scope of medical education and research. "The objective is to ensure hassle-free healthcare facilities for the public, while also reducing the burden on GTB Hospital, which currently sees around 10,000 patients every day," a senior government official said.

The official added, "Such an integration would help optimise faculty, infrastructure and paramedical resources across the institutes." Under the proposal,

### • Key objectives

**DECONGEST** GTB Hospital

**DEVELOP** IHBAS on the lines NIMHANS

**OPTIMISE** use of 75 acres of vacant land at IHBAS

**ENHANCE** medical education, research, & specialised healthcare delivery in Delhi

the government is also considering constructing an underground tunnel to allow safe public movement between the hospitals.

GTB Hospital is run by the Delhi government and is associated with the University College of Medical Science (UCMS), University of Delhi; and, therefore, it also serves as a training center for undergraduate and post-graduate medical students.

Staff posted here include doctors from the Central Health Services cadre as well as the Delhi government's non-teaching specialist cadre, officials said. "This integration plan will also increase PG seats by bring-

ing together teaching posts across the hospitals and recruiting more faculty...MBBS seats will also increase. This could be easier because of the academic strength of UCMS and GTB, which the other hospitals have struggled to attract so far," said an official.

RGSSH and the DSCI are society-run hospitals with relatively lesser footfall and most staff here are hired on a contractual basis. "For instance, RGSSH has around 650 beds but only about 250 are being used. Most patients go to GTB because of its treatment, out patient department (OPD) and testing facilities," an official pointed out.

The proposal aims to streamline services and help distribute patients to hospitals according to their specialities. It will also allow better use of the infrastructure, staff and land available at RGSSH, the DSCI and the IHBAS. "All three hospitals have facilities for cardiology, pulmonology, gastroenterology, nephrology, orthopaedics, radiation oncology, palliative medicine, anaesthesia, internal medicine, ENT

and general surgery. However, several specialities overlap across these hospitals, leading to duplication of services and scattered resources," an official said.

Data shared by officials highlight a sharp difference in patient load across the three hospitals. The GTB Hospital's OPD sees over 14 lakh patients annually, while the inpatient department (IPD) records around 95,000 admissions. All 28 operation theatres here are functional. In comparison, the DSCI sees around 1.27 lakh OPD patients and about 6,600 IPD admissions, with only two of its seven operation theatres functional. RGSSH sees around 2.87 lakh OPD patients and about 8,700 IPD admissions, with six of its 12 operation theatres functional.

Officials said the nearly 650 beds at RGSSH could be dedicated mainly to super-specialty services. Oncology-related services could be centred at the DSCI. Some departments may also be reorganised. Moreover, GTB Hospital's 40-year-old building may see upgrades.

TWO MAJOR FIRES IN A DAY



A huge fire broke out at a slum cluster in Matiala in Southwest Delhi on Thursday. PRAVEEN KHANNA

### 80 huts gutted in major blaze at slum cluster in Matiala

Express News Service  
New Delhi, March 12

A MAJOR fire broke out in a cluster of huggis at Mansa Ram Park near the fish market in Matiala in Southwest Delhi's Uttam Nagar on Wednesday night, gutting around 80 shanties, police said. No casualties have been reported in the blaze so far, officers said.

According to police, a PCR call reporting the blaze was received at Bindapur police station at 11:57 pm on Wednesday. A police team rushed to the spot and evacuated residents of the shanties while alerting the fire department, officers said.

Around 28 fire tenders were deployed to the spot and firefighters managed to bring the blaze under control by around 3 am on Thursday.

This is the second fire reported at the same location within a week. On March 7, a similar blaze had broken out at the site. No loss of life was reported in that incident, following which a case was registered at Bindapur police station, police said. District administration officials said a debris clearance drive will be carried out at the site soon with the assistance of the MCD.

### 'Better to jump off building than die': Noida factory fire traps 200, injures 37

Neetika Jha, Drishti Jain  
Noida, March 12

TEN MINUTES before his shift ended, Tarun Kumar (23), a migrant worker from Bihar's Chapra, was gripped with panic early on Thursday. Along with more than 200 night-shift workers, he was trapped at a Noida factory when a huge fire broke out. At least 37 were injured, said officials.

"Around 5:30 am, I rushed to break the glass... the exits were hardly accessible due to the smoke. The glass was so thick that it could not be broken... I saw a small door and jumped from the third floor," he later told *The Indian Express* at a hospital where he was admitted. Many like him sustained injuries not from the blaze at Capital Power Systems Limited in Noida's Sector 4, but during their bid to escape.

"I thought it was better to jump than die in the fire. I first landed on a first-floor balcony and then jumped again... that was when I landed on the road," recollected Dilip Singh (30) from Etawah, a helper.

"The fire broke out between 5:30 am and 5:45 am," an official said. The trigger was not immediately known.

Rajeev Narain Mishra, Additional CP (Law and Order),



At the site in Noida on Thursday. ABHINAV SAHA

Gautam Buddha Nagar and Pardeep Kumar, Chief Fire Officer of the district, said the injured were undergoing treatment at a district hospital and the Safdarjung Hospital.

"This morning, we were informed that there was a fire at a factory in Sector 4 that makes electric meters...," Mishra said. "There were around 200-250 people working the night shift... The fire team... had to break through glass to get inside and rescue people. There was heavy smoke that made rescue operations difficult."

Mishra said the magnitude of fire necessitated a significant response. "We sent over 30 fire-fighting vehicles, hydraulic platforms, and foam tenders to the spot... Most people admitted (at the hospitals) are out of danger."

## 'Can't be a blanket ban': HC on orders to limit stirs at DU

Sohini Ghosh  
New Delhi, March 12

QUESTIONING THE continued imposition of prohibitory orders against assembly of five or more persons on the Delhi University campus, the High Court Thursday reprimanded the Delhi Police and sought responses from the police department, the university as well as two of its colleges.

A division bench of Chief Justice D K Upadhyaya and Justice Tejas Karia was dealing with a public interest litigation (PIL), challenging the legality of a DU notification dated February 17, which followed orders issued by the police under Section 163 of the BNSS (similar to CrPC section 144), prohibiting

public assembly of five or more persons, effectively curtailing demonstrations, protests or any gatherings on DU's college campuses, for a month.

While the DU notification is set to expire on March 17, the Delhi Police in February issued another order, barring "unrestricted" assembly of persons that took effect from February 25 and is valid until April 25. The notification said, "It has been observed in the past that organisers often fail to control such protests which get unruly and may expand disproportionately into huge numbers, thus creating law and order situation in the area."

Notably, following the February 17 order issued by the office of the DU Proctor, several

colleges affiliated to it, including Kirori Mal College and Dyal Singh College issued consequential orders "reinforcing the prohibition in aggravated manner," petitioner Uday Bhadoria, a student at Campus Law Centre, Faculty of Law, has pointed out in the petition.

Expressing reservations on "such kind of blanket prohibition", CJ Upadhyaya, addressing the Delhi Police's counsel, orally remarked: "There are some preconditions that have to be met before passing any order under BNSS Section 163... Not only 'apprehension' (of a potential law and order situation), if you've to prevent something which is going to happen tomorrow, only then can you use order under (BNSS Section 163)... We

are clearly of the opinion that there cannot be a blanket ban and we are also very doubtful if CrPC section 144 (BNSS section 163 equivalent) can be used."

While Bhadoria's counsels also sought an interim stay on the police's order extending the restriction at least until the next date of hearing on March 25, as well as the proctor's February 17 order expiring on March 17, the court refused, also deprecating students' conduct.

C J Upadhyaya orally remarked to the petitioner's counsels, "Let them (respondent authorities/varsity) file their affidavit... this order has been in effect from February... this liberty cannot be misused, can you deny this fact? It is only because there is Article 19 (2) (citizens'

right to assembly) that we are interfering in the matter, not for any other reason.

"You have to conduct yourself appropriately. Why has this situation come? It is an academic institution, proctor is also an academician... why would they pass such an order? There must be some reason... we are not making any comment on the conduct of the students... See what happened during the (DUSU) elections... we have to balance the situation... we are of the clear opinion that there can't be a blanket ban and we are also very doubtful if CrPC section 144 can be used. But... your conduct too cannot be appreciated at all... This order (of the proctor) has operated for nearly a month, let it operate for 10 more days."



# PHARMACY COUNCIL OF INDIA

A Statutory body under Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India

Celebrating  
124<sup>th</sup> Birth Anniversary of  
Prof. M.L. Schroff

As  
NATIONAL  
PHARMACY  
EDUCATION  
DAY



## PHARMA ANVESHAN-2026, DELHI (NCR)

Theme: Future Pharma Ecosystem: Fostering Synergy  
Among Academia, Industry, Research, Regulatory and Practice

ON 6TH MARCH 2026, WE PROUDLY CELEBRATE THE 124TH BIRTH ANNIVERSARY OF PROF. M. L. SCHROFF, REVERED AS THE FATHER OF MODERN PHARMACY EDUCATION IN INDIA, AS NATIONAL PHARMACY EDUCATION DAY. Prof. M. L. Schroff was a visionary educationist whose predisposition, deep understanding, patriotism, and comprehensive vision laid the foundation for structured pharmacy education in India. In 1937, at BHU, he pioneered the introduction of the first full-fledged three-year B. Pharm course in India, marking a historic milestone in the professionalization of pharmacy education. His contributions transformed pharmacy from a trade-oriented practice into a scientific, academic and research-driven profession.

### Key Initiatives & Achievements of Pharmacy Council of India

**Digital Reforms** – Implemented online systems for college approvals, inspections, and documentation.

**Faculty Portal** - All teachers linked with Aadhaar Enabled Biometric Attendance System (AEBAS) for Quality education to students.

**Linked Pharmacist in Health Care Professionals Registration system (HPR)** by Aadhar Authenticated System.

**Curriculum Development** – Introduced updated Education Regulations (ER) as per New Education Policy 2020 (NEP).

**The Jan Vishwas (Amendment of Provisions) Act, 2023** amended several laws in India, including the Pharmacy Act, 1948 to reduce criminal penalties for minor offences and replace them with financial penalties.

**PCI allocated funds for Pradhan Mantri Scholarship for Pharmacy Post Graduate Studies (GPAT)-(PMSPPS).**

**Encouraging good distribution practices** in wholesale & retail licenses and safe medication distribution.

**Promotion of Pharm. D program** – Helped introduce clinical pharmacy and hospital-based training in India.

**Pharmacist Registration Tracking System (PRTS)** – Works with State Pharmacy Councils to ensure licensed pharmacists practice legally.

- Decriminalization of minor offences**  
Some offences under the Pharmacy Act were changed from imprisonment to monetary penalties.
- Penalty for falsely claiming to be a registered pharmacist**
  - First offence: Fine up to 1 lakh
  - Subsequent offences: Fine up to 2 lakh.
- Dispensing medicines without being a registered pharmacist**
  - Punishment changed to fine up to 2 lakh or imprisonment up to 3 months (reduced).

**Regulation of Pharmacy Education in India** – Sets standards for D.Pharm, B.Pharm, M.Pharm and Pharm. D. courses.

**Approval of Pharmacy Colleges** – Inspects and approves institutions offering pharmacy programs across India.

**Implementation of E-office / Paperless function** of Council work.

**PRTS System and Student Portal** - Linked all students on Portal for more transparency in admissions process and linked with Single window registration systems for registration as Pharmacist.

### PROGRAMME HIGHLIGHTS

- Panel discussion by students on the theme of Pharma Anveshan 2026
- Panel discussion featuring experts from the pharmaceutical industry and academia
- Principals from Delhi NCR will participate in an interaction meeting with representatives of the Pharmacy Council of India.
- Informal interaction between industry representatives and academicians to explore collaborative opportunities
- Oral and poster presentations by students and researchers
- Patent and Innovation Showcase highlighting novel ideas and technological advancements
- Opportunity for participants to interact with academicians, industry experts, and innovators

### PHARMA ANVESHAN on 13th March, 2026

at  
**SGT College of Pharmacy, Shree Guru Gobind Singh Tricentenary University**  
Budhera, Gurugram-Badli Road, Gurugram- 122505, Haryana, India  
**Venue**  
Auditorium, S. Radhakrishnan Block (C-Block), 3rd Floor, Badli Road, Chandu-Budhera, Gurugram  
**Participants:**  
About 500 participants (Faculty/Research/Students/Industry/Regulatory/Professional Association members) from various Institutions in Delhi (NCR) State.

## SLEW OF DIRECTIONS ISSUED AT KEY CRIME MEETING

# Top cop flags rise in heinous crimes in Capital, fewer arrests

Approach JJB to treat minors involved in over two cases as adults: Golchha

Sakshi Chand  
New Delhi, March 12

THE CAPITAL has seen a worrying surge in heinous crimes — such as murder, attempt to murder, rape and offences under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act — even as the number of arrests in such matters has declined, Delhi Police Commissioner Satish Golchha flagged recently during a key crime meeting, *The Indian Express* has learnt. Intensify efforts to arrest

criminals involved in both heinous and street crimes, identify and act against individuals who flaunt weapons on social media, identify and act against those who instigate minors, trace source of firearms and take action against suppliers in firing incidents, identify individuals involved in running illegal 'satta' or betting operations — these were among the slew of directions Golchha issued at the meeting to officers concerned. Officers have been asked to identify juveniles involved in

### Major concerns

**Rate of conversion of PCR calls to cases:** Decline in North, Rohini and Dwarka districts

**Snatching cases:** Spike in Eastern Ranges

**Robbery cases:** Surge in North-East, Shahdara, South-East districts

**Rape, POCSO cases:** Surge in Central, East, Outer, North-East, South districts

criminal activities and counsel them. In cases where juveniles are involved in two or more offences, district DCPs have been asked to approach the Juvenile Justice Board and seek initiation of trial as adults wherever applicable. Officers have also been instructed to invoke provisions under the BNS and

the Juvenile Justice (JJ) Act, 2015, which penalise adults engaging minors in crimes

The top cop also directed all district Deputy Commissioners of Police (DCPs) to devote focused attention to pending cases of heinous crimes, and improve the detection rate for such incidents. The Special

Commissioner of Police (Law and Order) Zone-II has been asked to share information regarding the online sale of switchblade knives on e-commerce platforms

District police units have also been asked to devise strategies to curb firing incidents in their respective areas. In the directive, Golchha stated, "Those arrested in firing cases must be thoroughly questioned to identify the actual conspirators behind such incidents, while beat staff have been tasked with identifying persons carrying illegal firearms in their areas. Responsibility of beat staff will also be fixed in cases of preventable crimes within their beats."

The arrests in cases of street crimes — such as snatching, ex-

ortion, house theft and motor vehicle theft — have declined compared to the corresponding period last year, he underlined, said officers privy to the details.

The review also flagged a decline in the conversion rate of PCR calls into the cases registered in North, Rohini and Dwarka districts, compared to the corresponding period last year. District police have been directed to pay attention to the issue and ensure that petty quarrels are addressed at an early stage so that they do not escalate into serious offences and crimes.

He also noted an increase in robbery cases in North-East, Shahdara and South-East districts and asked the DCPs concerned to analyse the trend and

take corrective measures. Similarly, a rise in snatching incidents in the Eastern Range was highlighted, with the Joint Commissioner of Police (Eastern Range) asked to review the situation and implement measures to curb such offences.

During the review, it was found that cases of rape and offences under the POCSO Act have increased in Central, East, Outer, North-East and South districts.

The Commissioner further observed that the working-out percentage in burglary and house theft cases in some districts is not up to the mark and directed the concerned officers to improve detection in such cases. He also pointed out that the overall working-out per-

centage in motor vehicle theft cases is only around 9%, directing district police units to step up action under this category.

In addition, district DCPs have been directed to ensure that 100% e-Sakhya documentation is uploaded in cases of e-property theft and to focus on improving the overall working-out percentage in such cases.

Senior officers said the department will continue to monitor the situation closely and adopt a multi-pronged approach combining enforcement, community policing, and legal measures to address the worrying trends in crimes involving youth and urban violence.

A query sent to the Delhi Police spokesperson for a comment did not elicit a response.

## AS WAR RAGES IN MIDDLE EAST, GOVT ASSURES THERE IS NO SHORTAGE OF COOKING GAS

# LPG worry lines lengthen in city



Outside a gas agency in Delhi's Khichripur after it shut its doors for customers owing to a server issue. ABHINAV SAHA

People crowd LPG dealerships; some complain of delays, others seek backup cylinders fearing prolonged war, uncertainty

Neetika Jha  
New Delhi, March 12

LONG LINES and restless crowds continued to form outside dealerships and offices of LPG agencies across several parts of Delhi on Thursday.

There were impatient people who had tired of waiting for the gas they claimed they had booked several days ago, nervous people who had PNG connections but still wanted an LPG backup, and there were desperate people who said their kitchens had shut down because they'd run out of cooking gas.

Everyone wanted a cylinder. The panic and clamour was greater at gas agencies that served poorer neighbourhoods.



Many say their kitchens had shut down after they ran out of gas cylinders. ABHINAV SAHA

The disruption in global LPG supply chains due to the war in the Middle East has led to a crisis — driven, according to the central government, more by consumer anxiety and possible hoarding and panic-buying than by any actual supply shortages.

But the concerns expressed by those in the queues outside LPG dealerships appeared real.

At Dikshit Gas Seva, an Indane dealership in East Delhi's Khichripur, 23-year-old Vikas refused to leave like many others — and after a long, heated argument, managed to get a cylinder.

"I had booked online a week ago. It should have been delivered to my house on Mon-

day. I started to come here every day, and on the fourth day of visits, I finally got my cylinder," he said.

Thirty-five-year-old Seema complained she hadn't even been able to book her cylinder online. "I have also been trying to call the dealership for the last two days. I have now come in person, but I am being told there is no way other than to book online," she said.

An official at the dealership who gave his name as Satish claimed daily supply of gas cylinders had "come down to half" from the day after Holi, which was celebrated on March 4.

Another official, who gave his name as Vinay Kumar, said: "The number of cylinders has reduced. There are 2,500 bookings pending, and we do not have enough cylinders."

Kumar said that the number of LPG cylinders reaching the centre every day had come down from around 600 on average to only around 360. "Meanwhile, as the number of bookings have piled up, our server has stopped responding," he said.

The Delhi government, meanwhile, assured that the supply of LPG, petrol, diesel,

and PNG was normal across the NCR, and that there were no shortages of fuel.

At a dealership in Trilokpur, 42-year-old Shabana said her booking had been confirmed on March 5. "I waited for six days for a cylinder and then came to the agency, but I was told to come back another day," she said.

At a Bharat Petroleum office in East Delhi's Shakarpur, there was a line for the renewal of connections. "We are here to get our KYC done so we can get a new connection," said Neha (32), a resident of Laxmi Nagar. "Who knows when the PNG pipeline will run dry? Everything is so uncertain."

The situation at dealerships in more affluent South Delhi colonies was less chaotic. Unlike in areas of East Delhi, gas agencies in Green Park and Moti Bagh did not have long queues.

Jai Bhagwan Sharma, the owner of Bharat Gas Agency in Moti Bagh said: "We cater to around 6,000 customers in the area. We get 115 bookings every day on average. But today, we have had 315 bookings within a few hours. It is because people are panicking."

## Panic-buying in Gurgaon, eateries buy cylinders 'in black'

Abhimanyu Hazarika  
Gurgaon, March 12

EVEN AS Sunil Sareen of a high-rise in Gurgaon's Sector 102 said he received an LPG cylinder just a day after he placed the order, and Kundan Lal Sharma of a residential society in Sector 21 agreed, the situation is not the same everywhere in the Millennium City.

In the wake of the ongoing conflict in West Asia, the working class is ending up panic-buying and booking domestic LPG cylinders. Small eateries said they are being forced to either buy commercial cylinders in black or downsize menus and operational time. The crisis has also pushed the demand and price of electrical alternatives higher.

At Santosh Gas Agency in Sarhaul, near Udyog Vihar Phase 4, customers queued up on Thursday for not just getting bookings done, but with questions related to the crisis, said its proprietor. "People are arriving at agencies out of panic and looking to buy and book multiple cylinders at once. There are some 60 dealers in Gurgaon and all are facing this issue. We can deliver 300 cylinders a day, but are getting bookings for 900. We have not delivered a commercial cylinder in five days," said Ritesh Yadav.

A dealer in Sector 46 concurs. "Our delivery time has increased from 24 hours to three days now. But we expect things to get better in a day or two."

Bharat Yadav, president of the Haryana LPG Dealers Association, said: "Around 60% of Gurgaon's LPG is sourced from abroad. Hence the supply is affected. There is so far no issue with the delivery of domestic cylinders, but there is panic among people. We expect things to stabilise soon."

Many who work as domestic helps said they were booking cylinders fearing stock would finish soon. They were, however, informed regarding

the 25-day waiting period. "Those who want to stock up are purchasing extra cylinders in black, for Rs 3,500," said a worker in Sector 52.

People are also tapping into the black market for commercial cylinders.

Shopowners in the popular HUDA markets in sectors 31 and 40 admitted they have bought cylinders in black to stay afloat. "I bought one for Rs 2,300, while the rate is Rs 1,800," said the owner of an eatery operating in the Sector 31 market.

Staffers of a restaurant in the same market said they are mulling investment in a diesel *bhatti* (high-pressure gas stove). "Our dealer has said that we can only buy in black. For now, we have three left. We have removed *tawa roti* from the menu," a staffer said.

Food outlets are also considering limiting operation to peak business hours.

Akshit Behl, growth and investment head at Khadak Singh Da Dhaba, said: "None of our vendors are able to supply commercial cylinders. So we are switching to electric, to an extent. For some outlets, we have started operating only during the peak hours: 7-10 pm."

Another restaurant owner said that some outlets are able to cover the extra expense after buying cylinders in black as they see enough sales.

The sudden rise in demand for cylinders, meanwhile, has prompted many to buy induction cooktops. Users in Gurgaon Thursday said these cooktops are "out of stock" on quick commerce apps like Zepto, Swiggy Instamart and Blinkit.

A staffer at Happy Electric, Sushant Lok II, said: "We do not have inductions. But we have been receiving multiple enquiries from customers."

"At least 20 cooktops are being sold daily. Prices are rising. What we used to get for Rs 2,400 is now priced at Rs 3,100 and above," said Golu Tiwari of Anjana Electricals, Wazirabad.

## THE SUPPLY AND THE DEMAND

# HOW HOMES IN DELHI USE LPG AND PNG



Petroleum and Natural Gas Minister Hardeep Singh Puri

### DEPENDENCE ON THE GULF

India is the world's second biggest importer of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG). Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas Hardeep Singh Puri told Parliament on Thursday that India used to import approximately 60% of its requirement of LPG from Gulf countries such as Qatar, UAE, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait. However, over the past couple of years, LPG cargoes are being procured from the US, Norway, Canada, Algeria, and Russia as well. Even so, 90% of India's LPG imports continues to be dependent on West Asia and passage through the Strait of Hormuz. 40% of India's LPG demand is produced domestically. On March 8, the government directed all refineries to maximise LPG yields; in the last five days, LPG production has increased by 28%, Puri told Parliament.

### LPG CONSUMPTION IN INDIA

India consumed 33.15 million tonnes of LPG last year. As of July 1, 2025, the total number of active domestic LPG consumers in India stood at 33.05 crore, the government told Parliament in August 2025. The number of connections released under the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY) was 10.56 crore as of March 10, according to the PMUY portal.

### THE LPG DEMAND IN DELHI

The number of domestic LPG connections in Delhi stood at 51.78 lakh as on July 1, 2022, according to data presented by the government to Parliament on August 1, 2022. This included 35.41 lakh "double-bottle" connections. As of August 1, 2025, the total number of PMUY connections in Delhi was 2,59,054, according to data presented in Parliament on August 21 last year.

Assuming six 14.2-kg cylinders are supplied per year per domestic connection, the annual domestic demand in Delhi would work out to around 3.12 crore cylinders — or about 26 lakh cylinders per month. This estimate would not include the demand for commercial 19-kg cylinders that are typically used by restaurants, hotels, and eateries. According to industry estimates, restaurants in Delhi use between 2 and 6 commercial cylinders every day.

### PIPED GAS IN DELHI & NCR

A large section of the population of Delhi and the NCR uses piped natural gas (PNG), supplied by Indraprastha Gas Ltd (IGL) lines in housing societies and most well-off

neighbourhoods. According to Delhi government figures, there were 17.23 lakh PNG connections in the Capital as of 2025. PNG is produced by regasifying liquefied natural gas (LNG), which India imports mainly from Qatar, the UAE, the US and Oman.

# LPG supply uncertain, so a Noida restaurant experiments with induction

Veteran chefs are not used to working on these cooktops. This rhythm is new and the experience is unusual

Drishiti Jain  
Noida, March 12

ON WEDNESDAY evening in a Chinese restaurant in Noida's Sector 18, two chefs bent over the kitchen counter, working unusually hard to prepare a relatively simple order of vegetable hakka noodles.

The chefs are veterans of the kitchen — for years, they have stood in front of the large, roaring flame that is key to producing great Chinese dishes, their hands moving in fluid, natural motions.

What they are not used to is working with a heated plate, pressing buttons on the panel of an induction cooktop. This rhythm is new, the experience is unusual, and the chefs move uncertainly.

"It is tricky to cook a dish of noodles when you cannot toss the vegetables around in the wok, lifting and moving it over a superhot flame. As a result, the vegetables sometimes get soft and overcooked," said Rajak Karikar, who has been a chef for the past 10 years. Standing next to Karikar,

another chef advises him urgently to "increase the temperature" of the cooktop.

This is the kitchen of Baby Dragon, a popular multicuisine restaurant and bar that describes itself as a "local favourite since 2005".

On Tuesday, the restaurant's kitchen switched from LPG to cooking with electric devices, its owner having decided that he could no longer expect a steady supply of fuel as the ripple effects of the war in the West Asia continue to get stronger.



A chef at work inside the kitchen of Baby Dragon in Noida. GAJENDRA YADAV

On Tuesday, Baby Dragon acquired five new induction cooktops and special cookware for a total Rs 1 lakh for its kitchen.

"We need around 1.5-2 cylinders daily, but the supplier sent word yesterday morning that gas was out of stock and he would not be able to supply us with cylinders. So I ordered two induction cooktops from Amazon and three from a shop in Karol Bagh, along with utensils that are suitable for cooking on induction devices," said Vicky Saluja, the 57-year-old owner of Baby Dragon. "I had no option but to bite the bullet."

The introduction of electric devices in the kitchen has required Saluja to be extra care-

ful. "Whatever you cook, keep in mind that water does not come in contact with the induction device," Saluja instructed the team working in the kitchen on Wednesday.

Some Chinese dishes have been taken off the menu, and the four chefs are uneasy about the "rationalisation". "Chinese is our specialty, we have to find some way," said a chef.

But the show — and meals — must go on. "We are learning and adapting," said chef Satish Rautela (40), who has been working at the restaurant for the past five years.

"It will take 3-4 days to learn, as cooking on an induction device is different from cooking on a stove. There is a

difference when we cook pasta. Orders that took perhaps 15 minutes to prepare are now taking longer," he said.

Karikar said the real test would come during the weekend, when the kitchen has to serve more customers. "The capacity of the [induction] vessel is 22 litres, so we cannot prepare large quantities in one go. If 20 kg of potatoes have to be boiled for a gravy, we will have to do it in three batches," he said.

Saluja said he hopes that normalcy is restored soon, so that he has the option of running the kitchen with both LPG and induction devices. "I have been calculating the expenses since yesterday, let's see how it pans out."

# India co-sponsors resolution at UNSC condemning Iran attacks on Gulf nations

Shubhajit Roy  
New Delhi, March 12

AS THE conflict in West Asia rages, India and Pakistan have been found to be on opposite sides of the divide, but there was an exception.

New Delhi co-sponsored a resolution (Resolution 2817) at the UN Security Council that condemned the "egregious" attacks by Iran against Gulf Cooperation Council countries and Jordan and demanded immediate cessation of all attacks by Tehran while denouncing its threats of closure of the Strait of Hormuz. The 15-nation UN Security Council, currently under the presidency of the United States, adopted the resolution on Wednesday with 13 votes in favour, none against and abstentions by veto-wielding permanent members China and Russia.

The 13-0 vote at the UNSC saw China and Russia — two Iranian allies — abstaining from Wednesday's vote, allowing it to be approved.

India co-sponsored the Bahrain-led resolution along with over 130 nations including Australia, Austria, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Canada, Egypt, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Japan, Kuwait, Malaysia, Maldives, Myanmar, New Zealand, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Spain, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, UK, US, Yemen and Zambia.

The resolution, which had a total of 135 co-sponsors, reiterated its strong support for the territorial integrity, sovereignty and political independence of Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Jordan.

It condemned in the strongest terms the egregious attacks by Iran against the territories of Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Jordan and determined that such acts constitute a breach of international law and are a serious threat to international peace and security.

The resolution demanded immediate cessation of all at-

tacks by Iran against the GCC countries and Jordan. It called upon Tehran to "immediately and unconditionally" cease from any provocation or threats to neighbouring states, including the use of proxies.

It reaffirmed that the exercise of navigational rights and freedoms by merchant and commercial vessels, in accordance with international law, must be respected, particularly around critical maritime routes, and takes note of the right of member states, in accordance with international law, to "defend their vessels from attacks and provocations, including those that undermine navigational rights and freedoms".

The resolution condemned any actions or threats by Iran aimed at closing, obstructing, or otherwise interfering with international navigation through the Strait of Hormuz, or threatening maritime security in the Bab Al Mandab, the strait between Yemen on the Arabian Peninsula and Djibouti and Eritrea in the Horn of Africa.

The resolution further condemned the attack on residential areas and civilian centres and expressed solidarity with the affected countries and their people. It called upon Iran to comply fully with its obligations under international law, including international humanitarian law, particularly regarding the protection of civilians and civilian objects in armed conflict.

The UNSC also voted on a draft resolution submitted by Russia. The draft text failed to be adopted because it did not garner the nine favourable votes required. The one-page text made no mention of Iran, Israel, the US or the Gulf states — the countries involved in the conflict — but simply urged cessation of military activities.

It received four votes in favour (China, Russia, Pakistan and Somalia), two votes against (Latvia and the US), and nine abstentions. Many nations called it hypocritical for Russia to call for an end to hostilities at a time when it was waging a war against Ukraine.

# Kerala ex-minister Sudhakaran quits CPM

Shaju Philip  
Thiruvananthapuram, March 12



G Sudhakaran says he will contest the Assembly polls as an independent

IN A major setback for the ruling CPI(M), veteran leader and former four-term minister G Sudhakaran on Thursday declared that he would contest the coming Assembly elections as an Independent.

A prominent CPI(M) leader from Alappuzha district, the former four-term legislator will contest from Ambalappuzha constituency that he represented from 2006 to 2016 before being dropped by the party. Ambalappuzha is a CPI(M) strong-

hold that has elected veterans such as VS Achuthanandan and Susheela Gopalan in the past.

Sudhakaran told the media in Alappuzha he had quit the

CPI(M). "I will contest as an Independent candidate in Ambalappuzha. At the same time, I have not abandoned the Communist ideology and politics. For the CPI(M), politics is the only weapon. I do not have the support of any party so far. I will not join any other party or will seek the support of other parties. I will remain a Communist. I am not going to surrender. If anyone attacks me personally, I will hit back. The party will perish if the party attacks me personally," he said.

"My contest will be against the criminalisation of politics. It will be a major issue that I will

raise during campaigning," he said. Last week, Sudhakaran said in a Facebook post that he would not renew his party membership. Since then, the CPI(M) reached out to Sudhakaran to pacify him, but he did not budge from his stand.

A member of the party since 1967, Sudhakaran was the first state president and founding member of the SFI, the students' wing of the CPI(M). While serving as a minister in the Vijayan government from 2016 to 2021 and the V S Achuthanandan government from 2006 to 2011, Sudhakaran was known for his fight against corruption

# 'Bengal loves those who love Bengal': Mamata message to Governor Ravi

Atri Mitra  
Kolkata, March 12

DAYS AFTER describing him as "BJP cadre" and warning him against repeating "what he did in Tamil Nadu", West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Thursday welcomed newly sworn-in Governor R N Ravi with a pointed message: "Bengal loves those who love Bengal."

Soon after he was administered the oath of office by Calcutta High Court Chief Justice Sujoy Paul at Lok Bhavan in Kolkata, Ravi walked up to the chief minister to greet her and introduced his wife.

Banerjee presented Ravi with the traditional Bengali 'uttoriya' (stole) and said: "Please see Bengal... Bengal loves those who love Bengal." Ravi described Kolkata as the country's cultural capital and noted that it had



Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee congratulates Governor R N Ravi in Kolkata. PARTHA PAUL

critical periods of foreign invasions and occupation, which systematically threatened our culture and identity, this land gave birth to numerous great persons and divine souls." The oath-taking ceremony at the Sardar Patel Unity Hall was attended by several senior officials and leaders, Speaker Biman Banerjee, Kolkata Mayor Firhad Hakim, and Left Front chairman Biman Bose.

However, no senior BJP leader, including Leader of Opposition Suvendu Adhikari, was present at the event. Sources said that state BJP chief Samik Bhattacharya and Adhikari were in Delhi to attend the party's central leadership meeting on West Bengal Assembly elections due in a few weeks. BJP leader Anirban Ganguly represented the party at the oath-taking ceremony.

# Experts say don't dilute rules that bar transpersons from giving blood: Govt

New Delhi: The Centre on Thursday informed the Supreme Court that experts have opined against dilution of guidelines that bar transgenders, gay men and sex workers from donating blood.

The Centre told a bench of CJI Surya Kant and Justices Jyotsna Banerjee and Vipul M Panchohi that following the apex court's direction passed last May, experts have reconsidered the issue. "There is a reconsidered opinion that if this ban is diluted, it will be injurious to others," ASG Aishwarya Bhati, appearing for the Centre, said.

The SC was hearing pleas challenging the 2017 guidelines that exclude transgender individuals, men having sex with men, and female sex workers from being blood donors. PTI

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<b>DCIL invites applications for the post of</b>	
<b>Post</b>	<b>Vacancy</b>
<b>Executive Director ( Finance )</b>	<b>01</b>
For detailed advertisement and submission of online applications, please visit our website <a href="https://www.dredge-india.com/career">https://www.dredge-india.com/career</a>	
<b>Commencement of online Application</b>	<b>18.03.2026 from 10.00 Hrs</b>
<b>Last date for submission of online application</b>	<b>08.04.2026 till 18.00 Hrs</b>

## RECRUITMENT FOR THE POSITION OF VICE-CHANCELLOR

**THE SEARCH-CUM-SELECTION COMMITTEE INVITES APPLICATIONS FOR THE POST OF VICE-CHANCELLOR AT NICMAR UNIVERSITY, PUNE.**

The National Institute of Construction Management and Research (NICMAR) is a pioneering organisation for the promotion of education, training, research, professionalism, and skill formation at all levels of the construction and other allied industries. NICMAR is an independent, autonomous, non-government, non-profit entity incorporated in India in September 1983 as a Society and a public Trust. NICMAR established a self-financed private university, "NICMAR University" at Pune in 2022, governed by the Maharashtra Private Universities Act, 2023 (Mah. Act No. VIII of 2024).

NICMAR is in the process of appointing a **Vice-Chancellor for NICMAR University, Pune**, to lead the university. The Hon'ble President of the University has constituted a Search-Cum-Selection Committee, which invites applications from eminent academicians who fulfil the qualifications and experience prescribed under UGC regulations for the post of Vice-Chancellor.

- A person possessing the highest level of competence, integrity, morals, and institutional commitment is to be appointed as Vice-Chancellor. The person shall be a distinguished academician with a minimum of 10 years of experience as Professor in a university or in a reputed research and/or academic administrative organisation, with proof of having demonstrated academic leadership and experience in educational planning and administration of national and international level.
- The minimum qualifications and eligibility shall be as per UGC regulations, details of which are available on the NICMAR University website. However, the Committee reserves the right to shortlist candidates based on institutional alignment. It is desirable that the applicant is from the Construction/Built Environment Sector as the University specialises in this field and offers only courses and programmes related to Construction/Built Environment Sector.
- The candidate must not exceed 65 years of age as at the closing date of this advertisement.
- Applications and nominations from eligible candidates must be submitted through the online form along with cover letter, latest resume & required supporting documents on or before **03 April 2026 at 5:00 P.M.** Please follow this link to access the online form - <https://connect.nicmar.ac.in/pune/careers>

**Search-Cum-Selection Committee**  
NICMAR University Pune

# EYE ON GLAUCOMA

ADVERTORIAL

## The Silent Thief of Sight and India's Growing Response



**G**laucoma is one of the leading causes of irreversible blindness worldwide. **The tragedy? It is detectable. The solution? Early screening.** That is the message driving a nationwide campaign led by Sightsavers India in partnership with AbbVie Therapeutics India Pvt Ltd under the Netra Vasant - Rural Eye Health Programme.

Because when it comes to vision, prevention is power.

