

PM Modi launches Karmayogi Sadhana Week, stresses 'Nagrik Devo Bhav'

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Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday underlined the mantra "Nagrik Devo Bhav" and highlighted the importance of citizen-centric public service, while inaugurating Karmayogi Sadhana Week 2026. Addressing the inaugural session through video conferencing, PM Modi said, "It is essential to update public services as the country advances in this changing world. Karmayogi Sadhana Saptah is an important link in this attempt. The main mantra of the principle of governance we are working on is 'Nagrik Devo Bhav'." He congratulated people

for their participation in the event, stating, "Many congratulations and best wishes to all of you of Karmayogi Sadhana Week. In this era of the 21st century, rapidly changing systems, a rapidly changing world, and our India advancing at the same pace between them. For this, it is necessary to continuously update public service in accordance with the times." The Prime Minister noted that Karmayogi Sadhana Week serves as a critical initiative for enhancing the capability of every government employee. "Karmayogi Sadhana Week is an important link in that very endeavour. You are all familiar with the fact that the

principle of governance we are advancing today is fundamentally guided by the mantra 'Citizen is God'. With the spirit embodied in this mantra, the focus today is on making public service more capable and more sensitive towards citizens," he said. The PM also urged officials to focus on strengthening their own capacities rather than limiting others, adding, "Another major principle of success is to enlarge your own line rather than shortening others'. In our country, since independence, many kinds of institutions have been working with different focuses. But there was a need for an institution whose focus is



capacity building, which enhances the capability of every employee, every karma yogi working in the government." In a first-of-its-kind national initiative, the Capacity Building Commission launched Sadhana Saptah, 2026, from April 2-8, marking one of the largest

collaborative capacity building efforts across India's civil services ecosystem. The initiative coincides with two important milestones: the Foundation Day of the Capacity Building Commission and the completion of five years of Mission Karmayogi, an official

release from Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions read. Sadhana Saptah stands for Strengthening Adaptive Development and Humane Aptitude for National Advancement. The initiative will bring together Central Ministries,

Departments and Organisations (MDOs), States and Union Territories, and over 250 Civil Services Training Institutions (CSTIs) in a shared national capacity building effort. Civil servants across the country will participate in structured capacity-building programmes designed to build competencies required for achieving the vision of Viksit Bharat 2047. For the first time, capacity building activities across ministries, states, and training institutions are being aligned within a common thematic framework. While earlier efforts focused primarily on individual ministries or departments, Sadhana Saptah expands participation

across the broader civil services ecosystem, creating a shared learning movement at a national scale, a release read. From North to South, civil servants across levels, from early career officers to senior leadership, will engage with common themes that support responsive, citizen-centric governance. The week is anchored around the Three Sutras: Technology, Tradition and Tangible Outcomes. Learning activities include webinars, workshops, Samuhik Charcha sessions, and curated courses on the iGOT Karmayogi platform, available in multiple Indian languages, including Hindi, a release added.

Year-long Events Planned for Mahatma Phule's 200th Birth Anniversary

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Mumbai, Date 01: The period from April 11, 2026 to April 10, 2027 is being celebrated as the bicentenary birth anniversary of Krantisurya Mahatma Jyotirao Phule. Stating that this bicentenary year is an opportunity to effectively take his work and thoughts to the next generation, Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis directed to make an annual calendar of various programs based on his work and organize programs successfully throughout the year. Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis was speaking at a meeting of the committee formed to celebrate the bicentenary birth anniversary of Krantisurya Mahatma Jyotirao Phule organized in the ministry. The meeting was attended by Deputy Chief Minister Eknath Shinde,



Deputy Chief Minister Sunetra Ajit Pawar, Food and Civil Supplies Minister Chhagan Bhujbal, Cultural Affairs Minister Adv. Ashish Shelar, Social Justice Minister Sanjay Shirsat, Imv Bahujan Welfare Minister Atul Save, School Education Minister Dadaji Bhushe, Rural Development Minister Jayakumar Gore, Women and Child Development Minister Aditi Tatkare etc.

were present. Chief Minister Fadnavis said that the department attached to the formed committee should organize at least two to three programs. Such motivational programs should be planned by April 15. The Zilla Parishad School in Khanwadi, the native village of Mahatma Jyotirao Phule (Tal. Purandar, District Pune), which preserves his memory, has been transformed. This

bicentennial year should begin with the inauguration of the Khanwadi Zilla Parishad School with CBSC education and modern facilities on April 11. For this, a sub-committee should be formed under the formed ministerial committee to successfully implement the programs throughout the year and monitor these programs. The literary heritage based on the life and work of Mahatma

Jyotirao Phule should be translated into multiple languages. So that literature in their language is available to the citizens of the respective languages. Private schools should also be included in the programs organized by the School Education Department. Each minister should consolidate the instructions given by the department and take necessary action on it. At this time, the concerned minister gave information about the planning of his department. He also gave instructions regarding the programs to be held on the occasion of this bicentennial year. Principal Secretary of the General Administration Department Atul Patne gave information in the meeting.

Commercial LPG, jet fuel prices increased



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NEW DELHI: State-run oil companies on Wednesday more than doubled aviation turbine fuel prices and raised commercial LPG by 10.4%, before the government stepped in to limit the ATF increase to 8.6% for scheduled domestic airlines — which the government said shields passengers from an immediate fare shock while leaving open the possibility of further hikes. ATF prices are revised monthly by state-run oil marketing companies against international

benchmarks. Accordingly, they initially raised ATF 114.55%, from 96,638 per kilolitre to 2,07,341 per KL in Delhi, tracking the surge in global energy costs following the near-closure of the Strait of Hormuz. OMCs also raised commercial LPG prices by 195.50 to 2,078.50 per 19-kg cylinder in Delhi on Wednesday. It is the second hike in under a month: prices were raised by 114.50 on March 7, taking the cumulative increase to about 17.5% in four weeks. Hotels, restaurants and hostels, which rely on commercial cylinders, bear the full cost of

both increases. On March 7, continued on →10 IndiGo raises fuel charge: 600 to apply on Del-Mumbai flight Neha LM Tripathi Jet fuel prices were hiked by 8.56% on Wednesday, with IndiGo becoming the first to pass on the increase by announcing new fuel surcharges of up to 950 per sector on domestic routes and 10,000 on long-haul international flights for all new bookings from April 2. Previously, the airline had a flat 425 fuel charge on domestic flights and up to 2,300 on international flights.

PNG demand surges but connections lag

While enquiries rose fourfold in March, installations have been delayed by infra work, encroachments

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MUMBAI: As Mumbai continues to grapple with an acute LPG shortage, the focus is now also on PNG, or piped natural gas. Residents across the city say they are facing prolonged delays in securing PNG connections, despite follow-ups and, in many cases, infrastructure already being in place. In March, enquiries for new connections jumped fourfold. Unlike LPG, domestic PNG supply has suffered no disruption after the West Asia war broke out, and the state government has mandated that every Mumbaiite secure a PNG connection where infrastructure is available. The

appeal of PNG also lies in its reliability and convenience — no booking, no waiting and, until now, no shortage for domestic consumers. In Chembur, though, Ashish Arora, who moved into Le Jardin building about a month ago, says although the building has a PNG connection, connections have yet to be given to individual flats. Mahanagar Gas Limited (MGL) told him the process would take 90 days. "I was surprised. It is work that can be done in an hour," Arora said. In Sion-Koliwada, residents of Owners Colony, a cluster of 29 bungalows, say they applied for PNG in early February, drawn by its cost and safety

advantages. Despite the infrastructure being in place, they remain unconnected. "MGL has told us it will be done in 25 days. When the pipes are in place, why should it take so long," said Nitesh Ahuja, 32, an advocate who lives in the colony. In a Bandra building, progress has stalled for more than a year. "There's a PNG line at our building's gate, and pipes have been installed right up to our flats but connections have not been given. All this while, MGL did not tell us why the work stopped but, yesterday, we received a call claiming it would be resumed," a resident said. At Bona Vision Heights in Vakola, 35 flats and around 95 residents



are in limbo. Rone Menezes, 55, said the building finally received confirmation on August 7, last year, that work would proceed. "After repeated follow-ups, we were told the matter had been 'escalated'. Today, they told me the permission has been granted by the BMC

and work will start soon," he said. In Ulwe, a rapidly developing neighbourhood in Navi Mumbai, the wait has stretched into years. In Orchid Tower, a 12-storey building, residents have waited seven years for PNG. The building was constructed in 2018

and had applied for a PNG connection that same year but received no update until 2021, when MGL began laying a pipeline. Work halted when the MGL crew encountered a boundary along the planned route and could not proceed. Similar challenges have been

resolved elsewhere but with no update, said Narendra Tandel, 63, chairperson of the housing society. An attempt to reroute the pipeline through an adjoining building didn't go anywhere. According to residents, MGL had approached the neighbouring building with a proposal to redirect the line, but consent was not granted. "They said it is a new building and once the inauguration takes place, they will consider the proposal," said a resident. He added: "MGL has since asked us to approach the building. It's MGL's responsibility, not ours." An MGL spokesperson said the company has seen a sharp surge in demand, with

connections rising over 200% in March, to around 50,000 from 16,000 in February, while daily enquiries increased four to five times. He said infrastructure has been laid in several residential complexes in anticipation of approvals, though last-mile connectivity in some areas continues to face challenges such as ongoing infrastructure work, traffic constraints, narrow lanes, encroachments and underground congestion of utilities including high-tension cables. These issues are being addressed as MGL's teams work on the ground with residents to connect maximum households to PNG within the next three months, he said.

