



Tamannaah Bhatia's Odela 2 Gets A...



इफतार (सोमवार) : 06:03  
सेहरी (मंगलवार) : 04:30

**SARAFI**  
सोना : 8,420  
चांदी : 110.00  
(नोट : सोना 22 केरट प्रति ग्राम)

**BRIEF NEWS**

**संभल हिंसा में जामा मस्जिद के सदर गिरफ्तार**

**SAMBHAL :** संभल हिंसा के 4 महीने बाद जामा मस्जिद के सदर जफर अली को पुलिस ने गिरफ्तार कर लिया। इससे पहले पुलिस ने जफर अली को रविवार सुबह 11 बजे घर से उठाया। करीब 4 घंटे कोतवाली में पूछताछ की। जफर अली को अब चंडौसी कोर्ट ले जाया गया है। वहीं, जफर अली की गिरफ्तारी के बाद उनके साथी अधिकांश पुलिस की गाड़ी के पीछे भागने लगे। लोगों ने जफर अली जिंदाबाद के नारे लगाए। जफर अली का घर मस्जिद से 100 मीटर दूर है। तनाव को देखते हुए इलाके में 200 से ज्यादा जवान तैनात किए गए हैं। 5 थानों की फोर्स भी जामा मस्जिद इलाके में तैनात है। पुलिस सूत्रों ने बताया कि दंगा भड़काने की साजिश रचने में जफर अली को गिरफ्तार किया गया है। संभल में 24 नवंबर को जामा मस्जिद सर्वे के दौरान हिंसा हुई थी।

**अमेरिका में भारतीय मां ने बेटे का रेटा गला**

**NEW DELHI :** अमेरिका में एक भारतीय मूल की महिला ने अपने 11 साल के बेटे की गला रेतकर हत्या कर दी। महिला का नाम सरिता रामाराजू (48) और बेटे का नाम यतिन रामाराजू है। महिला बेटे के साथ घूमने के लिए कैलिफोर्निया के सेंटा एना में डिज्नीलैंड गई थी। यहां तीन दिन बिताने के बाद महिला ने होटल में बेटे का चाकू से गला रेत दिया। हत्या के बाद महिला ने खुद पुलिस को फोन किया। उसने पुलिस को बेटे की हत्या और खुद के जहर खाकर आत्महत्या करने की जानकारी दी। 19 मार्च की सुबह मां और बेटे को होटल से चेक-आउट करना था। जानकारों मिलने के बाद सेंटा एना पुलिस होटल पहुंची, जहां लड़के की डेड बॉडी बरामद हुई। वह कई घंटों पहले ही मर चुका था।

**क्लोजर रिपोर्ट : सुशांत केस में हत्या के सबूत नहीं**

**MUMBAI :** सुशांत सिंह राजपूत डेथ केस में सीबीआई ने 4 साल 6 महीने 15 दिन बाद फाइनल क्लोजर रिपोर्ट फाइल की है। जिसमें जांच एजेंसी ने कहा है कि आत्महत्या के लिए सुशांत को उकसाने का कोई सबूत नहीं मिला है। सुशांत सिंह राजपूत 14 जून 2020 को बांद्रा में अपने घर पर रहस्यमय तरीके से मृत पाए गए थे। मीडिया और विपक्षी दलों के प्रेशर की वजह से इस मामले की जांच को सीबीआई को सौंपा गया। अब सीबीआई की आखिरी रिपोर्ट में मौत की असल वजह सुसाइड ही बताई गई है। इस मामले में रिया चक्रवर्ती को 27 दिन जेल में रहना पड़ा था। सीबीआई की तरफ से फाइनल रिपोर्ट सामने आने के बाद रिया के वकील सतीश माधुसूदन ने बयान जारी कर कहा कि इस मामले में कई झूठी कहानियां बनाई गईं।

## सुबह चार बजे बिगड़ गया मौसम का मूड और शुरू हो गई आफत

**PHOTON NEWS RANCHI :** पिछले तीन दिनों से मौसम अपना अलग ही रंग दिखा रहा है। वो दिनों तक सुबह में मौसम ठीक-ठाक रहा और दोपहर के बाद से खूब जमकर बारिश हुई। रविवार को सुबह चार बजे से ही राजधानी रांची सहित राज्य के कई जिलों में मौसम ने आफत की शुरुआत कर दी। भारी गर्जना के साथ तेज आंधी, और झमाझम बारिश ने पूर्वी सिंहभूम (चाईबासा), पूर्वी सिंहभूम (जमशेदपुर), सरायकेला, खूंटी, चतरा, हजारीबाग, रामगढ़ सहित कई जिलों में तबाही मचाई है। राज्य के सभी जिलों में सोमवार से मौसम साफ होगा। इससे तापमान में फिर से वृद्धि होगी। मौसम के बिगड़े मिजाज के कारण बिजली व्यवस्था टप हो गई और कई इलाकों में पेड़ गिरने के साथ ही घरों को नुकसान होने की खबरें सामने आई हैं। भारी मशकत के बाद रांची शहरी क्षेत्र में सुबह 9 बजे बिजली व्यवस्था बहाल हुई।

## रांची में दो घंटे तक तेज आंधी और बारिश ने मचाई तबाही, 5 घंटे गुल रही बिजली, 9 बजे हुई बहाल चाईबासा, जमशेदपुर, सरायकेला, खूंटी, चतरा, हजारीबाग और रामगढ़ में भी जमकर बरसा पानी



### कांके रोड, हरमू रोड और रातू रोड में पेड़ गिरने से बाधित रहा आवागमन, कई इलाकों में टूट गए बिजली के तार

बिजली नहीं रहने से लोगों को बड़ी दिक्कतों का सामना करना पड़ा। परेशान लोग बिजली विभाग के कार्यालयों में लगातार फोन कर रहे थे। तेज आंधी और बारिश के कारण राज्य के कई इलाकों में बिजली के तार टूट गए। रांची शहर के ज्यादातर हिस्सों में बिजली आपूर्ति बंद हो गई थी। करीब पांच घंटे बाद बिजली व्यवस्था बहाल हो सकी। जानकारी के अनुसार, आंधी और बारिश के कारण कांके रोड, हरमू रोड, और रातू रोड में पेड़ गिरने की सूचना है। इससे दर तक आवागमन बाधित रहा। अपर बाजार इलाके में एक पुराने पेड़ के गिरने से एक घर की छत पूरी तरह टूट गई, हालांकि इस घटना में किसी के हताहत होने की सूचना नहीं है। थाना प्रभारी कोतवाली आदिकांत महतो ने बताया कि एक घर पर पेड़ गिरा है। लेकिन इसमें कोई भी व्यक्ति के हताहत होने की सूचना नहीं है। आंधी व पानी खत्म होने के तुरंत बाद नगर निगम की हॉटलिनर शाखा के कमाचारी सक्रिय हो गए। कुछ ही घंटों में सबसे पहले सड़क पर गिरे पेड़ों को काटकर हटाने में जुट गए। इसके बाद सड़क के अलावा अन्य जगहों पर गिरे पेड़ों को काट करके हटाया गया। नगर निगम टीम की सक्रियता की वजह से कुछ ही घंटों में यातायात और जनजीवन सामान्य हो गया।

● कई क्षेत्रों में पेड़ गिरने से घरों को पहुंचा भारी नुकसान, फसलों में भी हुई बाधा  
● आज से 5 दिनों तक में 4-8 डिग्री सेल्सियस बढ़ सकता है अधिकतम तापमान

## शहीद एसआई सुनील मंडल को राज्यपाल व मुख्यमंत्री ने दी श्रद्धांजलि

# बोले सीएम हेमंत- व्यर्थ नहीं जाएगी जवानों की शहादत

**PHOTON NEWS RANCHI :** रविवार को राज्यपाल संतोष कुमार गंगवार और मुख्यमंत्री हेमंत सोरेन रांची के धुवां स्थित सेक्टर-2 में 133वीं सीआरपीएफ बटालियन के कैम्प पहुंचे। उन्होंने पश्चिमी सिंहभूम (चाईबासा) में आईईडी विस्फोट में घायल होने के बाद शहीद हुए सीआरपीएफ एसआई सुनील कुमार मंडल के पार्थिव शरीर पर पुष्पचक्र अर्पित कर श्रद्धांजलि दी। इस दौरान राज्यपाल ने कहा कि शहीद सुनील कुमार मंडल का अदम्य साहस और सर्वोच्च बलिदान हमेशा स्मरणीय रहेगा। आने वाली पीढ़ियों के लिए प्रेरणास्रोत बना रहेगा। उन्होंने शहीद के परिजनों के प्रति गहरी संवेदना व्यक्त करते हुए कहा कि इस दुःखद घड़ी में पूरा राष्ट्र उनके साथ खड़ा है। मुख्यमंत्री हेमंत सोरेन ने नवसलियों के खिलाफ चल रहे अभियान को और

### गवर्नर ने कहा- हमेशा स्मरणीय रहेगा अदम्य साहस और सर्वोच्च बलिदान

- बलिदानियों के परिवारों के साथ हमेशा खड़ी रहेगी सरकार
- नवसलियों के खिलाफ चल रहे अभियान को और अधिक किया जाएगा मजबूत
- झारखंड पुलिस के लगातार चल रहे ऑपरेशन के कारण हताशा है नवसली
- डीजीपी अनुराग गुप्ता सहित अन्य आला अधिकारियों ने भी अर्पित किए श्रद्धांजलि



### आईईडी की चपेट में आ गए थे दो जवान

मुख्यमंत्री ने कहा कि शहीदों के परिवार के साथ सरकार का साथ हमेशा रहेगा। झारखंड पुलिस के लगातार चल रहे ऑपरेशन से नवसली हताशा है। पुलिस पर हमला इसी हताशा का परिणाम है। सीएम ने शहीदों के परिवारों के प्रति गहरी संवेदना व्यक्त करते हुए कहा कि इस दुःखद घड़ी में पूरा राष्ट्र उनके साथ खड़ा है। मुख्यमंत्री हेमंत सोरेन ने नवसलियों के खिलाफ चल रहे अभियान को और

### घात लगाकर किया गया आईईडी विस्फोट

मौके पर आईजी अभियान ने कहा कि अभियान के दौरान घात लगाकर आईईडी विस्फोट किया गया था। इसमें 193 सीआरपीएफ के दो जवान घायल हुए थे। दोनों को हेलीकॉप्टर से चाईबासा से रांची लाया गया। राज अस्पताल में इलाज के क्रम में एसआई सुनील कुमार मंडल शहीद हो गए। घायल हुए कार्टेबल पार्थ प्रतियम डे आउट ऑफ डेजर है। उन्होंने कहा कि इस क्षेत्र में आखिरी निर्णायक लड़ाई चल रही है। सभी जवानों का मनोबल एकदम ऊंचा है। आने वाले दिनों में डीजीपी के नेतृत्व में नवसलियों के खिलाफ चलाए जा रहे अभियान में हम लोग सफल होंगे। इस क्षेत्र में ही नहीं, पूरे झारखंड को नवसल मुक्त बनाने में सफल होंगे। श्रद्धांजलि देने के बाद एसआई के पार्थिव शरीर को पतक गांव पश्चिम बंगाल के मिदनापुर जिले भेज दिया गया।

अधिक मजबूती देने का संकल्प दोहराते हुए कहा कि जवानों की शहादत व्यर्थ नहीं जाएगी। उन्होंने दिवंगत आत्मा की शांति और शोककुल परिजनों को संबल प्रदान करने की प्रार्थना की।

## अचानक लाठी, डंडे व कुल्हाड़ी से वार करने लगे 30-35 अज्ञात लोग वनकर्मियों पर पत्थर माफिया का हमला, नौ जख्मी

**PHOTON NEWS PLAMU :** पलामू जिले के छतरपुर थाना क्षेत्र की सिलदाग पंचायत के बसडीहा गांव के जंगल में पत्थर माफिया ने वन विभाग के कर्मियों पर अचानक हमला कर दिया। इसमें नौ वनकर्मियों गंभीर रूप से घायल हो गए। उन्हें छतरपुर अनुमंडलीय अस्पताल लाया गया, जहां से प्राथमिक उपचार के बाद बेहतर इलाज के लिए मेदिनीनगर रेफर कर दिया गया। घटना शनिवार वार की देर रात की बताई जा रही है। बताया जाता है कि सिलदाग पंचायत के