**From Awareness to Action: A 5-State Movement, which began in 2025**

The Campaign launched in 2025, began with a mission to create awareness on Glaucoma among rural and urban communities of India.

Centred around the theme "*Eye on Glaucoma: Early Detection, Better Protection*," the campaign travelled across:

- Bhubaneswar (Odisha)
- Lucknow (Uttar Pradesh)
- Bhopal (Madhya Pradesh)
- Bengaluru (Karnataka)
- Patna (Bihar)

**Culminating in a National Consultation in Delhi.**

Across:

- 27 screening camps and 6 consultations
- 5,339 individuals screened for glaucoma
- 139 additional outreach camps
- 16,214 individuals screened
- 1,525 cataract surgeries facilitated
- 1,806 spectacles distributed

Through radio campaigns, digital engagement, an interactive microsite, and on-ground screening kiosks, the campaign achieved:

- 22.5 million digital impressions
- 2.4 million estimated reach via print coverage

This was not just awareness - it was measurable action.



tions - particularly individuals above 40 - with timely screening and referrals.

The first state-level consultation of the year was successfully held in Ahmedabad on 7 March 2026, bringing together policymakers, clinicians, public health experts and media representatives to advance the glaucoma dialogue in Gujarat. At the consultation held in Ahmedabad, the panel members emphasised the need for stronger public awareness, integration of glaucoma screening into primary healthcare and vision centres, capacity building of eye care personnel, and improved patient counselling to ensure adherence to lifelong treatment, alongside greater collaboration across government, NGOs, academia, and eye care organisations.

The campaign will culminate this phase with its second major consultation in Jaipur on 22 March 2026, further strengthening cross-sector collaboration in Rajasthan.

Because awareness cannot be seasonal; it must be sustained.

**Why is glaucoma such a pressing public health issue in India today?**

**RN Mohanty, CEO of Sightsavers India:** Glaucoma is often called the "silent thief of sight" because it progresses without symptoms until significant vision is lost. In a country like India, where routine preventive check-ups are still not a habit, this makes it particularly dangerous. With an ageing population and uneven access to specialist care, undetected glaucoma can quietly contribute to irreversible blindness, especially among vulnerable communities.

**Suresh Pattathil, Managing Director & General Manager, AbbVie Therapeutics India Pvt Ltd.:** Glaucoma represents a significant but under-recognised burden within non-communicable diseases. Its asymptomatic progression makes it particularly challenging from a public health management perspective. As a healthcare company, we see a clear need to prioritise structured screening, awareness and earlier risk identification to reduce preventable vision loss at scale.

**What makes early detection so critical in preventing blindness?**

**RN Mohanty, CEO of Sightsavers India:** Vision lost to glaucoma cannot be restored, but it can be preserved if detected early. The challenge is that people do not experience warning signs in the initial stages. That is why proactive screening, especially for those above 40, is essential. Early detection allows timely treatment and monitoring, preventing progression to avoidable blindness.

**Suresh Pattathil, Managing Director & General Manager, AbbVie Therapeutics India Pvt Ltd.:** From a clinical standpoint, glaucoma-related vision loss is irreversible. The only effective strategy is timely diagnosis and sustained management. Early detection reduces long-term disease burden, lowers treatment complexity and improves

quality-of-life outcomes. Supporting preventive screening aligns with our broader commitment to advancing patient outcomes through early intervention.

**What brought Sightsavers India and AbbVie India together for this campaign?**

**RN Mohanty, CEO of Sightsavers India:** The partnership is rooted in complementary strengths. Sightsavers India brings decades of experience in community-based eye health, including our Rural Eye Health Programme, which is present across 10 states and more than 100 districts. This gives us deep grassroots reach, trusted community networks and implementation scale within public systems.

At the same time, corporate partners bring visibility, strategic resources and the ability to elevate glaucoma within mainstream health conversations. When development expertise in last-mile delivery combines with corporate leadership and investment, it creates both scale and sustainability.

**Suresh Pattathil, Managing Director & General Manager, AbbVie Therapeutics India Pvt Ltd.:** As a corporate organisation, we aim to invest in high-impact CSR initiatives that are scalable, measurable and aligned with national health priorities. Partnering with an experienced implementation organisation allows us to translate strategic investment into structured on-ground action.

**How does this collaboration go beyond awareness into measurable impact?**

**RN Mohanty, CEO of Sightsavers India:** Awareness is only the first step. This collaboration is structured around screening numbers, suspected case identification, referral completion and linkage with government facilities. By embedding camps within public health centres and strengthening referral pathways, the initiative ensures that people

identified at risk are connected to continued care translating outreach into tangible health outcomes.

**Suresh Pattathil, Managing Director & General Manager, AbbVie Therapeutics India Pvt Ltd.:** Awareness creates conversation, but impact comes when the private sector steps in with sustained engagement. By supporting structured, city-level implementation and aligning with public health priorities, we are contributing to a broader ecosystem where preventive eye health is consistently prioritised - not only during campaigns but as part of ongoing healthcare dialogue. Responsible CSR is about long-term engagement, credibility and shared accountability, and this partnership is designed with that continuity in mind.

**If you had one message for families with members above 40, what would it be?**

**RN Mohanty, CEO of Sightsavers India:** If there is one thing I would emphasise from years of working in eye health, it is this: do not wait for symptoms. Glaucoma is silent, and by the time vision is affected, the loss is permanent.

For every family with members above 40, make an annual comprehensive eye examination a non-negotiable health habit just like checking blood pressure or sugar levels. Encourage your parents and elders to prioritise it, accompany them if needed, and treat preventive eye care as a shared family responsibility.

**Suresh Pattathil, Managing Director & General Manager, AbbVie Therapeutics India Pvt Ltd.:** As families, we routinely plan for financial security and regular health check-ups, and eye health deserves the same attention. A simple comprehensive eye examination after the age of 40 can make a lasting difference in preserving independence and quality of life.

**Why Glaucoma Demands Urgency**

At a national consultation in Delhi held in March 2025, experts warned that nearly **1.5 million people become visually impaired or blind due to glaucoma**, with a significant proportion undiagnosed until advanced stages.

Dr. Suneeta Dubey, a leading glaucoma specialist, emphasised that while glaucoma is irreversible, it is manageable - if caught early.

**Challenges identified included:**

- Low public awareness
- Poor treatment adherence
- Limited rural diagnostics
- Shortage of trained glaucoma specialists
- Lack of dedicated national screening programs

The solution? Move from reactive care to preventive screening. Leaders across states reinforced the urgency of collaboration.

Government representatives from Bihar, Madhya

Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka and Odisha emphasised policy integration and public-private partnerships as critical to reducing preventable blindness.

From Delhi to Bengaluru, a unified message emerged:

**Vision care must move from episodic treatment to systemic prevention.**

**Looking Ahead**

If 2025 laid the foundation, 2026 is about accelerating impact.

The campaign has already entered its next phase with sustained public engagement and expanded on-ground action. Since the beginning of 2026, glaucoma screening camps have been conducted across multiple locations, continuing the effort to reach at-risk popula-



## Out of House, Out of Mind

CONGRESS MP Hibi Eden and seven other INDIA bloc MPs, who have been suspended for the entire Budget Session for "unruly behaviour", have been protesting outside Parliament for the past several days. On Wednesday, Eden got a chance to convey his frustration to Prime Minister Narendra Modi who was in Kochi to inaugurate the golden jubilee celebrations of All Kerala Dheevara Sabha, an organisation of Dheevara community, a fishing caste group. Seeing Eden at the event, the PM asked why he was not in the Capital to attend the Parliament session. Eden, who travelled to Kerala for a day to take part in the function, said: "You have suspended me, Sir... *wapas liya nahi* (haven't taken me back)."

## Speaker among 'Chaudharys'

SPEAKER OM BIRLA, while calling out names of ministers for tabling papers, called Union Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal as "Arjun Ram Chaudhary". Looking at a stunned Meghwal, who was to lay the business papers in place of his colleague Tokhan Sahu, Birla realised his mistake. "Sorry... *Chaudharyon ke beech mein rehne hain na* (I stay among Chaudharys)," the Speaker said, triggering a wave of laughter in the House.

## Dent in ties?

A MINOR car mishap became the talking point among Congress MPs in Parliament on Thursday as senior Congress leader K C Venugopal's four-wheeler brushed former Union minister Anand Sharma's parked car on the premises. Sharma, who was sitting in the car, escaped unhurt. Though Venugopal was not present in his vehicle at the time of the incident, Congress leaders were heard joking about how the car mishap involving the two leaders, who are not very fond of each other, may dent their relations further.



## What's brewing?

Union Minister Nitin Gadkari, Aam Aadmi Party MP Raghav Chadha and others in Parliament on Thursday. PTI

## Bid on Farooq life a matter of great concern: Nadda in RS

Express News Service  
New Delhi, March 12

THE CENTRE Thursday said the murderous attack on Farooq Abdullah is a matter of great concern, adding that all necessary steps will be taken to ensure his security. Leader of the House and Union Minister J P Nadda said the government is taking the assassination bid with utmost seriousness.

This was in reply to Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge's allegation that there seemed to be a conspiracy to kill Abdullah, blaming revocation of J&K's statehood for the incident. Nadda said a thorough probe is being conducted to ascertain the motive of the arrested assassin and to prevent any such security lapse in the future. He said: "Reaching a conclusion that this happened because (J&K) was not given statehood... and making allegations that there is in a way a conspiracy being hatched to kill him... is condemnable."

Also, Opposition members slammed the Centre for replacing MGNREGA with the Viksit Bharat-Guarantee for Rozgar and Aajeevika Mission (Gramin) Act - VB-G RAM G. In the Upper House, Congress MP Shaktisinh Gohil said: "...MGNREGA gave jobs to poor people in villages... now you say the states will give money (for the scheme under VB-G RAM G). From where will the states get money?"

Congress MP Imran Pratapgarhi said, "...You want to end MGNREGA by putting the burden on the states."

## 'A DECLINE DESPITE RISING URBANISATION' House panel sounds alarm as urban development budget hits five-year low

Damini Nath  
New Delhi, March 12

A PARLIAMENTARY Standing Committee Thursday flagged the decreasing share of allocations for the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) to the lowest in five years, at 1.6% of the 2026-2027 Budget Estimates (BE), at a time when urbanisation is increasing.

The Standing Committee on Housing and Urban Affairs, chaired by Magunta Sreenivasulu Reddy, presented its report on the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs' Demands for Grants (2026-2027) in the Lok Sabha Thursday.

The committee noted that "despite increasing urbanisation and rising demand for housing, water supply, sanitation and urban transport, the Ministry's relative share in the Central Budget has declined and its projections are routinely curtailed at the approval stage except in FY 2025-26."

While the total outlay of the Union government has increased from Rs 39.44 lakh crore in 2022-2023 to Rs 53.47 lakh crore in 2026-2027, the Ministry's share has not increased proportionately, the report said. In fact, the Ministry's share has gone down from 1.94% of the Budget in 2022-2023 to 1.6% in 2026-2027 — the

### Urban development budget

(Numbers in ₹)

Year	Budget Estimates	Revised Estimates	Actual expenditure
2022-23	76,549.46 cr	74,545.64 cr	74,107.67 cr
2023-24	76,431.60 cr	69,270.72 cr	68,796.61 cr
2024-25	82,576.57 cr	63,669.93 cr	53,258.86 cr
2025-26	96,777.00 cr	57,203.78 cr	40,967.62 cr*
2026-27	85,522.39 cr	--	--

\*As on Feb 20

lowest in five years.

"Further, against the projected outlay of Rs 97,644.51 crore for 2026-27, the approved Budget Estimate is Rs 85,522.39 crore, reflecting a reduction of Rs 12,122.12 crore (12.41%). The Committee also note that such reductions between projected outlay and approved Budget Estimates have been persistent over the years i.e. 22.82% in 2022-23, 11.52% in 2023-24 and 17.25% in 2024-25, with the only exception being the year 2025-26," the report said.

The committee noted that persistent gaps between the projected outlay and the budget allocations were linked to the utilisation of funds. The committee said the gap between the BE, Revised Estimates (RE), and Actual Expenditure had

"widened significantly in recent years".

"While utilisation remained close to RE in 2022-23 and 2023-24, the position deteriorated in 2024-25 and 2025-26. In 2025-26, the BE of Rs 96,777 crore was sharply reduced at RE stage to Rs 57,203.78 crore (a reduction of nearly 40%). The actual expenditure as on 20.02.2026 stands at Rs 40,967.62 crore, which is only 71.62% of RE implying that nearly 28.38% of the revised allocation is to be spent in the last 39 days of the financial year," the report said.

The committee recommended that the Ministry adopt a more realistic mechanism to come up with budget estimates and to present a time-bound plan for increasing its share in the Union Budget.

## NCTE wants school education dept's presence in key panel

Express News Service  
New Delhi, March 12

THE NATIONAL Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) is learnt to have told a joint committee of Parliament that the Department of School Education and Literacy (DoSEL) should have a presence in the higher education commission that will be set up under the Viksit Bharat

Shiksha Adhishthan (VBSA) Bill. The NCTE is learnt to have suggested that the DoSEL's role be defined in VBSA, since the Department is a major stakeholder in teacher education. A 31-member joint panel of Parliament, which is considering the Bill, met representatives of the NCTE, the University Grants Commission (UGC), the All India Council for Technical Edu-

cation (AICTE), and the Council of Architecture Thursday.

The Bill, introduced in the winter session of Parliament and then referred to the committee, effectively seeks to merge the UGC, NCTE, and AICTE, and set up an umbrella body with three councils that will perform regulatory, standard-setting, and accreditation functions for higher education. The Bill is in line with

the NEP 2020, which recommends a single higher education regulator.

The NCTE is learnt to have told the joint committee that the DoSEL should have a presence in the VBSA (the higher education commission), to ensure quality of teacher education institutions. It has said that this will strengthen the coherence between teacher prepara-

tion and enhancing learning outcomes of students, which is the mandate of the DoSEL. The joint committee, with D Purandeswari as the chairperson, is likely to present its report on the Bill in the last week of the monsoon session of Parliament.

Introduced in winter session, Opposition MPs had objected to the Bill saying that it could lead to "excessive centralisation".

# Birla: Rules apply to all, no MP can speak any time on any thing

Express News Service  
New Delhi, March 12

RETURNING TO THE House a day after the motion to remove him from office was defeated, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla on Thursday sought to emphasise that freedom of speech in Parliament is guaranteed, but subject to the Constitution, rules and standing orders regulating its procedure. Birla said it was incumbent on everyone from the Prime Minister and his Cabinet colleagues to Members of the Opposition to follow these rules.

He also noted that the House had spent 12 hours debating the resolution to remove him — the third such motion of its kind in the history of the nation — instead of conducting official business, proposing that the hours of its functioning be increased for the remainder of its scheduled sittings to compensate for the lost time.

"I listened carefully and attentively to every Honourable Member. I sincerely thank all Members of this House, whether they expressed their views in support or offered suggestions through criticism. This is the essence of democracy: every voice is heard and every viewpoint holds value," he said.

Responding to the broader concerns raised over his official conduct, Birla sought to address each point, especially in relation to opportunities for Members to speak, clarifying that all MPs



Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla in Parliament on Thursday. ANI

must follow procedures. "Some Members believe that the Leader of the Opposition may stand at any time and speak on any subject of their choice as a special privilege. I wish to clarify that the House functions according to the rules framed by the House. These rules apply equally to every Member," he said.

"The rules according to which the House runs have been made by the House itself, not by the government or the Opposition. I have inherited these rules... When the Prime Minister or ministers want to speak on a matter of public importance, they (too) have to seek agreement from the Speaker. A notice has to be given," he said.

In response to allegations that microphones of Opposition Members were switched off by the Chair, Birla sought to clarify that "the Chair does not have any button to switch microphones on or off". "The system in the House activates the microphone only of the Member who has

been granted permission to speak," he said.

"This Chair does not belong to any person. It is a symbol of India's democratic traditions, the spirit of the Constitution and the prestige of this great institution. My predecessors strengthened the dignity and traditions of this House, and it is my constant endeavour to ensure that its prestige continues to grow."

Responding to concerns regarding respect for women MPs, Birla sought to underscore "deep respect for all women Members". "My endeavour has always been to ensure that every woman Member gets the opportunity to speak in this House. During my tenure, every woman Member, including first-time MPs, has had the opportunity to express her views," he said.

Seeking to negate claims that Opposition Members were not given adequate opportunity in debates, Birla cited data related to proceedings from recent Lok Sabhas, adding that despite speaking time being viewed in proportion to numerical strength, Opposition MPs have "often received more time" than allocated during major debates.

"I frequently extend the time allotted for debates and Zero Hour so that more Members can express their views," he said, even as he criticised the "disruptive behaviour" in the House — especially sloganeering, displaying placards, tearing papers and approaching the Well.

## Fuel crisis & US 'influence': Opp, Govt lock horns in LS yet again

Deeptiman Tiwary & Jatin Anand  
New Delhi, March 12

THE LOK Sabha on Thursday witnessed stormy scenes after Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi raised allegations against Union Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas Hardeep Singh Puri while speaking on the country's energy crisis.

Gandhi had given notice to speak on the energy crisis arising from the war in West Asia. Beginning his speech around 4 pm, he warned that the conflict involving the United States, Israel and Iran could have "far-reaching consequences" for India's energy security. Referring to the disruptions around the Strait of Hormuz, he said the situation could severely affect India because a large portion of its oil and natural gas imports move through the route.

"The pain has just started," Gandhi said, adding that there was already anxiety around LPG supply. He accused the government of allowing the US to "influence" India's decisions on buying oil. "I do not say this lightly, but allowing the US to decide who we buy oil, gas from... whether we buy oil from Russia or not, whether our relationship with different oil suppliers can be decided by us, this is what has been bartered," he said.

After a few minutes, Gandhi shifted his remarks to the "oil minister". Hardeep Puri was sit-



LoP Rahul Gandhi wears Konyak Nag ornaments, Thursday. PTI

ting in the House.

Gandhi's remarks triggered protests from the Treasury benches, with ministers Kiren Rijju, Piyush Goyal, Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, Arjun Ram Meghwal and Pralhad Joshi objecting to the claims. Birla intervened, reminding Gandhi that he had been allowed to speak on the LPG crisis and could not raise unrelated issues.

When Gandhi continued to speak, Birla stopped him and asked Puri to reply on the energy situation. This prompted the Congress members to storm into the Well of the House and raise slogans. As Puri spoke about the government's steps to deal with energy pressures, the Congress MPs continued their slogans. After a few minutes, Gandhi left the House.

When Puri finished his speech, Birla addressed the pro-

testing members. "The LoP had given a notice to speak on the LPG issue. But he started speaking on other issues. This is not the way," he said.

Soon after, Birla left the House and BJP MP Jagdambika Pal took the Chair. The commotion, however, continued.

As Pal requested the members to take their seats, Congress MP KC Venugopal was seen animatedly making a point to the Chair. Pal said he would allow Venugopal to speak if he asked the Congress members to return to their seats. Venugopal gestured to the Members to leave the Well and they did. Pal then said BJP MP Nishikant Dubey, who had given a notice, would speak first, after which Venugopal would be allowed. The move appeared to have caught Venugopal by surprise.

Dubey launched a sharp attack on the Congress, calling Gandhi the "leader of propaganda" and accusing him of receiving funds from a foreign philanthropist for the Bharat Jodo Yatra. He also alleged that Congress MPs had been "having a picnic" at Makar Dwar while protesting over LPG prices and went on to accuse the Gandhi family of creating Pakistan. With Opposition members protesting again, Pal adjourned the House for 10 minutes at 4.50 pm.

Venugopal appeared visibly upset as he did not get a chance to speak. He did not return when the House reconvened at 5 pm.

● RENEWED 'LEGACY COMPETITION' AHEAD OF BAHUJAN SAMAJ PARTY FOUNDER KANSHI RAM'S BIRTH ANNIVERSARY ON MARCH 15

## 'Kiske Kanshi Ram?': UP parties vie for BSP founder's legacy as 2027 polls loom

Maulshree Seth  
Lucknow, March 12

WITH THE birth anniversary of Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) founder Kanshi Ram, March 15, just days away, a familiar but politically loaded question is resurfacing in Uttar Pradesh's discourse: "Kiske Kanshi Ram (whose is Kanshi Ram)?"

From the Congress to the Samajwadi Party (SP) to Dalit leader and Aazad Samaj Party (Kanshi Ram) Chandrashekhar Azad, and the BSP itself, almost every political formation in the state is seeking to invoke the legacy of the leader, who is seen to have reshaped Dalit politics in north India. The renewed competition comes as parties recalibrate their outreach to Dalits ahead of the 2027 Uttar

Pradesh Assembly elections.

The latest entrant in this jostle is LoP Rahul Gandhi. Increasingly vocal on issues such as caste census, reservation and social justice, Gandhi is expected to invoke Kanshi Ram's legacy during his outreach in Lucknow on March 13. Congress leaders say the effort is part of a broader attempt by the party to reconnect with the Dalit support base it once commanded before the rise of the BSP. "For the Congress, invoking Kanshi Ram carries particular significance. The party lost a large portion of its traditional Dalit support in Uttar Pradesh after the rise of the BSP in the 1990s. Gandhi's outreach — centred on social justice, caste census and representation — is

widely seen as an attempt to reclaim some of that political space," a Congress leader said.

The symbolism is not accidental. Kanshi Ram's slogan — "Jiski jini sankhya bhari, uski utni bhagidari" (the greater a group's population, the greater its share (in power or representation)) — mirrors the language Gandhi has been using while advocating social justice, a caste census, and proportional representation, especially his "jini abaadi, utna haq" (Rights proportional to numbers)" slogan. Congress leaders pointed out that the party had launched a campaign among Scheduled Castes (SCs) on Kanshi Ram's birth anniversary two years ago. This year, Gandhi is expected to mark the occasion by interacting

with the party's Dalit leaders as well as representatives from social sectors and intellectual circles.

Similar echoes can be seen in the political messaging of the SP. Kanshi Ram's idea of the "Bahujan" social coalition is often com-

pared to the SP's more recent formulation of Pichhda, Dalit, Alp-sankhyak (backward, Dalit, minorities) plank, which yielded rich dividends in the 2024 Lok Sabha polls. The party hopes that its PDA plank will help con-

solidate votes in its favour ahead of the Assembly elections.

"Kanshi Ram spoke of the "Bahujan" — a broad alliance of Dalits, Other Backward Classes (OBCs) and minorities. Today, SP's PDA formula is widely seen as drawing from the same social arithmetic Kanshi Ram articulated," said an SP leader.

Party leaders also say Kanshi Ram's legacy remains relevant even for parties such as the SP despite past political friction. During earlier SP governments, there were allegations that institutions named after Kanshi Ram had been renamed. Yet the influence of the social coalition he envisioned continues to shape political strategies. On March 15, SP chief Akhilesh Yadav planned events in Lucknow.

A total of 84 Assembly seats

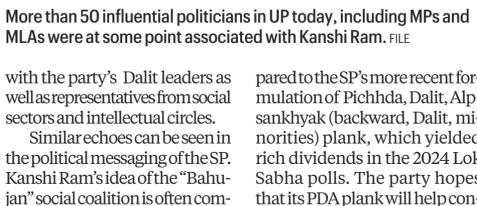
of the state's 403 are reserved for SCs. In the 2022 polls, the BJP won 58 of these seats while the SP 16 while the Congress failed to win even a single of these seats. Of the state's 80 Lok Sabha seats, the BJP won eight of the state's 17 SC-reserved seats while the Congress won one. The SP emerged victorious in seven.

Meanwhile, BSP chief Mayawati is expected to observe the anniversary on March 15 through party programmes, while Azad is likely to hold a rally around the anniversary in Agra.

Each of these initiatives reflects an attempt to connect with Kanshi Ram's ideological and social base — particularly Dalits and other marginalised groups.

The scramble for the BSP founder's legacy is striking as Kanshi Ram had sharply criti-

cised most mainstream political parties during his lifetime, positioning the BSP as an independent vehicle for Bahujan assertion. Yet decades later, leaders across these very parties are invoking his ideas and political symbolism.



More than 50 influential politicians in UP today, including MPs and MLAs were at some point associated with Kanshi Ram. FILE

**NATIONAL LAW UNIVERSITY AND JUDICIAL ACADEMY, ASSAM**  
(ESTABLISHED BY ASSAM ACT NO.XIV OF 2009)  
HAJO ROAD, AMINGAON, GUWAHATI-781031

Advt No. NLUJAA/ESTT/F/RECRUITMENT/IFS/2026/001 Date:11.03.2026

**RECRUITMENT NOTICE**

National Law University and Judicial Academy, Assam invites applications for the following Regular/Permanent positions:

Sl. No	Name of the post	No. of posts	Reservation
1	Professor of Law	02	UR
2	Associate Professor of Law	04	SC(01),UR(03)
3	Assistant Professor of Law	02	1 UR(PwD), 01 (UR)
4	Assistance Professor of Political Science	01	01 (UR)

Last Date for receipt of Application: 30.04.2026

For further details, minimum qualifications, experience and application form please visit [www.nluassam.ac.in](http://www.nluassam.ac.in).

Sd/- Registrar

**COEP TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY**  
Shivajinagar, Pune - 411 005  
(A Unitary Public University of Government of Maharashtra)  
Tel: 020-2550 7000/09 website : [www.coeptech.ac.in](http://www.coeptech.ac.in)

**Non-Vacation "Tenured Associate & Assistant Professors" on 3-Years tenure (Purely Contract) basis and Contractual Assistant Professors on 11 - months basis across various Departments of the University**

COEP Technological University Pune invites applications from dynamic, eligible and qualified candidates with passion towards research and academics to work as **Non-Vacation "Tenured Associate & Assistant Professors"**, on 3-Years tenure (Purely Contract) basis on dying positions and **Contractual Assistant Professors on 11-months basis** in the various Departments in the University. Please visit University website ([www.coeptech.ac.in/recruitment](http://www.coeptech.ac.in/recruitment)) for requirements, qualifications, experience and other details under "Career" tab. Reservation policy as per norms will be followed in recruitment process.

All interested candidates are requested to visit the University website for details and submit an **online application form** and send the print copy of the same to the University to the specified address on or before **15<sup>th</sup> April 2026 up to 5.00 pm.**

s/- Registrar  
Date: 13<sup>th</sup> March 2026 COEP Technological University Pune

**SH. JITENDRA PRATAP SINGH**  
Special Judge, NDPS Act.  
Room No.35, P. Building  
Patiala House Courts  
New Delhi

**PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON**  
(See Section 84 BNSS)  
SC No. 252/2018  
**NCB Vs Brayton Nicholas Lyimo**

Whereas complaint has been made before me that Brayton Nicholas Lyimo S/O Sh. Nicholas R/O Mwajuma Ramadhan Saghaba, D-145, 1st Floor, Kh.No.09/18 Chandra Vihar Extension, Delhi-41, have committed (or suspected to have committed) the offence punishable under section 8C/21 of NDPS Act 1985. It has been returned to a warrants of arrest there upon issued that the said Brayton Nicholas Lyimo S/O Sh. Nicholas cannot be found and whereas it has shown to my satisfaction that the said Brayton Nicholas Lyimo S/O Sh. Nicholas has absconded. (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the warrant)

2) Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused is required to appear before this Court to answer the said complaint on the day of 27-04-2026.

Sd/xxxx  
Special Court, NDPS Act  
Patiala House Courts  
New Delhi

CbC 19126/11/0162/2526

**केन्द्रीय पेट्रोसायन अभियांत्रिकी एवं प्रौद्योगिकी संस्थान (सिपेट)**  
(रासायन एवं पेट्रोसायन विभाग, रासायन एवं उर्वरक मंत्रालय, भारत सरकार)  
Central Institute of Petrochemicals Engineering & Technology (CIPET)  
(Department of Chemicals & Petrochemicals, Ministry of Chemicals & Fertilizers Govt. of India)

**ENGAGEMENT OF VARIOUS MANPOWER FOR LIMITED OR FIXED PERIOD ON CONTRACT BASIS AT CIPET, RAIPUR & KORBA**

Advertisement No: CIPET:IPT/RPR/HOC\_MP/08 Date: 12.03.2026

Central Institute of Petrochemicals Engineering & Technology (CIPET) was established in 1968 by Government of India with the assistance of United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) at Chennai CIPET operates from various locations spread across the country to cater the needs of the Polymer and allied industries. CIPET, Raipur invites on-line applications from eligible candidates for engagement of various contractual manpower for CIPET, Raipur & Korba as per the details given below-

S. No.	Manpower requirement	Remuneration Salary Range per Month	No. of positions
1.	Assistant Professor (Chemistry)	Rs. 35,000/- to 40,000/-	1 No.
2.	Assistant Professor (Plastics Engineering & Technology)	Rs. 35,000/- to 40,000/-	1 No.
3.	Assistant Professor (Mechanical)	Rs. 35,000/- to 40,000/-	1 No.
4.	Lecturer (Plastics Engineering & Technology)	Rs. 30,000/- to 35,000/-	2 No.
5.	Lecturer (Electrical & Electronics)	Rs. 30,000/- to 35,000/-	1 No.
6.	Lecturer (Physics)	Rs. 30,000/- to 35,000/-	1 No.
7.	Lecturer (Mathematics)	Rs. 30,000/- to 35,000/-	1 No.
8.	Instructor (Skill Development)	Rs. 25,000/- to 30,000/-	2 No.
9.	Placement Consultant	Consolidated up to Rs. 40,000/-	1 No.

For detailed information on eligibility criteria, educational qualifications & experience, general terms and conditions and application form etc., please visit our website: [www.cipet.gov.in](http://www.cipet.gov.in).

Candidates may submit their application in online mode by logging into the link <https://cbtaxan.co.in/cipet-raipur/>

CIPET, Raipur reserves the right to cancel the recruitment process at any stage without assigning any reason.

Date of opening link: 12/03/2026 Date of closing of the link: 01/04/2026  
Principal Director & Head

**AXIS FINANCE LIMITED**  
Axis House, C-2, Media International Centre, Pandurang Budhkar  
Marg, Worli, Mumbai - 400 025

**APPENDIX IV (See Rule 811)**  
**SYMBOLIC POSSESSION NOTICE**  
(For immovable property)  
[As per Appendix IV read with rule 8(1) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002]

Whereas,  
The undersigned being the Authorized Officer of the **Axis Finance Limited (AFL)**, under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of Powers conferred under Section 13 (12) read with the Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, issued a demand notice dated 29<sup>th</sup> December, 2025 calling upon the Borrower(s) / Guarantor(s) / Mortgagee(s) (1) **RAM DARESH MAHTO** and (2) **SANJU** both at K-317, GALI NO-6 PREM NAGAR-2, KIRARI SULEMAN NAGAR, SULTANPURI C BLOCK, NORTH WEST DELHI, DELHI - 110086 who have mortgaged the immovable property more particularly described hereunder to repay the amount mentioned in the notice i.e. INR. 35,15,486/- (Rupees Thirty Five Lakh Fifteen Thousand Four Hundred and Eighty Six Only) due as on 05.12.2025 with further interest at the contractual rate thereon till the date of payment within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

The Borrower(s) / Guarantor(s) / Mortgagee(s) having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrower(s) / Guarantor(s) / Mortgagee(s) and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 on this 10<sup>th</sup> day of March of the year 2026. The Borrower(s) / Guarantor(s) / Mortgagee(s) in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of the Axis Finance Limited for an amount of INR. 35,15,486/- (Rupees Thirty Five Lakh Fifteen Thousand Four Hundred and Eighty Six Only) due as on 05.12.2025 and further interest thereon at the contractual rates together with costs, charges, etc. of Axis Finance Ltd until the full payment or realization in full.

The Borrower(s) / Guarantor(s) / Mortgagee(s) attention is invited to provisions of sub section (8) & sub section (13) of section 13 of the said Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.

**DESCRIPTION OF THE IMMOVABLE PROPERTY**  
PROPERTY BEARING NO. K - 317 (MEASURING 58.52 SQ. MT. (70 SQ. YDS. APPROX.) OUT OF KHASRA NO. 1211, SITUATED AT COLONY PREM NAGAR, K BLOCK, GALI NO. 6, NANGLOI, VILLAGE KIRARI SULEMAN NAGAR, NORTH WEST DELHI, DELHI - 110086.

And Boundaries of the House/Plot:  
EAST - 15 FT. ROAD  
WEST - OTHERS PLOT  
NORTH - OTHERS PLOT  
SOUTH - 15 FT. ROAD

Date: 10.03.2026  
Place: Delhi

Authorized Officer  
Axis Finance Ltd.



**PM – KISAN : Government of India's Commitment to Farmer's Prosperity**



**Transfer of more than ₹18 thousand 640 crore directly into the Bank Accounts of above 9 crore 32 lakh farmers under 22<sup>nd</sup> instalment of PM-Kisan Samman Nidhi**

by

**Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi**

13 March 2026 | 5:00 PM | Jyoti-Bishnu International Cultural Centre, Khanapara, Guwahati, Assam

**Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi Scheme**

**Samman Nidhi of over ₹4 lakh 9 thousand crore transferred to farmers so far**

**One of the world's largest Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) schemes**

**₹6000 annual assistance to farmers**

**Over 85% beneficiaries of PM-Kisan are small and marginal farmers**

**One woman beneficiary in every 4 beneficiaries of PM-Kisan**

**Unprecedented Achievements in Agriculture in last 12 years**



**With 150+ million tonnes, India became the world's largest rice producer country.**



**Foodgrain production increased from 252 million tonnes to over 357 million tonnes.**



**Horticulture production increased from 277 million tonnes to 369 million tonnes. Also, India became world's largest producer of mango, guava, mangosteen, banana and papaya in the world.**



**Procurement of tur, urad and masoor ensured at MSP from registered farmers under the Mission on Aatmanirbharta in Pulses.**



**Announcement of AI-based National Digital Platform 'Bharat VISTAAR' in Union Budget 2026-27, providing farmers access to agricultural information, services and advisory in simple language.**



**Procurement of wheat, paddy, cotton, pulses and oilseeds at MSP worth over ₹26 lakh crore.**



**Released fertilizer subsidy of ₹15 lakh 50 thousand crore, ensuring timely availability of fertilizers to the farmers at affordable prices.**



**Agricultural credit flow increased from ₹8 lakh 45 thousand crore to ₹28 lakh 69 thousand crore, providing impetus to the rural economy.**



**About ₹2 lakh crore compensation to farmers under PM Fasal Bima Yojana for losses caused by natural disasters.**



**Unprecedented rise in Agriculture Budget from ₹27 thousand crore to over ₹1 lakh 40 thousand crore.**

**From seed to market, the Government of India supports the farmers at every step**

Watch Live Telecast of the Programme on DD News or DD Kisan Channel



Kisan Call Centre  
1800-180-1551 (6 AM - 10 PM)

The programme can be watched live on [pminiawebcast.nic.in](http://pminiawebcast.nic.in)

Follow  
X, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, LinkedIn, WhatsApp



'Bharti' - The New AI Chatbot for Farmers. For More Information, Contact: 155261



**EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY**  
E-TENDER  
Notice No. 67 of 2025-26 (Open-Engg/DDU)  
On line (through e-tendering) for the following work is invited by DRM/Engg/DDU for and on behalf of the President of India from experienced and financially as well as technically sound contractors including those enlisted with the Railway. CPWD, BSNL, MES, PWD and other public sector undertakings- (1) **Name of work with its location**: Tender No. 31-DDU-DEN-HQ-25-26. Construction of 20 units type-II & 10 units type III staff quarters at Plant Depot colony, Renovation of children Park in Roza colony and improvement of colony by Earth filling in low land area in staff quarters to avoid water logging in European colony, station colony and Roza colony at DDU. (2) **Advertised Value**: Rs. 70500961.61 (3) **Earnest Money**: 502500.00 (4) **Name of work with its location**: Tender No. 32-DDU-DEN-HQ-25-26 Provision of 20 Unit Type-II staff quarters in Loco colony & 10 units type-III staff quarters at New Central colony at DDU under ADEN/HQ/DDU. (5) **Advertised Value**: Rs. 474300.00 (7) **Closing Date & time for submission of e-tender**: 01.04.2026, Up-to 12:00 hrs. (8) **Website particulars of e-tendering**: [www.reps.gov.in](http://www.reps.gov.in)

Divisional Railway Manager,  
East Central Railway,  
Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Division  
PR/1922/DDU/ENGG/1725-26/40

**"IMPORTANT"**  
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**Nanaji Deshmukh Veterinary Science University, Jabalpur**  
No. 288/DI/NDVSU/2026 Dated: 12/03/2026  
**ADMISSION NOTICE**  
Applications on the prescribed form are invited for admission in five PG Diploma courses for the academic session 2026. Last date for submission of form is 07/04/2026. The detailed prospectus and application form can be downloaded from the University website: [www.ndvsu.org](http://www.ndvsu.org).