Thousands Attend Spiritual Satsang of Sant Rajinder Singh Ji Maharaj in Ahilyanagar

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Ahilyanagar: A spiritually uplifting satsang by Sant Rajinder Singh Ji Maharaj concluded in a devotional atmosphere in Ahilyanagar, drawing thousands of devotees. Addressing the gathering, Sant Rajinder Singh Ji Maharaj emphasized that higher spiritual realization cannot be attained without sincere effort in meditation practice. He explained that while people often rely on what they hear, a true Guru

(master) guides seekers based on personal experience of truth. When individuals learn to control their desires, their mind turns towards God, enabling them to experience the inner divine sound and celestial music, often referred to by saints as "Shabd," "Kalma," "Word," or "Bange-Asmani." He further elaborated that when a seeker listens to this divine sound within, the soul progresses to higher spiritual realms and realizes its true identity as a part of the Parmatma (Supreme Being). Achieving



inner peace and God-realization, he noted, is possible only through the path of spirituality and dedicated meditation. The satsang, organized on April 1 at Miskin Nagar, witnessed enthusiastic participation from

devotees. The event began with a devotional bhajan, "Dadu Dekha Deeda, Sab Koi Kahat Suneeda," composed by Sant Dadu Dayal and presented by Mata Rita Ji. The bhajan was later explained in detail by Sant

Rajinder Singh Ji Maharaj during his discourse. The two-day spiritual event was successfully organized with the efforts of office-bearers and volunteers of the Ahilyanagar centre. After the discourse, Sant Rajinder Singh

Ji Maharaj personally met devotees, offering darshan and blessings. Using a simple analogy, he explained that just as milk must be churned to obtain butter and eventually ghee, success and God-

realization come only through consistent effort. He highlighted Surat Shabd Yoga as one of the highest spiritual paths, noting that it does not require complex rituals or physical postures. Through regular

practice, seekers can experience the divine presence within and fulfill the true purpose of human life. Following the satsang, Sant Rajinder Singh Ji Maharaj initiated new seekers into spirituality, enabling them to experience the inner divine light and sound. Maharashtra President of Sawan Kirpal Ruhani Mission, Mahesh Ambwani, expressed gratitude and appreciation for the guidance and blessings of the spiritual leader.



Big responsibility on Jai Pawar; Sunetra Pawar's big decision

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Mumbai: After taking over the reins of the Nationalist Party after the death of late NCP leader Ajit Pawar, Deputy Chief Minister Sunetra Pawar has started working for the party while recovering from her grief. The NCP's core committee meeting was held recently. Now a big decision has been taken in the NCP fold. Ajit Pawar's son Jay Pawar has been included in the National Executive of the Nationalist Party. This is the first time that Jay Pawar has been appointed to any post in the party. After the death of Ajit Pawar, Sunetra Pawar took the responsibility of the party on her shoulders. The responsibility of the Deputy Chief Minister and National President has been entrusted to Sunetra Pawar. While Parth Pawar has been appointed as a Rajya Sabha MP. After that, a new responsibility has been entrusted to Jay Pawar. Ajit Pawar's son Jay Pawar has been included in the National Executive of the Nationalist Party. While Parth Pawar



will become an MP and represent the party in the Rajya Sabha, Jay Pawar will work in the party organization. Along with Jay Pawar, Sana Malik, Saroj Ahire, Shekhar Nikam and Chetan Tupe have also been included in the national executive for the first time. Till date, senior leaders were given a place in the national executive of any party. But, the first ones have been given an opportunity to so many young executive members. Sunetra Pawar has now given an opportunity to the entire Young Brigade. Meanwhile, a letter sent by Sunetra Pawar to the Central Election Commission on February 26 has come to light. In this letter, only her own

position has been mentioned by Sunetra Pawar. Apart from Sunetra Pawar, only Shivajirao Garje is mentioned as the treasurer. This resolution was passed on February 26, 2026, when Sunetra Pawar was elected as the national president. Notably, the NCP informed the Election Commission of this resolution on March 10 and at the same time it was also stated that any correspondence after January 28 should not be considered official. We are now submitting the decisions and office bearers list of the party meeting held on February 26 to the Election

Commission. Sunetra Pawar has mentioned only 14 office bearers. Notably, Sunil Tatkare is not mentioned as the state president and Praful Patel is not mentioned as the national working president. Only Sunetra Pawar's name is mentioned as the national president and Shivajirao Garje is mentioned as the treasurer. While the organizational election structure includes Praful Patel, Sunil Tatkare, Chhagan Bhujbal, Manikrao Kokate, Dilip Walse Patil, Chetan Tupe, Shekhar Nikam, Subodh Mohite, Saroj Ahire, Jay Pawar and Dheeraj Sharma.

Rhythm - 2026 Cultural Festival Celebrated with Enthusiasm at Dr Vitthalrao Vikhe Patil Collage of Engineering

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Ahilyanagar: The "Rhythm-2026 Cultural Festival" at Dr. Vitthalrao Vikhe Patil College of Engineering was celebrated with great enthusiasm and vibrant participation from students. The festival was inaugurated by Principal Dr. Ravindra Navthar, who emphasized the importance of cultural activities in shaping students' personalities and overall development. The event commenced with "Group Day / Mismatch Day," where students showcased creativity through coordinated outfits as well as unique mismatched attire. This was followed by "Bollywood Day," which captivated the audience as students portrayed popular Bollywood characters with lively performances. The



mes such as "Halloween Day," "Black and White Day," and "Saree and Tie Day" added color and excitement to the festival. Students expressed their creativity through distinctive costumes, creating a lively and energetic atmosphere on campus. The festival concluded with "Traditional Day," where students donned traditional attire, beautifully reflecting India's rich cultural heritage. All activities were held at NASA Point within the college campus. The Snehasammelan (Annual Gathering)

Coordinator for the event was Prof. Sunil Mandhare. Faculty coordinators included Dr. Mrs. K. D. Vidhate, Prof. Mrs. Prachi More, and Prof. Mrs. Pooja Kajale. Student representatives Siddharth Hake, Sneha Ahire, Raj Deshmukh, Rohit Fegade, Pooja Bansode, Omkar Joshi, Shweta Sonawane, and Om Rakshe played a key role in organizing the festival. The event received guidance from Prof. Sunil Kalhapure, Director (Technical) of the foundation, and Principal Dr. Ravindra Navthar. The

successful was appreciated by Dr. P. M. Gaikwad, Director General (Administration), Chief Executive Officer Dr. Sujay Vikhe Patil, and Chairman of the institution as well as State Minister for Water Resources and Guardian Minister of Ahilyanagar, Hon. Radhakrishna Vikhe Patil. The festival provided students with a valuable platform to showcase their talents and created memorable experiences, earning widespread appreciation for its successful execution.

Congress Urges Fair Implementation of Voter List Revision Drive in Maharashtra

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Mumbai :The Congress party has urged the Election Commission to ensure that the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in Maharashtra is conducted in a fair, transparent, and unbiased manner. The demand was made by a party delegation led by state Congress president Harshvardhan Sapkal after meeting the State Chief Electoral Officer S. Chockalingam on Thursday. Concerns have been raised across several states regarding the ongoing SIR exercise, with

allegations that voters from specific communities and religions are being deliberately excluded. The Congress claimed that in some states, irregularities in the revision process ahead of elections have raised serious doubts about its intent, suggesting that the exercise could be skewed in favour of the ruling party. Following the meeting, Sapkal told the media that Maharashtra had previously undertaken the SIR process between 2002 and 2004 over a period of nearly 13 months without haste. Given that the state's voter base has increased by over 3.5 crore



since then, he stressed the need for careful planning and sufficient time for the current exercise. He pointed out that with no major elections scheduled in the next two to three years, there is no need to rush the process. "Even if the revision takes 18 to 24 months, it should not be an

issue. A well-paced process will help avoid public suspicion," he said. The Congress delegation also made several key recommendations, including: The SIR exercise should not be conducted simultaneously with the census by the same officials. Political parties should be

provided electoral roll data in soft copy (OCR/machine-readable formats) as well as hard copy. A minimum of one month should be given for filing objections or responding to notices. At least seven days' notice must be issued before deleting any voter's name, ensuring a fair

hearing. The party further emphasized that Booth Level Officers (BLOs) must function independently, free from pressure by any individual, organization, or political entity. It also called for a special drive to facilitate the registration of Booth Level Agents (BLAs). Additional

ly, the Congress demanded that all SIR-related data be preserved for at least five years at the Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) and District Election Officer (DEO) levels, and be made accessible to political parties as required. The delegation also sought strict scrutiny of Form 7 applications and timely sharing of lists of voters marked as "Absent, Shifted, or Dead" (ASD) with recognized political parties at the booth level. Importantly, the party cautioned against any process that indirectly enforces

citizenship verification akin to the National Register of Citizens (NRC), stating that the SIR exercise should remain strictly limited to voter registration. It also recommended that voter registration be halted once elections are officially announced. Other members present in the delegation included Leader of Opposition Vijay Wadettiwar, former minister Naseem Khan, AICC secretary Sachin Sawant, and party leaders Sandeep Kondvilkar and Abhijit Sapkal.

30 people filed applications for Baramati by-election;

Will the election be unopposed or will it be a close one?, the state is paying attention

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Baramati: After the death of the late Ajit Pawar in Baramati, the by-election battle has begun. It is reported that Sunetra Pawar will file her nomination on April 6 in the presence of the Chief Minister and Deputy Chief Minister on behalf of the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP). In the backdrop of this election, the NCP has started holding ghongdi meetings in Baramati city and taluka from today and there is an atmosphere of enthusiasm among the workers. A

strategy is being devised to make Sunetra Pawar win with a huge majority by going to villages and directly interacting with the voters. The workers have decided to get Sunetra Pawar elected with more votes than Ajit Pawar in this election. On the one hand, while efforts are being made to make this election unopposed, sources say that 30 people have filed applications for the Baramati by-election. The Mahayuti is focusing on making Netra Pawar's election unopposed. But it is still unclear how many applications are filed

out of the 30 applications, how many are eligible and how many applications will be withdrawn. Everyone's attention is on whether Sunetra Pawar will meet Kunakuna to contest the election unopposed. Will this election be unopposed? Everyone's attention is on this. It is being reported that the Chief Minister will come to Baramati on the 6th to file Sunetra Pawar's nomination. The schedule for the Baramati assembly by-election has been announced and the voting will be held on April 23, 2026. The



last date for filing nominations is April 6 and the last date for withdrawal of applications is April 9. So far, 30 people have filed their nominations. All three candidates who filed their nominations on the first day are from outside Baramati. Satish Kadam and Sagar Bhise have

filed their nominations as independents from the Hindustan Janata Party, while Raju Ghutukade has filed his nominations as an independent from the New Rashtriya Samaj Party. OBC leader Laxman Hake expressed the opinion that we have declared our stance

that we will not allow the Baramati assembly by-election to be held unopposed. Who will be the candidate against Sunetra Pawar? He also said that I myself or someone else will be informed to you in the next two days. Be it OBC leaders or the Pawar family, who influence

Maharashtra politics, they do not talk about OBC reservation. It can be said that the reservation of OBCs has ended, said Hake. Sharad Pawar had announced his stance in the elections that he would give tickets to the original OBCs. However, when the elections came, Hake criticized that nothing was done as per the announcement he made. Hake said that BJP should also field a candidate in Baramati. Why are you facing the elections under the guise of sympathy and sorrow. Ajitdada

was insensitive to the reservation of OBCs. He has now passed away. Tell me what contribution you have made, said Hake. You are giving huge funds to Sarathi Party and other Economic Development Corporations, but Mahajyoti is being treated with hostility. During Ajit Pawar's lifetime, the Economic Development Corporation was not given the post of chairman or office. "Five, five, six constitutional posts in one house, so who should we criticize?" Hake asked.

