

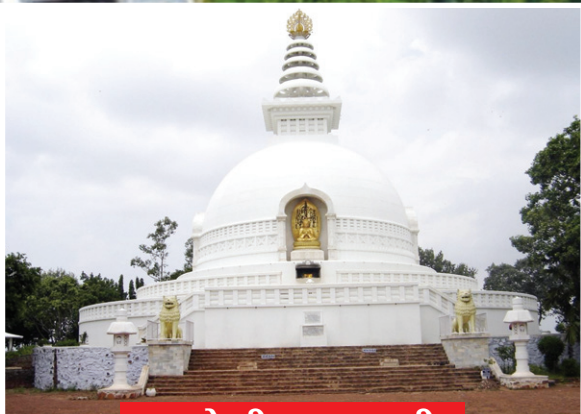
युमक्कड़ की पाती

मेरी यात्रा की शुरुआत दिल्ली से हुई। मैंने राजधानी एक्सप्रेस से पटना जाने का निर्णय लिया, क्योंकि ट्रेन यात्रा न केवल सुविधाजनक और किफायती होती है, बल्कि रास्ते में बदलते हुए नजारों का आनंद लेने का भी मौका देती है। ट्रेन में बैठते ही ऐसा लगा, जैसे एक अलग ही दुनिया की ओर कदम बढ़ा रहा हूँ। खिड़की के बाहर बदलते हुए दृश्य - हरियाली, गाँवों के छोटे-छोटे घर, नदियाँ और खेत सब कुछ बहुत सुकून भरा था। सहायत्रियों से बातचीत ने इस यात्रा को और भी रोचक बना दिया।

दिल्ली की भागदौड़ भरी जिंदगी से कुछ समय के लिए दूर जाने की योजना लंबे समय से मन में थी और जब राजगीर का नाम सुझाया गया तो मेरे मन में बौद्ध धर्म, प्राचीन इतिहास और शांतिपूर्ण वातावरण की छवियाँ तैरने लगीं। इस स्थान की ऐतिहासिक और सांस्कृतिक महत्ता ने मुझे इसकी ओर आकर्षित किया और मैंने तुरंत अपनी यात्रा की योजना बनाई। दिल्ली से अपनी यात्रा की शुरुआत की। दिल्ली से राजगीर की मेरी यात्रा न केवल एक भौगोलिक सफर थी, बल्कि यह आत्मा को ताजगी और दिमाग को नई ऊर्जा देने वाला अनुभव था। मेरी यात्रा की शुरुआत दिल्ली से हुई। मैंने राजधानी एक्सप्रेस से पटना जाने का निर्णय लिया, क्योंकि ट्रेन यात्रा न केवल सुविधाजनक और किफायती होती है, बल्कि रास्ते में बदलते हुए नजारों का आनंद लेने का भी मौका देती है। ट्रेन में बैठते ही ऐसा लगा, जैसे एक अलग ही दुनिया की ओर कदम बढ़ा रहा हूँ। खिड़की के बाहर बदलते हुए दृश्य

- हरियाली, गाँवों के छोटे-छोटे घर, नदियाँ और खेत सब कुछ बहुत सुकून भरा था। सहायत्रियों से बातचीत ने इस यात्रा को और भी रोचक बना दिया। करीब 12 घंटे की यात्रा के बाद मैं पटना पहुँचा। पटना, जिसे प्राचीन समय में पाटलिपुत्र कहा जाता था, बिहार की राजधानी है और यह शहर अपने समृद्ध इतिहास और परंपरा के लिए जाना जाता है। यहाँ पहुँचते ही मैंने स्थानीय मिठाई खाजा का स्वाद लिया, जो यहाँ का प्रसिद्ध व्यंजन है। पटना से राजगीर की दूरी लगभग 100 किलोमीटर है, जिसे मैंने टैक्सी से तय किया। राजगीर पहुँचने का अनुभव मेरे लिए आत्मिक और अविस्मरणीय था। जैसे ही मैं इस ऐतिहासिक और प्राकृतिक सुंदरता से भरपूर स्थान पर पहुँचा, मुझे एक अनोखी शांति और सुकून का एहसास हुआ। चारों ओर फैली हरियाली, पहाड़ियों की छटा और वहाँ की ताजगी ने तुरंत ही मेरा मन मोह लिया। राजगीर की प्राचीनता और धार्मिक महत्ता यहाँ के वातावरण में महसूस की जा

सकती थी। पहाड़ी रास्तों और साफ हवा ने एक अलग ही ऊर्जा प्रदान की। स्थानीय लोगों की सादगी और उनका स्वागत करने का तरीका दिल को छू लेने वाला था। राजगीर के गर्म पानी के झरनों और बौद्ध धर्म से जुड़े स्थलों के दर्शन ने इस जगह को मेरे लिए और भी खास बना दिया। यहाँ की शांति ने मुझे भीतर से गहराई तक प्रभावित किया और मुझे महसूस हुआ कि यह जगह न केवल एक गंतव्य है, बल्कि आत्मिक शांति का स्रोत भी है। यात्रा के इस चरण में भी मैंने बहुत कुछ महसूस किया। रास्ते में गंगा नदी का दर्शन हुआ, जिसकी विशालता और पवित्रता मन को गहराई तक छू गई। बिहार के ग्रामीण इलाकों की सरलता और वहाँ के लोगों की सादगी ने मुझे प्रभावित किया। जैसे-जैसे राजगीर के करीब पहुँचता गया, हरियाली और पहाड़ियों का नजारा मेरी आँखों को सुकून देने लगा। राजगीर पहुँचते ही मुझे यहाँ की शांति और सौंदर्य ने घेर लिया। राजगीर में मेरी पहली मॉजिल



मखाने की लाजवाब खीर

स्थानीय खानपान ने मेरी यात्रा को और भी खास बना दिया। लिट्टी-चोखा, मखाने की खीर और सत्तू जैसे व्यंजनों का स्वाद लेना अपने आप में एक अलग अनुभव था। राजगीर के लोग बेहद मिलनसार और मेहमाननवाज हैं। उनसे बातचीत करके मैंने यहाँ की परंपराओं और रीति-रिवाजों के बारे में बहुत कुछ जाना।

विश्व शांति स्तूप थी। सफेद संगमरमर से निर्मित यह स्तूप शांति और ध्यान का प्रतीक है। यहाँ पहुँचने के लिए मैंने रोपवे का सहारा लिया, जो अपने आप में एक अनूठा अनुभव था। ऊपर से पूरे राजगीर का दृश्य मंत्रमुग्ध करने वाला था। स्तूप पर ध्यान और मौन ने मेरे मन को गहराई से प्रभावित किया। इसके बाद मैंने ग्रिधकूट पर्वत की ओर रुख किया जो बौद्ध धर्म के अनुयायियों के लिए विशेष महत्व

रखता है। यह माना जाता है कि यहीं भगवान बुद्ध ने धर्म चक्र प्रवर्तन किया था। पर्वत तक पहुँचने का पैदल सफर रोमांचक था। रास्ते में छोटे-छोटे पत्थर के शिलालेख और प्राकृतिक सुंदरता हर कदम पर मेरा स्वागत कर रही थी। राजगीर के गर्म पानी के झरने जिसे सप्तधारा के नाम से भी जाना जाता है मेरी यात्रा का एक और यादगार पड़ाव थे। इस झरने में स्नान करना, न केवल एक अलग

वेणुवन विहार भी दर्शनीय था। कमरे साफ-सुथरे और आवश्यक सुविधाओं से युक्त थे। हरियाली से भरा हुआ है और इसे भगवान बुद्ध का निवास स्थान माना जाता है। यहाँ की शांति और सुकून ने मेरे मन को गहराई से छुआ। राजगीर में बिताए गए दिनों में मैंने न केवल ऐतिहासिक और धार्मिक स्थलों का दर्शन किया, बल्कि यहाँ की संस्कृति और परंपराओं को भी करीब से महसूस किया। राजगीर में ठहरना एक सुकूनभरा और यादगार अनुभव था। मैंने शहर के केंद्र में स्थित एक छोटे लेकिन आरामदायक होटल में ठहरने का फैसला किया, जो बजट में था और सभी प्रमुख स्थानों के करीब था। कमरे साफ-सुथरे और आवश्यक सुविधाओं से युक्त थे। होटल के स्टाफ ने गर्मजोशी से मेरा स्वागत किया और स्थानीय जानकारी देने में काफी मदद की। सुबह के समय होटल की बालकनी से आसपास की पहाड़ियों और हरियाली का नजारा मन को शांति देता था। होटल के पास ही एक स्थानीय बाजार था, जहाँ से मैंने कुछ हस्तशिल्प और राजगीर की प्रसिद्ध वस्तुएँ खरीदीं। होटल की सरलता और आसपास का शांत वातावरण मेरी यात्रा को और भी खास बना गया। राजगीर का यह ठहराव मुझे हमेशा याद रहेगा।

ज्ञान व शांति का अनुभव जब मैं राजगीर से लौटने के लिए तैयार हुआ तो मेरे मन में शांति और ताजगी का एक अनोखा अनुभव था। इस यात्रा ने मुझे यह सिखाया कि जीवन की भागदौड़ में कभी-कभी हमें ठहरकर खुद को सुकून देना चाहिए। राजगीर जैसी जगह हमें न केवल इतिहास और संस्कृति का अनुभव कराती है बल्कि जीवन को सरलता और सादगी से जीने का महत्व भी समझाती है। दिल्ली लौटते समय ट्रेन में बैठे-बैठे मैंने सोचा कि यह यात्रा केवल एक गंतव्य तक पहुँचने की प्रक्रिया नहीं थी, बल्कि यह मेरे भीतर की यात्रा भी थी। राजगीर ने न केवल मेरे ज्ञान को समृद्ध किया, बल्कि मुझे शांति और आत्म-विक्षेपण का अद्भुत अनुभव भी दिया। यह यात्रा मेरे जीवन के उन पलों में से एक बन गई, जिसे मैं हमेशा संजोकर रखूँगा। अगर आप भी इतिहास, संस्कृति और प्रकृति के प्रेमी हैं तो राजगीर की यात्रा एक बार जरूर करना चाहिए।



Email- [thephotonnewsjharkhand@gmail.com](mailto:thephotonnewsjharkhand@gmail.com)

- हमें अपना फीडबैक, सुझाव या टिप्पणियाँ देने के लिए दिए गए बार कोड को स्कैन करें या मेल करें।
- आप हमें अपनी रचनाएं, कविता या आलेख भी भेज सकते हैं। जिसे हम अपने आने वाले अंक पर प्रकाशित करेंगे।

**राकेश कुमार पाण्डेय**  
सहायक प्राध्यापक/लेखक  
ग्रेजुएट कॉलेज, जमशेदपुर

## 'दुझ सा न कोई'

वर्णन क्या करूँ मैं, तेरे साथ का।  
वो प्यारा सा स्पर्श, तेरे हाथ का।  
हर थकान मेरी, मिटा जाती थी,  
वात्सल्य भरे शब्द, तेरी बात का।

जरा सी उदासी पर, परेशान होना।  
मेरी छोटी सफलता पर, गुमान होना।  
समय से घर न आऊँ, टाइम पर न खाऊँ।  
चेहरे पर तेरा, बनावटी उफान होना।।

रूठ जाऊँ कभी तो, बार-बार मनाना।  
गलती जब-जब हो, हरबार समझाना।  
उपमा उपमेय उपमान, दे दे कर मुझे ,  
जीवन की राह, लगातार बताना।।

यह कल्पित कवि की, कल्पना नहीं है ।  
हकीकत है यह, कोई सपना नहीं है।  
आभास पढ़कर यह, तुम्हें भी हुआ होगा।  
जगत में मां बाप सा, कोई अपना नहीं है।।