Sd/-  
**Director of Instruction**  
NDVSU, Jabalpur

**DISTRICT POLICE HEADQUARTERS KATHUA**  
E- mail: [spkathua@jkpolice.gov.in](mailto:spkathua@jkpolice.gov.in) Fax/Phone No.: 01922-234010

**LOOK OUT NOTICE**

On 26-02-2026, person namely Alam Din S/O Shatu R/O Ward No. 12 Tehsil District Kathua reported at Police Station Kathua stating therein that on 27-02-2026, his daughter namely Janam, age 18 years is missing from home. The complainant tried his best to search his daughter, but all in vain. On this, missing report vide DD No. 21 dated 28-02-2026 has been entered at Police Station Kathua.

During the course of investigation, best efforts were made to locate missing individual, whereas she is still un-traced.

As such Description Roll/Photograph of said missing individual is being shared with the appeal that anybody having clue/information about her whereabouts may inform us accordingly. The informer will be rewarded suitably:-

DESCRIPTION ROLL	PHOTOGRAPH
Name: Janam	
Father: Alam Din	
Permanent Address: Ward No. 12	
Present Address: Ward No. 12	
Tehsil: Kathua	
Police Station: Kathua	
Age: 18 years	
Complexion: Fair	
Height: 05 Ft	
Built: Normal	
Face: Round	
Eyes: Black	
Languages known: Hindi/ Dogri	

Any information related to the whereabouts of the subject may be communicated on following contacts:-  
1. DPO Kathua- 01922-234010 (Phone/Fax)  
2. dpokathua@jkpolice.gov.in (Mail ID)  
3. PCR Kathua- 01922-234311 (Phone/Fax)  
4. Police Station Kathua - 01922-234310

Sd/-  
Sr. Superintendent of Police,  
Kathua.

DIP/J-12740/25, Date 12 Mar 2026

**DIRECTORATE GENERAL RESETTLEMENT**  
MINISTRY OF DEFENCE  
**JOB FAIR for EX-SERVICEMEN (ESM)**  
20 MARCH 26 (7 AM Onwards)  
VENUE: ARAVALI AUDITORIUM, NEAR SHANKAR VIHAR METRO STATION  
SHANKAR VIHAR MILITARY STATION, DELHI CANTT  
Documents Required: ESM I-Card and 5 copies of Resume/Biodata

**EX-SERVICEMEN: SKILLED, DISCIPLINED AND DEPENDABLE**

**Benefits for Industry Employers**

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- Free Job Postings
- Free Allotment of Stalls
- Free Access to Resumes of ESM

**What Employers Can Expect in Job Fair**  
Officers for Leadership roles & ESM for-  
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- Fitters, Electricians and Technicians  
- Artificers, Mechanics and Engine Operators  
- Network and Telecom Engineers  
- Surveyors and Draughtsmen  
- Machinists, Welders and Artisans  
- Automobile, Aviation & Weapon Technicians

For further details contact:  
Director (SE), DGR - 11-20862532  
diredsgr@desw.gov.in  
Jt Director (SE), DGR-011-20863432  
seopadgri@desw.gov.in

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CbC 10401/11/0056/2526

# Some trying to create panic over LPG: PM

Shubhajit Roy  
New Delhi, March 12

PRIME MINISTER Narendra Modi on Thursday accused the Opposition, particularly the Indian National Congress, of attempting to create panic over an alleged LPG shortage in the country, even as he acknowledged that the ongoing conflict in West Asia has triggered a global energy crisis affecting nations across the world.

Addressing the NXT Summit 2026 at Bharat Mandapam, Modi said India was working at multiple levels to ensure uninterrupted energy supplies and urged political parties and other stakeholders to act responsibly during a time of global uncertainty. "A big fulcrum of a country's progress is how we are dealing with the country's challenges," he said, adding, "We all know that global situations can change quickly. We saw Covid-19 pandemic, then we saw the Russia-Ukraine war and now a war is going on very near to us. This war has forced the world into a very big energy crisis."

He accused sections of the Opposition of attempting to ex-

**I have spoken to several top leaders of the world. Consistent efforts are being made to tide over supply chain roadblocks.**

**NARENDRA MODI,**  
PRIME MINISTER

plot the situation by spreading alarm about LPG availability. "LPG is being discussed a lot today. Some people are trying to create panic, run their agenda. I do not wish to make political comments on them. But by doing this, they are not only exposing themselves, but also harming the country," he said.

Modi said India had been engaging with global leaders to address supply disruptions. "In the past few days, I have spoken to several top leaders of the world. Consistent efforts are being made to tide over supply chain roadblocks," he said. The government's priority during international crises has been to shield citizens from the economic impact. "We have seen during the

Ukraine war and till now how it impacts global markets and the people. But the Indian government has always made efforts that the burden of war does not fall on the people," he said. "This time too we will ensure that the country's farmers and citizens are least affected by the war."

"I also request states to ensure there is no black marketing and rumours are not spread." Calling "crises" a test for the entire nation, Modi urged collective responsibility. "Crises are a test for the whole nation. We are supposed to deal with crises with calm and patience. We are supposed to move forward by sustaining public confidence and keeping them aware," he said.

"The crisis that has been precipitated by this war has touched all other countries. In some or the other measure everyone is in its crosshairs," he said. The PM said the crisis had underscored the importance of reducing dependence on imported energy. "This global crisis has shown us why it is so important to be self-reliant... in the past few years we have worked in a holistic way to make India self-reliant in the energy sector," he said.

**Express News Service**  
Pune, Ahmedabad, Kolkata, Bengaluru, Chandigarh, Ludhiana, March 12

FROM SWITCHING to menu items cooked on coal or wood grills to sourcing black-marketed cylinders at twice the price, restaurants and street food vendors are scrambling as the ongoing Middle East crisis disrupts petroleum supply chains, raising concerns of a cooking gas shortage in India.

Days after the Centre invoked the Essential Commodities Act, 1955, to ensure liquefied petroleum gas (LPG), piped natural gas (PNG) for households and compressed natural gas (CNG) for vehicles take precedence over other natural gas-consuming sectors, India's LPG-dependent food industry is grappling with dwindling supplies and long queues, forcing many to sharply cut menus or temporarily shut operations. This comes as the Iran crisis has choked global supply chains, critically affecting, among other things, oil, gas and fertilisers.

In Bengaluru and other parts of Karnataka, hotels have curtailed operations, some limiting menus to coffee and tea. Amid continuing uncertainty, Ramesh Chandra, a hotel owner in Bengaluru's suburban Kengeri, is unsure whether he will open Friday. He typically uses 2-4 cylinders a day and, with oil companies increasing the minimum waiting period from 21-25 days, now has only 4-5 left. "I will continue the operations till I run out.



People queue up to avail LPG cylinders amid supply shortage in Ranchi on Thursday. PTI

I'm also making efforts to get a supply of cylinders but I don't know whether I will open the hotel tomorrow," he says.

In Pune, the growing shortage has led to leaner menus and even restaurant closures. "Some restaurants switched to electrical and induction cookers. Maharashtra and Punjabi food is being made on coal or wood grills at some places," Saill Jahagirdar, Pune Chapter Head of the National Restaurants Association of India, said. "They are transitioning and working on reduced menus. Snacks centres or joints that cannot shift to electric are shut. It's a mix now."

The shortage has also affected the black market, with restaurant owners being told there is "no stock for even black marketing". "I purchased three commercial cylinders at double the rate three days ago. But now there is no stock left at all in

Pune. Some black marketing was going on before, but now nothing is left," said the owner of one restaurant. In Ahmedabad, street vendors say they are trying to secure cylinders through "informal" channels. "Earlier an LPG cylinder would cost around Rs 1,800/Rs 1,900. Now, they are quoting Rs 2,500/Rs 3,000, and some are even asking for Rs 4,000," Magan Patidar, who runs Mahadev Rajwad, part of a tea stall chain in Ahmedabad, said.

Gas agencies, however, dismiss these claims, saying there has been "panic booking" by hotel and restaurant owners. "Restaurant and hotel owners who are being quoted prices as high as Rs 4,000 (in the informal market) frequently approach the agency out of desperation to keep their businesses running," a representative of Priya Gas in Ahmedabad said. On black marketing allegations, he said:

"Since the agencies are not receiving filled commercial stock from the firms or the government, there is simply no supply available to divert into a black market. We have been forced to stop providing them (hotels and restaurants) with fuel due to the current policy shift."

Consumers also say they face problems while booking. "The online booking system is not responding," Ram Kumar, a consumer from Ludhiana, said. "People say that the software is down, so what is the point of saying that there is no shortage of domestic cylinders?"

In Kolkata, where the price of commercial cylinders has risen three-fold to Rs 4,500-5,000 from the earlier Rs 1,600-1,800, several caterers and restaurant owners have switched to wood cooking.

Meanwhile, chief ministers and political leaders sought the

Centre's intervention. In a letter to Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas Hardeep Singh Puri Tuesday, Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah said several hotel and restaurant associations in Bengaluru were unable to procure commercial LPG cylinders, and "many establishments are expressing concern that they may have to temporarily shut operations if supplies are not restored soon". "Choultries (wedding halls), hostels and event venues that rely on commercial LPG for food preparation are also facing uncertainty, particularly with scheduled social and community events," the letter said.

In Kolkata, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee sought to pin the blame on the Ministry of Petroleum. Gas, she claimed, was not in the hands of the West Bengal government. "This situation has arisen due to the wrong decision of the Ministry of Petroleum... Gas supply should not be stopped... They need to think about people first. It is in the hands of the Centre. We want the Central government to take immediate action."

Distributors, facing pressure, have also sought an increase in commercial cylinder supply. "The LPG companies, state governments and consumers are holding distributors responsible, which is unfair. I would urge the LPG companies to increase supply..." Satender Singh, president of the LPG Distributors Association (Haryana), said.

FULL REPORT ON [WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM](http://WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM)

**यू.पी. प्रोजेक्ट्स कारपोरेशन लिमिटेड**  
(उत्तर प्रदेश सरकार का उपकरण)  
कार्यालय: परियोजना प्रबंधक, निर्माण इकाई-26, मकान नं०-136, गली नं०-1, राजीव गांधी, पंचनगर, सारनपुर-247010  
ई-मेल: pm26saharanpur@gmail.com, GST No-09AAACU3393F128, दूरभाष 0122-2614701  
पत्रांक-1457/पी.सी.एच./पी.ओ.एच-26/सारनपुरई-टेंडर, दिनांक-12.03.2026

**अल्पकालीन ई-निविदा सूचना**  
इस कार्यालय के निविदा सं०- 05.07.10 एवं 11/पीसीएल/पीएम/यूनिट-26/सहारनपुर/2025-26, दिनांक-03.02.2026, 16.02.2026, 18.02.2026 एवं 19.02.2026 द्वारा ई-निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है। उक्त ई-निविदा <http://etender.up.nic.in> की वेबसाइट पर दिनांक 11.03.2026 से 17.03.2026 के अपराह्न 12:00 बजे तक डाउनलोड/अपलोड की जा सकती है। ई-निविदा से सम्बन्धित अन्य विवरण, नियम एवं शर्त कारपोरेशन की वेबसाइट [website-https://upprojects.upsdc.gov.in](https://upprojects.upsdc.gov.in) पर भी दिनांक 11.03.2026 से देखी जा सकती है।

**परियोजना प्रबंधक इकाई-26, सहारनपुर**

**कार्यालय परियोजना प्रबंधक, यूनिट-49, कन्दूरुवाण एण्ड डिजाइन सर्विसेज 3090 जल निगम (नगरीय) (3090 सरकार का उपकरण)**  
ई-6, पियदर्शनी नगर, निकट वी.डी.ए. ऑफिस, बरेली-243122  
E-mail: pm49\_bareilly@rediffmail.com  
प्रधान कार्यालय : टी.सी.-38-बी, विद्युति अण्ड, गोमतीनगर, लखनऊ-226010  
Visit us at [www.cdsupjn.org](http://www.cdsupjn.org)  
Mob : 9410844293

निविदा सूचना सं. : 301/ कार्य-15/19 दिनांक : 11.03.2026

**ई-निविदा सूचना**

उत्तर प्रदेश जल निगम, की ओर से अशोहस्ताखरी द्वारा द्वारा कस्तूरवा गाँधी बालिका विद्यालय, नगर, बरेली में कम्प्यूटर लैब का निर्माण कार्य योजना, अनुमानित लागत रु. 16.12 लाख (जी.एस.टी. रहित एवं लेबर सेस सहित) हेतु सी.एच.डी.एस. में यथोचित श्रेणी में पंजीकृत टेकदारों से दिनांक 01.04.2026 को 15:00 बजे तक ई-निविदाएं आमंत्रित की जाती है। उक्त कार्य हेतु ई-निविदा प्रपत्र दिनांक 12.03.2026 से दिनांक 01.04.2026 के मध्य उत्तर प्रदेश सरकार की e-procurement वेबसाइट <https://etender.up.nic.in> से डाउनलोड किये जा सकते हैं तथा ई-निविदा दिनांक 01.04.2026 को 17:00 बजे सी.एच.डी.एस. यूनिट-49, उ.प्र. जल निगम (नगरीय), बरेली में निविदा खोली जायेगी। ई-निविदा से सम्बन्धित विस्तृत विवरण विभाग की वेबसाइट [www.cdsupjn.org](http://www.cdsupjn.org) एवं प्रोक्वोरमेंट पोर्टल <https://etender.up.nic.in> पर उपलब्ध है। समस्त शुद्धि पत्र (Corrigendum) <https://etender.up.nic.in> पर ही अपलोड किये जायेंगे, इनका पृथक से कोई प्रकाशन नहीं किया जायेगा। निविदादाताओं को सलाह दी जाती है कि वे उक्त वेबसाइट का समय-समय पर अवलोकन करते रहें।

**कार्यालय परियोजना प्रबंधक, यूनिट-49, कन्दूरुवाण एण्ड डिजाइन सर्विसेज 3090 जल निगम (नगरीय) (3090 सरकार का उपकरण)**  
ई-6, पियदर्शनी नगर, निकट वी.डी.ए. ऑफिस, बरेली-243122  
E-mail: pm49\_bareilly@rediffmail.com  
प्रधान कार्यालय : टी.सी.-38-बी, विद्युति अण्ड, गोमतीनगर, लखनऊ-226010  
Visit us at [www.cdsupjn.org](http://www.cdsupjn.org)  
Mob : 9410844293

निविदा सूचना सं. : 300/ कार्य-15/19 दिनांक : 11.03.2026

**ई-निविदा सूचना**

उत्तर प्रदेश जल निगम, की ओर से अशोहस्ताखरी द्वारा द्वारा कस्तूरवा गाँधी बालिका विद्यालय, राम नगर, बरेली में टॉयलेट ब्लाक निर्माण कार्य योजना, अनुमानित लागत रु. 17.42 लाख (जी.एस.टी. रहित एवं लेबर सेस सहित) हेतु सी.एच.डी.एस. में यथोचित श्रेणी में पंजीकृत टेकदारों से दिनांक 01.04.2026 को 15:00 बजे तक ई-निविदाएं आमंत्रित की जाती है। उक्त कार्य हेतु ई-निविदा प्रपत्र दिनांक 12.03.2026 से दिनांक 01.04.2026 के मध्य उत्तर प्रदेश सरकार की e-procurement वेबसाइट <https://etender.up.nic.in> से डाउनलोड किये जा सकते हैं तथा ई-निविदा दिनांक 01.04.2026 को 17:00 बजे सी.एच.डी.एस. यूनिट-49, उ.प्र. जल निगम (नगरीय), बरेली में निविदा खोली जायेगी। ई-निविदा से सम्बन्धित विस्तृत विवरण विभाग की वेबसाइट [www.cdsupjn.org](http://www.cdsupjn.org) एवं प्रोक्वोरमेंट पोर्टल <https://etender.up.nic.in> पर उपलब्ध है। समस्त शुद्धि पत्र (Corrigendum) <https://etender.up.nic.in> पर ही अपलोड किये जायेंगे, इनका पृथक से कोई प्रकाशन नहीं किया जायेगा। निविदादाताओं को सलाह दी जाती है कि वे उक्त वेबसाइट का समय-समय पर अवलोकन करते रहें।

**Will urge Centre to increase limit of non-domestic LPG cylinders allocated to state: Kerala govt**

**Express News Service**  
Thiruvananthapuram, March 12

THE KERALA government, during a high-level meeting, on Thursday, decided to urge the Centre to increase the limit of non-domestic LPG cylinders allotted to the state.

After the meeting, which was chaired by Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, a release from the CMO stated that the state wanted to increase the limit of non-domestic LPG cylinders allotted — considering the presence of large number of migrant workers across the state. At present, the ceiling of the non-domestic cylinder is 20%.

During the meeting, representatives of LPG companies, also assured the state government that they will bring out guidelines, on priority, regarding the distribution of non-domestic LPG cylinders amid the crisis. Schools, old age homes, orphanages, canteens at IT parks and community kitchens will get the priority.

**Express News Service**  
Pune, March 12

**All food courts on campus will temporarily operate with a limited menu**

AMID THE LPG shortage in India owing to the ongoing West Asia conflict, technology giant Infosys has informed employees that all its food courts will operate with a limited menu. Further, it has advised employees to bring food from their homes and to avoid planning events on campus that require catering. An email with these advisories was sent by the canteen committee of Infosys Pune to employees on Thursday, a copy of which is available with The Indian Express. The email states, "As per the latest government guidelines, the use of LPG across various sectors has been revised in light of the ongoing geopolitical situation. This has resulted in restricted and controlled distribution of LPG as a commodity in commercial food and beverage operations across the country. Food court vendors are receiving reduced LPG supplies from their respective providers. Despite their sincere

efforts to continue operations, the limited availability of LPG is restricting their ability to operate at full capacity."

The company informed that all food courts will temporarily operate with a limited menu, some cooked food will be sourced from the vendor's central kitchen externally, and alternate cooking through e-appliances/ biofuel is being stepped up. It also said that the team was closely monitoring the situation and was in regular coordination with LPG suppliers and food court operators.

An Infosys employee told *The Indian Express*, "Within the Pune Infosys campus, there are huge food courts where the food options have been curtailed; that's the only thing that has changed. They have asked us to bring food from home to possibly reduce crowding..."

**Parul Kulshrestha**  
Jaipur, March 12

**Kota hostels, messes switch to firewood for cooking meals**

HOSTEL AND mess owners in Rajasthan's Kota, known as the coaching capital with over 1 lakh students attending classes in the city to prepare for competitive exams, have expressed concern over the shortage of LPG amid the ongoing conflict affecting West Asia.

Naveen Mittal, president of the Hotels Association of Kota, told *The Indian Express* that if the situation continues, it will be difficult to provide food for the students. "In the hostel fees package, food and lodging are included. Students from all over India come to the city to study, and if the LPG supply is not met, then we will not be able to provide food to the children," said Mittal. Around 4,000 hostels and 500 food messes are functional in Kota city. Some messes have started preparing food using firewood.

Jasmer Singh, owner of the Food Mess in Kota, said there are eight branches of the mess, in which 250 LPG cylinders are required monthly. Due to the shortage, they have started using firewood. "Not everyone has such an open mess to use a wood oven. Hence, many mess owners have shut down their messes, and students are suffering because they have paid monthly. We need LPG cylinders or the economy will collapse," said Singh.

Even manufacturing units are beginning to feel the pressure. They use LPG for welding, cutting and heating work. Alwar Trade Federation president Harmeet Singh said, "Around 90% of the manufacturing of containers that are used in trucks is done in Rajasthan. They need welding, cutting and heating work, which is done

using commercial LPG cylinders."

Chief Secretary V Srinivas chaired a hybrid meeting at the Secretariat on March 11, at the direction of Chief Minister Bhajan Lal Sharma, to review the supply of domestic cooking gas across Rajasthan. He assured that after the Centre's March 9 order, restricting commercial cylinder supply, domestic LPG supply remains uninterrupted and adequate stocks are available. Continuous supply is being ensured for households, hospitals, educational institutions, and Annapurna kitchens. He also directed the formation of state and district-level monitoring committees to monitor stocking, movement, and distribution and prevent black marketing.

In the export industry, Rahul Gupta, president of Alwar Auto Component Manufacturing Society, said, "...We are facing a loss of around Rs 2 crore, and if this continues, things will become difficult."

Former secretary of the Udaipur Hotel Association, Jatin Shrivastava, said the tourism industry could also face trouble. "...Many tour guides and hotel owners have taken advance money from tourists. How are they going to manage?"

Crowd outside an LPG distributor's office in Jaipur on Thursday. ROHIT JAIN/PARAS

using commercial LPG cylinders."

**कार्यालय परियोजना प्रबंधक, यूनिट-49, कन्दूरुवाण एण्ड डिजाइन सर्विसेज 3090 जल निगम (नगरीय) (3090 सरकार का उपकरण)**  
ई-6, पियदर्शनी नगर, निकट वी.डी.ए. ऑफिस, बरेली-243122  
E-mail: pm49\_bareilly@rediffmail.com  
प्रधान कार्यालय : टी.सी.-38-बी, विद्युति अण्ड, गोमतीनगर, लखनऊ-226010  
Visit us at [www.cdsupjn.org](http://www.cdsupjn.org)  
Mob : 9410844293

निविदा सूचना सं. : 304/ कार्य-15/23 दिनांक : 11.03.2026

**ई-निविदा सूचना**

उत्तर प्रदेश जल निगम, की ओर से अशोहस्ताखरी द्वारा द्वारा कस्तूरवा गाँधी बालिका विद्यालय, राम नगर, बरेली में कम्प्यूटर लैब का निर्माण कार्य योजना, अनुमानित लागत रु. 16.12 लाख (जी.एस.टी. रहित एवं लेबर सेस सहित) हेतु सी.एच.डी.एस. में यथोचित श्रेणी में पंजीकृत टेकदारों से दिनांक 01.04.2026 को 15:00 बजे तक ई-निविदाएं आमंत्रित की जाती है। उक्त कार्य हेतु ई-निविदा प्रपत्र दिनांक 12.03.2026 से दिनांक 01.04.2026 के मध्य उत्तर प्रदेश सरकार की e-procurement वेबसाइट <https://etender.up.nic.in> से डाउनलोड किये जा सकते हैं तथा ई-निविदा दिनांक 01.04.2026 को 17:00 बजे सी.एच.डी.एस. यूनिट-49, उ.प्र. जल निगम (नगरीय), बरेली में निविदा खोली जायेगी। ई-निविदा से सम्बन्धित विस्तृत विवरण विभाग की वेबसाइट [www.cdsupjn.org](http://www.cdsupjn.org) एवं प्रोक्वोरमेंट पोर्टल <https://etender.up.nic.in> पर उपलब्ध है। समस्त शुद्धि पत्र (Corrigendum) <https://etender.up.nic.in> पर ही अपलोड किये जायेंगे, इनका पृथक से कोई प्रकाशन नहीं किया जायेगा। निविदादाताओं को सलाह दी जाती है कि वे उक्त वेबसाइट का समय-समय पर अवलोकन करते रहें।

**TAMILNADU POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD CHENNAI-32**  
Tender Notice No: T3/TN/PCB/F.026078/SI. Appeal No. 23633-23634 of 2010/2026, Dt.12.03.2026

E-tender (2-cover system) through TN etenders' website are invited for "Carrying Out Comprehensive Environmental Audit for the Palar River in Tamil Nadu"

The tender documents can be downloaded from <https://tntenders.gov.in> and [www.tnpcb.gov.in](http://www.tnpcb.gov.in) on or after 13.03.2026. The last date for the receipt of the tender is 12.04.2026.

CHAIRPERSON  
Tamilnadu Pollution Control Board, Chennai - 600032

**कार्यालय परियोजना प्रबंधक, यूनिट-49, कन्दूरुवाण एण्ड डिजाइन सर्विसेज 3090 जल निगम (नगरीय) (3090 सरकार का उपकरण)**  
ई-6, पियदर्शनी नगर, निकट वी.डी.ए. ऑफिस, बरेली-243122  
E-mail: pm49\_bareilly@rediffmail.com  
प्रधान कार्यालय : टी.सी.-38-बी, विद्युति अण्ड, गोमतीनगर, लखनऊ-226010  
Visit us at [www.cdsupjn.org](http://www.cdsupjn.org)  
Mob : 9410844293

निविदा सूचना सं. : 303/ कार्य-15/22 दिनांक : 11.03.2026

**ई-निविदा सूचना**

उत्तर प्रदेश जल निगम, की ओर से अशोहस्ताखरी द्वारा द्वारा कस्तूरवा गाँधी बालिका विद्यालय, रिखा (मन्सखोदा), बरेली में कम्प्यूटर लैब का निर्माण कार्य योजना, अनुमानित लागत रु. 16.12 लाख (जी.एस.टी. रहित एवं लेबर सेस सहित) हेतु सी.एच.डी.एस. में यथोचित श्रेणी में पंजीकृत टेकदारों से दिनांक 01.04.2026 को 15:00 बजे तक ई-निविदाएं आमंत्रित की जाती है। उक्त कार्य हेतु ई-निविदा प्रपत्र दिनांक 12.03.2026 से दिनांक 01.04.2026 के मध्य उत्तर प्रदेश सरकार की e-procurement वेबसाइट <https://etender.up.nic.in> से डाउनलोड किये जा सकते हैं तथा ई-निविदा दिनांक 01.04.2026 को 17:00 बजे सी.एच.डी.एस. यूनिट-49, उ.प्र. जल निगम (नगरीय), बरेली में निविदा खोली जायेगी। ई-निविदा से सम्बन्धित विस्तृत विवरण विभाग की वेबसाइट [www.cdsupjn.org](http://www.cdsupjn.org) एवं प्रोक्वोरमेंट पोर्टल <https://etender.up.nic.in> पर उपलब्ध है। समस्त शुद्धि पत्र (Corrigendum) <https://etender.up.nic.in> पर ही अपलोड किये जायेंगे, इनका पृथक से कोई प्रकाशन नहीं किया जायेगा। निविदादाताओं को सलाह दी जाती है कि वे उक्त वेबसाइट का समय-समय पर अवलोकन करते रहें।

**कार्यालय परियोजना प्रबंधक, यूनिट-49, कन्दूरुवाण एण्ड डिजाइन सर्विसेज 3090 जल निगम (नगरीय) (3090 सरकार का उपकरण)**  
ई-6, पियदर्शनी नगर, निकट वी.डी.ए. ऑफिस, बरेली-243122  
E-mail: pm49\_bareilly@rediffmail.com  
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Visit us at [www.cdsupjn.org](http://www.cdsupjn.org)  
Mob : 9410844293

निविदा सूचना सं. : 302/ कार्य-15/21 दिनांक : 11.03.2026

**ई-निविदा सूचना**

उत्तर प्रदेश जल निगम, की ओर से अशोहस्ताखरी द्वारा द्वारा कस्तूरवा गाँधी बालिका विद्यालय, मझगाँवा, बरेली में कम्प्यूटर लैब का निर्माण कार्य योजना, अनुमानित लागत रु. 16.12 लाख (जी.एस.टी. रहित एवं लेबर सेस सहित) हेतु सी.एच.डी.एस. में यथोचित श्रेणी में पंजीकृत टेकदारों से दिनांक 01.04.2026 को 15:00 बजे तक ई-निविदाएं आमंत्रित की जाती है। उक्त कार्य हेतु ई-निविदा प्रपत्र दिनांक 12.03.2026 से दिनांक 01.04.2026 के मध्य उत्तर प्रदेश सरकार की e-procurement वेबसाइट <https://etender.up.nic.in> से डाउनलोड किये जा सकते हैं तथा ई-निविदा दिनांक 01.04.2026 को 17:00 बजे सी.एच.डी.एस. यूनिट-49, उ.प्र. जल निगम (नगरीय), बरेली में निविदा खोली जायेगी। ई-निविदा से सम्बन्धित विस्तृत विवरण विभाग की वेबसाइट [www.cdsupjn.org](http://www.cdsupjn.org) एवं प्रोक्वोरमेंट पोर्टल <https://etender.up.nic.in> पर उपलब्ध है। समस्त शुद्धि पत्र (Corrigendum) <https://etender.up.nic.in> पर ही अपलोड किये जायेंगे, इनका पृथक से कोई प्रकाशन नहीं किया जायेगा। निविदादाताओं को सलाह दी जाती है कि वे उक्त वेबसाइट का समय-समय पर अवलोकन करते रहें।

**कार्यालय नगर निगम, भोपाल**  
विद्युत शाखा  
निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना

दिनांक: 11/03/2026

निम्नलिखित कार्य हेतु दो विषयगत पद्धति के अनुसार पररेन्टेड/आयटमेंटेड मोडर्नटेड निविदायें निर्धारित प्रपत्र पर आनलाईन आमंत्रित की जाती है।

क्र.	आन चॉस देण्डर	कार्य स्थल का नाम	अनुमानित राशि	यशोहर की कीमत	निविदा प्रपत्र की कीमत	टेकदार की श्रेणी	कार्य हेतु निर्धारित एम ओ आर	निविदा की अवधि	कार्य की अवधि
1.	2026_UAD_489493_1	External Electrification work at Bhour site under PMAY Bhopal	76369915/-	381850/-	20000/-	Registered Electrical contractor in centralized registration system in MPPWD having valid electrical license	MPUADD SOR Works, 2021/MPUADD BUILDING SOR Works, 2021/MPPWD SOR 2024 and MPMKVCL MPCZ SOR.2025	1 माह	6 माह

नियम पत्र संचालित - निविदा प्रपत्र की निर्धारित राशि, यशोहर राशि एवं अन्य आवश्यक दस्तावेज आनलाईन प्रस्तुत करने होंगे। समस्त विस्तृत जानकारी [www.mptenders.gov.in](http://www.mptenders.gov.in) पर देखी जा सकती है। यदि किसी प्रकार का संशोधन होता है तो वह website पर प्रदर्शित होगा। वह पृथक से समाचार पत्र में प्रकाशित नहीं किया जायेगा।

हस्ता./-  
कार्यालय चर्चा (चि.)  
नगर निगम भोपाल

नि.क्र. 3317/025/026

**कायलिय नगर पालिक निगम सागर**  
:: ऑनलाईन निविदा सूचना :: सागर दिनांक 12/03/2026

क्रं./लोककर्म/न.नि./2026/57  
निम्नलिखित कार्य हेतु केन्द्रीयकृत प्रणाली में पंजीकृत टेकदारों से ऑन लाईन निविदायें आमंत्रित की जाती है। निविदा का विस्तृत विवरण बेबसाइट <https://mptenders.gov.in> पर देखा जा सकता है।

क्र.	टेण्डर क्रमांक जारी दिनांक	कार्य का नाम	कार्य की लागत राशि रु. एवं समायावधि	निविदा प्रपत्र का मूल्य एवं ई.एम. डी.	निविदा की अंतिम तिथि
1	2026_GA014_489437_1 13.03.2026	मुख्यमंत्रि शहरी अधोसंरचना विकास योजना (चतुर्थ चरण) अंतर्गत 18 विभिन्न स्थानों पर सड़कों का निर्माण कार्य	7,97,74,178-00 06 माह	3,99,000-00	13.04.2026 शाम 05:30 तक

**नोट:-** निविदा से संबंधित किसी भी प्रकार के संशोधन का प्रकाशन ऑन लाईन <https://mptenders.gov.in> की बेबसाइट पर ही किया जावेगा, पृथक से समाचार पत्र में प्रकाशन नहीं किया जावेगा।

**आयुक्त नगर पालिक निगम सागर**

**NORTHERN RAILWAY**  
Tender Notice  
Invitation of Tenders through E-Procurement System  
Principal Chief Materials Manager, Northern Railway, New Delhi-110001 for and on behalf of the President of India, invites e-tenders through e-procurement system for supply of the following items:-

Sr. No.	Tender No.	Brief Description	Qty. Nos	Closing Date
01	12255003D	Design, Supply, Installation, Testing, Commissioning and Maintenance	41 Nos	30.03.2026
02	09255016	Aar Approved Cartridge Tapered Roller Bearings Class	300 Nos	06.04.2026
03	77269011	Running Contract for WCMS Crossings (T-9843 & T-9792)	2000 Set	06

## 'THEIR AIM WAS J&K SECESSION FROM THE UNION OF INDIA' SC bail to Kashmiri separatist leader in terror-funding case

Express News Network  
New Delhi, March 12

THE SUPREME Court on Thursday granted bail to Kashmiri separatist leader Shabir Ahmed Shah, accused of promoting and funding terrorist and secessionist activities in Jammu and Kashmir.

A bench of Justices Vikram Nath and Sandeep Mehta gave him the relief while hearing his appeal challenging a June 12, 2025, order of the Delhi High Court that denied him bail in a case registered by the National Investigation Agency (NIA).

As per the prosecution, Shah played a substantial role in facilitating a separatist or militant movement in Jammu and Kashmir by inciting and instigating the general public to chant slogans in support of its secession, paying tribute to the family of slain terrorists/militants by eulogising them as "martyrs", receiving money through hawala transactions, and raising funds through the LoC trade, which were allegedly used to fuel subversive and militant activities in the region.

The case was premised on an alleged conspiracy hatched among several accused persons who were allegedly engaged in secessionist activities in Jammu and Kashmir through various terrorist activities, such as the organisation of violent protests, instigating the general



J&K separatist leader Shabir Ahmed Shah. FILE

public to commit violence, pelting of stones at the security forces, burning of schools, damaging public property, etc., and waging war against the Union of India. "Their ultimate aim and objective was to seek the secession of the J&K from the Union of India, all in the garb of 'Freedom', the prosecution claimed.

It further said that the investigation allegedly established that the secessionist and separatist leaders were also raising funds to be utilised in terrorist and separatist activities through the LoC trade.

While the Court was talking of the past eight years Shah has been imprisoned, the founder of the JKDFP, one of the main

political organisations of Kashmir seeking the right of self-determination for the Valley, has spent more than half his 75 years of life in jails.

From allegations of terrorism, terror funding, rioting with a deadly weapon, promoting enmity between different groups on grounds of religion, and being part of unlawful assembly at a polling station, Shah is named as an accused in at least 24 FIRs. He has not been convicted in any till date.

In June 2025, Shah's daughter Sehar Shabir made an appeal to the authorities to release him citing his ill health. "This is not political. This is not anti-national. This is not against any country, institution, or government. This is only about my father's life. His health. His right to be treated with dignity," she posted on X, adding that her father had spent 38 years in prison in total and had been advised multiple surgeries. On Thursday, after Shah got bail, Sehar posted: "... today justice has taken its first step. We always had faith in the judiciary, and today that faith stands affirmed."

Welcoming the bail order, Kashmir's chief cleric Mirwaiz Umar Farooq said: "We fervently hope that the courts in the same spirit give relief to all political prisoners and youth languishing in jails inside and outside Jammu and Kashmir."

## I AM NOT AFRAID, SAYS MEGHALAYA CM

# Sangma, wife meet locals after violence at Garo Hills town

Express News Service  
Guwahati, March 12

AFTER A night of arson and vandalism at Tura in Meghalaya's Garo Hills, Chief Minister Conrad Sangma, along with his wife and MLA Mehtab Chandee, visited different parts of the town on Thursday in an attempt to calm tensions prevailing since Monday.

Tura is the headquarters of West Garo Hills, which has been gripped by violence and tensions since Monday over the Garo Hills Autonomous District Council elections that have since been postponed, with Garo groups opposing the participation of non-tribals in the polls.

The entire district has been under curfew and mobile internet prohibition. On Thursday, curfew was relaxed for two hours in the afternoon by the district administration to "facilitate public to purchase essential items". The district administration has also notified that the curfew would be relaxed for four hours from 9 am to 1 pm on Friday.

The relaxation comes after an escalation of tensions in Tura



Meghalaya CM Conrad Sangma addresses locals in Garo Hills on Thursday. X/@SANGMACONRAD

town on Wednesday, with vandalism and arson by mobs. One of the structures torched by mobs in the town was the office of Conrad Sangma's National People's Party. PTI reported that a vehicle part of the convoy of a Border Security Force DIG was also torched on Wednesday.

In a video message on Wednesday, speaking in his native Garo language, Sangma said that he had been advised to move to a safer location due to information that mobs were moving towards his home in Tura with the intention of attacking his family. "Based on this information

and in accordance with my security protocol, I was advised to move to another place. However, I did not leave, and I did not agree to relocate, because I am not afraid," he said.

On Thursday, he visited various parts of the town, meeting residents in an attempt to calm tensions. "Visited several locations in Tura to assess the damage caused to public and private properties across the town. It is truly heartbreaking to witness the extent of destruction. Distressed to see the loss suffered by individuals and commercial establishments," he said.

## Amid an impasse in talks with Centre, Ladakh groups call for shutdown, protest

Naveed Iqbal  
Srinagar, March 12

IN A strongly worded message to the Centre, the Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA) has called for a shutdown and protest march across Ladakh on March 16. Two bodies representing socio-political and religious groups in Ladakh — Apex Body Leh and the Kargil Democratic Alliance — have been in talks with the Centre as part of a high-powered committee (HPC) under the Union Ministry of Home Affairs to press various demands of the region.

