

Accurate information to citizens thanks to chatbots; Department of School Education felicitated in 150 days of e-Governance initiative

Coffee Table

News Network

Mumbai, Dt. 28 – The Department of School Education and Sports has successfully implemented technology-based initiatives under the 150-day e-governance reform program to provide prompt, multilingual and accessible information to citizens, students, parents and teachers through WhatsApp chatbot 24x7. Taking note of this innovative and people-oriented performance, the department was felicitated by Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis. This initiative has given a new impetus to the education system in the state, which will bring speed in digital governance, transparency and

service delivery. As part of the state government's 150-day action programme, the school education department has implemented several significant reforms, emphasizing digital transformation, data-based decision-making and administration in line with the National Education Policy 2020. Policies, Circulars, Notifications, Dashboards and Citizen Oriented Services were made available at one place by strengthening the Department's official website system. This has increased the transparency of information and the information is easily accessible to students, parents, teachers and administrative authorities. Under the guidance of School



Education Minister Dadaji Bhushe and State Minister Dr. Pankaj Bhojer, the overall quality of the department has improved and Principal Secretary Ranjitsinh Deol has expressed satisfaction that the school education department has secured the sixth rank out of 57 departments. He has specially appreciated Education Commissioner Satchindra Pratap Singh for implementing

the entire work at the sectoral level and Deputy Secretary Sameer Sawant for completing the e-governance work at the Ministry level. E-office system enables decision making. The e-office system has increased efficiency, accountability and transparency as progress of files, approval processes and administrative functions in the department are completely

digitized. Various education related services and certificates have been made available online, in a timely and responsive manner by linking to the 'Aaple Sarkar' portal. This has reduced the number of visits of citizens to government offices and service delivery under the Right to Service Act has become more effective. Interactive dashboard The department has developed interactive

dashboards to monitor key aspects like enrollment, attendance, academic quality, school infrastructure, teacher planning and implementation of various schemes. With the help of this dashboard, strategic decisions are made more accurately with real-time overview at all administrative levels. Effective communication through WhatsApp chatbot Among the initiatives implemented by the School Education Department, the official AI-based WhatsApp chatbot launched by the department is becoming a one-window digital assistant for citizens. Instant information in Marathi and English language on all matters related to School Management, Student Welfare

Scheme, Teacher Service Queries, Class XI Admission, Apar ID, Exams & Results, Complaints & Feedback. Therefore, the communication between the department and citizens has become more effective. Enhancement of evaluation quality due to 'AI' The concept test of AI-enabled assessment app 'Nipun Maharashtra' has ushered in a new era in the assessment process in basic education. Automated collection of information from assessment papers, AI-based assessment of students' reading skills, classroom-level real-time analysis and benchmarking against individual learning needs have enhanced the quality of assessments. Over 90

percent accuracy and 30 to 40 percent time savings were reported in pilots in selected districts. Apart from this, accurate infrastructure maps have been created by geo-tagging the schools. This has made the verification of physical assets of schools, planning of facilities and prioritization of development works as per need more effective. Overall, due to all these activities, the school education department has achieved remarkable progress on all four levels of e-governance, service accessibility, transparent administration and quality education and the performance of the department has been recognized at the state level during the 150-day programme.

Pulse Medical Conference 2026 successful; New direction of transformation of health sector : Hasan Mushrif

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Mumbai, Dt. 28: Medical Education Minister Hasan Mushrif asserted that the Pulse Medical Conference 2026 has been important for moving in a new direction in the field of health and medical education, and new avenues of innovation, investment and cooperation have been opened up through this conference. Addressing the concluding session, Minister Mr. Mushrif said that discussions on bulk drug park and pharmaceutical sector will promote self-reliance, and new business opportunities are created due to the participation of startups. The initiative will directly benefit nearly four thousand students, health professionals, researchers and rural residents. Reviewing the two-day conference, Minister Mushrif said that the 'Maharashtra Manifesto' has given a clear direction for cooperation, pilot projects and



comprehensive measures. He expressed his belief that due to this, the conference will be effective and not limited to discussions only. Pulse Medical Conference 2026 made it clear that major transformations in the health sector are possible if governments, academia, industry and international partners come together. In-depth discussions were held in the areas of artificial intelligence, digital health, quality medical education, clinical innovation and preventive health. The conference highlighted Maharashtra's move towards a technology-based and patient-centric health system through high-level

round table meetings, various sessions and exhibitions. He also informed that 15 MoUs have been signed in the field of education, research and digital health. Highlighting the need for international cooperation in the face of global challenges, Minister Mushrif said that cooperation in the field of health must go beyond borders. Minister Mushrif urged that it is time to implement the ideas presented in the conference and build a more accessible, affordable and future-oriented healthcare system. Dignitaries including Minister of State for Medical Education Madhuri Misal were present on this occasion.

PM Modi calls for unity, collective responsibility amid West Asia war

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Mann Ki Baat: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday urged citizens to remain united and vigilant in the face of challenges arising from the ongoing conflict in West Asia. Speaking during his monthly radio programme Mann Ki Baat, he appealed to people not to believe or spread rumours. According to the PTI, PM Modi said a "fierce war" has been ongoing in India's neighbourhood for over a month, calling it a difficult period that requires collective responsibility and awareness from all citizens. The Prime Minister expressed gratitude to countries in the Gulf region for supporting more than one crore Indians living and working there during



the crisis. The conflict Noting the global turbulence amid the conflict between US-Israel and Iran, he said, "The month of March has been eventful at a global level. In the past, the entire world faced numerous problems for a long time due to the Covid. We all expected that after emerging through the Covid-19 crisis, the world would move forward on the path of progress with a fresh start. But conditions of war and conflict continued to emerge in different regions of the world. Currently, a fierce war has been going on for a month in our

neighbourhood. Relatives of lakhs of families reside in these countries, and particularly work in the Gulf countries. I am grateful to Gulf countries for providing every kind of assistance to over one crore Indians there.", according to the ANI. "A crisis is developing around the world regarding petrol and diesel. Our global relations, the support we receive from various countries, and the strengths we have built over the past decade have enabled India to face these challenges resolutely. These are certainly challenging times.

Today, through 'Mann Ki Baat,' I will once again urge all my countrymen that we must unite and overcome this challenge," the Prime Minister added. Appeal against misinformation PM Modi warned that rumours could cause harm to the country and urged citizens to rely only on official information provided by the government, reported the ANI. Amid rising fuel prices and concerns over LPG supply, the government has taken steps such as reducing excise duty on petrol and diesel and accelerating the rollout of piped natural gas (PNG) infrastructure, the news agency reported. Diplomatic engagements continue The Prime Minister has been in touch with several global leaders, including Donald Trump and

Mohammed bin Salman, to discuss the evolving situation in West Asia. Global conflict background The conflict began on February 28, involving military action by the United States and Israel against Iran, followed by retaliatory strikes by Iran targeting regional allies. Iran's control over the strategically important Strait of Hormuz has also raised global concerns, as it is a key route for energy supplies. PM Modi has held discussions with several world leaders, including those from Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait, Jordan, Iran, France, Israel and Malaysia. He also spoke with Donald Trump on March 24, describing the conversation as a useful exchange on the evolving situation.

World's Largest International Agri Market Planned Near VadHAVAN Port 'Shetkari Bhavan' to be Set Up in 190 Market Committees Across Maharashtra Minister Jaykumar Rawal Shares Details at Kopergaon Event

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Shirdi : Farmers are not merely food producers but the backbone of the nation's economy, and strengthening them is key to building a robust rural economy, said Jaykumar Rawal. He announced that the state government is planning to establish the world's largest international agricultural marketplace over 1,200 acres near VadHAVAN Port, modeled on global standards similar to Paris, to provide farmers access to international markets. He was speaking at the groundbreaking ceremony of the 'Rashtrasant Tukdoji Maharaj Shetkari

Bhavan' and the inauguration of various development works at the Kopergaon Agricultural Produce Market Committee (APMC). The event was attended by former MLA Snehalata Kolhe, industrialist Bipin Kolhe, cooperative leader Vivek Kolhe, Kopergaon Municipal Council President Parag Sandhan, and APMC Chairman Sahebrao Rohom, among others. Out of 306 Agricultural Produce Market Committees in the state, nearly 190 will be equipped with 'Rashtrasant Tukdoji Maharaj Shetkari Bhavans'—modern facilities designed to provide farmers with accommodation and essential amenities such as water and sanitation while



visiting markets. Highlighting various welfare measures, Rawal said the government is implementing key schemes for farmers, including solar agricultural pumps aimed at providing free electricity, annual financial assistance of 12,000 under farmer welfare schemes, and an

incentive of 50,000 for those who repay loans regularly. The government has also ensured procurement of soybean and cotton at Minimum Support Prices (MSP), offering significant relief to farmers. Additionally, the 'Ladki Bahin' scheme is being effectively implemented to empower women. To modernize

agricultural trade, the use of the National Agriculture Market (e-NAM) platform is being expanded. Under the 'One Nation, One Market' concept, a unified licensing system is being introduced, enabling traders to purchase agricultural produce from any market committee across the state. With assistance

from the Asian Development Bank, the state is implementing the 2,100 crore 'MAGNET 2.0' project, which will provide subsidies for primary processing, transportation, and storage infrastructure. Addressing the concerns of onion growers, Rawal said the government has prepared a

comprehensive action plan, including the establishment of an 'Onion Bank' across the state. Five such facilities will be set up along the Samruddhi Expressway to focus on storage, grading, packaging, and value addition, ensuring fair prices and minimizing losses for farmers. He further

assured that the government will support the development of cold storage units, warehouses, and grading facilities at the Kopergaon APMC, considering its growing turnover. Efforts are also underway to secure international markets for geographically indicated (GI) agricultural products through trade agreements with other countries. During the event, other dignitaries also expressed their views. In his introductory remarks, Sahebrao Rohom stated that the government has sanctioned 1.73 crore for the construction of the Shetkari Bhavan at Kopergaon.

Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar Municipal Corporation collects record Rs 221cr in taxes even before fiscal-end

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Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar: The Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar Municipal Corporation (CSMC) has recorded an all-time high tax at Rs 221 crore ahead of the close of the current financial year, with property tax alone accounting for almost Rs 200 crore. According to the civic tax collection department, the total recovery includes Rs 21 crore in water tax. "This (tax collection) marks an increase of over 45% compared to the previous year, with around 35% of citizens paying higher tax amounts," an official said. In the 2024-25 financial year, the civic body had collected Rs 157.7 crore in property tax. "The total recovery for the current



financial year is expected to rise marginally further, as a few days remain before the March 31 deadline," he said. Deputy commissioner Vikas Nawale attributed the record-breaking performance to meticulous planning and effective execution by the civic administration under the guidance of municipal commissioner G Sreekanth. "The record tax recovery will provide a significant boost to

upcoming development projects. It will also prove crucial for the holistic development of the city," he said. Several initiatives contributed to the improved collections, including the WhatsApp chatbot, online tax payment facilities, the 'Shrimitra' cell and the 'Shrimitra' cellphone application, which helped the administration reach a wider base of taxpayers. "Sustained outreach efforts had

a positive impact on recovery figures. We appeal to the remaining taxpayers to clear their dues before the end of the financial year," another official said. To further improve compliance, the civic body has also taken strict action against major defaulters by sealing properties for non-payment of property tax. Civic officials said the move acted as a deterrent and provided an additional boost to tax recovery.

AIMIM corporator & kin booked on murder bid charge

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Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar: The city police have booked an AIMIM corporator and 10 of his family members for attempt to murder following an attack on ISLAM (Indian Secular Largest Assembly of Maharashtra) office-bearer Rafat Yaar Khan in the Juna Bazar area on Thursday. An FIR for attempt to murder and rioting was registered on Friday. Police said the attack is suspected to be a fallout of an earlier clash between the two groups. On March 20, Rafat and some of his associates were booked by Kranti Chowk police for allegedly assaulting Minhaj Khan at Sillekhana crossroads. Minhaj had sustained

considerable injuries in that incident, including stitches inside his mouth. However, AIMIM corporator Meraj Khan, who has also been named as an accused in the Friday's FIR, said that at least seven people of the 11 named in the FIR were not even present at the spot when the incident took place. "We are being framed in the false case and demand an in-depth probe so that the facts come out," said Meraj. DCP (zone-1) Pankaj Atulkar said, "We will ensure a fair probe. Appropriate action will be taken against those at fault." According to the City Chowk police, Rafat was riding a moped along with his associate and fellow office-bearer Abul Hasan Hashmi when they were allegedly waylaid by suspects.



The attackers, armed with iron rods and sticks, reportedly assaulted Rafat, leaving him with head injuries. Rafat and Abul were former AIMIM office-bearers but rebelled against the party after they were denied tickets in the municipal corporation polls. The duo contested the elections and lost. The incident occurred in a busy part of the old city. Police said the assault lasted for several minutes

before the attackers fled. Rafat was later rushed to the Govt Medical College and Hospital (GMCH), where he is currently recuperating. His condition is stable, said officials. Based on Rafat's complaint, police have registered a case against 11, including AIMIM corporator Meraj Khan and his brother Minhaj Khan, under charges of attempt to murder, rioting and other relevant sections.

Woman, son charred to death as car catches fire after crash

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CHHATRAPATI SAMBHAJINAGAR: A 45-year-old woman and her 25-year-old son were charred to death as their car caught fire after a truck collided head-on with their four-wheeler at Kapsi Phata in Ashti taluka of Beed district on Friday afternoon. According to the police, the speeding truck had collided head-on with the car that immediately caught fire. The deceased have been identified as Pushpa Shrihari Puri and her son Rishikesh, residents of Salegaon in Kej taluka. Rishikesh had recently completed his Chartered Accountant studies and was set to begin his professional career. The victims are the wife and son of Shrihari Puri Maharaj, a gram sevakh with Ashti panchayat samiti and a well-known kirtankar. At the time of the incident, he was



attending a kirtan programme in a nearby village. "The duo was travelling from Ashti towards Beed for some personal work when the accident occurred. Eyewitnesses said the tipper truck, coming from the opposite direction at a high speed, rammed into the car with tremendous force. The impact crushed the vehicle and it went up in flames, trapping the occupants inside," a police officer said. The intensity of the fire was such that the victims did not get any chance to escape. Local residents rushed to the spot and tried to help, but

were unable to approach the vehicle due to the raging blaze. Police and fire brigade personnel reached the spot soon after being alerted. However, it took around two hours of continuous efforts, including cutting through the mangled metal and dousing the flames, to retrieve the bodies from the car. The accident has sent shockwaves across Beed district, with many expressing grief over the loss. Police have registered a case against the driver of the tipper truck for rash and negligent driving, and causing death due to negligence.

10 BLOs booked for skipping poll duty in Jalna

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Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar: Ten booth-level officers (BLOs) from Jalna district were booked under section 234 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) and section 134 of the Representation of the People Act, 1950, for allegedly failing to join duty and wilfully neglecting election-related responsibilities for the 101 Jalna assembly constituency. The FIR was registered in Jalna on the complaint of Vishnupant Ghughe (50), an employee at the tehsil office in Jalna, who was authorised by the tehsildar and

assistant electoral registration officer through a written order on Friday to initiate legal action against errant officials. According to the complaint, the chief electoral officer, Maharashtra, had issued a directive on March 3, 2026, assigning BLOs the responsibility of verifying unclear, distorted and non-human photographs in the electoral roll, along with completing other time-bound tasks related to voter list revision. Despite being appointed as BLOs and directed through an order dated March 20 to report for duty, the accused officials allegedly failed to join work. The tehsil



office issued multiple communications on Jan 29, Feb 5, March 4, 5, 6, 11 and 20, asking them to attend meetings and take charge of assigned duties, but they remained absent. Officials said the BLOs also skipped a crucial review meeting held on Friday and did not respond to show-cause notices issued for their absence. No explanation was

submitted, nor did they report for duty, the complaint stated. Their continued absence stalled several key election processes, including SIR 2002 verification work, online mapping, DSE processes within and across parts, and the disposal of Forms 6, 7 and 8 related to voter enrolment, deletion and correction. The delay drew strong displeasure from the

district collector and district election officer, who repeatedly directed that the pending work be completed within the stipulated timeline. Police officials, citing the content of the complaint, said by deliberately avoiding their assigned responsibilities, the accused obstructed crucial election work, prompting registration of the FIR under relevant legal provisions. Ten booth-level officers (BLOs) from Jalna district have been booked under Section 234 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) and Section 134 of the Representation of the People Act, 1950.

MMRDA earns top rank in Maharashtra



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MUMBAI: The Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority (MMRDA) secured the top position in the state under the 150 Days Sevakarmi Plus Programme, official said on Sunday. It was also ranked fourth in the state

in the 150 Days E-Governance Reform Programme of the Government of Maharashtra. Commendation certificates were presented to MMRDA Commissioner Sanjay Mukherjee by Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis. Participating government agencies were

assessed on nine parameters related to personnel development and compliance with service rules for the Sevakarmi Plus Programme award. They were also evaluated on seven parameters concerning the use of innovative digital governance for the E-Governance Reform award.

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Nashik: It took over about three decades for the state govt to provide funds for sanctioning the lining work along with the renovation of 84-km section of Kukadi Canal that will benefit farmers across 6,000 hectareS of farmland which are part of Ahilyanagar, Pune and Solapur districts. The decision, issued via a govt resolution, follows consistent follow-up by legislative council Chairman Ram Shinde, with the govt. The work will now be executed by Maharashtra Krishna Valley Development



Corporation, and it has been made mandatory to utilise the funds sanctioned for this purpose exclusively for these specific, designated tasks. According to a senior officer from WRD, "The work of renovation and lining will benefit the agricultural infrastructure of western Maharashtra

and Marathwada, as administrative approval has been granted for Rs47.03 crore renovation. The project, aims to modernise the distribution system that has served the region for over three decades." The Kukadi Project is a lifeline for seven drought-prone talukas across Pune, Ahilyanagar, and

Solapur districts. However, the canal had not seen significant maintenance in 25 years. Constant water flow without continuous lining led to structural degradation and overgrown vegetation; massive leakages and wastages, besides delayed delivery of water to farmers. Dilapidated infrastructure including crumbling culverts, outlets, and bridges obstructed the water flow. "The restoration works that will be executed under government's 'special repair' scheme will include restoration of the canal cross-

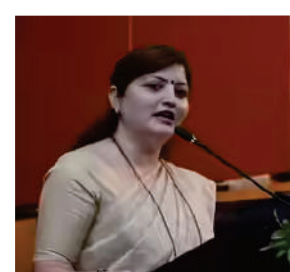
section and stone lining in deep-cut areas, overhauling old road bridges, canal drops, and inspection paths and thus plug the leakages that will help in restoration of irrigation to 6,000 hectares of land within the project's command area," said the officer. "The renovation will specifically benefit the talukas of Ambegaon, Shirur, Junnar, Parner, Karjat, Shrigonda, and Karmala talukas ensuring more efficient water cycles for farmers who have long struggled with conveyance losses," the officer added.