### पलामू के छतरपुर थाना क्षेत्र की सिलदाग पंचायत के बसडीहा गांव की घटना



### घटनास्थल पर फौरन पहुंचे पुलिस पदाधिकारी

वनपाल लक्ष्मीकांत पांडेय, वनपाल सविज्ञ उराव, वनकर्मियों अजय कुमार, संतोष उराव, पंकज कुमार, आशुतोष कुमार तिवारी, विनोद कुमार, राकेश पासवान, राहुल कुमार समेत कई लोग गंभीर रूप से घायल हैं। हमले के बाद रात में ही घटना की जानकारी पुलिस को दी गई। सूचना मिलते ही छतरपुर अनुमंडल पुलिस पदाधिकारी अजय कुमार यादव, प्रभारी थाना प्रभारी अनिल कुमार रजक घटनास्थल पर पहुंचे और घायल वनकर्मियों को छतरपुर अनुमंडलीय अस्पताल लाया। यहां से बेहतर इलाज के लिए उन्हें मेदिनीनगर रेफर कर दिया गया है। कार्रवाई के दौरान 30 से 35 की संख्या में अज्ञात पत्थर माफिया ने लाठी, डंडे और कुल्हाड़ी लेकर वन कर्मियों पर हमला कर दिया।

### मणिपुर में सुरक्षा बलों ने अभियान चलाकर बरामद किए हथियार और विस्फोटक

**IMPHAL :** रविवार को मणिपुर के विभिन्न इलाकों में सुरक्षा बलों ने सघन अभियान चलाकर भारी मात्रा में हथियार, गोला-बारूद और अन्य सशस्त्र सामग्री बरामद की। कुछ लोगों को हिरासत में भी लिया गया है। अभियान के दौरान सुरक्षा बलों ने एक स्थानीय पोपी, दो सिंगल बैरल गन, एक .303 राइफल, एक संशोधित सीपोजी कारबाइन, नौ .303 जिंदा कारतूस, चार 7.62 मिमी जिंदा कारतूस, तीन आईईडी, 15 एके-47 खाली कारतूस, 20 नग .303 खाली कारतूस, 20 नग 7.62 मिमी खाली कारतूस, 32 इंसस खाली कारतूस, तीन पोपी शेल, दो बीपी हेलमेट, दो जंगल बूट, चार बीपी जैकेट, दो टियर गैस स्मॉक शेल, 16 टियर स्मॉक शेल और अन्य भारी सामान बरामद किया गया। इसके अलावा, इंगल ईस्ट जिले के सागोलमंग थाना क्षेत्र के अंतर्गत पुखाओ सतिपुर में एक और अभियान में एक एसबीबीवल गन, एक पोपी लांचर, एक स्थानीय निर्मित गन, दो 7.62 मिमी एसएलआर जिंदा कारतूस, आठ 12 बोर कारतूस, आठ स्थानीय निर्मित शेल, दो बीपी जैकेट कवर, दो बीपी आयनर प्लेट और दो वॉकी-टॉकी सेट जब्त किए गए।

## न्यू स्टडी पूरी दुनिया में बढ़ती बुजुर्ग आबादी इस रोग का सबसे बड़ा कारण

# पार्किंसन बीमारी की चपेट में अधिक तेज गति से आ रहे पुरुष

**PHOTON NEWS @ RESEARCH DESK :** जिनगी में बुढ़ापा अपने आप में एक बड़ी बीमारी है। इस अवस्था में शरीर में अनेक प्रकार की बीमारियां घर करने लगती हैं। हड्डियों, मांसपेशियों और तंत्रिकाओं में स्वाभाविक रूप से कमजोरी आने लगती है, जिसका प्रभाव उम्र के साथ दिखने लगता है। इस अवस्था में स्पेशल केयर की जरूरत होती है। बुढ़ापे की अवस्था में पार्किंसन नाम की बीमारी अमूमन लोगों को अपने प्रभाव में लेने लगती है। हाल के हुए रिसर्च से यह महत्वपूर्ण जानकारी सामने आई है कि बढ़ती बुजुर्ग आबादी इस बीमारी का सबसे बड़ा कारण है। यह बीमारी महिलाओं की अपेक्षा पुरुषों में ज्यादा तेजी से बढ़ रही है। पार्किंसन बीमारी एक तंत्रिका तंत्र यानी नर्वस सिस्टम से जुड़ा रोग है। यह मस्तिष्क की गतिविधि को नियंत्रित करने वाले हिस्से को प्रभावित करता है। इस बीमारी में शरीर के अंगों में कंपकंपी और मांसपेशियों में जकड़न और रतार धीमी हो जाती है। मरीज को सोचने, संतुलन बनाए रखने यानी चलने, खड़े होने, बात करने और बैठने में भी परेशानी होती है और हाथ व पैर लगातार हिलते रहते हैं।

### शरीर के तंत्रिका तंत्र में आने वाली विसंगतियों के कारण पैदा होता है यह डिजीज हाथ-पांव हमेशा हिलते रहने और शरीर पर नियंत्रण खो देने की बन जाती है स्थिति

● चीन की कैपिटल मेडिकल यूनिवर्सिटी के शोधकर्ताओं ने किया है विशेष अध्ययन  
● नए शोध के निष्कर्षों को डिजिटल मेडिकल जर्नल में चिन्ता से किया गया है प्रकाशित  
● साल 2021 की तुलना में मरीजों की संख्या में 112 फीसद बढ़ोतरी की आशंका

**2050 तक बढ़े करेड हो जाएगी बीमार लोगों की संख्या**  
चीन की कैपिटल मेडिकल यूनिवर्सिटी के शोधकर्ताओं सहित अन्य शोधकर्ताओं ने खुलासा किया है कि दुनियाभर में 2.5 करोड़ से अधिक लोगों पर 2050 तक पार्किंसन बीमारी से ग्रस्त होने का खतरा मंडरा रहा है। इसकी सबसे अहम वजह तेजी से बढ़ती बुजुर्ग आबादी है। पुरुषों के इसकी चपेट में आने की आशंका अधिक है। इसके नतीजे ब्रिटिश मेडिकल जर्नल में प्रकाशित हुए हैं।

शोधकर्ताओं के अनुसार, पार्किंसन के मरीजों की इस अनुमानित संख्या में 2021 की संख्या में 112 फीसद की बढ़ोतरी होगी। इस न्यूरोलॉजिकल डिजाइनर के दक्षिण एशिया में अनुमानित मामलों की संख्या 68 लाख होगी। यह क्षेत्र दुनिया में पार्किंसन के मरीजों के मामले में दूसरे स्थान पर रहेगा। पूर्वी एशिया एक करोड़ से अधिक मामलों के साथ पहले नंबर पर होगा।

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## मंडियां सम्मान : रांची में सामने आया फर्जीवाड़ा तीन आंगनबाड़ी सेविकाओं से डीसी ने मांगा स्पष्टीकरण

**PHOTON NEWS RANCHI :** यह दुःखद है कि मंडियां सम्मान योजना के लाभुकों के सत्यापन प्रक्रिया के बीच रांची से फर्जीवाड़े का एक बड़ा मामला सामने आया है। धुवां में लाभुक महिलाओं से आवेदन के सत्यापन के बदले पैसों की मांग की जा रही थी। मामले की शिकायत मिलते ही डिप्टी कमिश्नर (डीसी) मंजुनाथ बर्जंत्री ने तीन आंगनबाड़ी सेविकाओं से खिलाफ कड़ा एक्शन लेते हुए उनसे स्पष्टीकरण मांगा है। जिनके खिलाफ कार्रवाई हुई, उनमें धुवां बंधन कोच्चा की रहने वाली अर्चना सिंह, गायत्री नगर धुवां की गीता कुमारी और कदम खटाल की उषा कुमारी शामिल हैं। दरअसल



● योजना के लाभुकों की सत्यापन प्रक्रिया में पैसा लेने की मिली थी शिकायत  
लाभुक महिलाओं ने जन शिकायत कोषांग के लिए जारी व्हाट्सएप नंबर के माध्यम से आंगनबाड़ी सेविकाओं के खिलाफ शिकायत की थी। शिकायत में बताया गया था कि आंगनबाड़ी सेविका मंडियां सम्मान योजना की सत्यापन प्रक्रिया के लिए लाभुकों से पैसों की मांग कर रही हैं।











## Bhagat Singh's vision vs today's student politics

Higher education institutions have often been the breeding grounds for both legendary and ignoble uprisings worldwide. The current ideological battles in universities such as JNU, DU, Rajasthan University, Central University of Haryana, Hyderabad Central University and Panjab University raise concerns for all stakeholders concerned. Instances of violence, assaults and protest movements — though motivated by various factors — prompt critical questions about the role of politics in these institutions.

Do we need 'politics' in our educational environments? Do these institutions enjoy the necessary independence and reflect the democratic ideals our nation upholds? While student politics is not inherently problematic, the politicisation of student unions in India has led to numerous unintended consequences.

In addition to these issues, higher education in India is plagued by problems reflective of the broader political landscape. Frequent clashes between student unions, class boycotts, strikes, electoral manipulation, display of muscle power, academic interruptions and violence have become commonplace. Critics of institutional politicisation provide numerous examples of entire academic sessions being wasted due to such happenings. They decry political violence infiltrating what they refer to as the 'temples' of modern India. How would Bhagat Singh respond to these developments? Bhagat Singh continues to shape the discourse and activism surrounding student politics across various ideological lines, including those of Gandhi, Ambedkar and Hedgewar. He believed that "education should create a better, more equal, more democratic and socialist society." Ideology often comes with the baggage of indoctrination, and educational institutions often succumb to this allure under the guise of fostering academic orientations. An 18-year-old, fresh from the 'safe' and nurturing confines of a school, is particularly vulnerable to being shaped as a lifelong supporter or sympathiser of a particular ideology. For this 'prospective' voter, ideologies compete for attention. Bhagat Singh urged students to "study so that you are able to meet arguments of your opponents. Equip your ideology with supporting arguments. If you oppose a prevailing belief, if you criticise a great person who is considered to be an incarnation, you will find that your criticism will be answered by calling you vain and egoist. The reason for this is mental ignorance. Logic and free thinking are the twin qualities that a revolutionary must inevitably possess." In recent years, many of India's largest universities have experienced significant turmoil, becoming stages for political manoeuvres, where student politics serves as a launching pad for broader ambitions. According to Louis Althusser, the State exercises control over its subjects through both repressive state apparatuses (like the police) and ideological state apparatuses (such as colleges and universities). Students are often used as instruments by politically affiliated organisations to promote specific ideologies.

In this context, they are provided with 'ready-made' heroes and icons to follow unquestioningly. Bhagat Singh warned against this mentality: "To say that Mahatmas, who are great, should not be criticised because they are above criticism and for this reason, whatever they say about politics, religion, economics and ethics is correct and that whatever they say will have to be accepted, whether you believe it or not, reveals a mentality which cannot lead us to progress and is clearly regressive." Bhagat Singh was not against student politics; rather, he believed that politics, despite its frequent negative portrayal, is not an inherently bad concept. His conviction was that each student and youth should carry a vibrant vision — an inspiring aspiration for the kind of society they wish to shape and inhabit. While this dream may seem idyllic, it should never veer into the realm of dystopia. Instead, it should be a beacon of hope, illuminating a future filled with possibility and promise.

## Why AAP chose to confront farmers

With his push for a peace deal in Ukraine, Trump is seeking to cut America's losses and shift its strategic focus and military resources towards the Indo-Pacific.

THE well-planned action of the Bhagwan Singh Mann government against protesting farmers has surprised everyone. Farm union leaders were detained by the police when they were going back to Punjab after a meeting with Central and state ministers in Chandigarh regarding their long-pending demands, including assured procurement of farmers' crops at a legally guaranteed minimum support price.