On Thursday, co-chairman of the KDA, Asgar Ali Karbalai, said, "We have reached the end of our tether, and we want to inform the government of India and the people of India that we will not sit quietly and we will continue the fight for our constitutional rights. The key part of that is statehood and inclusion under the Sixth Schedule."

Detailing efforts of the last five years, Karbalai said, "After the meeting with the Centre on February 4, according to us — the ABL, the KDA and the people of Ladakh — it ended without any conclusions. The MHA had promised to set up another meeting in 15 days, but as of now, we have not heard back."

Since 2020, he said, the HPC and the sub-committee that part of it have met over 15 times, and after every meeting, it is decided that another meeting would be scheduled soon to address the "justified, constitutional demands of the people of Ladakh".

"We have presented our charter of demands several times. However, there has been no conclusive result from all these meetings," he said.

"They (the Centre) think that the Ladakhi people can be taken lightly. Therefore, from the indications we've received from the MHA, the delay tactics, we believe that they are pushing some agenda on the Ladakhi people. If this attitude continues, we will be forced to protest on the streets and extend our agitation," he added. Urging the MHA "not to test our patience repeatedly", Karbalai also alleged that the government is trying to divide the people of Ladakh.

"In your efforts to divide the Ladakhi leadership and the people, by trying to give regional or religious colour, all these efforts will be in vain. Please refrain from this."

He said, "Before the resolve of the people of Ladakh gives way to anger, please consider our demands seriously and sincerely..."

## Bangladesh House condoles Manmohan Singh's death

Press Trust of India  
Dhaka, March 12

BANGLADESH PARLIAMENT on Thursday condoned the deaths of several national and international leaders, including former Indian prime minister Manmohan Singh, Bangladesh's Khaleida Zia and slain Iranian leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

The maiden session of the 13th parliament adopted a motion to condole the deaths initially included 31 names, including late Pope Francis and Matia Chowdhury, a former parliamentarian and leader of deposed premier Sheikh Hasina's Awami League.

However, after the main opposition Jamaat-e-Islami insisted, names of executed 1971 war criminals, tried as hardened collaborators of Pakistani troops during the country's Liberation War, were also included in it.

The motion also included names of those killed during the July-August mass protests that toppled the Sheikh Hasina government in August 2024. The newly elected speaker Hafiz Uddin Ahmed, a veteran 1971 freedom fighter, agreed to incorporate the names of the executed war criminals as Jamaat claimed the initial list of names were "one sided."

## 63-year-old attacker claims he had been trying to target Farooq for 20 yrs

Arun Sharma  
Jammu, March 12

A LOCK hangs on the brown door, further secured with ropes passing through the handle, leading to the house of Kamal Singh Jamwal in Jammu's Purani Mandi. On the adjacent wall are posters of models selling undergarments, put up by a shop next door.

The inconspicuous door doesn't tell half the story, as per those in the neighbourhood, who know Jamwal as a member of one of the most prominent families, of one of the city's oldest areas, whose father Ajit Singh was once a senior police officer. Now, as they search for answers for what prompted the 63-year-old to open fire at former J&K CM Farooq Abdullah on Wednesday night, sending shock waves through the Union Territory, there are hints of a man struggling with problems and failed business ventures, who had also tried dabbling in politics.

On Wednesday night, Jamwal came up from behind as Abdullah was leaving a wedding in Jammu's Greater Kailash area, along with senior National Conference leaders, cocked his revolver at his head and pulled the trigger. However, Jamwal



Kamal Singh Jamwal and his Jammu residence (right). EXPRESS

missed — police say this was because he was inebriated — and Abdullah's security along with others present wrestled him to the ground. In the jostling, one more shot went off, though no one was hurt. On Thursday, Jamwal was remanded in five-day police custody.

Jamwal claimed he had been trying to target Abdullah "for 20 years", saying when asked why, "Yeh mera maqsad hai (This is my mission)." During interrogation, police sources said, the 63-year-old said he held Abdullah responsible "for the spread of terrorism" in J&K. Jamwal also said that the revolver he used was licensed and belonged to him. Jamwal's wife and son, a graduate, are believed to have locked the Purani Mandi house and left soon after his arrest. Jamwal also has two daughters,



one of them a doctor, who are both married. The wedding of one of them took place just six-seven months ago, say neighbours. Jamwal took the Panthers Party route to politics initially, said sources, and even contested the Jammu Municipal Corporation elections, but lost. After 2014, he started participating in programmes, especially religious, and would claim to be chairman of an outfit called the 'Dharmik Jagran Manch'.

As per neighbours and close relatives, Jamwal, who dropped out of school after Class 10, also struggled with alcohol issues. Several business ventures he got into failed, including a leased hotel in Himachal Pradesh's Manali, a hotel in Ramban, and an eatery in Purani Mandi. The family, however, had rent coming in from shops and other

property owned by them in the Purani Mandi area.

Jamwal reportedly also has land and a house in Kulgam in Kashmir, which was gifted to his father by Dogra King Hari Singh for his services. As per a close relative, they continue to visit Kashmir at least once a year. Shatrueet Singh, whose son's wedding reception was the venue where Jamwal attacked Abdullah, denies Jamwal's claims that the two of them are relatives. A member of another prominent Rajput family of Jammu, who runs educational institutions and hotels, Shatrueet says Jamwal was only a former neighbour.

Shatrueet and family lived earlier in Purani Mandi, but moved to the upscale Channi Himmat area some time back.

Shatrueet told The Indian Express that Jamwal recently visited their home when he was not present, and his mother extended him an invite for the wedding. "After that, Jamwal called me up several times asking about the wedding preparations, but I avoided him," he said, mentioning Jamwal's "drinking problems".

However, as Shatrueet worries, his son's wedding may now forever be tied to Jamwal's act.

## Tensions spike in Manipur's Ukhrul after bodies of two missing Kuki men recovered

Sukrita Baruah  
Guwahati, March 12

THE BODIES of two Kuki men, who had been missing since Wednesday morning amid tensions and violence in Manipur's Ukhrul district, were found on Thursday. This comes hours after 21 people, mostly Tangkhul Nagas, who had been held captive, were released.

The two men, whose bodies were found by security forces and local residents on Thursday morning, were identified as Thengin Baite of Thawai Kuki village and Thangboimang Khongsai of Shangkai village. Their bodies were found in a forested area along the Mapithel hill range, which was the site of a gunfight between groups of both communities on Wednesday, officials said.

In the Manipur Legislative Assembly, Home Minister Govindas Kothoujam said that a gunfight had reportedly occurred between around 6.30 am and 9 am on Wednesday at Mapithel hill range in Ukhrul district between two armed groups after two Kuki villagers were allegedly abducted. During the gunfight, one civilian, Lalminthang Haokip (40), sus-



The men, identified as Thengin Baite and Thangboimang Khongsai, were missing since Wednesday. EXPRESS

tained a minor bullet injury and was evacuated to a health centre in Kangpokpi district, he said.

A security official in Ukhrul said, "According to information received, Tangkhul volunteers went to the Thawai Kuki hill area to stop the cultivation of poppy there, and 'detained' or abducted two villagers from there. The rest of the villagers ran away, and armed volunteers were mobilised on both sides, and there was a shootout between the two groups. The local Kukis say that, separately, two villagers who had gone to repair a water pipeline have been missing since that time."

Kuki groups stopped vehi-

cular traffic on the Imphal-Ukhrul road in the area.

21 passengers of three vehicles travelling on the road were allegedly held captive by the groups, leading to efforts that went well into the night by the government to secure their release. Of the 21 people, 18 were Tangkhul Nagas, and three were from other communities.

"One of the Kukis held by the Tangkhuls managed to escape. During negotiations to secure the release of the 21 hostages, what they wanted was for the other person to be released and the two missing to be found and rescued. There were another six people who were stranded in the hill area after the gunfight, and they wanted them to be rescued as well. Then, the other person who was held was released, and the locations of the six stranded people were secured. However, the two missing people were not found at the time. Still, they agreed to release the 21 people with the assurance that the search would continue, and they were released at around 2.30-3.00 am," said a security official.

Later, at around 8.30 am on Thursday, the bodies of two men were found by BSF forces.

## BRIEFLY



Tourists arrive at the North Portal of the Atal Tunnel amid snowfall, in Lahaul and Spiti district of Himachal Pradesh on Thursday. ANI

## Fresh snowfall at isolated places in higher reaches of Himachal

ISOLATED AREAS in the higher reaches of the Lahaul and Spiti district in Himachal Pradesh experienced a fresh spell of snow, while the lower hills saw intermittent rain on Thursday. Snowfall was reported in Jispa, Darcha, and Shinkula, with Hansa recording 2.5 cm of snow. The rain and snow in March have

brought smiles to residents, particularly tourism stakeholders in Manali and Lahaul and Spiti. The valley has experienced a drop in maximum temperatures due to the snowfall in higher areas, marking a significant change in weather in Manali and its surroundings, as well as in Lahaul and Spiti. PTI

## ED attaches assets of firms owned by Anil Ambani

THE ED has provisionally attached 31 immovable properties valued at Rs 581.65 crore belonging to Reliance Home Finance Limited (RHFL) and Reliance Commercial Finance Limited (RCFL), escalating its crackdown on alleged financial irregularities within the Anil Ambani-led Reliance Group. "The attached assets, primarily land parcels, are spread across 13 states including Goa, Kerala, Karnataka, Punjab, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Delhi, West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, and Rajasthan. This latest move follows search operations on March 6 under the Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA) linked to Reliance Power Limited (R- Power)," an ED spokesperson said in a statement. ENS

## Deep purple: Punjab farmer reimagines potato farming

Anju Agnihotri Chaba  
Jalandhar, March 12

A POTATO with deep purple skin and flesh in the same colour is slowly making its way onto tables and in the markets in Punjab, where the traditional varieties with brown skin and white or yellow flesh continue to dominate demand. Leading the change is a young farmer from the state's Malwa region.

Gurjot Singh, a 27-year-old progressive farmer from Matta village in Faridkot district, has been cultivating and multiplying purple potato seeds on his farm for past several years. According to Singh, the crop can generate earnings ranging from Rs 6 lakh to Rs 20 lakh per acre depending on yield quality and market prices, making it significantly more profitable than conventional crops.

Unlike regular potatoes, the purple variety is sugar-free, rich in vitamin C and antioxidants, and contains high levels of anthocyanins — natural compounds also found in blueberries that are associated with various health benefits. Nutri-

tional studies suggest that anthocyanins may help improve cholesterol levels, support eye health, and reduce the risk of heart disease, certain cancers, and diabetes.

Singh says he first saw purple potatoes in retail stores in Delhi and Chandigarh, where they were sold for Rs 280 to Rs 400 per kilogram as imported specialty produce. Intrigued by the crop's premium price and nutritional appeal, he initially bought a few kilograms to experiment with cultivation. When that attempt failed to produce seed tubers, he imported 20 kg of seed potatoes from Bolivia in 2022.

The crop, sown on a few marlas of land, adapted well to Punjab's soil and climate, allowing him to multiply the seeds gradually. Within a year, he expanded cultivation to three acres, then to around three acres in the following season. By the fourth year, the crop had expanded to about 35 acres on his own farm, with an additional 25 acres being cultivated through contract farming arrangements. Interestingly, when Prime



Gurjot Singh from Matta village in Faridkot. ANJU AGNIHOTRI CHABA

Minister Narendra Modi officially launched India's own purple potato variety — Kufri Jamunia, developed by the Central Potato Research Institute (CPRI) in Shimla. — in August 2024, Singh had already been growing them for nearly two years.

Purple potatoes are believed to have originated in the Andean region of South America, particularly Bolivia and Peru, where coloured potato varieties have been cultivated for centuries. Today, they are gaining

global popularity due to their high antioxidant content and use in health-focused foods. In countries such as the United States, they are commonly used in salads, smoothies, vegan dishes, and even dairy-free ice creams.

Singh says the crop suits Punjab's climate, which is relatively fungus-free and ideal for producing disease-free seed potatoes. Yields can reach around 400 bags of 50 kgs per acre, while the crop's thicker peel gives it nearly double the shelf life of ordinary potatoes.

Beyond selling fresh produce, Singh focuses primarily on seed multiplication. Last season, he sold seed potatoes at around Rs 5,000 per 50-kg bag, producing about 200 quintals of seed per acre. Even with moderate yields, he says farmers can earn several times more than from wheat or conventional potato varieties, while input costs remain around Rs 50,000 to Rs 60,000 per acre.

The crop cycle lasts about 90 to 100 days, with sowing typically in October or November and harvesting between

February and March. Purple potatoes can be used in a variety of dishes including parathas, tikkis, French fries and desserts.

This season, when regular potatoes were selling for just Rs 2 to Rs 3 per kg, Singh managed to sell purple potatoes at about Rs 28 per kg in wholesale markets, with even higher prices in metropolitan markets like Delhi.

To meet rising demand, Singh has adopted a contract farming model in which farmers receive seed tubers from his farm and return a portion of their harvest for further multiplication. The system allows rapid expansion while maintaining seed quality.

Singh, who began farming at the age of 14 and later completed a law degree, now manages about 67 acres of land — up from the eight acres originally owned by his family. Alongside purple potatoes, he continues to experiment with several other rare potato varieties as part of his efforts to promote crop diversification and high-value agriculture in Punjab.

**The Indian EXPRESS**  
— FOUNDED BY —  
**RAMNATH GOENKA**  
— IN 1932 —  
BECAUSE THE TRUTH  
INVOLVES US ALL

## Question CEC, but move to impeach is unwise

THE IMPEACHMENT motion likely to be moved in Parliament by parties of the Opposition against Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar is not a step towards resolution of a political problem, but its disquieting symptom. Clearly, even a united Opposition does not have the numbers to carry the motion through. At best, therefore, it can use it to register a symbolic protest against what it sees as the EC's biased functioning — the draft motion cites his "partisan and discriminatory conduct" and "mass disenfranchisement" through the Special Intensive Revision of electoral rolls. The motion against CEC Kumar is set to come on the heels of a similar Opposition move against the Speaker — the no-confidence motion against Om Birla, seeking his removal for the alleged failure to ensure the House's impartial functioning, was rejected by a voice vote in the Lok Sabha on Wednesday. In both cases, the Opposition is taking an extreme step to draw attention to the less-than-fair conduct of umpires. In both, there is merit in the Opposition's grievances. But it needs to ask itself whether by rushing to use an instrument of last resort to score only a symbolic point, it undermines itself, while risking a hardening of confrontation with a high-ranking constitutional authority.

To be sure, the EC has acted in ways that invite accusations of political bias on the watch of CEC Kumar. He has treated the Opposition with disrespect and the poll body's decisions have often handed the advantage to the ruling party. The conduct of the SIR in Bihar raised questions of pace and timing, setting off a scramble for hard-to-get documents and casting the burden of proof on the vulnerable voter in an exercise that morphed into a test of citizenship. But then, the Supreme Court stepped in, to nudge the EC towards greater transparency, to direct it to include Aadhaar as proof of identity, so that the SIR does not become an exercise of exclusion. Even amid the ongoing SIR ahead of elections in West Bengal, the SC intervention has tamped down the escalating confrontation between the Mamata Banerjee government and the EC — the Chief Minister called off her sit-in after the Court ordered the formation of tribunals to hear appeals against exclusion from voter lists.

Amid the polarisation, then, and in spite of an executive that weaponises its majority, there are countervailing forces, checks and balances. The Opposition needs to make its way by appealing to, and widening these spaces from within, strategically and imaginatively. No confidence and impeachment motions are a cop-out, and an abdication of that responsibility.

## In blacklisting experts, SC does itself disservice

LAST MONTH, the Supreme Court took strong exception to a section in a Class VIII Social Science textbook that referred to corruption in the judiciary. The section, indeed, seemed to reflect bad faith, especially because many of the deletions and additions in NCERT text books on the watch of the BJP-led government have been politically motivated. The judiciary's seminal role also means that assessments of its institutional record must be undertaken with utmost care and diligence, particularly those meant for impressionable minds. The Court's reprimand prompted an almost immediate course correction — the government complied with the SC's directive to withdraw the textbook and pulled up the NCERT. However, after raising the red flag, the SC has further pressed the issue. On Wednesday, it directed the Centre, States, UTs, universities and public institutions to "dissociate" from the NCERT's team — historian Michel Danino, legal expert Alok Prasanna Kumar and educationist Suparna Diwakar. This blacklisting and imposition of curbs by the Court is a let-down. A prickly and thin-skinned response goes against the Court's formidable reputation of expansiveness and open-mindedness — built up by bench after bench, and finding expression in jurisprudence that has expanded the ambit of the freedom of expression especially.

In the last decade, NCERT textbooks have invited controversy. The excising of references to the Gujarat riots, pruning of chapters on medieval Indian history, diluting of references to protest movements and removal of the mention of the demolition of Babri Masjid have pointed to a flattening of social complexities and a forced alignment of texts with the ideology of the ruling party. At the same time, amid shifting political currents, the SC has consistently underlined that its integrity lies in being steadfast to constitutional values and due processes. The commitment to its mandate has also made the institution look within. This spirit of introspection lay behind the then-CJI B R Gavai's remark in July last year. "Sadly, there have been instances of corruption... even within the judiciary," he said. The now-withdrawn textbook referred to Justice Gavai's speech.

The Court's umbrage at what it saw as an attempt to selectively denigrate its institutional dignity wasn't misplaced. But now, if the Court's censure gives way to censoring, it will be a disservice to its own record of responding to criticism with magnanimity.

## A gift of big, beautiful shoes

BEFORE THE emails and Pizzagate, before the basket of deplorables and Benghazi, there was a time when criticism of Hillary Clinton revolved around something apparently equally polarising: The pantsuits. One may be forgiven for wondering why, at a time when such attire was no longer unusual for women in professional environments. But politicians' sartorial choices never fail to attract attention, often of the negative sort, which may be one reason they tend to stick to the uniform — whether suit-and-tie or white-shirt-and-mundu. Now, all eyes are on the US cabinet and its new uniform of sorts: Shoes made by the American brand Florsheim.

According to a report in *The Wall Street Journal*, US President Donald Trump has developed a penchant for these shoes and started gifting them to cabinet members, and other favoured individuals, after guessing their sizes. They make sure to wear the shoes in front of him, even when they're the wrong size — online fashion critics have spotted Secretary of State Marco Rubio apparently wearing Florsheims that are too big.

If this is true, these politicians face the task of catering to a constituency with a very particular aesthetic sense, honed in the haute couture of 1980s New York. To win even more, they might also want to consider wearing extra-long ties, reaching well below the belt, and even adding a sprinkling of tasteful gold décor to their homes. As with the discourse over Clinton's pantsuits, though, this is all just a distraction. There are more serious things to be concerned about, like the President's next Truth Social post.

# Atmanirbharta is managing external dependencies, big-power rivalries

THE WEAPONISATION of India's oil imports by the United States, linking the sourcing of oil to terms for bilateral trade, is a reminder of the constraints imposed by such external dependence on national security and foreign policy.

Independent India began its development process with four critical external dependencies — food, foreign exchange, defence equipment and energy. The foreign exchange crisis of 1957-58 alerted policy makers to the external financial constraint. The war with China in 1962 signalled the shortage of defence equipment. The droughts of 1965-67 drew attention to the critical dependence on food imports. The Gulf War of 1990 contributed to a spike in oil prices that triggered a balance-of-payments crisis.

The governments of the day learnt important economic and foreign policy lessons from each crisis. The shortcomings in defence equipment available during the 1962 war forced Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru to reach out to the United States for assistance. The food crisis of the mid-Sixties showed how external dependence in a vital sector like food could also be used to shape foreign-policy choices. President Lyndon Johnson tried to link food aid to a change in India's stance on the war in Vietnam. Prime Minister Indira Gandhi stood her ground.

The oil crisis of 1990 and the subsequent foreign exchange crisis of 1991 forced India to approach the International Monetary Fund for support. Neither the United States nor other developed economies were willing to help India until the government of Prime Minister Narasimha Rao undertook major changes in both economic and foreign policy. The diplomatic recognition of

Israel was one consequence.

More recently, the weaponisation of finance by the Group of Seven (G7) economies, following the Russian invasion of Ukraine, and the weaponisation of energy supplies by US President Donald Trump, drew attention to the constraints being imposed on the pursuit of an independent foreign policy and highlight the strategic importance of greater self-reliance.

Little wonder then that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has rediscovered the relevance of Nehru's policy of self-reliance, that is *atmanirbharta*, even as Panditji is slammed day in and day out.

It should be clear to the managers of national security that the US will persist with its present policy of weaponising all forms of trade, especially trade in energy, defence equipment and access to advanced and critical technologies. The optimism generated by last February's joint statement titled, "US-India COMPACT — Catalysing Opportunities for Military Partnership, Accelerated Commerce & Technology — for the 21st Century", should now be set aside given the events of the last 12 months.

Prime Minister Modi and President Trump even signed on to another optimistic acronym, TRUST — "US-India Transforming the Relationship Utilising Strategic Technology" — when they agreed that "energy security is fundamental to economic growth, social well-being and technical innovation in both countries". Trump signed on a statement that promised to "ensure energy affordability, reliability and availability, and stable energy markets."

By renegeing on that promise Trump has undone a quarter-century of trust-building between the



SANJAYA BARU

While PM Modi seems to have adopted Indira Gandhi as his role model on a range of policy issues and in his style of governance, he has not yet acquired her sense of personal courage and confidence to stand up to external bullying

US and India. The TRUST statement says both countries are "leading producers and consumers, in driving the global energy landscape", committing them to an Energy Security Partnership, including in oil, gas, and civil nuclear energy. India can no longer trust Trump's America on energy security after the events of the last fortnight.

Joining hands with Israel, the US has engulfed all of West Asia in a war that has serious consequences not just for India's energy security but also the larger economic interests it has invested in the region. Given the geo-economic stake India has acquired in the Gulf, the Israel-US action amounts to a betrayal of trust. The Prime Minister ought to stand up and say as much in Parliament.

Indian national security managers would be well advised not to get locked into any more agreements with the US during the remainder of the Trump administration given the direction of Trump's economic and geopolitical policies. The Modi government's policy of "*atmanirbharta*" requires it to stand up to the challenge of neo-imperialism posed by Trump's aggressive moves around the world. Self-reliance is earned, not granted.

Even as India continues to manage these longstanding external dependencies in an increasingly uncertain and difficult global economic and geopolitical environment, new vulnerabilities have come to the fore. Over the past decade, elite emigration has emerged as a new source of external vulnerability. For a long time, India has viewed the diaspora's reach and standing, especially in developed countries and in West Asia, as a symbol of "soft power" and a

source of foreign exchange.

Trump's anti-immigration and America First policies and the war in the Gulf have once again exposed the tenuous foundations of India's diaspora outreach. Moreover, a globalised Indian power elite is being used, especially by the US and its allies, to influence public opinion and shape policy narratives at home, drawing India into their conflicts.

The last time this kind of external influence-mongering was experienced on such scale was during the Cold War, in the 1960s and 1970s, when a non-aligned India became an important theatre for external actors. Once again, one sees a similar increase in the activities of what are these days fashionably referred to as "influencers". The difference between the earlier Cold War era and now is the paradox that, on the one hand, India has become more developed and more influential and yet, on the other hand, it appears to have become more vulnerable to external pressure and influence.

While Prime Minister Modi seems to have adopted Indira Gandhi as his role model on a range of policy issues and in his style of prime ministerial governance, he has not yet acquired her sense of personal courage and confidence to stand up to such external bullying. Standing up to Pakistan is okay. But she stood up to the Big Powers.

Managing Big-Power rivalry, which in the contemporary era is a three-way contest between the US, Russia and China, while not allowing any one of them to exploit India's external strategic dependencies as weapons against India, is what leadership has to be about.

Baru is a writer and former editor, The Financial Express

## Dignity of life should take into account the ethics of letting go



HARMALA GUPTA

D YING WITH dignity is one of the most vexing challenges we face today. It is a consequence of technological advances in the medical field that keep us physically alive but extract a huge toll in terms of psychological, social, financial and spiritual suffering.

Not surprisingly, this has led to a demand in many countries for physician-assisted suicide. It also comes with the argument that the right to life must include the quality of that life and that, when faced with unbearable suffering brought on by medical treatments that rob one of dignity, one should have the right to say "No more!"

Given this background, the recent Supreme Court judgment allowing a young man who had been in a vegetative state for 13 long years after a tragic accident to finally die with dignity is welcome. However, the elderly parents should not have had to petition the courts over a number of years.

Surely, it could have been dealt with in a speedier manner by the doctors themselves when they realised that there was no hope of recovery.

The procedure to be followed when there is no hope of recovery, regardless of whether a signed advance medical directive (AMD) is available or not, was clarified by a Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court in 2019 in response to an application filed by the Indian Society of Critical Care Medicine.

The need to act expeditiously, while also laying down safeguards, was emphasised. These require constituting a primary medical board in the hospital where the patient is being treated, as well as a secondary medical board that would include experts from outside the hospital to provide oversight. Both are to give their decisions, ideally, within 48 hours. This practice was certainly not followed in this case.

Discontinuing a treatment when you know that it is not in the interest of your patient, but will instead prolong suf-

fering, upholds the Hippocratic Oath to which all doctors are sworn. This is ethical medical practice.

It requires caring doctors who are willing to spend time with the patient and relatives, explaining the pros and cons, listening to their concerns, and honouring the AMD (if available) or the wishes the patient may have expressed to their loved ones or to a surrogate when able to do so.

The medical community, too, needs to come to a consensus as to whether removing a feeding tube or a breathing tube that is doing the patient more harm than good falls within the realm of ethical medical practice, or should be considered "passive euthanasia", as the court termed it in the present case.

Palliative care staff working with patients with debilitating and life-limiting conditions in our country have been emphasising the need for palliative care teams to guide this process of care and provide a pathway once it is clear that there is no cure or hope for recovery.

They are willing to contribute to the setting up of end-of-life guidelines in healthcare institutions for these patients and their caregivers. Based on our 30 years of experience at CanSupport in looking after patients with serious health-related suffering, there is no doubt in our minds that palliative care — which ensures continuing quality of life, and death with dignity — must be universally available and made part of our public healthcare system.

No one should have to bear the indignity of life-prolonging measures, strapped to a machine in the ICU, that only increase suffering.

To reiterate, ensuring quality of life is as much an intrinsic part of ethical medical practice as prolonging life. It is not about being humane or kind; it is the professional duty of the doctor who has sworn an oath to relieve suffering.

The writer is founder-president, CanSupport

## In our shared home, we built ourselves a refuge



SHREYA BASAK

THAT FIRST week, I could not sleep. Not because it was a new house, an unfamiliar space, but due to the weight of learning to live alone — again — after building a home with someone. For me, the new house was a place where this shift had to quietly settle in; for the friend sharing this house with me, it was a space to begin afresh after a difficult personal time. We were both shedding old skin, relearning to do things our way.

Looking back, I realise that through most of my 20s, whenever I moved house, my neighbourhood seemed to move with me, except this neighbourhood is not a street or a cluster of buildings. It is the ordinary, vulnerable moments of life unfolding in the space between me and my closest friend from college. In the seven years since we moved to this city, this has grown to be the safest neighbourhood I have known.

For most, the idea of neighbourhood once meant familiar faces. There was always someone to borrow sugar from, someone who'd check in when the lights went out. But that closeness also came with watchful eyes. Neighbours quietly shaped how you stepped out, what you wore, and who you were expected to become. They were both community and audience.

Over time, for me, the neighbourhood became a space built slowly through care, trust, and shared thinking. In Delhi, where the traditional idea of neighbourhood often fades into anonymity and hustle, a different kind of neighbourhood, one held together by friendship, feminist care, and a shared sense of freedom, has quietly grown inside the many apartments we have rented.

Mornings here often begin with two cups of coffee, pancakes or garlic toast, and Taylor Swift. Here, sharing chores is free of conflict. There are small rituals, too. Curating a playlist that turns cooking into a recreational activity. Flowers placed on the table as an act of hope. A dessert baked without prompting. Finding joy in caring for cats. Solidarity holds this neighbourhood together. It could be part friendship, part love affair, part partnership. A space where, simply by being seen and understood, each of us has slowly become more ourselves. Sometimes that simply means asking, "*Tui thik achish?*" (All okay?).

Sometimes it reminds me of my childhood. After long mornings, mothers would stand by the doorway talking to the aunt next door, sharing the weight of the day and spilling secrets. But those conversations would pause if an elder or male relative walked in. Here, it feels different. The doors only open wider.

Two women stitched this neighbourhood together between work, exhaustion, laughter, and long conversations. In a way, it reveals what women truly enjoy and who they are when no one is watching. It carries the emotional and political labour that women pour into the idea of home — a place that has changed me as a person and that I will always want to return to.

The writer is a Delhi-based development communication professional

## 40 YEARS AGO March 13, 1986



### Chavan to be sworn in

S B CHAVAN will be sworn in as Chief Minister of Maharashtra. The swearing-in of most of the members of the new Council of Ministers is also slated for the same day. The Chief Minister-elect, who will be relinquishing charge as the Union Home Minister, said in New Delhi that he will take into his ministry persons of talent, experience and capacity to work without consideration of group affiliations. He is against the creation of a post of deputy chief minister.

### Tensions in Pakistan

NINE PROMINENT opposition leaders of Pakistan, including National Democratic Party leader Khan Abdul Wali Khan have been put under house arrest to prevent

them from attending a meeting against the government action on poppy growers. Besides Wali Khan, the other prominent leaders put under house arrest include the party's central vice president, Haji Ghulam Ahmad Bilour, and provincial president Mohammad Afzal Khan.

### Golden Temple 'incidents'

THE CENTRE has told the Punjab government that "secessionist activities" continue to take place in the Golden Temple complex and that the latter should check these. In communication with the Chief Minister, Surjit Singh Barnala, the Union Minister of State for Internal Security, Arun Nehru, is understood to have pointed out that the "Khalian" flag continued to fly at the top of a building in the complex where

it was put on January 26. He has asked the state government to bring it down.

### Surplus budget for Bengal

THE WEST Bengal Chief Minister, Jyoti Basu, now looking after finance, presented in the state Legislative Assembly a surplus budget of Rs 50.53 crore for 1986-87, inclusive of a Rs 28.57 crore opening balance. Basu proposed new levies to mop up Rs 40.5 crore, of which Rs 30 crore alone would come from increased cess on coal. However, Basu said the surplus had to take into account the payment of five instalments of dearness allowance to state government employees besides the additional commitment of Rs 8 crore for development of infrastructural facilities in the Calcutta metropolitan development areas and other urban areas.



● **WHAT THE OTHERS SAY**  
Force alone won't bring peace: Israel should negotiate with Lebanon.  
—Haaretz, Israel

**DIS/AGREE**  
THE BEST OF BOTH SIDES

A weekly column, which offers not this-versus-that, but the best of both sides, to inform the debate



ILLUSTRATION: C.R SASIKUMAR

Can an age-based ban on social-media use safeguard the young from its harms?

## Let's talk protection, not control



ALISHA LALLJEE

**M**Y SON doesn't listen to anyone at home or at school. We are all fed up and close to giving up. If the government can intervene and ban social-media use, we are all for it. At least we will have some peace in the house," a relatively annoyed parent of a 16-year-old told me the other day.

The Andhra Pradesh government has recently announced that it is exploring banning social media for children under 13. Other states such as Karnataka, Maharashtra, and Kerala, too, have expressed interest in bringing in legislation to restrict social-media use. When the government proposes a ban on social-media use for children, reactions tend to be immediate. Some see it as moral policing. Others see it as long-overdue protection. But if we pause the outrage and listen carefully to what is happening in homes, classrooms and therapy rooms, a quieter truth emerges.

Children today are growing up in digital spaces that are not built for their psychological safety. Unlike television, which we consumed passively, social media is immersive, persuasive and algorithm-driven. It does not just entertain; it studies behaviour, amplifies insecurities and rewards comparison. A child may appear to be scrolling harmlessly, but beneath that screen are subtle messages about appearance, popularity, worth and validation. The developing brain is especially sensitive to reward loops. Every like, every comment, every notification activates a dopamine cycle that children do not yet have the maturity to regulate. Over time, this can shape attention spans, self-esteem and emotional resilience, often without the child even realising something is shifting inside them.

What makes this more concerning is that harm on social media is not loud at first. It does not always show up as obvious distress. It shows up as subtle withdrawal, shorter attention spans, constant checking, fear of missing out (FOMO), and a quiet but persistent comparison with others. Children begin to measure themselves against filtered lives and edited bodies. They internalise standards that are unrealistic, and live in this biased bubble that they believe is true. They constantly

measure their lives against these standards and often despair when they can't match up. Exposure to cyberbullying and inappropriate content complicates their emotional landscape.

Parents often notice mood swings but do not connect the dots to digital exposure. Social media harms in ways that are cumulative and psychological; it may not always be immediate or dramatic. By the time the effects become visible, a child is already suffering from anxiety disorders, sleep disturbance, body image concerns or attention difficulties.

All of these do call for a supervisory mechanism that empowers not just parents, but also children in the long run. An absolute and blanket ban, however, may not be the most effective or realistic way to go about it. Technology is embedded in modern life. A rigid prohibition may simply drive usage underground, making monitoring harder and conversations difficult. Children would continue using social media whether we like it or not, but they would simply do it on the sly this time.

What could the possible restrictions look like? For instance, delaying independent access until a certain age while allowing supervised, time-limited exposure could strike a balance, as children would be more accountable. Screen-time caps integrated at a system level rather than left entirely to parental enforcement could ease the burden on families, as many children are manipulative about it. Digital literacy education must also become compulsory in schools, teaching children not only how to use technology, but how not to use it.

Ultimately, this debate is not about control; it is about protection during a vulnerable developmental window. We do not allow children to drive cars before they are ready, not because driving is evil, but because age-related maturity matters. The same principle applies here. Childhood is a period when identity is fragile, self-worth is still at a formative stage, and peer validation carries enormous weight. A thoughtful, calibrated restriction acknowledges both realities: That social media is here to stay, and that children deserve stronger guardrails. The ban, if refined rather than absolute, could serve as a protective pause, giving children time to build the emotional tools they need before stepping into a digital world that does not always have their best interests at heart. This would also lessen the burden on already struggling parents.

The writer is a Mumbai-based psychologist, psychotherapist and special educator

## Ban cannot address full spectrum of risk



APARAJITA BHARTI AND SIDDHARTH DEB

**I**T IS rare for policy discussions to resonate in every home as much as the potential ban on social media for those under 16. Regulating screen time is one of the most stressful features of modern parenting, and these proposals seem to be resonating with exhausted parents worldwide. India until recently appeared on a different path. However, something shifted in the last two months. The Andhra Pradesh government, otherwise known to be one of the most tech-forward state governments, was the first to announce that it was exploring such a move. Other states — Karnataka, Maharashtra, Goa, Bihar, and Kerala — rushed to announce exploratory discussions in this regard. This year's Economic Survey framed social media addiction as a "public health issue" but shied away from a policy prescription. Reports suggest that the Centre has also started looking at age-related restrictions.

However, what seems "popular" is not often the best policy solution. First, a social media ban for under-16s can create a false sense of security among policymakers and caregivers. Risk permeates across the internet. The nature of those risks differs from platform to platform. Young people encounter varying risks on gaming platforms, AI chatbots and VoIP (voice over internet protocol) services. Banning one kind of platform will only result in young people migrating to other online spaces that adults (and regulators) are less familiar with. Thus, the limits of ban-first approaches cannot be ignored.

Second, a significant number of young people access the internet in single-device households. In shared-device settings, family structures organically regulate screen time. Regulations around young people's access to digital services must be attuned to the reality that kids often bypass these restrictions by simply using their parents' accounts and are generally adept at bypassing access-control restrictions.

Third, unlike the Global North, access to digital platforms in India helps bridge existing socio-economic inequities to a larger extent. The 2024 ASER survey cited by the Economic Survey also observes that over half of young people in rural areas use

smartphones for education. It also observed that nearly 80 per cent of mothers were only schooled till Class X, with over 40 per cent having only completed Class V. This points to the inverse dependence of mothers (often primary caregivers) on their children for digital guidance. Therefore, policymakers should weigh the wider ramifications of cutting kids' access to online spaces.

Given this context, India should explore frameworks that align with social realities while addressing parents' legitimate concerns. First, interventions should build on recent legislative reforms like India's forthcoming DPD Act, which holds critical implications for young people's digital safety. Set for rollout in May 2027, the DPD Act limits personalisation and bans targeted advertising for under-18s. Additionally, its verifiable parental consent requirement for children is India's first brush with age-verification systems easily.

In parallel, India can introduce a framework built on well-being-by-design principles. These can apply universally to all digital services with specific guardrails around addiction, stranger contact and other harmful behaviours. The principles should be augmented by transparency norms and penalties in case of violations. Platforms can be nudged to increase the uptake of parental controls and user awareness about their reporting and safety features.

