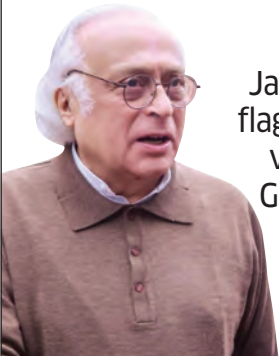


PAGE 6

NATION

Jairam Ramesh flags tribal rights violations in Great Nicobar project



PAGE 10

LAW & JUSTICE

Not mandatory to go to temple to prove belief: SC



PAGE 11: BUSINESS

AI could add \$500b to India's economy by 2030: Study



PAGE 12

GLOBAL

Western leaders to learn from Modi's consistent focus on environment



PAGE 15

SPORTS

Ronaldo, Portugal get another shot at WC glory



CBI arrests five in NEET paper leak probe

Raids across Rajasthan, Haryana and Maharashtra point to a larger conspiracy threatening the credibility of NEET

PRAMOD KUMAR SINGH
■ New Delhi

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has arrested five individuals and carried out simultaneous searches at multiple locations in connection with the paper leak in the National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (Undergraduate) (NEET-UG) 2026 examination.

Those arrested have been identified as Dr Shubham Khairnar from Nashik, Mangilal Biwal from Jaipur, Vikas Biwal from Jaipur, Dinesh Biwal from Jaipur and Dr Yash Yadav from Gurugram. The arrests were made within 24 hours of the CBI registering the case.

NEET-UG remains the sole gateway for admission to MBBS, BDS, and other undergraduate medical and dental courses in over 600 medical colleges across the country.

PANKAJ KUMAR

Every year, more than 20 lakh aspirants appear for the test, competing for roughly 1.1 lakh seats.

After receiving a formal written complaint from the Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Education, Government of India, the CBI registered the First Information Report (FIR) on May 12 under multiple stringent provisions of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), including criminal conspiracy, cheating, and criminal breach of trust. The case also invokes the Prevention of Corruption Act and the Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act, 2024, a relatively new central legislation specifically designed to curb malpractices such as paper leaks, impersonation and organised cheating in competitive exams.

According to CBI officials, the five accused persons were apprehended from three states: three from Jaipur, Rajasthan; one from Gurugram, Haryana; and one from Nashik, Maharashtra. Teams of investigators simultaneously conducted raids at several premises linked to the suspects, their associates and other individuals believed to be part of the larger network. "Several other suspects are currently being examined, and more arrests are likely in the coming days," a CBI spokesperson said.

While the agency has so far withheld detailed information on the exact roles played by the arrested individuals, preliminary findings point towards a coordinated attempt to leak the question paper or manipulate the examination process either before or during its conduct. Sources indicate that the probe is examining possible involvement of intermediaries, coaching centre operators and even insiders who may have had access to the question paper or the examination logistics.

The development has triggered widespread concern among students, parents and educationists. Many aspirants who appeared for NEET UG-2026 had already expressed anxiety over reports of irregularities even before the official complaint was filed.

CONTINUED ON >> P4

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

The Union Government on Wednesday raised import duties on precious metals as part of a broader effort to conserve foreign exchange amid mounting pressure from the West Asia crisis. Effective May 13, import duty on gold and silver has been increased from 6 per cent to 15 per cent and that on platinum has been raised from 6.4 per cent to 15.4 per cent.

"During periods of external stress, measured moderation of discretionary imports may contribute significantly to overall macro-economic stability and prudent external-sector management," a source said explaining the rationale behind the duty hike.

The Government has hiked Surcharge (SWS) and the Agriculture Infrastructure and Development cess (AIDC) to push the customs duty.

CONTINUED ON >> P4



Indian Youth Congress activists raise slogans during a protest following the leak of the NEET-UG 2026 paper in New Delhi

PANKAJ KUMAR



A customer checks a necklace at a jewellery shop in Amritsar, Punjab

PTI

Govt raises import duty on gold to conserve forex

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
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CONTINUED ON >> P4

Over 85 per cent pass CBSE class 12 exams

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

Over 85 per cent class 12 students have cleared the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) examination, the board announced on Wednesday. The overall pass rate has dipped by over three percentage points compared to the last year, the result show. Girls once again outperformed boys in the examinations and recorded 88.86 pass percentage, while for boys, it stood at 82.13 per cent.

Marking a first, the CBSE carried out full-scale evaluation of class 12 exam answer sheets through 'On Screen Marking' (OSM), under which 98,66,622 answer books were digitally assessed by around 70,000 evaluators.

Department of School Education & Literacy Secretary Sanjay Kumar said this year some there is a difference in the percentage of marks this time, but that is quite natural because the scheme for assessment changed and that is reflected in the results. "But I don't think that is the more important part. The more important part is that the examination results are out. Girls have done much better than the boys, as usual and I would take this opportunity to congratulate all the children and all those who have done well. To some, who may not have done that well, I would say not to lose their heart," Kumar said.

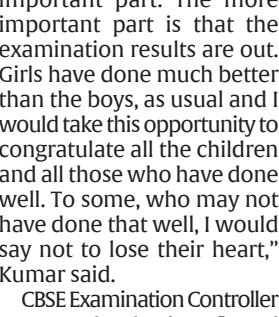
CBSE Examination Controller Sanyam Bhardwaj confirmed that more than 85 per cent of the students have passed the exams. A total of 94,028 candidates — 532 per cent of all examinees — scored 90 per cent and above, while 17,113 candidates (0.97 per cent) scored 95 per cent or more.

CONTINUED ON >> P4



Students celebrating in St Thomas' Girls Senior Secondary School in New Delhi after CBSE Class 12 results were announced

PANKAJ KUMAR



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CONTINUED ON >> P4

CBI chief gets extension

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ New Delhi

The Centre on Wednesday extended the tenure of Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) chief Praveen Sood by one more year.

This is his second extension in office. The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC), based on the recommendations of the selection committee, approved Sood's extension for a period of one year beyond May 24, 2026, an order issued by the Personnel Ministry said.

Sood took over as the director of the CBI on May 25, 2023, for a two-year term. He was



CBI chief Praveen Sood

PTI

given a one-year extension last year.

The decision to extend his tenure was taken following a meeting of the selection committee headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and comprising Chief Justice of India Surya Kant and Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi on Tuesday, officials said.

After the meeting, Gandhi had given a strong dissent note on the process of selection of the CBI director and said he does not want to be a part of a "biased exercise".

Mulayam Singh's younger son dies



SP National President Akhilesh Yadav arriving at post-mortem house at KGMU in Lucknow, where remains of his stepbrother Prateek Yadav were kept for post-mortem

PTI

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Lucknow

Prateek Yadav, the younger son of Samajwadi Party founder Mulayam Singh Yadav, died at the age of 38 after falling ill with cardiac-lung complications early Wednesday. His death has shocked political circles across Uttar Pradesh. Prateek had been battling deep vein thrombosis (DVT), pulmonary embolism and recent cardiac complications, a senior doctor who treated him said on Wednesday.

The provisional post-mortem report prepared at the King George's Medical University (KGMU) earlier in the day cited the cause of death as "cardiorespiratory collapse due to massive pulmonary thromboembolism", a condition in which a large blood clot blocks arteries in the lungs, leading to sudden heart and lung failure.

"He was my old follow-up (patient) for the last five-six years for hypertension and DVT. Recently, he developed a sudden onset of breathlessness and chest discomfort. He was also diagnosed with pulmonary embolism about three weeks back," said Dr Ruchita Sharma, associate director, Department of Medicine, Medanta Hospital. The doctor said on April 29, Prateek had visited her, and during the visit, cardiac complications were also spotted, leading to his hospitalisation for a couple of days.

"We treated him, administered injections during the hospitalisation," Dr Sharma said, adding that Prateek was also on blood thinners. She said his "cardiac involvement", coupled with DVT and pulmonary embolism, had made him a "high-risk patient", though he didn't skip medicines. "In fact, even on Tuesday night, he took all his medicines," the doctor said, indicating she was in regular touch with Prateek and his wife, Aparna.

Prateek, known as a fitness enthusiast and bodybuilder who also operated a gym in Lucknow, had suddenly fallen ill in the early hours of Wednesday and was rushed to the Civil Hospital, where he was declared dead on arrival.

Those close to him who described him as health-conscious. The post-mortem examination documented six distinct blue-purple bruises, all of which were confirmed to be ante-mortem (sustained while the deceased was alive). Three of them were approximately 5 to 7 days old, while remaining were approximately a day old.

The Bystander



REBEL PATHI
TVK
E. Suresh

Assam approves UCC minus tribals

TONY DAS ■ Guwahati

The Assam Cabinet on Wednesday approved the implementation of the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) in the state, but the tribal population will be kept outside its purview, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said. The UCC Bill will be laid before the new legislative assembly on May 26, the Chief Minister said at a press conference here after chairing the first cabinet meeting of his second term as the head of the Government.

"This is a major decision taken in the first cabinet meeting and aligns with the commitment we made during the elections," he said. Sarma said Uttarakhand, Goa and Gujarat have already implemented the UCC, but his Government has customised it for the requirements of Assam.

"We have completely exempted the tribal population from the purview of UCC. All rituals, traditions and customs practised by the people of Assam outside the scope of UCC," he said. The UCC will deal with succession, marriage, live-in relationships and compulsory registration of marriage and divorce, he added.



Assam CM Himanta Biswa Sarma chairing the first cabinet meeting of the new State Government in Guwahati

PTI

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Trump gets red carpet welcome in Beijing

KJM VARMA ■ Beijing

US President Donald Trump was accorded a red carpet welcome on Wednesday upon his arrival in Beijing for talks with his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping on a host of issues, including the Iran war and a trade deal.

Trump was welcomed by Chinese Vice President Han Zheng at the airport, a rare honour that broke with usual diplomatic protocol.

Officials say most of the top leaders visiting China, including Russian President Vladimir Putin, a close ally of Xi, were received by State Councillors, a high-ranking post of the ruling Communist Party of China.

By deputing Vice President Han to receive Trump, China sent a message about the importance it attached to his visit, observers said.

There was also a brass band playing as Chinese military personnel presented a guard of honour as Trump descended the steps of his plane.

He was also greeted by 300 Chinese youth dressed in blue and white uniforms and waving Chinese and American flags in unison, chanting in Chinese. "Welcome, welcome! Warm welcome!"

Trump briefly paused to listen to the flag-waving youth and moved to get into his limousine, The Big Beast, flown from Washington.

The highway route leaving the airport was decorated with American and Chinese flags. Skyscrapers were lit up with Chinese characters meaning "Beijing Welcome."

CONTINUED ON >> P4



US President Donald Trump and Elon Musk during the arrival ceremony in Beijing on Wednesday

AP

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CONTINUED ON >> P4

Indian ships given priority pass in Strait of Hormuz: Iran deputy FM

ASHOKE RAJ ■ New Delhi

Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister Kazem Gharibabadi on Wednesday strongly defended Tehran's proposed service fee mechanism for vessels transiting the Strait of Hormuz, while confirming that Indian ships are being given preferential passage amid heightened regional tensions.

Speaking exclusively to *The Pioneer* on the sidelines of the India-chaired BRICS meeting, Gharibabadi dismissed suggestions that Iran was imposing transit tolls on international shipping and said the proposed charges were linked only to maritime services provided by Iran and Oman in the strategically critical waterway.

"We are providing maritime services — navigation assistance, safety and rescue operations and other safety-related services," Gharibabadi said. "There will be charges for those services, but the framework will be based on three principles: transparency, non-discrimination and compliance with international standards."

Rejecting criticism from Western governments and shipping stakeholders, the Iranian diplomat asserted that Tehran had no intention of violating international maritime law.

CONTINUED ON >> P4



Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister Kazem Gharibabadi

PIONEER PHOTO

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CONTINUED ON >> P4

GOVT RAISES MSP FOR KHARIF CROPS

The Union Cabinet on Wednesday raised the Minimum Support Price (MSP) for paddy by ₹72 to ₹2,441 per quintal for the 2026-27 kharif marketing season, while announcing sharper hikes for pulses, oilseeds and cotton to encourage crop diversification and reduce import dependence. The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, approved MSPs for 14 kharif crops ahead of the June sowing season. MSP for A-grade paddy was fixed at ₹2,461 per quintal. Among major increases, sunflower seed MSP was raised by ₹622 to ₹8,343 per quintal — the steepest hike — followed by cotton (medium staple), up ₹557 to ₹8,267 per quintal. Sesamum, nigerseed, soyabean and groundnut also saw sizeable increases. In pulses, tur MSP was increased by ₹450 to ₹8,450 per quintal and urad by ₹400 to ₹8,200 per quintal, while moong rose marginally by ₹12.

CM transfers Rs 1,835 cr to Ladli Behna beneficiaries

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Bhopal

Chief Minister Mohan Yadav on Wednesday said the Madhya Pradesh government remains fully committed to the welfare, dignity and empowerment of women while addressing a major public programme organised in Mungwani village of Narsinghpur district under the Chief Minister Ladli Behna Yojana. During the event, the Chief Minister transferred the 36th instalment of the scheme, amounting to Rs 1,835 crore, directly into the bank accounts of nearly 1.25 crore women beneficiaries across the state.