Was the crackdown a unilateral decision of the state government or was the Centre involved in some way? The detentions were followed by the eviction of farmers who had been camping at the Shambhu and Khanauri inter-state borders for the past more than a year. The temporary structures built there were demolished and the farmers were warned of serious consequences if they did not leave along with their tractor trailers and belongings.

The state government has justified its efforts to restore traffic movement at these borders, which were practically sealed by the Haryana authorities in February 2024 to stall the 'Delhi chalo' march called by the Bhartiya Kisan Union (Ekta-Sidhupur) and the Kisan Mazdoor Sangharsh Committee (KMSC), led by Jagjit Singh Dallewal and Sarwan Singh Pandher, respectively. The march was aimed at intensifying pressure on the Central Government to accept the farmers' demands.

The Haryana Government's heavy-handed tactics forced both unions to change their plans. The KMSC made its camp office at Shambhu, while Dallewal stationed his farmers at Khanauri. As these vital highways were blocked, Punjab remained cut off from other states on both routes. Members of both unions made many attempts to reach Delhi, but they were repelled with brute force. The matter reached the Supreme Court, and a high-powered committee was constituted under the chairmanship of a retired High Court judge; however, no concrete progress has been made to address the farmers' demands. The Centre set up a committee of Union ministers to discuss the key issues with the leaders of both unions. Several meetings, facilitated by the Punjab Government, have taken place so far, but to no avail. What is the message CM Mann has sent to the people of Punjab by taking strong action against farmer leaders? Is it a sign of AAP's shifting priorities after the defeat in the Delhi Assembly elections? Does this crackdown mark a strategic rebranding of the ruling party, positioning itself as a tough, no-nonsense government that is presumably fighting a battle on multiple fronts to safeguard Punjab's interests? Mann's approach can also be described as an attempt to assert his authority, particularly after the setback in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections — AAP won only three seats out of 13 in Punjab — and the below-par show in the urban bodies' elections held in December last



year. It seems that the CM and the party top brass are eyeing urban votes — both as part of its short-term strategy to win the Ludhiana West bypoll and its long-term goal of winning the 2027 Assembly elections. The CM made his intentions clear when he met leaders of farm unions under the banner of the Samyukta Kisan Morcha in Chandigarh on March 3. He asked them to call off their week-long dharna that was scheduled to begin on March 5, but they refused. Their stand annoyed the CM and he left the meeting in a huff. This was followed by a police crackdown on prominent farmer leaders to scuttle their plans. The situation went from bad to worse when both sides hardened their stand. Apparently, both the Central and state governments are well aware of the ideological differences among various farm unions in Punjab. This factor has influenced their response to the farmers' demands. What compelled AAP to take the plunge? Farmers had played a crucial role, particularly in Malwa, in AAP's landslide victory in the 2022 Assembly elections. The party won 92 seats out of 117 in the state; the lion's share was from Malwa — 66 out of 69. Farm unions of this region spearheaded the 2020-21 agitation against the three Central farm laws, which were eventually repealed by the Modi government.

Mann chose to take on this important vote bank because the prolonged protests were impacting the day-to-day life of the people, who were unhappy with the state government for its failure to end the stalemate. Frequent dharnas, road and rail blockades had dented the image of the AAP government both within and outside the state. AAP must have calculated that it would not be able to get in 2027 the level of support it had got from farmers in 2022; this forced the party to find alternative vote banks to stay in the race. An important consideration for the strict action against farmers could be that AAP does not want to upset the 'non-agricultural' voters, who reside mostly in urban and semi-urban areas. Data compiled by the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS) shows that a large proportion of 'non-agricultural' voters opted for AAP in the 2022 elections. A post-poll survey conducted by Lokniti-CSDS in the state had found that dissatisfaction with the Modi government at the Centre was almost as high as the discontent with the Congress' five-year tenure (2017-22). Future decisions of the state government regarding farmers are also likely to be determined by such factors. It's clear that the farming community will not be the be-all and end-all of AAP's electoral campaign.

## Production hiccups

Manufacturing sector needs a booster shot

The elephant has missed a golden opportunity to get the better of the dragon. An ambitious \$23-billion programme, launched four years ago to incentivise domestic manufacturing and woo firms away from China, has been allowed to lapse by the Modi government. The Production-Linked Initiative (PLI) scheme will not be expanded beyond the 14 pilot sectors, while production deadlines will reportedly not be extended despite requests from some participating firms. Around 750 companies had signed up for the scheme, but many of them failed to kickstart production; those that met manufacturing targets were put off by the tardy payout of subsidies.

This disappointing development comes amid US President Donald Trump's tirade against India over tariffs. Another sobering fact is that growth in India's manufacturing sector fell to a 14-month low in February. It is apparent that the government's flagship 'Make in India' campaign,



which was launched in 2014 with the objective of transforming the country into a global hub for design

and manufacturing, remains a work in progress. The time is ripe to ascertain why the PLI scheme, contrary to expectations, did not prove to be a game-changer. It was rolled out at a time when China was battling to maintain production levels amid its crippling zero-Covid policy, while the US was pushing multinationals to diversify production lines. India has tasted global success in pharmaceutical and mobile phone production, but China continues to be dominant in sectors such as steel and textiles. India is projected to become the world's third largest economy (behind the US and China) by 2028, thanks to its much-sought-after consumer market and an increasing share in the global output. There is scope for performing even better, provided New Delhi plays its cards right. China's sluggish economic growth should spur India to give its manufacturing sector a new lease of life. It all boils down to seizing the initiative, even as tariff headwinds will test the famed resilience of the Indian economy.

## Trump's aid cuts and geopolitics of foreign assistance

Until the late 1970s, most IMF loans went to what are now considered advanced economies

THE decision of US President Donald Trump to gut USAID — effectively dismantling 42 per cent of the global humanitarian-aid system and jeopardising millions of lives — has reignited the debate over the effectiveness of foreign assistance. With many developing countries trapped in a seemingly inescapable cycle of aid dependency, it is increasingly clear that the dominant model is ill-suited to today's economic and geopolitical realities. But many of the alternatives being pondered in the Age of Trump offer no real solution, either. Foreign funding has long been a key driver of global development, shaping economic trajectories in ways that are often overlooked. The US itself relied on foreign financing during its War of Independence, and China's industrial boom was partly driven by Japanese soft loans. Japan, too, sought World Bank financing to build the power plants that fueled its rapid growth. Even the UK turned to the International Monetary Fund 11 times between 1956 and 1977 — more frequently than today's most aid-dependent African economies.

And in the late 1940s, Spain turned to Argentine handouts after being excluded from the Marshall Plan. Even the mobile payment platform M-Pesa, long a symbol of African self-reliance on innovation, got its start with the support of an aid grant. Until the late 1970s, most IMF loans went to what are now considered advanced economies, with nearly 72 per cent of IMF lending directed to these countries in the 1960s alone. But over time, the most dynamic and enterprising economies managed to break free from aid dependency and development assistance dwindled, eventually becoming a negligible fraction of global financial flows. Today, the foreign direct investment passing through the Netherlands alone each year is

roughly 15 times the global aid budget. With a few exceptions, like the Asian Tigers in the late 1990s or Greece and Portugal in the 2010s, the past few decades have shown that aid dependency is not inevitable. But accelerating economic development requires a sustained global effort. Regrettably, wealthy countries' commitment to the traditional aid paradigm — as outlined in the Addis Ababa Agenda and championed by



the European Union — has always been tenuous at best. This is evident in their failure to meet their 1970 pledge to allocate 0.7 per cent of their gross national income to development assistance. Within just three years of setting that target, OECD countries' average contribution had already fallen to 0.27 per cent of GNI. In 2023, it was 0.37 per cent. Meanwhile, as emerging economic powers like China and the UAE assume a larger role in shaping the rules of the international system, a more transactional approach to aid — explicitly tying

development assistance to business interests and geopolitical objectives — is gaining traction. This signals a reversion from today's aid paradigm to the era when aid was primarily driven by explicit self-interest. At gatherings like the St Petersburg International Economic Forum, policymakers call for a new multipolar age in which developing countries in Africa and elsewhere would be able to assert their sovereignty, engage with "development partners" on their own anti-colonial terms and no longer serve as a "graveyard" for western aid projects. Western policymakers seem oblivious to these developments. While they mourn the humanitarian fallout from USAID's demise, such as the escalating famine in Sudan, Russia and other powers are busy cutting strategic deals. For example, even as 60 per cent of Uganda's HIV budget hangs in the balance, its government is forging new energy and infrastructure partnerships with the UAE. But few expect rising economic powers like China and the UAE to assume traditionally western roles, like distributing antiretrovirals and menstrual pads, or defending press freedom and judicial independence. Although they may occasionally make such gestures for optics, they have no intention of reshaping recipient countries' institutions or pushing for systemic reforms. The St Petersburg model of development cooperation is narrower, more explicitly transactional and far less institutionally intrusive than its western counterpart. It makes no lofty promises. Instead, it operates as a kind of portmanteau diplomacy — a blend of strategic gifts, investments and land acquisitions, unburdened by grand ambitions or the risk

of losing credibility when such promises fall short. Trump's transactional mindset aligns seamlessly with this paradigm shift. But while proponents of the portmanteau model present it as a pragmatic approach to development, their claim that it creates a faster escape route from aid dependency veers into utopianism. China's assistance of this type has done little to accelerate Zimbabwe's economic development; if anything, it has deepened the country's reliance on aid. To be sure, the western paradigm has failed to live up to its promises. But its likely replacements offer little cause for optimism. Lacking the vast development-consulting industry that has grown around the western model, emerging powers remain unwilling to engage in the institutional oversight needed to create localised alternatives. There are no drawn-out deliberations or endless hand-wringing, as is often the case with western aid. When the going gets tough, countries like China simply walk away. But regardless of the aid model, the fundamental challenge facing low-income countries remains unchanged: unlike Asian and European countries that successfully moved beyond aid dependency, countries like Ghana continue to grapple with a political elite seemingly incapable of effective policy leadership. Consequently, other domestic actors, such as the vibrant civil-society watchdogs in Ghana and Kenya, must rise to the occasion and monitor development spending to ensure better coordination, prioritisation and efficiency. Activists celebrating the potential emergence of a post-imperial, agency-driven, multipolar aid system would do well to remember that economic progress will remain out of reach as long as civic disempowerment persists. Until we confront this fundamental challenge head-on, no aid paradigm will be able to put developing countries on the path to economic independence.

## Mcap of 9 top valued firms surges Rs 3 trn; ICICI, Airtel biggest gainers

**New Delhi.** The combined market valuation of nine of the top-10 most-valued firms surged Rs 3,06,243.74 crore last week, with ICICI Bank and Bharti Airtel emerging as the biggest gainers, in tandem with a bullish trend in equities. Last week, the BSE benchmark gauge surged 3,076.6 points, or 4.16 per cent, and the NSE Nifty jumped 953.2 points, or 4.25 per cent.

The market capitalisation (mcap) of ICICI Bank jumped Rs 64,426.27 crore to Rs 9,47,628.46 crore, the most among the top-10 firms.

Bharti Airtel's valuation zoomed Rs 53,286.17 crore to Rs 9,84,354.44 crore. HDFC Bank added Rs 49,105.12 crore, taking its market valuation to Rs 13,54,275.11 crore. The mcap of Reliance Industries Ltd surged Rs 39,311.54 crore to Rs 17,27,339.74 crore and that of Bajaj Finance rallied Rs 30,953.71 crore to Rs 5,52,846.18 crore.

The valuation of Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) soared Rs 24,259.28 crore to Rs 12,95,058.25 crore.

The mcap of State Bank of India climbed Rs 22,534.67 crore to Rs 6,72,023.89 crore and that of Hindustan Unilever advanced Rs 16,823.08 crore to Rs 5,28,058.89 crore. Infosys added Rs 5,543.9 crore to take its market valuation to Rs 6,61,364.38 crore.

However, the mcap of ITC declined Rs 7,570.64 crore to Rs 5,07,796.04 crore. Reliance Industries remained the most valued domestic firm, followed by HDFC Bank, TCS, Bharti Airtel, ICICI Bank, State Bank of India, Infosys, Bajaj Finance, Hindustan Unilever, and ITC.