Resignation NCP's internal issue, legal action missing

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News Network

Pune: After resigning as the chief of state women's commission, Rupali Chakankar stepped down from the post of state president of NCP's women wing on Friday but opposition claimed that these resignations are not enough and there should be legal action against her over her association with Ashok Kharat. After Kharat's

arrest, opposition targeted Chakankar as she was one of the trustees of his trust. The MVA members alleged that while Chakankar was heading the state women's commission, instead of helping the victims whom Kharat was exploiting, she tried to protect the astrologer. As the opposition kept on mounting pressure on her, Chakankar first resigned as the state women's commission



chief and on Friday, NCP chief Sunetra Pawar asked her to step down from the post of state president of the women's wing of the party as well. Reacting to Friday's

resignation, Shiv Sena (UBT) deputy leader Sushma Andhare said, "Chakankar quitting NCP's post is their party's internal issue. We are not bothered about it. We are concerned about the cases related to Kharat in which we suspect Chakankar's involvement. We are demanding SIT to question her and name her in the FIR." UBT Rajya Sabha member Sanjay Raut said

the cases related to Kharat are quite serious and the issue has mangled the state's image in the country. "Chakankar's name is linked with the case but former minister Deepak Kesarkar said that there were 40 MLAs who were visiting Kharat. Considering the serious nature of the case, the chief minister should share information of all the people who helped Kharat," Raut said.

Seminar on New Income Tax Law Organized by MCCIA and CA Institute



Coffee Table News Network

Ahilyanagar :The Maratha Chamber of Commerce, Industries and Agriculture (MCCIA), in collaboration with the CA Institute, Ahilyanagar, organized an important seminar on the topic "Income Tax Act 2025: What Every Business Must Know Before April 1, 2026." The event was held at the MCCIA Conference Hall in Ahilyanagar on Friday. The session commenced with inaugural addresses by chief guest CA Abhaykumar Kataria, President of the CA Institute, Ahilyanagar, and Arvind Pargaonkar,

President of MCCIA. The keynote address was delivered by CA Prasad Bhandari, who provided a comprehensive overview of the latest amendments in the new income tax law. He explained how the law has been simplified and highlighted important timelines, audit preparedness, and the correct procedures for filing returns. The seminar aimed to equip local industrialists and business professionals with essential knowledge and practical insights, enabling them to effectively prepare for the upcoming changes in the income tax system.

2 cops arrested for robbing forex delivery exec of \$10K

Coffee Table News Network

Mumbai: Two police constables posted at BKC and Jogeshwari police stations have been arrested and suspended for allegedly kidnapping a forex company delivery executive and robbing him of \$10,000 in Juhu on

Wednesday. Police said the victim had gone to Juhu to deliver foreign currency to a client when he was intercepted by five men, including constables Sandeep Shinde (33) and Gajendra Rajput (40). The accused allegedly forced him into a car, drove to



Dahisar, and robbed him. Shinde was caught on the spot by Dahisar

patrolling officers after they noticed a commotion involving the victim. The remaining four accused managed to flee. "During interrogation, Shinde revealed the involvement of another constable, Rajput, who was later arrested from his residence in

Thane," a Juhu police officer said. Police are currently searching for the other three absconding accused and are yet to recover the stolen cash. Both constables are in police custody, with Shinde remanded for 10 days

Oldest law school mislabels LLB degree in certificates

Coffee Table News Network

Mumbai: In a lapse that has left students both bemused and concerned, the reputed Government Law College (GLC) in Churchgate has issued third-year, second-semester certificates carrying an incorrect expansion of the LLB degree as "Bachelor of Legislative Law," a nomenclature not recognised by the Bar Council of India or Mumbai University, under which the 170-year-old institution operates. 'LLB' stands for the Latin term, 'Legum

Baacaalaurus'. In English, it is referred to as 'Bachelor of Laws'. The certificates were issued just as students were preparing for their fourth-year, second-semester examinations. "We were shocked to receive marksheets that read we had cleared the sixth semester of bachelor of Legislative Law," said a student. "As fourth-year students, we start reaching out to law firms and foreign universities around this time. Legal firms and universities would have felt we are



submitting fake certificates." When contacted, principal Asmita Vaidya initially asked this reporter to check the "full form of LLB on the internet and on the MU website." When informed that it stands for Bachelor of Laws, she said the marksheet format was from the

University of Mumbai. Later she said her college could not have issued a certificate with an erroneous expansion. On Friday, that an office clerk had made the mistake after referring to an online source. "Fresh corrected certificates are being printed and

distributed," she said. By evening, the college issued a notice asking second, third and fourth year students to collect their marksheet "with the title as per university norms". Students who had collected their marksheet on Wednesday were asked to return the erroneous certificates. Retired Supreme Court judge justice Abhay Oka said, "It is very unfortunate... We have to be very cautious as GLC has a name and it has immense fame associated with it. Such mistakes

should be avoided." A senior Bar Council official also said such certificates would not be accepted. Students also pointed to delays in issuance of certificates by GLC, an institution widely recognised as the oldest law school in Asia. Those from the 2027 graduating batch said until about 15 days ago, even first-semester exam certificates were not issued. "It is only today that I have received marksheets of semester 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6," said an eighth-semester student.

New 7MW solar project to provide daytime power to farmers in Deola

Coffee Table News Network

Nashik: A new 7MW solar power project was inaugurated at the Bhaur power substation in Deola taluka of Nashik, under the Maharashtra State Govt's "Mukhyamantri Saur Krushi Vahini Yojana 2.0" (Chief Minister Solar Agricultural Feeder Scheme), to provide an assured daytime electricity supply for agriculture. The project was split into two units, comprising a 4MW facility at Vithewadi and a 3MW facility at Bhaur. Together, the units were set to provide a steady, uninterrupted and assured daytime electricity supply to 1,316 agricultural pumps across the



Vithewadi, Bhaur and Bagdu regions. For years, farmers often had to tend to their crops during late-night hours due to power scheduling. The shift to solar ensured they could work safely and efficiently during the day. During the inauguration, Rajendra Pawar, Director of Human

Resources, highlighted the dual benefits of the scheme, saying it aimed to bolster agricultural development and farmer prosperity while supporting environmental conservation through sustainable energy. "The government's objective of providing daytime electricity is being successfully

realized through these district-wide solar initiatives," Pawar stated. As the Bhaur substation began distributing solar power, officials urged the community to support Mahavitaran by paying electricity bills on time so the utility could maintain high-quality service.

SIT to seek forensic auditor appointment amid large cash transactions in Kharat cases

Coffee Table News Network

Nashik: The special investigating team (SIT), constituted for cases against rape-accused astrologer Ashok Kharat, has decided to seek appointment of a forensic auditor to investigate trails of his cash gains. "Kharat sold gemstones, polished tamarind seeds and gold. He charged large sums in cash for performing pujas and other rituals in India and abroad. He may have invested this money through various means and we need to investigate that," a senior SIT officer said. The officer added, "Some complainants have approached us saying they paid through bank transfers or cheques. In such cases, we can establish the money trail, but it is difficult to trace cash transactions. In such



situation, we have decided to write to the state home department seeking appointment of a forensic auditor." Kharat, a Nashik-based astrologer, was arrested on March 18 in a rape case. Subsequently, several cases were registered against him. The police said Kharat allegedly sexually exploited several women and cheated many people by posing as an astrologer. "He has been accused of exploiting their faith and, in some cases, issuing threats," the police added. Nashik

commissioner of police Sandip Karnik told TOI, "He cheated victims by promising remedies for issues related to health, finances and personal or family problems." The SIT officer said Kharat's financial affairs were handled by two chartered accountants and they have been cooperating with the investigation. "So far, the Nashik police and the SIT have estimated his properties and assets at around Rs41 crore. It is, however, likely to exceed Rs100 crore," the officer said. "Kharat has purchased land at

Mirgaon near Sinnar in Nashik since 2009. The property includes a wedding hall, farmhouse and other facilities. He has also employed staff at the farmhouse, wedding hall and mango orchard," the officer said. Another SIT officer said, "One caller alleged that Kharat sold him a gemstone worth Rs50 for Rs2 lakh, claiming it had healing powers. Another caller said Kharat charged over Rs 1 lakh in cash and gave him a tamarind seed as a blessing. He later verified the quality of the gemstone after news of Kharat's arrest was broadcast." Kharat had also built the Shree Ishaneshwar Temple at Mirgaon village in Sinnar, Nashik district, under the banner of Sri Shivnika Sansthan.

LPG supplies may stop in 3 mths, apply for piped gas

Coffee Table News Network

Mumbai: Food and civil supplies minister Chhagan Bhujbal said on Saturday that LPG supplies may dry up in the next three months in the backdrop of the US-Iran war and there should be an increased focus on switching to piped natural gas (PNG). "We have had a discussion in Delhi with the food and civil supplies minister and petroleum minister. PNG is cheaper and should be used as much as possible. According to their circular, it's possible that LPG supplies will stop in the next three months. By then,



people should apply for PNG connections where it is possible," said Bhujbal. He said in urban areas, where piped gas is available in municipal areas, it should be made mandatory. "In municipalities where PNG is available, it should be made mandatory for the occupation certificate. Like water supply connections are required before occupation

certificates are given," said Bhujbal. He also said permissions should be speeded up for laying new PNG lines. "Permissions are required from an adjoining building which has a PNG connection. They often resist this because they fear their own supply will reduce. Such permissions should be done away with," he said.

FIR filed against 6 CNG pump staff in Maharashtra for assaulting officer

Coffee Table News Network

VASAI: The Pelhar police have registered an FIR against six staff members of a CNG pump located in Dhanivbaug, Nalasopara East, for allegedly assaulting a government officer and overcharging customers. The case has been filed under sections related to assault, causing grievous hurt to a public servant on duty, along with provisions of the Essential Commodities Act and the Petroleum Act. The complainant, Bhagwat Sonar, a Food Supply



Inspection Officer from Vasai, had conducted a raid at the pump on Saturday afternoon following multiple complaints of overcharging. During the inspection on Saturday afternoon, Sonar allegedly found that customers were being charged Rs 30 to Rs 50 extra per refill despite fixed government

rates. According to the FIR, the situation escalated when Sonar questioned the staff about the malpractice. The staff allegedly behaved aggressively, argued with the officer, and disobeyed his instructions. In a video recorded by Sonar, the employees can be seen confronting him in a hostile manner. He

further alleged that his movement was restricted and that he was physically assaulted during the incident. One of the staff members also reportedly helped a colleague escape from the spot, who was allegedly involved in collecting the excess cash from customers. Following the incident, Sonar alerted the Pelhar police, who reached the location and intervened. Speaking on the incident, Sonar said that the raid was conducted after receiving several complaints. He added that the staff appeared to be

taking advantage of rumours about a possible shortage of CNG supply to overcharge customers. They also feel that this overcharging may have been going on for some time. He also confirmed that the action taken report will be shared with the state government with a proposal to cancel the licence of this pump. Police officials confirmed that further investigation is underway to determine the extent of the malpractice and whether more individuals were involved in the racket.