Addressing a large gathering, Mohan Yadav described the Ladli Behna Yojana as one of the biggest welfare initiatives undertaken by the state government for women's financial and social empowerment. He said the scheme has played a significant role in strengthening the economic independence of women and improving their participation in family and social decision-making processes. The Chief Minister informed that more than Rs 55,000 crore has already been transferred directly into the accounts of Ladli Behna beneficiaries since the launch of the scheme.

During the programme, the Chief Minister also inaugurated and laid foundation stones for 40 development projects worth approximately Rs 296 crore. These included 17 projects worth Rs 215 crore for which foundation stones were laid and 23 completed



projects worth Rs 80 crore that were inaugurated.

Mohan Yadav said Madhya Pradesh is witnessing rapid transformation in infrastructure, welfare and public services under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He highlighted that women are increasingly progressing in fields such as computers, security services, entrepreneurship and administration. He said the state government has provided 33 per cent reservation to women in the police department and more than four lakh women are currently associated with self-employment activities. Women working in garment industries and factories are also being provided financial assistance of Rs 5,000.

The Chief Minister said schemes such as Ladli Laxmi Yojana are positively transforming the lives of girls in the state. He informed that nearly

53 lakh girls have benefited from the scheme, while around 80 lakh girls are receiving scholarships for education. Financial assistance of Rs 55,000 is also being provided under the Chief Minister Kanya Vivah/Nikah Yojana.

Highlighting measures for farmers, Mohan Yadav announced that the state government would provide a bonus of Rs 600 per quintal on urad procurement. He said Madhya Pradesh has become the country's leading wheat procurement state and procurement operations would continue till May 23, with the possibility of extension if required. He also highlighted efforts to connect women farmers with dairy production activities to increase rural incomes.

The Chief Minister appealed to citizens to conserve water and reduce unnecessary use of petrol and diesel in line

with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's appeal. He said his official convoy had been reduced from 13 vehicles to eight as part of fuel-saving efforts. He also encouraged people to promote organic farming and reduce the use of chemical fertilisers.

During the programme, meritorious students, sportspersons, women self-help groups and beneficiaries of various government schemes were honoured. The Chief Minister also announced the opening of a college in Mungwani, construction of a bridge over the Shedi river and development of sports infrastructure in Narsinghpur district.

He also praised public participation in welfare and development programmes, saying collective efforts by citizens and the government are helping accelerate social and economic progress across Madhya Pradesh.

New coal projects get approval

Bhopal: Chief Minister Mohan Yadav has thanked Prime Minister Narendra Modi after the Union Cabinet approved an incentive scheme worth Rs 37,500 crore for coal and lignite gasification projects located near the earth's surface.

The Chief Minister said the decision would strengthen the country's energy security, boost industrial growth and generate nearly 50,000 employment opportunities through 25 proposed projects. He said the initiative would also encourage long-term investment in coal gasification projects.

The scheme aims to accelerate India's target of achieving 100 million tonnes of coal gasification by 2030 and reduce import dependence on products such as LNG, urea, ammonia and methanol.

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Bhopal

The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) on Wednesday declared the Class 12 board examination results for 2026, ending the wait for lakhs of students across the country, including 80,454 candidates from Madhya Pradesh and 9,399 students from Bhopal.

This year, the performance of the Bhopal region remained below the national average. The region recorded an overall pass percentage of 79.43 per cent, while the national average stood at 85.20 per cent, leaving Bhopal trailing by 5.77 percentage points. The region also performed below several other CBSE regions, including Raipur, Lucknow



Students celebrate their success after the Central Board of Secondary Education announced class 12th results, at St Joseph's Convent Senior Secondary school in Bhopal on Wednesday. Pioneer photo

CBSE Class 12 results declared, Bhopal trails national average

and Ranchi.

At the national level, the overall pass percentage declined by 3.19 per cent compared to last year. While the pass percentage in 2025 was 88.39 per cent, it dropped to 85.20 per cent this year. Among all regions, Thiruvananthapuram recorded the best performance with a pass percentage of 95.62 per cent, while Prayagraj emerged as the weakest-performing region with 72.43 per cent results. Delhi West and Delhi East also registered strong performances with pass percentages above 91 per cent.

An analysis of the Bhopal region's results showed that girls once again outperformed boys. The pass percentage among girls stood at 82.19 per cent, while boys recorded 76.87 per cent, giving girls an

advantage of more than five percentage points.

A concerning trend also emerged in the Bhopal region, where 12.14 per cent of students failed in all subjects. Education experts believe the figure raises serious concerns regarding both academic preparedness and the quality of educational support available to students.

Students can check their results through the official CBSE website, DigiLocker and the UMANG application using their roll number, school number, admit card ID and date of birth. Students failing in one or more subjects will be eligible to appear for compartment examinations.

CBSE has also allowed students dissatisfied with their marks to apply for verification, re-evaluation and photocopies

of answer sheets. The Class 12 examinations this year were conducted between February 17 and April 10, 2026, and answer sheets were evaluated through a digital system aimed at ensuring greater transparency and faster processing.

The Bhopal region remains one of the largest CBSE regions in the country, with 1,291 affiliated schools, making it the second-largest region after Ludhiana in terms of the number of schools.

Officials said schools in the Bhopal region will now focus on improving academic support and counselling for students who performed poorly in the examinations. Education experts have also stressed the need for stronger preparation strategies and continuous assessment to improve future board results in the region.



A herd of deers cool themselves under a water sprinkler as they graze green grass during hot summer at the Van Vihar National Park in Bhopal on Wednesday.

Fuel-saving initiative launched during Simhastha survey

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Ujjain

Acting on Prime Minister Narendra Modi's appeal for fuel conservation and Chief Minister Mohan Yadav's call to reduce petrol and diesel consumption, the Ujjain district administration has started implementing fuel-saving measures during inspections related to Simhastha 2028 preparations.

From Wednesday, senior administrative officials inspecting development works for the mega religious event began travelling together in a single traveller bus instead of using separate vehicles. The initiative is aimed at promoting fuel efficiency while sending a public message on energy conservation.

Under the directions of Chief Minister Mohan Yadav, large-scale infrastructure and development works are progressing rapidly in Ujjain to prepare for Simhastha 2028, which is expected to attract millions of devotees from across the country and abroad for holy bathing in the Shipra River.

During the latest inspection,

Divisional Commissioner and Simhastha Fair Officer Ashish Singh, Collector Roshan Kumar Singh, Municipal Corporation Commissioner Abhilash Mishra and other officials jointly travelled in one vehicle while reviewing ongoing works along the riverbanks.

Over the past five days, officials conducted a detailed 36.5-kilometre foot survey on both banks of the Shipra River and identified 140 locations for the construction of approach roads connecting various ghats with the city's main roads. The survey covered areas from the ghats beneath Lal Pul Bridge to Gau Ghat, the Vedhshala area, Wakankar Bridge, Jeevan Khedi and the old and newly developed ghats near Shri Shani Temple.

Officials said the proposed roads will improve accessibility and ensure smooth movement of devotees during Simhastha. The newly developed 29-kilometre stretch of ghats is expected to help manage large crowds and facilitate uninterrupted bathing arrangements round the clock during the event.

CM reduces convoy size

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Bhopal

Following Prime Minister Narendra Modi's appeal for restrained use of petrol and diesel, Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav has reduced the number of vehicles in his official convoy from 13 to seven as part of a fuel conservation initiative.

The reduced convoy was visible on Wednesday when the Chief Minister left Bhopal for Narsinghpur with only seven vehicles accompanying him. The move is being seen as an effort to promote fuel efficiency and encourage simplicity in official functioning.

After the Chief Minister's decision, Deputy Chief Minister Rajendra Shukla also announced measures to minimise vehicle usage in official activities. In a social media post, Shukla said fuel conservation in national interest is a collective responsibility and the Public Health and Medical Education Department would fully support the initiative.

He said departmental inspections, tours and official programmes would use minimum vehicles until further orders

Pregnant woman found dead, family alleges harassment

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Bhopal

A 31-year-old pregnant woman, identified as Twisha Sharma, allegedly died by suicide at her residence in Bhopal's Katara Hills area, with her family accusing her husband and in-laws of prolonged mental harassment and abuse. Police have launched an investigation into the incident.

Twisha, a native of Noida, had married Bhopal-based advocate Samarth Sharma around a year ago. Her husband belongs to the family of a retired woman judge. According to police, she was found hanging at her residence on Tuesday night. She was taken to hospital by her husband and mother-in-law, where doctors declared her dead.

Her brother Harshit Sharma, a Major in the Indian Army, alleged that Twisha had called the family shortly before her death and complained of severe mental harassment by her husband over the past several days. He claimed she was being insulted over minor issues and was under intense emotional stress.

According to the family, Twisha had expressed her

desire to leave Bhopal and return to her parental home in Noida. They said she had even booked tickets to travel back before news of her death arrived.

The family further alleged that Twisha was subjected to humiliation after she quit her job following marriage and moved to Bhopal. Harshit Sharma claimed she was frequently taunted and called "useless" by her husband and was also insulted over her upbringing and family background, which allegedly pushed her into depression.

Another serious allegation raised by the family relates to her pregnancy. According to relatives, Twisha was not prepared for motherhood after an unplanned pregnancy earlier this year, but her in-laws allegedly pressured her to continue with it. The family claimed she was also taunted over the pregnancy and emotionally disturbed by repeated accusations and remarks made against her. Relatives also alleged that Twisha had suffered physical assault after marriage and pointed to injury marks visible on her hands and ears. However, police said no suicide note has been recovered from the house so far.

UWA launches India education initiative

Bhopal: The University of Western Australia (UWA) has announced a major scholarship programme through UWA India, marking one of its most significant initiatives for Indian students.

The programme aims to make globally recognised edu-

cation more accessible to talented students from diverse academic, social and regional backgrounds.

UWA Vice-Chancellor Professor Amit Chakma said the initiative reflects the university's strong commitment towards India and ensuring that financial constraints do not hinder students' ambitions. Applications for UWA India

are now open. With campuses in Mumbai and Chennai, UWA India will offer undergraduate and postgraduate programmes in STEM, business and technology aligned with global industry requirements and India's evolving workforce needs. Students can access programme details and apply through the university's official website.

SYMBOLIC POSSESSION NOTICE

ICICI Home Finance

Registered Office: ICICI Bank Towers, Bandra-Kurla Complex, Bandra (East), Mumbai- 400051

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Branch Office: Shrimaya Square, 2nd Floor, 62, Ksapanak Marg, Freeganj, Opp. Madhav Nagar Hospital, Ujjain- 456010

Whereas

The undersigned being the Authorized Officer of ICICI Home Finance Company Limited under the Securitisation, Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of the powers conferred under section 13 (12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) rules 2002, issued demand notices upon the borrowers mentioned below, to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

As the borrower failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/ her under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules on the below-mentioned dates. The borrower in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of ICICI Home Finance Company Limited.

The Borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower/ Co-Borrower/ Loan Account Number	Description of property/ Date of Possession	Date of Demand / Notice Amount in Demand Notice (Rs)	Name of Branch
1.	Anil Solanki (Borrower), Mamta Solanki (Co-Borrower), 192 Block B Tirupati Solitaire Ujjain Ujjain 456001 Madhya Pradesh, LHUJN00001600529	Property Situated At Part of Survey No 336 And 337, Ward No. 28, Gram Karra, Tehsil Dabra District Gwalior Madhya Pradesh Bounded By- North By: Survey No.334 of Mahesh, South By: Survey No. 348,347 of Alok, East By: Survey No.339 of Hemant, West By: Road./ Date of Possession- 08-05-2026	16-02-2026 Rs. 99,99,846/-	Ujjain
2.	Anil Solanki (Borrower), Mamta Solanki (Co-Borrower), 192 Block B Tirupati Solitaire Ujjain Ujjain 456001 Madhya Pradesh, LHUJN00001600531	Property Situated At Part of Survey No 336 And 337, Ward No. 28, Gram Karra, Tehsil Dabra District Gwalior Madhya Pradesh Bounded By- North By: Survey No.334 of Mahesh, South By: Survey No. 348,347 of Alok, East By: Survey No.339 of Hemant, West By: Road./ Date of Possession- 08-05-2026	16-02-2026 Rs. 2,60,113/-	Ujjain

The above-mentioned borrowers(s)/ guarantors(s) are hereby given a 30 day notice to repay the amount, else the mortgaged properties will be sold on the expiry of 30 days from the date of publication of this Notice, as per the provisions under the Rules 8 and 9 of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002.

Date: May 14, 2026
Place: Gwalior

Authorized Officer

ICICI Home Finance Company Limited

E-check gates curb illegal mineral transport

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Bhopal

The Madhya Pradesh government's technology-driven e-check gate system has emerged as a major initiative for controlling illegal mineral transportation and preventing revenue losses in the state. Equipped with an advanced information technology-based monitoring mechanism, the system has significantly strengthened transparency, accountability and real-time surveillance of mineral transport activities across Madhya Pradesh.