## FPI outflows ebb amid easing global concerns, optimism over Ukraine war

**New Delhi.** The Indian equity market has witnessed a moderation in FPIs' selling pressure with the outflows narrowing to Rs 1,794 crore (USD 194 million) last week, buoyed by easing global concerns and growing optimism around a potential de-escalation in the Russia-Ukraine conflict. However, despite this positive shift, it still marks the 15th consecutive week of outflows. Going forward, Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs) are expected to remain cautious, awaiting greater clarity on the US Federal Reserve's interest rate trajectory, geopolitical developments, and India's domestic economic outlook, according to Himanshu Srivastava, Associate Director of Manager Research at Morningstar Investment. According to the data with the depositories, FPIs have offloaded equity shares worth Rs 1,794 crore (USD 194 million) for the week ended March 21. This was in comparison to USD 604 million outflow observed in the holiday-shortened preceding week. Last week, FPIs turned net buyers on two occasions, with a significant purchase of Rs 3,181 crore on March 21 and Rs 710 crore on March 19. The recent reversal in FPIs selling has turned the market sentiments for the better, facilitating a rally in the market for the week ended March 21.

"It can be argued that positive domestic fundamentals like pick up in growth and decline in inflation coupled with weakness in the dollar have contributed to the change in FPIs strategy," V K Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist, Geojit Investment Services, said. Investor sentiment has shown signs of improvement, buoyed by easing global concerns and growing optimism around a potential de-escalation in the Russia-Ukraine conflict, Srivastava said. Positive domestic developments such as India's better-than-expected trade deficit and China's stimulus-driven consumption boost have further supported the sentiments. Additionally, the recent market correction has presented attractive entry points for investors, he added. Srivastava also pointed out that that softening of the US dollar index along with rising expectations of a rate cut by the US Federal Reserve has supported foreign fund flows back into emerging markets like India. Dovish commentary from the Fed -- hinting at the possibility of two rate cuts this year -- has encouraged FPIs to selectively re-enter Indian equities. However, despite this renewed interest, FPIs have still withdrawn Rs 31,719 crore from the market so far in March, following outflows of Rs 34,574 crore in February and Rs 78,027 crore in January. As a result, total FPI outflows for 2025 have now reached Rs 1.44 lakh crore, according to data from the depositories.

## Housing supply down 34%, sales drop 23% in top 9 cities in Q1CY25: Report

**New Delhi.** Housing supply in the top nine cities fell by 34 per cent while sales declined by 23 per cent in the first three months of 2025, according to real estate data analytics firm PropEquity.

The firm said housing supply in the first three months dropped to 80,774 units compared to 122,365 units in the same period last year, marking the third consecutive quarter of sub-100,000 unit launches. Housing sales fell to 105,791 units in Q1CY25 from 136,702 units in the year-ago period.

Among the top nine cities, only Bengaluru bucked the trend, while Hyderabad, Chennai, Kolkata, Pune, Thane, Navi Mumbai, Mumbai, and Delhi-NCR witnessed a decline in either supply or sales or both.

Housing supply in Bengaluru rose by 17 per cent to 20,227 units in Q1CY25, with the city accounting for 25 per cent of total launches this quarter, up from 14 per cent in the same period last year.

All other cities saw a drop in new supply, with Kolkata leading the pack at a year-on-year (Y-o-Y) decline of 62 per cent, followed by Mumbai and Thane at 50 per cent, and Pune at 48 per cent.

Only Bengaluru and Delhi-NCR recorded a Y-o-Y increase in sales, each rising by 10 per cent and accounting for 17 per cent and 11 per cent of total sales in the nine cities, respectively.

Hyderabad recorded the sharpest Y-o-Y decline in sales at 47 per cent, followed by Mumbai at 36 per cent and Pune at 33 per cent. The decline was also seen on a quarter-on-quarter (Q-o-Q) basis. Overall housing supply fell by 12 per cent from 92,128 units, while sales declined by 13 per cent from 121,886 units in Q4CY2024.

# Trade Tariffs: India Has Strong Advantage In High-Value Manufacturing, Exports

**The PLI schemes (Rs 1.97 lakh crore outlay) for 14 key sectors are driving manufacturing growth, as telecom equipment manufacturing surpassed Rs 50,000 crore in sales under the PLI scheme, according to latest government data.**

**New Delhi.** Amid the debate on trade tariffs, industry leaders on Sunday said India has a strong advantage in high-value manufacturing and this situation could actually open doors for them in exports with right policy support. Policy support like extended PLI benefits and

better export incentives can help the \$13 billion Indian television industry to fill global supply gaps.

The revision of Basic Customs Duty (BCD) on key electronics items will also strengthen the 'Make in India' initiative and help meet Prime Minister Narendra Modi's ambitious \$500 billion electronics manufacturing target. This move aims to strengthen India's electronics manufacturing sector with mobile phones, smart LED TVs, and other devices more affordable while enhancing the country's role in global supply chains. "To truly make the most of it, we need to double down on infrastructure, skill development and make India a more business-friendly manufacturing hub," said Arjun Bajaj, Director, Videotex. India's TV market is evolving fast — bigger screens, smarter tech, and premium experiences are driving

demand.

"At Videotex, we're staying ahead by expanding our manufacturing capabilities, integrating backward processes like injection moulding, and



doubling down on R&D for smarter TV solutions. Our new facility, set to be fully operational by the beginning of coming financial year, will boost both production and innovation," Bajaj added. The company holds nearly 90 per cent of

India's webOS Hub market and are working on deeper customisations along with bringing premium projects with this solution. Also, with introduction of its new Mini LED line-up in the market,

Videotex becomes the first original design manufacturer (ODM) designing this in India. "We're also exploring export opportunities to take Indian-made TVs global," said Bajaj. The large size of India's domestic market, which reduces reliance on external demand, is expected to insulate the country from the US tariff hike, with the economy expected to maintain a growth of 6.5 per cent in FY26, global ratings agency Fitch said.

A recent Morgan Stanley report had also stated that India is the "best placed country in Asia," amid the global uncertainty triggered by US President Donald Trump's threat to jack up tariffs, because of the nation's low goods exports to GDP ratio and strong fundamentals.

## Digitisation, Reforms, Financial Inclusion Among Factors In India Doubling its GDP in 10 Years, Say Experts

**Earlier in the day, referring to the IMF data, BJP leader Amit Malviya posted on the micro-blogging site X that India has reached a remarkable economic milestone, doubling its GDP from USD 2.1 trillion in 2015 to an impressive USD 4.3 trillion in 2025.**

**New Delhi.** Digitisation, reforms, financial inclusion are among several factors that have contributed to India's economic growth over the past decade, economists have said as IMF data, cited by BJP leader Amit Malviya, showed that the country doubled its GDP from USD 2.1 trillion in 2015 to USD 4.3 trillion in 2025.

Pankaj Jaiswal, an economist, said that India has seen significant growth in the last ten years. "Since Prime Minister Modi took office, the country has experienced rapid economic growth,"

he said. He also talked of benefits of financial inclusion and contributions of people, who were earlier not part of formal economy, also being counted now due to digitisation. Sharad Kohli, also an economist, attributed the rapid pace of growth to the policy reforms



undertaken by the BJP-led government. "This is the outcome of reforms and policies undertaken by the government. And these reforms have happened across the sectors. Take, for example, agriculture, fintech,

governance and why forget manufacturing or infrastructure, which has contributed in a huge way," he said.

Earlier in the day, referring to the IMF data, BJP leader Amit Malviya posted on the micro-blogging site X that India has reached a remarkable economic milestone, doubling its GDP from USD 2.1 trillion in 2015 to an impressive USD 4.3 trillion in 2025, marking an extraordinary 105 per cent growth that stands unmatched by any other major global economy.

In the post, the BJP leader hailed Prime Minister Narendra Modi, adding that the achievement reflects his decisive leadership and relentless efforts of his government. China, which is seen as the major economic superpower in Asia, added 76 per cent in one decade. The GDP of Germany witnessed an addition of 44 per cent.

## Foreclosing personal loans: Know the pros and cons

**Kolkata.** A personal loan, like any other loan, comes with a repayment schedule. One has to complete repayment of the EMIs (equated monthly instalments) within the schedule set by the lender. But it must be kept in mind that if the borrower wants, he/she can repay the loan before the prescribed tenure.

Any lender is extremely cautious about a personal loan since it is an unsecured loan — one which is given without keeping any asset as collateral. Prepayment of a any loan is an indicator of the financial solvency of the borrower. However, there are a few points any borrower should be cautious of. Borrowers need to carefully weigh all options before opting for foreclosure.

### Foreclosure and advantages

Foreclosure or prepayment of a loan is a good option for a borrower who has surplus funds at his hand. Settling a debt early comes with the advantage

that one has to pay less total interest than he/she would have to pay otherwise during the normal course. Prepayment also can have a positive impact on one's credit score. Also, if one can close a loan before schedule, one become financially free to apply for another loan, if any sudden need arises. But saving on interest cost is one of most compelling reason to pay off, if possible, before the scheduled date. Also if you can pay off a loan completely, you actually end up freeing up the amount of money every month that you would have paid as EMI. You can even think of investing that amount to some productive asset or activities.

### Points to take care of

In order to discourage prepayment of loans, lenders impose foreclosure charges. It can vary approximately between 2% and 6% of the outstanding loan amount. These charges are meant to partially compensate the lender for the reduction in interest income that the

foreclosure results in. Also, there is the question of opportunity cost. The borrower can use the lumpsum, he/she uses to foreclose the loan to invest in other income generating asset such as stocks, mutual funds etc. It is possible that such investments earn him/her higher returns than the rate of interest the borrower is paying on the loan. Also paying off a handsome amount can cause temporary liquidity problems for an individual, especially if some unforeseen situation crops up.

### Will foreclosure charges be abolished?

However, the foreclosure charge could be on its way out. RBI has issued guidelines for discontinuing the practice of prepayment charges on floating-rate loans. Once implemented, it could remove a major irritant for the borrower and pave the way for a smoother foreclosure of loans. However, the possible liquidity crunch and opportunity cost question will remain.

# Tariff moves, FIIs trading activity to drive markets this week: Report

**The Rally Was Fuelled By Improving Investor Sentiment, Improvement In Foreign Capital Flows, And Positive Global Developments. Image: Bloomberg**

**New Delhi.** Global trends, tariff-related updates and trading activity of foreign investors would be the key drivers for the equity market movement this week, analysts said. Markets witnessed a strong rebound last week, with the benchmark indices surging over 4 per cent.

The rally was fuelled by improving investor sentiment, improvement in foreign capital flows, and positive global developments, an expert said. "We expect this upward momentum to continue, on the back of



foreign institutional investors' return to the Indian market amid attractive valuations and signs of economic recovery," Siddhartha Khemka, Head - Research, Wealth Management, Motilal Oswal Financial Services Ltd, said. Investors would also track the rupee-dollar trend and movement in global oil

benchmark Brent crude, an analyst noted. "With no major domestic economic events scheduled, focus will remain on the expiry of March derivatives contracts and FII activity. On the global front, the US markets will be closely watched, with tariff-related updates and GDP growth data expected to influence investor

sentiment.

"Although US markets saw a temporary respite after a sharp decline, mixed signals suggest potential volatility in the coming sessions," Ajit Mishra SVP, Research, Religare Broking Ltd, said.

Last week, the BSE benchmark gauge surged 3,076.6 points or 4.16 per cent, and the Nifty jumped 953.2 points or 4.25 per cent. "The domestic market has concluded the week with consistent recovery. The anticipated reduction in risk-free rates, coupled with the correction in the dollar index, are facilitating fund flows back to EMs. FIIs, whose selling activity has been waning, are becoming net buyers, driven by dovish signals from the US Fed, which suggest the possibility of two rate cuts this year. This has reignited optimism in the domestic market," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services, said.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) bought equities worth Rs 3,239.14 crore on Thursday, according to exchange data. On Friday also, FIIs bought equities worth Rs 7,470.36 crore.