Editorial...

ED controversy

The uneasy relationship between the Union and the states acquired a troubling new dimension this week when the Supreme Court of India sharply questioned the conduct of Mamata Banerjee during an Enforcement Directorate search earlier this year. What the court described as 'not a happy situation' is, in truth, far more serious. It strikes at the delicate constitutional balance between political authority and the rule of law. The controversy stems from an incident in January when the Enforcement Directorate carried out searches at the office of political consultancy firm Indian Political Action Committee in connection with a money-laundering probe. According to the agency, the West Bengal chief minister entered the premises during the search and removed documents and electronic material linked to the investigation. Banerjee has dismissed the allegations as politically motivated, framing the episode as yet another instance of central agencies being used against opposition leaders. Political contestation between the Centre and the states is neither new nor unusual in India's federal democracy. Yet the events described before the court raise a fundamental question: Can an elected executive physically intervene in the functioning of a statutory investigative agency? If the allegation of removing investigative material is even partially true, it represents a disturbing precedent that transcends

partisan politics. The Bench of Justices Pankaj Mithal and N V Anjaria was clearly troubled by the constitutional conundrum that the case presents. The state argued that the ED, being merely a government department, lacked standing to approach the court under Article 32 of the Constitution of India, which protects fundamental rights. If that route is barred, and a petition under Article 226 of the Constitution of India is also unavailable, the judges asked a simple but unsettling question: Who then decides when a central agency is obstructed? The concern is legitimate. Denying every legal pathway risks creating a vacuum in which agencies charged with enforcing the law can be blocked with impunity. At the same time, allowing one arm of government to litigate freely against another could strain the federal framework and invite an avalanche of inter-governmental disputes. Senior advocate Shyam Divan's warning about the dangers of such precedent cannot be dismissed lightly. Yet constitutional balance cannot come at the expense of institutional integrity. If investigators are prevented from performing lawful duties, the matter ceases to be a mere federal disagreement and becomes a question of governance itself. The court's observation that the episode is 'unusual is a polite judicial understatement. One can say it was a strong indictment

Dangerous shift

Coffee Table
News Network

Tulsi Gabbard, now serving as the United States intelligence chief, stood before the Senate this week, her words carried the unmissable weight of a world edging closer to a nuclear precipice. In a stark and unvarnished assessment, she placed Pakistan alongside China, Russia, North Korea and Iran as states whose advancing missile capabilities now threaten the American homeland. The message was clear: The nuclear club is not only expanding in size but in sophistication and the consequences could be catastrophic. Gabbard's testimony underscores a dangerous shift. Nuclear deterrence, once premised on static arsenals and predictable doctrines, is being reshaped by rapidly evolving delivery systems hypersonic glide vehicles, dual-capable missiles, and stealth technologies. These are not only mere instruments of defence but they are tools that compress decision-making time, heighten miscalculation risks and blur the line between conventional and nuclear warfare.

That Pakistan finds itself on this list is both unsurprising and deeply concerning. For decades, its nuclear programme has been viewed through the prism of regional rivalry, particularly with India. Yet Gabbard's remarks elevate the issue from a subcontinental flash-point to a global security threat. The implication is profound: Instability in South Asia no longer remains geographically contained, it reverberates across continents. Equally significant is her observation about the tightening nexus between North Korea, Russia, and China. Such alignments, whether tactical or strategic, risk creating a fragmented global order where nuclear and missile technologies are shared, bartered or co-developed beyond traditional oversight frameworks. This is a world where proliferation is not an exception but a creeping norm. Her assertion that the United States has 'obliterated' Iran's enrichment programme and that Tehran has not resumed it offers a rare note of reassurance. But it also raises uncomfortable questions.

Open spaces are development too

Coffee Table
News Network

The scorching summer sea-son has set in. Soon it would be severe in its impact. The Israel-US vs Iran war, appearing to acquire the shape of World War III, is not on the wane after many weeks. It is threatening India's energy security. While we can hope and pray for the war-led tensions to end sooner than later, the threats related to growing climate change and global warming are here to stay. This is because we Indians are not doing what is expected of us in combating rising temperatures. Last week I happened to visit a unique fruit orchard-cum-urban forest developed by a committed environmentalist near Indore after lots of consistent hard work and sizeable resources. It is not commercial; a husband-wife couple has worked wonders. The small place has proved how climate change can be fought off locally and in summers how native trees, open spaces and grasslands can provide you with what you need perfect environment, water seepage and above all, fruits, vegetables to eat. The



groundwater table there is excellent after land treatment. For some time, I have been battling for the cause of open spaces in cities where they are shrinking fast due to faulty policies and lack of any vision for the next five years, not even fifty years. Keeping open spaces open for the future is also development, is what I am trying to convince the authorities. In the times we are living in India, development defines erecting glitzy malls, massive multi-storied office complexes, metro stations, where they are not required, and if policymakers like NITI Aayog can issue directives to states to consider open spaces as part of development, the future can be secured. Open spaces in highly urbanised areas are

the lifelines of cities. As cities are spreading fast with nomenclatures like Smart Cities, Growth Engines, etc., traditional open spaces of small and big gardens, sports fields, school grounds and common lands are being eaten up by infrastructure lobby in the government and in the private sector. In Indore, of all the institutions, Smart City erected a multi-storied office building where Indore's largest park for children existed. Many IAS officers sit there and decide the future of the city! What do the top-soil open spaces do for mankind? Have you had time to realise it? They have multiple uses in the times of climate change and shrinking cities, hence must be conserved through tough legislation and

political will. Usurping open spaces from the cities (as also from habitable villages) is just like burying old stepwells, killing rivers and water bodies, only to repent in a crisis period. Very soon long queues of people would be witnessed carrying plastic containers awaiting water tankers which would come every alternate day or may be more, as scarcity turns acute towards May end across India. Curiously, many district collectors have issued warnings in March while banning new digging of bore-wells for hand pumps. They are now worried about the groundwater situation but did little any time before. India has this typical systemic problem of rising to address public issues just

before they become urgent. Long term visionary planning is almost always absent in the official set-up. The case I am pleading for open spaces is chiefly to help recharge groundwater through percolation. While groundwater conditions (over-exploitation) are going from bad to worse due to enhanced agriculture, industrialisation and urbanisation needs, besides other increased uses, the government has done little to focus attention on our water resources. The replenishment of aquifers, management of traditional water resources, tending to rivers and wetlands is all being done very casually. Open spaces are vital to any city or village. They help in climate mitigation, water percolation during rainy days, can be used for cultural events such as garba or for small-time local sports like volleyball or football; an open piece of land of about an acre or less can provide many benefits to kids and elderly if better managed with trees, grasses and without any filth around. We have witnessed how in the past 50 years large gardens,

stepwells, ponds and lakes have almost disappeared in front of our eyes. Population pressures and total apathy of city managers have resulted in this alarming condition that has increased temperatures and created water shortages all over. The Central Groundwater Board was constituted in 1986 and since then, despite techno-legal measures, the situation has deteriorated. States like Punjab, Haryana, Delhi, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu and parts of Gujarat are heading towards Day Zero. Cities like Indore are also facing acute drinking water problems and the entire commercial hub depends on the Narmada river. The fad of paving open areas with cement concrete layers and building of CC roads is adding to the misery. If policymakers like NITI Aayog can issue directives to states to consider open spaces as part of development, the future can be secured. Experts say, Mumbai is paved 95 per cent and that is the cause of urban flooding and wastage of rainwater

India can help end war in Iran!

Coffee Table
News Network

The war in Iran has taken unanticipated turns. US President Donald Trump seems to have got stuck in a war that does not appear to end as per his calculation. It is like the war in Ukraine where Russian President Vladimir Putin grossly miscalculated his war objectives and the duration. Trump may have realised that the strength of an army does not accurately reflect on the ground. He may also be reminded of America's defeat in Vietnam and pulling out of Afghanistan without considerable success. He has appealed to his allies and other countries for help. He sought help for keeping the Strait of Hormuz clear and secure, but observers hint at his desperation for ending the war. Washington exhorted a few energy-dependent countries including South Korea, Japan, European NATO members and even China to help in demilitarising Strait of Hormuz, which is under Iranian control. But none of these countries has made any tangible response. In fact, NATO, which has

the US as leading member, has said 'no'. China is most unlikely to extend any help. Other countries including a close friend of Washington, Britain, are prevaricating. The negative or no response is a consequence of unilateral military action taken by Donald Trump against Iran. It is like inviting someone to join the meal while the person inviting is half-way through his lunch. Moreover, the unilateral steps without extensive coalition building and diplomatic footwork, has led European capitals including Berlin and Paris to react that action in Iran is not a NATO mandate. The second option referred above is the conclusion of war that Trump is seeking to avoid the scars of Vietnam, Afghanistan and even Iraq. Although these episodes were not a function of Trump's presidency, history repeats itself. This proverbial historical truth should be piercing Trump's swashbuckling leadership. A few international observers suggest that he may be turning to India for brokering a ceasefire. Trump has riled New Delhi with his rhetoric and unsub-