## ■ विमर्श

# आधुनिक समाज की नई वास्तविकता : ग्रे डिवोर्स

ग्रे डिवोर्स का मतलब है, उम्रदराज जोड़ों के बीच तलाक, विशेष रूप से वे जो 50 वर्ष से अधिक उम्र के होते हैं। इसे 'ग्रे' इसलिए कहा जाता है क्योंकि इसमें शामिल लोग आमतौर पर जीवन के उस पड़ाव में होते हैं जब उनके बाल सफेद होने लगते हैं। 32 वर्षों तक साथ रहने के बाद मशहूर गायक व संगीतकार शंकर महादेवन का पत्नी संग तलाक, जाने-माने क्रिकेटर रह चुके रवि शास्त्री का लंबे समय के बाद पत्नी रितु सिंह से तलाक हो जाना, फिल्म अभिनेत्री मलाइका अरोड़ा और अभिनेता अरबाज खान का लंबे समय के बाद अलग होना- बहुत कुछ सोचने पर मजबूर करती है। यह केवल सेलिब्रिटी तक ही सीमित नहीं है, आम जीवन में भी यह चलन तेजी से बढ़ रहा है। यह दशाता है कि उम्र, समय, या सामाजिक अपेक्षाएं अब रिश्तों को बांधने के लिए पर्याप्त नहीं रह गई हैं।

### मुख्य कारण :

बदलती प्राथमिकताएं- लंबे समय तक शदीशुदा रहने के बाद

कई बार व्यक्ति को यह महसूस होता है कि उनकी जिंदगी केवल समझौतों और दूसरों की उम्मीदों पर आधारित रही। बच्चों के बड़े हो जाने और सेटल हो जाने के बाद, माता-पिता खुद की जिंदगी पर ध्यान देते हैं और अगर संबंधों में संतोष नहीं है तो अलग होने का निर्णय लेते हैं। अब आधुनिक समाज इसे कलंक के रूप में नहीं देखता है, हमने इसे स्वीकार कर लिया है। आत्मनिर्भरता और स्वतंत्रता- महिलाओं का आत्मनिर्भर होना भी 'ग्रे डिवोर्स' का एक पहलू है अब महिलाएँ अपने जीवन के बड़े फैसले लेने की ताकत रखती हैं और अपनी मर्जी से जीवन जीने में सक्षम हैं। डिजिटल युग और डेटिंग एप्स का प्रभाव- आज के दौर में डेटिंग एप्स ने नए साथी की तलाश को आसान बना दिया है। बड़े शहरों में यह ट्रेंड बढ़ रहा है। जीवन की पुनर्रचना - 50 की उम्र के बाद कई लोग अपनी बाकी जिंदगी को नए तरीके से जीने की सोचते हैं। ग्रे डिवोर्स आधुनिक समाज की एक नई वास्तविकता है। यह

दिखाता है कि विवाह जैसे रिश्ते भी बदलती परिस्थितियों के साथ बदल सकते हैं। इसका मतलब यह नहीं कि विवाह का महत्व कम हो गया है, बल्कि यह इस बात का प्रतीक है कि लोग अब अपनी खुशियों और व्यक्तिगत संतुष्टि को प्राथमिकता देने लगे हैं। लेकिन यहाँ यह भी ध्यान देने अतिआवश्यक है कि तलाक के बाद की जिंदगी को संभालना आसान नहीं होता, खासकर जब उम्र ज्यादा हो। इस स्थिति में सामाजिक और मानसिक समर्थन बहुत मायने रखता है। सामाजिक स्वीकृति : तलाक और पुनर्विवाह जैसे विषय पहले वर्जित माने जाते थे, लेकिन अब समाज इसे स्वीकार करने लगा है। डेटिंग एप्स का प्रभाव : डिजिटल युग में, डेटिंग एप्स ने नए संबंध बनाने के अवसर बढ़ा दिए हैं, जिससे लोग अपने जीवन में नए साथी खोजने के लिए प्रेरित हो रहे हैं। हालाँकि, यह बदलाव हर किसी के लिए सही नहीं हो सकता। यह व्यक्तिगत प्राथमिकताओं और परिस्थितियों पर निर्भर करता है।



### क्या यह सही है

इस सवाल का जवाब आसान नहीं है। कुछ लोग इसे आत्म-संशुद्धिकरण का प्रतीक मानते हैं, जबकि कुछ इसे परंपरागत मूल्यों

के क्षरण के रूप में देखते हैं। हर व्यक्ति का अनुभव और निर्णय उसकी व्यक्तिगत परिस्थितियों और मानसिक स्थिति पर निर्भर करता है। यह चलन समाज के लिए एक संकेत है कि हमें रिश्तों को लेकर

अधिक संवेदनशील और सहनशील होने की जरूरत है। रिश्ते केवल सामाजिक दबाव या जिम्मेदारी के लिए नहीं, बल्कि परस्पर प्रेम, समझ और सम्मान के आधार पर टिकने चाहिए।



गीता दुबे











# बच्चा रहे हमेशा कॉन्फिडेंट इसके लिए उसे बोलना सिखाएं ये 5 स्ट्रॉंग लाइंस

कभी खुद को नहीं समझेगा किसी से कम ऐसी कई पंक्तियां हैं जो अगर बच्चा रोजाना खुद से कहने लगेगा तो उसका आत्मविश्वास भी तेजी से बढ़ेगा. जानिए कौनसी हैं ये कॉन्फिडेंस बढ़ाने वाली बातें. बहुत से बच्चे कम उम्र से ही कॉन्फिडेंट होते हैं. उन्हें किसी के सामने कुछ कहने या करके दिखाने में झिझक नहीं होती और ये बच्चे जीवन के हर क्षेत्र में आगे रहते हैं. लेकिन, इस कॉन्फिडेंस की वजह क्या होती है? इस कॉन्फिडेंस की वजह होती है बच्चे का खुद पर विश्वास करना. यह विश्वास बच्चों में अपने अंतर्मन में कही बातों से भी आता है तो कई बार माता-पिता की बातें बच्चों को आत्मविश्वासी बनाती हैं. अपने बच्चों को कॉन्फिडेंट बनाने के लिए आप भी उन्हें ऐसी पॉजिटिव बातें बोलना सिखा सकते हैं जिससे उनका आत्मविश्वास बढ़ने लगे. खुद से ये स्ट्रॉंग लाइंस

बोलकर ना सिर्फ बच्चों का कॉन्फिडेंस बढ़ेगा बल्कि किसी भी मुश्किल घड़ी से निकलने का हौसला भी उनमें आएगा. फ्रमैं जैसा हूं वैसे ही प्यार के काबिल हूंफ्र बच्चे का सेल्फ कॉन्फिडेंस बढ़ाने के लिए उसे यह पंक्ति सिखाई जा सकती है. बच्चों को समझाएं कि वे जैसे हैं वैसे ही मूल्यवान हैं और प्यार के काबिल हैं. अपनी सेल्फ वर्थ समझने के लिए उन्हें किसी की वेलिडेशन या रजामंदी की जरूरत नहीं है. फ्रमैं परेशानी का हल ढूंढ सकता हूंफ्र किसी भी मुश्किल से निकलने के लिए सबसे ज्यादा जरूरी होता है खुद पर विश्वास करना. माता-पिता को अपने बच्चे को यह बोलना जरूर सिखाना चाहिए कि वह किसी भी परेशानी का हल ढूंढ सकता है. जब कोई मुश्किल आए तो बच्चे को खुद से यह जरूर कहना चाहिए कि मैं किसी भी

परेशानी का हल ढूंढ सकता हूं. बच्चे का आत्मविश्वास ) बढ़ने लगेगा. फ्रमैं बहादुर हूं और मुझे हार नहीं माननी हैफ्र किसी परिस्थिति से पार पाने के लिए और हमेशा अपना बेस्ट देते रहने के लिए बच्चे को यह पंक्ति खुद से जरूर कहनी चाहिए. इससे बच्चे में कॉन्फिडेंस आता है. इससे बच्चा हार मानने के बजाय आगे बढ़ता जाता है. फ्रमेरे विचार मेटर करते हैंफ्र कई बार बच्चे किसी काम को इसलिए नहीं करते या फिर किसी के सामने अपनी बात रखने से झिझकते हैं क्योंकि उन्हें लगता है कि उनकी बात का कोई मूल्य नहीं है. लेकिन, बच्चे को यह समझाना और यह कहना सिखाना जरूरी है कि उसके विचार मेटर करते हैं. जब बच्चे खुद से यह कहने लगते हैं तो आत्मविश्वास के साथ अपनी बात को आगे रखना भी शुरू कर देते हैं.



फ्रमैं नई चीजें सीख सकता हूंफ्र बच्चों को खुद से यह जरूर कहना चाहिए कि वह नई चीजें सीख सकते हैं. इससे बच्चे किसी काम को सीखने (स्क्रिबल) से घबराते नहीं हैं. बच्चों में इस पंक्ति को कहने पर नई चीजें सीखने का कॉन्फिडेंस आता है.

## क्या होती है लाइटहाउस पैरेंटिंग, टीनेजर्स की परवरिश में आजमा सकते हैं यह यूनिक तरीका

आप टीनेजर बच्चों के माता-पिता हैं तो आपने पैरेंटिंग के अलग-अलग तरीकों के बारे में तो सुना ही होगा. लेकिन, क्या आप लाइटहाउस पैरेंटिंग के बारे में जानते हैं? यहां जानिए लाइटहाउस पैरेंटिंग क्या होती है और टीनेजर्स की परवरिश में कैसे काम आती है. परवरिश के अलग-अलग तरीकों में से ही एक है लाइटहाउस पैरेंटिंग. असल में लाइटहाउस पैरेंटिंग एक तरह की बैलेंस्ड पैरेंटिंग अप्रोच है जिसमें बच्चों को प्यार, सपोर्ट और गाइडेंस दी जाती है लेकिन साथ-साथ बाउंडरीज मेंटेन करना भी जरूरी होता है. इस पैरेंटिंग स्टाइल में माता-पिता बच्चे को एक सुरक्षित वातावरण देते हैं जिसमें बच्चे खुद को बेहतर तरह से एक्सप्रेस कर सकते हैं. इसमें बच्चे माता-पिता से अपने मन की बातें बिना डरे कह पाते हैं. यहां जानिए क्या होती है लाइटहाउस पैरेंटिंग और इसे कैसे आजमाया जा सकता है. बनाएं विलयर नियम लाइटहाउस पैरेंटिंग में आपको विलयर रूल्स बनाने होते हैं. आपको नियम बनाकर यह सुनिश्चित करना होता है कि बच्चे इन्हें गंभीरता से फॉलो करें. वही, स्पष्ट होना भी जरूरी है, जैसे अगर आप चाहते हैं कि बच्चा अपना फोन इस्तेमाल ना करे तो सीधेतौर पर उसे कहें कि फोन इस्तेमाल ना करे. तानों के जरिए बात कहने की कोशिस ना करें. कमजोरियों पर ना करें निंदा अगर बच्चे की कोई कमजोरी है तो उसकी सीधेतौर पर निंदा ना करें बल्कि समझें और उसे भी समझाएं कि कमजोरियों से सीखने की जरूरत होती है. चाहे गलती हो या फिर कोई कमी, इसे पूरा करने पर ध्यान दें ना कि बच्चे की निंद करके उसका मनोबल कमजोर करें. कोशिश के द पूरे नंबर किशोरावस्था ऐसी उम्र है जिसमें बच्चे अलग-अलग कामों को सीखने की कोशिश करते रहते हैं और अक्सर एक्सपेरिमेंट्स करते हैं. ऐसे में अगर बच्चे किसी काम में बुरे भी निकलते हैं और कभी-कभी उन्हें हार का मुंह भी देखना पड़ता है. ऐसे में बच्चे को उसकी कोशिश और एफर्ट्स के पूरे नंबर दें. रिजल्ट क्या निकला या क्या नहीं इससे ज्यादा जरूरी है बच्चे का हौसला बढ़ाना. बहुत ज्यादा कठोरना ना अपनाना इस पैरेंटिंग स्टाइल में इस बात का ध्यान रखा जाता है कि माता-पिता बच्चे के साथ बहुत ज्यादा कठोरता नहीं बरत रहे हैं. इस उम्र में बच्चे से बहुत ज्यादा कठोर व्यवहार किया जाए तो बच्चों में एक तरह का डर गहराने लगता है जिससे वे अपनी परेशानियां तक पैरेंट्स से कहने से डरने लगते हैं.