# ECI engages more than 4000 EROs, 36 CEOs and 788 DEOs for holding all party meetings across the country

**The meetings will continue till March 31 to sort out every pending issue related to booth-level and others on a priority basis with the participation of all parties' representations and their suggestions.**

NEW DELHI. ECI has started holding all-party meetings across the country by engaging more than 4000 Electoral Registration Officers (EROs) to sort out pending polling booth-level issues in their respective assembly constituencies. The move has reportedly been taken to clear the pendency of complaints of booth-level issues ahead of polls in many states. An official source from the Election Commission of India (ECI) on March 22 said that as many as 4,123 EROs have

started holding all-party meetings to resolve any pending polling booth-level issues in their respective Assembly Constituencies (Acs). The meetings will continue till March 31 to sort out every pending issue related to booth-level and others on a priority basis with the participation of all parties' representations and their suggestions. According to ECI's statement, all 788 District Election Officers (DEOs) and 36 CEOs of all 28 States and 8 UTs at the State and UT levels have also been directed to hold meetings to resolve any pending issues at the district and State and UT levels respectively. "The 36 CEOs and 788 DEOS have strictly been directed by the commission to resolve the pending issues by holding all-party meetings at state and UTs levels within the legal framework of the RP Act 1950 and 1951, the Registration of Elector

Rules 1960, the Conduct of Election Rules 1961 and the manuals, guidelines and instructions issued by ECI from time to time", said an official statement. The ECI

entire country in each AC, district and State/UT by March 31, 2025", the ECI has added through a statement. It has also been stated that the decision to take such move

was taken in line with the directions of the Commission, led by CEC Gyanesh Kumar along with ECs Dr. Sukhbir Singh Sandhu and Dr. Vivek Joshi during the conference of CEOs of all States/UTs and one DEO and ERO from each state, held on March 4, 2025, in New Delhi. Furthermore, the ECI has also stated that the political parties and their authorized representatives such as Booth Level Agents (BLAs), Polling Agents, Counting Agents and Election Agents have specific roles to play in various electoral processes including the conduct of elections. "This grassroots-level engagement has been welcomed by political parties, with their active and enthusiastic participation in meetings across assembly constituencies.



further said that the all-party meetings have already started with the active participation of national/ and state level political parties across the country. "And, all such meetings are to be completed in the

## More trouble for FIITJEE: Police get fresh complaints against its South Delhi centre

The Kalu Sarai centre is among the prominent ones of the chain



New Delhi. Fresh complaints have been received against FIITJEE, a coaching institute chain that prepares students for competitive exams, from parents of students enrolled at its Kalu Sarai centre in South Delhi, police said Saturday. The coaching institute chain, which has 72 centres across the country, has been in trouble after several centres in major cities shut down recently amid alleged financial turmoil and non-payment of salaries to staff.

"We received 20 complaints seeking action against the FIITJEE centre in Malviya Nagar's Kalu Sarai. After a primary inquiry, they have been forwarded to the Economic Offences Wing (EOW) of the Delhi Police," a police officer said, adding that the complaints received from Malviya Nagar would be merged with the FIR filed by the EOW.

The Kalu Sarai centre is among the prominent ones of the chain.

On March 12, the EOW registered a cheating case against FIITJEE after receiving 192 complaints from parents of students who studied at its Preet Vihar centre in East Delhi. The centre shut down in mid-January. Speaking to The Indian Express, Nishant Garg, a parent and a complainant, claimed he had paid Rs 1 lakh to the Kalu Sarai centre in September last year but later found the centre was not paying salaries to its staff and classes might not take place. "We then approached the administration, asking for our money back, but they said it could not be refunded," Garg, who works in a private company as an assistant general manager, claimed. "I paid Rs 1 lakh in September and later gave a cheque of Rs 1 lakh to the centre. After requesting the bank, I have now put the cheque on hold," he said.

The FIR was registered under sections 406 (punishment for criminal breach of trust), 420 (cheating), and 120B (punishment for criminal conspiracy) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) at EOW police station, as the complaints had started coming in since 2022. The Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), the new criminal code of India, came into effect on July 1, 2024, replacing the IPC.

The EOW started a probe after it received around 35 complaints in February, which has now gone up to 192, said police. These complaints were initially filed with the local police in East Delhi and later forwarded to the EOW, as the amount was suspected to be big and needed a thorough investigation," an officer said.

In a statement earlier, FIITJEE had said the "present turmoil is temporary". "Company officials are working to resume operations at all places within a reasonable time," it added. It had also blamed managing partners for the financial crisis that led to the closure of several centres.

## Sex Racket In Delhi Busted, 3 Minors, 10 Nepali Nationals Among 23 Rescued

New Delhi. The Delhi Police has busted a sex racket operating in the Paharganj area here, rescuing 23 women, including three minors and 10 Nepalese nationals, an official said on Sunday. Seven people involved in human trafficking were arrested in the joint operation carried out by teams from the Paharganj Police Station, Shardhanand Marg Police Post and



Himmatgarh Police Post. "Based on inputs and surveillance, police identified key locations involved in the illegal trade. The accused were allegedly luring women from West Bengal, Nepal, and other states under false pretences and forcing them into prostitution," a senior police officer said. They were housed in a room in the Paharganj main market area, before being sent to various hotels. The officer said before the raid, teams conducted surveillance and deployed decoy customers at suspected locations. "Once the illegal activities were confirmed, teams raided multiple locations, including hotels. The victims were found being transported on scooters to different locations. The teams rescued 23 women, including three minors and arrested seven accused," said the officer.

Those arrested have been identified as Nurshed Alam (21), Md Rahul Alam (22), Abdul Mannan (30), Taushif Rexa, Shamim Alam (29), Md Jarul (26) and Monish (26), police said.

## "Wholesome Experience": Delhi Woman Cancels Cab For Female Rapido Captain

New Delhi. A Delhi woman's ride with Rapido turned into an unexpectedly "wholesome experience" when she met a female captain who was also a chef. Smriti Sahu, in a LinkedIn post, revealed that after an evening of shopping with a colleague, she booked a Rapido ride and was surprised to see a female driver, Pooja Tripathi, accept her request. She had also booked an Uber ride simultaneously, but cancelled it, choosing instead to ride with the Rapido captain on her "Kali (black) Activa." "It was the best decision ever because she was absolutely entertaining. Such a jolly person!" Ms Sahu wrote. What truly touched her was Ms Tripathi's inspiring life story. The Rapido captain, apart from ferrying passengers, is also a chef by profession. She joined the ride-hailing platform simply because she enjoys riding her scooter. Ms Sahu recalled how Ms Tripathi frequently checked in on her comfort with questions like, "Ma'am, zyada tez toh nahi chala rahi na?" (Am I riding too fast?) and "Aap aaram se toh baithe ho na?" (Are you seated comfortably?).

"She wasn't just talking for the sake of it, I could tell she had been through some tough times simply by the way she appreciated every little happy moment in her life," Ms Sahu said, adding that the 35-minute ride flew by in an instant. She also shared Ms Tripathi's details in a screenshot which showed her in a chef uniform. "Below are her details, in case Rapido decides to reward her in any way," Ms Sahu wrote.

A user commented, "This is just so cool. Good vibes only." Another wrote, "Wow, such a superb and beautiful story." "As someone who is scared to book rides on uber or ola anymore, this makes me so much happier," a comment read. Someone said, "Such a wholesome moment!" Last month, Rapido co-founder Pavan Guntupalli announced that the company would launch its women-only bike taxi service called 'Bike Pink' in Karnataka. It would create 25,000 jobs for women. The service was first introduced in Chennai in September 2024. They also plan to expand 'Bike Pink' to Kolkata.

## Kapil Sibal urges Opposition's INDIA to end disunity: Be a bloc, not un-bloc

Kapil Sibal has urged unity, structured leadership, and clear messaging from Opposition's INDIA bloc as it continues to face internal divisions, especially in states like Delhi, Punjab and West Bengal.

New Delhi. Rajya Sabha MP Kapil Sibal on Sunday urged the Opposition's INDIA bloc to present itself as a united front, cautioning that public disunity is undermining its credibility. Speaking to news agency PTI, Sibal stressed the need for a formal structure within the alliance, complete with official spokespersons to articulate its positions.



"INDIA bloc should appear to be a bloc and not un-bloc itself in the manner that it does in the public domain. They (INDIA parties) need to have a cohesive policy, a cohesive ideological framework and a cohesive programme for the future," Sibal said.

"I am not talking about the state level or the national level, there has to be cohesiveness in the way in which it thinks on issues that are of great national importance and unless that

mechanism is put in place and unless there are spokespersons of the bloc who represent the views of the INDIA bloc, I don't think that this can move forward very effectively," he added. Responding to questions on whether the INDIA bloc needs a formal political structure, Sibal said he has long advocated for such an arrangement. "Either it is not palatable to somebody or they feel this is not the right time.

## Gurugram Cops Slap Rs 1,000 Fine On Drunk Man In Car. He Wasn't Driving

New Delhi. A Gurugram man was allegedly fined Rs 1,000 by the police for being drunk inside his own car, despite not being behind the wheel. He shared the incident in a Reddit post titled, "Drinking and driving in Gurugram...my car got pulled over by the cops last night." According to his account, his car was stopped by the police while he was returning from a party. He admitted to being "completely sozzled" but clarified that his "personal driver/chauffeur" was the one operating the vehicle. He further said that the driver was checked multiple times and was found to be completely sober, as he was on duty.

Drunk," he wrote. The man humorously ended his post by admitting, "Sorry if it isn't making sense, I have a splitting headache just now."



Despite no alcohol being found in the car and the driver being fit to drive, the police still fined the man Rs 1,000 simply for being intoxicated as a passenger, he claimed. "They asked me if I had been drinking which was

One Redditor commented, "What? How could they make you pay? How are people supposed to go back from bars then?" To this, the original poster replied, "I am confused as f\*\*k, it

seems like moral policing. They accused me of being drunk." Another user sarcastically wrote, "Guess that was-how dare you have a sensible and uneventful fun night in Gurugram, tax." "A different commenter shared their own experience, saying, "I was drinking a little and was pulled over in Gurugram. I accepted I was drinking, and said I've no money. They took a picture of my number plate and phone screen and let me go. Got no challan online. Who pays for drinking while sitting in the backseat? The cops scammed you." Another user wrote, "They extorted you, my man! And thank you for being responsible!" According to Section 185 of the Motor Vehicles Act, driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs is a punishable offence. The penalties include up to 6 months of imprisonment or a fine of Rs 10,000, or both, for the first offence.

## "Suspected" Arambai Tenggol Members Attack Meitei Insurgents Who Signed Ceasefire: Manipur Police

**"Four UNLF (P) cadres were detained and taken to hospital for treatment. They are reported to be free from any danger," the Manipur Police said**

New Delhi. Four members of a Meitei insurgent group that signed a ceasefire agreement with the Centre and the Manipur government in November 2023 were injured in an attack by a group of 15-20 suspected members of the Arambai Tenggol (AT), the police said in a post on X on Sunday. There were reports of firing from both sides at the incident that happened on Saturday, the police said. The suspected AT members came to the house of alleged United National

Liberation Front (Pambei), or UNLF (P) functionary Irengbam Nandakumar Singh alias Tonsana, 56, the police said, adding a fight broke out between them in which four UNLF members received blunt injuries. "Immediately, teams of security forces rushed to the spot. The four UNLF (P) cadres were detained and taken to hospital for treatment. They are reported to be free from any danger and have only blunt injuries (not gunshot), they are stable," the police said in the post on X.