Drought in 35 villages including these 2 talukas of Ahilyanagar will end

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Mumbai: The state cabinet has approved the Saklai Upsa Irrigation Scheme, which is very important for the drought-affected areas of Shrigonda and Ahilyanagar talukas. This scheme will provide water to about 10,000 hectares of area in about 32 villages, which will provide great relief to the farmers. It is expected that the decision of Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis will reduce the long-term water shortage in this area. Water Resources Minister and Guardian Minister of Ahilyanagar Radha said that this scheme will be life-saving for the drought-affected areas. All the administrative approvals and permissions required for this project have been completed by holding meetings from time to time. Therefore, the actual implementation will now gain momentum. Under this scheme,



water will be pumped from Mhasegaon in four phases. In this process, water will be lifted through various pump houses and transported to higher areas. It is planned to lift water up to a height of about 208.34 meters in total, and pump houses number 1 to 4 as well as distribution tanks will be constructed for this. The reservoir of Ghod Dam will be used as the main source for this project. A pump house will be built at Mouje Mhase and water will be lifted from there. After that, this water will be stored in the distribution tank on

the hill in the Chikhali and Ghutewadi areas. From here, water will be transported to the villages through closed pipes with the help of gravity. The existing small irrigation ponds, percolation ponds, cement drain dams and village ponds will be effectively used in this scheme. It is planned to release water in about 196 water reservoirs in a total of 32 villages. Due to this, the storage and management of water at the local level will be more efficient. Under this scheme, a total of 1.80 TMC of water has been planned, 1.60 TMC for

irrigation and 0.20 TMC for drinking. Therefore, along with agriculture, the problem of drinking water in rural areas is also likely to be reduced to a large extent. Loknete Padma Bhushan Dr. Balasaheb Vikhe Patil had pursued this scheme for a long time. The state government is determined to complete this dream project of his in the next four years. Minister Vikhe-Patil said that this decision has accelerated all phases of the project and work will begin soon.

The number of ineligible beloved sisters is in front; 71 lakh women's benefit of 1500 permanently closed

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Mumbai: 71 lakh women beneficiaries of the 'Ladki Bahin Yojana' scheme, which started in the state since the assembly elections, have been found ineligible in the e-KYC process. It has become clear that these women were not eligible for this scheme as they had not done e-KYC. 2.43 crore women had registered in this scheme and were getting Rs 1,500 assistance every month. Due to this, the government exchequer was facing a burden of Rs 43,740 crore annually. (Ladki Bahin Yojana) This Ladki Bahin Yojana scheme had also affected other schemes to some extent, as the state's financial situation was somewhat disrupted due to this scheme, the Women and Child Welfare Department had launched a campaign to find ineligible women. It had come to light that some government employees and some men were also taking advantage of this scheme in the name of



women. Since women who did not fulfill the conditions of the scheme or from wealthy families were also taking advantage of this scheme, the government had decided to do KYC of the beneficiary account holders. Due to this, 71 lakh Ladki Bahin Yojana have now become ineligible. (Ladki Bahin Yojana) The government has spent Rs 21,300 crore in the last 20 months under this scheme for 71 lakh Ladki Bahin Yojana. As the deadline for identity verification has been extended, the remaining women have been urged to submit KYC documents and complete the process by April 30. After the government's Ladki Bahin Yojana was

launched, verification started from November 2024 and the work of removing ineligible Ladki Bahin Yojana from the scheme was started. Since the number of beneficiaries in the scheme is large, data purification was necessary. For this, the deadline was extended twice. The government had appealed to complete the KYC process by March 2026, but now the deadline has been extended till April 2026 (Ladki Bahin Yojana). So far, one crore 90 lakh beneficiaries have completed the KYC process, out of which one crore seventy-five lakh sisters have been eligible, while many women have been ineligible by the end of March. However, since

71 lakh women have been receiving a subsidy of fifteen hundred rupees for the last twenty months, this amount is around 1065 crores per month. Therefore, it is believed that so far the government has spent approximately Rs 21,300 crores on providing subsidies to ineligible Ladki Bahin sisters. Beneficiaries who chose the wrong option while doing e-KYC in the Ladki Bahin Yojana have now been given a deadline till April 30, 2026 to make corrections. This deadline was till March 31. Women and Child Welfare Minister Aditi Tatkare said that this will be the last chance to correct e-KYC.

Who gets the credit for Dahisar-Mira-Bhayander Metro? Leaders clash even before inauguration;

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Mira Bhayandar: Even before the inauguration of Dahisar-Mira-Bhayander Metro 9A (Dahisar-Kashigaon), there is a battle for credit. Due to the hoarding of posters by Transport Minister Pratap Sarnaik and MLA Narendra Mehta, major squares in the city are filled with political posters. Both the leaders are claiming that they were the ones who pursued the metro project. Due to this, the political atmosphere has heated up even before the inauguration. Since the congestion in the trains and traffic jams on the roads are a constant problem while traveling to Mumbai from Mira-Bhayandar, the metro was considered an essential option. After



receiving approval from the state government, the work on the project actually started in 2019. After seven years, the first phase of Dahisar-Kashigaon has been completed, and all the necessary permissions have been received from the 'MMRDA'. Meanwhile, after the inauguration date was fixed, both the leaders have put up hoardings portraying themselves as the 'architects' and 'Metromans' of the metro project. In some places, the hoardings have been placed next to each other, making the competition for

credit prominent. Even though Shiv Sena and BJP are in a grand alliance at the state level, the competition for credit is increasing in local politics. The four-lane bridge in the Golden Nest area was suddenly converted into two lanes in the middle, making it a 'dangerous bridge'. There was a lot of criticism against the MMRDA and the government for this structure. MNS has alleged that 'those who take credit for this bridge, which has caused damage worth crores'. Activists are also

sharing posts on social media in favor of their leaders. Therefore, the question 'whose real credit is it?' is arising among the citizens. On the other hand, the Congress has criticized that the ruling party should take note of the delay in the Metro project. Although the government has approved houses of at least 500 sq. ft. for the redevelopment project, the residents of Sector-1 say that this space will be insufficient and it would be appropriate for them to get a house of at least 750 sq. ft. Considering the increasing number of families, standard of living, and future needs, the government should reconsider this and decide to provide 750 sq. ft. houses to the residents. Locals are demanding that they do so.

Husband kills married woman in Baramati

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Baramati: The area has been rocked by the brutal murder of a married woman from Baramati taluka in Pune district, Sayali Jadhav, by her husband Akshay Jadhav, who took her to Kalaburgi in Karnataka on the pretext of seeing God. The parents and relatives of the deceased woman have demanded that the accused husband be given the strictest punishment, that is, death penalty. Sayali Akshay Jadhav from Dattobachi Wadi in Baramati taluka was murdered on March 25. Her husband Akshay Dattatray Jadhav had taken her to Gangapur in Karnataka on the pretext of going to see God. However, due to an argument over suspicion of her character, he dragged Sayali out of the car on the road and beat her up severely. Akshay then slit Sayali's throat with a



sharp weapon. After this incident, Sayali's in-laws' family members spoke to reporters in Baramati and made serious allegations. "Our daughter's husband was repeatedly harassing her for money. He was pressuring her to bring money from her in-laws to build a house and buy a vehicle. For this, he used to beat her," they alleged. Sayali's Rohini aunt said that Akshay had made her wait for 15 days, and on the 16th day, she got married to Alandi for love. We were not even aware of it. He constantly

pressured her for money. He kept insisting that Sayali should not be there. The day before the incident, he called me. He told me to tell her to forget the fight and come back. I don't know what happened later, but she went to the bank because she was going. He killed Sayali at 4 pm on Thursday. We couldn't even bring the body. I couldn't even touch her, I was so unlucky, said the mother-in-law. In this case, he has strongly demanded that strict action be taken against the accused and that he be given the death penalty, and that justice be given to the family. Meanwhile, anger is being expressed in the Baramati area due to this incident, and the demand for strict action against the accused is gaining momentum.

Editorial...