Officials said the newly implemented system has already led to the registration of 139 cases related to illegal mineral transportation across 20 districts, with penalties amounting to more than Rs 4.12 crore imposed so far. The government believes the digital monitoring framework

has helped effectively check unauthorised transportation of minerals while ensuring stricter enforcement of mining regulations.

To strengthen monitoring of mineral transportation, the state government has established 40 e-check gates at strategically identified routes in 23 districts. These e-check gates are designed to digital-track vehicles carrying minerals, verify transport permits and continuously monitor transportation activities through an integrated online system.

For smooth implementation and effective functioning of the project, a State-Level Command and Control Centre has been established at the Directorate in Bhopal. In addition, District Command Centres have also been made operational in all 23 concerned districts, enabling authorities to carry out real-



time surveillance and coordinated monitoring of transport movements.

Officials said the system was formally introduced after the state government amended the Madhya Pradesh Minerals (Prevention of Illegal Mining, Transportation and Storage) Rules, 2022 through a notification issued on April 16, 2026. Under the amended provisions, the term "check gate" has been defined as an information technology-based monitoring system estab-

lished specifically for regulating mineral transportation and preventing illegal transport activities.

As part of the new framework, IT-based tracking devices will now be installed in registered mineral transport vehicles under government supervision. While the government will oversee installation, vehicle owners will be responsible for maintaining these devices and ensuring their proper functioning.

Authorities have clarified that if any installed tracking device is found inactive, tampered with or damaged, strict action may be taken against the concerned vehicle owner, including suspension or cancellation of vehicle registration.

The amended rules further empower authorities to initiate penal action against vehicle owners if irregularities are

detected through analysis of data received from the e-check gate system. In serious cases, district collectors have also been authorised to order seizure of vehicles involved in illegal transportation activities.

Officials said the initiative marks an important step towards modernising mineral transport regulation through technology and strengthening efforts to curb illegal mining and associated revenue leakage in the state.

Officials said the e-check gate system is also expected to improve transparency in the mining sector by creating a digital record of mineral transportation activities and reducing human intervention in monitoring processes. The government believes the initiative will strengthen regulatory enforcement, increase revenue collection and promote responsible and legally compliant mineral transportation across the state.



Minister for Women and Child Development, Nirmla Bhuria lights a ceremonial lamp to inaugurate the Result Oriented Child Budgeting workshop in Bhopal on Wednesday. Pioneer photo



Aam Aadmi Party workers stage a protest against the NEET paper leak, in Bhopal on Wednesday. Pioneer photo

Fire breaks out in Karond commercial building

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Bhopal

A fire broke out on the first floor of a four-storey commercial building in Bhopal's Karond area on Wednesday, triggering panic among local residents and shop owners. The building houses a KFC outlet and a Croma electronics showroom. According to officials, the fire reportedly started in a generator installed near the Croma showroom, allegedly due to a short circuit. Several air conditioners and furniture items kept nearby were damaged in the blaze. Though the KFC outlet located close to the affected area remained safe,

property worth lakhs of rupees was reportedly destroyed.

The incident created panic in the area as flames rose high into the air and thick black smoke spread across the locality. Eyewitnesses said the building was not crowded at the time of the incident, which helped avert a major tragedy.

Fire officer Saurabh Patel of the Municipal Corporation said a fire brigade from the nearby People's Hospital reached the spot immediately after receiving information and began efforts to douse the flames. Shortly afterwards, municipal fire tenders also arrived, and both teams jointly managed to bring the fire under control before it could spread further.

The building is located opposite People's Hospital in Karond. As news of the fire spread, local residents and shopkeepers rushed out of their homes and establishments, leading to heavy crowds gathering outside the building. Police from Nishatpura police station also reached the spot and assisted in managing the situation.

Officials said no casualties or injuries were reported in the incident. The administration is currently assessing the extent of the damage caused by the fire. Officials said a detailed inspection of the building and electrical systems will be carried out to determine the exact cause of the fire.

Boy drowns in hotel pool

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Gwalior

A seven-year-old boy died after drowning in a swimming pool at Prince Mama Hotel on AB Road in Gwalior's Girwai area on Monday night. The child, identified as Ved Pal, had gone to the hotel with his family for dinner and a pool party.

The family buried the child's body early Tuesday morning, but later approached police alleging negligence by the hotel management. Following their complaint, police on Wednesday exhumed the body from Lakshmiganj cremation ground and sent it for postmortem examination.

Major redevelopment completed at Vidisha station

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Jabalpur

Vidisha Railway Station, known for its historical and cultural significance in Madhya Pradesh, has been redeveloped with modern passenger amenities under the Amrit Bharat Station Scheme. The station, which falls under the West Central Railway zone, has been upgraded at a cost of around Rs 29.46 crore.

Vidisha station is considered an important rail hub in the region due to its connectivity with several major cities and the large number of passengers using the station daily. Officials said the redevelopment project aims to provide improved passenger facilities

while also boosting regional development and tourism.

Under the scheme, major modernization and beautification works have been carried out in the station's circulating area. Covered over-sheds have been developed on platforms 1, 2, 3 and 4, while expansion of platform shelters has also been completed to improve passenger convenience during all weather conditions.

The station's façade and interior sections have been upgraded with a modern design and improved infrastructure. Waiting halls and toilet facilities have also been renovated to provide better comfort and hygiene for passengers.

As part of the redevelopment works, a second entry

MGPS excels in Class XII results

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Bhopal

Mithi Gobindram Public School has once again upheld its tradition of academic excellence by delivering an outstanding performance in the CBSE Class XII Board Examinations for the 2025-26 session. The school achieved a 100 per cent pass result, reflecting the hard work and dedication of students along with the continuous support of teachers and parents.

A total of 109 students appeared for the examination, out of which 90 students secured first division marks. The results further highlighted the school's strong academic standards, with two students scoring above 95 per cent, 13 students securing more than 90 per cent and 31 students achieving above 80 per cent marks.

Bhavya Kriplani and Nikhil Manglani jointly topped the school with 95.8 per cent marks each. Aditya Peswani secured third position with 94.4 per cent, followed by Harshil Ramkranyani with 94.2 per cent and Harshit Sahu with 93.2 per cent. Adding further distinction to the results, Aditya Peswani scored a perfect 100 out of 100 marks in Yoga.

According to the department, Manoj Sharma, in-charge Chief Municipal Officer of Nagar Parishad Vijaypur, was suspended for failing to show adequate interest in implementing the Swachh Jal Abhiyan and for not resolving complaints related to contaminated drinking water registered on CM Helpline 181 within the stipulated time. Officials said despite complaints reaching L-4 level, effective action was not taken, which was considered negligence in official duties and disregard of instructions issued by senior authorities.

Similarly, Hanumant Bhadauriya, associated with Nagar Parishad Bhandar in Datia district, was suspended over delays in issuing the Letter

3 UDHD officers suspended over negligence

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Bhopal

of Acceptance (LOA) to contractors under the Amrut 2.0 scheme. The department stated that the delay unnecessarily obstructed implementation of the important urban development project and reflected administrative negligence.

Another officer, Yashwant Rathore, Chief Municipal Officer of Nagar Parishad Badoni, was also suspended for poor progress in public welfare schemes and Swachh Survekshan 2026-related works. He was additionally accused of negligence in resolving CM Helpline complaints. The department also noted that Rathore remained absent from a departmental video conference held on May 13, 2026, without prior information or official permission.

Jitu raises Ken-Betwa concerns

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Bhopal

Madhya Pradesh Congress president Jitu Patwari has levelled serious allegations against the Centre and the state government over the Ken-Betwa river linking project, claiming that thousands of tribal families are being displaced without proper compensation and rehabilitation.

Speaking during his Bundelkhand tour, Patwari said Congress leader Rahul Gandhi is likely to visit the project-affected areas later this month to meet displaced families and understand their grievances.

Patwari said he visited Panna on May 11 and met protesting families affected by the project. He also discussed issues related

to jailed farmers and agitators with district authorities. On May 12, he alleged, the Chhatarpur administration attempted to stop him from meeting affected families, but later withdrew under pressure from Congress workers.

The Congress leader claimed that affected families had neither received fair compensation for their houses, land and trees nor proper rehabilitation benefits. He said compensation fixed years ago had now become irrelevant due to inflation and changing economic conditions. Patwari further alleged that many children of affected families were excluded from compensation and rehabilitation because they were minors when the original survey was conducted.

PPE kits given to sanitation workers

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Bhopal

Bhopal Municipal Corporation on Wednesday distributed Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) kits to sanitation workers and door-to-door waste collection staff under the Namaste Yojana being implemented as part of the Swachh Bharat Mission.

Mayor Malti Rai distributed PPE kits to sanitation workers at the Zone-4 office in Mangalwara, while Corporation Chairman Kishan Suryavanshi distributed kits at the newly inaugurated municipal headquarters building. Similar distribution programmes were also organised at other zonal offices of the corporation.

The PPE kits include gloves, gumboots and raincoats to ensure sanitation workers can perform their duties safely and conveniently, especially during the monsoon season. Officials said the ini-

tiative aims to improve workplace safety, hygiene and health conditions for sanitation staff engaged in cleanliness operations across the city.

Mayor Malti Rai said the kits have been provided to ensure the safety and well-being of sanitation workers while carrying out cleanliness-related duties. She appealed to sanitation workers to regularly use the kits while working and continue contributing towards the vision of a clean and healthy Bhopal.

Corporation Chairman Kishan Suryavanshi said the PPE kits were being distributed under the Namaste Yojana to promote safe sanitation practices and create a cleaner and healthier environment for citizens. He added that raincoats had been included in advance ahead of the rainy season to help sanitation workers perform their duties more effectively during monsoon conditions.

Delivery associates to get OPD benefits

Indore: Amazon India announced a major expansion of health and insurance benefits for nearly 90,000 delivery associates working across its operations network in the country. The initiative includes enhanced medical coverage, accident insurance and wellness support aimed at improving the health, safety and financial security of delivery partners.

Under the revised benefits programme, mediclaim coverage has been increased to Rs 1.5 lakh, while outpatient department (OPD) expenses up to Rs 10,000 will now be covered. Group Personal Accident insurance coverage has also been expanded to Rs 10 lakh, including compensation for temporary and permanent disabilities.

The wellness programme will cover associates and up to three family members annually. It includes unlimited multilingual virtual doctor consultations and two free in-person OPD visits every year.

System failure blamed for tiger deaths due to canine distemper virus

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Bhopal

The death of tigress T-141 and her cubs in Madhya Pradesh due to the Canine Distemper Virus (CDV) has triggered serious concerns over the functioning of wildlife disease monitoring and forest management systems in the state.

While the virus has been identified as the immediate cause of death, wildlife experts and conservationists believe the tragedy reflects a much larger failure of preparedness, surveillance and preventive action within the system.

Canine Distemper Virus is a highly contagious viral disease that primarily spreads from infected dogs to wild carnivores, including tigers, lions and leopards. The virus weakens the immune system and can prove fatal if not detected and controlled in

time. Experts say the recent tiger deaths have once again exposed the vulnerability of India's wildlife reserves to infectious diseases originating from stray and feral dog populations living around forest areas.

Wildlife specialists point out that this is not the first time the country has faced such a crisis. Similar outbreaks have occurred earlier in several wildlife regions, including the Gir National Park in Gujarat, where Asiatic lions died due to CDV in 2018.

At that time, experts had recommended stronger disease surveillance systems, vaccination drives and tighter control over stray dog movement near protected forest zones. However, many of those recommendations were either implemented only partially or gradually ignored over time.

Conservation experts argue that despite clear warning

signs and previous experiences, the response mechanism in Madhya Pradesh remained weak.

They say there was no serious effort to monitor or regulate the increasing presence of stray dogs around tiger habitats, buffer zones and villages located near forest reserves. According to experts, this unchecked movement of dogs became one of the biggest risk factors for the spread of infection among wild animals.

The incident has also raised questions about the preparedness of major tiger reserves in the state, including Kanha, Bandhavgarh and Pench. These reserves are considered among India's most important wildlife habitats and already have systems for tiger monitoring and conservation. However, experts believe disease surveillance and veterinary preparedness did not receive the same

level of attention as tourism management and routine forest administration.

Another major concern being highlighted is the delay in preventive action. According to reports, dog vaccination drives in villages surrounding affected forest areas were intensified only after the tiger deaths came to light. Wildlife experts say such measures should have been undertaken much earlier as part of a continuous preventive programme rather than as an emergency response after the damage had already occurred.

The deaths have also highlighted the absence of a strong early-warning system for wildlife epidemics. Specialists believe that if regular health screening of wild animals, scientific disease monitoring and rapid veterinary intervention systems had been functioning effectively, the outbreak could possibly have been identified

at an earlier stage and its spread contained.