# हमेशा डांट-डंपटकर बच्चे को ना बनाएं दब्बू

## इन तरीकों से बढ़ाएं बच्चे का कॉन्फिडेंस

अगर आपको भी अपने बच्चे में कॉन्फिडेंस की कमी नजर आती है तो यहां जानिए किस तरह उसमें आत्मविश्वास लाया जा सकता है. इस तरह बच्चे जीवन में कभी भी और किसी से भी पीछे नहीं रहते हैं.

माता-पिता चाहते हैं कि बच्चे जीवन में हमेशा आगे बढ़ते रहें, कक्षा में सबसे अच्छा प्रदर्शन दिखाएं, दोस्तों के बीच पॉपुलर रहें और कभी उन्हें किसी से कमतर महसूस ना हो. ऐसे में पैरेंट्स बच्चों को अक्सर अनुशासित करने के लिए डांट-डंपट भी देते हैं. लेकिन, इस सख्ती से होता यह है कि बच्चे का कॉन्फिडेंस कम होने लगता है और वह झंपने लगता है. ऐसे में बच्चे की परवरिश में यह गलती आप बिल्कुल भी ना करें बल्कि उसे वो काम सिखाएं या इस तरह

उससे बताव करें जिससे वह आत्मविश्वासी बने और किसी मुश्किल से कभी घबराए नहीं. किसी काम को करने का सिखाएं सही तरीका अक्सर ही बच्चों में कॉन्फिडेंस की कमी इसलिए देखी जाती है क्योंकि उन्हें कोई काम सही तरह करने में दिक्कत होती है या फिर वे इस काम को सही तरह से करना नहीं जानते जिसकी वजह से उनकी खिल्ली उड़ाई जाती है. ऐसे में आप बच्चे का आत्मविश्वास बढ़ाने के लिए उसे इन कामों को सही तरह से करना सिखा सकते हैं. इससे अपने थार-दोस्तों के सामने भी बच्चे का कॉन्फिडेंस बना रहता है. बच्चे के विचारों को दबाएं नहीं – पैरेंट्स एक आम गलती यह कर देते हैं कि जब बच्चा अपने विचार उनके सामने रखता है तो वे उसकी बातों पर ध्यान नहीं देते. कई बार तो यह भी होता है कि बच्चा अगर थोड़ा भी खुलकर व्यवहार करता है तो पैरेंट्स उसे यह कहकर चुप करवा देते हैं कि इतराओ मत. ऐसे में बच्चे अपने

आपको एक्सप्रेस करने से कतराने लगते हैं. करें बच्चे की सराहना – बच्चा किसी चीज में बुरा होगा तो ऐसे भी बहुत से काम होंगे जिसमें वह सबसे अच्छा होगा या फिर जिन कामों को वह अच्छी तरह कर सकता है. इसीलिए बच्चे की सराहना करना जरूरी है. बच्चे को इससे कॉन्फिडेंस मिलता है और वह खुद को बेहतर करने की तरफ अग्रसर होता है. घर पर ही करवाएं कॉन्फिडेंस बढ़ाने वाली एक्टिविटीज – आप बच्चे को घर में ही अपने मन की बात कहने के लिए, सबके सामने कुछ गाकर सुनाने या डांस करने के लिए प्रोत्साहित कर सकते हैं. बच्चे को जो कुछ अच्छा लगता है वह सभी के सामने करके दिखाने में कंफर्टेबल है या नहीं उससे पूछें. धीरे-धीरे बच्चे अगर घर के सदस्यों के सामने बोलना या अपनी खूबियां दिखाना शुरू करते हैं तो बाहरी लोगों के सामने भी उन्हें कॉन्फिडेंट महसूस होने लगता है.

## इन 5 वजहों से माता-पिता की बात नहीं सुनते हैं बच्चे, समय रहते ध्यान देना है जरूरी

अक्सर ही बच्चे माता-पिता की बात को सुनकर भी अनसुना कर देते हैं. ऐसे में पैरेंट्स को यह समझाना जरूरी है कि बच्चे के इस तरह बताव करने की क्या वजह हो सकती है. बच्चों की परवरिश करना कोई आसान काम नहीं होता है. पैरेंट्स बच्चों के बड़े होने तक खुद भी जीवन से जुड़ी अनेक नई बातें सीखते हैं और लगातार सीखते जाते हैं. लेकिन, इस पूरे सफर में पैरेंट्स ऐसी गलतियां भी करते हैं जिनसे बच्चे की परवरिश पर असर पड़ता है. कई बार माता-पिता को यह देखकर हैरानी होती है कि बच्चे उनकी बात नहीं सुन रहे हैं या बात को सुनकर नजरअंदाज कर देते हैं. ऐसे में कई बार पैरेंट्स को यह समझने में दिक्कत होती है कि बच्चों के इस बताव की क्या वजह है. अगर आप भी बच्चों की इसी व्यवहार से परेशान हैं तो यहां जानिए किन वजहों से

बच्चे माता-पिता की बात को अनसुना करने लगते हैं. जरूरत से ज्यादा सख्ती अगर माता-पिता बच्चे पर जरूरत से ज्यादा सख्ती करने लगते हैं तो बच्चे उनकी बात सुनना बंद कर देते हैं. बच्चों को लगने लगता है कि पैरेंट्स की सख्ती से बचने का तरीका है उनकी बात ना मानना और आखिर में किसी भी बात को सुनने से इंकार कर देना. ऐसा बच्चे ज्यादातर पैरेंट्स से बदला लेने के लिए करते हैं. हमेशा चिल्लाकर बात करना पैरेंट्स अगर बच्चे पर हर समय ही चिल्लाते रहते हैं और उससे किसी भी काम को करने के लिए चिल्लाकर ही बात करते हैं तो इससे बच्चा घबरा जाता है. बच्चे को लगता है कि चुप रहकर और बातों को अनसुना करके

ही खुद को प्रोटेक्ट कर सकते हैं. बहुत ज्यादा नियम बच्चों पर अलग-अलग और ढेर सारे नियम थोप दिए जाने पर भी उन्हें अच्छा नहीं लगता है. बच्चे इन नियमों से तंग आकर पैरेंट्स की एक भी बात सुनना पसंद नहीं करते हैं और सोचते हैं कि इन नियमों के जवाब में अब वे हर काम को और हर बात को अनसुना कर देंगे. अटेंशन के लिए भी करते हैं कई बार बच्चे माता-पिता की बात इसलिए नहीं सुनते क्योंकि उन्हें अटेंशन चाहिए होता है. माता-पिता बच्चे पर ध्यान दें और उसके इस व्यवहार के लिए उससे आकर सवाल-जवाब करें इसीलिए बच्चे पैरेंट्स की बात नहीं सुनते, उन्हें इग्नोर करते हैं और उनसे उखड़ा-उखड़ा रवैया अपनाने लगते हैं.



## बच्चे को होता है सेल्फ डाउट और खुद को समझता है सबसे कमतर

### तो पैरेंट्स इन 4 तरीकों से बढ़ाएं उसका कॉन्फिडेंस

आपका बच्चा अगर खुद पर विश्वास नहीं करता है और सेल्फ डाउट से घिरा रहता है तो यहां जानिए किस तरह उसका आत्मविश्वास बढ़ाया जा सकता है.

माता-पिता को अक्सर लगता है कि बच्चों को जीवन में किसी तरह की परेशानी नहीं होती या फिर बच्चों पर कोई जिम्मेदारी नहीं होती इसीलिए उन्हें हर स्थिति में खुश रहना चाहिए. लेकिन, ऐसी बहुत सी चीजें हैं जिनसे बच्चे अकेले गुजरते रहते हैं. बच्चे खुद की तुलना दूसरे बच्चों से करने लगते हैं, हर किसी की डांट सुनकर खुद को सबसे कम समझने लगते हैं, उनपर अच्छी परफॉर्मेंस का प्रेशर होता है तो साथ ही उनकी भावनाएं कई बार माता-पिता या दोस्त कोई नहीं समझ पाता जिससे बच्चे खुद को अकेला महसूस करते हैं. इसके अलावा, अक्सर ही बच्चे सेल्फ डाउट में पड़ जाते हैं और अपना आत्मविश्वास खो देते हैं. ऐसे में माता-पिता बच्चे को समझते हुए उसे इस दुविधा से निकालने की कोशिश कर सकते हैं. अगर आपको लगता है कि आपका बच्चा सेल्फ डाउट में रहता है, कॉन्फिडेंट फील नहीं करता और खुद को दूसरे बच्चों से कम समझता है तो यहां जानिए किस तरह बच्चे के आत्मविश्वास को बढ़ाने में मदद की जा सकती है.

नकारात्मक बातों को दूर करना सिखाएं बच्चे कई बार नकारात्मक और सकारात्मक बातों में अंतर करना नहीं जानते और इसीलिए कुछ बुरा भी हो तो उसे अपने अंदर दबाए रखते हैं. यही नकारात्मक बातें बच्चों को अंदर ही अंदर खाने लगती हैं. ऐसे में बच्चों को सिखाएं कि किस तरह नकारात्मक बातों को पहचानकर उनसे दूरी बनाई जा सकती है. नकारात्मक भावनाओं को दूर करके ही सेल्फ डाउट से छुटकारा पाया जा सकता है.

स्ट्रेंथ पर फोकस करना बच्चे को उसकी स्ट्रेंथ पर फोकस करना सिखाएं. जिन कामों में बच्चा अच्छा है उन कामों में खुद को वह और कैसे बेहतर बनाए और किस तरह अपनी सफलताओं से कॉन्फिडेंट महसूस करे यह उसे बताएं. इससे आत्मविश्वास तो बढ़ता ही है, साथ ही बच्चों में सकारात्मक विचारों का संचार होता है.

हार लेकर ना बैठना बच्चा अगर अपनी गलतियों या हार के बोझ तले बैठा रहेगा तो यकीनन इससे उसका आत्मविश्वास कम होगा. ऐसे में बच्चे को सिखाएं कि जीवन में जीत और हार लगे रहते हैं, लेकिन हार को लेकर बैठना और खुद को हारा हुआ महसूस करना सही नहीं है. हार से सीखना और आगे बढ़ते रहना जरूरी होता है.

आत्मनिर्भर होना अगर बच्चे को लगता है कि वह कोई भी काम खुद से नहीं कर सकता या फिर उसे हर काम को करने के लिए किसी की जरूरत है, तो यह उसकी लो सेल्फ एस्टीम को दर्शाता है. ऐसे में पैरेंट्स के लिए जरूरी है कि वे कम उम्र से ही बच्चे को आत्मनिर्भर होना सिखाएं. कम से कम छोटे-मोटे काम और जिम्मेदारियां बच्चा खुद उठाने लगे जिससे उसके सेल्फ कॉन्फिडेंस में वृद्धि हो.







## India-Afghan relations beyond Pakistan’s shadow

The upscaling of India's relations with Afghanistan is not sudden and Pakistan-centric. The 90-minute warm exchanges between Indian Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri and Afghan Acting Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi last week in Dubai in the aftermath of the deteriorating Afghanistan-Pakistan relations were a coincidence.The Afghan Foreign Office stated that the meeting conformed to its determination to strengthen political and economic ties with India "as a significant regional and economic partner." India is equally determined to continue to connect with Afghans and prevent the hiatus that existed from the mid-1990s to 2001 (during the factional warfare within the Mujahideen government and the rule of the Taliban) when the Indian embassy and consulates remained shut.The Indian decision to step up India-Afghanistan relations is in line with India's progressive engagement with the Taliban. JP Singh, Indian government's point person for Afghanistan, pursued this periodically through contacts with the relevant Afghan authorities. Over time, both sides felt the need to expand their relations beyond humanitarian assistance from India in foodgrains, pesticides, vaccines, medicines and de-addiction and relief materials. Although the Taliban regime is non-inclusive and mistreats minorities and women, the law-and-order situation has improved and opium cultivation has almost gone. Isolating the Taliban is unlikely to moderate them.