New captains in a turbulent sector

Indian aviation's two most consequential appointments in years arrived within hours of each other this week. William Walsh, formerly of British Airways, IAG and currently at the powerful aviation lobby group IATA, will take over as IndiGo's chief executive. Vikram Yadav assumes charge as director general of civil aviation. Neither appointment is routine, and neither comes at a routine time. The sector had one of its worst years in 2025 — 260 lives lost in the Air India flight 171 tragedy, over 5,000 IndiGo flights cancelled in a single week that stranded 300,000 passengers — and began 2026 in no better shape, with a crash that killed a deputy CM and the West Asia conflict driving fuel costs and forcing longer international routes, leaving the industry staring at financial pain. Today, Brent crude has surged past \$102 a barrel, from less than \$70 in February. Indian carriers are barred from nine countries' airspaces, with reroutes adding up to 70 minutes and nearly two tonnes of extra fuel burn on every European sector. Analysts project industry-wide losses of ₹17,000–18,000 crore for FY2026; Air India alone expects a record loss of at least ₹15,000 crore. Walsh inherits an airline whose operational credibility was shattered barely three months ago — a ₹22.2 crore penalty, quarterly profit down 78%, and a predecessor who was, by all indications, made to

make way. The turnaround mandate is clear — the airline has long stretched the limits of operational efficiency, and now requires systemic change. Yadav's brief is arguably harder. The DGCA's inquiry into the IndiGo crisis cited "inadequate regulatory preparedness" — a rare admission that the regulator failed its mandate. The AI-171 investigation, politically and diplomatically fraught given the deliberate-act theory and American involvement, will reach a critical point under his watch with a report due this summer. And the institution he will lead struggles with hundreds of vacancies. He must run a credible safety regulator on incomplete strength at the most possible time. And then there is the relational test between the regulator and IndiGo, India's largest domestic airline. The December crisis laid that bare when the regulator granted exemptions, then penalised the airline for the provisions it had relaxed. India wants 500 million air passengers by 2030. It wants to be a global aviation hub. Those ambitions require a regulator and a market leader that treat safety as foundational, not negotiable. How Walsh and Yadav navigate what awaits them will shape not just an industry, but the aspirations, the global credibility and the safety of 1.4 billion people, many of whom are only just beginning to fly.

A difficult season ahead for agriculture

With a 60% chance of El Niño in the June-August period rising to 80% in August-October—the country's farm sector must brace for possible pain. The phenomenon is associated with deficient rainfall, and 50-60% of India's net sown area, largely kharif crops, is monsoon-dependent. This involves close to 61% of India's farmer population. The need to plan ahead is more urgent this year as the disruption in fertiliser and natural gas (key for fertiliser production) shipments from West Asia must also be factored in. If El Niño effects intensify and rainfall proves deficient - a clearer picture will emerge closer to June- pulses and rice yields could get affected, depressing farm income and pushing up food inflation. While the farm sector has been able to withstand El Niño in recent years, the climate crisis has queered the pitch; scientists have flagged oceanographic factors that cause El Niño to intensify and increase the chances of associated extreme events. On the

fertiliser side, uncertainty over the war clouds the outlook. The US has talked of an end-date, but much will depend on whether it adheres to that timeline and whether Israel continues the war even if the US withdraws. Then, there is the question of whether Iran will allow traffic through the Strait of Hormuz to return to its pre-war normal. Even after the war ends, with natural gas infrastructure in West Asia taking serious hits, normalisation of shipments could take some time. The government and farmers must factor in the double whammy. From sowing decisions-short-duration, drought-resistant varieties to moisture conservation, farmers must pre-empt poor rains. The government, for its part, must assume greater responsibilities on crop insurance, guaranteed employment to minimise rural pain. The long-term focus must be on expanding India's water conservation and irrigation capacity to tide over climate shocks

India should choose broader realism

Coffee Table

News Network

Frankly I do not care a fig whether a tinpot dictator ship like Pakistan, with a bankrupt economy and a defunct polity, gets a fleeting moment under a dubious sun to play the role of mediator, facilitator or whatever in the ongoing Iran war. That this is a slight to India is ludicrous. Pakistan is a failed state. India, on the other hand, while not without its problems, is the world's largest democracy a major economy, a nuclear weapon state, a civilisational power and home to 1.4 billion people, with a legitimate claim to sit on the high table of the global community. My concern, therefore, is about what India did or did not do in this unfortunate war. In this context, a new debate has emerged between so-called 'realists and idealists. At first glance, the argument of the realists appears compelling. The world, they insist, is not a moral classroom but a competitive arena where power, not principle, determines outcomes. In such a world, they argue, the pursuit of immediate economic advantage and transient strategic leverage must override any abstract commitment to ideals. For relatively weaker nations, the logic is to be silent, speak softly, align cleverly and survive. Idealism, in this view, is not merely naive, it is a liability. Yet, this

perspective, while pragmatic in tone, is impoverished in vision. It reduces nations to transactional entities, devoid of identity, memory or moral imagination. It assumes that the currency of global respect is power alone, when history suggests a more nuanced truth: That enduring influence often rests on a combination of credibility, consistency and conviction. For instance, the anti-colonial struggles of the 20th century were not won merely by military strength, they were sustained by moral arguments that exposed the hypocrisy of imperial domination. The articulation of principles sovereignty, self-determination, equality became, in time, instruments of power in their own right. This is not to suggest that foreign policy should be conducted as a sermon. Nations must, of necessity, calibrate their responses to the realities of the world. But calibration is not capitulation. There is a difference between strategic flexibility and moral abdication. A nation that abandons its stated principles at the first hint of inconvenience risks eroding not only its credibility abroad. The critique of idealism as inefficient and counterproductive similarly rests on a narrow understanding of national interest. Economic gains secured at the cost of long term



credibility may prove ephemeral. Nations that are perceived as opportunistic or supine may find themselves taken for granted, or excluded from a meaningful role in geopolitical equations. Conversely, those that demonstrate a principled approach, even when inconvenient, often command a moral authority that amplifies their influence beyond their material capabilities. It is in this broader context that one must examine our role when the US and Israel attacked Iran and assassinated its head of state. The assertion that weaker nations cannot afford a strong voice is, in fact, a deeply internalised form of defeatism. Strength in international relations is not measured solely in military or economic terms, which, of course, we must aspire to. It also resides in the clarity of a nation's positions and the consistency with which they are articulated. When

a country speaks with conviction even if it cannot enforce its will it contributes to shaping the normative environment in which global politics unfolds. Silence, on the other hand, is seldom neutral - it is often read as acquiescence. Violation of sovereignty and the targeted elimination of a national leader raise profound questions about the norms governing international behaviour. India has friendly relations with America and Israel, but also diplomatic and age-old cultural ties with Iran. Regardless of one's assessment of Iran's policies, the blatant violation of its sovereignty and the targeted elimination of its national leader should have led a country like India with its long-standing commitment to the principles of sovereignty, non-interference and the peaceful resolution of disputes to immediately express deep concern if not outright condemnation. The

defence of the principles of sovereignty, non-interference and the peaceful resolution of disputes, is not an idealist posture, but a matter of vital national interest for India. To remain silent, or to respond with studied ambiguity in the face of actions that contravene these principles, risks emboldening predatory behaviour of this nature in our neighbourhood, especially from China. Moreover, the unprovoked attack on Iran, and the ensuing mayhem in the Gulf region, directly impacts our economy, and we see this unfolding even as I write this. Similarly, while a trade deal with America is welcome, it cannot be concluded at the cost of sovereignty, where a diktat is issued that we cannot buy oil from Russia. This assertion of sovereignty is not, as the realists claim, ineffectual 'grandstanding'? Respect in international relations comes from the

courage to articulate and defend your beliefs, even when doing so entails risk. Foreign policy, in this sense, is an expression of a nation's character. In the final analysis, respect in international relations is not bestowed solely upon the powerful. It is earned by those who demonstrate the courage to articulate and defend their beliefs. For India, the choice then is not between idealism and realism, but between a narrow realism that confines itself to deliberate ambiguity and a broader realism that recognises the enduring value of principles. The former may yield quick dividends, the latter builds lasting stature. Foreign policy, at its best, is an expression of a nation's character. India has a role in restoring sanity, and as the current chair of BRICS, even play a role to end this war. But if our neutrality and credibility is in doubt, can we play such a role, even when doing so is incongruent with our national interest? To speak, therefore, when our principles and national interest is at stake is not an act of sterile idealism. It is an assertion of sovereignty in its most profound sense - the right to define one's voice and the courage to let it be heard. The author is a diplomat and former member of Rajya Sabha.

Where can one invest in 2026-27?

Coffee Table

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Things are likely to get much worse before they get better. This is a year that all the money lessons we have learnt are put to action. The madness of the 2020s just does not end. Each crisis looks worse than the previous one. The Trumpian bullying on trade has morphed into physical abuse of global infrastructure, putting both energy and food security for billions at risk. In a fully unpredictable world, where self-interest comes first, India needs to put on its energy and food security oxygen mask with long-term solutions, not band-aids. And we, as citizens, must prepare for a hard year ahead on inflation, markets and overall chaos. The journey from February to March 2026 shows how fast a good story can turn precarious. What looked like a launching year for higher Indian growth trajectory is now quite the reverse. The Goldilocks moment of low inflation, above 7% growth, a comfortable stack of foreign reserves, a declining fiscal deficit, and a low current account deficit is under threat as the world reels from the West Asian fuel supply disruption. The vitals of the Indian economy are already showing stress. The rupee is falling, bond yields are up, stock markets have lost almost 10% over the past month. As fear and uncertainty get

amplified on social media, I will attempt to answer very simply some of the questions that the non-finance people are asking. Why is the rupee falling? Because India needs more dollars to buy each unit of fuel it imports from abroad. Oil prices have risen sharply over a month and can go even higher. As we pay more dollars, the price in terms of the amount of rupees needed to buy a single dollar rises. This has also cascaded, given the downward trajectory of the rupee over the past year due to foreign institutional investors selling the Indian market and taking the dollars back to where the Artificial Intelligence (AI) boom is giving better returns. The rupee story can quickly get worse if the West Asia crisis prolongs — who expected the Russia-Ukraine war to last these years? — and the fat pipeline of Gulf NRI foreign exchange inflows takes a hit. Why should you worry even if you are not an importer or aren't sending kids abroad to study? Rising oil prices and falling rupee usually translate into higher levels of inflation. Rising prices cut consumption and also translate into higher interest rates, both of which then cause the already-skittish private sector to step back from investment. This can become a bad downward cycle. What do bond yields have to do with the warrant of