Environmentalists say the tragedy is not merely the result of a virus outbreak but also a reflection of deeper systemic weaknesses in wildlife management. They argue that conservation efforts often focus heavily on increasing tiger numbers while comparatively less attention is paid to wildlife health, habitat biosecurity and disease prevention.

Experts are now demanding a long-term scientific strategy to prevent similar incidents in the future. They have called for regular vaccination and sterilisation drives for stray dogs living near forest areas, stronger coordination between forest departments and veterinary experts, establishment of dedicated wildlife disease laboratories and creation of rapid-response medical teams inside tiger reserves.

SYMBOLIC POSSESSION NOTICE					
ICICI Home Finance		Registered Office: ICICI Bank Towers, Bandra-Kurla Complex, Bandra (East), Mumbai- 400051			
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Branch Office: ICICI Home Finance, 1st Floor, Indraprastha Tower, 12, 13, 14 Sanskar Velly, Sector 1, Mhow Neemuch Road, Pithampur- 454775, Branch Office: ICICI Home Finance, Plot no. 58, 1st Floor, Avani Amish Square, Silver Hills Colony, Above ICICI Bank, Dhar 454001., Branch Office: Office No -106,1st floor, Pukhraj Corporate, Navlakha Indore- 452001					
Whereas					
The undersigned being the Authorized Officer of ICICI Home Finance Company Limited under the Securitisation, Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of the powers conferred under section 13 (12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) rules 2002, issued demand notices upon the borrowers mentioned below, to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.					
As the borrower failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/ her under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules on the below-mentioned dates. The borrower in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of ICICI Home Finance Company Limited.					
The Borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.					
Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower/ Co-Borrower/ Loan Account Number	Description of property/ Date of Possession	Date of Demand Notice/ Amount in Demand Notice (Rs.)	Name of Branch	
1.	Rishabh Jain (Borrower), Harshita Rathod (Co-Borrower), 91 Happy Villa Colony Dhar, Dhar, Flat, Dhar, Dhar 454001 Madhya Pradesh, LHDHAA00001684889	Property Situated At Plot No. 41, Madina Nagar, Ridhi Sidhi Colony, Gram Jetpura, Ward No. 06, Tehsil And District Dhar (M.P)- 454001 Madhya Pradesh Bounded By- North By: Plot No. 70, South By: Road, East By: Plot No. 42, West By: Plot No. 40./Date of Possession- 11-05-2026	16-02-2026 Rs. 22,70,595/-	Dhar	
2.	Rishabh Jain (Borrower), Harshita Rathod (Co-Borrower), 91 Happy Villa Colony Dhar, Dhar, Flat, Dhar, Dhar 454001 Madhya Pradesh, LHDHAA00001684899	Property Situated At Plot No. 41, Madina Nagar, Ridhi Sidhi Colony, Gram Jetpura, Ward No. 06, Tehsil And District Dhar (M.P)- 454001 Madhya Pradesh Bounded By- North By: Plot No. 70, South By: Road, East By: Plot No. 42, West By: Plot No. 40./Date of Possession- 11-05-2026	16-02-2026 Rs. 38,254/-	Dhar	
3.	Anil Kumar (Borrower), Santoshi Devi (Co-Borrower), Ward No 27 Kaushiki Hotel Ke Pass Chhoti, Bagdoon Bagdoon Vtc Pithampur Po: Pithampur District: Dhar Pithampur 454774 Madhya Pradesh, LHPHMO00001613634	Residential Property No. 109/A, Patwari Halka No. 59/117, Survey No. 56/1 Paiki, Ward No. 28, Gram Bagdun, Tehsil Pithampur District Dhar, 5 Madhya Pradesh Bounded By- North By: Remaining Part of Plot No, South By: Plot No 111, East By: Plot No 144- A, 143, West By: Road./Date of Possession- 11-05-2026	16-02-2026 Rs. 14,57,262/-	Pithampur	
4.	Anil Kumar (Borrower), Santoshi Devi (Co-Borrower), Ward No 27 Kaushiki Hotel Ke Pass Chhoti, Bagdoon Bagdoon Vtc Pithampur Po: Pithampur District: Dhar Pithampur 454774 Madhya Pradesh, LHPHMO00001613635	Residential Property No. 109/A, Patwari Halka No. 59/117, Survey No. 56/1 Paiki, Ward No. 28, Gram Bagdun, Tehsil Pithampur District Dhar, 5 Madhya Pradesh Bounded By- North By: Remaining Part Of Plot No, South By: Plot No 111, East By: Plot No 144- A, 143, West By: Road./Date of Possession- 11-05-2026	16-02-2026 Rs. 56,679/-	Pithampur	
5.	Amit Manish Lalwani (Borrower), Anshu Amit Lalwani (Co-Borrower), C-204 Orange County Adarsh Gram Triveni Colony Indore, Indore, Flat, Indore, Indore 452001 Madhya Pradesh, LHIND00001656153	Flat No 104 First Floor, Baba Shri Balkanand Complex, Plot No 1/1, Rajaswa Gram Colony (Chhatribaug), Indore- 452001 Madhya Pradesh Bounded By- North By: Mos And Stairs, South By: Open, East By: Flat No.105, West By: Flat No.103./Date of Possession- 11-05-2026	16-02-2026 Rs. 40,70,247/-	Indore-Navlakha	
The above-mentioned borrowers(s)/ guarantors(s) are hereby given a 30 day notice to repay the amount, else the mortgaged properties will be sold on the expiry of 30 days from the date of publication of this Notice, as per the provisions under the Rules 8 and 9 of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002.					
Date: May 14, 2026, Place: Dhar, Indore			Authorized Office, ICICI Home Finance Company Limited		

The above-mentioned borrowers(s)/ guarantors(s) are hereby given a 30 day notice to repay the amount, else the mortgaged properties will be sold on the expiry of 30 days from the date of publication of this Notice, as per the provisions under the Rules 8 and 9 of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002. Date: May 14, 2026, Place: Dhar, Indore Authorized Office, ICICI Home Finance Company Limited

IN FOCUS



Tourists participate in river rafting in the Beas river during the summer season at Manali in Kullu district, Himachal Pradesh

PTI

Prateek Yadav’s sudden demise heartbreaking: Yogi Adityanath

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ Lucknow

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Wednesday said that the “sudden demise” of Prateek Yadav was “extremely heartbreaking” as he extended his condolences to the family.

Prateek, 38, was the younger son of Samajwadi Party founder the late Mulayam Singh Yadav and stepbrother of party president Akhilesh Yadav. He died earlier this morning at the civil hospital, where he was rushed around 6 am.

“The sudden demise of Shri Prateek Yadav Ji, son of former Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, ‘Padma Vibhushan’, the late Mulayam Singh Yadav Ji, and husband of Smt. Aparna Yadav Ji, Vice-



Chairperson of the Uttar Pradesh State Women’s Commission, is extremely heartbreaking. Humble tribute,” Adityanath posted on X.

“My condolences are with the bereaved family. I pray to

Lord Shri Ram that the departed soul attains eternal peace and the grieving family is granted the strength to bear this immense sorrow. Om Shanti!” he added.

Although hailing from a prominent political family,

Prateek, a fitness enthusiast, had stayed away from active politics.

However, his wife, Aparna Bisht Yadav, joined the BJP and is currently the vice chairperson of the State Women Commission.

Gujarat restricts convoy facility for CM, deputy CM



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Gandhinagar

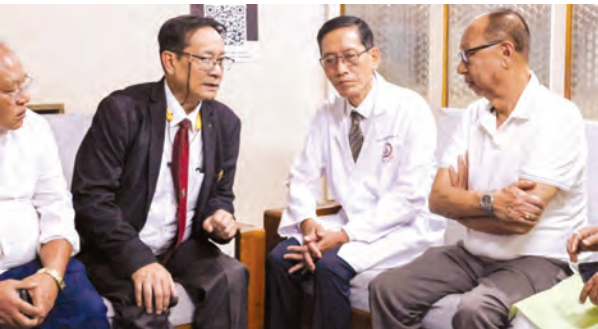
In a major administrative move aimed at encouraging fuel conservation and reducing unnecessary expenditure, the Gujarat Government has decided to withdraw official convoy facilities for ministers placed under the “non-category” classification.

The decision follows PM Narendra Modi’s recent appeal to reduce petrol and

diesel consumption across the country. Acting on the call, the state administration has begun implementing several austerity measures involving official travel and security arrangements.

Under the revised protocol, only Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel and Deputy Chief Minister Harsh Sanghavi will continue to receive limited convoy facilities. All other ministers will no longer be entitled to official convoys during travel.

Fresh violence rocks Manipur, three killed



Manipur CM Y Khemchand Singh and others visit the injured at the Shija Hospitals and Research Institute in Imphal

PTI

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ Imphal

In fresh violence in Manipur on Wednesday, suspected militants shot three church leaders dead and injured four others in Kangpokpi district, while a civilian was gunned down and his wife wounded in Noney district, officials said.

The Kangpokpi incident happened in the morning hours at a place between Kotzim and Kotlen villages when members of the Thadou Baptist Association (TBA) were returning from Churachandpur after attending a religious congregation.

The second incident occurred at a place between Jouzangtek and Nungsai villages in Noney district around

8 pm.

After the Kangpokpi ambush, Chief Minister Y Khemchand Singh stated that such “senseless acts of violence” against innocent civilians threaten peace in Manipur which has been rocked by ethnic violence since 2023.

Chief Ministers of Mizoram and Manipur condemned the killing of church leaders and sought immediate arrest of the culprits.

Following the killings, a total shutdown was imposed in Kangpokpi district where Kukis are in the majority.

A forum of Naga legislators and a Kuki organisation also deplored the killings, while a Meitei group rejected allegations from some quarters that it was behind the ambush.

Police to challege HC bail granted to school caretaker in child assault case

KHUSHI MEHROTRA
■ New Delhi

The Delhi Police is preparing to challenge the bail granted to the 57-year-old school caretaker in the case involving the alleged sexual assault of a three-year-old girl inside a West Delhi school, taking the matter to the Delhi High Court.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (West) Darade Sharad Bhaskar told *The Pioneer*, “We are in the process of filing an appeal in the High Court against the bail granted to the accused in the matter”.

A court in Dwarka granted bail to the accused on May 7 after noting that the child’s medical examination revealed no signs of injury or redness. Police sources also said investigators were getting assistance from the forensic department in gathering evidence against the accused.

The court also took note of CCTV footage that allegedly showed the caretaker leaving the junior wing of the school in the morning and not returning during the period when the assault was alleged to have taken place.



The alleged incident took place on April 30, the child’s second day at the school in Janakpuri.

According to the complaint filed by the girl’s mother on May 1, the child told her that a staff member had taken her to an isolated area and assaulted her.

After the toddler identified the caretaker, police arrested him.

They booked him under Section 64 of the *Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita* and provisions of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act.

Meanwhile, the incident has also triggered administrative action against the

school. Reports said the Directorate of Education (DoE) issued a show-cause notice to the institution on May 8, warning of and threatening to take over its management over what it described as “grave lapses” in child safety and supervision.

The school was directed to submit a detailed response by May 11, failing which it could face withdrawal of recognition and cancellation of its land lease.

Delhi Police officials said the investigation into the case remains underway even as it moves to challenge the bail order before the High Court.

Tehran welcomes India’s peace initiative; slams BRICS member over West Asia

ASHOKE RAJ ■ New Delhi

Iran on Wednesday said it would welcome any peace initiative by India to de-escalate tensions in West Asia, while accusing one member country of blocking a consensus within BRICS on the ongoing regional conflict.

Speaking to a select group of journalists in New Delhi ahead of the BRICS foreign ministers’ conclave, Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Kazem Gharibabadi said differences within the grouping had prevented the issuance of a unified statement on the crisis.

“We want India’s BRICS chairship to be successful. It is not a good approach to send a signal to the world that BRICS is divided,” Gharibabadi said. “One country is insisting on condemning Iran.”

Though he did not name the country directly, his remarks appeared to be aimed at the United Arab Emirates, which, along with Iran, joined BRICS during the bloc’s expansion in 2024.

“We have not attacked neighbouring countries. They handed over their territories to the US to launch attacks on us,” he said. “We



never insisted that Arab countries should be condemned because they allowed their military bases to the United States.”

The Iranian deputy foreign minister praised India’s role as BRICS chair, describing New Delhi’s approach as “impartial” amid sharp divisions within the grouping over the US-Israel conflict involving Iran.

The comments come a day before India hosts the BRICS foreign ministers’ meeting, which is expected to focus extensively on the West Asia crisis and its impact on global energy security. Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi and Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov are among the leaders attending the conclave chaired by External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar.

Gharibabadi said Tehran viewed India as a credible and balanced actor capable

of contributing to regional stability.

“India has always supported peace. It is in favour of peace and stability in the region,” he said. “We will welcome whatever initiative India takes for peace.”

Responding to a question on Pakistan’s reported role as a facilitator between Tehran and Washington, he said Iran remained open to all diplomatic channels.

“Pakistan is only a facilitator. We will welcome all such initiatives,” he said.