The security forces also raided the premises of AT Unit-17 under Imphal East district's Porompat police station, and recovered incriminating material including approximately 15 gram of a substance suspected to be heroin, INSAS assault rifle bayonet etc, the police said. An AT delegation met Manipur Governor Ajay Kumar Bhalla on February 25 and discussed the way forward for bringing peace in the border state. The AT delegation sought assurance from the Governor that there would be no attacks



on civilians after the surrender of firearms, and the central forces and the police would fill any security gap, which otherwise may force civilians to arm themselves again. The valley-dominant Meitei community and over a dozen distinct tribes collectively known as Kuki, who are dominant in some hill areas of Manipur, have been fighting since May 2023 over a range of issues such as land rights and political representation. Kuki civil society groups have alleged the AT launched attacks on their villages along the inter-district borders after the first wave of clashes in May 2023, which forced the Kuki tribes

to take up arms and form village defence forces. Many AT members have been named in cases of police armoury lootings. The AT, however, says it was a cultural organisation that was compelled to take up arms as "village volunteers" due to ineffective law enforcement in the early days of the ethnic violence; it says lack of law enforcement led to Meitei villages in the foothills coming under attacks from Kuki militants.

**Insurgents From Both Communities Involved In Manipur Violence: Police**  
The involvement of overground insurgents from both communities in the Manipur clashes was confirmed in September 2024 by the police after a gunfight in Jiribam district, neighbouring Assam. Banned Meitei militant groups such as the PLA, KYKL and KCP that had become nearly extinct in Manipur for the last 10 years also returned from Myanmar after May 2023 and due to the junta's diminishing hold in areas where the few remaining Meitei militants camped.

## NEWS BOX

## Top Hamas political leader killed in Israeli airstrike in southern Gaza: Report

An Israeli airstrike in southern Gaza's Khan Younis killed Hamas political leader Salah al-Bardawel, Hamas and Palestinian media reported in the early hours of Sunday. Pro-Hamas media said the airstrike killed Bardawel, who is a member of the group's political office, and also killed his wife. Israeli officials had no immediate comment.

Israel resumed significant strikes on Gaza on Tuesday, blaming Hamas, abandoning a ceasefire agreement that began on January 19 and ending almost two months of calm. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has repeatedly said the main aim of the war is to destroy Hamas as a military and governing entity. He has said the aim of the new campaign is to force the group to give up remaining hostages.

Hamas' de facto government head Issam Addalees and internal security chief Mahmoud Abu Watfa were among those killed by Israeli strikes on Tuesday, in addition to several other officials. Palestinian health officials said at least 400 people, more than half of them women and children, were killed on Tuesday.

Palestinian medics said an Israeli plane bombed a house in the city of Rafah in the southern Gaza Strip, wounding several people.

Hamas has accused Israel of breaking the terms of the January ceasefire agreement by refusing to begin negotiations for a final end to the war and a withdrawal of its troops from Gaza but has said it is still willing to negotiate and was studying Witkoff's "bridging" proposals. The return to the air strikes and ground operations that have devastated Gaza has drawn calls for a ceasefire from Arab and European countries. Britain, France and Germany issued a joint statement calling on Israel to restore access for humanitarian aid. Israel has blocked the entry of goods into Gaza and Falk accused Hamas of taking aid for its own use, a charge Hamas has previously denied.

## Key US pilot safety messaging system faces brief outage

Washington A US Federal Aviation Administration system that provides safety messages to pilots experienced an outage for several hours on Saturday before resuming operations, the agency and airlines said. The outage of the "Notice to Airmen" system for more than three hours on Saturday was due to a hardware issue. In early February, the system known as NOTAM also suffered a failure. The FAA said the main NOTAM system "experienced a temporary outage and the system was reset." The agency said it was "investigating the root cause ... closely monitoring the situation." The NOTAM system provides pilots, flight crews and other users of US airspace with critical safety notices. It could include items such as taxiway lights being out at an airport, nearby parachute activity or a specific runway being closed for construction. "All active NOTAMs were available until the time of the outage," the FAA said. On Friday, US Transportation Secretary Sean Duffy said he would announce a plan next week to drastically overhaul the aging US air traffic control system.

A NOTAM outage in January 2023 disrupted more than 11,000 flights in the first nationwide US ground stop since 2001. A ground stop is an air traffic management initiative in which no aircraft meeting certain criteria can take off. The FAA said in 2023 it planned to discontinue an older NOTAM system by mid-2025. National Air Traffic Controllers Association President Nick Daniels told Congress this month the NOTAM system has led to significant disruptions. "At minimum, the FAA will need \$154 million just to conduct further research on a replacement NOTAM system, but will need \$354 million to replace the broken NOTAM system," Daniels said.

## OpenAI, Meta in partnership talks with Reliance for AI expansion in India: Report

world. OpenAI and Meta Platforms have held separate discussions with India's Reliance Industries over potential partnerships to expand their artificial intelligence offerings in the country, technology news website The Information reported on Saturday.

A possibility being discussed involved a relationship between Reliance Jio and OpenAI to distribute ChatGPT, according to The Information, which cited two sources familiar with the matter.

OpenAI also discussed with employees cutting the ChatGPT subscription price to as low as several dollars instead of \$20 a month, according to the report, which added that it is not clear if OpenAI has discussed the idea of price reduction with Reliance. Reliance has discussed selling OpenAI's models to its enterprise customers through an application programming interface or API. The Information report added, saying that the Mukesh Ambani-led conglomerate also discussed hosting and running OpenAI models locally, so the data of local customers can be kept within India. In particular, Reliance has discussed running the Meta and OpenAI models in a three-gigawatt data centre that the company is planning to build, which it has said is the largest data centre in the world, located in the city of Jamnagar in Gujarat. Meta declined to comment on The Information report. OpenAI and Reliance did not immediately respond to requests for comment on the Reliance Industries is one of the largest conglomerates in India, engaged in petrochemicals, refining, oil and gas exploration, telecommunications, retail and green energy.

# Trump's entry at wrestling championship gets loud cheers, 'USA' chants

**Donald Trump travelled with Elon Musk**  
**He received cheers and congratulated winning wrestlers**  
**This is third sports event Trumps has attended in his second term**

Washington. President Donald Trump attended the National Collegiate Athletic Association wrestling (NCAA) wrestling championships on Saturday night for the second time in three years, the latest example of how he has mostly limited travel early in his new term to trips built around sports events. Trump arrived at the Wells Fargo Centre in Philadelphia to loud cheers and a standing ovation. He pumped his fists amid "U-S-A!" chants. As the matches occurred, Trump stood near the action and personally congratulated most of the winning wrestlers. The Republican president spent Friday night at his club in Bedminster, New Jersey, about 70 miles

northeast of Philadelphia, on what was his first visit there of his second term. "We're going to the big fight," Trump told reporters as he left the White House on Friday evening. "I've always supported the wrestlers." He added, "These are the great college wrestlers from the various schools." Trump travelled with billionaire and top adviser Elon Musk. Oklahoma Sen. Markwayne Mullin greeted the president as he arrived at the Philadelphia airport. Pennsylvania Sen. Dave McCormick and U.S. Rep. Jim Jordan were also at the arena sitting in the same section as Musk and White House Chief of staff Susie Wiles.

In the two-plus months since returning to the White House, Trump attended the Super Bowl in New Orleans and the Daytona 500 in Florida, where his motorcade drove a portion of the track. While president-elect, he went to a UFC fight in New York. That's more travel for sports than for policy announcements or official duties, though a



long January swing took Trump to tour damage from Hurricane Helene in North Carolina and wildfires in Los Angeles. He then gave a speech and visited the floor of Las Vegas' Circa Resort & Casino before heading to Doral, Florida, to address a House Republican policy conference.

Trump has long built his public and political persona around sporting events and relishes turning up at live events to hear cheers from

the crowd, even if some in attendance boo him. He has also signed an executive order intended to ban transgender athletes from participating in girls' and women's sports — an action which he points to frequently to fire up his core supporters.

The president played football as a student at the New York Military Academy. As a New York businessman in the early 1980s, he owned the New Jersey Generals of the United States Football League.

Trump had sued to force a merger of the USFL and the NFL. The USFL eventually folded. The president has used most Saturdays and Sundays to play golf at his Mar-a-Lago club in Florida, though he also sometimes remained in Washington to give weekend speeches. Trump was a candidate for reelection when he went to the 2023 NCAA wrestling championships in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

## US shifts crime-fighting agents to immigration clampdown under Trump: Report

**Homeland Security shifts resources to find unauthorised immigrants**  
**Trump's immigration push strains federal law enforcement**  
**Critics say crackdown diverts resources from crucial investigations**

pledges to deport "millions and millions" of "criminal aliens," thousands of federal law enforcement officials from multiple agencies are being enlisted to take on new work as immigration enforcers, pulling crime-fighting resources away on other



areas -- from drug trafficking and terrorism to sexual abuse and fraud.

This account of Trump's push to reorganise federal law enforcement — the most significant since the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks — is based on interviews with more than 20 current and former federal agents, attorneys and other federal officials. Most had first-hand knowledge of the

changes. Nearly all spoke on the condition of anonymity because they were not authorised to discuss their work.

"I do not recall ever seeing this wide a spectrum of federal government resources all being turned toward immigration enforcement," said Theresa Cardinal Brown, a former Homeland Security official who has served in both Republican and Democratic administrations. "When you're telling agencies to stop what you've been doing and do this now, whatever else they were doing takes a back seat." In response to questions from Reuters, Homeland Security Assistant Secretary Tricia McLaughlin said the US government is "mobilising federal and state law enforcement to find, arrest, and deport illegal aliens." The Federal Bureau of Investigation declined to respond to questions about its staffing. In a statement, the FBI said it is "protecting the US from many threats." The White House did not respond to requests for comment.

## Turkey erupts over mayor's arrest: Protesters pepper-sprayed, hundreds detained

Istanbul. Prosecutors early Sunday requested that detained Istanbul Mayor Ekrem Imamoglu, the top challenger to President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, be formally arrested over allegations of corruption and terror links.

A court is now set to decide whether the popular opposition figure will be charged and jailed pending a trial.

The arrest this week of Imamoglu has intensified political tensions and sparked widespread protests across Turkey, with demonstrators rallying in multiple cities to voice their opposition. Many view his arrest as a politically driven attempt to remove Imamoglu from the next presidential race, currently scheduled for 2028. Government officials reject the accusation and say Turkey's courts are independent. Police questioned Imamoglu for around five hours on Saturday as part of an investigation into allegations of aiding the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party, or PKK, the

Cumhuriyet newspaper reported. A day earlier he was questioned for four hours over the corruption accusations. The mayor rejected all charges during both



interrogations. He was later transferred to a courthouse for questioning by prosecutors along with some 90 other people who were also detained with him. Authorities barred access to the courthouse using barricades on local roads and closing nearby metro stations. Hundreds of police officers and over a dozen water cannon trucks were deployed. Still, hundreds gathered in front of the building shouting: "Rights, law, justice!"

LARGEST WAVE OF PROTESTS IN TURKEY IN MORE THAN DECADE

Others gathered outside the Istanbul city hall or took to the streets to denounce the mayor's resignation for a fourth night of nationwide protests, in the largest wave of street demonstrations in Turkey in more than a decade. The demonstrations were largely peaceful but a group of protesters, trying to break through barricades to reach Istanbul's main square, threw flares, stones and other objects at police, which responded with pepper spray. Some demonstrators said rubber bullets were fired. Police used water cannons and tear gas to scatter demonstrators in Ankara. Interior Minister Ali Yerlikaya said 323 people were detained following protests Saturday night. Earlier, he said: "There will be no tolerance for those who seek to violate societal order, threaten the people's peace and security."

## Indian-origin woman slits son's throat after Disneyland trip amid custody battle

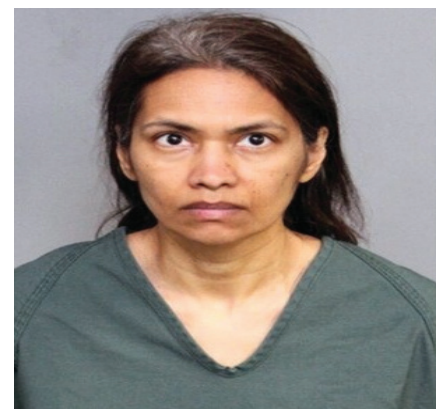
**Saritha Ramaraju faces 26 years to life if convicted on murder**  
**Custody battle ongoing with ex-husband since 2018**  
**Boy found dead in Santa Ana motel**

New York. An Indian-origin woman has been charged with allegedly murdering her 11-year-old son after a three-day vacation to Disneyland. Saritha Ramaraju, 48, has been charged with one felony count of murder for slitting her son's throat, killing the boy after they went on a vacation to Disneyland during a custody visit. She has also been charged with one felony enhancement of personal use of a weapon, a knife.