The conspiracy-obsessed Pakistani social media is viewing the Dubai meeting as a plot hatched against it. Its commentators invariably see any growing closeness between India and Afghanistan as two sides of a nutcracker trying to crush Pakistan. They disregard India's stake in Afghanistan's stability, the traditional connection between Indians and Afghans and the Indian security consideration (to assure itself that Afghan territory is not used by terrorist groups against India). India meets its strategic objective if Afghanistan can stand on its feet and make its own decisions.The establishment of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan led to triumphalism in Pakistan. The Taliban bristles at the suggestion that it is a Pakistani puppet. The Pakistani euphoria has since turned to disquiet because of the refusal of the Taliban leadership to accept its tutelage. To pressure the Taliban, Pakistan has pushed back Afghan refugees at a time when the authorities in Kabul cannot handle the numbers. Pakistani actions have resulted in unfriendly relations with three of its five neighbours — Afghanistan, India and Iran.Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif described the recent Pakistani cross-border military strikes as a "teeth-breaking response" to the Taliban's perceived non-cooperation in curbing the activities of the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan. Besides, Pakistan has a grudge against the Afghan refusal to acknowledge the Durand Line as the frontier between Afghanistan and Pakistan. Following border skirmishes between the two, Pakistani aerial bombardment of 83 locations in Afghanistan led to many civilian deaths, including women and children. The Pakistani punitive strikes have been "unequivocally" condemned by the Indian External Affairs Ministry spokesperson.The former army chief of Pakistan, General Ashfaq Parvez Kayani, altered the erstwhile Pakistani idea of establishing 'strategic depth' in Afghanistan — propounded by one of his distant predecessors, General Mirza Aslam Beg — by qualifying that Pakistan should do so without control over Afghanistan.The Pakistani establishment has done the opposite — not just eschewing the quest for control but also engaging in aggression against Afghanistan. No wonder, the Afghan reaction is fierce. Acting Deputy Foreign Minister Sher Mohammad Abbas Stanikzai reminded Pakistan that though Pakistan had named its missiles Ghaznavi, Abdali and Babur, it should remember that Afghanistan had.

## Political lessons of AAP’s Delhi school model

India’s education system is in urgent need for reform, yet in the rough and tumble of electoral promises, education rarely makes an appearance.

One of the biggest puzzles about Indian politics is the near absence of political competition around public goods like education (and health) in the electoral battlefield. It simply does not get as much public debate as it deserves, This is particularly puzzling because Indians care deeply about education and recognise it as the path to better jobs and mobility.

India achieved near-universal enrolment in elementary education in the mid-2000s and it has stayed steady since; enrolment in secondary schools has been growing, as has the market for private schools and private tuitions. Between 2000 and 2022, the number of people with secondary education or higher levels doubled.However, most students are receiving an education of shoddy quality. At the elementary level, as ASER reports repeatedly remind us, just about 50 per cent (pre-Covid) of students in Class V can read a Class II textbook. This figure increases at the secondary level. The intense competition and scandals around competitive exams for higher education and the increasing unemployment rates amongst educated youth in India are testimony to this.India's education system is in urgent need for reform. Yet, in the rough and tumble of electoral promises, education rarely makes an appearance. While parties compete over subsidies and cash transfers, their silence on public goods like education is conspicuous. This is where the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) in Delhi stood out. Soon after coming to power in 2015, the government announced its mission to ‘revolutionise’ education in Delhi. Despite the ups and downs through its decade in power, the party repeatedly deployed education as its key differentiator, the lynchpin of its "Delhi model". The party stood out because it made education an electoral issue.Today, a lot of this is being lost in the ugliness that has become the norm in election campaigns. The AAP, too, is shifting focus. It is looking more like its peers, doling out direct benefit cash transfers to women and playing the Hindutva game.Elections are a time to reflect on the big shifts that parties have engendered. The AAP's work on education was not without critique, but it was substantive. It offers a site to engage with the challenges of our education system.For several years, I had the opportunity, along with a team of researchers, to observe AAP's education reforms as they unfolded in Delhi's elementary schools (classes VI-VIII). In a recently published book, 'Lessons in State Capacity from Delhi's Schools', we reflect on what we had learnt. Most discussions on Delhi's education revolution focus on enhanced budgetary provisions and improvements in school infrastructure.But to me, what really stood out was the willingness to acknowledge and open a political dialogue on the fundamental challenge confronting the Indian education system: the obsession with mastering examinations through rote-learning. This is a system



obsessed with syllabus-completion rather than subject-mastery, with the goal of ensuring that the best students are made exam-ready. For teachers, pass percentages are the key metric to which they are held accountable by both the school system and parents. Rote-learning is the primary means to this end.I refer to this as the classroom consensus. It works for the best students, but for those left behind, the tyranny of syllabus completion and pass percentages has meant that the classroom simply does not cater to them. As Manish Sisodia, the architect of Delhi's school reforms, has said, the classroom is a victim of the curriculum, syllabus and textbooks.Much of what the Delhi education revolution did was aimed at disrupting the classroom consensus by experimenting with ways to ensure that basic, foundational literacy and numeracy skills were imparted to all students. It included infrastructure upgradation, building a cadre of mentor teachers, improving in-service training and exposure visits around the world, infusing campaigns to build foundational literacy and numeracy skills, along with aligning classrooms within a grade according to student learning levels (how close students were to curriculum level expectations).None of this was unchallenged. In schools, amongst teachers and educationists, questions were asked, debates held and ideas critiqued.Moreover, versions of these reform ideas have been tried out in some other states and in different ways, but rarely as a political project and never for long enough to disrupt the classroom consensus.Change was hard. There was confusion, resistance and active pushback at the school level. The spectre of syllabus-completion and examinations loomed, causing confusion in the messaging. Over time, a subtle but important shift took place. Consistent engagement

was held with schools on the dynamics of the classroom. Teachers were exposed to different ways students could acquire basic skills outside the framework of the syllabus-examination nexus. Regular ‘missions’ that focussed on improving basic literacy and numeracy were infused. All this shifted the conversation.Teachers still spoke about students in terms of their exam-readiness, but now the gaps in student learning levels and the distance between curriculum expectations and the student in the last row of the classroom had entered the conversation, preparing the ground for a deeper change.There are lessons in this package of reform efforts for other states on how to improve foundational literacy and numeracy in primary schools, which is a key goal of the Union government's New Education Policy, 2021.Throughout the early years, a consistent attempt was made to make parent-teacher dialogue on student learning a routine through widely publicised mega parent-teacher meetings. Such engagement in government schools is rare. The quality of the mega parent teacher meetings was variable, but the political support they received and the stated goal of shifting the societal dialogue on education was important and a first for India. With the AAP's political battles in Delhi, the momentum for reforms in the government's second term slowed down.But it is important to recognise that in a political culture where welfare obligations of the state have been reduced to cash handouts, where bigotry, hate and the worst forms of identity politics are the primary offerings that politicians take to the hustings, for the first time, education was brought into the political discourse.This was significant and deserves attention in the cacophony of ugly, coarse political rhetoric that is now the norm in our electoral discourse.

## Ace in space

Docking of satellites a new high for India

Getting off to a flying start in the new year under a new chief, the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has achieved yet another milestone by successfully performing the docking of satellites as a part of the Space Docking Experiment (SpaDeX). This exercise is expected to make the country better equipped for more ambitious and complex missions such as the Bharatiya Antriksha Station, Chandrayaan-4 and Gaganyaan. India’s stature in space has gone up a few notches as it has become the fourth country — after the US, Russia and China — to accomplish the feat. It is remarkable that ISRO has bounced back from the Chandrayaan-2 heartbreak of 2019 to make rapid strides in the past couple of years, especially the Chandrayaan-3 soft-landing in 2023.

The strategic importance of the space sector cannot be overemphasised. The SpaDeX success comes amid a



fierce race between the US and China, which are both going all out to send a crew to the moon — the first since NASA's Apollo programme conducted its final mission in 1972. Just a few weeks ago, China accused

America of initiating “dangerous actions” to jeopardise global strategic stability after the US Space Force stationed a unit in Japan. Beijing itself has been speedily expanding its military capabilities in space. President Xi Jinping’s “eternal dream” of building China into a space power has an ominous ring to it. This is worrisome not only for the US but also for its ally India, whose relations with China continue to be uneasy despite recent signs of a thaw.

The Chinese challenge makes it imperative for India to develop cutting-edge capabilities to protect its space assets such as satellites and indigenous launch vehicles. This should go hand in hand with greater stress on research and innovation to ensure that the country’s space programme remains on course for human spaceflight and other key missions.

## Producing biochar a profitable alternative to stubble burning

The pyrolyser, a portable and automated machine, is transforming crop waste management by converting it into biochar directly in the field.

Agriculture, the backbone of global food security and economies, sustains billions of lives. However, the excessive use of fertilisers and pesticides since the Green Revolution has significantly degraded soil, depleting its carbon levels, a key indicator of soil health. Simultaneously, agriculture is a major contributor to climate change, with intensive farming practices releasing greenhouse gases (GHGs), such as carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide into the atmosphere.The challenges facing agriculture in India are multifaceted: demand for fair crop prices and assured procurement, effective stubble management, deteriorating soil health, lack of crop diversification, depleting water levels and rising food demand, driven by a growing population.

Addressing these challenges requires innovative solutions that safeguard farmers' livelihoods, boost incomes and reduce environmental harm. Recognising their role in shaping a sustainable future, farmers are willing to adopt eco-friendly practices like carbon-negative farming, provided their profits remain intact.Carbon-negative farming involves practices that remove more GHGs from the atmosphere than they emit. It surpasses carbon neutrality, which merely balances emissions with removals. This approach uses natural methods to capture carbon dioxide and store it in the soil, which is the best place for carbon.Practices like agroforestry, cover cropping and biochar enable this transformation, with biochar emerging as particularly effective. Biochar is a carbon-rich material produced by heating crop residues through pyrolysis, a high-temperature, low-oxygen process that sequesters carbon in the soil for centuries.

Globally, Bhutan, Suriname and Panama are recognised as carbon-negative, with Sikkim leading as India's first carbon-negative state. These examples highlight the feasibility and impact of sustainable practices at both global and local levels.

Carbon credits, a key driver of carbon-negative farming, offer farmers an opportunity to earn additional income. Each carbon credit certifies the removal of one metric tonne of carbon dioxide. These credits, calculated by using remote-sensing and AI-driven satellite data, enable farmers to monetise the carbon sequestered in their fields.As corporations strive for carbon neutrality, the demand for carbon credits is increasing rapidly. Private players are enrolling farmers in programmes that reward sustainable practices with carbon credits, positioning carbon-negative farming as both an environmental solution and a profitable venture.Crop residue management is one of agriculture's most pressing challenges. In Punjab and Haryana, stubble burning has escalated into a crisis, releasing massive GHGs and causing hazardous air pollution. This practice harms public health, degrades soil and pollutes the environment.A sustainable solution lies in producing biochar from stubble, unlike burning, which releases carbon into the atmosphere. Biochar locks carbon in the soil, transforming waste into a valuable resource.

The concept of biochar is not new. It dates back to ancient Amazonian agriculture, where it was used to create fertile "Terra Preta" soils that remain productive even today.Modern science has revived this practice, demonstrating its ability to improve soil health, enhance water retention, boost nutrient availability and reduce reliance on fertilisers. Farmers who adopt biochar often report increased yields and greater resilience to climate stresses within a single growing season.