Gharibabadi, who was part of Iran’s negotiating team during talks with the United States, accused Washington of undermining diplomacy and prolonging the conflict.

“The US is not serious about ending the war through diplomacy,” he claimed, adding that Iran would fully reopen maritime access once Washington lifted sanctions, ended what he called a naval blockade and released frozen Iranian assets.

The Iranian official also reiterated Tehran’s commitment to the Chabahar port project and said India could decide how to proceed given continuing US sanctions linked to the initiative.

CBI arrests five in NEET paper leak probe

Social media platforms have been flooded with messages of outrage and demands for a thorough, time-bound investigation. The Ministry of Education has been closely monitoring the probe and has assured full cooperation to the CBI.

A senior official, speaking on condition of anonymity, emphasised that the government remains “absolutely committed to upholding the sanctity and transparency of all competitive examinations.” The National Testing Agency (NTA), which conducts NEET, is also expected to issue a detailed statement once the investigation makes further progress.

This is not the first time that competitive examinations in India have come under the scanner for alleged leaks. Similar incidents in recent years had prompted the enactment of the Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act, 2024, which prescribes stringent punishments, including jail terms of up to ten years and heavy fines. The CBI’s swift action in the present case is being seen as a strong message that the new law will be enforced without exception.

The agency has appealed to the general public, candidates, coaching institutes and any other stakeholders possessing credible information to come forward and assist the investigation. It has also cautioned against the circulation of unverified rumours that could hamper the probe or cause unnecessary panic among students.

The CBI is expected to file its first status report in the competent court within the next few days. With the investigation still in its early but intensive phase, further arrests, seizures and revelations are anticipated. For now, the focus remains on ensuring that the culprits are brought to justice quickly and that the faith of millions of young Indians in the fairness of the medical admission process is restored, an official added.

Govt raises import duty on gold to conserve...

Consequential changes have also been made to other items such as gold/silver dore, coins, findings. The duty hike came within days of Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s clarion call for curbs on gold purchases, along with other austerity measures to reduce avoidable foreign exchange expenditure. Industry experts say the decision will lead to a sharp decline in sales of gold jewellery and coins, but will spur old gold exchange within the economy.

Another sources said the ongoing war in West Asia is expected to balloon India’s import bill, and the government wants to prioritise forex expen-

diture towards essential imports like crude oil, fertilisers, industrial raw materials and capital goods that directly support economic activity and food security. A notification issued by the finance ministry shows the Government increased the Social Welfare

The impact of the duty hike would be visible in the retail inflation data of May, and a full picture would be visible only in June. As international prices of gold remain elevated, the duty hike is not likely to have much of an impact on the Current Account Deficit (CAD), as even lower imports would come in at a costlier price. Besides, the rupee is likely to remain under pressure, as is evident from the currency touching a record low of 95.80 to a dollar. Historically, import duty hikes have resulted in lower volumes of imports, but elevated global prices have kept the import bill high.

Gold imports in India, the world’s second biggest gold consumer after China, are driven by the jewellery industry demand. Such imports involve substantial outflow of foreign exchange. India’s gold imports surged more than 24 per cent to an all-time high of \$71.98 billion in 2025-26. In volume terms, however, the shipments dipped 4.76 per cent to 721.03 tonnes in 2025-26. The prices of gold have risen from \$76,617.48/KG in FY25 to \$99,825.38/KG in FY26.

In the national capital, the price of gold increased by ₹1,500, or nearly 1 per cent, to ₹1,56,800 per 10 grams on Tuesday from Monday’s closing level of ₹1,55,300 per 10 grams. Silver prices also advanced by ₹12,000, or 4.53 per cent, to ₹2,77,000 per kg. In the international market, spot gold slipped \$42.33, or 1 per cent, to \$4,692.64 per ounce while silver fell 3.04 per cent to \$83.49 per ounce.

Jewellers and industry leaders on Wednesday said the hike in import duty on gold and silver could impact jewellery volumes in the short term, though demand is expected to remain resilient due to the yellow metal’s enduring cultural and investment appeal in India. India had allowed imports of gold from Dubai at tariffs one percentage point below the normal Most-Favoured-Nation (MFN) rate through a Tariff Rate Quota (TRQ) system. The quota began at 120 tonnes annually in 2022 and is set to rise to 200 tonnes by 2027, nearly one-fourth of India’s yearly gold imports.

Over 85 per cent pass CBSE class 12 exams

He said the number of students placed in compartment rose to 1,63,800 (9.26 per cent) in 2026, up from 1,29,095 (7.63 per cent) in 2025. It means that these student may have failed in one or two

FROM PAGE - 1

subjects in the main board exam but have passed in the other subjects. Transgender candidates achieved a 100 per cent pass rate.

Students placed in compartment or wishing to improve performance in one subject may appear in the supplementary examination scheduled for July 15, officials said. The ‘List of Candidates’ (LOC) submission window will open on June 2.

Trump gets red carpet welcome in Beijing

Trump’s son Eric and his daughter-in-law Lara, as well as Tesla chief Elon Musk, disembarked from Air Force One along with Trump.

Accompanying Trump on his trip to China are some of the US’s top business leaders.

Nvidia’s Jensen Huang, Tim Cook of Apple, Musk of Tesla and SpaceX, and Larry Fink of BlackRock, are among those travelling with the US president.

“I will be asking President Xi, a Leader of extraordinary distinction, to ‘open up’ China so that these brilliant people can work their magic, and help bring the People’s Republic to an even higher level,” Trump said in a post on social media. Trump said that it will be his “very first request” when he meets the Chinese leader, BBC reported. “I have never seen or heard of any idea that would be more beneficial to our incredible Countries,” he said.

The last-minute addition of Nvidia’s Jensen Huang to Trump’s delegation was regarded as significant, as semiconductor chips are central to the US-China technology rivalry.

China is bargaining for semiconductor chips for its AI tech development, while the US wants the rare-earth minerals used for manufacturing mobile phones and aircraft jets.

Ahead of Trump’s arrival, Chinese Vice Premier He Lifeng and Scott Bessent completed the final round of trade negotiations in South Korea, details of which are not known.

The next two days, Trump and Xi are scheduled to hold several rounds of talks to discuss both bilateral and global issues, especially the Iran war. The talks are expected to focus on trade and tariffs, Artificial Intelligence and technology, Taiwan and US’ arms sales to Taipei, Iran and West Asia East security and rare earths and supply chains. Trump’s schedule in Beijing included a visit to the Temple of Heaven, a complex of imperial temples where emperors would pray for a good harvest.

Ahead of his departure for Beijing, Trump told the media in Washington he would be talking with Xi about trade more than anything else. He plans to sign more deals with China to buy more

American food and aircraft. The two countries also plan to set up a Board of Trade with China to address differences between the countries.

From a trade point of view, China looks to reap a rich harvest as Trump is accompanied by top CEOs of US multinational giants, including Tesla chief Musk and Apple CEO Cook, who have well-trenched businesses in China.

The global focus on the summit, however, would be on any possible outcome that could end the US-Israeli war against Iran and end the blockade of the Strait of Hormuz.

Ahead of Trump’s visit, Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi made his first visit to Beijing after the war and held talks with his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi. The US watched his visit closely as China is the largest importer of Iranian oil and shares strategic defence ties with Tehran, and has considerable influence over Iran.

After talks with Araghchi, Wang called on Iran to reopen the Strait of Hormuz as soon as possible, even as it appreciated Tehran’s commitment not to develop nuclear weapons, a prime demand of Trump to end the war.

Commenting on Wang-Araghchi talks, US Secretary of State Marco Rubio said, “I hope the Chinese tell him what he needs to be told. And that is what you are doing in the Strait, which is causing you to be globally isolated. You’re the bad guy in this.” China’s anxieties over the Iran war increased, especially after Trump imposed a blockade of Iranian ports, restricting Iran’s oil exports to China.

Bert Hoffman, former World Bank country director for China, said China wants the Iran war to end because it has many partners in the region, including Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Kuwait. “So they don’t like to see wars, they like to have stability,” he said.

In its editorial on Trump’s visit, state-run Global Times said Xi has held multiple telephone conversations and meetings with him, which have helped correct the course of the bilateral relationship and steer it clear of hidden dangers at critical moments. For China-US relations to truly stabilise and improve in the future, the most fundamental step is to fully and faithfully implement the important consensus reached by both leaders, it said. From China’s point of view, the Taiwan issue was expected to figure prominently in the talks.

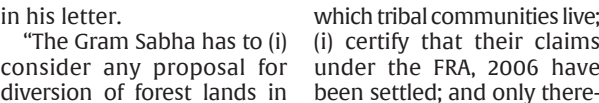
Last week, Foreign Minister Wang told Rubio, during their telephone talks, that the US should make the right choice about the self-ruled Taiwan.

China claims Taiwan as part of its own and has been ramping up military pressure on the island with periodic military drills around the island. (PTI)

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

and other stakeholders, in line with the Jawara Policy, 2004, and Shompen Policy, 2015. This is entirely false," Ramesh said.

The Ministry of Tribal Affairs, as the nodal agency for implementation of the Forest Rights Act, 2006, must take serious note of the "flagrant violation" of the rights of tribal communities and due processes under that historic law in the case of the Great Nicobar Island Project and take credible remedial action immediately, the Congress leader demanded.



Settler communities in Campbell Bay, Laxmi Nagar and Govind Nagar on August 12, 2022, he said.

The resolutions of these gram sabhas of the settler communities are cited as consent of the gram sabhas under the FRA, 2006, Ramesh noted.

The letter to Oram comes days after Ramesh wrote to Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav, claiming that the Great Nicobar island development project would "destroy" the unique ecosystem there, and urging him to

The Centre, on May 1 released a detailed statement with answers to FAQs (frequently asked questions) "The Great Nicobar Project is a strategic initiative to strengthen India's presence in the Andaman Sea. It seeks to balance port-led growth with calibrated environmental safeguards. Protection of indigenous communities remains central to its planning," the Government statement read.

Authorised Officer, Bank of Maharashtra

Khera appears before Assam Police over claims against CM’s wife

TONY DAS
■ Guwahati

Congress leader Pawan Khera appeared before the Assam Police Crime Branch on Wednesday for questioning in connection with cases filed by Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma's wife, Riniki Bhuyan Sharma.

The cases were lodged after Khera alleged that Sharma possessed multiple passports and undisclosed properties abroad.

Speaking to reporters before entering the Crime Branch office, Khera said he was cooperating with the investigation.

“I have been summoned by the police and have come accordingly. We respect the law and the judiciary, so I am



here as per legal procedure,” he said. Khera said he would speak to the press in detail after the questioning was completed. Sharma had filed criminal complaints against Khera and others at the Guwahati Crime Branch

Police Station under various provisions of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS).

The charges against the Congress leader include making false statements in connection with an election, cheating, forgery, use of

forged documents as genuine, intentional insult with intent to provoke breach of peace, and defamation.

Earlier, Assam Police had visited Khera's residence in Delhi, but he was reportedly not present there.

Khera had initially approached the Telangana High Court, which granted him seven-day transit anticipatory bail. However, Assam Police challenged the order in the Supreme Court. The apex court granted him anticipatory bail, observing that the matter appeared to have arisen out of political rivalry.

Pawan Khera left the police station at 10 pm after 12 hours. He has been asked to appear again on Thursday morning.

Law will take its own course in Khera case : Himanta

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ Guwahati

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Wednesday said that the law will take its own course in the case filed by his wife against Congress leader Pawan Khera for alleging that she possessed multiple passports and undisclosed properties abroad.

As per the Supreme Court order, he (Khera) appeared before the Crime Branch on Wednesday, and the police will definitely ask him questions, the chief minister said at a press conference here after chairing the first Cabinet meeting of his second term in office.

“The law will take its own course, but we have already received in writing from the Union Government that the documents Khera displayed were fake,” he



said. Police investigations, therefore, will not take long, and they will be able to submit the chargesheet within the stipulated time, the CM said.

“If he continues to cooperate, the submission of the chargesheet or final report

will be faster, but if he does not, it may take time.

We want to conclude the case as soon as possible,” Sarma added.

Khera came to the Crime Branch office here earlier in the day and said he was cooperating with the

investigation. “I have been summoned by the police and have come accordingly. We respect the law and the judiciary, so I am here as per legal procedure,” he said.

Khera said he would speak to the press in detail after the questioning was completed.

The chief minister's wife had filed criminal complaints against Khera and others at the Guwahati Crime Branch Police Station under various provisions of the *Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita* (BNS).

The charges against the Congress leader include making false statements in connection with an election, cheating, forgery, use of forged documents as genuine, intentional insult with intent to provoke breach of peace, and defamation.

BJP sweeps Haryana municipal corporation polls, tastes victory in Hooda bastion

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ Chandigarh

The BJP on Wednesday swept the municipal corporation polls, registering emphatic wins in Ambala and Sonipat, and gaining an unassailable lead in Panchkula.

The BJP also swept other civic body polls and clinched the president's post in the municipal committee of Sampla, a stronghold of former Haryana chief minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda.