Lastly, we need to increase investments in digital safety education for children and parents. We have a generation of parents that have had social media since they were teens and are no less prone to harmful online behaviours. While some school boards have adopted digital safety curricula, they are not implemented uniformly as this is often seen as a "supplementary" activity. Such curricula should also be dynamically updated to keep pace with rapid technological change.

Indian policymakers have taken a pragmatic approach to digital regulation so far, one that balances safety with socio-economic upliftment. We hope that when it comes to digital access for teenagers, we adopt a similar approach and find a middle path that achieves our goals.

Bharti is co-founder of Young Leaders for Active Citizenship (YLAC) and The Quantum Hub (TQH). Deb is associate director, TQH

## Opposition is using every instrument to protect institutions



**ZERO HOUR**  
BY DEREK O'BRIEN

**P**ARLIAMENT IS in session. There is a strong buzz in the corridors of the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha that a clutch of Opposition parties will soon be moving a motion of removal against the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC). If the motion to remove the CEC is filed (as I think it will be), this will be a first.

In the last 75 years, India has had 25 Chief Election Commissioners. Neither House of Parliament has ever brought a removal motion against the CEC. Never. Is the current CEC all set to hold a dubious record?

### Process of removal

For the removal of the CEC, 100 members of the Lok Sabha or 50 members of the Rajya Sabha have to submit a notice to the Speaker or Chairman. If the notice is admitted, a three-member committee is formed to investigate the same. If the committee finds the grounds valid, the motion is taken up for consideration. It needs to be passed by a special majority (a majority of the total membership of the House and at least two-thirds of the members present and voting) of both the houses.

The Constitution prescribes that the CEC can be removed from his office on the same grounds as a judge of the Supreme Court — "proved misbehaviour or incapacity". The term "proved misbehaviour" has been interpreted to include deliberate abuse of powers, partisan exercise of constitutional functions favouring one political formation over others, and actions that undermine public confidence in the independence and impartiality of the CEC, amongst other attributes.

### Independence of the ECI

During the Constituent Assembly debates, B R Ambedkar had said, "the election machinery should be outside the control of the executive government". This was reiterated by the Supreme Court during the *Anoop Baranwal v Union of India* case of 2023, when it ruled that the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) and Election Commissioners (ECs) should be selected by a three-member committee consisting of the Prime Minister, the Leader of the Opposition, and the Chief Justice of India.

### Disregarding SC

A few months later, the Union government cocked a snook at the SC and came up with the CEC Act. Section 7 of the Act fundamentally changed this structure by creating a selection committee consisting

of the Prime Minister (chairperson), the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, and, incredibly, a Union Cabinet Minister nominated by the Prime Minister.

This arrangement gives the executive a majority (two out of three members), allowing the Union to control appointments to the ECI.

### A glorious past

The Election Commission has a long and famed record. Sukumar Sen, West Bengal's Chief Secretary and later India's first Chief Election Commissioner, was given the enviable task of conducting India's first general election. More than 170 million Indians were eligible to vote. Of these, around 85 per cent were illiterate. 16,500 clerks, 56,000 presiding officers and over 2 lakh policemen were deployed. Bridges were built over rivers to reach villages in the hills. Naval vessels sailed to reach small islands. This was the largest democratic exercise in the world.

S Y Quraishi, the 17th CEC, expanded the Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) in order to achieve voter literacy. He also took categorical stands against the negative effects of the media boom such as paid news and opinion polls. The 23rd CEC of India, Sunil Arora, capitalised on technology to create a database of more than 930 million electors, and launched a nationwide phone helpline number.

### A first

How, then, did we reach this day in 2026 when opposition parties are now unitedly considering taking the un-

precedented action of attempting to remove the CEC? Even though the notice can be moved in just one House, it seems the Opposition is mulling moving it in both Houses. Strong messaging. Members of the Opposition are using every constitutional tool available to protect the sanctity of India's glorious institutions. However, if the notice is not taken up by the Union government, doubts will be raised about a tacit understanding between the executive and the CEC.

In 1991, there was an uproar in Parliament to remove T N Seshan as the CEC. But no formal notice was ever filed. In 2006, the BJP-NDA submitted a memorandum seeking the removal of Navin Chawla as an Election Commissioner. Here, too, no parliamentary process was invoked.

Are MPs sitting today in the Opposition on the verge of making history? PS: In the first general election, 28 lakh women had their names struck off the electoral rolls. Why? Because they refused to share their actual names and instead identified themselves as "mother of A", or "wife of B". "The Times They Are a-Changin'" — Bob Dylan.

The writer is MP and leader, All India Trinamool Congress Parliamentary Party. Additional research: Chahat Mangtani, Ayashman Dey, Varnika Mishra

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Euthanasia verdict

THE SUPREME Court's verdict in the Harish Rana case is a moment of quiet but significant legal progress ('On passive euthanasia, over to the Centre', *IE*, February 12). For 13 years, his family carried an unbearable burden with remarkable dignity, and the court has rightly acknowledged that. What stands out equally, however, is the Court's call for a comprehensive law on passive euthanasia. This is long overdue. Relying on case-by-case judicial intervention is neither practical nor fair to families already overwhelmed by grief and medical uncertainty. Parliament must take this up seriously and draft clear, humane guidelines covering consent, medical board procedures, and palliative care standards. The right to die with dignity should not depend on one's ability to approach the Supreme Court.

Abbharna Barathi, Chennai

THE SUPREME Court's decision in the Harish Rana case once again highlights the moral and legal complexities surrounding passive euthanasia in India ('On passive euthanasia, over to the Centre', *IE*, February 12). While the Court had earlier recognised the right to die with dignity under Article 21 in the landmark *Common Cause v Union*

of India (2018) judgment, the absence of a clear statutory framework continues to burden families and hospitals with procedural uncertainty. Countries such as the Netherlands and Belgium have developed detailed safeguards governing end-of-life decisions, combining medical oversight with legal accountability. India, too, must move beyond case-by-case judicial relief and enact comprehensive legislation that protects patient autonomy while preventing misuse.

Palak Verma, Mandi Gobindgarh

### Gas prices

THE MODI government has failed in foreseeing the impact of the Iran-Israel-US war despite enough warnings ('West Asia crisis a reminder for self-reliance, energy growth: PM', *IE*, March 12). Though PM Narendra Modi travelled to Israel just a few days before the latter attacked Iran, his government failed to foresee the problems the country was destined to face due to unrest in West Asia and make alternative arrangements. People are facing hardships due to acute shortage of cooking gas. Hotels and eateries are shutting down due to non-availability of gas. More importantly, hospitals are facing serious problems.

Tharcus S Fernando, Chennai



MAHALAKSHMI RAMAKRISHNAN

KN PANIKKAR was among the stalwart historians who contributed to the reputation of the Centre for Historical Studies, JNU. Beginning his career at the University of Delhi, Panikkar was invited to join the CHS in 1972 by the pioneers who were giving shape to a new and confident department. S Gopal, Romila Thapar and Bipan Chandra all found in the young Panikkar a dedicated and motivated teacher and researcher.

Panikkar initiated a new field of history, a socio-cultural history of modern India, which gradually took off, like many new areas the Centre initiated. His course on the intellectual history of modern India gave a new orientation to social and cultural his-

## Panikkar, an uncompromising historian

tory, till then not taught in most universities. His presidential address at the Indian History Congress in 1975 on India's social reform movement in the 19th century was a reflection of his contribution to this field.

A Marxist, he engaged with questions perceived as outside the mainstream of established historiography, as seen in his important work *Culture and Consciousness in Modern India: A Historical Perspective*. His interest in political and intellectual history resulted in several landmark publications, including *Against Lord and State: Religion and Peasant Uprisings in Malabar, 1836-1921*, *Communalism in India: A Perspective for Intervention*, and *Culture, Ideology, Hegemony: Intellectuals and Social Consciousness in Colonial India*.

At a time when everyone in the south of the Vindhyas was considered "Madras," pioneers at the CHS made it a point to move

away from the North India-centric gaze. R Champakalakshmi, who specialised in pre-modern Tamil Nadu, and Panikkar, whose specialisation was modern and contemporary Indian history, stood tall among the galaxy of historians. However, the fact that they were from South India certainly had a bearing on the kinds of courses and research fostered in the centre. Delhi/North India, even until the early 1990s, was an alien land for many of us from the south, and the presence of these scholars made a difference. In my case, I moved to JNU from Hyderabad to work with Champakalakshmi, whose writings had inspired my research. If it weren't for the likes of her and Panikkar, people like me would have run back to our safe havens without completing our degrees.

After his retirement, Panikkar returned home and was received with open arms in Kerala. More than a decade ago, I met him at

the Indian History Congress and the Kerala History Congress. It was heartening to see his defence of professional history in the face of attacks on the discipline from an anti-history and ideologically motivated position.

Panikkar embodied the intellectualism of Independent India that was courageous and never compromised on academic integrity. I joined the faculty just after he retired and proudly inherited his and Champakalakshmi's mantle, even though it sat somewhat awkwardly on my shoulders. Panikkar's loss will be keenly felt, especially when the discipline is under attack and the communalism that he sought an intervention against is at its peak. His legacy lives on through those who carry forward his convictions and courage.

The writer is a historian and professor at Centre for Historical Studies, JNU

**Corrigendum**

Adv No :- 1058/11/1301/2026/43549 on dated 05.03.2026 advertise in Indian Express and Dainik Jagran for post of MO, LTs, Staff Nurse, in ART center PGIMS Rohtak & Blood Bank LT in PGIMS Rohtak, STI counselor in civil Hospital Rohtak will be re-advertised due to administrative reason.

Sd/-  
Civil Surgeon  
Rohtak

No. 43800/HRY



**Municipal Corporation Gurugram PUBLIC NOTICE**

Subject: - Regarding Prohibition of Open Defecation and Open Urination.

It is hereby informed to all residents, shopkeepers, commercial establishments, labourers, visitors and the general public within the jurisdiction of Municipal Corporation Gurugram (MCG) that open defecation and open urination at public places are strictly prohibited. Municipal Corporation Gurugram is committed to maintaining a clean, hygienic, and healthy city under the objectives of Swachh Bharat Mission and ensuring public sanitation standards.

**Prohibition**  
No person shall:  
● Defecate or urinate in open areas such as roads, streets, parks, vacant plots, drains, public spaces, markets, or any unauthorized locations.  
● Create unhygienic conditions causing nuisance or environmental pollution.

**Availability of Public Facilities**  
MCG has provided adequate sanitation facilities including:  
● Public Toilets  
● Community Toilets  
● Mobile Toilet Units  
● Citizens are requested to use designated sanitation facilities only.

**Penalty Provisions**  
Any person found violating the above directions shall be liable for action under Municipal Bye-Laws and applicable provisions of sanitation regulations, including:  
● Imposition of spot fine/penalty of Rs. 500/-  
● Legal action as per Municipal Act provisions  
● Repeated violations may attract stricter enforcement measures

**Public Cooperation Requested**  
All residents and stakeholders are requested to:  
● Maintain cleanliness in public places.  
● Encourage others to use public toilets.  
● Report violations to Municipal Authorities.

Commissioner  
Municipal Corporation  
Gurugram

No 43793/HRY



**Municipal Corporation Gurugram PUBLIC NOTICE**

Subject: - Prohibition of Manual Cleaning of Sewer and Septic Tanks.

It is hereby informed to all residents, RWAs, institutions, commercial establishments, contractors, and the general public within the jurisdiction of Municipal Corporation Gurugram that manual cleaning of sewers, manholes, and septic tanks is strictly prohibited. Manual scavenging and hazardous manual entry into sewer or septic tanks without approved mechanized equipment is a punishable offence under the provisions of the Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013.

**Prohibition**  
No individual, agency, contractor, or establishment shall:  
● Engage any person for manual cleaning of sewer lines, manholes, drains, or septic tanks.  
● Allow entry of any worker into sewer/septic tank without proper authorization, safety gear, and mechanized support.  
● Undertake septic tank cleaning through unsafe or traditional manual methods.

**Mandatory Compliance**  
All sewer and septic tank cleaning shall be carried out only through:  
● Mechanized equipment  
● Authorized agencies approved by Municipal Corporation Gurugram  
● Proper safety protocols and protective equipment

**Penalty Provisions**  
Violation of the above provisions shall attract:  
● Legal action under applicable laws.  
● Imposition of penalties and prosecution.  
● Blacklisting of contractors/agencies involved.  
● Registration of FIR against responsible persons.

**Safety Advisory**  
Residents, RWAs, institutions, and commercial establishments are advised to:  
● Hire only authorized mechanized desludging operators.  
● Inform MCG before undertaking septic tank cleaning.  
● Immediately report any instance of manual sewer cleaning.

**Helpline / Complaint**  
Any violation may be reported to:  
● Municipal Corporation Gurugram Control Room 1800-180-1817 (Toll Free)  
● Sanitation Branch, MCG  
● Official complaint portal/mobile application

Commissioner  
Municipal Corporation  
Gurugram

No 43797/HRY



**Office Order**

Subject: - Constitution of the Responsible Sanitation Authority (RSA) and Emergency Response Sanitation Unit (ERSU).

In order to prohibit construction/maintenance of insanitary latrines and employment of any person for manual scavenging or hazardous cleaning of sewerage and septic tanks with the view to deploy mechanized cleaning of sewerage, septic tanks and eliminating manual scavenging, the Responsible Sanitation Authority (RSA) and Emergency Response Sanitation Unit (ERSU) are being constituted.

**The composition of Responsible Sanitation Authority (RSA) :-**  
● Chairperson: Chief Engineer, MCG  
● Member Secretary: Executive Engineer-HQ, MCG  
● Technical Members: Executive Engineers, Assistant Engineers & Junior Engineers  
● Health Member: Chief Medical Officer, MCG.

**Primary Functions**  
● Resource Management: To procure and maintain specialized mechanized equipment (Suction machines, Jetting machines, etc.).  
● Regulatory Oversight: To issue and enforce "Sewer Entry Permits" (No entry into a sewer is allowed without RSA approval).  
● Empowerment: To register and regulate Private Sanitation Service Organizations (PSSOs) operating in Gurugram.  
● Criminal Liability: To initiate legal action against any private entity or individual found forcing/allowing a human to enter a sewer without protective gear.

**Emergency Response Sanitation Unit (ERSU)**  
The ERSU is the operational/field-level unit that acts like a "Fire Brigade for Sewers." It responds to emergencies such as blockages, overflows, or accidents etc.  
1. Composition of ERSU  
● Nodal Officer: Executive Engineer (Divisional).  
● Assistant Nodal Officer: Assistant Engineer designated by Nodal Officer  
● Quick Response Team: A team of 10-12 trained "Sewer Entry Professionals" (SEPs) equipped with PPE/Safety kit constituted by Nodal Officer.  
● Control Room Operators: 24x7 staff to be deployed by the Nodal Officer to manage the Helpline Nos. 1800-180-1817 (MCG) & 14420 (National Safai Mitra Helpline).

2. Equipment Mandate  
The ERSU must maintain the following "Life-Saving Kit" at all times:  
● Gas Detectors  
● Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA)  
● Tripod with Winch and Safety Harnesses  
● Emergency Medical Kit and Oxygen Cylinders  
● Jetting and Suction Machines with GPS tracking  
● Any other equipment as required to ERSU

Commissioner  
Municipal Corporation  
Gurugram

No 43796/HRY

**E-Tender Notice**

Batch No-19/2026  
E-Tender Notice for supply of materials "Participation in through" Web Portal of IREPS [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in). Offers are invited for supply of the following material. The closing time for the tender is at 14.00 Hrs. (1) Tender No.: 39256199A, Short Description of item: CASNUB-22-NLB cast steel bogies with friction damping arrangement for BOBRN wagon as per Drg. No. WD-04078-S/1, All-4, item no. 1 to 18 except item no. 4, 6, 7, 8, & 9 (Drg. attached) and as per "Scope of Supply" of RDSO Technical Pamphlet "WD-21\_CASNUB-22-NLB BOGIE-93 (Rev-2, Amend-5), Quantity: 18 Nos., Publishing Date & Time: 09/March/26, 23:46 Hrs, Tender Closing Date & Time: 30 March 2026, 14:00 Hrs. Participants are required to submit their offer only on-line through the web Portal of IREPS [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in) before the closing date and time. Other details regarding Consignee and detailed description of stores are available in tender document in tender notice on the above portal.  
Sr. DMM/ECR/DHN  
PR/1921/DHN/STORE/T/2526/25-26/32

OFFICE OF THE ADDITIONAL CHIEF ENGINEER, PHED, REGION AJMER  
PHONE NO. 0145-2624748, Email-[acerregionajmer@gmail.com](mailto:acerregionajmer@gmail.com)  
No. F.O/Ar.MP/2025-2026/18632-18681 Dated: 05/03/2026  
NOTICE INVITING TENDERS FOR WORKS  
Bids for the Augmentation of UWSS Niwai, Conversion from RWSS to UWSS Diggi and Lambaharisingh and conversion from PCT to piped water supply Jadno ki dhani including 05 year O&M after 01 year defect liability period Division Malpura District Tank under Budget Announcement 2025-26 (NIT No.25/2025-26; Estimated Cost Rs.7352.82 Lacs) are invited from interested bidders up to 06.04.2026 Other particulars of the Bid may be visited on the procurement portal (<http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in>, <http://sppp.raj.nic.in>) of the state.  
UBN No. PHE 2526BLOB15234  
NIB No. PHE2526A7052  
Sd/-  
(Ram Chandra Rao)  
Additional Chief Engineer  
PHED Region Ajmer  
DIPR/C/5002/2026

**Rajasthan Medical Services Corporation Ltd.**  
D-Block, Swasthya Bhawan, C-Scheme, Jaipur - 302005  
Ph. No. 0141-2223887, Fax No. 0141-2228065, E-Mail-[edepmmrsc-rj@nic.in](mailto:edepmmrsc-rj@nic.in)  
Ref. No. : F-1 /RMSC/EPM/M/3/NIB-879/2025-26/1783 Dated:- 05/03/2026  
**Corrigendum / Addendum**  
Bid for item CR Machine (NIB-879) are invited from interested bidders up to Date: 23.03.2026 : 06:00 P.M. Other particulars of the bid may be visited on Procurement portal website <https://sppp.rajasthan.gov.in> or [www.dipronline.org](http://www.dipronline.org) or <https://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in> or website <http://rpsc.health.rajasthan.gov.in>.  
UBN :- MSC2526GLOB00060 Executive Director (EPM)  
Raj.Samwad/C/25/22214 Rajasthan Medical Services Corporation

**District Health and Family Welfare Society**

O/o Civil Surgeon Rohtak  
Address - Civil Surgeon Office Rohtak  
Phone No:- .....

Re-Advertisement Against Advertisement Code PRDH-1058/11/1301/2026/43589 on dated, 05/03/2026 in news paper Dainik Jagran and Indian Express

Advertisement Code PRDH-1058/11/1301/2026/43589 on dated 05/03/ 2026 has canceled due to some administrative reasons so applied candidate need to apply again. Applicants are invited from eligible candidates to fill the following posts in District Rohtak under Haryana State. AIDS Control Society Posts are purely on contract basis for a fixed period initially up to 31.03.2026 (extendable, subject to further administrative approval and performance).

Application from completed in all respect along with photocopy of all essential qualification certificates and relevant documents (attested/self attested) must be submitted through registered post/by hand to "District T.B. Hospital Rohtak, Room No -5" before closing dated 21/03/2026 by 5.00 PM after that no application form will be accepted and no separate correspondence in this regard will be entertained by this office. This office will not be responsible for any postal delay. Candidates are also advised to visit the website of Health Haryana i.e. [haryanahealth.gov.in](http://haryanahealth.gov.in) regularly for any corrigendum/notice/updates/result etc.

Incomplete applications forms shall be rejected. Candidates are Also advised to read the instructions carefully before applying for the post. The Applicants who already applied advertisement published by Haryana AIDS control Society Panchkula on 22 January 2026 Indian express for the following posts will be considered no need to apply again.

Sr. No	Place Posting	Name of the Post	No. of post and Category	Essential qualification / Eligibility criteria	Age limit	Consolidated salary per month
1	ART CENTER PGIMS ROHTAK	M.O	POST-1 CAT-GEN	<b>Position:</b> MO-ART <b>Essential Qualifications:-</b> MBBS with valid registration from the respective State Medical Council/NMC. <b>Desirable:</b> Experience in HIV/AIDS Program/Post ART settings, These with MD Medicin/Diploma in Medicine will be preferred. <b>Essential Experience:-</b> 6 months' work experience. Post Graduates from clinical Discipline will also be considered., Good working Knowledge of computer MS Office. <b>Job Responsibilities:-</b> "As an MO-ART, advise and facilitate ART (Anti-Retroviral Therapy) services in NACO funded ART centres from time to time (including in a fleet of mobile ART)." Perform various medical and technical activities of NACO (as per the attached job file).	As per Haryana Govt Norms	72000
2	ART CENTER PGIMS	LT	POST-1 CAT-GEN	<b>Essential Qualification:-</b> ● B.Sc in Medical Laboratory Technology (BMLT) or BMLS ● Diploma in Medical Laboratory Technology (DMLT) or DMLS with the course duration of at least 2 years recognized by UGC/ State Government/ Central Government. <b>Essential Experience:-</b> ● One year Experience for B.Sc in MLT (BMLT) or BMLS ● Two year Experience for DMLT or DMLS <b>Desirable:-</b> ● Community candidates from infected and affected as well as key communities. ● Engement with key population and affected communities at field level.	As per Haryana Govt Norms	25000
3	ART CENTER PGIMS	STAFF NURSE	POST-1 CAT-GEN	<b>Essential Qualification:-</b> ● B.Sc. Nursing OR ● GNM ● Candidate must be registered in State Nursing Council <b>Essential Experience:-</b> ● The Candidate should be Computer literate with working knowledge of MS Office, usage of internet and electronic mail ● Engagement with key populations and affected communities at field level <b>Desirable:-</b> ● Community candidates from HIV infected and affected as well as key communities	As per Haryana Govt Norms	21000
4	BLOOD BANK PGIMS ROHTAK	LT	POST-1 CAT-GEN	<b>Essential Qualification:-</b> (i) Degree in Medical Laboratory Technology (M.L.T.) OR Diploma in Medical Laboratory Technology (MLT) (ii) Should have completed 10+2 before obtaining diploma or degree (iii) The degree or diploma should be from University/Institute recognized by Central Government or State Government (iv) The Candidate should be registered with the concerned Para-Medical Council if applicable (v) Knowledge of Computer <b>Experience:-</b> 1. Minimum two years after degree and three year after diploma 2. Degree holders must have minimum six months experience in the Blood Banking. Diploma holders must have minimum one year experience in Blood Banking. <b>Desirable:-</b> ● Post Graduate Degree ● Proficiency in MS Office	As per Haryana Govt Norms	25000
5	CIVIL HOSPITAL ROHTAK	STI COUNSEL LOR	POST-1 CAT- GEN	<b>Essential Qualification:-</b> ● Graduation degree holder in Psychology/Social Work/Sociology/Anthropology/Human Development/ Nursing with 3 years of experience in counseling/ educating under National Health Programme. OR ● Post Graduate in Psychology/Social Work/ Sociology/ Anthropology/Human Development/ Nursing ● If Candidate is a Person Living with HIV/AIDS (PLHIV) ● Graduate Degree holder in Psychology/Social Work/Sociology/Anthropology/ Nursing with 1 year experience in counseling/ educating under National Health Programme. <b>Desirable:-</b> 1. Experience of working under the National AIDS and STD Control Programme (NACP) facility or community settings Knowledge and Skill ● The Candidate should be Computer literate with working knowledge of MS Office, usage of internet and electronic mail ● Familiarity with Government health policies and related programmes ● Ability to work in terms and flexible ways of working as per the need of programme.	As per Haryana Govt Norms	21000

**Important instructions for candidates:-**  
1. Applicant must be permanent resident of Haryana (Bonafide domicile certificate from executive magistrate should be furnished).  
2. Applicant should have passed Hindi/ Sanskrit up to Matric.  
3. These posts are district specific and non transferable.  
4. The reservation policy of Govt. of Haryana will be enforced (these posts are district specific, so all district authorities are hereby directed to ensure to fill the backlog of reservation policy as per Haryana Govt. and as per the total sanctioned posts in different categories in district).  
5. Waiting list of three candidates per post will be kept so that post need not to be re-advertised again & again and posts may not remain vacant. This waiting list will be valid for one year.  
6. The selection criteria of Haryana State AIDS Control Society approved by Chairman, Haryana SACS shall be followed for recruitment. The detail of selection criteria may be seen on the website of Health Haryana i.e. [haryanahealth.gov.in](http://haryanahealth.gov.in) are annexed at Annexure "A".  
7. The candidates are required to attach the attested / self attested legible copies of qualification / certificates and other relevant documents along with the application form.  
8. Candidates applying for a post must ensure that they fulfill all the eligibility condition as on the previous day of closing date. Ineligible candidates need not to apply.  
This office reserves the right to cancel the whole recruitment process at any time at any stage without assigning the reason to candidate.

Sd/-  
Civil Surgeon  
Rohtak

No. 43799-HRY

**GOVERNMENT OF HARYANA TENDER NOTICE**

Sr. No.	NAME OF BOARD/CORP/ AUTH	NAME OF WORK NOTICE TENDER	OPENING DATE CLOSING DATE (TIME)	AMOUNT / EMD (APPROX) IN RUPEES	WEBSITE OF THE BOARD/CORP/ AUTH	NODAL OFFICER/ CONTACT DETAILS/EMAIL
1	DADA LAKHMI CHAND STATE UNIVERSITY OF PERFORMING AND VISUAL ARTS, SECTOR-6, ROHTAK.	RATE CONTRACT OF SANITARY ITEMS IN DLCSUPVA ROHTAK	12.03.2026 27.03.2026	11,10,793/-	<a href="http://www.dlcsupa.ac.in">www.dlcsupa.ac.in</a>	9416198934 dpskgotama@mail.com

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION KINDLY VISIT : [www.haryanaprocurement.gov.in](http://www.haryanaprocurement.gov.in) or [www.etenders.hry.nic.in](http://www.etenders.hry.nic.in) No- 43778/HRY



**Haryana Government Gazette**  
Published by Authority

Govt. of Haryana  
No.6-2026] CHANDIGARH, TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2026(MAGHA21,1947SAKA)  
PART-I  
Notifications, Orders and Declarations by Haryana Government  
HARYANA GOVERNMENT  
PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT (B&R)  
Notification  
The 2nd February, 2026  
FORM-X  
(See Rule-24)  
DECLARATION

No. 28 GA-87/D-15.- Whereas, it appears to the Governor of Haryana that a total of 0.2125 acres land is required in the Village- Hansara, Tehsil -Hansara, District-Gurugram for public purpose, namely already constructed Gurugram Patandi Rewari Road. It is hereby declared that the land in the locality described below is needed for the above purpose in compliance of the order dated 23.07.2013 passed in CWP No. 22156 of 2012 connected with CWP No. 17801 of 2012 as well as order dated 29.04.2024 passed in EA No. 21 of 2019. The land in question is under possession of PWD B&R Department & same is also exempted from the social impact assessment report from the competent authority issued vide letter No.14/20/2024-2B&R (W) dated 24.04.2024 and letter No.14/18/2024-2 B&R (W) dated 26.04.2024. Therefore, declaration is made that a piece of land measuring 0.2125 acres via 0.085 hectare of standard Measurement under acquisition for the above said project in Village- Hansara, Tehsil - Hansara, District - Gurugram, whose details description is as under :-

Serial Number	Khasra No. And land (0-4-0)	Type of Land	Area under Acquisition (in acre)	Name and Address of person interested	Boundaries (Karam)			
					N	S	E	W
01	899/29	Gair Mumkin	0.025	Laxman Singh VPO-Hansara	6	6	6	6
02	103/5/1Min (0-17-0) 103/5/2Min (0-13-0)	Gair Mumkin	0.1875	Babbar Singh and Others VPO-Hansara	6	6	26	26
					6	6	19	19
Total area in acres=			0.2125					

Tree		Structures	
Variety	Number	Type	Plinth area (in Sqm)
Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil

This declaration is made under after hearing of objections of persons interested and due enquiry as provided under section 15 of the Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act, 2013 (Central Act 30 of 2013). The number of families likely to be resettled due to Land Acquisition is 0 (Zero).  
A plan of the land may be inspected in the office of the Land Acquisition Collector, PWD B&R Br., Gurugram on any working day during the working hours.

Place: Gurugram  
Date:.....  
Sd/-  
Superintending Engineer,  
Gurugram Circle, PWD B&R Br., Gurugram.

No. 6-2026] CHANDIGARH, TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2026(MAGHA21,1947SAKA)  
PART-I  
Notifications, Orders and Declarations by Haryana Government  
HARYANA GOVERNMENT  
PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT (B&R)  
Notification  
The 2nd February, 2026  
FORM-X  
(See Rule-24)  
DECLARATION

No. 28 GA-87/D-15.- Whereas it appear to the Governor of Haryana that a total of 1.4 acres land is required in village-Dhankot, Tehsil -Kadipur, District-Gurugram for public purpose, namely already constructed Gurugram Chanda- Farrukhnagar Road. It is hereby notified that the land in the locality described below is needed for the above purpose in compliance of order dated 23.08.2022 passed in CA No. 269 of 2017. The land in question is under possession of PWD B&R Deptt. & below mentioned land is exempted from the social impact assessment report from Competent Authority issued vide letter No. 14/20/2024-2B&R (W) dated 07.05.2024. Therefore, declaration is made that a piece of land measuring 1.4 acres via 0.56 hectare of standard measuring for the above said project in Village Dhankot, Tehsil Kadipur, District Gurugram, whose details description is under acquisition.

Serial Number	Khasra No.	Type of land	Area under Acquisition (inacre)	Name and Address of person interested	Boundaries (Karam)			
					N	S	E	W
01	70/1/2MIN(0-18) 70/2MIn(0-18) 70/3MIn(0-18) 70/4MIn(0-18) 70/5MIn(0-18) 71/1/2Min(0-18) 71/2MIn(0-18) 71/3MIn(0-18) 71/5MIn(0-18) 70/7MIn(1-2) 70/8MIn(1-2)	Gair Mumkin	1.4	Chander Prakash etc. V.P.O-Dhankot	40	40	4	4
					40	40	4	4
					40	40	4	4
					40	40	4	4
					40	40	4	4
					40	40	4	4
					40	40	4	4
					40	40	4	4
					40	40	5	5
					40	40	5	5
Total Area			0.993					

Tree		Structures	
Variety	Number	Type	Plintharea(inSqm)
Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil

This declaration is made under after hearing of objections of persons interested and due enquiry as provided under section 15 of the Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act, 2013 (Central Act 30 of 2013). The number of families likely to be resettled due to Land Acquisition is 0 (Zero).  
A plan of the land may be inspected in the office of the Land Acquisition Collector, PWD B&R Br., Gurugram on any working day during the working hours.

Place: Gurugram  
Date:.....  
Sd/-  
Superintending Engineer, Gurugram Circle,  
PWD B&R Br., Gurugram.

No. 6-2026] CHANDIGARH, TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2026(MAGHA21,1947SAKA)  
PART-I  
Notifications, Orders and Declarations by Haryana Government  
HARYANA GOVERNMENT  
PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT (B&R)  
Notification  
The 2nd February, 2026  
FORM-X  
(See Rule-24)  
DECLARATION

No. 28 GA-87/D-15.- Whereas it appear to the Governor of Haryana that a total of 0.093 acres land is required in Village-Dhankot, Tehsil -Kadipur, District-Gurugram for public purpose, namely already constructed Gurugram Chanda- Farrukhnagar Road. It is hereby notified that the land in the locality described below is needed for the above purpose in compliance of order dated 07.07.2023 passed in CS No. 255 of 2017. The land in question is under possession of PWD B&R Deptt. & below mentioned land is exempted from the social impact assessment report up from Competent Authority issued vide letter No. 14/20/2024-2B&R (W) dated 07.05.2024. Therefore, declaration is made that a piece of land measuring 0.093 acres via 0.03 hectare of standard measuring for the above said project in Village Dhankot, Tehsil Kadipur, District Gurugram, whose details description is under acquisition.

Serial Number	Khasra No.	Type of land	Area under Acquisition (in acre)	Name and Address of person interested	Boundaries (Karam)			
					N	S	E	W
01	73/1/2 Min (0-2) 73/2MIn (0-13)	Gair Mumkin	0.093	Om parkash etc. VPO- Dhankot	5	5	4	4
					40	40	3	3
Total Acre			0.093					

Tree		Structures	
Variety	Number	Type	Plintharea(inSqm)
Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil

This declaration is made under after hearing of objections of persons interested and due enquiry as provided under section 15 of the Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act, 2013 (Central Act 30 of 2013). The number of families likely to be resettled due to Land Acquisition is 0 (Zero).  
A plan of the land may be inspected in the office of the Land Acquisition Collector, PWD B&R Br., Gurugram on any working day during the working hours.

Place: Gurugram  
Date:.....  
Sd/-  
Superintending Engineer, Gurugram Circle,  
PWD B&R Br., Gurugram.

No. 6-2026] CHANDIGARH, TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2026(MAGHA21,1947SAKA)  
HARYANA GOVERNMENT  
PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT (B&R)  
Notification  
The 2nd February, 2026  
FORM-X  
(See Rule-24)  
DECLARATION

No. 28 GA-87/D-15.- Whereas it appear to the Governor of Haryana that a total of 0.268 acres land is required in Village- Dhankot, Tehsil Kadipur, District- Gurugram for public purpose, namely already constructed Gurugram Chanda- Farrukhnagar Road. Its hereby notified that the land in the locality described below is needed for the above purpose in compliance of order dated 18.03.2023 passed in CS No. 22190 of 2014 as well as EXE/77/2024. The land in question is under possession of PWD B&R Deptt. & below mentioned land is exempted from the social impact assessment report from Competent Authority issued vide letter No. 14/20/2024-2 PWD B&R (W) dated 07.05.2024. Therefore, declaration is made that a piece of land measuring 0.268 acres via 0.10 hectare of standard measuring for the above said project in Village Dhankot, Tehsil Kadipur, District Gurugram, whose details description is under acquisition.

Serial Number	Khasra No.	Type of land	Area under Acquisition (in acre)	Name and Address of person interested	Boundaries (Karam)			
					N	S	E	W
01	72/2/2 (1-4) 72/7/1Min (0-12) 72/8/2/1Min (0-7)	Gair Mumkin	0.268	Bhagwati @ Bhagwati etc. VPO-Dhankot	36	36	6	6
					22	22	5	5
					12	12	5	5
Total Acre			0.268					

Tree		Structures</	
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**The Brihanmumbai Electric Supply & Transport Undertaking**  
(OF THE BRIHANMUMBAI MAHANAGARPALIKA)

**TENDER NOTICE**

E-tenders are invited for the supply of following items.

(1) 81467- Biennial Contract for Purchase of 11kV, 250MVA, Indoor Vacuum Circuit Breaker Switchgears for Distribution Sub-Station with Horizontal Isolation of various ratings, (2) 81462- Contract for Empanelment of Advertising Agency.

Re - invited e-tenders

(3) 81199.

Note: For more details, log on to website <https://mahatenders.gov.in>

PRO/AAM(M)/131/2026 GENERAL MANAGER

**ANDHRA PRADESH POWER GENERATION CORPORATION LIMITED**  
(A Govt. of A.P. Undertaking)

VIDYUT SOUDHA, VIJAYAWADA-520004

NIT No. RFX No. 610002237

APGENCO invites tenders for "Maintenance and Mechanized Housekeeping of 3rd, 4th & 5th floors of Vidut Soudha main building, 2nd floor of canteen building (APGENCO premises) and Security offices at Vidut Soudha, Gumadala, Vijayawada from 01.04.2026 to 31.03.2028" through APGENCO e-Procurement platform (<https://etender.apgenco.gov.in/irj/portal>). Estimated Contract Value (ECV) is Rs.1,67,06,275/- . Schedule Available Date & Time: 11.03.2026, 03.00 PM. Bid Submission closing Date & Time: 18.03.2026, 3.00 PM. Technical RFX Response/Pre Qualification bid Opening Date 18.03.2026, 3.30 PM, Price Bid Opening Date & Time: after 3.30 PM on 23.03.2026, Ph: (0866)-2526899/442. Detailed Tender Notice is placed in [www.apgenco.gov.in](http://www.apgenco.gov.in).