stantiated repeated claims on his mediation on the India-Pakistan war that lasted for about 48 hours in 2025. However, he maintains that Prime Minister Narendra Modi is his close friend. Some other notable leaders like Finland's President Alexander Stubb have urged India to give a hand citing New Delhi's diplomatic outreach and relations with both Iran and the US-Israel. In an

there are many actors in the Ukrainian drama, it may have been a tall order for Modi to deal with them. But in Iran, there are only three countries at war, notwithstanding the reports about China and Russia actively helping Iran. It may therefore be easier for Modi to mediate. It is worth recalling India's successful mediation in the Korean War (1950-53). This experience

the US, China and North Korea to the negotiating table. New Delhi's neutral position and relations with both sides facilitated communication and confidence-building. Admittedly, the Korean War in reference took place 75 years ago. But the logic and logistics of war and the human proclivities of actors involved remain just the same. So, the Korean experience

consensus. New Delhi can propose humanitarian aid and support for affected civilians, demonstrating India's commitment to regional stability. It can explore economic cooperation and investment opportunities to encourage de-escalation and a ceasefire. India can use the multilateral platforms like the UN, BRICS, the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), even Quad to advocate for diplomacy and dialogue. Prime Minister Modi has already spoken with Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian expressing concern over the escalation of tensions and underscoring dialogue. New Delhi has also maintained communication with other regional leaders, including the UAE, Saudi Arabia and Israel. With some initial hesitation, New Delhi has made up with Iran which has allowed Indian cargo ships to sail through the Strait of Hormuz. As things are hotting up for Trump at home, he may be inclined to take any help to get out of the Iran imbroglio. New Delhi has an opportunity to step in.



interview with Bloomberg, Stubb said global efforts should focus on halting hostilities. He added, "We need a ceasefire... I am wondering if India can actually get involved. I saw foreign minister Jaishankar call for a ceasefire to calm things down." Some of us have been urging Prime Minister Modi to give a hand in ending the war in Ukraine. But since

showcases India's ability to contribute to international conflict resolution and diplomacy. India can leverage its neutral stance and diplomatic relationship. In the Korean War, as a part of armistice talks, India chaired the Neutral-Nations Repatriation Commission (NNRC) overseeing the exchange of prisoners of war. India's diplomatic efforts helped bring

could inform India's approach to mediating the Iran conflict in several ways. India can offer itself as a neutral platform for talks, just as it did in Korea. India's relationships with all three warring parties can help build trust and facilitate communication. India can engage with international partners like EU and Gulf countries to build a

Full scale military operations in Iran?

Coffee Table News Network

US: The United States is preparing for a possible expansion of its military operations in Iran, drawing up plans that range from limited, targeted ground raids to a broader deployment of troops, even as the White House publicly maintains that no decision has been taken. The evolving strategy reflects a widening gap between operational readiness on the ground and cautious messaging from Washington, with officials signalling both restraint and the possibility of escalation within the same breath. According to a report by The Washington Post, Pentagon officials have spent weeks developing options for ground operations that would stop short of a full-scale invasion but could involve a combination of Special Operations forces and conventional infantry. These plans are being positioned as contingency measures, offering flexibility to president Donald Trump as the conflict with Iran enters a potentially volatile phase. At the heart of the

deliberations is a key strategic question: whether the US can achieve its military and political objectives through air power and limited strikes, or whether it will need to commit troops on the ground, even in a restricted capacity. What the Pentagon is planning Officials familiar with the discussions said the military is not currently preparing for a large-scale invasion akin to past conflicts in Iraq or Afghanistan. Instead, the focus is on short-duration, high-impact operations designed to neutralise specific threats. Among the options under consideration are: Targeted raids on Iranian coastal military installations Operations to locate and destroy weapons capable of targeting commercial and military shipping The potential seizure of strategic assets such as Kharg Island, a key Iranian oil export hub in the Persian Gulf One official indicated that such missions would likely span "weeks, not months," while another suggested a possible timeline of "a couple of months," underscoring that any ground engagement would be limited in scope but potentially intense. A



former defence official said the plans are extensive and have been studied in detail. "We've looked at this. It's been war-gamed," the official noted, adding that these are not last-minute preparations but part of a longer strategic assessment, according to the Post. USS Tripoli deployment signals readiness Amid these deliberations, the arrival of the USS Tripoli in the Middle East has added to speculation about possible next steps. According to US central command, the vessel, which serves as the flagship for a contingent of around 3,500 Marines and sailors, reached the region on Saturday. The group includes transport and strike

aircraft, amphibious assault capabilities and tactical assets. Images released by the command show Seahawk helicopters, Osprey aircraft used for troop transport, and F-35 fighter jets on the ship's deck, indicating its readiness for a range of missions, including rapid deployment and amphibious operations. The movement of such assets is being viewed as part of a broader effort to position forces for multiple contingencies. Conflicting signals from Washington Even as military preparations continue, the administration's public stance has remained ambiguous. Trump, speaking earlier this month,

said: "I'm not putting troops anywhere. If I were, I certainly wouldn't tell you, but I'm not putting troops." At the same time, multiple reports have suggested that the administration is considering deploying up to 10,000 additional troops to the Middle East, supplementing forces already stationed across the region. US secretary of state Marco Rubio on Friday reiterated that Washington could meet its objectives without deploying ground forces and emphasised that the conflict is "not going to be a prolonged" one. However, the White House has also issued warnings of escalation. Press

secretary Karoline Leavitt said that if Iran does not scale back its nuclear ambitions and threats, the President is "prepared to unleash hell." She added, "It's the job of the Pentagon to make preparations in order to give the Commander in Chief maximum optionality. It does not mean the President has made a decision." Strategic targets and operational risks Kharg Island has emerged as a focal point in military discussions due to its significance in Iran's oil exports. Capturing or disrupting operations at the island could provide the US with leverage in any future negotiations. However, experts

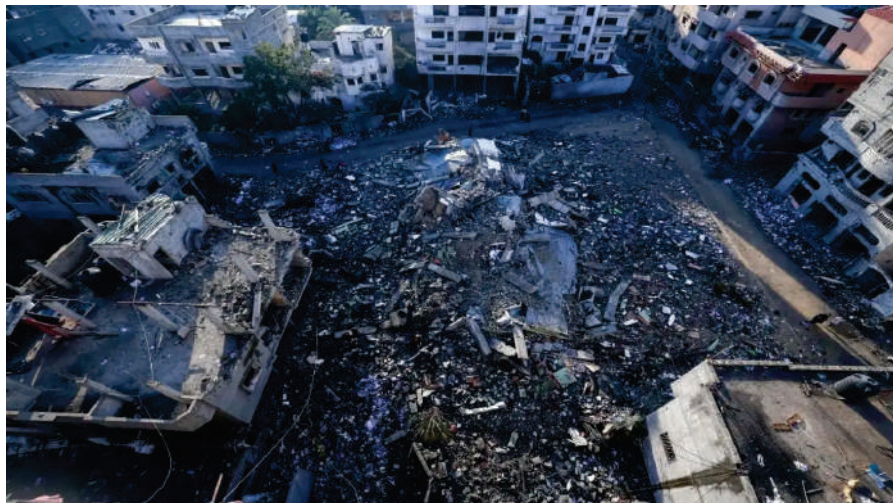
caution that such a move carries substantial risks. The island's confined geography and Iran's capability to deploy drones, missiles and artillery could make it difficult to hold. "I just wouldn't want to be in that small place with Iran's ability to rain down drones and maybe artillery," said Michael Eisenstadt, a defence analyst. He suggested that a more viable approach may involve agile operations, with troops conducting quick raids rather than holding territory for extended periods. "Agility is part of your force protection, if they are moving and doing raids, in and out," he said. Other potential targets include Iranian coastal sites near the Strait of Hormuz, a critical global oil shipping route that has seen heightened tensions in recent months. Mounting risks for US personnel Any ground engagement would expose US forces to a range of threats, including drone strikes, missile attacks, ground fire and improvised explosive devices. Officials said more than 300 American service members have already been wounded in retaliatory strikes

targeting US facilities across at least seven countries in the Middle East. At least 10 of those injuries were reported to be serious. In the past month alone, 13 US troops have been killed in incidents including a plane crash in Iraq, a drone attack in Kuwait and an assault on a base in Saudi Arabia. These developments highlight the potential cost of escalation, even without a formal ground invasion. What lies ahead For now, the Pentagon's plans remain contingent on political approval, with officials emphasising that preparing for multiple scenarios is a standard part of military planning. The current posture suggests that the US is seeking to balance deterrence with restraint - keeping options open without committing to a defined course of action. Whether the situation evolves into limited special operations, a broader troop deployment or a continued reliance on air and naval power will depend on decisions taken in Washington in the coming weeks, as well as Iran's response on the ground.

Iran accuses US and Israel of attacking universities

Coffee Table News Network

US: Iran has accused the United States and Israel of deliberately attacking its academic institutions, claiming that strikes on universities such as Isfahan University of Technology and Tehran University of Science and Technology are part of a larger effort to weaken the country's scientific and cultural foundations. Iran's Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokesperson, Esmail Baqaei, said the attacks were not connected to nuclear concerns but were instead aimed at undermining Iran's intellectual and cultural strength. In a post on X, Baqaei stated, "Isfahan University of Technology and the University of Science and Technology in Tehran are just two among many universities and research centres deliberately attacked by the aggressors during the past 30 days of their illegal war on the Iranian nation." He further claimed that the United States and Israel were attempting to damage Iran's scientific and cultural infrastructure, targeting universities, research centres, historical



monuments, and prominent scientists. He added, "Countering Iran's 'nuclear program' and 'imminent threat' were nothing but vicious pretexts - mere fabrications designed to conceal their real intention." IRGC issues strong warning Following these accusations, Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) issued a stern warning to institutions linked to the US and Israel in the West Asian region. According to a statement broadcast on Telegram by the state-run Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB), the IRGC described universities affiliated with the United States and Israel as "legitimate targets" if retaliation becomes necessary. The statement read, "The American-Zionist aggressor forces have targeted Iranian universities for the umpteenth time by bombing the Tehran University of Science and

Technology," as reported by IANS. It warned that attacks on Iranian universities could be met with similar strikes on Western-linked institutions in the region. The IRGC also cautioned individuals near such campuses to stay at least one kilometre away to protect their safety. The statement said, "The reckless rulers of the White House should know that all the universities of the occupying regime and American universities in the West Asian region are our legitimate targets, so the destruction of two universities in retaliation for the destroyed Iranian universities. We advise all staff, faculty, and students of American universities in the region and residents of their surrounding areas to stay within a one-kilometre radius of the aforementioned universities to protect their lives," as per IANS.