Notably, the Congress had not fielded its candidate in Sampla for the civic polls.

Meanwhile, celebrations broke out in the BJP camp, with party workers and leaders distributing sweets.

Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini hailed the BJP's stupendous show in the civic polls, which came close on the heels of the party's big wins in West Bengal and Assam.

He said people have once again put their stamp of approval and reposed their trust in the policies and programmes of the Narendra Modi-led Government.

Saini hit out at the Congress, saying people have once again rejected them. “Congress always takes support of lies, people have understood this,” he said, adding the grand old party's “real face has been unmasked”.

On the BJP's win in the Hooda bastion, Sampla, Saini said, “People don't trust Hooda anymore. He speaks lies.” “Our Government is



working with honesty and transparency, fulfilling the promises made to people,” the CM said.

As per official trends, for the Ambala mayor post, BJP's Akshita Saini defeated her Congress rival, Kulwinder Kaur, by a margin of 21,358 votes. Sonia Rani, an Independent, ended up in third place.

In Panchkula, BJP's Shyamlal Bansal gained an unassailable lead over Congress's Sudha Bhardwaj for the mayor's post, while AAP's Rajesh Kumar was in third spot.

For the mayor's post in Sonipat, BJP's Rajiv Jain trounced his Congress rival, Kamal Dewan, by 23,247 votes. Anand Kumar of the INLD trailed in third spot.

At present, the sitting mayors in three municipal corporations of Panchkula, Ambala and Sonipat are from the BJP.

In the Sampla municipal committee, BJP's Praveen defeated Independent candidate Ankit by 687 votes.

In Dharuhera, BJP's Satyanarayan, alias Ajay Jangra, won against Babu Lal, an Independent candidate, by 6,236 votes, while Congress ended up in third place.

However, in Uklana, BJP candidate Nikita Goyal lost to Independent candidate Rima Soni by 2,806 votes.

In the Rewari municipal council, Vinita Pippal of the BJP defeated Congress's Neharika by 21,445 votes.

In the Ambala municipal corporation, the BJP won 16 wards, three went to Congress, while an Independent won in one ward.

In the Sonipat municipal corporation, the BJP secured 17 wards while Congress registered wins in five wards.

In a few municipal wards, Congress candidates were even behind the Independents.

The counting in the Panchkula municipal corporation was in progress, where the BJP has so far won 10 wards.

Andhra minister welcomes kharif MSP hike, thanks Union Govt

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ Amaravati

Andhra Pradesh Agriculture Minister K Atchannaidu on Wednesday welcomed the Centre's decision to increase MSP for Kharif crops for the 2026-27 marketing season, saying that the move would strengthen farmers financially and reinforce confidence in the agriculture sector.

The Centre approved a massive expenditure of ₹2.6 lakh crore towards increasing Minimum Support Price (MSP) for Kharif crops, and it reflected the Government's sincerity and commitment towards safeguarding farmers' interests and ensuring remunerative prices for agricultural produce, Atchannaidu said in



Andhra Pradesh Agriculture Minister K Atchannaidu

a press release.

“The Centre's decision to increase MSP for Kharif crops for the 2026-27 marketing season will strengthen farmers financially and further boost confidence in the agriculture sector,” he added.

He observed that fixing MSPs by ensuring at least 50

per cent profit over the cost of cultivation provided real assurance to farmers and noted that MSPs of several crops have been significantly increased to ensure fair returns for farmers' hard work. The minister said that the MSP of common paddy has been increased by ₹72 per quintal to ₹2,441, while the MSP for Grade-A paddy has been fixed at ₹2,461, which he said would greatly benefit paddy farmers.

He further noted that the MSPs have been fixed at ₹4,073 for jowar, ₹5,205 for ragi, ₹2,900 for bajra, ₹8,200 for horse gram, ₹2,410 for maize, Rs 10,346 for sesame, ₹8,343 for sunflower, ₹8,667 for cotton and ₹7,517 for groundnut.

TVK Govt will function with horse speed, says CM Vijay

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ Chennai

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister C Joseph Vijay on Wednesday said his Government will function with the speed of a horse delivering clean administration.

He assured that his administration would rigorously protect the rights of minorities, women, children, youth, farmers, and Government workers. His Government will be committed to secularism,



social justice, transparency, and involved in public welfare. Speaking during the debate on the confidence motion, which he moved as mandated by Governor Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar, in the Assembly, Vijay remarked that his

Government would work with “horse speed” and deliver development rather than indulge in backroom political deals.

His remark comes amidst a charge by Leader of the Opposition Udhayanidhi Stalin, and AIADMK leader Edappadi K Palaniswami on alleged “horse-trading” in the wake of lone AMMK MLA S Kamaraj and AIADMK faction comprising 25 legislators announcing support to TVK Government in the Assembly.

J&K Police nab two terror sympathisers in Kishtwar

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Jammu

Continuing its crackdown against the terrorist ecosystem sustaining active foreign terrorists, Jammu and Kashmir Police have so far arrested two terrorist sympathisers, allegedly behind providing logistics support at a hideout in the Singhpora area of Chhatroo in the Kishtwar district of Jammu division.

According to a press state-

ment issued by the office of District Police, Kishtwar, “in a decisive operation against anti-national elements, Jammu and Kashmir Police have arrested a key accused linked to providing aid to foreign terrorists at a hideout in Singhpora, Chatroo, Kishtwar”. The case was registered under FIR number 03/2026 at Police Station Chatroo, invoking Sections 61(2), 109, 147, 148 of BNS; Sections 13, 16, 18, 19, 20 of UAPA; and Section 7/27 of the Arms Act.



According to Senior Superintendent of Police, Kishtwar Naresh Singh, J&K police apprehended Mashkoor Ahmed S/o Mohd Ramzan, resident of Beighpora, Singhpora, Kishtwar, a teacher in the

School Education Department, who was directly implicated in facilitating the terrorists' hideout.

SSP noted that by arresting the terrorist sympathiser, the police have exposed the local ecosystem extending logistics to terrorists in the region.

“This arrest disrupts critical logistics supporting terror activities in the region”, Singh added. Earlier, Maneer Ahmed, a resident of Bandeyan Naidgam, was also arrested for similar offences by the

Kishtwar police team.

Police said further investigation is underway to detect and dismantle the wider network involved in supporting terrorist activities in the district.

On February 22 this year, three terrorists, including one of the top commanders of the Pakistan-based Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) terrorist outfit, were neutralised by the joint team of security forces in the general area of Passerkut in Chhatroo, Kishtwar district.



बैंक ऑफ महाराष्ट्र
Bank of Maharashtra
भारत सरकार का उपक्रम

JABALPUR ZONAL OFFICE, WRIGHT TOWN, JABALPUR PH: 0761-2480065,67,68

PUBLIC NOTICE FOR SALE

E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8 (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower/s and Guarantor/s that the below described Immovable properties mortgaged/charged to the Bank of Maharashtra, the possession of which have been taken by the Authorised Officer of Bank of Maharashtra, will be sold on “As is where is”, “As is what is”, and “Whatever there is” & “WITHOUT RECOURSE BASIS” on **16.06.2026**, for recovery of the balance due to the Bank of Maharashtra from the Borrower (s) and Guarantor(s) as mentioned in the table. Details of the Borrower/s and Guarantor/s, amount due, Short description of the immovable property and encumbrances known thereon, possession type, reserve price and the earnest money deposit are also given as under-

Name & Address of Borrower / Guarantor	Outstanding Dues for Recovery of which Property are being sold	Description of properties	Type of Possession	Reserve Price EMD Amount Bid Increase Amount
1) Branch - Asset Recovery Branch, Jabalpur M/s Shree Nakoda Ginning and Pressing Factory Through its Directors/Guarantors/ LRs 1. Mr. Sushil Doshi 2. Mr. Premchand Doshi 3. Mr. Sawan Doshi 4. Mr. Anand Doshi (Deceased) Through its LRs Mrs. Puja Jain & Pahal Jain 5. Mr. Mridul Doshi Guarantors - 1. Mr. Sushil S/o Mr. Amolakchand Doshi 2. Mr. Premchand S/o Amolakchand Doshi 3. Mr. Sawan S/o Praveen Doshi 4. Mr. Anand S/o Prakash Jain (Deceased) through its LRs Mrs. Puja Jain & Pahal Jain (Natural Guardian - Puja Jain) 5. Mr. Mridul S/o Sushil Doshi 6. Mr. Amolakchand S/o Gulabchand Doshi (Deceased) through its LRs Mr. SusilKumar, Prakash Chand & Premchand 7. Mrs. Hukumbai W/o Mr. Amolakchand Doshi (Deceased) Through its LRs Mr. SusilKumar, Prakash Chand & Premchand 8. Mrs. Chandrakanta W/o Late Mr. Praveen Kumar 9. Mr. Prakash S/o Mr. Amolakchand Doshi 10. Mrs. Pankunwar Bai W/o Mr. SushilKumar Doshi 11. Mrs. Mamtabai W/o Mr. Premchand Doshi 12. Mr. Praveen S/o Amolakchand Doshi All R/o - Gram: Padliya, Near Karahi, Tehsil: Maheshwar, Dist. Khargone (M.R.)	Rs.18,77,43,542/- (Rupees Eighteen crores Seventy seven lakhs fourty three thousands five hundred forty two only) + Unapplied interest on contractual rate w.e.f. 01.11.2019 + penal interest thereon and other charges and expenses	PH no.56, Survey No. 56/1/1, village Padliya Khurd, Tehsil Maheshwar Dist. Khargone area 0.30 hect. Owner: Mrs. Chandrakanta W/o Praveen Kumar Doshi, Mr. Sawan S/o Prveen kumar Doshi and Mrs. Sonam W/o Piyush Kumar Doshi All the pieces of land and building constructed on plot (House)no. 270, Padliya Khurd, Tehsil Maheshwar Dist. Khargone admeasuring 235.79 sq.mtr. Owner: Mr. Prakash Chandra, Mr. Sushil, Mr. Premchand, Ms. Vijaya, Mrs. Chandrakanta, Mr. Gaurav, aman and Ms. Priyal. PH. no. 57/(Old PH N 56) S.No. 3/1/1 and S.No. 3/1/0 village Aakhilpura, Tehsil Maheshwar Dist. Khargone area admeasuring 0.675 + 0.659 hect. Total area - 1.334 Hectare @ 13340.00 Sqm. Owner: Mr. Prakash Chandra, Mr. Sushil, Mr. Premchand, Ms. Vijaya, Mrs. Chandrakanta, Mr. Gaurav, aman and Ms. Priyal	Symbolic Symbolic Symbolic	Rs.9690000/- Rs.969000/- Rs.10000/- Rs.5227000/- Rs.522700/- Rs.10000/- Rs.14174000/- Rs.1417400/- Rs.10000/-
2) Branch - Asset Recovery Branch, Jabalpur Borrower - M/s Gurukripa Dehydrated Vegetables Through its Proprietor Mr. Narendra Hammad (Deceased) s/o Shri. Laxman Hammad Through Its Lrs (1) Mrs. Pooja Hammad w/o Late. Shri. Narendra Hammad (2) Master Poorvansh Hammad (minor) s/o Late. Shri. Narendra Hammad (Through its Natural Guardian Mrs. Pooja Hammad w/o Late. Shri. Narendra Hammad) Address - Plot no.7 to 11, Industrial Area, Segson, Badwani, Tehsil and Dist. Badwani. Guarantor: Shri. Laxman Hammad s/o Shri. Dhanaji Hammad Address - House no. 401, village: balkuan, Tehsil and Dist: Badwani	Rs.2,43,79,247/- (Rupees Two Crore Forty Three Lakh Seventy Nine thousand Two Hundred Forty Seven only) (Ledger Bal: Rs.2,43,79,247/- + Unapplied Interest @ 13.45% p.a. with monthly rate w.e.f. 07.10.2016 + penal interest and other charges / expenses	Diverted land and construction thereon bearing Survey No. 105/3 PH no 09 (New no 23), situated at gram Balkunwan, Tehsil and district Barwani M.P. Total area - 0.089 hectare (890 sq.mtr.) Owned by : Shri. Laxman Hammad s/o Shri. Dhanaji Hammad	Symbolic	Rs.1755000 Rs.175500/- Rs.10000/-
3) Branch - Asset Recovery Branch, Jabalpur Borrower - M/s. Ruchi Traders Proprietor: Mr. Suraj Singh s/o Mr. Fateh Singh Address1: Imaliya Swaroop, Berasia, Laxminarayan Krishi Upaj Mandli, 80 feet road, Bhopal (M.P.) Pin 463106, Address2: Village Ramgada, Tehsil Berasia, Bhopal (M.P.) Pin 463106	Rs.1,26,05,017.70/- (Rupees One Crore Twenty Six Lakh Five thousand Seventeen rupees and Seventy Paise only) + Unapplied Interest Rs. 3,09,621.88/- upto 24/01/2024 + penal interest @ 2% and other expenses w.e.f. 25.01.2024	(A) All those pieces and parcel of property with construction & fixtures there being & lying at diverted commercial land & Building on Khasra No. 3/1/1/3/kha/2/ka (Re no Kh No. 3/1/1/3/2/2/1 area 0.40 Hect or 1.00 Acre situated at village Imaliya Swaroop, patwari Hika No. 53/25, adjacent to main Berasia to Narsingh Garh Road, R.N.M. 02, Tehsil Berasia, Distt – Bhopal (M.P.) (Owned by Mr. Suraj Singh) (B) All those pieces and parcel of property with construction & fixtures there being & lying at diverted commercial land & Building on Khasra No. 3/1/1/3/kha/2/kha (Re no Kh No. 3/1/1/3/2/2/2 area 0.405 Hect or 1.00 Acre situated at village Imaliya Swaroop, patwari Hika No. 53/25, adjacent to main Berasia to Narsingh Garh Road, R.N.M. 02, Tehsil Berasia, Distt – Bhopal (M.P.) Owned by - Mr. Suraj Singh	Physical	Rs. 12441000/- Rs. 1244100/- Rs.10000/-
4) Branch - Asset Recovery Branch, Jabalpur Borrower - M/s. LKT Hi Tech Hospital Proprietor: Dr. Kunj Lata Richhariya D/o Shri. Ramesh Chandra Richhariya, Address1: LKT Hi Tech Hospital, Mugaliya Hat, Bhopal (M.P.) Pin 462024, Address2: LKT Hi Tech Hospital, ward No 8, Vidisha By-Pass road, Near Police station, Ashok Nagar (M.P.) Pin – 473331	Rs.71,95,005.70/- (Rupees Seventy One Lakh Five thousand Seventeen rupees and Seventy Paise only) + Unapplied Interest Rs. 3,09,621.88/- upto 24/01/2024 + penal interest @ 2% and other expenses w.e.f. 25.01.2024	All those pieces & parcel of property with construction & fixture there being & lying at Flat No. MIG G 001, Ground floor, Silver Inn Homes, Old Ashoka Garden, Northern part of plot no 95,96,97, ward No. 69, Distt – Bhopal (M.P) admeasuring area 436 Sq. ft./ 40.52 Sqm.	Physical	Rs.990000/- Rs.99000/- Rs.10000/-
3) Branch - Asset Recovery Branch, Jabalpur Borrower - M/s Sharmila Singhai B-16, Manisha Market, Shahpura, Bhopal- 462016 Guarantor : 1. Smt. Sharmila, W/o: Shri Prashant Singhai 2. Shri Prashant Singhai, S/o: Shri M.M Singhai All - R/o.- B-16, Manisha Market, Shahpura, Bhopal- 462016	Rs.2,01,27,048/- + Unapplied interest on contractual rate w.e.f. 01.01.2019+ penal interest thereon and other charges and expenses	1. Open land/plot situated at Khasra no. 309 admeasuring 0.10 hect (1000 Sq. Mt.). At Nayapura, Kolar Road, PH no. 38/28 R.N.M -03 ,Vikas Khand Fanda Tahsil Huzur, Bhopal 2. Open land/plot situated at Khasra no. 307 admeasuring 0.10 hect (1000 Sq. Mt.). At Nayapura, Kolar Road, PH no. 38/28 R.N.M -03 ,Vikas Khand Fanda Tahsil Huzur, Bhopal Total Plot area 1000 + 1000 = 2000sq.mtr. Owner: Ms.Sharmila Singhai, Shri Prashant Singhai	Symbolic	Rs.3,24,00,000/- Rs.32,40,000/- Rs.10000/-