However, scaling biochar production and adoption remain a significant challenge. In this context, the pyrolyser, a portable and automated machine developed by Applied Carbon, is transforming crop waste management by converting it into biochar directly in the field.The pyrolyser employs a high-temperature, low-oxygen

process powered by syngas, a byproduct of pyrolysis, making it self-sustaining. Designed for ease of use, it integrates seamlessly with tractors and harvesters. Once biochar is produced, it is quenched with water, enriched with nutrients or microbes tailored to farmers' needs, and immediately applied to the fields. This process not only enhances soil fertility but also allows farmers to earn carbon credits, turning sustainable practices into a source of additional income.India, with its vast agricultural landscape, stands to benefit immensely from carbon-



negative farming. Punjab, a cornerstone of the nation's food security, contributes 40-45 per cent of India's wheat and 28-30 per cent of its rice. However, this productivity comes with challenges like stubble management, soil degradation and declining soil fertility.A promising solution offered by the pyrolyser involves converting stubble into biochar. This approach enables farmers to improve soil health, reduce air pollution and earn additional income through carbon credits. It addresses

India's twin challenges of feeding a growing population and meeting international climate commitments.Applied Carbon's pyrolyser has gained global recognition, with five prototypes developed and \$21.5 million raised for large-scale production. Microsoft, committed to becoming carbon-negative by 2030 and offsetting all historical emissions by 2050, has shown a keen interest in this technology. This collaboration underscores the growing synergy between corporate sustainability goals and transformative agricultural practices and offers a blueprint for scaling such innovations.

However, scaling the pyrolyser technology requires policy support, adequate funding and active public-private partnerships. Governments should provide subsidies, promote localised manufacturing and facilitate collaboration with agricultural engineers, technologists and AI experts to tailor solutions for local farming needs. These measures can ensure the widespread adoption of carbon-negative farming practices.Carbon-negative farming represents a transformative shift in agriculture, evolving it from a contributor to climate change into a part of the solution. By addressing challenges like GHG emissions, soil degradation and farmer livelihoods, it aligns agriculture with the broader goals of sustainability and environmental health.Pyrolyser-based sustainable farming practices can be both environmentally and economically viable, allowing farmers to boost their incomes while contributing to a carbon-neutral and sustainable future.The benefits of carbon-negative farming extend far beyond individual farms. By improving soil health, strengthening food security and addressing stubble burning and climate change, it tackles critical global challenges. Adopting sustainable agriculture reflects a collective commitment to securing a healthier planet and a better future for generations to come.



**Hero launches four new products at the Auto Expo**

**NEW DELHI.** The country’s largest two-wheeler maker Hero MotoCorp launched four new products at the Bharat Mobility Global Expo 2025. The new models include the Hero Xoom 125 (R 86,900), Hero Xoom 160 (R1,48,500), Hero Xpulse 210 (R 1,75,800), and Hero Xtreme 250R (R1,79,900). All four products will be available for booking from February 2025, with deliveries expected to commence in March 2025. “Today two of our premium brands, Xtreme and Xpulse, have become even stronger. We have fortified our presence in the 125cc scooter segment and also ventured into the 160cc category with a Maxi Scooter,” said Niranjan Gupta, Chief Executive Officer, Hero MotoCorp. He added, “The launch of these new models on the back of an already strong portfolio, will further boost our growth journey as we enter the next fiscal.” Honda Motorcycle and Scooters India (HMSIL) also announced the prices of two electric scooters that were unveiled in November 2024. Prices for the affordable QC1 electric scooter start at R90,000 while the more premium Activa e starts at R1.17 lakh.

TVS Motor showcased multiple new concepts at the expo, the most important being the Jupiter CNG Concept. TVS said that riders will be able to switch between petrol and CNG instantly, and it will offer a range of 226km with running costs of less than R1 per kilometre. TVS-owned British luxury motorcycle maker Norton Motorcycles is showcasing the Norton V4CR - the most powerful café racer from the UK.

**Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited signs loan agreement worth Rs 31,802 crore**

**NEW DELHI.** BHARAT Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL) has signed a loan agreement worth R 31,802 crore with a consortium of six lenders led by the State Bank of India. The project, estimated to cost R 48,926 crore, aims to establish a petrochemical complex, including a 1.2 million metric tonnes per annum (MMTPA) ethylene cracker unit and an expansion of the refinery’s capacity from 7.8 MMTPA to 11 MMTPA.

This expansion will enable BPCL to produce downstream petrochemical products such as Linear Low-Density Polyethylene (LLDPE), High-Density Polyethylene (HDPE), Polypropylene (PP), and other aromatics, significantly reducing India’s dependence on imports.

“We are delighted to achieve financial closure for our Bina Refinery Expansion cum Petrochemical Project, which aligns with India’s broader strategy to boost industrial growth, infrastructure development, and increased industrial activity,” said G Krishnakumar, Chairman & Managing Director, BPCL. “Upon completion, it will mark a significant milestone towards attaining Atma Nirbharata in petrochemical products and enhancing the energy security of the nation.”

**Budget 2025: Govt May Introduce New Income Tax Bill To Simplify I-T Law; All You Need To Know**

**NEW DELHI.** In the upcoming Budget 2025 session of Parliament, the government is likely to introduce a new income tax bill to simplify the current I-T law, make it comprehensible and reduce the number of pages by about 60 per cent, news agency PTI has reported. “The new Income Tax law will be introduced in the Budget session of Parliament. It will be a new law and not an amendment to the existing Act. Currently, the draft law is being vetted by the law ministry and it is likely to be brought in Parliament in the second half of the Budget session,” according to the PTI report citing a source.

The Budget session is scheduled from January 31 to April 4. The first half (January 31-February 13) will start with President Droupadi Murmu’s address to the joint sitting of Lok Sabha and Raya Sabha followed by the tabling of the Economic Survey for 2024-25. The Union Budget for 2025-26 will be presented on February 1. Parliament will reconvene on March 10 and will sit through April 4.

Sitharaman in her July Budget had announced a comprehensive review of the six-decade old Income Tax Act, 1961, within six months. Pursuant to the Budget announcement by Sitharaman for a comprehensive review of the I-T Act, 1961, the CBDT had set up an internal committee to oversee the review and make the Act concise, clear, and easy to understand, which will reduce disputes, litigation, and provide greater tax certainty to taxpayers. Also, 22 specialised sub-committees were established to review various aspects of the Act.

Public inputs and suggestions were invited in four categories — simplification of language, litigation reduction, compliance reduction, and redundant/obsolete provisions.

The Income Tax Department has received 6,500 suggestions from stakeholders on review of the Act.

Sources said the provisions and chapters will be significantly reduced and the obsolete provisions will be deleted. The Income Tax Act, 1961, which deals with imposition of direct taxes — personal I-T, corporate tax, securities transaction tax, besides gift and wealth tax — currently has about 298 sections and 23 chapters.

# 8th Pay Commission: What were the big changes in 7th and 6th Pay Commissions?

**The Government has approved the formation of the 8th Pay Commission for central government employees and pensioners. Here is a look at the salary hikes under the 7th and 6th Pay Commissions.**

**NEW DELHI.** The Union Cabinet recently approved the formation of the 8th Pay Commission, which is set to revise salaries for lakhs of central government employees and pensioners. Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw suggested that the commission will likely be formed soon, and its recommendations will come into effect on January 1, 2026.

The announcement comes just days before the Union Budget 2025 and aims to align salaries with current economic conditions and inflation rates. As the anticipation around the 8th Pay Commission grows, here is a look at the major changes that were part of the 7th and 6th Pay Commissions.

**SALARY AND PENSION HIKE IN 7TH PAY COMMISSION**

The 7th Pay Commission came into effect on January 1, 2016. It introduced many major changes for central government employees. One of the most critical aspects was the fitment factor, which was set at 2.57.

What this meant was that the basic pay would be multiplied by 2.57, leading to increased salaries across all levels amongst central government staff.

The 7th Pay Commission also recommended a minimum basic salary of Rs 18,000, marking an increase from the

previous Rs 7,000 under the 6th Pay Commission. In addition, pensions saw a decent increase. For pensioners, the minimum basic pension rose to Rs 9,000, up from Rs 3,500 under the 6th Pay



Commission.

**WHAT HAPPENED IN 6TH PAY COMMISSION?**

The 6th Pay Commission, which was implemented in January 2006, introduced modest changes but still

improved salaries and pensions. The fitment factor under the 6th Pay Commission was 1.86. Therefore, the minimum basic salary was revised to Rs 7,000, up from Rs 2,750 in the 5th Pay Commission. Pensioners also benefited marginally, with the minimum basic pension increasing from Rs 1,275 to Rs 3,500 per month.

**WHAT TO EXPECT FROM THE 8TH PAY COMMISSION?**

As of now, nothing is clear about what exactly can be expected under the new pay commission. However, some reports suggest that it is expected to introduce a more major revision to salaries and pensions. Unconfirmed projections for the 8th Pay Commission indicate that the fitment factor could range from 2.28 to 2.86. If this happens, the minimum basic pay may rise from Rs 18,000 to anywhere between Rs 41,000 and Rs 51,480, providing a big financial boost for central government employees.

## Mixed Bag For Indian Stock Markets This Week, All Eyes On Trump’s Inauguration

**New Delhi.** As Indian investors adopt a cautious approach ahead of the inauguration of Donald Trump as 47th US President and his comments with focus on tariffs, this week was a mixed bag for the domestic benchmark indices. After three days of gains, the domestic market ended on a weak note on Friday as large-cap IT and banking stocks saw higher underperformance due to a cautious outlook on discretionary spending for the former and subdued deposit and credit growth, as well as tighter liquidity conditions for the latter. In contrast, public sector banks (PSUs) performed well during the week. Sensex ended the week at 76,619.33 and Nifty settled at 23,203.2. The Nifty remained under bearish pressure for yet another

session. Nifty Bank ended at 49,540.6 down by 738.10 points or 1.50 per cent. The Nifty Midcap 100 index closed at 54,607.65 after climbing



123.85 points, or 0.23 per cent, while the Nifty Smallcap 100 index closed at 17,672.05 after adding 28.75 points, or 0.16 per cent. Since the recent peak in September 2024, the Nifty 50 has fallen by 11.5 per cent, with the

Midcap index down 12 per cent and the Smallcap index sliding 11 per cent. The Q3 earnings season will be critical in restoring confidence and stability.

According to market watchers, investors are increasingly adopting a risk-averse stance due to strengthening of the dollar. Furthermore, rising uncertainty over potential economic policies from the new US administration impacted overall sentiments. Overall, the market is expected to remain cautious in the short term due to moderate Q3 expectations, while persistent FII outflows could add to higher volatility. Looking ahead, the incoming US President’s policies and comments will be keenly watched with focus on tariffs. Higher inflation in Japan or tighter policy from BoJ will weigh on market.

## International Monetary Fund Retains India's GDP Growth Forecast At 6.5% For FY26, FY27

**New Delhi.** The International Monetary Fund (IMF) retained India's growth forecast at 6.5 per cent for fiscal 2026 and fiscal 2027, the global economic body said in its World Economic Outlook report. The IMF added, "In India, growth is projected to be solid at 6.5 percent in 2025 and 2026, as projected in October and in line with potential."



The global body noted a slowdown in the Gross domestic product (GDP) growth rate adding that "growth in India also slowed more than expected, led by a sharper-than-expected deceleration in industrial activity." India's economic growth slowed in the second quarter of the current fiscal as it expanded only by 5.4 per cent whereas in the second quarter the GDP growth rate was recorded at 6.7 per cent. The GDP growth rate in

fiscal 2024 was recorded at 8.4. However, the economy still holds the tag of "world's fastest growing economy."

According to the November monthly economic review by the Finance Ministry, the fresh uncertainties have surfaced for global trade in the financial year 2026. However, despite the global challenges, the ministry in its report provides a cautiously optimistic

outlook for India. It predicts that growth in the second half of FY25 will be better than the first half. It said, "After a moderation in Q2 of FY25, the outlook for Q3 appears bright, as reflected in the performance of HFIs for October and November 2024." The report stated that the strong US dollar and potential policy rate adjustments in the United States are pressuring emerging market currencies.

On the international front, the IMF forecasted that global growth is projected at 3.3 percent in both 2025 and 2026, below the historical (2000-19) average of 3.7 percent. The forecast for 2025 is broadly unchanged from that in the October 2024 World Economic Outlook (WEO), primarily on account of an upward revision in the United States offsetting downward revisions in other major economies, the Washington-based organisation added.