R.O. No. 4906PP/CLADVT/1/2021-22 Dt: 12.03.2026

**JAPIT**  
Jharkhand Agency for Promotion of Information Technology  
(An Autonomous body under Department of Information Technology, Govt. of Jharkhand) Ground Floor, Engineer's Hostel - I, Near Golchakkar, Dhurwa, Ranchi, Jharkhand Phone. 0651-2401040, 2401067

**NOTICE INVITING TENDER (NIT)**

On behalf of the Government of Jharkhand, JAP-IT invites Online Bids through Jharkhand e-procurement portal (<https://jarkhandtenders.gov.in>) for empanelment of outsourced agencies under "Manpower Rate Contract" for providing Manpower to Departments/Offices of the State Government of Jharkhand as per provision of "Jharkhand Manpower Procurement (Outsourcing) Manual, 2025". Details are as follows:

Tender Reference number	JAP-IT/RC/MANPOWER/01/2026
1. Name of Work	Empanelment of Outsourced Agencies under Manpower Rate Contract
2. Tender Fee	INR 20,000/- (Rupees Twenty Thousand only) through Jharkhand e-Procurement portal
3. Earnest Money Deposit (EMD)	INR 5,00,000/- (Rupees Five Lakh Only) through Jharkhand e-Procurement portal
4. Start date/time of downloading Tender document	12.03.2026
5. Last Date for sending Pre-Bid Query	14.03.2026
6. Pre-bid meeting	17.03.2026, 03:00 PM
7. Start date of bid submission	20.03.2026, 06:00 PM
8. Last date and time of Online Bid Submission	31.03.2026, 03:00 PM
9. Technical Bid Opening	01.04.2026, 03:30 PM
10. Commercial Bid Opening	To be informed later.
11. Place of Pre-Bid Meeting/ Communication/ Bid Submission/ Bid Opening	JAP-IT, Ground Floor, Engineers Hostel I, Near Golchakkar, Dhurwa, Ranchi-834004 Tel: 0651-2401044
12. Contact/ Pre-Bid query e-mail ID	Email: <a href="mailto:ceo.japit@jarkhandmail.gov.in">ceo.japit@jarkhandmail.gov.in</a> / <a href="mailto:japit_doit@rediffmail.com">japit_doit@rediffmail.com</a>

Note: 1. JAP-IT reserves the right to change the conditions or cancel the tendering process at any stage without assigning any reason thereof. Please visit the portal regularly for the same.  
2. The Bidders are advised to submit the Bids well in advance as JAP-IT/GoJ will not be responsible for non-submission of the bids because of any technical glitches

Sd/- Chief Executive Officer, JAP-IT  
PR.NO.374861 Information Technology(25-26):D

**कार्यालय कार्यपालन यंत्री लो.स्वा.यां. संधारण खण्ड नगर पालिक निगम उज्जैन**

**प्रथम निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना**

लोक स्वास्थ्य यांत्रिकी संधारण खण्ड नगर पालिक निगम उज्जैन द्वारा निम्नलिखित कार्यों हेतु ऑन लाईन निविदाओं का आमंत्रण केन्द्रीकृत प्रणाली में पंजीकृत ठेकेदारों से निम्नानुसार नगरीय प्रशासन एवं विकास विभाग द्वारा जारी एस.ओ.आर. दिनांक 02.08.2021 से लमसम आधार पर किया जाता है।

नि.स.क्र.	कार्य का विवरण	कार्य की अनु. लागत	प्रतिभूति राशि	ऑन लाईन निविदा प्रपत्र का मूल्य	समयावधि	निविदा क्रय एवं दर प्रस्तुत करने की अंतिम तिथि
2026_UAD_484960_1	Project Management Consultancy Services for Water Supply Work for Ujjain Simhasth 2028 Project	119960000/-	600000/-	30000/-	730 दिवस	26-03-2026

निविदा संबंधित अन्य विवरण एवं विस्तृत निविदा सूचना की जानकारी वेब साईट <https://mptenders.gov.in> पर ऑन लाईन दर्शाई गई है।

कार्यपालन यंत्री लो.स्वा.यां.संघा. खण्ड न.पा. नि. उज्जैन आयुक्त नगर पालिक निगम उज्जैन

**NORTHERN RAILWAY CORRIGENDUM**

Ref: i) Tender Notice No.79/2025-26 dated 15.01.2026 (S.No.1)  
ii) Tender No.08245719A due on 13.03.2026

In reference to above tender, the due date has been extended from 13.03.2026 to 02.04.2026. All other terms and conditions remain unchanged.

The corrigendum has been published on website [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in).

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE 839/2026

**कुटेशन नोटिस**

हरियाणा राज्य परिवहन करनल में वाहनों की मुरम्त के लिए हार्डवेयर/पैटी आईटमस / मिसलेनियस आईटम की अगले एक वर्ष के लिए खरीद की जानी है। इच्छुक सप्लायर दिनांक 25-03-2026 तक अपनी सील बन्द कुटेशन महाप्रबन्धक, हरियाणा राज्य परिवहन, करनल के नाम भेज सकते हैं। जिसके ऊपर स्टोर आईटम कुटेशन लिखा होना अनिवार्य है। स्टोर आईटम की लिस्ट व अन्य शर्तों के लिए महाप्रबन्धक, हरियाणा राज्य परिवहन, करनल के कार्यालय में सम्पर्क कर सकते हैं या हरियाणा राज्य परिवहन विभाग की वेब-साईट (<http://hartrans.gov.in>) से डाउनलोड कर सकते हैं। कुटेशन से संबंधित सभी दस्तावेज किसी भी कार्य दिवस दिनांक 20-03-2026 से पहले आकर 100/- रु जमा करवाने उपरान्त महाप्रबन्धक कार्यालय, हरियाणा राज्य परिवहन, करनल से प्राप्त कर सकते हैं।

हस्ता/- महाप्रबन्धक, हरियाणा राज्य परिवहन, करनल  
No. 43762/HRY

**NORTHERN RAILWAY TENDER NOTICE**

The Dy. Chief Electrical Engineer/Const./Northern Railway, DRM Office, New Delhi-110001 invites e-tender under One Packet System for the under noted work:-

Name of work and location	Design, supply, Erection, Testing, commissioning & modification work of 25 KV single phase ac for work of palway yard in connection with commissioning of Runchi-Palwal 4th line in DLI Divn
1. Completion period of the work	18 months
2. Approx cost of work	Rs. 2,04,84,288.05/-
3. Earnest Money amount (to be deposited Online)	Rs 2,52,400/-
4. Date & time for submission of E-tender and opening of tender	Tenders may be uploaded up to 15.00 hrs on date 06.04.2026 on IREPS web site i.e. <a href="http://www.ireps.gov.in">www.ireps.gov.in</a> . The bidders can participate in the e-tender, the tender will be opened at 15.00 hrs soon after closing of uploading of tenders on 06.04.2026.
5. Detailed Tender Notice & Tender Document	The detailed e-tender notice and tender document is available on <a href="http://www.ireps.gov.in">www.ireps.gov.in</a> . Above tender document will be available for submission of offer on IREPS web site i.e. <a href="http://www.ireps.gov.in">www.ireps.gov.in</a> from 23.03.2026 to 06.04.2026. All other terms and conditions in respect of above tenders are given in tender document. The detailed tender notice also can be seen on the Notice Board of the above office.

Tender No. 345-R/Dy.CEE/C/NDS/2025-26 Dated: 12.03.2026  
SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE 832/26

**NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY E-Tendering Tender Notice**

Tender Notice No. - 11520252026 Date- 09.03.2026

Divisional Railway Manager (Engineering)/North Central Railway/Prayagraj, for and on behalf of the President of India, invites E-TENDERS on prescribed form for the following work to 13.30 hrs. on 09.04.2026. The details of the Tender are as under:

S.N.1. Tender No: 258 Name of work: Pre and post tamping track measurement survey using Trimble Gedo Vorsys trolley system in DDU-PRYJ and CAR-CPU section under Sr. DEN/1/PRYJ

Approx Cost: ₹ 1,21,85,255.72 Bid Security: ₹ 2,10,900.00

Completion Period: 12 months Date of opening of tender: 09.04.2026

Eligibility Criteria for similar work: Engineering survey of Railway line/Roadway

S.N.2. Tender No: 259 Name of work: Construction of RPF Women changing rooms and short-term facilities for Divyangjan and 02 Nos Hut/Relay room for Interlocking of LCs under Sr. DEN/1/PRYJ at various stations.

Approx Cost: ₹ 1,30,61,602.23 Bid Security: ₹ 2,15,300.00

Completion Period: 12 months Date of opening of tender: 09.04.2026

Eligibility Criteria for similar work: Any Civil Engineering work

1. Tender on line can be submitted up to 13.30 hrs. of tender opening date.  
2. The complete information along with tender document of above E-Tenders are available on Website [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in) up to 13.30 hrs. on the due date of tender opening. 553/26 FA

North central railways @CPRONCR www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in

**BENGALURU WEST CITY CORPORATION**  
Office of the Executive Engineer Traffic Engineering Cell 2 BWCC, 19th main road Rajajinagar 2nd Block Bengaluru.-560010.

No.EE/TEC(Z-2)/TEND/05/2025-26 Date: 12.03.2026

**INVITATION FOR TENDER (IFT)**  
Tender Notification (Two Cover System) (Through GOK KPPPortal only)

The Executive Engineer- Traffic engineering Cell Division invites tenders on behalf of the Chief Commissioner, GBA, Bangalore from eligible Tenderers for the work detailed in the table below. The tenderers may submit tenders for works given in the table through KPP portal of the Government of Karnataka (viz <https://kpp.karnataka.gov.in>). The tenderers are advised to note the minimum qualification criteria specified in Clause 3 of the Instructions to Tenderers to qualify for award of the contract. Other details can be seen in the tender document.

Sl. No.	Name of the work/Minimum Reserve Annual License fee/ EMD amount in Rs/Period of Service
1	Collection of Parking Fees for HMT Main road. Triveni main road, 17th cross road Tharasa Road. in Malleshwaram. Minimum Reserve Annual License fee : Rs. 1,05,00,000, EMD : Rs. 2,10,000/-, Period of Tender: 3 year + 2 years of Extension

Calendar of Events:-  
1. Last Date & Time for Tender Queries : 16-03-2026 up to 3.00 pm.  
2. Pre bid Meeting on : 23-03-2026 at 3.30 Pm in TEC Division, 19th main road Rajajinagar 2nd Block Bengaluru 560010. 3. Last Date for Receipt of Tender is : 25-03-2026 up to 4.00 pm. 4. Date of opening of Technical Bid is : 27-03-2026 by 4.30 pm. 5. Date of opening of financial Bid after approval of Technical bid : 30-03-2026 (If possible)

Sd/- Executive Engineer, TEC Zone-2 BWCC

**GOVERNMENT OF HARYANA TENDER NOTICE**

Sr. No.	NAME OF BOARD/CORP/ AUTH	NAME OF WORK NOTICE TENDER	OPENING DATE CLOSING DATE (TIME)	AMOUNT/ EMD (APPROX) IN RUPEES	WEBSITE OF THE BOARD/CORP/ AUTH	NODAL OFFICER/ CONTACT DETAILS/EMAIL
1	HAFED	HISPP GANAUER E TENDER FOR THE TRANSPORTATION WORK OF WHEAT SEED WHEAT GRAINS AND STOCK ARTICLES AND HSPP GANAUER E TENDER FOR THE LABOR WORK OF WHEAT SEED WHEAT GRAINS AND OTHER STOCK ARTICLES	12.03.2026 19.03.2026	30,000/-	<a href="https://tenders.hry.nic.in">https://tenders.hry.nic.in</a>	9355010156 dmhdf-snp@hafed.gov.in

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION KINDLY VISIT : [www.haryanaeprocurement.gov.in](http://www.haryanaeprocurement.gov.in) or [www.etenders.hry.nic.in](http://www.etenders.hry.nic.in) No- 43756/HRY

**सार्वजनिक सूचना**  
**नगर परिषद सोहना, जिला गुरुग्राम**

नगर परिषद सोहना क्षेत्र में नागरिकों/मनदाताओं को सूचित किया जाता है कि हरियाणा सरकार के निर्देशानुसार युद्धावस्था सम्मान भत्ता (Old Age Pension), विधवा पेंशन (Widow Pension) तथा डीडीएलवाई (DDLY) योजनाओं के अंतर्गत लाभार्थियों को प्राप्त सूची का सत्यापन (Verification) नगर परिषद सोहना द्वारा गठित सभाओं (Area Sabhas) द्वारा किया जाता है। इन एरिया सभाओं में संबंधित बाड़ों के मनदाताओं की उपस्थिति में लाभार्थियों की जानकारी का सत्यापन किया जाएगा तथा आवश्यक सुझाव/आपत्तियां भी प्राप्त की जाएंगी।

नगर परिषद सोहना क्षेत्र के बाड़ नं. 1 से 21 के लिए एरिया सभाओं की बैठकों का आयोजन दिनांक 14 मार्च 2026 (शनिवार) एवं 15 मार्च 2026 (रविवार) तक निम्न अनुसार किया जाएगा -

क्र.सं.	बाड़ नं.	दिनांक व समय	स्थान जहाँ सभा की जानी है	एरिया सभा के सचिव पद मो० न०
1	14-03-2026	10:00 Am	Raiseena chaupal	Sh. Deepak Yadav Clerk 8708048388
2	14-03-2026	10:00 Am	Community centre Dhunela	Sh. Mukesh Clerk 9306594806
3	14-03-2026	10:00 Am	Ward no 03 chaupal	Sh. Satwant Clerk 7082833754
4	14-03-2026	10:00 Am	Ward no-04 chaupal	Sh. Vishnu Clerk 8239191222
5	14-03-2026	10:00 Am	Ward No-05 chaupal	Sh. Prem Prakash Clerk 9457476008
6	14-03-2026	02:00 PM	Ward No-06 chaupal	Sh. Prem Clerk 8952077573
7	14-03-2026	02:00 PM	Ward No-07 chaupal	Sh. Indeeraj Clerk 9812034631
8	14-03-2026	02:00 PM	Ward No-08 chaupal	Sh. Mohsin Khan (Supt.) 9812662147
9	14-03-2026	02:00 PM	Ward No-09 chaupal	Sh. Ankit (Supt.) 8930080037
10	14-03-2026	02:00 PM	Ward No-10 chaupal	Sh. Shaffique (L.O) 9991481768
11	15-03-2026	10:00 AM	Ward No-11 chaupal	Sh. Subhash (Supr.) 9355385213
12	15-03-2026	10:00 AM	Ward No-12 chaupal	Sh. Muzaffar (J.E) 9050799786
13	15-03-2026	10:00 AM	Ward No-13 chaupal	Sh. Rashid (J.E) 9813715079
14	15-03-2026	10:00 AM	Ward No-14 chaupal	Sh. Asif Khan (J.E) 9466008672
15	15-03-2026	10:00 AM	Ward No-15 chaupal	Sh. Anand (J.E) 8287808143
16	15-03-2026	02:00PM	Ward No-16 chaupal	Sh. Harish Mehta 9910120804
17	15-03-2026	02:00PM	Ward No-17 chaupal	Sh. Ishwar (Comp.Op) 8569960096
18	15-03-2026	02:00PM	Ward No-18 chaupal	Sh. Amit (Supr) 9996895131
19	15-03-2026	02:00PM	Ward No-19 chaupal	Sh. Surender (Supr) 9896369830
20	15-03-2026	02:00PM	Ward No-20 chaupal	Sh. Tejpal (Supr) 9992665121
21	15-03-2026	02:00PM	Ward No-21 chaupal	Sh. Manoj (Supr) 8076051212

अन: सभी जनसाधारण को सूचित किया जाता है कि आप अपने बाड़ की एरिया सभा में निर्धारित तिथि, समय एवं स्थान पर आयोजित एरिया सभा में बैठक में उपस्थित हो कर सरकार द्वारा भेजी गईं उक्त लाभार्थियों के सत्यापन की प्रक्रिया में अपना सहयोग प्रदान करें, ताकि पात्र व्यक्तियों को योजनाओं का लाभ सुनिश्चित किया जा सके।

यह सूचना जर्नल में जारी की जाती है।

हस्ता/- कार्यकारी अधिकारी नगर परिषद सोहना जिला गुरुग्राम  
No. 43771/HRY

**TAMIL NADU MEDICAL SERVICES CORPORATION LTD.**  
(A GOVERNMENT OF TAMILNADU UNDERTAKING)  
No.417, Pantheon Road, Egmore, Chennai-600008. Phone:28191890/28190259; Fax: 044-28190636

**Tender Notice**

Sl.No	Online Tender no with qty/ Document Cost	Sale Period	Pre bid	Submission	Opening
1	E1531/PUR/RC/TNMSC/ENGG/2026, Dt:12.03.2026 Hydraulic Hand Pallet Trolleys (18) & Semi Electric battery Operated Stacker (6) - Rs.2,290/-	13.03.2026 to 01.04.2026	11.00 AM	11.00 AM	12.00 Noon
2	E1532/RTT/TNMSC/ENGG/2026, Dt:12.03.2026 - Retrofit DR (4) - Rs.5,725/-	16.03.2026 to 01.04.2026	23.03.2026 11.00 AM	02.04.2026 11.00 AM	02.04.2026 12.00 Noon
3	E1533/PACS/DME-ICH/TNMSC/ENGG/2026, Dt:12.03.2026 - PACS System (1) - Rs.5,725/-	16.03.2026 to 01.04.2026	23.03.2026 11.00 AM	02.04.2026 11.00 AM	02.04.2026 12.00 Noon
4	E1534/WM/NHM/RC/TNMSC/ENGG/2026, Dt:12.03.2026 - Various type of Washing Machine - Rs.5,725/-	16.03.2026 to 01.04.2026	23.03.2026 12.00 Noon	02.04.2026 11.00 AM	02.04.2026 12.00 Noon
5	E1535/HB/NHM/RC/TNMSC/ENGG/2026, Dt:12.03.2026 - Digital Hemoglobinometer Cuvettes (12000) - Rs.5,725/-	16.03.2026 to 01.04.2026	23.03.2026 12.30 PM	02.04.2026 11.00 AM	02.04.2026 12.00 Noon
6	E1536/NBS/NHM/TNMSC/ENGG/2026, Dt:12.03.2026 - Comprehensive New Born Screening (NBS) under PPP Mode - Rs.5,725/-	17.03.2026 to 06.04.2026	24.03.2026 11.00 AM	07.04.2026 11.00 AM	07.04.2026 12.00 Noon
7	E1536/Teleradiology/RC/TNMSC/ENGG/2026, Dt:12.03.2026 - Fixing rate contract for Teleradiology services - Rs.5,725/-	18.03.2026 to 07.04.2026	25.03.2026 11.00 AM	08.04.2026 11.00 AM	08.04.2026 12.00 Noon

For details visit [www.tntenders.gov.in](http://www.tntenders.gov.in) and TNMSC website [www.tnmsc.tn.gov.in](http://www.tnmsc.tn.gov.in)  
GENERAL MANAGER (EQUIPMENT)

**OFFICE OF SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, MORADABAD CIRCLE, P.W.D. MORADABAD**

Short Term E-Procurement Notice Inviting Tenders

No. 1552 /E-Tender/MBD Circle/25-26 Dated: 07-03-2026

1. On behalf of the Governor of UP, tenders for following work are invited by the Superintending Engineer, Moradabad Circle, PWD Moradabad online on website <http://etender.up.nic.in> from registered contractors from 14-03-2026 at 10.00 am to 20-03-2026 at 12.00 Pm. Technical bid/Prequalification of tenders shall be opened on 20-03-2026 at 12.30 Pm. in office of undersigned by tender committee in presence of authorised representatives/bidders who wish to be present. Financial bid of the tenders' who qualify in technical bid shall be opened on date and time as specified by a notice in the office of undersigned. In case of Government holiday the required process shall be carried out on next working day. Amount mentioned in column 5 & 7 shall be mandatory deposited by net banking only on E-Tender Portal.

Sl. No	DISTRICT	Name of Work	Estimated cost (Rs. in Lacs)	Bid Security (Rs.in Lacs)	Time of completion of the work (Including rainy season)	Cost of tender documents including GST	Category of Building work contractor eligible
1	Sambhal	Construction work of 04 suite Inspection house building in Tehsil Chandausi of Dist Sambhal	208.00	12.40	12 Month	2354.00	A, Building work Category

2. In PWD technical evaluation of tenders is to be done by Prahari Software. URL for Prahari is <http://wms.upwd.gov.in/Prahari/> On opening of the website Prahari login page will open in which user type Contractor is to be selected. User name and password for login on Prahari shall be same as used for contractor's registration on Chnakaya Portal. Bidders have to upload all the basic information and required document on Prahari as given in Prahari in detail. If a bidder does not upload information and document on Prahari technical evaluation of the tender shall not be done and the bidder will be responsible for that.

Rules/conditions & details of the tender are available at website <http://etender.up.nic.in> and <http://wms.upwd.gov.in/Prahari/>.

(Er. S.P. Singh)  
Superintending Engineer Moradabad Circle, PWD Moradabad.  
For and on behalf of Governor of UP  
Mob No. 9557104999  
Mail ID:- semoradabad13@yahoo.com

**TRANSMISSION CORPORATION OF ANDHRA PRADESH LIMITED**  
(A Government of Andhra Pradesh Undertaking & An ISO 27001:2022 Certified Company)

**CALL FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST NOTICE**

The APTRANSCO invites Expression of Interest for "Establishment of State Transmission Asset Management Centre (STAMC) with Reliability Centered Maintenance (RCM) Framework and Operationalisation of Unmanned Substations in Andhra Pradesh" within 2 weeks from the date of this publication. Please visit [www.aptransco.gov.in](http://www.aptransco.gov.in) for further details.

RO No-GMCC/APTRANSCO/69/26 Sd/- Chief Engineer/APSLDC

**RFP FOR DOUBLING OF TRACK BETWEEN SELENGHAT AND BHOJO STATIONS**

Tender Notice No.: CON/2026/FEB/03, Dated: 28-02-2026. E - Tender are invited by the undersigned for the following work. Tender No.: CE/CON/FT/EPC/2026/04; Name of Work: RFP for Doubling of Track between Selenghat (394.30 km) (Including) and Bhojo Stations (including) upto km 457.00 ('62.70km') including Electrification & Signalling Works and connection with Furkating-New Tinsuka Doubling Project of Northeast frontier Railway in the state of Assam on EPC Mode. Approx. Value : ₹982,51,99,379.10/- . Date & time of closing of tender at 14:30 hrs. on 22-04-2026 and opening of tender at 15:30 hrs. on 28-04-2026. For details of Tender and Corrigendum-1, please visit N.F. Railway website [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in)

CE/Con/LMG Project, Maligaon  
NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY Construction Organization  
Serving Customers With A Smile

**कार्यालय नगर निगम अलीगढ़**

**ई-निविदा सूचना (Retender)**

नगर निगम अलीगढ़ द्वारा Selection of Concessionaire for Assigning the Advertisement Rights for Banner, Canopy and Advertisement Vehicles within Aligarh Municipal Corporation के कार्य हेतु समक्ष फर्मों से ई-निविदा उ300 ई-प्रोक्वोरमेंट पोर्टल: <https://etender.up.nic.in> के माध्यम से निम्नवत श्रेष्ठतुल से आमंत्रित की जाती है:

कार्य का नाम	निविदा शुल्क	धरोहर धनराशि
Selection of Concessionaire for Assigning the Advertisement Rights for Banner, Canopy and Advertisement Vehicles within Aligarh Municipal Corporation	₹3,500+18% GST=4,130	₹ 45,000

●निविदा अपलोड करने की अंतिम तिथि : 02.04.2026, 04:00 बजे अपराह्न  
●निविदा खोलने की दिनांक/समय : 02.04.2026, 05:00 बजे अपराह्न

सभी फर्मों को निविदा शुल्क एवं धरोहर धनराशि उ300 ई-प्रोक्वोरमेंट पोर्टल/ <https://etender.up.nic.in> के माध्यम से ऑनलाइन जमा कराने का प्रमाण निविदा के साथ संलग्न करना होगा। निविदा के सम्बन्ध में शेष विस्तृत सूचना, नियम व शर्तें उक्त वेबसाइट से प्राप्त की जा सकती है।

सह-प्रभारी विभाजन नगर निगम अलीगढ़

**SALUTE THE SOLDIER**

**CENTRAL RESERVE POLICE FORCE**

DG and all Ranks of #CRPF pay solemn tribute to Lance Naik Bachi Singh of 11 Bn, who made the supreme sacrifice while bravely fighting dacoits in Bihar on 13 March 1975. #CRPF salutes the braveheart and pledges never to let his sacrifice go in vain.

DG and all Ranks of #CRPF pay solemn tribute to Sub Inspector Gurcharan Singh of 86 Bn, who made the supreme sacrifice after being fired upon by militants during an area domination patrol in Punjab on 13 March 1990. #CRPF salutes the braveheart and pledges never to let his sacrifice go in vain.

DG and all Ranks of #CRPF pay solemn tribute to Lance Naik Yashwant Singh, Lance Naik Harender Choudhary, Constable Uttam Kumar Singh, Constable P. S. Madavi and Constable/Driver Jawahar Lal of 60 Bn, who made the supreme sacrifice while bravely countering an insurgent ambush in Assam on 13 March 1999. #CRPF salutes the bravehearts and pledges never to let their sacrifice go in vain.

DG and all Ranks of #CRPF pay solemn tribute to Assistant Sub Inspector A. B. Singh of 73 Bn, Constable L. Perumal, Constable Subhash Suran Barla of 73 Bn, Constable Sateesha of 73 Bn, who made the supreme sacrifice during a militant attack in Bemina, Srinagar, Jammu & Kashmir on 13 March 2013. #CRPF salutes the bravehearts and pledges never to let their sacrifice go in vain.

Veer Balidani Lance Naik Bachi Singh 11 Bn 21-11-1944 To 13-03-1975

Veer Balidani Sub Inspector Gurcharan Singh 86 Bn 03-01-1943 To 13-03-1990

Veer Balidani Lance Naik Yashwant Singh 60 Bn 08-04-1962 To 13-03-1999

Veer Balidani Constable P. S. Madavi 60 Bn 16-09-1970 To 13-03-1999

Veer Balidani Constable/Driver Jawahar Lal 60 Bn 20-04-1973 To 13-03-1999

Veer Balidani Assistant Sub Inspector A. B. Singh 73 Bn 10-09-1966 To 13-03-2013

Veer Balidani Constable Subhash Suran Barla 73 Bn 13-09-1991 To 13-03-2013

Veer Balidani Constable Sateesha 73 Bn 05-08-1987 To 13-03-2013

Veer Balidani Assistant Sub Inspector Ramkishan Singh Tomar 212 Bn 05-09-1966 To 13-03-2018

Veer Balidani Constable Ajay Kumar Yadav 212 Bn 15-01-1979 To 13-03-2018

Veer Balidani Constable Dhamendra Yadav 212 Bn 03-08-1981 To 13-03-2018

Veer Balidani Constable Manoranjan Lenka 212 Bn 13-03-1993 To 13-0



IRAN IS ALLOWING PASSAGE ONLY TO ITS CHINA-BOUND OIL TANKERS

# Two oil tankers reach India via Strait of Hormuz, ignite hope

It is the first known instance of non-Iranian crude oil tankers transiting the Strait of Hormuz

Sukalp Sharma  
New Delhi, March 12

AMID THE massive disruption in maritime traffic through the Strait of Hormuz, two crude oil tankers — cumulatively carrying roughly 3 million barrels of West Asian oil — have arrived in India after transiting the fraught waters, according to vessel tracking data and industry sources.

One of the tankers, Liberia-flagged Shenlong carrying around 1 million barrels of Saudi Arabian crude oil, arrived at Mumbai port on Wednesday, shipping data showed.

Shenlong, a Suezmax tanker, had set sail on March 3 from Saudi Arabia's Ras Tanura port for Mumbai, whose suburbs house refineries of Bharat Petroleum Corporation and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation.

The other tanker, an India-flagged very large crude carrier (VLCC) with around 2 million barrels of crude from Iraq, also arrived at Mumbai, from where

it is now headed to Odisha's Paradip, where a large Indian Oil Corporation refinery is located, a source in the know said, but declined to name the vessel citing safety reasons.

Both tankers are estimated to have crossed the Strait of Hormuz — the narrow waterway between Iran and Oman that connects the Persian Gulf with the Gulf of Oman and the Arabian Sea — sometime in the past five-six days.

These mark the first known instances of non-Iranian crude oil tankers transiting the critical chokepoint of the Strait of Hormuz, where vessel movements have effectively come to a halt since the West Asia conflict started on February 28.

Reports indicate that Iran was allowing only its own oil tankers — headed to China — to cross the strait. According to sources in India's oil and gas industry, the arrival of tankers has raised hopes that more of India's energy supplies that are cur-



The two oil tankers that have arrived in India may have sought permission from Iran to cross the Strait of Hormuz, sources said. AP

rently stuck in the Persian Gulf could find their way to the country in the coming days and weeks. Sources indicated that India is talking to Iran to secure the safe passage of vessels headed to India, particularly oil and liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) tankers, a number of which are stuck to the west of the Strait of Hormuz. Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said that safety of shipping and India's

energy security have come up in External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar's discussions with his Iranian counterpart.

"The External Affairs Minister and the Foreign Minister of Iran have had three conversations in recent days. In the last one, they discussed issues pertaining to the safety of shipping and India's energy security. Beyond that, it would be premature for me to say anything," Jaiswal said Thursday.

According to sources, the two oil tankers may have sought permission from Iran to cross the strait, although there is no confirmation on that. As per vessel tracking data, the tankers had switched off their Automatic Identification System (AIS) transponders, also called "going dark" in shipping parlance, to avoid public detection before crossing the strait.

FULL REPORT ON  
WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM

# Insurance underwriters say fear brought shipping to a halt, not coverage

George Mathew  
Mumbai, March 12

INSURANCE UNDERWRITERS on Thursday said that commercial shipping through the Strait of Hormuz has effectively halted, not due to a lack of insurance coverage, but because shipowners and operators have suspended transits amid growing safety and security concerns.

"Most prominent is shipping in the Straits of Hormuz where trade has been halted, not by a lack of available insurance, but by obvious safety concerns," said Chris Jones, Chief Executive of the International Underwriting Association.

"The market for marine war risks is operating in the manner we would expect, given the increase in threats to shipping and insurers are focussed on ensuring client can continue to access the cover they require," Jones said in a statement.

Insurance underwriters are professionals who evaluate risk and decide whether an insurer should provide coverage, and on what terms.

After the conflict intensified in early March, war-risk insurance premiums in some cases climbed to around 1-1.5% of a vessel's value, depending on the ship type and its exposure to risk.

This means a tanker worth \$100 million could face premiums of \$1-1.5 million per voyage in extreme situations.

The safety aspect came to the forefront after Iran on Wednesday claimed responsibility for an attack on two oil tankers anchored in Iraqi territorial waters, as conflicts in the region continue to escalate and strikes on commercial shipping spread beyond the Strait of Hormuz. Iraq's State Organization for Marketing of Oil identified the two vessels as the 73,976 dwt crude oil tanker



REUTERS FILE

Safesa Vishnu and the 50,155 dwt combined chemical and oil tanker Zephyros.

According to Lloyd's List Intelligence data, Safesa Vishnu is beneficially owned by US-based Safesa Group, while Zephyros is beneficially owned by Greece's George & Vassilis Michael family of companies. Insurers are willing to provide coverage for ships operating in the region, albeit with heightened risk assessments and potentially higher premiums which have soared multiple times. However, the escalating threat environment has led many shipowners and charterers to delay voyages or seek alternative routes.

According to Jones, with the situation rapidly evolving, it is important that in-depth, real time security advice is available. "The London Market's joint marine committees are working with expert consultants to provide underwriters with the latest information. We welcome any initiative to improve the security situation," he said. "Elsewhere the London company market is also providing aviation cover to support flights transporting people away from the affected areas —

both via existing flight routes and new repatriation operations. With airspace opening and closing, based on the assessment of aviation authorities, insurers are working with brokers, clients and third-party experts to closely monitor changes in risk," Jones said.

Prior to the commencement of the current hostilities Iran and the wider West Asia was already an area of relative enhanced risk and insurance coverage in place will reflect this. IUA members are, however, continuing to provide cover for clients affected by the current hostilities in Iran across a number of lines of business, IUA said.

According to Lloyd's List, while the US has repeatedly refused requests from the shipping industry to provide naval escorts since the Iranian conflict began on February 28, both US and EU naval operations are being assessed. "Neither the US nor EU plans are yet at the stage of committing to a deployment of assets, but, a basic naval escort operation would need between eight to 10 destroyers to protect convoys of 5 to 10 commercial vessels in each transit," it said.

# Exporters seek priority allocation of LPG, natural gas for manufacturing units

Press Trust of India  
New Delhi, March 12

EXPORTERS' BODY FIEO on Thursday urged the government to allocate LPG and natural gas to export-oriented manufacturing units on a priority basis, as any disruptions in the fuel availability will create problems in maintaining production schedules.

Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO) President SC Ralhan said that he has written a letter in this regard to the commerce and industry ministry.

"Manufacturing exporters are facing issues. There is an urgent need for priority allocation of LPG/natural gas as fuel for export-oriented units (EOUs) and export-oriented SMEs," Ralhan said.

The West Asia crisis, triggered by the launch of a joint attack by the US and Israel on Iran, has disrupted energy supplies in several countries. The government has revised the priority order for allocating domestically produced natural gas, placing LPG production alongside CNG and piped cooking gas at the top.

Ralhan said that export-oriented manufacturing units are operating in a highly competitive global environment and are constantly competing with suppliers from countries such as China and other East Asian economies.

Large global buyers follow highly structured global sourcing models and require uninterrupted production and timely deliveries from their suppliers.

"In the event of disruption in fuel availability, Indian exporters are unable to maintain production schedules. Consequently, international buyers are compelled to shift their orders to competing countries, particularly China," Federation of Indian Export Organisations said in a communication to the commerce ministry.

In this context, the availability of LPG/natural gas as an industrial fuel is critical, particularly for export-oriented SMEs and EOUs that rely on it for their manufacturing processes, it added.

"We fully appreciate that the present gas supply situation is challenging. However, even through a calibrated mechanism, a dedicated priority allocation for export-oriented industries would help ensure that production and export commitments are not adversely affected," Ralhan said.

He added that ensuring fuel availability will not only protect existing export orders but will also reinforce international confidence in India as a reliable sourcing destination.

Sharing similar views, Jalandhar-based Hand Tools manufacturers and Exporters Association President Ashwani Kumar said that due to the present constraints in LPG supplies, production activities are facing serious disruptions.

"In this regard, we humbly request your kind approval for 425 kg LPG per day for our production line operations and 19-kg commercial LPG cylinders for factory mess and canteen to provide meals to workers and staff," Kumar said.

# Feb inflation rises to 3.21%, Iran war impact yet to be felt

Siddharth Upasani  
New Delhi, March 12

INDIA'S HEADLINE retail inflation rate rose to 3.21% in February from 2.74% in January, data released on Thursday by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) showed.

The prices faced by consumers rose at a faster rate even before the US and Israel attacked Iran at the end of the month and the subsequent retaliation by Tehran that has seen energy prices surge.

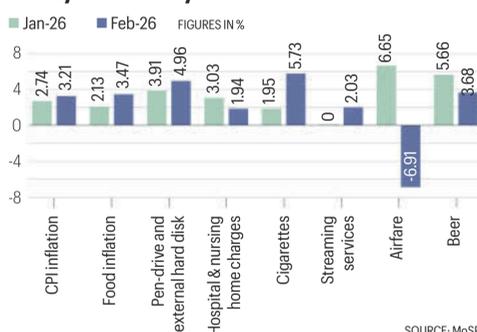
According to data released by the statistics ministry, the rise in inflation in February was driven by an unfavourable base effect as well as the continued rise in prices of gold (48% inflation) and silver jewellery (161%). Key food items such as tomato (45%) and cauliflower (44%) also saw a big jump in prices compared to last year, while a fall in prices of others such as onion (down 28%) and potato (down 18%) kept the rise in the headline inflation rate in check.

On the whole, food inflation rose to 3.47% from 2.13% in January. However, the food price momentum — or the month-on-month increase in food prices — was non-existent, with the Consumer Food Price Index down 0.2% in February compared to January, suggesting an unfavourable base effect helped drive up the year-on-year inflation rate.

The price momentum for all the items in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) as a whole was minor, with the index up 0.1% from January.

"...the tobacco and intoxicants category also witnessed an uptick in inflation, driven by a sharp increase in excise duty on tobacco products. Mean-

## • Early inflationary trends in new CPI series



FIGURES IN %

SOURCE: MoSPI

Note: Inflation figures only for non-food items with significant change in Feb from Jan

while, core inflation remained stable at 3.4%, unchanged from the previous month. Excluding precious metals, core inflation stood significantly lower at 2.0%, indicating broadly contained underlying price pressures," Rajani Sinha, Chief Economist at CareEdge Ratings, said.

The CPI data for February is the second inflation print under the updated inflation series which has a base year of 2024 for prices and updated consumption basket based on the 2023-24 Household Consumption Expenditure Survey.

Released last month, the new CPI inflation series has a lower weight of food and includes more goods and services than before, thus providing a more comprehensive and updated picture of the country's price situation.