She faces a maximum sentence of 26 years to life if convicted on all charges, a statement

from the Office of the District Attorney, Orange County, California said Friday. Ramaraju, who moved out of California after divorcing the boy's father in 2018, was staying with her son at a motel in Santa Ana for a custody visit. During the visit, she bought three-day passes to Disneyland for herself and her son. On March 19, the day Ramaraju was scheduled to check out of the motel and return the boy to his father, she called 911 at 9.12 am to report that she had killed her son and taken pills to kill herself.

Santa Ana police arrived at the motel and found the young boy dead on the bed in a room among Disneyland souvenirs. It appeared the boy had been dead for several hours before his mother called 911, the statement said. The boy was scheduled to be returned to his father that day. A large kitchen knife was found inside the motel room which was purchased the day before. Ramaraju was released from the hospital on Thursday after ingesting the unknown substance and arrested on suspicion of



stabbing the boy to death. "The life of a child should not hang in the balance between two parents whose anger for each other outweighs their love for their child," Orange County District Attorney Todd Spitzer said. "Anger makes you forget who you love and what you are responsible for doing. The safest place for a child should be in their parents' arms. Instead of wrapping her arms around their son in love, she slit

his throat and in the cruelest twist of fate removed him from the very world she brought him into." While the statement did not name the boy, who was pronounced dead at the scene, a report in NBC Los Angeles identified him as Yatin Ramaraju.

The report added that Saritha Ramaraju had been in a custody battle with her husband Prakash Raju since last year, when she had accused him of making medical and school decisions without her input and alleged he had substance abuse issues. Prakash Raju had said in court papers that he was born and raised in Bengaluru, India, the NBC report said, adding that the couple had divorced in January 2018. Raju was granted the son's custody and Saritha Ramaraju received visitation rights, according to court records. The report, citing court papers filed in November, said that the mother was living in Fairfax, Virginia, and wanted her son to live with her. Ramaraju had accused her former husband of a "history of substance abuse issues" and added he "gets very aggressive under the influence of alcohol, drugs and smoke."



CCTV announced. As China faces an uncertain economic outlook, the country saw marriages decline by one-fifth last year and experienced a third consecutive year of overall population decline.

In a further step to address the issue, the Ministry of Civil Affairs will promote the "fight against certain harmful customs such as high 'bride prices' and wasteful expenses for weddings", according to CCTV.

The "bride price" is usually cash offered by the groom's family to his future wife. It is often seen as a mark of respect towards in-laws and a contribution to a young couple's life together. But the cost can sometimes be prohibitively high and create financial pressure on the groom's family, as well as increasing social inequality.

## NEWS BOX

## Mr. 360's litmus test: Suryakumar Yadav targets IPL turnaround amid T20 woes

**New Delhi.** TimesofIndia.com in Chennai: Suryakumar Yadav was all relaxed, had a nice laugh when MS Dhoni was referred to as an "uncapped player" and looked upbeat for the upcoming season of the Indian Premier League (IPL). This edition carries an additional layer of significance for Surya who hasn't had the best of times with the bat since taking over T20I captaincy from Rohit Sharma after the World Cup last year. India operated without fear and have had a splendid run under new head coach Gautam Gambhir in the bilaterals which followed but the spunk has been missing from Surya's blade.

Fifteen outings as a captain have yielded a meagre 258 runs and struggles continued in the domestic circuit for Mumbai too. The bat which once breathed fire has been ice cool for a very long time and the IPL presents an opportunity to get back amongst the runs. The right-hander enjoyed a lot of success at No. 3 but has himself pushed down the order to accommodate Tilak Varma who has been in red hot form. While the move paid rich dividends for the young left-hander, Surya's batting stock has been on a bear run since then.

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With the Mumbai Indians, he will be free from



captaincy duties, except the first game where he is leading because of Hardik Pandya's slow-over rate suspension, and would look to rediscover the mojo in the next few weeks. When asked about the return to No.3 spot, Surya kept cards close to his chest and asserted he is flexible to bat anywhere in the batting order. "It's always good to have that impact at the top. And I have seen that guy (Tilak), he has been working really hard. So for Team India, I thought it would be better if he can bat at number 3 and I can take the responsibility at number 4. Because for me, I think batting number doesn't matter. I will try and bat the same way, try and make that impact whenever there is an opportunity. And so does he. So you might see guys being flexible during this season, during this stint with the IPL. And everyone is flexible. Even I can bat at 3... I can bat at 5, Tilak can bat at 5. So it's that flexibility we have in our team," said.

## SRH vs RR, Hyderabad pitch, weather report IPL 2025: Will rain play spoilsport

**New Delhi.** Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH) and Rajasthan Royals (RR) will be up against each other in Match No.2 of the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2025 on Sunday, March 23. The Rajiv Gandhi International Stadium in Hyderabad will host the contest. The Sunrisers played an attacking brand of cricket last year and finished as the runners-up. With Pat Cummins as their captain, the Orange Army edged past most teams before losing to Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) in the Qualifier 1 and Final. Travis Head and Abhishek Sharma laid the platform at the top of the order, helping the Sunrisers win plenty of games. This season, they have bolstered their bowling with the inclusion of Mohammed Shami and Australian spinner Adam Zampa.

As far as the Royals are concerned, they will be led by Riyan Parag in the first three games as Sanju Samson failed to recover from his finger injury. Parag was the third-highest



run-scorer last season, but leading the Royals will have its share of challenges. SRH vs RR, IPL 2025: Rajiv Gandhi International Cricket Stadium pitch report

Hyderabad has been a high-scoring venue with the average score being 163 from 137 T20 matches. Out of 77 matches in the IPL, the chasing team has won 42 times while the team batting first finished on the winning side 34 times. One match was called off due to rain. The Sunrisers have scored at a rate of 8.41 at this venue in 57 matches.

India hold the record for the highest team total in Hyderabad after they made 297 for six against Bangladesh last year. SRH have the top score in the IPL in Hyderabad, 277 for three against Mumbai Indians in March 2024.

## SRH vs RR, IPL 2025: Hyderabad weather report

There is no chance of rain for the time being in Hyderabad. Skies are clear with less than 10 percent cloud cover.

# IPL 2025: BCCI pushing to keep KKR vs LSG Ram Navami clash in Eden Gardens

← **The Indian Cricket Board is trying to not move KKR vs LSG from Kolkata to Guwahati. A top BCCI source has told India Today that negotiations are happening to make sure that the IPL match can be played in Kolkata without any hassle.**

**New Delhi.** After pondering a move to shift KKR's match vs Lucknow Super Giants to Guwahati on April 6, the Indian Cricket Board is now pushing for the match to happen in Kolkata, India Today has learnt. Kolkata Knight Riders' match against Sanjeev Goenka's LSG was scheduled to take place in Kolkata on April 6. However, with Kolkata Police raising security concerns due to Ram Navami celebrations on the same day, the BCCI had earlier pondered shifting the match to Guwahati. However, India Today has learnt that the BCCI have made a U-turn on the



thought and now wants to host the match in Kolkata itself.

"Despite potential security concerns surrounding the festival, the BCCI is actively working with the Kolkata Police to ensure the match takes place at its originally

planned venue," a top BCCI source told India Today. As per top BCCI sources, the BCCI is in constant touch with the Kolkata Police. The BCCI wants the match to be held at Eden Gardens on the same date with proper police deployment. The Kolkata

Police is also working on arranging their deployment for the match, as well as ensuring the safety and security of the people. According to sources, the BCCI is trying to keep the match on the same day at the same venue. If that's not possible, rescheduling and moving the match to another venue will be considered. Earlier, former KKR pacer and current BJP MLA Ashok Dinda has speculated that economic loss for KKR could also be a reason for the shifting of venues.

"It is a question whether security can be provided or not, but we also understand that Ram Navami is a huge festival. On Ram Navami, thousands hit the streets and participate in the festivities. Then who will come to watch the match? Who will buy tickets?" said Dinda to India Today.

"It is taken for granted that it will be difficult for people to move around on that day of Ram Navami, as there will be traffic congestion, rallies, and people will also participate in these rallies. Then it will be a loss for KKR, and Shah Rukh Khan does not come here for a loss but for profit. If not, then more players from Bengal would play in KKR," said Dinda.

## IPL 2025 early impression: Ee Sala Cup Namde RCB's bold start fuels big dreams

**New Delhi.** How many of you had Royal Challengers Bengaluru in your top four before IPL 2025? And how many rushed to change your predictions after the opening night at Eden Gardens? On Saturday, 22 March, RCB delivered one of their most clinical performances, dismantling defending champions Kolkata Knight Riders. The scars of that unforgettable 2008 opener when Brendon McCullum made a mockery of an RCB side may never fully fade, but Bengaluru fans can take solace in their team's near-perfect start to the 18th edition of the IPL. In this league, history counts for little. Every match is a fresh challenge, and in a tournament as competitive as the IPL, any team can beat another on its day. KKR, last season's batting powerhouse, suddenly looked like wooden-spoon contenders. Of course, it's far too early for sweeping conclusions. But if RCB's opening night is anything to go by, their fans can dare to dream—perhaps even of a long-awaited title run. Does that sound like getting ahead of ourselves? Maybe. But there's good reason to believe RCB can be genuine title contenders—Saturday's performance provided enough evidence to back that claim.



### CAPTAIN RAJAT PATIDAR IMPRESSES

RCB did not chase a high-profile captain in the IPL mega auction. With a hefty purse, they had the option to go after superstars like KL Rahul, Rishabh Pant, or Shreyas Iyer. But they had different plans—RCB went intent on plucking gaps in their squad instead of stacking it with superstars. Sounds very un-RCB, right? Virat Kohli may have been a consideration for the leadership role, but instead, the team management backed Rajat Patidar, encouraging him to gain captaincy experience in domestic cricket. He responded by leading Madhya Pradesh to the final of the Indian domestic T20 competition before the IPL, proving his credentials for the big stage. On the opening night, the 31-

year-old, who has endured the highs and lows of a decade-long career in Indian cricket, looked unfazed by the occasion. Winning the toss and opting to field was the right call, but RCB's control slipped in the first 10 overs despite an early breakthrough. Ajinkya Rahane and Sunil Narine counter-attacked after Josh Hazlewood removed Quinton de Kock early. Rahane, in particular, unleashed a brutal assault, sending the ball flying into the stands. At the 10-over mark, KKR were cruising at 107 for 2, with Narine dismissed for 26 off 24 just before the halfway stage.

Despite the mounting scoreboard pressure, Patidar remained composed. His faith in his spinners paid off as they turned the game around in spectacular fashion.

Krunal Pandya emerged as the game-changer, picking up three crucial wickets in the middle overs. Suyash Sharma, expensive in his first three overs, was given an extra over by Patidar—a decision that proved decisive. Knowing Andre Russell struggles against googlies, Patidar backed the young leg-spinner, and it was indeed a wrong'un that got rid of the dangerous all-rounder in the 16th over.



**New Delhi** Former Australian cricketer David Warner recently lashed out at Air India after experiencing a frustrating delay on a flight. Warner, who last played for Australia in the Men's T20 World Cup in the West Indies and USA, boarded a flight that was initially without a pilot, causing an extended wait. The retired batter took to social media to express his disappointment over the situation. Warner wrote, "We've boarded a plane with no pilots and waiting on the plane for hours. Why would you board passengers knowing that you have no pilots for the flight?" Air India issued a statement, attributing the delay to bad weather conditions in Bengaluru, which caused widespread diversions and delays for several airlines. The airline explained that the crew assigned to Warner's flight was occupied with another duty, further contributing to the hold-up. Despite the inconvenience, Air India acknowledged the situation and expressed regret for the disruption faced by Warner and other passengers. Replying to Warner's complaint, Air India wrote, "Dear Mr. Warner, today's challenging weather in Bengaluru caused diversions and delays across all airlines. The crew operating your flight was held up on an earlier assignment affected by these disruptions, which led to a delay in departure. We appreciate your patience and thank you for choosing to fly with us."