## Big Boost For Food Processing Industry: Projects Worth Over Rs 30,000 Crore Approved Under PM Kisan Sampada Yojana

**The PM Kisan Sampada Yojana aims to increase processing and preservation capacity by 428.04 LMT per annum, create 13.42 lakh jobs, and benefit 51.24 lakh farmers.**

**NEW DELHI.** The Ministry of Finance has announced the approval of 1,646 food processing projects, including food testing labs and R&D initiatives, under various sub-schemes of the PM Kisan Sampada Yojana. These projects, approved until December 18, 2024, are valued at Rs 31,830.23 crore, with the potential to attract Rs 22,722.55 crore in private investment. Implemented by the Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MoFPI) since 2016-17, the PM Kisan



Sampada Yojana aims to increase processing and preservation capacity by 428.04 LMT per annum, create 13.42 lakh jobs, and benefit 51.24 lakh farmers. The government is committed to driving growth in agriculture and food processing by encouraging both private and public investments in areas such as aggregation, modern storage, efficient supply chains, processing, and marketing. This push is aimed at increasing the level of food processing and enhancing the

export of processed foods by creating modern infrastructure with efficient supply chain management from farm gates to retail outlets.

**PMFME Yojana: First Scheme for the Unorganised Sector**

The PM Formalisation of Micro Food Processing Enterprises (PMFME) Yojana, a centrally sponsored scheme implemented by MoFPI since 2020-21, provides financial, technical, and business support for upgrading micro food processing enterprises. It is the first-

ever scheme for the unorganised sector. Under the PMFME Yojana, over 3.10 lakh SHGs have received seed capital support, and 1,14,388 individuals have benefited from credit linkage subsidies as of December 18, 2024. The Ministry of Finance also provided updates on financial support for the establishment of 50 multi-product food irradiation units in the MSME sector, as announced in the 2024-25 budget.

An Expression of Interest (EOI) was issued in August 2024 inviting proposals for the establishment of multi-product food irradiation units under the Integrated Cold Chain and Value Addition Infrastructure Scheme of PMKSY. So far, 20 project proposals have been received, and they are under scrutiny or evaluation in accordance with the scheme guidelines.

**PLI Scheme Update:**

Regarding the PLI scheme for the food processing industry, the finance ministry reported that 133 companies are currently covered under the programme. Investments totalling Rs 8,910 crore have been attracted so far, and incentives worth Rs 1,084 crore have been disbursed in 85 eligible cases.



# Don't invoke abetment of suicide mechanically, cops should be sensitised: Top court

►A bench of Justices Abhay S Oka and KV Viswanathan said the investigating agencies should be sensitised so that people were not subjected to the abuse of the process of a totally untenable prosecution.

**New Delhi.** The Supreme Court on Friday said the offence of abetment of suicide under the Indian Penal Code should not be invoked mechanically against individuals only to soothe the feelings of the distraught family members of the person who has died. A bench of Justices Abhay S Oka and KV Viswanathan said the investigating agencies should be sensitised so that people were not subjected to the abuse of the process of a totally untenable prosecution.

"Section 306 IPC appears to be casually and too readily resorted to by the police. While the persons involved in genuine cases where the threshold is met should not be spared, the provision should not be deployed against individuals, only to assuage the immediate feelings of the distraught family of the victim," said the bench.

"The conduct of the proposed accused and the victim," the court went on, "their interactions and conversations preceding the unfortunate death of the victim should be approached from a practical point of view and not divorced from day-to-day realities of life. Hyperboles employed in exchanges should not, without



anything more, be glorified as an instigation to commit suicide." The top court said the trial courts also should exercise "great caution and circumspection" and should not adopt a "play-it-safe syndrome" by mechanically framing charges, even if the investigating agencies in a given case showed utter disregard for the ingredients of Section 306.

The judgment came on a plea filed by one Mahendra Awase challenging an order of the Madhya Pradesh High Court, which declined his prayer to discharge him from the offences

punishable under Section 306 of the IPC. According to the records, a person died by suicide and left a note in which he mentioned he was being harassed by Awase. Apart from the suicide note, the statements of witnesses were recorded that indicated the person who died was disturbed as Awase was harassing him over the repayment of a loan. The top court said, in order to bring a case within the purview of Section 306 of the IPC, there must be a case of suicide and in the commission of the said offence, the person alleged to have abetted the commission of suicide, must have played an active role by an act of instigation or by doing certain act to facilitate the commission of suicide. The bench said it was convinced that there were no grounds to frame charges under Section 306 IPC against the appellant. A reading of the suicide note reveals that the appellant was asking the victim to repay the loan guaranteed by the victim. It could not be said that the appellant, by performing his duty of realising outstanding loans at the behest of his employer, can be said to have instigated the victim to die by suicide," the court said.

## Probe Agency Restores Properties Worth Rs 290 Crore in Maharashtra Bank Scam

**New Delhi.** The Enforcement Directorate (ED), Mumbai Zone, has restituted immovable properties worth Rs 289.54 crore to the Competent Authority, MPID appointed by the Government of Maharashtra in the case of M/s Pen Co-operative Urban Bank Ltd, an official said on Friday. A statement mentioned that the assets were provisionally attached by ED under Section 5 of Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002 as the erstwhile office bearers had cheated the banks and siphoned off the bank funds for private investments.

The investigation was initiated based on the FIR registered by Pen Police Station, District Raigad, Maharashtra. It was alleged by the LEA in its chargesheet that office bearers of the bank entered into criminal conspiracy with the then Auditors of the Bank willfully and intentionally manipulated the books of accounts of Pen Bank and fraudulently reported profit and caused a loss of Rs. 651.35 Crore to the bank. ED investigations revealed that the proceeds generated out of crime of forgery and cheating was diverted and routed through the bogus cash credit accounts opened in the said bank using the services of cheque discounters in the market. The statement further read that part of such Proceed of Crime (POC) was utilised for purchase of immovable properties at different locations in Raigad District of Maharashtra in the names of third parties (Benami properties). "These Benami properties measuring 70.9 acres worth Rs. 25.20 Crore were attached u/s 5 of PMLA on 26.05.2014 and 03.12.2014. Further Prosecution Complaint dated 20.06.2018 has been filed in the subject case before Hon'ble Special Court, PMLA and the trial is underway," it read. "In the meantime, a Criminal Writ Petition bearing was filed by one of Depositor of Pen Urban Cooperative Bank Ltd before the Hon'ble Bombay High Court praying for release of the properties attached under the PMLA. The Hon'ble Bombay High Court vide order dated 07.10.2016 directed the ED to hand over the properties to MPID. Against the said order, ED filed a SLP before the Apex Court vide order dated 03.11.2017 which granted a stay on the order of Hon'ble Bombay High Court. MPID authorities filed an application u/s 8(8) of PMLA dated 01.02.2019 before Hon'ble Special Court (PMLA), Mumbai to confiscate the attached property to MPID for its restitution," it further mentioned.

## Land-for-jobs case: Delhi court issues production warrant for Amit Katyal

**NEW DELHI.** A Delhi court on Friday issued a warrant to produce accused Amit Katyal in the land for a job money laundering case on the next date of hearing scheduled on January 31. Katyal, who is currently lodged in Bhondsi Jail, Haryana, under judicial custody in connection with a case filed by the Gurugram Police, has been charge-sheeted in the high-profile case involving former Railway Minister Lalu Prasad Yadav. The court's decision comes as the matter progresses towards critical stages, including the scrutiny of documents and the framing of charges. During the hearing, Special Judge



Vishal Gogne of Rouse Avenue Court queried the investigation officer about the status of prosecution sanctions against public servants. Special Public Prosecutor (SPP) Manish Jain, under instructions from the investigation officer, informed the court that the process is underway. The Enforcement Directorate (ED) submitted documents as directed by the court, responding to pleas from the accused seeking access to relevant materials. The court urged the defense counsel to expedite the document scrutiny process to commence arguments on the framing of charges by early February. Earlier, on September 18, 2024, the court issued summons to Lalu Prasad Yadav, his sons Tejashwi Yadav and Tej Pratap Yadav, along with other accused in the case.

## Delhi University announces honorarium hike for staff working late or on holidays

**NEW DELHI.** The Delhi University on Friday announced a revision to its honorarium policy for staff working beyond regular hours or on closed days. The amendment, approved during the varsity's executive council (EC) meeting, provides increased payments for employees who report before 7:30 am, leave after 7:30 pm on working days, or work more than seven hours on Saturdays or closed days (over 60 days in a year). Under the new policy, Group A officers will receive Rs 400 for late sitting and Rs 800 for working on Saturdays or closed days.

Group B officials will be compensated Rs 300 for late sitting and Rs 600 for working on Saturdays/closed days, while Group C officials, including drivers, will receive Rs 250 and Rs 500, respectively. Additionally, the EC authorised prof Anil Kumar Aneja, Head of the Department of English and university representative on the governing body of St. Stephen's College, to facilitate communication between DU and St. Stephen's College to resolve any issues related to the college's operations, in line with the University's statutes, regulations, and UGC guidelines. Vice Chancellor Prof. Yogesh Singh also appointed two additional EC representatives, Aman Kumar and Raj Pal, to the committee to address these matters.

The EC also decided that the UGC NET scores from June 2024 and December 2024 will be considered for the second phase of PhD admissions for the academic session 2024-25. Candidates with a NET + JRF qualification will be given preference. Moreover, the EC approved an increase of 20-25% in PhD seats compared to the previous round of admissions. Moreover, DU employees will now have access to medical facilities at the Northern Railway Hospital.

All DU staff and its colleges will be eligible for OPD, IPD, diagnostic, and operative services on a reimbursement basis at CGHS rates, following approval of the proposal by the DU EC.

## Ghazipur landfill residents decry broken promises as pollution, health crises persist

**NEW DELHI.** Nestled between East Delhi's Ghazipur landfill and the bustling wholesale meat and flower markets, about 400 families eke out a precarious existence. These families, predominantly migrants from West Bengal, Bihar, and Uttar Pradesh, live off the refuse of a city that seems to have forgotten them. Despite political promises and high-profile visits, the towering mound of garbage remains an unrelenting source of misery. As Delhi gears up for another election cycle, political parties are ramping up their campaigns. Yet, for the residents of Ghazipur, including Mullah Colony and Rajbir Colony, the rhetoric rings hollow. Promises made by former chief minister Arvind Kejriwal and even Prime Minister



Narendra Modi have yet to translate into tangible improvements. The landfill's toxic shadow continues to loom large over their lives. Satbir, 32,

who has known no other home, articulates the perpetual health crises faced by the community. "Cough, fever, and respiratory diseases are constants here," he shares. The landfill's fires during the scorching summers release

noxious fumes, exacerbating health issues. During the monsoons, clogged drains and overflowing sewage compound their woes. Raghnath, 41, another resident, bears visible scars of the environmental neglect. "People fall sick and don't even realise it's due to the landfill's pollution. I've suffered from a persistent fungal infection," he laments. His words echo the collective despair of a community abandoned by its representatives. "We vote, but our issues remain," he says. Srinivas, 71, a resident of over four decades, recounts the worsening conditions. "Respiratory problems have become a part of life here. During rains, the streets become rivers of filth," he says, holding up his medical prescriptions. His plea for a cleaner environment has long fallen on deaf ears.

## Delhi HC dismisses Janata Party's plea against EC order on poll symbols

**NEW DELHI.** The Delhi High Court on Friday dismissed a petition filed by the Janata Party challenging the Election Commission's directive that election symbols be reserved solely for recognised political parties. The bench, comprising Acting Chief Justice Vibhu Bakhru and Justice Tushar Rao Gedela, highlighted that the Supreme Court and the High Court had previously settled this matter in other cases.

The court clarified that political parties could not claim symbols as their exclusive property, especially when the symbols could be lost due to poor electoral performance. The bench firmly said, "In light of prior rulings, the petitioner's challenge to the

constitutional validity of the order is without merit. Hence, the petition is dismissed." The Janata Party's counsel



contended that the party, once recognised, should retain the right to its traditional symbol—a plough on a farmer's shoulder—even after losing

recognition. The counsel argued that an election symbol is inherently tied to a political party, regardless of its recognition status. He contended that the election symbol order unfairly discriminates between recognised and unrecognised parties. He further said that the order should not strip a party of its symbol simply because it failed to secure 6 per cent of the valid votes in the previous election. Advocate Sidhant Kumar, representing the EC, countered that this issue had already been addressed and resolved by the Supreme Court in a previous case involving Subramanian Swamy. The court agreed, affirming that the matter was no longer open for debate, thereby supporting the Election Commission's stance.