Rising tensions over academic targets This latest development comes amid a backdrop of heightened tensions between Iran and Western nations, with universities and research centres increasingly cited as strategic targets. Tehran views these attacks as a deliberate attempt to harm its intellectual capital, while the IRGC's warnings indicate the possibility of retaliatory measures that could escalate regional instability. Analysts note that targeting educational and research institutions is unusual in conventional conflicts and signals a shift toward more symbolic and psychological warfare. As of now, both the United States and Israel have not publicly responded to Iran's allegations. The coming days are likely to see close monitoring of developments in West Asia, especially near American and Israeli-linked institutions.

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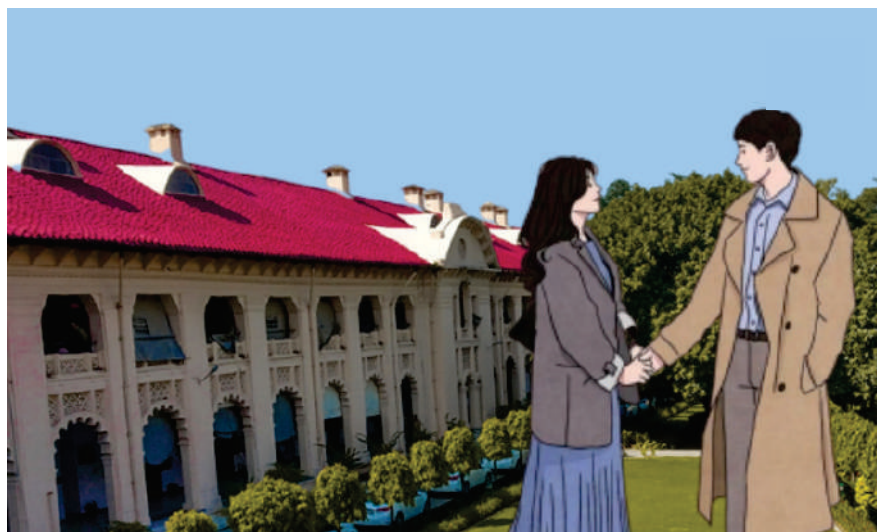
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Married Persons Cannot Enter Into Live-In Relationship Without Obtaining Divorce: Allahabad HC Refuses Protection

Coffee Table
News Network

A single judge of the Allahabad High Court on March 20 observed that an individual who is already married and has a living spouse cannot legally be permitted to enter into a live-in relationship with a third person without seeking a divorce from the earlier spouse. A bench of Justice Vivek Kumar Singh made this observation while dismissing a writ petition filed by a couple (both married to different partners) seeking mandamus directing the respondents not to interfere with their peaceful life and to provide protection. It was the case of the petitioners that they were living together as husband and wife and had an apprehension of a life threat from the respondents. The State, however, opposed the plea, as it was argued that both petitioners were already married and their act was illegal as they had not obtained a decree of divorce from a competent court. Taking into account the facts of the case, the Court, at the outset, noted that in a marriage or live-in relationship, there must be two consenting adult human beings, and the concepts of gotra, caste, and religion are left behind. The Court observed that no one, not even parents, has the right to interfere in the personal liberty of two adults. Justice Singh, however, explicitly clarified that the Right to Freedom or Right to Personal Liberty is not an absolute or unfettered right and that the freedom of one person ceases where another person's statutory right begins. Importantly, the single judge stressed that a spouse has a statutory right to the company of their counterpart, and that right cannot be deprived for the sake of personal liberty.



The HC added that the freedom of one person cannot encroach on or outweigh the legal right of another person. "If the petitioners are already married and have their spouse alive, he/she cannot be legally permitted to enter into live-in relationship with a third person without seeking divorce from the earlier spouse. He/she first has to obtain the decree of divorce from the court of competent jurisdiction before solemnizing marriage or entering into living in a relationship out of their legal marriage," the bench further remarked. On the question of relief to the petitioners, the bench observed that a mandamus can be issued only if the petitioner has a legal right to the performance of a legal duty by the party against whom the mandamus is sought, and such right must be subsisting on the date of the petition. However, the Court opined that the petitioners have no legal right to protection on the facts of the present case inasmuch as the protection sought may amount to protection against the commission of an offence under Section 494/495 IPC. "It is well settled law that writ of mandamus can not be issued contrary to law or to defeat a statutory provision including penal provision. The petitioners do not have legally protected and judicially enforceable subsisting right to ask for

mandamus...this Court is not inclined to issue any writ, order or direction in the nature of mandamus for protection to the petitioners who are in a live-in relationship without obtaining decree of divorce from competent court as mentioned above" the bench noted. Thus, refusing to issue the writ, the Court disposed of the petition with the observation that if the petitioners are subjected to violence, they may approach the Superintendent of Police with a detailed application. Significantly, a perusal of various orders passed by Justice Singh reveals a consistent approach. Relying on this exact legal reasoning, his bench has repeatedly denied police protection to live-in couples where either one or both partners are already married to someone else. Interestingly, in stark contrast to this Single Judge order, a Division Bench of the High Court, just five days after passing of this particular order, observed that there is no offence if a married man lives with an adult in a live-in relationship with the other person's consent. Stressing that morality and law must remain separate, the Division Bench of Justice JJ Munir and Justice Tarun Saxena stated that social opinions and moral views will not dictate the Court's actions when protecting citizens'

rights. This contrasting observation was made while the Division Bench was hearing a separate petition seeking protection for a live-in couple allegedly facing threats from the woman's family. Finding that a prima facie case was made out, the Court admitted the petition and issued notices to the respondents. It granted the state counsel two weeks' time to file a counter-affidavit. The bench also granted immediate relief to the couple (an 18-year-old woman and a married man) and directed that, until further orders, the petitioners shall not be arrested in the criminal case registered under Section 87 of the BNS at Police Station Jaitipur in Shahjahanpur district. To ensure their absolute protection, the Division Bench restrained the informant and all members of the woman's family from causing any harm to the parties in life or limb. The bench further directed that the family members shall not enter the parties' matrimonial home or contact them directly, through any electronic means of communication, or through the agency of others. The Superintendent of Police, Shahjahanpur, shall be personally responsible for ensuring the safety and security of the petitioners, the bench added.

Disabled Employee Shifted To New Cadre Cannot Claim Seniority Based On Previous Service

Coffee Table
News Network

The Bombay High Court has held that a disabled employee who is shifted to another post or cadre under Section 47 of the Disabilities Act cannot claim seniority in the new cadre based on past service in the previous post. The Court observed that while the statute protects continuity of pay and service benefits, it does not permit disturbance of the existing seniority of employees already working in the cadre to which the disabled employee is shifted. Justice M.W. Chandwani was hearing a writ petition filed by an employee challenging his placement at the bottom of the seniority list after being absorbed as an Extension Officer (Panchayat) following disability acquired during service. The petitioner, initially appointed as a Lab Technician in 2002, suffered low vision in 2010 and, pursuant to earlier directions of the Court, was absorbed in 2016 into a different cadre with the same pay scale and service benefits. The dispute arose when a provisional and later final seniority list for promotion was published, excluding the petitioner. The petitioner contended that his earlier service as a Lab Technician ought to have been considered for determining seniority



and eligibility for promotion, relying on Section 47 of the Disabilities Act. The Court examined the scheme of Section 47 and clarified that it operates in two distinct parts: first, protecting an employee from discharge or reduction in rank upon acquiring disability, and second, ensuring that promotion is not denied solely on the ground of disability. It held that the provision ensures continuity of employment and pay, but does not confer any right to claim seniority in a different cadre based on past service. The Court distinguished between "reduction in rank" and "reduction in seniority," observing that while the former affects status and pay and is prohibited, the latter pertains to inter se placement within a cadre and impacts promotional prospects. It held that preservation of pay and service

benefits does not imply automatic carry-forward of seniority into a different cadre. It further held that granting such a benefit would adversely affect employees already working in the cadre, leading to discrimination and disruption of settled seniority positions. The legislative intent of Section 47, the Court observed, is to protect the disabled employee without prejudicing the rights of others in the organisation. It observed: in the process of shifting a disabled employee in view of the mandate of Section 47 of the Act of 1995, seniority of the employees who are already in that cadre where the disabled employee is being shifted cannot be disturbed. Therefore, the contention that the previous service of the petitioner on the post of Lab Technician be counted for the

purpose of determining his seniority in the cadre of Extension Officer (Panchayat) cannot be accepted." On facts, the Court noted that the petitioner had sought transfer to the new post, accepted the condition of fresh appointment, and raised the issue of seniority only after several years when the process of promotion commenced. It also found that the petitioner did not fulfil the minimum service requirement in the new cadre for promotion and was not denied promotion merely on account of disability. Accordingly, the High Court dismissed the writ petition, holding that past service in the previous post cannot be counted for determining seniority in the new cadre after such absorption.