how far stock markets fall? Both stock and bond markets are forward-looking and price in bad news before it manifests on the ground. The 10-year G-Sec yield breached 7% last week, a rise of more than 40-basis year-on-year (in bond markets that is a steep rise). In plain English, this means that the price of the 10-year government-issued bond fell. Bond prices and yields move in opposite direction. So, when you read yields are going up, remember that bond prices are falling. Sharply falling bond prices are a red flag. In this case, it is the expectation of potentially higher interest rates, not economic weakness, that is driving bond prices down. Inflation is expected to rise due to the higher fuel bill and also due to higher-than-expected government borrowing ahead. The government cut the special excise duty on petrol sharply, which is likely to hit its revenues by close to 1.5 trillion. This shortfall can either be

filled by higher-than-expected exports or by borrowing. The bond market thinks it will be more borrowing which will raise interest rates. This is going to derail the growth trajectory envisaged earlier in the year. The cost to growth is expected to be in the range of around one percentage point. India's GDP growth, which was pegged at well over 7% for the new financial year, is now expected to be lower. Stock markets, which were already spooked, are now digesting the new reality, and I would expect far more pain ahead than what we have seen in the markets so far if the war does not end. Is there more bad news? Yes. If the story on energy security were not bad enough, there is a looming fertiliser scare that might play out. Indian agriculture is dependent on both imported fertiliser and imported feedstock that goes into fertiliser factories. Current fertiliser stocks, the government says, are

adequate, but if the war continues, this could easily become a food security issue. Are there any silver linings? The clean macro story, oil and foreign reserves with which India entered the war-period is a big positive. If our vitals were already weak, the current crisis would have caused a worse problem. The strong macro position has given the needed elbow room for policy rethink and has allowed the government to absorb the fuel cost rise by cutting excise duties on petroleum products. While this may not last, at least the hit on consumers of petrol, diesel, and piped cooking gas has not been immediate. What can the government do? While the band-aid of absorbing the fuel price hike and the Reserve Bank of India's moves to manage currency, interest rates, and balance of payments will continue, the crisis ideally should trigger reforms that

build both energy and food security. India has one of the largest reserves of coal in the world and the technologies that must be deployed to use them to our advantage must be deployed. In addition, the path cleared for energy from small nuclear plants must be used to build for the future. The fertiliser story is one of misused subsidies. Instead of funding high-cost fertiliser production, a cash transfer to the farmer might be the road ahead. Though politically sensitive, subsidising those who actually need it rather than the current entangled web of entitlements and high costs — which have actually harmed both agriculture and soil over time — might be the way forward. What should we be doing? Start by recognising that tougher times lie ahead. There is a war raging, and we will get singled. The long-term growth story of India remains strong; we need to get through the present time by not making hasty money decisions. Do not try to time the markets; we do not know how long they could fall. Your only friend is a split between safer debt products and risky equity. And remember, equity needs at least seven to 10 years to show results. So, stay patient in these times of fear and uncertainty.

Use of recycled plastic in packaging made mandatory, new rules to boost circularity

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News Network

NEW DELHI: Centre has notified amendments to Plastic Waste Management Rules, making it mandatory for producers, importers and brand owners to use recycled plastic in packaging and carry a label and marking indicating the use of recycled content. The new rules, notified by the environment ministry on Tuesday, have provisions for stricter compliance, making the system of recycling and waste management more robust and comprehensive. They also set category-wise targets, which will go



up progressively from 2025-26 to 2028-29 and thereafter, for use of recycled plastic in packaging as per standards prescribed by govt. Producers and importers will also have to comply with the "applicable marking and labelling requirements" specified by Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) for food items. However, the

targets for mandatory use of recycled plastic in packaging will not be applicable to cases where such use is not permitted under various laws or regulations notified by central govt or statutory bodies such as FSSAI, Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation and Central Insecticide Board. Under the Plastic Waste

Management (Amendment) Rules, 2026, Central Pollution Control Board will develop a mechanism for reporting use of recycled content on the centralised online portal. The state govt and UT administration concerned will constitute a state/UT-level monitoring committee for effective monitoring and implementation of the amended rules. The local body in urban and rural areas will be the ground-level authority for enforcement of the rules, which come into force with immediate effect.

India's concern increased, crude oil surged due to Donald Trump's warning;

Crude Oil crosses \$105



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News Network

Crude Oil Price: A major development in global politics has led to a huge increase in the price of crude oil. Due to US President Donald Trump's aggressive stance against Iran, the price of crude oil in the international market has crossed \$105 per barrel. This decision has had a direct impact on the Asian stock market and the markets have collapsed. Donald Trump, while commenting on the war situation in Iran, has given a very strict warning. He said, "We will never allow Iran to get nuclear weapons. No deal will

be made with them. We will take major action in the next 2 to 3 weeks and the American military is very close to our targets." Trump further clarified that the 'Strait of Hormuz', which is very important for oil transportation, will be completely secured. Countries that import oil through this route should come forward for security, America will help them. After Trump's statement, a huge increase was recorded in oil prices within a few hours. Till Wednesday, Brent crude was trading below \$100 in the international market. However, after Trump's speech, it has increased by

more than 5 percent. Brent crude: 106.22 per barrel (5 percent increase), American crude (WTI): 104.36 per barrel (4.2 percent increase). Compared to a day ago, the price of crude oil has increased by about \$8 per barrel. The rising prices of crude oil are a big blow for India. India imports more than 80 percent of its oil requirements. Due to the increase in crude oil prices, India's import bill will increase and there is a risk of inflation. Meanwhile, the shadow of global tensions is also clearly visible on the stock market. In the Asian market, Japan's Nikkei 225

fell by 1.4 percent, while South Korea's Kospi fell by 3.4 percent. Hong Kong's Hang Seng also fell by 0.8 percent. Meanwhile, the alarm bell has sounded for the Indian stock market. The Gift Nifty is indicating a decline of 450 points and there is a possibility of a big fall in the Indian market today. The 'big action' mentioned by Trump and the period of 2 to 3 weeks have created an atmosphere of fear among investors around the world. Crude oil prices are increasing every hour and if this situation continues, it can have serious consequences on the prices of petrol and diesel.

No shortage of fuel or gas in India, says Rajnath Singh amid West Asia tensions

Coffee Table
News Network

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Thursday said that there is "no dearth of fuel or gas in the country" and India was ready to deal with any energy crisis resulting out of the West Asia conflict, reported news agency PTI. Singh, speaking at a Sainik Samman Sammelan in poll-bound Kerala, said that Indian Navy ships were safely escorting the country's tankers through the Strait of



Hormuz. The elections to the Kerala Assembly, which has 140 seats, will be held on April 9. The defence minister further said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi was using his diplomatic skills to protect

Indian interests in the Gulf region, reported PTI. "We are closely monitoring the state of affairs in West Asia and are prepared to deal with any situation," he said, reported PTI. In addition to the

progress in shipbuilding, the Defence Minister noted a significant shift in India's defence strategy, stating that while the country previously relied on imports to meet its weaponry needs, it has now become a prominent exporter. He emphasised that defence exports have witnessed a steady increase compared to last year, with the total now standing at Rs 38,500 crore.

India's arms exports jump 63% to record Rs 38,424 crore

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News Network

NEW DELHI: India logged its highest-ever defence exports at Rs 38,424 crore in the financial year 2025-26, a 62.66 percent jump over the previous fiscal, the Defence Ministry said Thursday. The jump was led by Defence Public Sector Undertakings (DPSUs), whose exports more than doubled, up 151 per cent to Rs 21,071 crore from Rs 8,389 crore, making up 54.84 percent of the total. Private firms grew at a slower 14 percent to Rs 17,353 crore. Calling it a "landmark milestone", the ministry said the performance reflects the "growing integration of the Indian defence industry into global supply chains" and its emergence as a "reliable partner for systems and sub-systems", adding that India is "marching ahead towards becoming a global manufacturing hub for defence equipment". India currently exports defence equipment to more than 80 countries, with the number of exporters rising to 145 from 128 in the previous year. The government attributed the increase to "continuous endeavours towards ease of doing business", including a revamped export authorisation portal and simplified



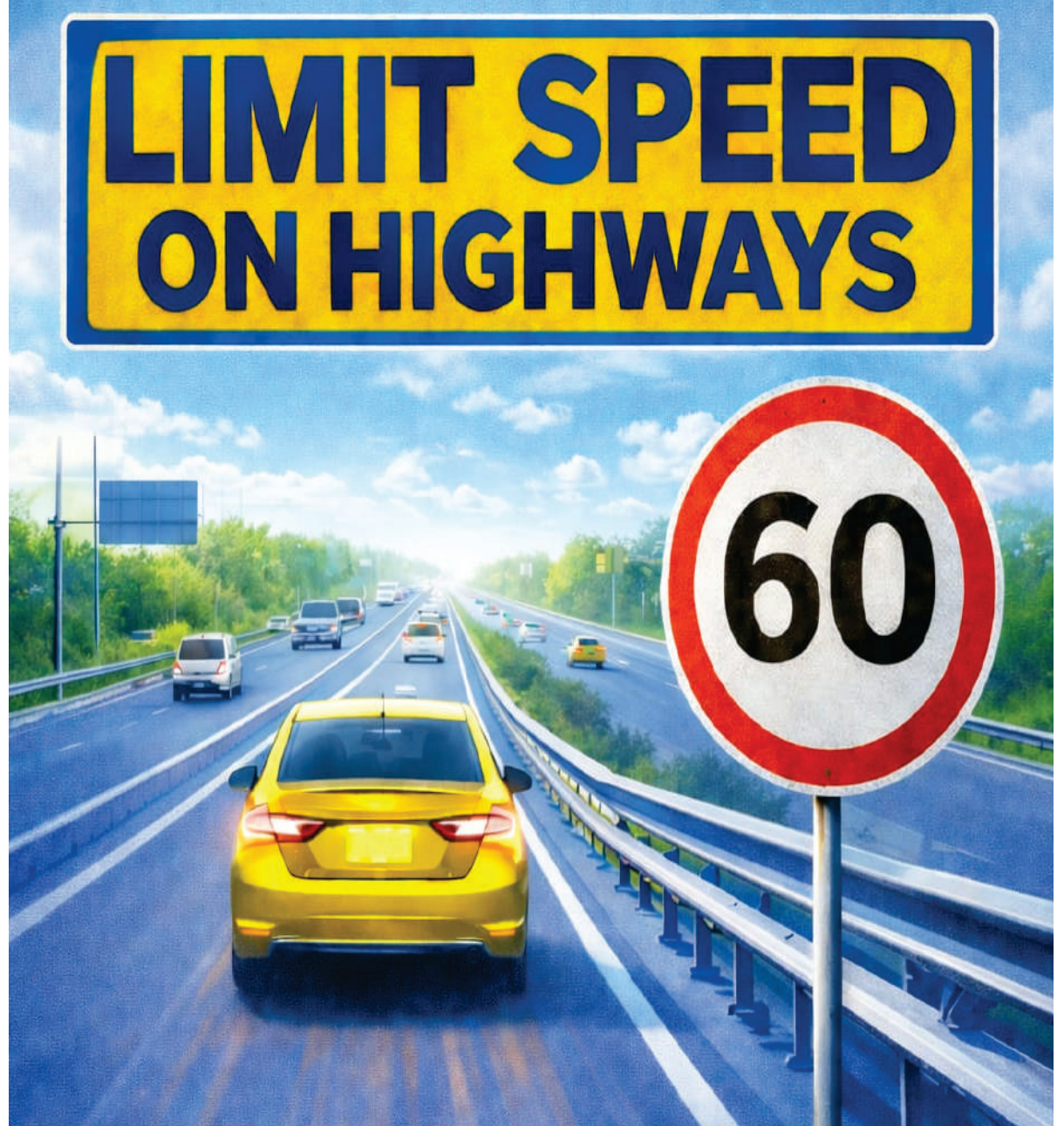
procedures. Behind the headline numbers is a mix of platform sales, missile deals and a steady pipeline of components and subsystems. The standout export remains the BrahMos supersonic cruise missile system, with the Philippines signing a \$375 million contract in 2022 for shore-based anti-ship variants. Deliveries are underway, and similar coastal defence proposals are being pitched to countries such as Vietnam and Indonesia, where discussions are ongoing. Armenia has emerged as another key buyer, placing orders over the past two years for Pinaka multi-barrel rocket launchers, Swathi weapon-locating radars, anti-tank munitions and the Akash air defence system, marking one of India's more significant entries into a conflict-linked