Inspection of Properties by bidder: 11.06.2026 to 12.06.2026 between 11:00 am. and 4:00 pm
Last Date & Time for Submission of Bid application/KYC documents/EMD etc. 16.06.2026 up to 11.00 a.m.
Date & time of E-auction with auto extention for 10 minutes- 16.06.2026 between 12.00 a.m. and 4.00 p.m.

The auction sale will be On-line E-Auction / Bidding through website <https://baanknet.com>, email: support.baanknet@psb alliance.com, Mob. - 8291220220 The intending Bidders / Purchasers are requested to register on portal using their mobile number and email id. Please take note that the registration and KYC approval etc take 2-3 working days. For detail terms and conditions of sale please refer to the link provided in <https://bankofmaharashtra.bank.in/asset-for-sales-search> and <https://baanknet.com>. Also prospective bidders may contact the authorized officials **Contact details: Incharge Recovery Jabalpur Shri Onkar Kumar (Zonal Manager) - 9823296164, Shri Nikhil S Patil (DZM) - 7387211200, Shri Bhushan Mohite (CM Recovery - Z.O.) - 9923257090, Dr. Ravikumar Verma (Sr. Manager) (9300955688) & Shri Hariom Trivedi (CM & Authorised Officer) - 9405719723**
Note - The sales are subject to the order/outcome of any case pending/ filed if any before Court/Tribunal

Date: 14/05/2026

Sale Notice to Borrower/Guarantors/Legal Heirs(LR's):/Coparceners

The above shall be treated as Notice of 15days u/r 9(1) of security interest (Enforcement) Rule, 2002

Authorised Officer, Bank of Maharashtra

Editor's
TAKE

The AI gold rush
and the jobs paradox

There is a mad rush towards AI learning, but will this craze actually create jobs or is the society prepared for disruptions AI may bring, is the big question

No technology in recent times has created a frenzy like AI. When AI exploded into the mainstream, it was welcomed with open arms because the promise it holds is immense. From healthcare to industry, from space exploration to defence – AI is a game-changer. But it has its downside too. Many professions are going to undergo an overhaul, and many people will lose their jobs. Estimates suggest AI could displace 92 million jobs globally by 2030, with up to 300 million jobs worldwide affected by automation. However, the situation may not be as grim as the figures suggest, as AI may also create jobs. People with AI skill sets will not only find employment but may also be better off. And that is the paradox of our times.

The very technology that is going to consume jobs is also going to create new opportunities. This contradiction is stark in our country, where unemployment is already high. Thanks to confusion and aggressive marketing, there is a great frenzy to learn AI skills – students, professionals, and even schoolchildren are rushing to enrol in AI courses in the hope of securing their future. AI has become the new career mantra. Platforms offering AI certifications, prompt engineering lessons, boot camps, and Generative AI modules are witnessing unprecedented demand. The fear of being left behind has created this mad rush to learn AI. The anxiety is understandable. Routine jobs are especially vulnerable. Entry-level white-collar roles may shrink significantly in the coming decade. It is like history repeating itself, when industrial innovations left workers jobless or when the introduction of computers led to job losses.

Yet, AI is not merely destroying jobs; it is reshaping them. Companies are increasingly looking for workers who can manage AI tools. The future may belong to professionals who combine domain expertise with AI literacy – finance plus AI, law plus AI, healthcare plus AI, and so on. This explains the extraordinary rush towards AI learning.

But there is also a danger of illusion. The booming AI education market has created thousands of courses promising instant expertise and guaranteed jobs. Many are superficial, outdated, or designed more for commercial profit than genuine skill-building. A certificate alone will not ensure employability. The real gap lies between learning AI theoretically and applying it meaningfully in real-world situations. There are other speed breakers as well. India still faces serious digital inequality. Educational institutions often struggle to update curricula quickly enough for a technology evolving almost every day. Moreover, ethical and regulatory concerns around privacy, misinformation, and bias remain unresolved. Governments, too, are yet to fully prepare for the social disruptions caused by AI. The market will eventually separate serious learning from certificate chasing. Employers will reward adaptability, creativity, and problem-solving, not merely familiarity with AI. AI literacy is not the same as job preparedness. AI can improve productivity and create opportunities, but it may also widen inequality. The real challenge is building a workforce that can think critically, adapt continuously, and combine human intelligence with artificial intelligence.



The unravelling of Dravidian order

Vijay has emerged as the face of generational anger and anti-establishment politics. But his rise also highlights a political vacuum: the old Dravidian order is losing credibility, while the new alternative remains inexperienced and organisationally weak



NILANTHA
ILANGAMUWA

Joseph Vijay Chandrasekhar, celebrated for decades as “Thalapathy” — the commander — is now confronting a truth far harsher than cinematic fiction: Tamil Nadu is not a theatre waiting for a hero’s entrance. It is among India’s most politically self-aware states, shaped by decades of ideological struggle, linguistic pride, welfare politics, caste negotiation, and a deeply emotional contract with social justice. Vijay may have conquered the electoral imagination, but the machinery of governance is proving far more unforgiving than fan adulation.

Tamil Nadu today stands at a historic crossroads. The Dravidian order that dominated the state for nearly sixty years is weakening, yet no alternative has fully established legitimacy. The DMK retains organisational strength and administrative continuity, while the AIADMK still survives through welfare-era loyalties and caste-based networks. But both parties increasingly appear ideologically exhausted. Their rhetoric continues to invoke social justice, federalism, and Tamil identity, yet their politics often resemble bureaucratic management rather than transformative mobilisation. Vijay’s rise emerged precisely from this vacuum.

National commentary has often caricatured Tamil Nadu as a state addicted to “cinema politics”, but that interpretation misses the deeper historical reality. MG Ramachandran and J Jayalalithaa succeeded not merely because they were film stars, but because they embedded themselves within the emotional and ideological framework created by the Dravidian movement. In Tamil Nadu, cinema became political pedagogy. Film dialogues carried ideological messages. Stardom mattered only when it resonated with the anxieties and aspirations of workers, backward castes, the poor, and Tamil linguistic identity. The foundations of this politics were laid by EV Ramasamy, whose Self-Respect Movement challenged Brahminical dominance in education, administration, and ritual hierarchy. His attack on caste oppression transformed Tamil politics permanently.

Later, CN Annadurai converted radical social critique into electoral politics through the DMK. The movement shifted political discourse away from elite nationalism towards dignity, representation, and linguistic self-respect. Tamil politics became inseparable from the question of social mobility. This ideological inheritance helped create one of India’s most paradoxical yet successful states. Tamil Nadu remained fiercely regional while becoming deeply integrated into global manufacturing networks.

Tamil Nadu built one of India’s most effective



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DISRUPTION

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welfare systems. Midday meal schemes pioneered under K. Kamaraj and expanded under MG Ramachandran reshaped nutrition and school attendance. Public healthcare, subsidised food distribution, maternal health programmes, and women-centric welfare schemes produced social indicators that consistently outperform much of the country.

M Karunanidhi, a scriptwriter, ideologue, and political tactician, fused literary performance, welfare governance, and coalition negotiation into a durable political machine. His son, MK Stalin, inherited not just a party but an institutional ecosystem. Under Stalin, Tamil Nadu retained economic growth despite post-pandemic pressures. Welfare delivery expanded through programmes such as doorstep healthcare initiatives, while the state sharpened its resistance to centralisation on issues like NEET, language policy, and fiscal devolution.

Yet the DMK’s central challenge was not administrative failure. It was emotional fatigue. Younger voters inherited the welfare state without inheriting the historical memory that once legitimised Dravidian politics. Anti-Brahmin rhetoric no longer electrifies an aspirational generation working in IT corridors or navigating precarious urban employment. Into this opening stepped Vijay.

Unlike Kamal Haasan, who entered politics through technocratic idealism, Vijay projected emotional populism. He did not initially offer a fully coherent ideological programme. Instead, he offered rupture - a symbolic rebellion against dynastic politics, corruption fatigue, and political stagnation. His appeal rested on accessibility and generational impatience. Importantly, he avoided overt alignment with Hindutva while softening the rigid atheistic tone historically associated with Dravidian discourse. This ambiguity broadened his social appeal.

But electoral momentum and governing capacity are entirely different realities. Cinema rewards singular charisma; parliamentary democracy rewards negotiation, compromise, organisational discipline, and patience. Vijay’s transition from celebrity icon to political admin-

istrator has exposed the limitations of charisma-driven mobilisation. Triumphant rhetoric, strategic inconsistency, and the inexperience of advisers intoxicated by spectacle have complicated his emergence as a credible governing force.

The deeper anxiety within Tamil Nadu’s political establishment reflects fear of displacement. Reports of tactical accommodation between the DMK and AIADMK - once unimaginable rivals — indicate how survival instincts are overtaking ideological hostility.

This crisis has also exposed the transactional nature of alliance politics. Congress leaders who survived electorally through DMK support now flirt with Vijay’s camp in search of future relevance. Alliances increasingly resemble temporary survival arrangements rather than ideological partnerships. Meanwhile, the BJP continues to struggle electorally in Tamil Nadu because Hindutva’s North Indian cultural grammar encounters resistance in a state where linguistic identity historically superseded pan-Hindu consolidation.

Yet Delhi’s influence no longer depends entirely on electoral dominance. Governors, investigative agencies, and coalition engineering increasingly function as instruments of political leverage. Across Tamil Nadu, suspicion persists that constitutional ambiguity may be used to shape outcomes from behind the scenes. The contradiction confronting Tamil Nadu is therefore profound. Economically, it remains one of India’s most advanced states. Socially, it

continues to outperform much of the country in education, healthcare, and women’s participation. Politically, however, it has entered an era where no force

commands complete moral authority. The old Dravidian order no longer inspires unquestioned loyalty, while the new populist alternative has not yet demonstrated governing maturity.