David Warner set to take part in PSL. Warner isn't a part of the ongoing Indian Premier League (IPL) 2025 after going unselected in the mega auction last year in Jeddah. Warner is amongst the four batters in the history of the IPL to score 6000 or more runs, along with Virat Kohli, Shikhar Dhawan and Rohit Sharma.

The southpaw is now set to play for the Karachi Kings in the Pakistan Super League (PSL) 2025, scheduled to be held from April 11 to May 18. The Kings will play their first match against Multan Sultans on Saturday, April 12 at the National Stadium in Karachi.

## 'Why boarding passengers...': David Warner resents flight delay experience with Air India

**David Warner shared his ordeal with Air India on his social media handle on "X" as he blasted the Indian airline for causing him discomfort.**

**New Delhi.** Former Australia cricketer David Warner wasn't a happy man as on Saturday, he boarded an Air India aircraft with no pilots in it. He waited for hours as his flight kept on getting delayed due to the absence of the crew members. This led him to blast the airline as he made a post on "X" (formerly Twitter) asking them why would they even board the passengers in such a scenario. "@airindia we've boarded a plane with no

pilots and waiting on the plane for hours. Why would you board passengers knowing that you have no pilots for the flight?" Warner wrote. He did not specify where he was headed to but didn't shy away from voicing himself against the airline causing him discomfort. The airline replied to Warner's tweet a couple of hours later that weather-related disruptions at the Bengaluru airport led to the flight crew getting delayed. According to their response, similar was the situation across all airlines.

"Dear Mr. Warner, today's challenging weather in Bengaluru caused diversions and delays across all airlines. The crew operating your flight was held up on an earlier assignment affected by these disruptions, which led to a delay in departure. We appreciate your patience and thank you for choosing to fly with us," Air

India said in a post on X.

### Air India's repudiate

Any further details couldn't be ascertained but it is understood that Warner is now one of the many complainants who have raised their grievances against the airline. On the internet, the airline doesn't have a very good reputation as passengers ranging from common people to celebrities have slammed them for several reasons. The reasons vary from the crew members denying any service to the most common problem of the flight getting delayed without any notice. This causes a ruckus at the airport and even inside the aircraft. Some instances also include soaring ticket prices, cancellation charges, and the complicated refund process. Very recently, a tourist from abroad had posted a video of himself travelling in an age-old Air India aircraft with worn out facilities inside.

## IPL 2025: MI cannot keep calm about the menacing opening day jinx any more

← **Since 2013, Mumbai Indians have endured a rather bizarre streak of not winning their opening match of an IPL season. While success has come in the form of 5 IPL titles during this period, the past few years haven't been great for the franchise, as a loss in Game 1 has set an unwanted tone for the season early on.**

**New Delhi.** When you think about the Mumbai Indians, the first thing that comes to your mind is the 5 IPL titles they have won. Tied with Chennai Super Kings for the most number of IPL titles, MI have gone on to become a global franchise, with their latest wins in the Women's Premier League and

SA20 showing their prowess. But when it comes to the IPL, there is an unwanted record that continues to follow them since 2012. MI haven't been able to win their opening match in the last 12 seasons. A crazy stat made even more interesting given the fact that they had won all their 5 titles after this horrid run had started. Their last win, interestingly, came against CSK in 2012, their opponents in the opening match of the season. While fans will joke about the fact that losing the first game is fine as long as they go on to win the title, things haven't been great since their last IPL trophy triumph in 2020. How did the opening match jinx cost MI in the recent past? MI haven't reached the final of the IPL in the last 4 seasons and finished at the bottom of the table in 2022 and 2024. In both the aforementioned seasons, Mumbai finished with just 8 points from 14 matches and losing 10 of them. In 2022, MI lost 8 matches on the trot before finally getting on the board. The last season was the first one under the



leadership of Hardik Pandya and the loss to Gujarat Titans kind of set the tone for a campaign that left a bad taste in the mouth of every Mumbai fan. It was a match that MI had in their palms before an almighty batting collapse sent them on a downward spiral. In 2024, MI lost their first 3 matches before showing some signs of life with 2 wins. Another loss and win followed, but then MI went on a 4-match losing streak that ended their chances of making it to the playoffs. Adding to this, Hardik was

constantly jeered at matches and the sounds of friction between the players inside the camp was the news everyone was looking for.

### MI start on the backfoot, but have hope

Well, the preparations for the opening match against Chennai at Chepauk are far from ideal. Hardik will miss the opening game due to his slow over-rate ban and Jasprit Bumrah is still recovering from his back injury at the Centre Of Excellence. Suryakumar Yadav will lead the side, and they will depend on the experience of Rohit Sharma and former CSK boys Deepak Chahar and Mitchell Santner to spark some magic. There are some effective players of spin in their ranks to counter the threat of spin with Tilak Varma expected to have a more enhanced role this season. The southpaw, a few months ago, dug in deep and guided India to a famous win over England and his expertise will be needed in Chennai. Will Jacks, the new buy at the auction.

# Avneet Kaur

Reveals What She Did When A Boy Misbehaved With Her During Holi: 'Grabbed A Bat And...'



Avneet Kaur recently opened up about a shocking incident when a guy tried to misbehave with her during Holi celebration. The actress, who is known for shows like Aladdin and Meri Maa, was speaking to Hauterrfly when she recalled how a boy threw a water balloon on her despite her warning him not to do it. Avneet mentioned that the incident left her furious following which she beat up the boy with a bat. "During Holi, I told a boy not to hit me. Despite my warning, he threw a water balloon at my bum. I thought, 'Bete, tu toh gaya. Pehle toh tune dekha nahi ki kitni khatarnak ladki hoon.' I grabbed a bat and gave him a good beating," Avneet said.

Fir uss ladke ki mummy aayi thi mere mummy ke paas, 'Aapki ladki ne mere ladke ko dho diya.' Mummy ne bola, 'Kyuki usne dhone wala kaam kiya. Aur kya karenin?'" the actress added. In the same interview, Avneet Kaur also another incident when someone touched her inappropriately at a dance rehearsal. She claimed that she was only 8 years old at that time and the incident led to a conversation about good touch and bad touch with her mother.

"Once, during dance rehearsals, there was a spot or someone who touched here and there... at the time, I told my mother about this... then my mom told me that beta, this is bad touch, this is good touch and whatever. You have to understand that this happens.

I am telling you this from back when I was eight years old. And since then, I was well prepared for such things," she shared. Meanwhile, on the work front, Avneet Kaur will soon be seen in Love in Vietnam. She also has a Hollywood project lined up. The actress will be seen in Mission: Impossible – The Final Reckoning.



## Shreya Dhanwanthary Gets Real About Fear Of Failure, Bollywood Struggle; Taapsee Pannu, Arjun Kapoor Back Her



Actress Shreya Dhanwanthary, known for her roles in 'The Family Man' and 'Scam 1992', recently expressed her fear of failure, worried that she might 'vanish' after doing a couple of good movies and shows. She shared that her father often suggests her to leave acting and pursue an MBA instead. She admitted that for the first time she questioned her path, frustrated by the lack of any visible progress despite her perseverance. She also talked about the lack of opportunities and good roles, highlighting that talent isn't the only factor based on which roles are given. She also shared that she feels uncertain about how much longer she can keep going. Taapsee Pannu, Bhumi Pednekar, Arjun Kapoor, Gunet Monga and others came out in her support. While speaking on the podcast 'Take A Pause With Varun Duggirala', Shreya Dhanwanthary said, "I'm actually really scared that I will fail very spectacularly. That I'd be this one person who did a couple of good movies, a couple of good shows and just vanished and just didn't amount to anything. The recent conversation I had with my dad is so funny. They are very supportive. But they think I'm wasting my potential. They think I could be doing a lot of other things. Every time dad used to be like 'Ye sab kyu karna hai yaar? Padh lo thoda, MBA kar lo, you'll be a CEO in no time. Your life is getting wasted'. Every time I would be like 'Dad, please. I'm doing something, I'm getting somewhere.' Last year when he said this, I'm like 'Maybe'. For the first time."

She added that her response scared her. "Because I feel like the one thing that is common in every person who makes a speech when they are winning an award is like, 'Hang in there. It's going to happen.' The hanging in there is tougher than people say it is. It is quite heart-breaking to hang in there with absolutely no sign of anything getting better." She said that she doesn't know how long she can hang in there. "Because the opportunities aren't there, the parts aren't being written. If they are, they are not being sent your way because there are other parameters for people to make decisions. Based on your following or who you are connected to or who you are seeing or who you are friendly with. Things that have nothing to do with acting. I'm losing the battle with myself," she said.

## Zeenat Aman Urges Women In Film Industry To Fight For Pay Parity: 'You've Come A Long Way'



Zeenat Aman is speaking up about something that has been a problem in Bollywood for years—pay disparity. The veteran actress praised how far women have come in the industry but reminded them that the fight isn't over yet. She encouraged female actors to stand up for what they deserve and not settle for less, because fair pay shouldn't be a privilege—it should be the norm! At The Hollywood Reporter India's Women In Entertainment awards ceremony, Zeenat was honoured with the Iconic Artist award by Sushmita



Sen. After the standing ovation, she gave a heartfelt speech wherein she said, "I know women in entertainment are being celebrated. But I think it is important to remember that all women must be celebrated. Not just women in entertainment."

Zeenat Aman added, "It is an illustrious gathering. I remember more than 50 years ago, I would be the only woman on set. What is so heartening to see now is that now in every sphere of filmmaking there are women who have created their own space. In the corporate world this is something that I am really proud of. But I do have something to say. Please, please push for pay parity. From my perspective you have come a long way, baby! So cheers to that, thank you." Meanwhile, Zeenat Aman is all set to make a comeback with some exciting projects! She will next be seen in Netflix's The Royals, alongside Ishaan Khatter and Bhumi Pednekar, which is set to release later this year. Apart from that, she has a role in Bun Tikki, directed by Faraz Arif Ansari, where she shares the screen with Shabana Azmi and Abhay Deol.

# Tamannaah Bhatia's

Odela 2 Gets A Release Date; Check Out Intense New Poster

Tamannaah Bhatia's upcoming film, Odela 2, finally gets a release date. The makers dropped a new intense poster from the project and revealed the release date – April 17. The teaser of the supernatural-thriller film was unveiled at the Maha Kumbh Mela in February. Tamannaah plays a Shiva devotee in the film, wiping off evil to let the good



prevail. In the new poster, the actor is seen intently gazing into the camera with blood splattered across her face. "A presence to be felt #Odela2 on April 17th," she wrote, while announcing the release date. Take a look:

At the film's teaser launch in Maha Kumbh last month, an elated Tamannaah told ANI, "I got a once-in-a-lifetime chance. I actually see so many people here. I feel we all want to be happy and free from our own

sufferings. I felt that everyone is here to say something of their own, don't let it go kind of things. So I felt so good to do this with everyone. It is also the devotion and faith of people that we are all able to do such a big thing. At the same time, this is the belief of all of us that we are able to do so much together, and it is our grace." Odela 2 serves as the sequel to the 2022

Telugu film, Odela Railway Station. This upcoming supernatural thriller delves into the timeless battle between good and evil, with Tamannaah embodying righteousness and Vasishtha representing darkness. Set in a village, the story revolves around its protector, Odela Mallanna Swamy, who continually shields it from malevolent forces.

Directed by Ashok Teja, Odela 2 stars Tamannaah Bhatia and

is produced under the Sampath Nandi Teamworks banner in collaboration with D Madhu of Madhu Creations. The film's ensemble cast includes Hebah Patel, Vasishtha N Simha, Surender Reddy, Naga Mahesh, Vuva, Vamshi, Bhupal, Gagan Vihari, and Pooja Reddy. With music composed by Kantara fame Ajaneesh Loknath and cinematography by Soundar Rajan S, the film is gearing up for a pan-India release soon.