market. Beyond missiles and artillery, Indian firms have exported ALH Dhruv helicopters to Mauritius, while Dornier-228 aircraft have been supplied to countries including Mauritius, Seychelles and Guyana for surveillance roles. Shipyards have also delivered offshore patrol vessels and interceptor boats to countries in Africa and Southeast Asia. At the lower end but in higher volumes, Indian companies are exporting artillery ammunition, small arms, bulletproof jackets and surveillance equipment, alongside a growing share of aerospace components and electronics to global original equipment manufacturers. This dual track of high-value platforms and steady component exports is driving overall growth. The

ministry said India is exporting defence equipment to more than 80 countries while also positioning itself as a partner for systems and sub-systems. The latest data also points to a shift in the export mix. While private firms were early movers in integrating with global supply chains, the current surge is being led by Defence Public Sector Undertakings, supported by government-to-government deals, lines of credit and diplomatic outreach in regions such as Africa and Southeast Asia. India has set a target of Rs 50,000 crore in defence exports by the end of the decade. Achieving this will depend on scaling up production, meeting delivery timelines and competing on cost and after-sales support, where Indian firms are still working to build consistency.




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Supreme Court Slams West Bengal Officials Over Attack On Judges During SIR Duty, Directs Use Of Central Forces

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The Supreme Court on Thursday took serious notice of a protest in West Bengal during which judicial officers engaged in Special Intensive Revision (SIR) work were held hostage by demonstrators from yesterday afternoon till midnight, and the attack on their vehicles using stones and sticks while they were being evacuated after midnight. The Court referred to the letter received from the Calcutta High Court Chief Justice regarding the incident that occurred in a village in Malda district, where judicial officers carrying out official duties were surrounded and prevented from leaving the area during a protest. A bench comprising Chief Justice of India Surya Kant, Justice Joyimalya Bagchi and Justice Vipul Pancholi registered a suo motu case on the issue and took it up this morning. The lawyers appearing for the petitioners and the State in the West Bengal SIR cases, Senior Advocates Kapil Sibal, Shyam Divan, Gopal Sankaranarayanan,

Menaka Guruswamy, as well as Solicitor General of India Tushar Mehta and Senior Advocate Dama Seshadri Naidu (representing the Election Commission of India) were present in the urgent hearing convened by the Court. CJI Surya Kant revealed that he had to pass urgent orders late at night to ensure the safety of the judicial officers. "Till 11 o'clock your Collector was not there. I had to verbally instruct very harsh orders in night. 5-year-old child not allowed food and water!" CJI said. Sibal said that he had read the report in 'The Telegraph' about the incident. Guruswamy said that it was an "apolitical protest". The Chief Justice replied, "If the protest was apolitical, then what were the political leaders doing? Was it not their duty to get at the spot and see what's happening? That somebody's trying to take law and order in their hands? 5 o'clock these people gheraoed the officers. Till 11, your Collector was not there." Sankaranarayanan submitted that the ECI be asked to deploy central forces. Naidu submitted that

such "mobocracy" was not accepted. The Solicitor General also expressed strong views, saying that it was an "unacceptable" assault on the Supreme Court itself, as the judicial officers were performing the duty entrusted to them by the Apex Court. Bench narrates the events in the order CJI said that WhatsApp messages were received late at night that seven judicial officers, including three women, were gheraoed at Malda District. The gherao started at 3.30 PM, and the Registrar General of the High Court requested the State administration for action. However, nothing was done till 8.30 PM, the bench noted in the order, and later the Home Secretary was contacted. The bench observed in the order that "no tangible action was taken by the authorities" and "food and water were not supplied to the judicial officers". The Chief Justice of the High Court had then to call the Home Secretary and other officials to monitor the situation. Finally, the judicial officers were released after 12 PM night, following the intervention of the

Chief Justice of the High Court. Shockingly, while they were going back, their vehicles were subjected to stone-pelting and attack by bamboo sticks. 'Criminal failure of administration': Bench slams Bengal officials "We are extremely disappointed to note



that the Chief Secretary could not be contacted and no messages could be shared with him," the Court noted in the order. The Court noted that the incident was a "brazen attempt" to affect the morale of the judicial officers and to challenge the authority of the Supreme Court. The Court said that it appeared to be a "calculated and deliberated move to demoralise the judicial officers and obstruct the ongoing process of adjudication of claims in the electoral

process." "We will not allow anyone to take the law into their hands to create psychological fear in the mind of judicial officers who are performing a solemn duty," the bench said, warning that it amounts to criminal contempt. The bench also slammed the "criminal failure" of

the State administration. The manner in which the Chief Secretary, the Director General of Police, the Superintendent of Police, and the District Collector reacted was "highly deplorable", the Court observed, recording its "extreme disappointment." The Court said that these officials owed an explanation for not ensuring the safe evacuation of the judicial officers. Guruswamy submitted that these officials were brought in by the Election

Commission of India after replacing the earlier officials. "These are your officials Mr Naidu," she submitted. Sankaranarayanan added, "If the Chief Justice could not contact the Chief Secretary, it is a serious matter. Let their personal affidavits be filed." Senior Advocate Kalyan Bandhopadhyay, for the petitioners, submitted that it was a failure of the ECI, as these officers were appointed by the ECI itself and were acting under the ECI's instructions. The Chief Secretary, DGP, District Magistrate and the SSP were issued a notice to show-cause why action should not be taken against them. They are directed to remain personally present online on April 6, at 4 PM. To ensure that no impediment is caused in the SIR process entrusted to judicial officers, and with a view to assure all judicial officers that their life, liberty, property and family members will be duly protected, the Court issued the following directions. The ECI has to requisition adequate Central Forces and deploy

them at all places where judicial officers are adjudicating the objections. The ECI and the State Govt are directed to take all remedial measures for the safe functioning of the task entrusted to the judicial officers. If any judicial officer has apprehension of security of his family, such threat perception is to be immediately assessed, and adequate measures are to be taken. The ECI and the State were directed to take all remedial measures to ensure safe and smooth functioning. Police officers must ensure that not more than 3-5 persons will enter premises (where adjudication work is going on) at one point of time for filing objections or at the time of hearing. The ECI was directed to entrust the investigation of the incidents to an independent agency, CBI or the NIA. After the order was dictated, Sibal requested that the Court omit the observation that there was "complete breakdown of law and order in the State" from the order, saying that it can be misinterpreted. Naidu opposed, saying "it was the naked truth."

Sibal submitted that it was an isolated incident in one place and should not be a reflection on the entire state. "We have taken note of this submission and we will take care of it," Justice Bagchi said. After the hearing was over, WB Advocate General Kishore Datta submitted that the ECI should not be acting like an adversary. In response, the CJI said: "Mr Adv General, now you are compelling us. Unfortunately, in your state, each one of you speak political language. That is the most unfortunate thing. We have never seen such a polarized state. That even in compliance of court orders, politics is reflected. It's only because all the parties were happy, we thought we were creating a neutral kind of structure (by calling for assistance of judicial officers)...so that none of you have (issues)...and this is what is [happening]...Do you think we are not aware who are the miscreants? At least I was monitoring everything till 2 AM! Very unfortunate."