Delhi High Court Warns Against Misuse Of Perjury Pleas To 'Arm-Twist' Opponents, Dismisses S.340 Cr PC Application

Coffee Table
News Network

The Delhi High Court has cautioned against the growing misuse of perjury proceedings, observing that applications under Section 340 CrPC are increasingly being filed to "arm-twist" opponents and delay trials, rather than to address genuine instances of false evidence. Justice Subramonium Prasad made the observation while dismissing an application seeking initiation of perjury proceedings against a defendant in a family property dispute. The case arose out of a suit for partition and rendition of accounts among siblings following the death of their father. During the course of proceedings, the plaintiffs moved an application under Section 340 CrPC

alleging that the defendant had made false statements on oath and filed forged documents in affidavits disclosing inherited assets. The Court noted that the allegations were primarily based on claimed inconsistencies between the affidavits and the material on record. However, it held that such contradictions, by themselves, do not meet the threshold required to initiate perjury proceedings. "The Plaintiff No.1 has only pointed out at certain contradictions between the affidavits and the material on record. In the opinion of this Court, the allegations per se cannot attract the ingredients under Section 340 of the CrPC which prescribes for initiation of an inquiry into an offence under Section 195(1)(b) of the

CrPC. Section 195(1)(b) of the CrPC deals with prosecution of offences relating to documents given in evidence, i.e., the offences punishable under Section 193 to 196, 199, 200, 205 to 211, 228, 463, 471, 475, 476 of the IPC. In the opinion of this Court, these offences are not made out at this juncture," it said. The Court added that falsity of the statements made in the affidavits will have to be established in the present trial. It opined that Plaintiffs can always initiate proceedings under Section 340 CrPC if material surfaces during the course of the trial. "This Court is not inclined to initiate parallel proceedings one under Section 340 of the CrPC and one under the present suit for ascertaining the correctness or otherwise of the

additional affidavits filed in this Court at this juncture," it said. Before parting, the Court remarked, "This Court is observing that now a practice has been made by the parties of filing applications under Section 340 of the CrPC only with an idea of arm-twisting the other side or putting pressure and also to delay the trial...The instant application is filed only with an intent to derail this Court from proceeding further with the matter and also to harass the Defendant No. 1." As such, it dismissed the application. The main suit will now proceed before the Court on August 04. Appearance: Plaintiff-in-person; Ms. Shruti Kapur, Advocate for D-1 Case title: Nisha Chandola & Anr v. Manoj Sharma And Anr Case no.: CS(OS) 246/2023

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Vijaypat Singhanian passes away: CM Fadnavis



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News Network

Mumbai: Tributes poured in following the demise of Dr. Vijaypat Singhanian with Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis and deputy CM Eknath Shinde expressing grief. Vijaypat Singhanian, the former chairman of the Raymond Group passed away in Mumbai. He was 87. Singhanian, a recipient of the Padma Bhushan, was widely recognised for his contributions to the textile industry and his role in building Raymond into a globally known brand. Vijaypat Singhanian led the Raymond Group for nearly two decades until 2000. He was also a passionate aviator and held a world record for achieving the highest altitude in a hot air balloon. In addition, the Indian Air Force appointed him as an Honorary Air Commodore in 1994, and he was named Sheriff of Mumbai in 2006. Fadnavis pays tribute Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis expressed

deep sorrow over Singhanian's passing. In a post on X, he said Singhanian's contributions to industry, philanthropy and entrepreneurship would continue to inspire future generations. He also noted that the iconic Raymond tagline, "The Complete Man", reflected values of quality, excellence and innovation. CM Fadnavis wrote on X, Deeply saddened to know about the demise of former Chairman of Raymond Group, Padma Bhushan Dr. Vijaypat Singhanian ji. His contribution to the textile industry, his philanthropy and adventurous spirit will continue to inspire generations together. 'Raymond - The Complete Man' is not just a tagline we all grew up with, but has set many trends - right from quality and perfection in entrepreneurship to communication and brand. I offer my humble tributes to the man who set the legacy called 'Raymond' Group. And deepest condolences to his family, friends and admirers.

Amit Shah attacks Mamata Banerjee, says she plays 'victim card' ahead of polls

Coffee Table
News Network

Union home minister Amit Shah on Saturday attacked Trinamool Congress (TMC) chief Mamata Banerjee for playing the "victim card" whenever an election approaches, alleging she created an imaginary monster out of the electoral roll Special Intensive Revision (SIR). Mamata has always played the politics of the victim card. Sometimes she breaks her leg, ties a bandage on her head, falls ill, and abuses the Election Commission. But the people of Bengal have understood her politics of playing the victim card," Shah said in Kolkata as he released a 40-page "charge sheet" attacking the TMC over infiltration, appeasement politics, women's security, corruption, and deterioration of law and order ahead of April 23 and April 29 assembly polls.



Shah said SIR is being held across the country. "Except for Bengal, in no other state did judicial officers have to be deployed. What is the reason?" He said SIR was also held in election-bound Tamil Nadu and Kerala, but no cases were filed in the courts. "But what happened in Bengal that the Supreme Court had to deploy judicial officers? Mamata Banerjee has to reply to the people on this. Your district magistrates did not work fearlessly. That is

why the Supreme Court had to deploy judicial officers." He said the only reason for opposing the SIR is that she wants to shield the infiltrators and return to power for another term, so she can allow more for the next five years. "But your dream will never be fulfilled," Shah said. Shah promised to "flush out" infiltrators from across the country, calling it the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)'s commitment and agenda. "Let Mamata

allege anything." When questioned about the spate of attacks on Bengali-speaking migrant workers in BJP-ruled states, Shah slammed Banerjee for diluting the difference between them and undocumented Bangladeshi infiltrators. "Mamata has been skilfully doing away with the difference between Bengali-speaking people and Bangladeshis. The infiltrators from Bangladesh also speak in Bengali. I

want to assure the people of Bengal that no one will harass the original inhabitants of Bengal. They need not worry. But this does not mean that illegal Bangladeshi infiltrators would be given shelter here." He said the people of Bengal have understood the tricks she plays. "Try to come up with some new tricks which might help to create an illusion. The people of Bengal would not be deceived by her old tricks." The TMC released a "counter-charge sheet" attacking Shah over Manipur violence, blasts in Delhi, the 2024 terrorist attack in Jammu and Kashmir's Pahalgam, the stopping of funds to West Bengal, and attacks on Bengali-speaking people, etc. "Shah releasing a charge sheet is equivalent to a judge and a criminal sharing the same

chair. A report by your own department states that Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, and Rajasthan, all three BJP-ruled states, top the list of crimes against women," said state minister Bratya Basu. Basu added that the Centre has stopped all funds to West Bengal. "He [Shah] is saying that demography has changed in West Bengal. Do they need a rerun of Gujarat [riots] here too to fix the demography?" Basu said Shah never uttered a single word on Manipur. "The entire nation is seeing what happens when a clown sits on the judge's chair," said Basu. TMC lawmaker Mahua Moitra accused Shah of labelling Bengalis as Bangladeshis. "You have declared every Bengali a criminal. You have insulted us, deprived us, criminalised us, and harassed us," she said

Delhi high court protects Gautam Gambhir's personality rights

Coffee Table
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The Delhi high court restrained entities from using Gautam Gambhir's persona without his consent and directed them to take down the infringing content. The Delhi high court has protected the personality rights of Gautam Gambhir, head coach of the Indian men's cricket team, restraining entities from using his persona without his consent. A bench of Justice Jyoti Singh in a March 25 order, released on Saturday, observed that Gambhir is

among India's most decorated cricketers, and that unauthorised content and merchandise deriving commercial value from his considerable goodwill and reputation amounts to a violation of his personality and publicity rights. The court directed the entities to take down the infringing content within 36 hours. "...[Gambhir] has represented India in 242 international matches across Tests, ODIs, and T20Is and is most remembered for his



match-winning innings in the 2007 ICC World Twenty20 Final and 2011 ICC Cricket World Cup Final..." Justice Singh said after retirement, Gambhir transitioned into a different role of mentorship and coaching and was appointed head coach in July 2024. "...under his

stewardship, India won the ICC Champions Trophy, 2025, Asia Cup, 2025, and ICC Men's T20 World Cup, 2026," the court said. Gambhir sought protection of personality rights, citing a coordinated campaign involving digital impersonation, AI-generated deepfakes, and unauthorised commercial exploitation of his persona. He said there has been a sharp rise in fabricated digital content relating to him across platforms

such as Instagram, X, YouTube, and Facebook since 2025. Gambhir sought protection of personality rights, citing a coordinated campaign involving digital impersonation, AI-generated deepfakes, and unauthorised commercial exploitation of his persona. He said there has been a sharp rise in fabricated digital content relating to him across platforms such as Instagram, X, YouTube, and Facebook since 2025. Gambhir said multiple accounts

used AI tools, including face-swapping and voice-cloning technologies, to create realistic videos falsely portraying him as making statements he never made. He referred to a fabricated "resignation announcement" that reportedly garnered over 2.9 million views. Gambhir said e-commerce platforms were facilitating the sale of posters and merchandise bearing his name and likeness without authorisation..

PM Modi lists GOBARdhan, biofuels among long-term measures amid fuel crunch

Coffee Table
News Network

In a meeting with chief ministers, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday called on states to accelerate alternative energy sources like biofuels, solar energy, GOBARdhan initiative as part of move to diversify fuel sources. The meeting was called by the prime minister amid the ongoing West Asia conflict, that has threatened global oil supply and led to supply disruption. PM Modi called upon states to work as "Team India" even as he recalled team effort

during Covid-19 pandemic. During the meeting, PM Modi urged states to focus on immediate response and long-term preparedness even as India geared up for potential impact of the ongoing conflict in West Asia. "Prime Minister called for a parallel focus on immediate response and long-term preparedness. He urged States to accelerate efforts in promoting alternative energy sources such as biofuels, solar energy, GOBARdhan initiative, electric mobility, as well as expanding piped



natural gas connections," a government statement read. While PM Modi highlighted the importance of enhancing domestic exploration of oil and natural gas, listing biofuels and natural gas, one of the lesser-known schemes that caught attention was

GOBARdhan or Galvanizing Organic Bio-Agro Resources Dhan. Meanwhile, the Prime Minister stressed the crucial role of states in implementing decisions, calling for constant centre-state coordination, timely information sharing, and joint decision-

making to ensure swift and aligned responses. He said that efforts undertaken in recent years to strengthen the country's economic and supply systems are proving beneficial in the current context. He further said that India has prior experience in dealing with similar global disruptions. He also recalled the collective response during the Covid-19 pandemic, when the Centre and States worked together as "Team India" to mitigate the impact on supply chains, trade, and daily life.