If one counts the numbers as per the old CPI series, the February inflation rate of 3.21% is the highest in 11 months. However, one-to-one comparisons between inflation numbers between the old and

new series may not be appropriate. Further, even at 3.21%, CPI inflation remains under the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) medium-term target of 4% for the 13th month in a row, although the figure for February is likely irrelevant for the central bank given the global developments of March and how they have impacted prices.

"February does not consider the war effect and hence March inflation would reflect the initial impact in terms of higher fuel prices especially of LPG. We could expect March inflation to be in the same range of 3.2-3.5% based on observations in the market so far in the food domain," said Madan Sabnavis, Bank of Baroda's Chief Economist. While global crude oil prices surged to \$120 per barrel earlier in the month following US and Israel's attack on Iran and its subsequent retaliation that involved shutting down Strait of Hormuz, prices have eased somewhat but remain highly volatile.

FULL REPORT ON  
WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM

# NSE IPO gathers pace; merchant bankers, law firms appointed

New Delhi: The National Stock Exchange of India (NSE) has appointed 20 merchant bankers, along with several law firms and other intermediaries, to manage its initial public offering (IPO), making a step towards its much-awaited listing.

The exchange's IPO committee, chaired by Srinivas Injeti, approved the appointments at a meeting held on Thursday.

The development follows the NSE board's decision in February to proceed with its long-pending public listing. The public issue will consist entirely of an offer-for-sale (OFS) by existing shareholders, with no fresh issue of shares.

NSE said the selection of intermediaries was carried out through a "structured, transparent and competitive process" based on an evaluation framework approved by the IPO committee.

As many as 20 merchant bankers appointed for the public issue along with eight law firms.

## • BRIEFLY

### Pacific OneHealth to set up pan-India micro hospital network

New Delhi: Pacific Group's healthcare arm Pacific OneHealth has announced plan to invest Rs 300 crore by 2030 to open micro hospitals across the country. The firm said in a statement on Thursday that it will establish a scalable network of micro hospitals across north, central, east, and north-east India. "Through this Rs 300 crore investment, we are building a financially sustainable micro hospital network that brings quality care closer to patients, reduces avoidable referrals, and strengthens continuity of care — without compromising on outcomes," said Saket Bansal, founder, Pacific OneHealth and executive director of Pacific Malls Group. ENS

FSSAI tells milk producers, vendors to compulsorily register with it

New Delhi: Food regulator FSSAI has made it mandatory for all milk producers, except members of dairy cooperative societies, and milk vendors to obtain registration certificates from it amid reports of adulter-

ation in some parts of the country. The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has issued an advisory to state food commissioners of all states and Union Territories regarding mandatory registration/license by milk producers (other than members of dairy cooperative societies) and milk vendors. PTI

### CCI junks case alleging abuse of mkt dominance by BookMyShow

New Delhi: The Competition Commission of India (CCI) Thursday dismissed a complaint against BookMyShow's (BMS) arent Big Tree Entertainment, which alleged abuse of dominant position in the online movie ticket market. The complainant alleged that BMS entered into exclusive arrangements with cinema operators restricting them from associating with competing online ticketing platforms. This allegedly created a barrier for new ticketing platforms from competing in the market and allegedly enabled BMS to impose unfair conditions on consumers, including convenience charges. After considering the probe carried out by the Director General, CCI defined the relevant market as the 'market for online inter-mediation services for booking movie tickets in India'. PTI

• SOME HEALTH INSURERS HAVE INCREASED RELIANCE ON AI TO HELP CATCH TREATMENTS AND BILLS THEY SAY ARE UNWARRANTED

# US insurers, hosps turn to AI to settle charges vs payments battle

Reuters  
Bengaluru, March 12

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE is being deployed on both sides of the tug-of-war between US healthcare systems that want to be paid more for medical procedures and insurers who want proof the services were necessary, and experts are having a hard time predicting a winner.

Centene, an insurer focused on the Medicaid programme for low-income people, recently raised the issue, saying hospitals were aggressively or even improperly using revenue software to trigger reimbursement. "There have been some of these pockets where folks

coming into the emergency department with a fever, all of a sudden all have sepsis," Centene CEO Sarah London said at a September investor conference, referring to a life-threatening condition that triggers a host of medical interventions.

A Blue Cross Blue Shield analysis of its commercial hospital claims found that roughly \$663 million in inpatient spending and at least \$1.67 billion in outpatient spending may be tied to more aggressive, AI-enabled coding practices nationwide.

"We are seeing more AI tools used at different points in the care and billing process, and



The US spends more on healthcare than any other nation at about 18% of its gross domestic product. REUTERS

when those tools operate independently, they can unintentionally lead to friction," said

Razia Hashmi, vice president of clinical affairs at Blue Cross Blue Shield Association.

## Cutting Costs

In recent months, some health insurers have increased reliance on AI to help catch treatments and bills they say are unwarranted, even as hospitals use artificial intelligence tools to document those medical services with codes that boost reimbursement, a review of company statements and interviews with a dozen experts and analysts found.

Both sides hope AI will drive down costs.

Consultancy firm McKinsey estimates that for every \$10 billion in revenue, AI could save insurers \$970 million through claims management, medical prior authorization requests

and by guiding clinical care.

AI tools are already leading to hospital care savings and they could amount to as much as \$900 billion by 2050, Morgan Stanley said in a September research note.

"The idea of (artificial intelligence) bot versus bot is intrinsically a situation where no one's going to win," said Christina Silcox, research director of digital health at Duke-Margolis Institute for Health Policy.

Several analysts, including TD Cowen's Ryan Langston and Whit Mayo of Leerink Partners, said insurers and hospitals could save money by using AI, but they did not provide estimates.

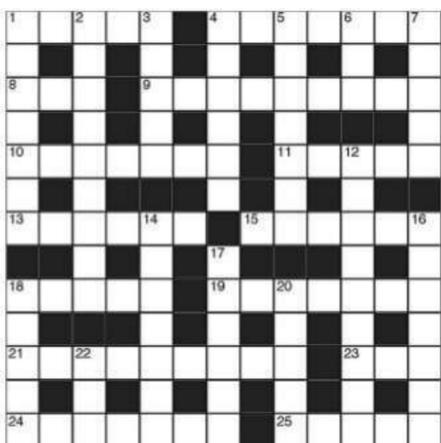
## • MARKETS

Sensex 76,034.42 -829.29 -1.08%	NIFTY 23,639.15 -227.70 -0.95%	Gold ₹1,65,200	US Dollar ₹92.19
		Silver ₹2,76,500	Oil \$113.57

NOTE: GOLD, SILVER RATES AS PER DELHI SPOT MARKET DATA GOLD PER 10G, SILVER PER 1KG; CRUDE OIL (INDIAN BASKET) AS OF MARCH 11, 2026

## CROSSWORD

5935



**ACROSS**  
 1 Rush in with a stepladder (5)  
 4 Agitated pursuer of regal status (7)  
 8 Strike sounds only a little one (3)  
 9 Brothers not on speaking terms with one another (9)  
 10 Some players take a long time dressing (7)  
 11 Perhaps my pet needs feeding (5)  
 13 I want a new name for Formosa (6)  
 15 International group's performing in concert (6)  
 18 Trees moved and planted again (5)  
 19 Place to thicken stew (7)  
 21 Betrayed - like a bride in church may be (5,4)  
 23 He's changed sex (3)  
 24 Furniture employed off stage (7)  
 25 Very small driving area close to New York (5)

**DOWN**  
 1 Henry and I only fish (7)  
 2 I can't mess around with the meanings of words (9)  
 3 What's more he gets no credit (5)  
 4 A wrong guess about customs (6)  
 5 A lot of impetus is lost turning two directions (7)  
 6 A step in the ballet dancer's career (3)  
 7 Out of practice and lacking polish (5)  
 12 Posse that gets together with all speed (9)  
 14 Is there at the start and finishes (7)  
 16 Home shared by devoted sisters (7)  
 17 Pin inserted into a joint (6)  
 18 Stiff clothes I'd put on (5)  
 20 Meeting in the course of a country stroll (5)  
 22 Compete with life in Paris (3)

**SOLUTIONS CROSSWORD 5934 ACROSS:** 1 Manipulate, 8 Weeds, 9 Tempter, 10 Reactor, 11 Relic, 12 Theory, 14 Brutal, 17 Rites, 19 Impiety, 21 Lacking, 22 Flair, 23 Trespasser **DOWN:** 2 Average, 3 Inset, 4 Untorn, 5 Admirer, 6 Extol, 7 Bricklayer, 8 Work to rule, 13 Respite, 15 Teenage, 16 Ring up, 18 Tacit, 20 Puffs

## JUMBLER WORDS

Given below are four jumbled words. Solve the jumbles to make proper words and move them to the respective circles below. Select the letters in the shaded circles and jumble them to get the answer for the given quip.

All too many consultants, when asked, 'What is 2 and 2?' respond, 'What do you \_\_\_\_\_?' - Norman R. Augustine (4,2,4)

**ANSWER:** All too many consultants, when asked, 'What is 2 and 2?' respond, 'What do you have in mind?' - Norman R. Augustine

**SOLUTIONS:** Naive, Nimby, Malted, Halves

**NVAEI:**

**NYINN:**

**AELTDM:**

**AELSHV:**

## OVER THE HEDGE

BY MICHAEL FRY & T LEWIS



## CALVIN & HOBBS

BY BILL WATTERSON



## MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG



## DIFFICULTY LEVEL 3s INSTRUCTIONS

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from 1 to 9 must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

## SUDOKU 6256

**DIFFICULTY LEVEL:** 1s = Very easy; 2s = Easy; 3s = Medium; 4s = Hard; 5s = Very Hard; 6s = Genius

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

## SOLUTION SUDOKU 6255

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



**GARUDA-AIRBUS FLEXROTOR DEAL:** Garuda Aerospace has signed a contract with Airbus Helicopters to acquire up to 18 Airbus Flexrotor uncrewed aerial systems. The drones will expand Garuda's global leasing portfolio and support missions including infrastructure inspection, disaster response, and surveillance, offering long-endurance monitoring solutions for industrial, defence, and public safety sectors.



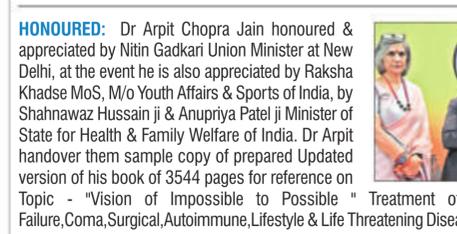
**TKMS-VEM TORPEDO PARTNERSHIP:** Thyssenkrupp Marine Systems (TKMS) signed a Teaming Agreement with VEM Technologies Pvt. Ltd. to develop a "Make-in-India" heavyweight torpedo. The partnership will support production for the Indian Navy's submarine fleet and may lead to a joint venture, enabling local manufacturing through technology transfer while strengthening India's defense industry and export potential.



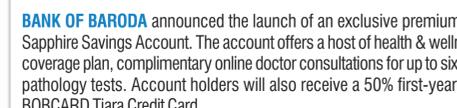
**COURSERA-KARMAYOGI PARTNERSHIP:** Coursera has partnered with the Government of India's Mission Karmayogi through the Integrated Government Online Training (iGOT) platform to deliver curated online courses for civil servants. Offered via the iGOT Marketplace, the program supports role-based professional development and prepares officials for modern governance challenges. The courses cover technology and data, infrastructure and sustainability, governance and leadership, and public welfare. Leaders from Coursera and Karmayogi Bharat said the partnership will help equip officials with digital, policy, and leadership skills while promoting continuous learning and strengthening India's goal of building a skilled, future-ready public administration under the vision of Viksit Bharat.



**PNB** celebrated International Women's Day 2026 with a special event dedicated to recognising the achievements, leadership, & contributions of women. The event was graced by Chief Guests Major Neelu Khanna & Dr. D Kansal in the presence of PNB MD & CEO A Chandra, EDs-M. Paramasivam along with senior officials & employees of the Bank. The event featured a special audio-visual presentation paying tribute to the contributions of women, showcasing inspiring stories of resilience, leadership and impact. Encouraging the gathering, A Chandra, MD & CEO, PNB emphasised the transformative role of both women and institutions in shaping society.



**HONOURED:** Dr Arpit Chopra Jain honoured & appreciated by Nitin Gadkari Union Minister at New Delhi, at the event he is also appreciated by Raksha Khadse MoS, M/o Youth Affairs & Sports of India, by Shah Nawaz Hussain ji & Anupriya Patel ji Minister of State for Health & Family Welfare of India. Dr Arpit handover their sample copy of prepared Updated version of his book of 3544 pages for reference on Topic - "Vision of Impossible to Possible " Treatment of Incurable Diseases Like Cancer, Kidney Failure, Coma, Surgical, Autoimmune, Lifestyle & Life Threatening Diseases by Homoeopathy.



**BANK OF BARODA** announced the launch of an exclusive premium savings account for women, the bob Women Sapphire Savings Account. The account offers a host of health & wellness benefits including a Rs. 10 lakh cancer care coverage plan, complimentary online doctor consultations for up to six family members & concessions on medicines & pathology tests. Account holders will also receive a 50% first-year fee waiver in the form of reward points on the BOBCARD Tiara Credit Card.



**RAILTEL CORPORATION** secured a Rs. 155.20 cr contract from Power Grid Corporation of India Ltd for implementing a N-UNMS to strengthen, monitoring & management of critical communication networks in the power sector. The N-UNMS is a centralized platform designed to monitor, manage & optimise large - scale communication networks through a single interface. The primary & backup network management centres will be established at Manesar & Nagpur, respectively. The project will be executed over a period of 18 months, followed by seven years of AMC support.

# CORPORATE BRIEFS

**NBCC** projects were inaugurated and foundation stones were laid by Prime Minister Narendra Modi for multiple residential and office infrastructure developments under the redevelopment of 7 GPRA colonies in Delhi. Prior to the event, PM Modi visited the Sarojini Nagar GPRA site with Minister Manohar Lal (Housing & Urban Affairs and Power) and Secretary Srinivas Katikithala. NBCC women officers briefed him, and he met women shramjeevis. Dr. K.P Mahadevaswamy (CMD, NBCC), Ravi Kumar Arora (Joint Secretary) & senior officers, including many women employees, attended the event. The formal virtual inauguration from Burari, Delhi, occurred in the presence of Manohar Lal, LG Vinai Kumar Saxena, CM Rekha Gupta, MoS Tokhan Sahu, & dignitaries. Approved by the Union Cabinet on July 5, 2016, the programme by NBCC and CPWD aims for modern, sustainable housing and optimal land use.



**IREDA** celebrated International Women's Day in New Delhi with the theme "Give to Gain," recognising the contributions of women in the renewable energy sector and encouraging them to lead the journey towards sustainable development. The event was graced by Ms. Anu Sethi, Director (HR), FEV India & a behavioural expert, as the Chief Guest. Pradip Kumar Das, CMD, IREDA & Dr. Bijay Kumar Mohanty, Director (Finance), along with senior officials, attended the celebration. In his address, CMD appreciated the contributions of women employees to IREDA's growth & highlighted the importance of gender diversity in strengthening governance, corporate values & institutional performance.



**SCOPE:** Centered on the theme 'Give to Gain,' SCOPE celebrated International Women's Day with an inspiring address by Atul Sobti DG, SCOPE to the organization's female workforce. He articulated that facilitating women the right platforms, mentorship, and equitable opportunities is a strategic investment that allows organizations to 'gain' unparalleled leadership and edge in the global scenario. He emphasized that by fostering an environment of mutual support and professional empowerment, SCOPE is ensuring a future where gender parity drives organizational excellence. The session was attended by women employees and senior officials of SCOPE.



**DWCD:** On the occasion of International Women's Day and promoting the Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP) initiative, an awareness programme was successfully organized by the Mission Shakti Team, East District with the objective of spreading awareness regarding the importance of girl child education, health, nutrition and safety among community members. The programme was graced by the presence of Dr. Rashmi Singh, Secretary, Department of Women & Child Development, Shri Anol Srivastava, District Magistrate, East District, Ms. Durgesh Nandini, Deputy Director (DD), Department of Women & Child Development, and Ms. Payal Moga, Principal, Shaheed Rajguru College, whose presence encouraged the participants and strengthened the message of women empowerment. The programme was successfully coordinated under the guidance and leadership of Ms. Sadhana Singh, District Officer, East District, whose efforts played a significant role in the effective planning, coordination and successful implementation of the event.



**SJVN:** Bhupender Gupta, chairman & MD, SJVN, congratulated the team of NJHPS on achieving the historic milestone of 150 BU of cumulative power generation. To mark the occasion, the celebrations were held at the Power House in the presence of Bhupender Gupta & Ajay Kumar Sharma, Director (Personnel). Besides, senior officials of SJVN were also present on the occasion. Moreover, Bhupender Gupta said, "It has emerged as a cornerstone of the northern power grid, delivering dependable green energy and ensuring grid stability during peak demand periods". Ajay Kumar Sharma, lauded the efforts of all present & past employees associated with Nathpa Jhakri Hydro Power Station.



## ROYAL STARS

BY GEORGIA NICOLS

**ARIES (MAR 21 - APR 20):** You should know that you make a great impression on others, which means you can ask for what you want. Demand the advantage. Not only do you look good, with Venus in your sign you are charming and diplomatic. What more do you want? Tonight: You're admired.

**TAURUS (APR 21 - MAY 21):** This is a great day to make travel plans or, in fact, to travel if you can. You will also enjoy studying, learning new things and exploring opportunities in medicine, the law, publishing and the media. Basically, you want to expand your world. Tonight: Do something different.

**GEMINI (MAY 22 - JUNE 21):** Check out anything to do with financial negotiations because you are in the driver's seat. You look competent in the eyes of authority figures, which will help you in some way. Tonight: Check your finances.

**CANCER (JUNE 22 - JULY 23):** Even though Venus is now at the top of your chart creating favourable circumstances in your professional life. You will have to be accommodating and be prepared to compromise. Romance with someone older or a mentor figure might begin. Tonight: Cooperate.

**LEO (JULY 24 - AUG 23):** Today you want it all. If you can travel for pleasure and explore new places, this will delight you. However, you're also prepared to work with vigour. You might even do something to boost your health. You've got all bases covered — go for it. Tonight: Work.

**VIRGO (AUG 24 - SEP 23):** Gifts, goodies and favours from others can come your way. Meanwhile, romance will be particularly passionate. This is a great day to socialise. Enjoy fun activities with kids. Make time for pleasure and socialising with others. Tonight: Enjoy the company of others.

**LIBRA (SEP 24 - OCT 23):** You can get a lot done today because you have the energy. You will finish old business and wrap up loose details. You will be particularly effective if you are working from home. Tonight: Cocoon at home.

**SCORPIO (OCT 24 - NOV 23):** This is a great day for those in anything to do with sports and entertainment. You feel competitive and energetic. Furthermore, you will express yourself with energy and clarity. People want to hear what you have to say. Tonight: Energetic discussions.

**SAGITTARIUS (NOV 24 - DEC 22):** You might buy something today, invest in real estate, or do something to secure your home. It's also a good day to tackle home repairs that need attention. Be patient with family members to keep the peace. Tonight: Check your belongings.

**CAPRICORN (DEC 23 - JAN 20):** Communications with others will get a boost, making them positive, enthusiastic and proactive. This means it's a wonderful day for those of you who sell, market, teach, act or write. Tonight: You are in charge.

**AQUARIUS (JAN 21 - FEB 19):** Quiet research done behind the scenes might yield financial information that can benefit your earnings. It also might help you wrap up old business. Settle old bills or disputes. Your words are golden. Tonight: Enjoy privacy.

**PISCES (FEB 20 - MAR 20):** Enjoy the company of friends. You have lots of energy to share and others want to be in your company. It's a particularly good day to discuss your future goals with someone to get their feedback. Tonight: Friendships are important.

**NHB:** The National Housing Bank's latest NHB RESIDEX shows rising residential prices in 46 of 50 cities in Q3 FY 2025-26. The 50-city HPI @ Assessment Prices rose 5.0% YoY, down from 7.2% last year. India's key markets saw rise in property prices like Bengaluru (12.7%) and Chennai (8.2%); Gurugram hit 22.8% YoY. Four cities saw declines, led by Raipur (-8.9%) QoQ, the index grew 1.8%, with Gurugram (+4.5%) strongest.

**ECORRES TECHNOLOGIES** with more than two years of proven success in customer communication management and enterprise content management launched Ecorres.ai. This new AI innovation hub serves as a marketplace for AI solutions across multiple domains, building on the company's strong foundation in CCM/ECM consulting, automation suites, and custom services. It empowers businesses to accelerate digital transformation with tailored, enterprise-grade AI offerings.

**DELHI TOURISM** is expanding curated Heritage Walks to promote experiential & night tourism while boosting visitor stay length. Recently, it organized a special walk for REC Ltd officials at Mehrauli Archaeological Park and Qutub Minar. Participants praised the immersive dive into Delhi's history, architecture, and cultural legacy as engaging and insightful.

**PNB** has launched Griha Vatika, a digital loan scheme aimed at promoting sustainable living and community well-being. The initiative encourages households to cultivate vegetables in urban spaces such as rooftops, terraces, balconies, and courtyards, turning homes into centers of nutrition & self-reliance. The scheme provides financial support for organic inputs & modern cultivation infrastructure, including hydroponic systems, vertical gardens, & drip irrigation kits.

**DAIKIN AIRCONDITIONING INDIA** announced the launch of its highly anticipated 2026 product lineup, marking a significant leap in energy efficiency and smart climate control. The new range includes a completely revamped series of Room Air Conditioners with the latest BEE 2026 Star Rating standards. With a sharpened focus on 5-star inverter models, the lineup introduces an array of new split ACs that blend ultra-quiet operation, rapid cooling, and superior energy savings, seamlessly aligned with updated BEE labelling norms.

**NIFTEM-K** under the M/o Food Processing Industries, signed an MoU with the University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, to strengthen collaboration in Food Science & Technology. The agreement was signed by Dr. H S Oberoi & Dr. Baljit Singh in the presence of Scott Moe, Avinash Joshi, Secretary MoFPI & D. Praveen, Jt Secy MoFPI.

**BHARAT TAXI:** Sahakar Taxi Cooperative Ltd hosted the Holi Milan Samaroh 2026 via its Bharat Taxi Welfare Wing, uniting the Sarathi community to celebrate unity & cooperative values. The event highlighted Sarathi's role in strengthening the cooperative. CEO Col. Himanshu Sharma outlined plans to expand driver participation, enhance livelihoods, & build a sustainable mobility model. Bharat Taxi also launched a new Driver Incentive Programme to boost earnings, service standards, and long-term engagement.

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If there are questions of current or contemporary relevance that you would like explained, please write to [explained@indianexpress.com](mailto:explained@indianexpress.com)

• WAR IN WEST ASIA

## 'Oil reserves sufficient... LNG is greater concern'



**EXPERT EXPLAINS**

**AJAY SINGH**

AN ENERGY AND SHIPPING INDUSTRY EXECUTIVE BASED IN TOKYO

BEFORE THE war in West Asia, a fifth of the world's oil and gas demand passed through the Strait of Hormuz. Two weeks on, that flow has slowed to a trickle, with the International Energy Agency flagging the "the largest supply disruption in the history of the global oil market".

Considering the importance of the strait, a solution will have to be found soon, even if at a high cost, said **Ajay Singh**, an energy expert and shipping industry executive based in Tokyo. None of the world's major economies can tolerate an indefinite closure of the passage, he told **Anil Sasi** in an interview. Edited excerpts:

**The oil price has fluctuated wildly, between \$70-120 a barrel during the past two weeks, and shot up again despite the IEA announcing release of oil from strategic reserves. Why such extreme volatility?**

Two weeks into the war, Iran's government has remained viable despite the loss of its leader, has taken the war to several countries across the region and has succeeded in choking off a fifth of the world's flow of oil and gas. The visuals on TV of burning oil tankers and so on are quite dramatic. The oil markets are alarmed that the war could be a protracted one and hyper-sensitive to every development, positive and negative.

The IEA's move to assuage markets by releasing oil from reserves is understandable but it was a moot point whether that would help at this stage. The markets are reacting out of fear more than any evaluation of supply and demand.

The major consuming economies have sufficient reserves to last several weeks — in addition to the IEA's reserves, itself sufficient to cater for close to two months' disruption of Persian Gulf supply, major countries have their own stocks. China is believed to maintain over 100 days' worth

• The chokepoint



of consumption, Japan over 250 days' worth, the EU 90 days' worth of imports and India 74 days' worth.

Actually, the position of natural gas reserves should perhaps be of greater immediate concern, but is receiving less attention. European gas reserves are at typically low winter-end levels, and their refilling for the next season — already impaired by reduced Russian supplies — is hampered by loss of Qatari and Emirati LNG supply. While China and Japan maintain substantial strategic LNG reserves as a matter of policy, it is not clear what the actual position at Indian LNG terminals is.

Spot LNG prices have shot up above \$15/MMBtu (Metric Million British Thermal Unit) in Asia and Europe, an over 50% increase in two weeks.

**Iran has succeeded in blocking the Strait of Hormuz despite the overwhelming military superiority of the US. What is the likely course of the conflict now?**

We do not know what the US and Israel had planned and I am certainly not a military expert, but the maxim of Field Marshal von Moltke the Elder comes to mind, that "no plan of war provides certainty beyond the first encounter with the enemy."

Uncertainty is inherent in the very nature of war, and the weaker power can take to unconventional means as Iran, using drones and the geography of the Strait of Hormuz, is doing. It has weaponised the oil price which it hopes will lead to politically damaging economic distress in the US.

The war has reduced energy flows through the Strait of Hormuz to a trickle. What could be the way out? An expert unpacks this and more



An LPG tanker anchored off Oman, near the Strait of Hormuz, on Wednesday. REUTERS

In a sense, this war started in June 2025 when Israel found it possible to strike Iranian nuclear installations. Having now started the war, it is unlikely that Israel and the US will stop until their basic aim — of permanently neutralising Iran as a serious military threat — is achieved. The survival or otherwise of the regime is of less consequence to them than the destruction of its capability to wage war. They will continue to degrade Iran's long-range missile and drone capability which, as of now, is far from being achieved. A sufficiently large number of drones are hitting targets on land and at sea to cause chaos, despite a majority reportedly being shot down.

The best-case scenario is that the two sides come to terms whereby Iran changes its policies vis-a-vis the US and Israel toward co-existence and economic cooperation. The worst-case scenario is that the war has no clear result, drags on beyond early April, adequate anti-drone defence cannot be assured and a defiant Iran, even if much enfeebled or politically fragmented, continues to harass shipping, oil and gas production, and life across the region. That would be a tragic prospect if it comes to pass, in a vitally sensitive part of the world, serving neither the long-suffering people of Iran nor the world at large.

**The US and Israel have not attacked Iran's main oil export facility at Kharg Island. What explains that?**

You raise a significant point — one that is a cause for hope. No major Iranian oil and gas production, refining or export facility has

thus far been attacked [three depots and one refinery near Tehran have been hit]. I believe it is a deliberate measure in the interest of stabilising oil price. It is partly a signal to Iran to reciprocate by refraining from attacking other countries' facilities — which it has so far rebuffed. It is partly also a measure to keep the Iranian people on side in the days after the war, as Iran's ability to produce and export oil and gas will be the foundation on which its economy can be revived.

**Can shipping through the Strait of Hormuz be resumed even if the war continues?**

Considering the importance of the strait to the world economy, a solution will simply have to be found even if, unfortunately, at high cost. None of the major economies of the world can tolerate an indefinite closure of the strait.

A need may arise for nations to get together to dispatch their merchant fleets escorted by their navies to the Gulf, even as diplomatic efforts toward peace continue. The real test will be passage of ships through the Strait relatively unmolested, under naval escort or otherwise. Anti-drone technology — both aerial and underwater — which is still nascent, would have to be adapted and deployed on merchant and war ships on a large scale.

Much has been said about the difficulty of finding insurance cover and its cost. In a situation where the stakes are high, sovereign states may have to step in to indemnify parties not just against loss of life and assets, but also against environmental damage.

• LEGAL

## Covid vaccine side effects: Why SC ordered 'no-fault' compensation

**Vineet Bhalla**

New Delhi, March 12

THE SUPREME Court on Tuesday directed the Centre to formulate a "no-fault" compensation policy for individuals who suffered serious adverse effects or died after receiving Covid vaccines. The court ruled that families should not be forced to prove negligence in civil courts to claim relief for vaccine-related injuries. Instead, it held that the State's constitutional obligation to protect public health extends to providing a structured compensation mechanism for those who suffered grave outcomes during a State-led vaccination drive.

**Vaccine complications**

The court was hearing a batch of petitions led by people who lost their children or spouses — all aged between 18 and 40 years — to rare complications, such as blood clotting disorders, shortly after receiving the Covishield and Covaxin vaccines in 2021. The petitioners argued that the government failed to ensure informed consent and transparently communicate the risks associated with the vaccines. According to them, the vaccination drive, while officially voluntary, was effectively made mandatory through various administrative restrictions on unvaccinated individuals, thereby violating their fundamental rights.

The Union government argued that the vaccines underwent rigorous regulatory approvals and that the existing system for detecting Adverse Events Following Immunisation (AEFI) was robust. It maintained that vaccine-related deaths were extremely rare, citing a reporting rate of just 0.001 per one lakh doses in India for certain clotting disorders. It contended that aggrieved families had a legal remedy: they could approach civil or consumer courts to claim damages for negligence or malfeasance against vaccine manufacturers.

The Bench rejected the government's suggestion to let families approach lower courts individually. It said vaccine injury claims involve complex scientific attribution. Insisting on proof of negligence, the Bench noted, "would impose an onerous burden upon affected families and would not be the best solution to those left affected." Forcing citizens into a multiplicity of individual legal battles would also risk inconsistent outcomes and unequal access to relief, which undermines the guarantee of equality under the Constitution's Article 14, it held.

**'No-fault liability' and right to health**

To resolve this, the court invoked the legal principle of "no-fault liability", which means that a victim or their family can receive financial relief without having to prove that the injury was caused by someone's negligence or intentional wrongdoing. The court noted that this principle is already recognised in Indian law, such as in motor vehicle accidents, and is a standard feature of vaccine injury schemes in Australia, the UK and Japan.

The judgment relied on Article 21, which guarantees the right to life, including the right to health. The court stated that the Constitution "does not conceive of the State as a distant spectator to human suffering, but as an active guardian of welfare and dignity." It ruled that since the mass vaccination programme was a State-led public health intervention, the State bears a positive obligation to support those who suffered grave outcomes, "no matter how rare they are."

The court clarified that it was not sitting in scientific review of the vaccines. It referred to its 2022 judgement in *Jacob Puliyel vs Union of India*, in which it had upheld the legality of the vaccine approval process and the AEFI mechanisms while ruling that bodily integrity is protected under Article 21 and no individual can be forcefully vaccinated. Relying on the ruling, the court refused to set up a separate expert medical board to investigate the deaths.

• DEFENCE

## China's 'border defence' villages and the challenges they pose

**Amrita Nayak Dutta**

New Delhi, March 12

CHINA HAS constructed 72% of its 628 Xiaokang, or "well-off villages," near the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in northeastern states, with 90% in Arunachal Pradesh.

The details were revealed on Tuesday by Deputy Chief of the Army Staff (Strategy), Lieutenant General Rajiv Ghai. He added that many of these settlements are in areas contested between the two countries.

"...Not to mention the Xiaokang project of about 600 odd villages across the northern borders. But more importantly, almost 72% of these 628 villages are across the northeastern states. That translates to about 450, and out of these, almost 90% are opposite the state of Arunachal Pradesh. No marks for guessing why that is so," he said.

"These border settlements, villages are definitely a challenge. They're coming up very rapidly. And many of these are in areas that are contested," he said.

**The villages**

China has been constructing 628 such

Xiaokang or "well-off villages" along India's borders with the Tibet Autonomous Region for over five years now. These have been constructed all along the LAC, including the Ladakh and Arunachal Pradesh borders.

The structures include mostly double-storey, large and spacious buildings. The construction for most of these planned villages has already been completed, as per officials.

The exact purposes of these villages have remained unclear, but they were understood to be dual-use — civil and military — and have thus been a concern from a defence perspective. The strategic community looks at it as a way to assert Chinese claims over certain areas along the LAC.

The extent of the LAC has been a source of contention between the two countries for years. India considers it to be 3,488 km long, while China says it is around 2,000 km.

**Are they occupied?**

While China had been constructing them aggressively since 2019, they remained vacant for a long time. However, since late 2023, Chinese nationals have started occupying several of these villages particularly

**'Xiaokang' villages**

• China has been constructing 628 such Xiaokang or 'well-off villages' along India's borders with the Tibet Autonomous Region for over five years now.

• Almost 72% of these 628 villages are located across India's northeastern states. And out of these, almost 90% are opposite Arunachal Pradesh.

across from Lohit Valley and the Tawang sector of Arunachal Pradesh. China has also been constructing infrastructure, including border villages, in Bhutanese territory.

**Law concerning these villages**

A new law on China's land borders was brought into effect from January 1, 2022. The law was passed in 2021 by the Standing Committee of China's National People's Congress, for the "protection and exploitation of the country's land border areas".

China's official news agency *Xinhua* stated: "The law also stipulates that the state shall take measures to strengthen border defense, support economic and social development as well as opening-up in border areas, improve public services and infrastructure in such areas, encourage and support people's life and work there, and promote coordination between border defense and social, economic development in border areas". Thus, this border law covers the border defence villages programme.

**India's response**

The Indian government announced the

Vibrant Villages Programme in 2022 to develop its border villages into modern villages with all amenities and as tourist attractions. The programme builds on the existing Border Area Development Programme under the Union Ministry of Home Affairs.

Under the programme, India plans to develop 663 border villages into modern villages in the first phase. Of them, at least 17 such border villages along the borders with China in Ladakh, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh, have been selected for development as a pilot project.

**Infrastructure push**

China has been constantly building infrastructure all along the LAC, including near Arunachal Pradesh's Tawang region and the Siang Valley. This includes new roads and bridges.

India has also focused on strengthening its border infrastructure and improving forward connectivity with the construction of new roads, bridges, and helipads. There has also been a push to develop alternate routes to the LAC and improve inter-valley connectivity in the northeast.

• GEOPOLITICS

## Caught between Afghanistan and Iran wars, Pakistan faces tough choices

**Yashee**

New Delhi, March 12

PAKISTAN IS caught between two conflicts. To its west in Afghanistan, relations with one-time protegee the Taliban have nosedived to an "all-out war". To its south-west, the Iran war rages, affecting Saudi Arabia, with whom Pakistan has a mutual defence pact.

The Iran war has driven up prices of petrol and diesel by Pakistani rupee 55 per litre. With this new strain on a shaky economy, continuing its military operations in Afghanistan and potentially launching a new one to help Saudi Arabia makes little fiscal sense, especially at a time International Monetary Fund (IMF) officials are on a review visit linked to a \$7-billion bailout package.

Also, both conflicts can worsen Pakistan's internal security situation — the Balochistan insurgency could get a boost from the Iran war, while the terrorist group Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) can retaliate for Afghanistan. Already, more than 20 people have been killed in protests against the killing of Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, re-

vered by Shias across Pakistan.

**In Iran, much at risk**

Pakistan can't risk its newly warm ties with US President Donald Trump, but its relationship with Iran is valuable too. Thus, Islamabad condemned the first attack on Iran, but did not name the attacker. PM Shehbaz Sharif has congratulated Mojtaba Khamenei for succeeding his father and consoled the Ayatollah's death, while also expressing solidarity with the Gulf countries Iran has attacked.

Among these countries, the most important for Islamabad is Saudi Arabia, its longtime benefactor. In September last year, the two countries signed a pact that aggression against either would be treated as aggression against both. Last week, Pakistan's Field Marshal, Asim Munir, went to Riyadh to meet the Saudi defence minister. In a statement released after this meeting, Pakistan army's media wing hoped that "brotherly country Iran would manifest prudence and sagacity", sidestepping any direct condemnation.

Eleven years ago, Pakistan had refused



Pakistan PM Shehbaz Sharif and Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman after signing the defence pact in September.

the Saudi request to join a military coalition in Yemen. It was not bound by a formal defence deal then. Today, if the war worsens for Saudi Arabia, the world will be watching how Pakistan honours its pact.

With Iran, Pakistan's ties are complex.

The Shia-Sunni divide is one factor, Pakistan's attempts to stay in the US's good books is another. Both share a 900-km border, on either side of which — Balochistan in Pakistan, Sistan and Baluchestan in Iran — a Baloch insurgency is simmering. In 2024, Iran struck inside Pakistan's borders and Pakistan hit back, both claiming to target militant hideouts. Since then, there had been some movement to improve ties.

But a defeated or weakened Iran is not in Islamabad's interest. If Iran cannot police its border, Baloch militants will be emboldened. Islamabad also wouldn't want an Israel-approved puppet leadership next door. Also, Balochistan depends heavily on trade and supplies from across the Iran border, while millions of Pakistanis working in Iran and the Gulf countries send home remittances.