Election Petition Must Be Decided On Materials On Record, Can't Be Remanded To Fill Evidentiary Gaps

Coffee Table
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The Supreme Court has observed that an election petition must be decided based on the materials available on record, and it is impermissible for the Appellate Court to remand election petitions for reconsideration merely to lead to fresh evidence or direct the calling of witnesses and expert examination when such issues were not raised before the Election Tribunal. A bench of Justice Vikram Nath and Justice Sandeep Mehta heard the case where the Trial Court set aside the Respondent's election to the Sarpanch post after finding merit in the Appellant's allegation of double voting. The First Appellate Court's



decision to uphold the trial court's findings to hold a fresh election was interfered with by the High Court under the Writ Jurisdiction. The High Court remanded the election petition for fresh consideration, with directions to call voters as witnesses and obtain expert fingerprint analysis of thumb impressions on voter lists. The High Court reasoned that because the election petition was decided without adopting "required recourses" such as presenting

voters as witnesses or obtaining expert evidence. It held that such conclusions were "ill made" and "based on pure surmises." Aggrieved by the High Court's ruling, the Appellant appealed to the Supreme Court on the ground that the High Court cannot fill in the gap by directing reconsideration of evidence through examination of the voters as witness, which was never sought during the trial. aside the High Court's order, the Court observed "that

the High Court ought not to have issued such directions for leading evidence as the Election Petition is to be decided on the basis of evidence available on record as may be led by the parties." The Court said that the High Court's directions amounted to impermissibly allowing the Respondent to fill a lacuna in their case. "The appeal ought to have been decided on the basis of the material available before it and there could not have been such sweeping directions to call for witnesses and expert evidence when neither of the parties had raised any such issue before the Tribunal. There is no scope of filling up of lacuna in proceedings relating to Election Petition.", the Court observed.

'Lack Of Effort To Send Samples For Forensic Examination Indicates Collusion Between Police & Accused'

Coffee Table
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The Punjab and Haryana High Court has held that a consistent failure on the part of investigating authorities to send forensic samples for examination indicates collusion between the police officials and the accused. The Court observed that the scientific evidence in all cases should be collected at the earliest, and all the samples must be sent to FSL, without any delay. The Court was hearing a criminal revision petition filed by the accused challenging the order of the trial Court directing him to provide a blood sample for DNA profiling and comparison. During

the course of proceedings, the Court examined the steps taken by the investigating agency in collecting and forwarding forensic evidence. The record showed that samples, including saliva, clothes of the prosecutrix and sample seals were initially sent to the forensic laboratory on 23.04.2021, but were returned due to objections raised by the laboratory. The samples were again deposited thereafter; however, despite objections being raised again, no further steps were taken to send the samples back to the forensic laboratory. The Court took note of the cross-examination of ASI Sewa Singh, which revealed that after the

samples were returned, they were neither properly re-sent nor pursued for forensic examination. The Court found that there was a complete lack of diligence in ensuring that scientific evidence was processed in a timely manner. It noted that the prosecution had rightly moved an application for obtaining the blood sample of the accused in this context. On examining the sequence of events, the Court found that despite multiple opportunities, the investigating agency failed to take effective steps to ensure forensic analysis. It observed that no efforts were made after 27.04.2021 to send the samples to the forensic

laboratory. The Court observed that the consistent failure to send samples for forensic examination suggested an "unholy collusion" between the police officials and the accused. Accordingly, the High Court directed the Director General of Police, Chandigarh, to depute an IPS officer to conduct an enquiry into the matter and conclude the same within two weeks from receipt of the order. It further directed the DGP to issue necessary instructions to all investigating officers to ensure the timely collection of scientific evidence and prompt dispatch of samples to forensic laboratories in future cases.

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Lok Sabha passes AP Reorganisation (Amendment) Bill; YSRCP MPs walk out

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NEW DELHI: The Lok Sabha on Wednesday passed the Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation (Amendment) Bill, 2026, seeking to recognise Amaravati as the sole and permanent capital of Andhra Pradesh, with the opposition Congress also supporting it along with the NDA. Once the bill becomes a law, Amaravati will be the sole and permanent capital of Andhra Pradesh with retrospective effect from June 2, 2024. However, opposing the bill during the debate, YSR Congress Party MPs staged a walk out. The bill was passed by a voice vote, fulfilling the aspiration of Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu, whose party TDP is a key ally of the ruling NDA. Responding to a nearly two-hour-long debate on the Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation (Amendment) Bill, Union Minister of State for Home Nityanand Rai thanked members for supporting the



Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly resolution that urged the Centre to provide legal backing to Amaravati as the State capital. Initiating the debate on the bill, Congress MP Manickam Tagore said his party fully supports the legislation but wants special status for AP as promised at the time of State bifurcation. "Let Amaravati develop like Bengaluru, Chennai or Hyderabad. Let Visakhapatnam, Tirupati and Kurnool also develop. We support Amaravati as the permanent capital of AP," he said. TDP member and Union Minister

of State for Rural Development and Communications Chandra Sekhar Pemmasani appealed to the House to pass the bill unanimously as it will ensure a permanent capital for Andhra Pradesh. Opposing the bill, YSRCP member PV Midhun Reddy said 34,000 acres were acquired by the State government for the development of Amaravati as the capital with the promise of giving free developed plots, a housing scheme and free education for the children of the affected people. However, nothing has been given to them so far. "They are not bothered about

farmers. Give a specific date, a specific timeline - when the plots will be given to the farmers. Incorporate all these points in the bill. Otherwise, there is no meaning," the YSRCP MP said. He alleged that the TDP-led NDA government in the State was not concerned about where the huge amount of funds would come from for the development of such a large capital. Supporting the bill, BJP member C M Ramesh said this is the first time in the history of independent India that a bill was brought to Parliament to declare a particular place as the capital of a State.

From now onwards, "no one will be able to play" with the capital of Andhra Pradesh as Amaravati will be the sole and permanent capital of the State, he said. Ramesh termed the proposal to have three capitals by the previous YSRCP regime as "illogical and irrational". We want a permanent capital for Andhra Pradesh and then there will be revenue and the State will flourish," he said. On March 28, the AP Legislative Assembly passed a resolution requesting the Centre to amend Section 5 of the AP Reorganisation Act, 2014 to incorporate the name of "Amaravati" as the new capital of Andhra Pradesh. To give effect to the resolution of the Legislative Assembly, and to provide "statutory clarity regarding the capital" of AP, the bill proposes to amend Sub-section (2) of Section 5 of the reorganisation law to incorporate the name of "Amaravati" as the new capital of AP with retrospective effect from June 2, 2024.

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VIJAYAWADA: Andhra Pradesh has achieved a 10% increase in the net GST collection in March 2026. Additionally, the State recorded an overall growth of 6% for the financial year 2025-26, marking a significant accomplishment in the current economic scenario. According to Chief Commissioner (State Taxes) Babu A, the growth was realised despite numerous structural and policy-related challenges, particularly the effects of GST 2.0 reforms. These reforms, designed to streamline tax rates and simplify the tax system, led to reductions in applicable rates across various sectors, thereby putting pressure on revenue collection. Despite such inherent limitations and revenue compression, the Commercial Taxes Department has shown strong administrative resilience by not only stabilising the collection but also realising growth. This reflects the effectiveness of

strategic interventions, enhanced compliance mechanisms, and a tech-driven tax administration approach, he said. The net GST collection for March 2026 reached Rs 3,316 crore, the highest ever for the month. The total includes GST compensation amount of Rs 193 crore. For the financial year (April-March 2026), the net GST collections have exceeded those of the same months in the previous fiscal, indicating consistent and sustained growth in economic activity and consumption in the State. Compared to March 2025, the net GST collection rose by 9.97%, demonstrating strong performance. The gross GST collection, excluding cess, for March 2026 reached Rs 3,773 crore despite reduction in tax rates on several products and the removal of cess on sin goods. Overall, Andhra Pradesh showed stable, above-average growth, better revenue performance compared to most neighbouring States. The effective tax administration has put it in a favourable position both

regionally and nationally. The State GST (SGST) collection reached Rs 1,415.84 crore in March 2026, marking a 1.17% increase over the same month in 2025. This growth indicates improved consumption patterns across sectors, effective tax administration, and strengthened enforcement mechanisms. A key focus during the year was systematically identifying and enforcing IGST Input Tax Credit (ITC) reversals in cases of ineligible or excessive claims. As IGST credit usage directly impacts SGST revenue, the department adopted a data-driven approach, utilising return analytics (GSTR-1, GSTR-2A/2B, and GSTR-3B) to identify discrepancies early. The Centre has settled Rs 1,706.76 crore of IGST for March 2026 to Andhra Pradesh, which is Rs 91.35 crore (5.65%) more than the settlement during the same period in 2025 (Rs 1,615.45 crore), and Rs 286.90 crore (20.21%) higher than 2024 (Rs 1,419.89 crore).

Rahul Gandhi calls Himanta 'most corrupt CM'; alleges 'land ATM' run by BJP leadership in Assam

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Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Thursday launched a sharp attack on Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, saying he is "the most corrupt Chief Minister in India" and accusing the BJP leadership of facilitating large-scale land transfers to corporates in the State. Addressing an election rally in Bokajan in support of Congress candidate Ratn Engti, Gandhi said that Sarma, along with Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah, had created a "land ATM" in Assam. Gandhi claimed that three big corporate houses have been handed over a total of 98,400 bighas of land in Assam. "These lands were snatched from the people. Narendra Modi, Amit Shah and Himanta Biswa Sarma have made a land ATM in Assam. They snatch



land from the people and give it to big industrialists," he added. Gandhi asserted that a Congress government would initiate action against the Chief Minister. "He may appear confident now, but he will fall silent once proceedings begin," he said. Talking about celebrated musician Garg, who died in Singapore by drowning in September last year, Gandhi said he stood for the state and its

people. "He did not stand for one person, one community, one language or one history. He reflected the spirit of the multi-cultural, multi-religious tradition of Assam. Once we come to power, we will deliver justice within 100 days, and it is 100 per cent sure," he added. Gandhi also asserted that Congress believes in decentralisation, while the BJP is trying to run Assam from Delhi. He said the

Congress would fully implement Article 244(A) of the Constitution to grant greater autonomy to Karbi Anglong and other Sixth Schedule areas, ensuring governance by local communities. Gandhi also slammed the India-US trade engagement, alleging that it had disadvantaged India by lowering tariffs on American goods and opening domestic markets.