# Parties cite public service to justify candidates having criminal cases: Report

**New Delhi.** Political parties have given reasons, such as "strong administrative capacity", "commitment to public service" and claims of cases being "politically motivated", for selecting candidates with criminal records in the 2024 Maharashtra and Jharkhand Assembly elections, poll rights body ADR said on Friday.

In many cases, the parties dismissed alternative candidates as lacking experience or the ability to connect with voters, using these explanations to side-step questions about their choices, the Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR) said. The ADR has analysed Form C7 of 1,286 candidates, who contested the Maharashtra and Jharkhand Assembly polls. Form C7 requires candidates to declare their



criminal antecedents, if any. An ADR report revealed that such reasoning often failed to meet the Supreme Court's directive requiring detailed, merit-based justifications for selecting candidates with criminal backgrounds. Instead, statements like "the candidate is young and energetic" or "cases were filed due to public agitation" were repeatedly used. Despite these assertions, 29 per cent candidates

in Maharashtra and 20 per cent in Jharkhand had no justification published for their selection, a direct violation of the Supreme Court's orders. For instance, in Maharashtra, Digamber Rohidas Aagwane of the Rashtriya Samaj Paksha, facing 35 criminal cases, was described as an "influential leader" dedicated to the poor, with no viable explanation for bypassing candidates without criminal records. Similarly, the selection of Congress's Sanjay Chandukaka Jagtap and Bunty Baba Shelke, facing 27 and 26 cases respectively, as candidates was justified on grounds of administrative experience and alleged political victimisation. The report also highlighted non-compliance with mandatory disclosures.

In Maharashtra, the NCP-Sharadchandra Pawar faction and the Shiv Sena (Uddhav Balasaheb Thackeray) failed to provide justifications for any of their candidates with criminal cases. Similar

lapses were noted in Jharkhand, where the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) did not disclose reasons for selecting any of its candidates with criminal records. The ADR has called for urgent reforms, including deregistration of the non-compliant parties, disqualification of candidates with serious criminal charges and stricter monitoring by the Election Commission (EC). In Maharashtra, 48 per cent of the analysed candidates (503 out of 1,052) declared criminal cases, with 32 per cent facing serious charges. In Jharkhand, 45 per cent candidates (105 out of 234) declared criminal cases, with 35 per cent facing serious charges. BJP candidate Babulal Marandi, facing 15 cases, was praised for his social service credentials and allegations against him were dismissed as politically driven. The report criticised political parties for prioritising "winnability" over integrity and accused the EC of failing to enforce compliance effectively.



with a resolution window available from February 5 to 11. The DoE has confirmed that the second list will include the marks allocated to applicants, and any additional admission lists will be issued on February 26, 2025. The entire admission process, including query resolution, is expected to conclude by February 14, 2025.

As per the policy, children must be at least three years old for nursery, four years old for kindergarten (KG), and five years old for Class 1 as of March 31, 2025. The upper age limits are capped at under four years for nursery and under five for KG.



If we weren't involved... the deal would've never happened," Trump said in an interview Thursday. Qatari Prime Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al-Thani, announcing the agreement on Wednesday, said an initial 42-day ceasefire would see 33 hostages released.



NEWS BOX

Australian Open: India's men's doubles challenge over as Sriram Balaji exits

New Delhi . India's challenge at the men's doubles event at the Australian Open 2025 has come to an end as N. Sriram Balaji and his partner Miguel Angel Reyes-Varela exited the competition in the second round on Saturday, January 18. Balaji and Reyes-Varela put in a valiant effort against Nuno Borges and Francisco Cabral but ultimately lost in a hard-fought 3-set clash on Saturday by a scoreline of 6-7, 6-4, 3-6.Balaji was India's only remaining hope in the men's doubles as the likes of Rohan Bopanna, Rithvik Bollapalli and Anirudh Chandrasekar had exited the competition in the very first round. The match between both teams was evenly-contested from the get-go as they were stingy in giving away break points and it was 6-6 in the first set as we headed into the tiebreaker.

While Balaji and Reyes-Varela won the first point in the tiebreaker, Borges and Cabral put in a clinical performance to win it 6-1 to



take the first set. **Balaji and Reyes-Varela mount a comeback** The Indo-Mexican pair weren't left disappointed after being blanked in the first set tiebreaker and started the second one by breaking the Portuguese duo. They made it 2-0 with Reyes-Varela serving before Borges-Cabral started to use their own service game effectively to make cut the deficit down to one.Game 10 of the second set saw Balaji and Reyes-Varela race into 40-0 and have 3 set points to their name. While the Portuguese duo was able to save one of them, the Indo-Mexican pair would take the set to tie the match at 1-1 and push it to the decider. The 3rd and final set saw both teams start off by winning from their serves before the match turned on its head in Game 4. From Reyes-Varela's serve, Borges-Cabral were able to break the Indo-Mexican pair to take a 3-1 lead and never showed signs of letting it slip.Balaji and Reyes-Varela tried their best, but ended up losing the match in 2 hours and 9 minutes.

Premier League: Manchester United legend Denis Law dies at 84

New Delhi. Manchester United legend and Ballon d'Or winner Denis Law has died at the age of 84, the Premier League club announced on Friday, January 18. Law, who began his career with Huddersfield Town, made a name for himself at United. The Scottish legend spent 11 years at Manchester United and won the league titles in 1965 and 1967 and the European Cup in 1968.The United legend scored 237 goals for the club in 404 appearances and is the club's third-highest goalscorer behind Wayne Rooney and Sir Bobby Charlton. Along with Charlton and George Best, Law formed one of the most feared footballing partnerships of all time, which was fondly dubbed as the 'holy trinity' by the Manchester United fans. Law is the only Scottish player to win the Ballon d'Or and the European Player Of The Year awards as he got the honours in 1964.



Law's family issued a statement through United announcing the demise of the legend on Friday."It is with a heavy heart that we tell you our father Denis Law has sadly passed away. He fought a tough battle but finally he is now at peace," a family statement shared by United said."We would like to thank everyone who contributed to his wellbeing and care, past and much more recently.""We know how much people supported and loved him and that love was always appreciated and made the difference. Thank you."United would also release a statement of their own, saying that everyone at the club are mourning the loss of one of the club's greatest players of all time. "Everyone at Manchester United is mourning the loss of Denis Law, the King of the Stretford End, who has passed away, aged 84," United added in a statement."He will always be celebrated as one of the club's greatest and most beloved players. The ultimate goal-scorer, his flair, spirit and love for the game made him the hero of a generation."

Family's happiness after Arjuna Award win has motivated me more: Sanjay

New Delhi .For Sanjay, his rise in the Indian men's hockey team has been spectacular. After first tasting success in the youth Olympic Games in Argentina in 2018, the young defender went on to make his debut for the senior team in 2022 and has been a regular fixture of the squad ever since. Success would quickly follow the 23-year-old from Haryana as he would win the Asian Games 2022 gold medal and also secured 2 Asian Champions trophies in 2023 and 2024. The biggest crowning moment for Sanjay came in Paris when he helped India win the bronze medal at the Olympics 2024 to continue his fine run. These consistent performances have now helped the young defender be one of the athletes to receive the prestigious Arjuna Award, which he received from President Droupadi Murmu on January 17. Ahead of this glorious personal moment, Indiatoday.in got the chance to talk to the defender, who is plying his trade now with the Kalinga Lancers in the Hockey India League.The 23-year-old opened up on his experiences so far in the revamped HIL, learning the art of drag-flicking from teammate Alexander Hendrickx and how winning the Arjuna

Award has motivated him more to achieve success. **Sanjay exclusive interaction** Sanjay: So far, the experience has been really great. I've learnt a lot, especially by getting the opportunity to play alongside some of the world's top players. Every moment, whether it's in the gym, on the field, or during our free time, has been a chance to learn from them. It's an excellent platform to prove my performance and show that I deserve to be part of the Indian team. This league is a big opportunity for all Indian players. What is your personal goal for this season?Sanjay: My personal goal is to perform well for my franchise, give my 100 percent, stay fit, and avoid injuries. I also want to prove myself and ensure that I get selected for the upcoming Indian squad. How do you think the Hockey India League will help Indian hockey grow?Sanjay: Definitely, it's a huge boost. For emerging players, juniors, and young players like me, it will increase our confidence. Playing alongside top players will help us understand their skills, and learning from senior players will allow us to

implement those lessons in our game. This will surely benefit the Indian team in the long run. You're being groomed as a drag-flicker. How



has your experience been, especially playing with someone like Alexander Hendrickx?Sanjay: Alexander is undoubtedly one of the world's top drag-flickers, and playing alongside him has been an amazing experience. Whenever we have free time, I try to learn as much as I can from him and ask questions. He has so many skills, and I hope to utilise those lessons in the future. Playing with such a big player is truly a proud moment for me.

The last time the Hockey India League was held, Kalinga Lancers won the title. Do you think that's possible this time? Sanjay: Anything is possible. We are taking it match by match and not thinking too far ahead. Our focus is on giving 100 percent against the team we face next and implementing the plans step by step. Can you describe the moment when you won the Arjuna Award? How did it feel? Sanjay: It was like a dream come true, and I felt incredibly proud of myself. I was very happy, and when I shared the news with my family, seeing their happiness motivated me even more. Their joy and the thought of receiving such a prestigious award has inspired me to work even harder to bring medals for the country and achieve more accolades.It's the New Year. What are your personal goals for this hockey season?Sanjay: Right now, the focus is on performing well in the HIL. I want to play well for my team, contribute to our victories, and also ensure my personal performance is up to the mark. My main goal is to get selected for the Indian team's squad, and after that, focus on the upcoming tournaments.

Australian Open: Gael Monfils creates history by knocking out 4th seed Taylor Fritz

New Delhi.Veteran Gael Monfils rolled back the years and produced a stunning performance to dump out Taylor Fritz from the third round of the Australian Open on Saturday, January 18. Monfils, after losing the first set, put in a determined performance to win the match with a scoreline of 3-6, 7-5, 7-6, 6-4 in a titanic battle at the Margaret Court Arena and created history in the process. The Frenchman, at the age of 38, became the oldest player to defeat a top 5 seeded player in the Australian Open since the ATP rankings came into place.Monfils had a rough start to the campaign, as he had to survive a 5-set thriller against Giovanni Mpetshi Perriard before beating Daniel Altmaier in straight sets. The 38-year-old was certainly the undergo heading into the clash against Fritz and the first set didn't go in his favour. Both men started off by matching each other as their service games were on point, with the



score being in the favour of the American at 4-3. Monfils committed a few errors while serving and a double fault at the end helped Fritz break him and extend the lead to 5-3. He would then serve out to win the first set. **Monfils shows off his strength** Both men once again were on top of their game when it came to their service, with Monfils serving up a total of 24 aces throughout the contest. With the score at 6-5, Monfils would be able to break Fritz, who was being left frustrated with what was happening. The third set continued the same trend as the first two as both men dominated while serving and the game went into the tiebreaker. Monfils was able to dominate his opponent during the tiebreaker with some powerful shots and critical errors from Fritz. He raced into a 6-0 lead in the tiebreaker and while Fritz got one back, the Frenchman took the lead in the match.The third set saw Fritz pick himself up and put in a fight, with both men playing an entertaining Game 4 that went on for 12 minutes.