PM Modi speaks with Saudi Arabia crown prince, discusses West Asia conflict



Coffee Table
News Network
Prime Minister Narendra Modi spoke to his Saudi Arabian counterpart and Crown Prince HRH Prince Mohammed bin Salman on Saturday and discussed the war in West Asia which has

been going on for over a month. Modi said that during the call, he reiterated that India condemns attacks on energy infrastructure of the West Asia region. "Spoke with Crown Prince and PM of Saudi Arabia, HRH Prince Mohammed

bin Salman and discussed the ongoing conflict in West Asia. I reiterated India's condemnation of attacks on regional energy infrastructure," Modi wrote in a post on

TOI journalist gets Ramnath Goenka award for civic reportage

Coffee Table
News Network

PUNE Sandip Dighe, a special correspondent with The Times of India, Pune, was presented with the Ramnath Goenka Excellence in Journalism Award in the Prakash Kardaley Memorial Award for Civic Journalism category on Friday. Vice-President CP Radhakrishnan presented the award to Dighe for the year 2024 at a function in New Delhi. Dighe received the award



for his extensive reportage in 2024 on irregularities in Old Grant Bungalows in the Pune and Khadki cantonment board areas. His reports highlighted

discrepancies like the use of these residential properties for commercial activities, unauthorised constructions and, in some cases, the sale of bungalows to

builders, violating orders for a no-objection certificate from the competent defence authority. He also reported on several civic issues afflicting both cantonment areas. The series of reports drew the attention of the Directorate General of Defence Estates, the state Inspector General of Registration, and Army authorities who then took appropriate action to stop such transactions.

Priest on scooter killed by BEST e-bus on SCLR in Mumbai's Kurla

Coffee Table
News Network

MUMBAI: A 55-year-old priest on a scooter lost his life in a mishap involving an electric BEST bus on the Santacruz-Chembur Link Road (SCLR) in Kurla on Thursday afternoon. The deceased, identified as Trivikram Shripad Acharya, was a resident of Ganesh Krupa building in Nehru Nagar, Kurla West. According to the Kurla police, the accident took place on Thursday around 12:30 pm. The BEST bus rammed into



his scooter and he fell. The rear wheels of the bus thereafter reportedly ran over him, resulting in his death on the spot. Police said the bus driver, identified as Kamlesh Kumar Baranlal (42), was taken into custody and

booked for causing death by negligence. Police said prima facie they have ruled out a case of drunk driving. The driver was medically examined to determine whether he was driving under the influence of alcohol at the time of the

accident. Kurla police stated that the process of registering a formal case in connection with the incident was underway, and further investigation is in progress. In Oct 2025, a 22-year-old Ghatkopar resident had died after he lost control of a scooter and crashed into a road divider on SCLR at Tilak Nagar. Several motorists using the extended 3.8km flyover of the SCLR have complained about potholes and uneven stretches, which they said are responsible for accidents.

Clash of claims: TMC rebuts Amit Shah's document with counterattack chargesheet

Coffee Table
News Network

NEW DELHI: The Trinamool Congress (TMC) released its own "chargesheet" against the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) within hours of Union home minister Amit Shah unveiling a similar document targeting the Mamata Banerjee government. The TMC's counter-document questioned women's safety in BJP-ruled states and accused the party of selective outrage, setting the stage for a sharp war of narratives in the run-up to polling. The chargesheet turned the spotlight back on the BJP, arguing that issues such as law and order and women's safety were equally pressing in states governed by the saffron party. TMC leaders framed their chargesheet as a rebuttal to what they described as politically motivated allegations, while positioning the BJP's campaign as an



attempt to deflect from its own governance record elsewhere in the country. Earlier in the day, Amit Shah, addressing a press conference in Kolkata, released the BJP's "chargesheet" against the TMC government, accusing it of presiding over "15 years of fear, corruption and violence". Framing the election as a choice between "fear and trust", Shah alleged that the Mamata Banerjee-led administration had institutionalised a politics of

intimidation and misinformation. He further claimed that West Bengal had become a hub for criminal syndicates and a "graveyard for industry", while linking the state's law and order situation to broader concerns of national security. Shah also flagged infiltration as a key issue, asserting that Bengal remained the primary route for illegal entry into the country after stricter controls in neighbouring Assam. The senior BJP leader highlighted the party's organisational push in the state,

praising Leader of Opposition Suwendu Adhikari for raising issues such as economic distress, disorder and alleged governance failures during his statewide outreach. West Bengal is scheduled to vote in two phases on April 23 and April 29, covering 294 constituencies, with counting set for May 4. The duelling chargesheets are expected to form a central plank of campaign rhetoric as both parties vie to influence voters in a closely watched electoral contest.

Tamil Nadu assembly polls: DMK gives seats to more than 60 fresh faces, retains most ministers

Coffee Table
News Network

CHENNAI: DMK allocated more than one third of its constituencies to fresh faces in the upcoming assembly election and retained most incumbent ministers. Chief minister M K Stalin released the list of candidates for 164 constituencies in which DMK is contesting directly. Among the list, more than 60 candidates are fresh faces. Among the ministers, even senior ministers such as water resources minister Duraimurugan, who was ill, rural development minister I Periyasamy, revenue minister K K



S S R Ramachandran and so on were retained. Three ministers such as human resources minister N Kayalvizhi Selvaraj, dairy minister T Mano Thangaraj and handlooms minister R Gandhi were denied seats. In Chennai, DMK has retained most of its candidates except Egmore, T Nagar, Anna Nagar, Royapuram and Villivakkam. Chief

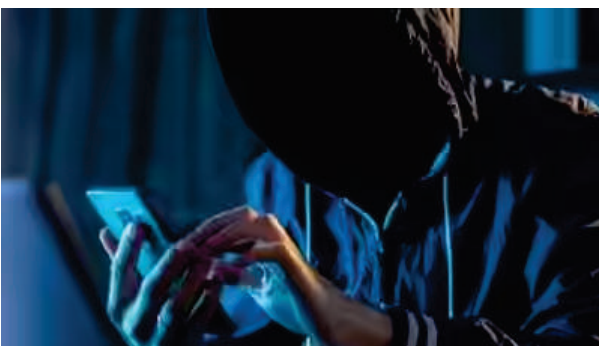
minister M K Stalin, deputy CM Udhayanidhi Stalin, health minister Ma Subramanian, HR and CE minister P K Sekarbabu and MSME minister T M Anbarasan have retained their seats. Among them 164 candidates, 125 candidates are graduates. Among them, 15 were doctors, 17 were engineers, 29 were lawyers and seven were Ph.D

holders. Even those who joined DMK recently from AIADMK were also given seats. Three times CM O Panneerselvam was given a seat in Bodinayakanur, Paul Manoj Pandian in Alankulam and former minister R Vaithilingam in Oranathanadu. Meanwhile, DMK also released the list of constituencies in which its alliance parties are contesting. DMK gets Virudhachalam, where DMK general secretary Premallatha Vijayakant is likely to contest, and Virudhunagar, where Premallatha's son Vijaya Prabhakaran is likely to contest.

Maldives consul files case in Mumbai over international credit card fraud

Coffee Table
News Network

MUMBAI: Honorary consul for Maldives in Mumbai, Bobby Mohanty (57), filed a complaint with the Juhu police on Wednesday alleging that cyber fraudsters used a credit card he held, issued by a foreign bank, to carry out a fund transfer of Rs 4.59 lakh in Jakarta in Oct 2025. Mohanty alleged that despite timely alerts and complaints to the bank, no action was initiated. He further alleged that the bank harassed him with finance charges and penalties for transactions not executed, which he said tarnished his CIBIL score credentials. Juhu police registered an FIR against an unknown person based on Mohanty's complaint. Mohanty has asked police to interrogate bank staff whose role he suspected in his card data being



compromised. The fraud occurred in Indonesia when Mohanty was on board a Delhi-Mumbai flight. "The transaction was immediately reported to the bank by my wife, Sanghamitra Mohanty, upon receipt of the email alert, and subsequently reconfirmed by me upon landing at Mumbai airport, with clear instructions to block the transaction," Mohanty said.

The bank failed to act, he said. "Despite timely reporting and the suspicious nature of a high-value international transaction, the bank failed to verify,

flag, or halt the transaction," Mohanty told TOI. A Juhu police officer said police have filed a case for cheating and forgery and under the IT Act for identity theft and impersonation against an unknown person. The cyber team will summon bank staff to get more details. "Mohanty has submitted the flight ticket which he used in Oct to fly to Delhi along with the complaints he has submitted to the RBI ombudsman. The cyber team is gathering details from the bank to find out why they did not flag off the transactions when complaints were

made and they were asked to block them," the officer said. Mohanty said after repeated correspondence with the bank, it reversed 50% of the transaction amounting to Rs 2.29 lakh about 40 days after the incident, which he said was an admission of fraud. "Possibility of internal involvement and collusion of employees with external fraudsters cannot be ruled out and warrants an independent investigation," he said. "Correspondence has been made with the RBI ombudsman and the RBI Governor, but in vain. The bank has wrongfully fastened liability on the cardholder, including levying charges on the disputed amount and issuing threats of adverse reporting to CIBIL for non-payment," he said.

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