Delhi records decline in crimes against women in 2025

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NEW DELHI: The national capital witnessed a marginal decline in crime against women, children and the elderly in 2025 compared to 2024 and 2023. A total of 12,458 cases of crimes against women, 7,413 against children, and 1,227 against elderly persons were registered during the year, the Rajya Sabha was informed on Wednesday. In a written reply, Minister of State for Home Affairs Nityanand Rai said that 13,195 cases of crimes against women, 7,636 against children, and 1,267 against the elderly were registered in 2024. The number of such cases in 2023 was 13,208, 7,769, and 1,361,



respectively. To a question on the number of posts currently vacant in the Delhi Police against their total sanctioned strength, the reply mentioned that the Delhi Police currently has 14,140 vacant posts, of which 13,958 are at the constable to inspector level. The sanctioned strength of constable to inspector level is 96,817, ACP level 346, and Additional DCP and above level is 168. Meanwhile, there are 152 posts vacant at the ACP level and 30 at the

additional DCP and above level. women's help desks and modern resources are available in all police stations of Delhi. Further, cyber police stations are functional in all 15 police districts of Delhi. Delhi Police has taken several concrete measures to strengthen law and order in the capital, which inter alia include dynamic identification of crime-prone areas and deployment of police resources including pickets, foot patrolling, PCR vans and

emergency response vehicles (ERVs) to enhance visibility and prevent crime; identification, surveillance and arrest of active criminals; integrated patrolling by local police, PCR staff and traffic police; and community policing programmes, the answer added. 12K cases reported in '25 compared to 13K the yr before. A total of 12,458 cases of crimes against women, 7,413 against children, and 1,227 against elderly persons were registered during the year. For comparison, 13,195 cases of crimes against women, 7,636 against children, and 1,267 against the elderly were registered in 2024.

BJP may rename TN as 'Dakshina Pradesh' if they come to power: CM Stalin

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TIRUCHY/KARUR: Chief Minister M K Stalin on Wednesday said the Dravidian model "super-fast engine will not bow down before the BJP's dabba engine" even as he alleged that if BJP and its allies assumed power in the state, they will not hesitate to even change Tamil Nadu's name into "Dakshina Pradesh". Addressing a public meeting at Thennur Uzhavar Sandhai grounds in Tiruchy, Stalin asked Prime Minister

Narendra Modi to stay in Tamil Nadu for a week to understand its development model and governance outcomes. "Let the PM come to TN and stay here for a week to see how the state is progressing in all sectors," Stalin said. Campaigning for DMK-led Secular Progressive Alliance candidates, including K N Nehru (Tiruchy West), Inigo Irudhayaraj (Tiruchy East), and Anbil Mahesh Poyyamozhi (Tiruverumbur), the CM expressed confidence that the



alliance would repeat its 2021 clean sweep of nine Assembly segments in the district. Stating that TN's identity must be protected, Stalin said,

"Tamil Nadu should remain Tamil Nadu and not become a jungle of violence like Uttar Pradesh or Manipur. If they come to power, they

will not hesitate to even rename TN as 'Dakshina Pradesh'." Alleging that the BJP-ruled states such as UP and Manipur fare poorly on women's

safety, he said, "Crimes against women are higher there, but TN remains a safe and progressive state." The DMK president also accused AIADMK, led by Edappadi K Palaniswami, of wearing a mask of the BJP. "They have mortgaged the interests of Tamil Nadu to the BJP to save themselves from central agencies (corruption charges)," Stalin alleged, questioning why BJP has not projected Palaniswami as the chief ministerial candidate for the

upcoming polls. AIADMK supported CAA in the Rajya Sabha, enabling its passage, along with PMK and when protests erupted against that amendment, "thousands were attacked," and around 70 people were killed, the CM alleged and claimed that "their bloodstain is on the hands of AIADMK." Yet during the 2024 LS election, when AIADMK faced polls all alone, the AIADMK chief reversed his stance and criticised CAA as a historical mistake.

"Now, does he support or oppose it?" the DMK chief asked. Referring to a recent controversy in Madurai, the CM said, "At a BJP rally, a cut-out of Periyar E V Ramasamy was removed at their behest. This shows the subservience of AIADMK." He also criticised the party's support for the Citizenship Amendment Act and the three contentious central farm laws (now repealed), alleging these decisions were against minorities and farmers.

Trump underestimated Iran's resilience. Now there is only one way out of the war

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For all their claims of military success in their war with Iran, the United States and Israel have yet to clearly define their rationale for starting the conflict, their goals and their exit strategy. With the Iranian regime having mounted a robust response, the Middle East has been plunged into an unnecessary confrontation with no end in sight. When US President Donald Trump and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu started this war a month ago, they didn't have a clear understanding of the nature of the Iranian regime and its defensive capability. They didn't expect Tehran to counter their offensives with an unprecedented level of preparedness, striking US bases across the Persian Gulf and hitting Israel hard. Nor did they anticipate Tehran would close the Strait of Hormuz, partially or fully, to cause a shortage of oil and gas with severe consequences for the global economy. Driven by an embrace of military power, they acted on a belief that American and Israeli might from the air and sea would force the Islamic government to quickly capitulate, enabling the Iranian people to instigate a favourable regime change – something that has not transpired. With a military victory now looking increasingly elusive, Trump will need to pivot to a diplomatic solution – and force Netanyahu to comply. Prior to the war, the Islamic government was under enormous domestic pressure and international criticism for its suppression of widespread public protests that left thousands of Iranians dead. The regime was also struggling to come to terms with Israel's degradation of its regional affiliates, Hamas and Hezbollah in particular, not to



mention the fall of Bashar al-Assad's dictatorship in Syria. While distrustful of Trump, it felt compelled to enter into negotiations with the US once more for a viable settlement of its controversial nuclear program. In late February, the chief mediator, the Omani foreign minister, said a deal was within reach. When the US and Israel attacked instead, it gave the Islamic government a different sort of opportunity: it could demonstrate the resilience it had spent decades building. Iran's system of authority, governance and security was structured to withstand the loss of its leaders and commanders. The regime had shown this in the 1980s in the face of stiff internal opposition, the eight-year war with Iraq, US efforts to contain it and regional hostility. The Islamic government has also managed to survive despite its theocratic impositions, frequent public uprisings and domestic and foreign policy shortfalls. The reasons for this include: the belief of many Shia Muslims in revolutionary Islamism its combination of ideological rigidity and pragmatic flexibility, a dedicated and entrenched security, intelligence and administrative apparatus whose survival is dependent on the regime's survival. While many Iranians have wanted to see the back of the Islamic government,

most are still very proud of their cultural and civilisational heritage. They don't like to see Iran being subjected to outside aggression, destruction and humiliation. This explains why many Iranians have rallied around the flag, as they have historically done against outside aggression. Knowing it cannot match the firepower of the US and Israel, the Islamic government has shown ingenuity in creating a "mosaic defence" strategy of asymmetrical warfare. This entails adapting and responding to US military weaknesses (for instance, by targeting US bases in Persian Gulf countries with drones and missiles) and decentralising its command structure so leaders can quickly be replaced when they are killed. The regime has been assisted by Russia and China with supplies of dual-use technologies and revenue from oil imports. Russia has also reportedly been giving Iran intelligence on the location of US assets in the region. And although Iran's regional affiliates have been degraded, they are still capable of backing the Islamic Republic in the conflict. Both Hezbollah and the Yemeni Houthis have entered the war by targeting Israel. The Houthis may also attempt to disrupt shipping through the Red Sea. In short, the Iranian government is resolved to deny the US and Israel a victory at all costs. Given this,

the conflict has become a war of endurance. A deal is the only way out. How long the US, Israel and Iran stay in the fight is a matter of conjecture. However, as the situation stands, the space for a diplomatic resolution has very much tightened. Iran has not shown a desire to back down, and the US and Israel are not united in their goals. Trump may eventually settle for a deal on Iran's nuclear program and a potential reopening of the Strait of Hormuz, given the costs of the war and his falling poll numbers in a year of mid-term elections. But Netanyahu seems adamant in his pursuit. He wants to destroy the Islamic government and weaken the Iranian state as a regional actor. What is increasingly clear is the war is unlikely to end by military means. The only way forward is a negotiated settlement. The onus will therefore fall on Trump to pull Netanyahu into line and take the lead on trying to strike a deal. Some analysts have already concluded that no matter how the war ends, Iran is prevailing. Amin Saikal, Emeritus Professor of Middle Eastern Studies, Australian National University; The University of Western Australia; Victoria University. This article is republished from The Conversation under a Creative Commons license. Read the original article.

Over 20 Indian workers died abroad daily in last five years, most in Gulf nations: Govt data

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NEW DELHI: Disturbing statistics about the conditions of Indian workers abroad reveal that over 20 individuals have died on foreign soil each day over the past five years, with most fatalities occurring in Gulf nations. According to data provided by Minister of State for External Affairs Kirti Vardhan Singh in a written reply to the Rajya Sabha on January 29, the total number of Indian worker fatalities abroad reached 37,740 between 2021 and 2025. A breakdown of the cause of these deaths was not provided. The data showed that the highest number of deaths occurred in 2021, with 8,234 Indian workers losing their lives abroad. Following a



dip to 6,614 deaths in 2022, casualties have risen steadily year-on-year, reaching 7,291 in 2023, 7,747 in 2024, and 7,854 in 2025. Gulf countries accounted for over 86 per cent of these deaths. The United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Saudi Arabia recorded the highest number of casualties, with 12,380 and 11,757 deaths, respectively, in the five-year period. They were followed by Kuwait (3,890), Oman (2,821), Malaysia (1,915), and Qatar (1,760). During this

period, Indian missions overseas received 80,985 complaints of abuse, exploitation, and workplace grievances from Indian nationals. UAE accounted for the highest volume of these grievances, with 16,965 complaints registered between 2021 and 2025. It was followed by Kuwait (15,234), Oman (13,295), and Saudi Arabia (12,988). A 2018 PTI report, based on analyses of Right to Information (RTI) responses and Parliamentary

records highlighted by the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative (CHRI), showed that nearly 10 Indian workers died every day in the Gulf region between 2012 and mid-2018. The CHRI analysis noted that at least 24,570 Indian workers died across six Gulf nations, Bahrain, Oman, Qatar, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE during that six-and-a-half-year period. In comparison, the latest government data shows that 32,608 Indian workers died in Gulf nations, excluding Bahrain (figures absent in the reply), between 2021 and 2025. This translates to an average of nearly 18 worker deaths every day in the Gulf region alone over the last five years

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