Dinesh Karthik questions Hardik Pandya's removal from vice captaincy in T20Is

New Delhi. Former India cricketer-turned commentator Dinesh Karthik has questioned Hardik Pandya's removal from vice captaincy in the Indian T20I side. Pandya was surprisingly not chosen to lead the team after Rohit Sharma's retirement from the format after the T20 World Cup 2024, with Suryakumar Yadav being handed over the leadership duties.Pandya was not even chosen as the vice-captain of the team, with Shubman Gill being appointed as Suryakumar's deputy for India's first series post T20 World Cup against Sri Lanka. Even after Gill lost his place in the T20I side, the selectors didn't name any vice-captain for the last two series against Bangladesh and South Africa. However, they chose all-rounder Axar Patel as the new vice-captain for the upcoming series against England. The move left Karthik baffled, who saw no reason to not choose Pandya even as a vice captain."I really don't

know. I don't know why he (Hardik) was stripped of his vice-captaincy. I don't see any reason to. They have done well. They have won in the bilaterals that he was the

with Rohit Sharma making his return to the T20I side just ahead of the World Cup 2024, Pandya was stripped of his responsibility.



vice-captain. Not a clue," Karthik said on Cricbuzz.Pandya was handed over the responsibility of leading the Indian T20I side after their semi-final exit from the T20 World Cup 2022. The all-rounder captained the team in 16 matches and led them to 11 victories, losing five matches. However,

**Hardik continues his brilliant form in T20Is** Following Rohit's retirement from the format after India's T20 World Cup 2024 triumph, Pandya was expected to be handed over the leadership duties. However, the selectors picked Suryakumar Yadav as the new skipper and didn't appoint the all-rounder even as the vice-captain.Chief Selector Ajit Agarkar was even asked about the reason behind Suryakumar's appointment in the press conference as he revealed that they needed someone who's available more often than not. Meanwhile, despite him not being considered for leadership roles, Pandya has been performing well for the team as he was adjudged Player of the Series in India's 3-0 victory over Bangladesh in October 2024.The all-rounder was the vital cog in India's T20 World Cup win in 2024 and continues to be an integral member of the team due to his all-round skills.

Rishabh Pant has almost reached the same level as MS Dhoni: Mohammad Kaif

**Former India cricketer Mohammad Kaif feels India wicketkeeper batter Rishabh Pant has almost reached the same level as legendary wicketkeeper MS Dhoni.**

New Delhi. Former India cricketer Mohammad Kaif feels Rishabh Pant has reached the same level as legendary India wicketkeeper-batter MS Dhoni. Ahead of the squad announcement for the ICC Champions

Trophy 2025, there have been widespread discussions about who will take the wicketkeeper's slot for the mega event, with KL Rahul, Rishabh Pant and Sanju Samson being in contention. Recently, Kaif shared his views on the matter and mentioned how Samson has left Pant behind with his recent T20I performances. However, he mentioned that Pant's remarkable performances in Test cricket have made him almost reach the same level as MS Dhoni.Sanju Samson has gone ahead. You have to understand this. With Rishabh Pant, people have their emotions attached. He is a big match-winner in Tests. Who can forget his knock at the Gabba and the hundred in South Africa? He performs well in overseas conditions. He is a good wicketkeeper. Rishabh Pant is a better wicketkeeper than Sanju Samson; he has almost reached the same level as MS Dhoni,"



Mohammad Kaif said on his YouTube channel. Furthermore, the former batter said that Pant needs to understand that his white-ball stats are not that good as compared to Samson."Rishabh Pant needs to recognise the reality. If someone tells him 'wrong things are being done with you', they are not telling the right things. Rishabh Pant should stay away from such friends. Someone needs

to tell him that his white-ball stats are not that great. Sanju Samson has genuinely earned that chance to go to the Champions Trophy. Rishabh Pant needs to work hard," he added. **Pant vs Samson in ODI cricket** In 31 ODIs played in his career so far, Pant has scored 871 runs at an average of 33.50 with five fifties and one hundred to his name. On the other hand, Samson has scored 510 runs from 16 matches at an average of 56.66 with one hundred and three fifties to his name. He even scored a hundred in his last ODI played against South Africa in Paarl in December 2023.The 30-year-old is in sensational form, having scored three hundreds in his last five T20Is. Hence, Samson finds himself ahead in the race for selection for the Champions Trophy 2025. It remains to be seen whether he will get the selectors' nod for the mega event.





# Tamannaah Bhatia

Reviews Aaman Devgan And Rasha Thadani's 'Incredible Film' Azaad

Debutants Aman Devgan and Rasha Thadani starrer Azaad has finally opened in theatres, marking the official entry of the two young actors in Bollywood. Both hailing from the family of stars, with Aaman being the nephew of acting powerhouse Ajay Devgn and Rasha walking in the footsteps of her mother Raveena Tandon, expectations remain high for their performances in the historical drama. Ahead of the film's release, the makers hosted a star-studded premiere for the entire team, drawing the likes of celebrities like Ajay Devgn, Kajol, Raveena Tandon, Boney Kapoor, Sonali Bendre, Vijay Varma, and others. Tamannaah Bhatia also made a stunning appearance at the event dressed in a 'Uyiii Amma' themed T-shirt, seemingly showing her support for Rasha's debut. Keeping it casual, the actress paired her T-shirt with baggy jeans, exuding cool yet chic vibes at the event. For those unaware, Uyi Amma is a dance number from the Azaad featuring Rasha Thadani. The song has been recently trending on social media with its catchy lyrics, dance steps, and music already turning into a sensation.



Besides giving a shoutout to the song, Tamannaah also did not forget to share her personal review of the film. Taking to her Instagram stories, she shared a picture featuring the lead actors with director Abhishek Kapoor and wrote, "What an incredible film and such genuine performances. This is the kinda cinema experience we need." Besides the core team taking centre stage in the photo, we cannot help but notice Vijay Verma in the background. During her appearance at the premiere, Tamannaah also had a fun banter with the paparazzi who teased her with the song lyrics. While she humbly posed for pictures, she also praised the track and called it "Super." Opened in theatres on Friday, January 17, Azaad tells the story of Govind (Aaman Devgan) who admires a dacoit Vikram Singh's (Ajay Devgn) black horse Azaad.

As the story unfolds, Govind will be seen locking horns with Janaki, the daughter of landlord Roy Bahadur, further setting the stage for a complex narrative around their lives in the pre-independence era.



## Please Don't Disturb Triptii Dimri

She Is 'Having A Whole Lot Of Fun' With Little Bit Of Sun

Triptii Dimri, known for her stint in Animal, Bulbbul, and more, is a complete travel enthusiast. Her social media handles are proof of the same. In the last month of 2024, she embarked on a journey to Prague, Finland and other surreal locations. Yet again, the actress went on a trip to an undisclosed destination. She shared a video on her social media handle capturing some of the best moments from there, which served pure travel goals. Taking to her Instagram account, Triptii Dimri posted a long reel featuring some stunning moments from her



recent vacation. The video began with the actress wearing a powder blue-hued flowy dress and riding on her cycle amidst the surreal nature of the place. From the floral garden to the small hills located over there, it seemed that the video was shot in France. As the scene changed from a sunny evening to an aesthetic location inside a building, the actress was descending the stairs. In the background, we can spot stacks of books kept on

a wooden shelf engraved on the white walls. Her video also featured iconic glimpses of various locations, sneak peeks into her road journeys, staycations and more.

For a lazy evening in France, Dimri was wearing a flowy black dress while staring at the beauty of the place. Next, she was also seen cycling through the cosy lanes of the French cities, wandering in flower gardens, plucking freshly harvested berries and even diving into some, walking through the lush green colonies and more. The actress ended the video with a moment captured during sunset. She was wearing a pink-hued bralette teamed with shorts while embracing the nature. Posting the video, she wrote, "A little bit of flowers.. a little bit of sun... and a whole lot of happiness." Soon, her fans started heaping praises on the actress for serving some pure travel goals. One user said, "We need a vlog on 'Tripts on Vacation' please!! These clips are so beautiful, hope you had an amaaazing time darling girl!!" Another person mentioned, "This is more beautiful than Bollywood films." Someone added, "You make Europe look even more beautiful." One more comment read, "What fun! What a beautiful place." It is not the first time Dimri mesmerised her fans with stunning glimpses from her vacation. She enjoyed a snowy vacation in Finland, followed by her New Year celebration while watching the Northern lights – all of which served her travel goals. On the work front, Dimri appeared in three films in 2024 – Bad Newz, Vicky Vidya Ka Woh Wala Video and Bhool Bhulaiyaa 3. She will be next seen in the movie Dhadak 2.



Kangana Ranaut Praises Vikrant Massey After Calling Him A 'Cockroach': 'Who Am I To Judge Him?'



Kangana Ranaut's Emergency finally hits theaters today after enduring multiple delays and challenges. While much of the buzz surrounds Kangana's portrayal of former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, the actor-filmmaker recently opened up about her changed dynamic with Vikrant Massey, the lead actor of The Sabarmati Report. Their relationship, once fraught with tension, has seemingly taken a surprising turn. Speaking on Shubhankar Mishra's Unplugged podcast, Kangana addressed her past feud with Vikrant, whom she had previously labeled a "cockroach" on social media. The incident stemmed from Vikrant's comment on Yami Gautam's bridal look, where he described her as "pure and pious like Radhe Maa." Kangana had famously replied, "Kahan se nikla ye cockroach. Laao meri chappal (Where did this cockroach come from, bring my slippers)." Fast forward to 2025, and Kangana has shifted her perspective. Reflecting on Vikrant's performance in The Sabarmati Report, she shared, "When I saw The Sabarmati Report, I told him that I liked his work. We must understand that every person has the potential to change. We shouldn't cage them or label them. Doing that is the biggest toxicity in Hindi cinema."

Kangana emphasized the importance of allowing room for growth, adding, "Who am I to judge him or anyone? Whatever capacity they are engaging with me, I will respond accordingly. There is a chance that he (Vikrant) can go back to feeling the way he did before the film. But having said that, it is much better than being so strict with your ideology that it makes you feel constricted and caged." Meanwhile, Emergency has finally released in theaters, with Kangana revealing she had contemplated an OTT release to avoid the obstacles of theatrical distribution. "There was an increased level of frustration about why I took the challenge of releasing the film in theatres."

Soni Razdan Calls Out Media Portal For Posting Saif Ali Khan's House Pics After Attack: 'Irresponsible'



Veteran actress Soni Razdan has slammed a media portal for posting inside pictures of Saif Ali Khan's residence, hours after he was attacked by an intruder at his home. She was disappointed with the news portal for their 'incredibly irresponsible' post, and demanded its removal from social media. Saif Ali Khan was stabbed by an intruder at his residence in the wee hours of January 16. The Bollywood star was stabbed six times by the robber following which he was rushed to Lilavati Hospital. The actor is now out of danger. Soni Razdan reacted to India Today's post on Instagram that was titled 'Inside Saif Ali Khan's Rs 45 crore Bandra home where he was stabbed.' The following slide in the carousel showed an image of Saif's building, the entrance area, swimming pool, lobby and the courtyard. The next slide showed a map of Bandra, which was marked with the locations of Salman Khan, Shah Rukh Khan, Naseeruddin Shah, Sohail Khan, Aamir Khan, Rekha and other celebrities' homes. Soni Razdan commented on the post, and criticized this irresponsible post. "This is an incredibly irresponsible post. When will our press show even the tiniest bit of maturity and responsibility in the face of what could have been a monumental tragedy? Suggestion from me. Delete this post while you still can save some face," she wrote.

Yesterday, filmmaker Hansal Mehta also took to X (previously Twitter), and wrote, "Unfortunate incident with Saif. Prayers for his speedy recovery. But why the f\*\*k are media reports giving out his residential address?" Meanwhile, on Thursday night, Kareena Kapoor Khan also issued a statement and appealed for privacy as their family processes the traumatic experience. "It has been an incredibly challenging day for our family, and we are still trying to process the events that have unfolded. I respectfully and humbly request that the media and paparazzi refrain from relentless speculation and coverage." She expressed concern for their safety, urging the media to respect their boundaries: "The constant scrutiny and attention are not only overwhelming but also pose a significant risk to our safety. I kindly request your cooperation during this sensitive time," she wrote. The attacker has now been arrested by the Mumbai Police. Yesterday, after the news of the attack on Saif Ali Khan emerged, celebrities such as Jr NTR, Chiranjeevi, Parineeti Chopra, Pulkit Samrat, Pooja Bhatt, Neil Nitin Mukesh and others wished him a quick recovery.