Add to this the fact that almost all the countries that could have mediated in its war with Afghanistan are now too busy with a war of their own.

However, while it is in a tight spot, Pakistan is still the country that can talk to all parties in this conflict. Ali K Chishti, a defence and security expert from Pakistan,

claimed, "Pakistan does face a policy cul-de-sac over the Iran issue. However, it has used this opportunity to leverage its ties with Iran proactively, because of which Iran has not targeted Saudi Arabia as viciously as other countries. So that's a win for Pakistan."

Domestically, could going to Saudi Arabia's aid in a war started by the US and Israel ignite tensions?

Asad ur Rehman, assistant professor at Karachi's Habib University, said the State might have a facesaver. "If Pakistan is forced into war on behalf of Saudi Arabia, there is some leverage, as it can be presented as an effort to safeguard the holy places [Mecca and Medina, both in Saudi Arabia]."

**Clash with Afghanistan**

The bone of contention here is the TTP, also called the Pakistan Taliban. The TTP originally had an Islamic jihad-based narrative, where it wanted Pakistan run as an emirate following a strict interpretation of the Quran. But increasingly, it has co-opted many long-standing local grievances of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Pashtun population. The TTP is lethal, responsible for

thousands of deaths in terror attacks in the past few years alone. After numerous attempts to crack down on the TTP failed, Pakistan on February 27 started a bombing campaign in Afghanistan, with the other side retaliating.

"Out of sheer frustration, Pakistan has decided to up the ante with Afghanistan. However, this may go nowhere. Afghanistan is adept in non-conventional warfare, and has enormous capacity to take punishment. The conflict could be prolonged," TCA Raghavan, India's former High Commissioner to Pakistan said.

Kabul has so far shown no sign of backing down. Why then is Pakistan continuing with the costly war? Chishti said: "Pakistan has a two-pronged policy in this campaign. First is to create a buffer zone within Afghanistan's borders around the areas where the TTP operates, since the Taliban government is unable to control the TTP. Second is to raise the costs for the Taliban regime, as part of a punitive deterrence policy. Also, an added objective is to destroy leftover US weapons, so as to deplete the Afghan Taliban's capacity."

UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

# Valverde: Tricks & Real treat

**Madrid captain scores stunning hat-trick as they humble Man City 3-0 in first leg**

Associated Press  
Madrid, March 12

EVEN WITHOUT a host of Galacticos, Real Madrid was far too strong for Manchester City in the latest Champions League clash of these titans.

A 3-0 win at the Bernabeu on Wednesday put Madrid in control of this round-of-16 tie at the halfway mark after a stunning first-half hat trick by Federico Valverde. The Uruguay international took on the responsibility of inspiring the record 15-time champion in the absence of injured stars Kylian Mbappe, Jude Bellingham and Rodrygo. "We are Real Madrid and you should never consider us dead," Madrid coach Alvaro Arbeloa said.

The victory could have been even more commanding, but Vinicius Junior's casually taken second-half penalty was saved by Gianluigi Donnarumma.

Defending champion Paris Saint-Germain beat Chelsea 5-2 and tiny Bodo/Glimt is also in sight of the quarterfinals after a 3-0 win over Sporting Lisbon. Arsenal drew 1-1 with Bayer Leverkusen.

By fulltime at a rocking Bernabeu, the only comfort City could cling to was the fact that it could have been so much worse.

When Vinicius stood over the ball on the penalty spot shortly before the hour mark, he looked certain add to the lead. But the Brazil forward skipped in his run-up and hit a weak side-footed effort that Donnarumma pushed away.

It will still take a massive turnaround to see City advance after being outclassed by Madrid. Valverde's hat trick featured three outstanding goals.



## 22 minutes, 3 goals

Real Madrid captain Federico Valverde scored the first hat-trick of his career during the Round of 16 first leg against Manchester City. AP

**20th MIN:** O'Reilly misjudges a long Courtois pass. Valverde traps and takes off. Donnarumma comes to the edge of his box but Valverde goes around the keeper on the right and rolls it into the empty net from a tight angle.

**27th MIN:** Vinicius Jr nips in from the left. His pass infield deflects off Dias and into the path of Valverde, who strides into the box down the inside left and lashes a low drive across Donnarumma and into the bottom right.

**42nd MIN:** Diaz wedges a delicate pass into the City box down the inside-right channel. Valverde meets the dropping ball, cushioning a soft volley over Guehi's head, then slotting it into the bottom left.

The pick of the lot was his third when he flicked the ball over the head of City defender Marc Guehi before volleying home. TV cameras caught Bellingham watching in the stadium with his mouth wide open in awe of the move.

City manager Pep Guardiola will likely be worrying that history is set to repeat itself after his team was eliminated at the hands of Madrid in each of the last two seasons.

"Our game was not as bad as this result," Guardiola said. "I'm not someone to say we are

### Results (First leg)

Bayer 1	Arsenal 1
Real Madrid 3	Man City 0
PSG 5	Chelsea 2
Bodo/Glimt 3	Sporting 0

going to turn it round, but we will try." PSG takes control against Chelsea

After losing to Chelsea in the final of the Club World Cup last year, PSG got some revenge. A three-goal advantage

after the first leg saw Luis Enrique's team take a big step toward the last eight.

### Bodo/Glimt win

Bodo/Glimt's fairytale run just keeps on going.

Manchester City, Atletico Madrid and Inter Milan have been left in the tiny Norwegian club's wake. Now Sporting Lisbon's Champions League hopes are hanging by a thread.

Bodo/Glimt - located north of the Arctic Circle and farther north than any team in Champions League history - took full

advantage of playing the first leg at home and led 2-0 at half-time through Sondre Fet's penalty and Ole Blomberg's goal just before the break.

Kasper Høgh scored in the 71st to put his team on the brink of the next round.

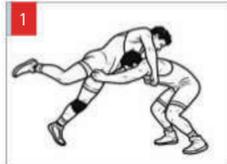
Kai Havertz returned to haunt Bayer Leverkusen and seal a late draw for Arsenal.

The Germany international struck an 89th-minute penalty against the team where he started his career and leveled the round-of-16 first leg tie at BayArena.

## THE STORY BEHIND THE VIRAL WRESTLING MOMENT

**My videos are everywhere now, I can't even keep up with Instagram anymore, I'm all over the feed**

BOZIGIT ISLARGEREEV, RUSSIAN WRESTLER



**BOZIGIT ISLARGEREEV** somersaults over bent back of his opponent, Rakhim Magamadov.



**ISLARGEREEV**, trailing 5-8 with just 7 seconds left, goes for a waist lock.



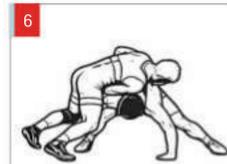
**THE RUSSIAN** lands on his feet, changing his axis, while beginning to uproot Magamadov.



**ISLARGEREEV USES** all his strength to lift Magamadov off his feet for a takedown.



**MAGAMADOV, THE** French wrestler, is left defending a pin in the throwdown.



**THE FOUR-POINTER** is complete as Islargereev flips him to complete a win.

# Russian springs a surprise with a stunning Flying Squirrel move

Shivani Naik  
Mumbai, March 12

ONE MOMENT, wrestler Rakhim Magamadov saw his opponent flying over him, and the next instant, Bozigit Islargereev had disappeared from his sight, though a heavy load (-86 kg) was dragging him down by the waist lock.

Magamadov's eyes registered the shock of the heavy-weight ghost somersaulting over his shoulder. His flailing hands, left clapping at thin air, told the entire story. Unless someone had eyes on the back of their head, they were completely blindsided and not in any control in the next few seconds, as Magamadov was taken down by the acrobatic rival for 4 full points.

The move was called Flying Squirrel by Americans, but the Russian made it an Insta sensation on Tuesday. The moment from the U23 European Wrestling Championships has since gone viral, transcending wrestling fandoms even.

Just like American junior wrestler Ellis Coleman back in 2011, Russian Islargereev was trailing 5-8 with just 7 seconds left, against Magamadov of France in the semifinals of the competition in Zrenjanin, Serbia. Years of losses and frustration in American high school wrestling had pushed Coleman, raised in rough Chicago back alleys, to devise a highly risky move that he deployed at the World Juniors in Bucharest, Romania. He took it all the way to the Olympics.

In its 2026 iteration, the Russian from Dagestan's Kostek village had brought out the flying inverted back-hold, the quick hip-snap to flip the axis from head-down to landing feet first, while lifting an unbalanced Magamadov into an involuntary arch that buckled for a 4-pointer takedown. 6-8 became 10-8.

The move that's Greco-Roman-coded in style, cracked up his usually stern and sombre coach.

"I think it was the first time in my life I saw him that joyful. I looked at him and he was so happy, literally jumping," the Russian told *The Indian Express* via a UWW writer on the spot in Serbia.



Bozigit Islargereev celebrates after the dramatic win. UWW

"Everyone was shocked. My videos are everywhere now, I can't even keep up with Instagram anymore, I'm all over the feed," Islargereev said.

### Instinctive move

The Russian stressed the skill to execute it didn't start as a drill. "Sometimes in training, I played around and tried something like that. But for it to work like this in competition - this was the first time. This move... I don't even know what to call it. Honestly, there's no name for it, it just came up naturally. I would like to name this move after my coach - the 'Asker Yusupov move.'"

The lead-up to the absolute Houdini-meets-Hercules move was typically downbeat and a scratchy start, brought this on. "At the beginning of the match, things weren't going my way. I made a lot of mistakes. There were literally only a few seconds left, probably around 10 seconds, when I pushed him out. Then there were about 7 seconds remaining," he recalled the pre-ambush.

When the grapplers knocked heads again, Islargereev knew he just couldn't get to the Frenchman's elusive ankles to initiate a leg attack. "I couldn't get to his legs at all. I thought to myself that since I couldn't attack from below, I would try from above. So I jumped. It just happened that way. I caught him really well, and he also turned a bit, and I managed to catch him at that moment and score four points.

It was very unexpected, but very pleasant. I'm happy that God gave me this," he said.

In trying to defend stoutly, Magamadov was too low, giving the Russian the brainwave to somersault.

"He was standing very low and I couldn't make a leg attack. In the end, there were only a couple of seconds left, there was no time to think too much. In that moment, you either take the risk or end up with nothing. I took the risk and went from above. That's how it happened, I jumped. And that was it," he explains.

### Nothing to lose

Of course, the move could've flopped had he not locked the hands around perfectly when launching that spinning cartwheel.

A near imperceptible move at the start will show Islargereev going for a freestyle feint, before launching the somersault move (daanv). "The main thing is first to fake an attack to the legs and trick him. As soon as he leans down, you need to jump upward so he can't catch your legs. Then you have to be careful, you need to land on both feet so you can lift him and score four points," the Russian described.

Till his 9th grade in Kostek village finishing school, Islargereev trained with talented peers from Dagestan, literally the wrestling capital of the world. After that, he moved north to Khanty-Mansiysk. "I've been living, training, and studying there since 2020," he says.

Though a gloss of the comedic and contrived covers all WWE pro wrestling, move similar to this are seen in those rings. At a formal amateur event, however, the predominantly ground-wrestler spiced up freestyle with a Greco gig.

Islargereev has also shown what Russian wrestling - shunted out from the Olympics - brings to sport: a lot of raw talent and flair.

For Islargereev, it was his only way to reach the finals. "Of course, this is a lesson for me that you should never give up. Even with just a few seconds remaining, even when you need four points, you can still come back and do it," he ended.

# Sunrisers Leeds sign Pak spinner Abrar in The Hundred

Express News Service  
New Delhi, March 12

AFTER MUCH speculation about the stance of The Hundred teams owned by IPL franchises about bidding for Pakistani players in the auction, Sunrisers Leeds not only bid for leg-spinner **Abrar Ahmed (in pic)** but also acquired his services for 190,000 pounds (approximately Rs 2.3 crore).

There had been reports earlier that the teams bought by IPL franchise owners would not

be bidding for Pakistani players, and developments in the early part of Thursday's auction seemed to follow the script. Mystery spinner Usman Tariq, known for the angular approach and the long pause before delivery, was the only player from his country to find any takers. Birmingham Phoenix got him for 140,000 pounds after a brief tussle with Trent Rockets. Neither of these franchises has any IPL-owner involvement.

Other Pakistani players whose names came up for bidding - Saim Ayub, Haris Rauf and Shadab Khan - found no takers.

But that changed when Abrar's name came up. He entered the auction at a base price of 75,000 pounds and Sunrisers Leeds co-owner and CEO Kavya Maran promptly raised the paddle. They were challenged by Trent Rockets as the bidding soon crossed the 100,000 pound mark. As the contest touched the 150k threshold, there was some discussion between Kavya and head coach Daniel Vettori, before they decided to go further. Trent Rockets eventually opted out and Abrar became a Sunrisers Leeds player for 190k.

The team is led by Harry Brook and also has players such

as Brydon Carse, Mitchell Marsh and Nathan Ellis. Sunrisers Leeds also scooped up South Africa's Ryan Rickelton, England's Zak Crawley, Matt Potts and Dan Lawrence in the early going.

There has been no Pakistani player in the IPL since 2009 and IPL team owners who have bought franchises in domestic leagues around the world generally don't go for cricketers from that country.

However, the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) and the eight franchises in The Hundred had released a statement last month saying that the selection would be based

entirely on 'cricketing performance, availability, and the needs of each team'.

There were 13 Pakistani players in the auction and nine cricketers from that country have featured in it over the first five seasons.

However, no Pakistan player found takers in the auction for the women's competition of The Hundred on Wednesday. In fact, no Pakistani woman player has ever been a part of the event.

The 2026 edition of the tournament will be held from July 21 to August 16, and will feature 34 men's and as many women's matches.

## FIH WORLD CUP QUALIFIERS

# India's next hockey star rises from boxing hub Bhiwani

Vinayakk Mohanarangan  
New Delhi, March 12

BHIWANI IN Haryana is synonymous with boxing, but in the current Indian women's team, a youngster from the region is starting to make her mark in hockey. Ishika, 18, is one of the newcomers in head coach Sjoerd Marijne's squad at the FIH Hockey World Cup Qualifiers in Hyderabad and scored on her senior debut against Uruguay on Sunday. On his return to the helm, the Dutchman has a serious rebuilding job ahead of him as India's fortunes have plunged internationally over the past year, and the 18-year-old forward is one of the youngsters he has turned to.

Ishika's journey began when her family was in Shahabad, that famous Haryana hockey nursery that has produced many a superstar for the Indian team. "My father used to coach there. When I was young, I went with my father and watched seniors play. After that, my father got transferred to Bhiwani, and I started taking it seriously when I was in Class

VI," Ishika tells *The Indian Express*. "There weren't many girls playing hockey in Bhiwani who I could train with. So, I used to play along with boys and my elder brother. My father has been my coach since the start of my journey till I made it to the camps."

Her father, Virender Kumar, 60, is a hockey tragic; he still plays too, representing Haryana at the 2025 Masters Cup in Chennai - Hockey India's tournament for players aged above 40. "At 60, I might have been the oldest player there," he says, adding that he played at the Inter University level during his younger days. But it wasn't a case of wanting to live his dreams through his daughter; that part just came naturally.

As Ishika puts it, "I think hockey was just built into my genes, I think. I never wanted to play any other game."

"She just started playing hockey for entertainment. She used to finish her homework and come with me to the stadium, and I gave her a small stick and assigned a few tasks. Then very soon, her ball control



Ishika with her father and coach Virender Kumar. EXPRESS

started getting really good. She started getting serious, would practice long hours on Sundays too, and that way, I too never took a day off. Her drive to play came from within her. I knew then she would become a good player," Virender says.

Virender, who is now retired from his job as a government-appointed hockey coach, continues to train kids in Bhiwani but concedes that it is no Shahbad or Sonapat, where Haryana's most well-known names have come from. "Bhi-

wani has had a boxing center for many years. But it is not exactly known for hockey. There is an astroturf for sure (Bhim Stadium), but the kids who come from the village are not regular. If you get 30-40 kids of the same age group, then they can have the same level of training. We just have a couple of 8-year-olds and 12-year-olds, five 19-year-olds, ten 20-year-olds. We don't get the right group," he says.

### Harry Potter fan

Ishika is a self-confessed Potterhead, spends her free time reading books - The Alchemist is her favourite, but not Harry Potter, as she is a fan of just the movies - and is a huge fan of Cristiano Ronaldo. "I don't watch a lot of Bollywood movies. I used to watch a lot of animated movies, but Harry Potter is my favourite. I have all parts watched multiple times," she says.

"Every time I go home, it's a good feeling to sit down with my mother and brother, re-watching those movies. While in school, it was just about studies and hockey, but since

coming to the camps, I picked up the reading habit, too."

On early evidence, Ishika has that spark, as illustrated by her first goal - receiving a first-touch pass from another teenager, Sakshi Rana and sweeping it past a crowded defence.

It was a fitting moment as Ishika and Sakshi share a special bond off the field too, both hailing from Haryana and playing together in the Junior World Cup together last year. In fact, on the day the squad for the World Cup qualifiers was announced, Ishika was a bundle of nerves and couldn't bring herself to look at the list. It was Sakshi who conveyed the message to her.

"Sakshi and I have a good bonding, have known each other a long time. We always talk about taking up spaces on the pitch, pre-scan and be ready for the next move. So, she saw me, and as soon as she hit the one-touch pass, my on-the-floor slap shot was good. To score my first goal for India on debut, with my long-time friend supplying the pass, was a very special moment for me," Ishika says.

# Hungary visa applications with forged WFI letter raise 'trafficking' fears

Press Trust of India  
New Delhi, March 12

A SUSPECTED human trafficking attempt has come to light after individuals posing as Indian wrestlers sought visas from the Hungarian Embassy in New Delhi for a purported competition in Budapest, prompting the Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) to clarify that the documents submitted by them were fake.

The embassy sought verification from WFI on Thursday after receiving visa applications supported by a recommendation letter allegedly issued by the national federation on March 4 for participation in an

"international wrestling training and competition programme" scheduled in Budapest from March 15 to 22.

The WFI swiftly responded and said that the letter was forged and had not been issued by the federation. "This has reference to your e-mail dated March 12 seeking clarification regarding the authenticity of the document... the attached letter is fake and has not been issued by the Wrestling Federation of India (WFI)," WFI president Sanjay Kumar Singh said in a reply to the embassy.

The federation also pointed out discrepancies in the document, including the use of the name of a former office-bearer

in an incorrect capacity.

"It is also clarified that Mr V.N. Prasood is no longer holding the position of Secretary General of WFI and is currently serving as Vice President, WFI. The matter has been verified with Mr Prasood, who has categorically denied issuing any such letter," Singh said.

According to the forged letter submitted to the embassy, 11 wrestlers and a manager were recommended for visas to travel to Budapest, citing a training and competition programme at a local venue.

In its reply, the federation urged the embassy not to process any visa applications based on the forged document.

# 'For their own life and safety', Trump warns Iran for FIFA WC

Express News Service  
New Delhi, March 12

A DAY after Iran's Minister of Sport Ahmad Donyamali said 'under no circumstances can Iran participate' at this summer's FIFA World Cup, President Donald Trump said on Thursday he did not think it would be "appropriate" for the Iranian football team to participate in the event co-hosted by the United States. Trump added "for their own life and safety", the team shouldn't take part in the tournament while the countries are at war.

"The Iran National Soccer Team is welcome to the World Cup," Trump wrote on his social media site. "But I really don't believe it is appropriate that they be there, for their own life and safety." The US is hosting the tournament with Canada and Mexico from June 11 to July 19.

to depart somewhat from what he relayed Tuesday at the White House to FIFA President Gianni Infantino, who later publicly said that Trump assured him the Iranian players and coaches would be welcome. A White House official, who insisted on anonymity to discuss private conversations, had confirmed Trump's message to Infantino about Iran's participation, according to Associated Press.

On Thursday, the White House did not immediately clarify what Trump meant by "their own life and safety," such as whether he anticipated threats against them while in the country after U.S. and Israeli strikes on Iran that began Feb. 28. Iran are scheduled to play in Inglewood, California, against New Zealand on June 15 and Belgium on June 21 before finishing group play in Seattle against Egypt on June 26. Since June, Iran has been



Donald Trump (L) and FIFA president Gianni Infantino. FILE/REUTERS

subject to a travel ban into the U.S. as part of the Trump administration's immigration crackdown. But athletes and coaches from the target nations are exempt, which means the Iranian team would be allowed to enter the U.S.

Donyamali said it would be impossible for Iran to take part

after air attacks launched by the US and Israel on February 28 killed Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, triggering a region-wide conflict that shows no sign of abating.

While it always seemed counter-intuitive that Iran would take part in a World Cup while at war with one of the co-hosts, FIFA was on Tuesday still clearly banking on Team Melli lining up for their first group game against New Zealand in Los Angeles on June 15.

## Fifa's assurance

Only a few hours before Donyamali's statement, FIFA chief Gianni Infantino trumpeted an assurance from Trump that Iran were "welcome to compete in the tournament in the United States".

A withdrawal would be governed by Article Six of the World Cup regulations, which, while stipulating a series of financial penalties for such a move, also

states that FIFA would be at liberty to call up any nation it chooses to fill the void.

"There's no modern precedent for this and, according to FIFA's own tournament regulations, they have full discretion to do whatever they want in the case of a team withdrawing," James Kitching, FIFA's former Director of Football Regulatory, told Reuters.

"That means, for example, a team that withdraws wouldn't have to be replaced by a team from the same confederation, or even replaced at all. Whether either of those scenarios would be politically tenable is a different question. The tournament regulations also provide disciplinary sanctions for any federation whose team withdraws. However, if Iran withdrew for any reason related to this current conflict, I doubt FIFA would impose any sanctions given the circumstances." (AP & Reuters inputs)

## BRIEFLY



Satwik-Chirag won a 74-minute thriller. FILE/EXPRESS PHOTO

## Swiss Open: Satwik-Chirag survive thriller to reach QF

TOP SEEDS Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty came through an epic battle against Japan's Hiroki Okamura and Kyohei Yamashita to reach the quarterfinals at the Swiss Open. The Indians won 21-15, 15-21, 28-26 in a 74-minute thriller, where both pairs traded numerous leads from 13-13 in the decider. Earlier, Kiran George bowed out in the men's singles pre-quarterfinals after losing to Hong Kong's Jason Gunawan. George, who had beaten former World champion Loh Kean Yew, lost 18-21, 21-16, 16-21. ENS

Final batch of WI and SA players have flown out of India: ICC

Express News Service  
New Delhi, March 12

THE LAST group of players of the West Indies and the South Africa T20 World Cup teams, who were stranded in India due to the Israel-USA war with Iran, have flown out of India safely, the International Cricket Council (ICC) announced in a statement on Thursday. The ICC said that the players were sent back home in a "complex operation" that "took place under exceptionally challenging global travel conditions." After Israel and USA had attacked Iran, the Asian country had responded by attacking many of its neighbours which resulted in air traffic from transit hubs like Dubai being affected heavily.

"Within the past 24 hours, South Africa's remaining 29 members and the West Indies' final 16 members have departed on flights to their respective homelands, bringing to a close a complex operation that has taken place under exceptionally challenging global travel conditions," the ICC statement read.

Members from both South Africa and West Indies had slammed the lack of communication and had taken to social media to air their frustration at the delay. What had angered both sides was that the England team was able to exit India before them, even though England had been eliminated in the second semi-final. West Indies head coach Daren Sammy wrote on X: "I just wanna go home." He followed it up with another post, writing: "At least an update, tell us something. Today tmw, next week. It's been 5 days."

David Miller expressed his anger in the comments section of a post from ESPNcricinfo, writing: "Funny that England gets eliminated after WI & SA and gets on a charter back home tonight. While WI & SA still wait for answers in Kolkata."

## MORE ODIS ON THE HORIZON

# Mission 2027 World Cup next with Rohit-Kohli in focus

Sri Lanka, New Zealand, England and Ireland are all keen on adding ODIs against India to their schedules

Venkata Krishna B  
Chennai, March 12

IS THE second wind of Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma leading to a fixture congestion for Team India in the next 12 months? The answer could probably be a resounding yes as India are lined-up to play more ODIs than it was originally scheduled in the Future Tours Programme.

The *Indian Express* understands that over the past couple of months, multiple boards have requested the BCCI to slot additional ODIs in their away tour, which the Indian board seems to have accepted.

While India have been predominantly playing white-ball tournaments since the Test series against South Africa, post the Indian Premier League, they will once again confront a busy schedule. Soon after the IPL, India will host Afghanistan for one Test and three ODIs before flying to the UK to play three ODIs and 5 T20Is against England. And during that tour, India are likely to play Ireland as well.

The question right now is whether India will travel to Ireland for the series or instead play all the three matches in Southampton. It is understood that Cricket Ireland and the BCCI are in advanced talks to finalise the schedule and it could either be three T20Is or three ODIs either at the start of the tour in July or in the end.

Moreover, playing more ODIs will also help India with an eye on the September-October 2027 World Cup in South Africa played under conditions that

**Post the Asian Games, India will host West Indies at home for three ODIs and 5 T20Is during the festive period in September-October.**

will need adapting. Although the T20 team has been unbeatable, in ODIs India are still not a rounded outfit. It lacks balance, and their recent series defeat against New Zealand at home proved to be a reality check. The young players as head coach Gautam Gambhir said are yet to figure out the rhythm of playing 50 overs where they have to mix caution and aggression. The likes of Yashasvi Jaiswal in particular need experience as was evident in his outing against South Africa.

Post the white-ball tour of UK, as per the FTP India are scheduled to play two Tests in Sri Lanka. It is understood that after the floodlights were installed at the Sinhalese Sports Club, Sri Lanka Cricket is keen on hosting India in a pink-ball Test. Whether the BCCI accepts SLC's request isn't clear as India haven't really warmed up to the concept of day-night Tests. However, given India's recent struggles against spinners, playing a day-night Test could be a safer option than playing the matches at Galle and SSC during the day.

While the tour was originally supposed to feature only two Tests, the SLC has requested the BCCI to include white-ball fixtures which



Indian fans will see more of Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli with a lot of ODIs lined up. CREIMAS FOR BCCI

would be used for flood-relief.

There were talks of India travelling to Sri Lanka in January to play two ODIs, but that was postponed to ensure the matches will be accommodated during the Test tour. There is a strong chance that the series will now include three matches, with the format still not decided as SLC is understood to be pushing for ODIs as it would bring in huge turnouts thanks to the presence of Sharma and Kohli.

In September, there could be a bit of breathing space. While India are scheduled to play 3 T20Is against Afghanistan in the UAE, given the current war climate that isn't certain. Similarly, they have a white-ball tour of Bangladesh,

which was originally supposed to take place in 2025, but was postponed to this year because of political reasons.

## Clearance from govt

The fate of that tour depends on the clearance from the government. If these two series don't go ahead as per schedule, the only other commitment would be the Asian Games in Nagoya, Japan. During the last edition in Hangzhou, India fielded a second-string team and clinched gold. However, with cricket at the Olympics in 2028, the T20I team might look to get into multi-disciplinary Games mode.

Post the Asian Games, India will then host West Indies at home for three ODIs and 5

T20Is during the festive period in September-October. Once that series finishes, India will fly to New Zealand mid-October for a full-fledged series to kick-start their summer. Though they were scheduled to play two Tests, three ODIs and 5 T20Is, New Zealand Cricket is understood to have requested to include two more 50-over fixtures. As a result, they will now play 10 white-ball fixtures in all during that tour.

From there on India will be stationed at home for the next three months which will end with Sri Lanka arriving here to play three ODIs and 5 T20Is. Once they welcome 2027, they will host Australia for a five-match Border-Gavaskar Trophy.

MOC extends support to Tennis players

INDIAN TENNIS players Yuki Bhambri and Sumit Nagal were on Thursday sanctioned financial assistance of close to Rs 30 lakh each by the Mission Olympic Cell (MOC) while rising player Dhakshinewar Suresh was included in the Target Asian Games Group (TAGG) to bolster preparations for the 2026 Asian Games and the 2026 Davis Cup Qualifiers. The approvals were cleared during the 169th meeting of the MOC on Thursday. PTI

AIFF defends preparations for Asian Cup

SUBRATA PAUL, the AIFF's director of national teams, defended the preparations for the AFC Women's Asian Cup on Thursday, describing them as "quite extensive" despite India's group-stage exit from the tournament in Australia. The team was knocked out of the tournament after losing all three Group C matches conceding a big 11-0 defeat to Japan and concluded its campaign with a 3-1 defeat to Chinese Taipei in Sydney on Tuesday. PTI

Aman leads over seasoned player Bhullar in IGPL

AMAN RAJ, who battled injuries last season, jumped to the top, reaching 11-under to be four shots clear of Gaganjeet Bhullar at the halfway stage of the IGPL season-opener at the Chandigarh Golf Club, here on Thursday. The 30-year-old from Patna, who won twice last season, shot a brilliant 8-under 64 after his opening round 69 to put himself in a very strong position. Bhullar followed his opening 68 with a 71 to be second at seven-under. PTI

Yuki enters ATP Masters 1000 semifinal

INDIA'S YUKI Bhambri entered his maiden ATP Masters 1000 semifinal as he and his Swedish partner Goran Goransson defeated Alexander Erler and Andrea Vavassori in straight sets in Indian Wells. The 33-year-old Indian had previously reached the doubles quarter-finals at the Masters 1000 level twice. Bhambri and Goransson defeated the Austrian-Italian pair 6-3 7-6 in the quarterfinals that lasted over one hour 30 minutes. PTI

# ATP Masters: Draper shocks Djokovic

Reuters  
March 12

DEFENDING CHAMPION Jack Draper claimed one of the biggest wins of his career by beating Djokovic in a deciding-set tie-break after two hours and 35 minutes. Draper, who trailed after dropping the opener 6-4, stormed into the second set by breaking Djokovic early and surviving multiple break points before sealing it with aggressive baseline play.

Djokovic won a stunning 26-shot rally at 30-all in the opening game of the decider, but Draper surged to leads of 3-1 and 5-3 before the 38-year-old Serb battled back to 5-5 and then broke the Briton as he first served for the match. The 24-year-old kept his composure, forced the tie-break and dominated it to close out a statement victory.

"I still don't feel like I'm playing anywhere near the way I want to play," Draper said in an on-court interview. "I came out here tonight and I won that match through determination and trying to problem-solve and do my best and have [a] great attitude."

"I'm proud of the way I regrouped. I haven't been playing on the tour (in) a long time, so to put away guys who are top players, it's something that comes with confidence." Draper will next face Russian 11th seed Daniil Medvedev, who beat Alex Michelsen 6-2 6-4 in a commanding performance, needing just one hour and 27 minutes to dismantle the American and maintain his strong form after winning last month's Dubai Open.

## Alcaraz dominates

World number one Carlos Alcaraz continued his domi-



Jack Draper reacts after winning a point. REUTERS

nant run at Indian Wells, beating Norway's Casper Ruud 6-1 7-6(2), while Jack Draper upset world number three Novak Djokovic 4-6 6-4 7-6(5) on Wednesday to reach the quarterfinals in the California desert.

Alcaraz relied on a near-flawless service game to seize control of the match, racing through the opening set in just 37 minutes after breaking Ruud's serve three times.

Thirteenth-seeded Ruud raised his level in the second set and forced a tiebreak, hoping to push the match to a decider, but Alcaraz kept his foot on the gas to seal his 15th consecutive victory of the season to reach the quarter-finals for a fifth straight year. "The conditions were difficult to be honest. Today the ball was tough to control but we both played great," two-time champion Alcaraz said in his on-court interview.

"My first set was incredible I'm really happy of playing that kind of level, really happy to get through and hopefully I'll play this level on the next round." Alcaraz will next face 2021 champion Cameron Norrie, with the Spaniard looking to avenge a defeat to the Briton at last year's Paris Masters.

## WORLD PARA ATHLETICS GRAND PRIX

# 'Going after 75m': World champ Sumit chases elusive mark

Pritish Raj  
New Delhi, March 12

IT WAS all casual and easy for reigning World and Paralympic champion javelin thrower Sumit Antil. He jogged lightly and practiced his run-up thrice before taking his first throw. He eventually registered a best throw of 69.25m to win the World Para Athletics Grand Prix on Thursday.

However, titles or winning competitions are no longer an area of concern for the Indian star para-athlete, as he has won every competition he has participated in since the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games. The 27-year-old from Sonapat is instead chasing the 75m mark, a distance that no para javelin thrower has achieved in the history of para athletics.

His current personal best of 73.29m is also the world record, which he achieved at the 2022 Asian Para Games. Since 2023, Sumit has been consistently hovering around the 73m mark but has never quite managed to

cross it despite several strong performances.

"It's been two years since I have thrown beyond 73m. I have been constantly going around 71 or 72m and sometimes it makes me sad as well. So this year, I am going after the 75m mark," Sumit said after his win. When asked what it would take to cross the 75m mark, Sumit said, "I honestly don't know because no athlete has done it before. But I am working on everything that can help me achieve it, be it sharpening my technique or increasing my strength and overall power."

## Early start to season

Sumit had an early start to the season and participated at the Dubai Grand Prix last month, where he threw 68.26m to win the gold medal. "I have many international tournaments lined up this season. Right now, I am in the loading phase and wasn't expecting a 69m throw here. My focus this year is on the Asian Para Games and I want to peak just before



Sumit Antil had a best throw of 69.25m on Thursday. PRAVEEN KHANNA

that event arrives. So my next target is to register a good throw at the Nottwil Grand Prix in May later this year," said Sumit.

The two-time Paralympic gold medalist didn't take a long break after winning the World Championships gold medal

last year in front of his family and friends, and plans to compete in more tournaments this year in order to achieve his target of 75m.

"After the World Championships, we didn't take a big break. Me and my team were back on track after just 15 days. I have worked on the finer aspects of my technique, like developing a more powerful run-up, and we are doing most of the things right at the moment. I had a slight niggle in my shoulder last year during the Worlds but overall everything is good for me now. I am just waiting for a good day when the conditions are favourable because that is very important for a big throw," he explained.

One would hope that, like his idol Neeraj Chopra, who achieved the elusive 90m mark last year, Sumit also manages to go beyond 75m at an event where he has already achieved multiple records — the 2026 Asian Para Games scheduled in Aichi-Nagoya, Japan later this year.

India dominates on Day two

New Delhi: India continued its dominance in the wheelchair category of the men's 400m T53/T54 event, sweeping the podium with Manojkumar Sabapathi winning gold in 54.33 seconds, Anil Kumar taking silver in 57.57 seconds, and Manikandan Jothi securing bronze with a time of 1:01.94.

The women's events also saw strong performances from Indian athletes. In the 400m T11/T12 event, Tejalben Amraji Damor won gold with a time of 57.53 seconds, Lalitha Killaka secured silver in 1:07.92, and Shalini Chaudhary completed another Indian podium sweep with bronze in 1:16.79.

India continued its strong showing in throwing events with Sahil Salim Sayyad winning gold in the men's discus throw F51/F55 with 36.83 metres, followed by Sukhchain with silver (30.49m) and Sudhir with bronze. PTI



Government of Assam



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**Shri Narendra Modi**  
Prime Minister

August Presence

**Dr Himanta Biswa Sarma**  
Chief Minister, Assam

Shri Sarbananda Sonowal  
Union Minister, Ports, Shipping & Waterways

Shri Hagrama Mohilary  
Chief, BTC

Shri Biswajit Daimary  
Speaker, Assam Legislative Assembly

Shri Urkhao Gwra Brahma  
Minister, Handloom Textiles & Sericulture, etc., Assam

Shri Charan Boro  
Minister, Welfare of Bodoland, etc., Assam

Shri Jayanta Mallabaruah  
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Shri Joyanta Basumatary  
MP, Kokrajhar HPC

13 March 2026

2:30 PM

Greenfield, Kokrajhar

## Strengthening Railway Infrastructure

### Foundation Stone laying for

Wagon POH (Periodical Overhauling) Workshop  
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#### Features & Benefits

- Modern wagon maintenance facility for **inspection, repair and overhauling**
- Improved freight **efficiency, reliability and safety**
- Local **employment** generation

Project cost  
**₹256**  
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### Flagging off of

Kamakhya-Charlapalli **Amrit Bharat** Express

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Narangi-Agartala Express

## Bhoomipujan

### Flyovers

- Gossaigaon Chariali** (DK Road)  
|<->| 1.05 km
- Balajan Tiniali** (Jwhwlao-Dwimalu Road)  
|<->| 680 m
- Debargaon Junction** (Jwhwlao-Dwimalu Road)  
|<->| 760 m
- Titaguri** (Jwhwlao-Dwimalu Road)  
|<->| 715 m

### Bridges

- Sankosh river** (Kachugaon-Sankosh Road)  
|<->| 2.7 km
- Beki river** (Khagrabari-Udalguri Chowk Road)  
|<->| 2.96 km

### Asom Mala 3.0

|<->|  
Total length **917 km**  
Roads **69** | Bridges **37**  
Districts covered **34**

Total Project cost  
**₹1,101**  
crore

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