Vijay’s rise is neither accidental nor miraculous. It reflects the ideological vacuum that emerges when successful societies outgrow their old slogans without discovering a new political language. Voters rejected stagnation without fully trusting disruption.

The danger now is that Tamil Nadu may drift towards personality-driven politics detached from doctrinal seriousness. If the DMK and AIADMK unite merely to block Vijay, they may postpone collapse while accelerating their irrelevance. The state may discover that charisma alone cannot govern industrial growth, fiscal pressures, caste tensions, and federal confrontation simultaneously. Tamil Nadu’s political story is about the uncertain transition from a deeply ideological republic to a more fragmented and emotionally volatile political order. The Dravidian system that once reshaped Indian federalism is no longer secure. It is improvising in real time, searching for a new language of legitimacy in a state that refuses to stand still.

The Pioneer
SINCE 1865

The human side of AI in the classroom



RITU
JAVA

2ND OPINION

Artificial intelligence is no longer confined to the edges of innovation; it is steadily becoming part of the everyday rhythm of education. Its presence in school curricula is not loud or disruptive, but quietly influential, shaping how students engage with learning and how educators respond to their needs.

Not only are we seeing new tools; we are also seeing an entirely different learning experience emerging through this evolution. The advent of AI has opened up ways to support not only students’ academic growth, but also the confidence and well-being that sit at the heart of meaningful learning.

For years, the classroom has been built on a straightforward approach - one teacher, one lesson, one pace. But all learners are different; some move ahead quickly,

while others need more time.

AI is starting to close this gap by identifying when a student is struggling or is ready to move on, allowing learning to adapt to each individual’s needs. It also changes the role of teachers by taking over tasks such as grading and tracking progress.

As classrooms evolve, teachers are becoming guides and mentors who help students interpret material rather than simply instruct them. At the same time, learning remains deeply tied to confidence, motivation, and self-worth. In this context, AI can contribute positively to the system. If implemented correctly, it can support learning through timely feedback, personalised instruction, and early detection of disengagement, among other methods. It can support both performance and well-being.

Nonetheless, the story has another side. The fear is that students will turn to AI and thoughtlessly use it as a shortcut — skipping the thinking and questioning that lead to genuine learning. Therefore, schools should teach students how to use AI responsibly rather than simply how to access it, with the goal of developing critical thinkers rather than merely efficient problem-solvers.

Then there are ethical questions, which are becoming increasingly important.

How is student data being used?

Are these systems fair to all learners?

Are we teaching children how to use technology responsibly?

These are not technical questions alone; they are deeply human ones. And they must be part of the conversation in every school that chooses to embrace AI.

The real impact lies in how thoughtfully schools integrate AI. The priority should be on building AI literacy rather than simply teaching its usage, while ensuring that teachers are equipped and trained alongside students.

Education has never been just about facts. At its heart, education is an experience rooted in relationships and mentorship. AI cannot replace that, and it should not try to. What it can do is strengthen it.

When AI is used thoughtfully in the classroom, it can make learning spaces more flexible and welcoming for all students, recognising and embracing the different experiences of each learner. It gives teachers more time to help students become more curious, confident, and expressive. Perhaps this is the real power of AI in the classroom: making education truly inclusive for everyone.

The writer is the Principal of Dharav High School, Gurugram

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Leaders must practise austerity first

Refer to your news regarding the Prime Minister’s call to adopt a patriotic lifestyle centred on economic self-reliance and austerity.

The disparity between the government’s call for public austerity and the continued extravagance of our leadership is a glaring democratic injustice. Following the 2024 Budget, it is hypocritical to ask the common man to tighten his belt while lavish official expenditure and foreign tours remain unchecked. Directives to avoid gold purchases or cancel travel do more than stifle personal freedom; they threaten the livelihoods of millions employed in the tourism and jewellery sectors, who are already reeling from economic instability.

Credibility in governance is earned through example, not edict. It is fundamentally unjust to slash subsidies for the poor while spending crores on state events. Furthermore, the rhetoric regarding foreign spending misses the point. Reserve Bank of India data confirms that the real driver of dollar outflows is not the casual traveller or middle-class weddings, but high-net-worth individuals investing in foreign assets.

If the administration wishes the public to embrace simplicity, it must first curb its own extravagance.

S PADMANABHAN | KOCHI

Need for collective economic restraint

Fiscal prudence and appeals for restraint are often mocked today as the tail wagging the dog, yet history shows that national sacrifice during difficult periods can strengthen long-term resilience. Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s appeal for reduced imports and mindful consumption recalls Lal Bahadur Shastri’s call in the 1960s for citizens to voluntarily fast from grains once a week when India was living in a humiliating “ship-to-mouth” condition before the Green Revolution transformed food security.

Such collective discipline remains relevant even today. India’s appetite for imported gold, luxury consumption, and speculative land accumulation weakens the broader economy. Ironically, Pliny once lamented that Rome’s gold flowed into India through trade. Today, the reverse is occurring as precious foreign exchange is drained to satisfy an unproductive obsession with gold.

Likewise, excessive land hoarding has turned housing from a social necessity into a speculative commodity. Economic progress requires not only government policy, but also civic restraint, productive investment, and a culture that values national resilience over conspicuous accumulation.

HARSH PAWARIA | ROHTAK

NEET leaks raise serious concerns

The cancellation of the May 2026 NEET-UG examination following allegations of a paper leak has once again exposed the fragile credibility of India’s entrance examination system.

NEET is the single gateway for admission to MBBS and BDS courses across the country, with nearly 24 lakh students appearing every year. When one examination determines the future of aspiring doctors, repeated irregularities become deeply alarming.

Major controversies surrounding NEET have surfaced repeatedly in 2016, 2021, 2023, 2024, and now in 2026. Such serial lapses compel many to question whether the system has become a farce. The latest cancellation is a serious black mark on the country’s educational framework. Investigative agencies, including the Rajasthan Special Operations Group, reportedly found evidence that the examination paper had been leaked before the test. The government has now handed the matter over to the CBI for a nationwide probe. While candidates will not need to re-register or pay additional fees, the emotional stress and uncertainty faced by students remain immense.

The authorities must ensure transparency, accountability, and stronger safeguards to restore public trust.

CK SUBRAMANIAM | NAVI MUMBAI

PIC TALK



Tourists participate in river rafting in the Beas River during the summer season in Manali, Kullu.

PHOTO: PTI

DIGITAL EXPERIENCE

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REPEATED NEET FAILURES SHAKE
STUDENTS’ TRUST IN NTA

The cancellation of the NEET-UG examination has once again exposed serious flaws in the functioning of the National Testing Agency (NTA). Established in 2017 to conduct major entrance examinations in a transparent and efficient manner, the agency has repeatedly faced controversies involving paper leaks, technical failures, poor exam management, and irregularities in evaluation.

The latest NEET-UG cancellation, triggered by allegations of a paper leak, has affected nearly 22.79 lakh students. For lakhs of aspirants who spent years preparing with sincerity and discipline, the decision has brought anxiety, uncertainty, and emotional distress. Similar controversies emerged in 2024, when allegations regarding grace

marks and paper leaks led to nationwide protests and legal disputes. The cancellation of UGC-NET in the same year further weakened public confidence in the agency.

Frequent irregularities not only damage the credibility of the NTA but also undermine the integrity of India’s education system. Students deserve a fair, secure, and reliable examination process. The government must ensure strict accountability, stronger cybersecurity, better coordination at examination centres, and severe punishment for those involved in leaks or negligence.

After nearly a decade of experience, the NTA can no longer afford repeated failures. Restoring students’ trust must now become its highest priority.

AMRIT LAL MARU ‘RAVI’ | INDORE

Please send your letter to the info@dailypioneer.com.
In not more than 250 words. We appreciate your feedback.

Urgent reforms needed in CGHS: Air India retirees trapped in a bureaucratic nightmare

Thousands of retired Air India employees are today trapped in a distressing cycle of humiliation and medical insecurity under the Central Government Health Scheme (CGHS). For them, what was meant to be a dependable healthcare safeguard has instead turned into a nightmare of delayed reimbursements, and administrative apathy



VK BAHUGUNA

As India pushes towards universal health coverage under Ayushman Bharat, which is one of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's greatest gifts to the people, another flagship welfare scheme — the Central Government Health Scheme (CGHS) — is failing thousands of its most vulnerable beneficiaries. Senior citizens who served the national carrier, Air India, for decades are now caught in a web of red tape, delayed payments, and hospital harassment that has turned a promised seamless medical safety net into a source of constant anxiety and financial distress, and nobody bothers if one complains.

Following the 2022 privatisation of Air India to the Tata Group, the Government of India rightly extended CGHS benefits to eligible retired and retiring employees as a social safeguard. Official memoranda assured cashless treatment, medicines, and investigations at empanelled hospitals — benefits meant to replace or improve the earlier Retired Employees Medical Scheme (REMS). Yet, on the ground, the reality is starkly different.

Many of these pensioners, now in their 70s and 80s, are forced to pay huge sums upfront for treatment and then chase reimbursements for months, often receiving only partial settlements or rejected claims. The root of much of this suffering is an unnecessary detour through the callous and arrogantly incompetent UTI Infrastructure Technology and Services Limited (UTIITSL), which has been appointed as the Bill Clearing Agency (BCA) for Air India-related CGHS claims. Instead of routing everything through the efficient National Health Authority (NHA) system that handles the main CGHS operations, these beneficiaries have been shunted into a parallel, slower track.

A glaring example is Indresh Hospital in Dehradun, which has been harassed for the last two months by UTIITSL. Despite submitting its valid NABH accreditation certificate six times, UTIITSL continues to reject claims and refuses to recognise the accreditation. Even a formal complaint lodged on the PMO grievance portal was dismissed contemptuously, further eroding trust in the system. This has forced the hospital either to demand full cash payments from Air India retirees or to turn them away, directly impacting patients in Uttarakhand and surrounding areas.

The Additional Director, CGHS, is not authorised to supervise these matters and, even after his communication, UTIITSL does not bother. Hospitals all over India - from Delhi to Mumbai to Chennai — empanelled under CGHS report similar harassment: bills are rejected on minor technical grounds, accreditation certificates are questioned despite NABH compliance, and payments are delayed for 8 to 18 months. This has led several hospitals either to refuse cashless services to Air India card-holders or to demand full payment in advance.

One affected retiree from Delhi described the ordeal: "We served the nation's airline through its toughest times. Now, in old age, we stand outside hospital counters begging for basic dignity in healthcare."

Similar stories echo across Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai, and smaller cities where Air India staff settled after retirement. In many Tier-2 locations, empanelled facilities are scarce, and those available are increasingly reluctant due to the UTIITSL bottleneck.

Systemic Failures Plaguing CGHS

The problems extend far beyond Air India beneficiaries. CGHS serves over 45 lakh central government employees, pensioners, and dependants, yet it grapples with outdated infrastructure and processes. Hospital empanelment remains inadequate, especially outside metropolitan areas. CGHS package rates for surgeries and procedures have not kept pace with inflation or private-sector costs, prompting many reputed hospitals either to opt out or to deliver compromised care to CGHS patients.

Claim settlements are notoriously slow. Digital portals exist but are not fully user-friendly, forcing many elderly beneficiaries to submit physical documents and face repeated queries over formatting or missing stamps. Advanced treatments often face caps or outright exclusions, leaving patients to bridge the gap from their meagre pensions.

For Air India retirees specifically, the situation is aggravated by card-related confusion. Many received yellow-



strip cards meant for autonomous bodies instead of the promised special-category cards. Entitlements are not clearly printed, leading to disputes at hospital counters. While OPD services through CGHS wellness centres work somewhat smoothly, inpatient department (IPD), day-care procedures, diagnostics, and emergency care have been severely affected by the UTIITSL routing.

This detour appears to contradict the directives that envisioned seamless NHA integration. The result is a classic case of policy intent being defeated by poor execution. Hospitals, already operating on thin margins under CGHS rates, are now bearing the brunt of endless back-and-forth with UTIITSL, leading them either to turn away patients or to insist on cash payments.

Families are selling assets or borrowing money to fund treatment while waiting for reimbursements that may never come in full. It raises serious questions about the government's commitment to welfare for disinvested public-sector employees. If the CGHS scheme — with a dedicated budget - cannot deliver basic cashless care efficiently, how can India scale more ambitious health programmes?

Due to mounting frustration, petitions have reached various High Courts, including notices issued by the Madras High Court on related matters. Retirees' associations have repeatedly written to the Ministries of Health, Civil Aviation, and Finance, highlighting violations of earlier assurances.

CGHS requires bold, time-bound action rather than incremental tweaks. The most immediate step must be the removal of the UTIITSL detour for all Air India beneficiaries, who should be fully integrated into the NHA platform. NHA's experience with large-scale digital processing under PMJAY can deliver settlements within 30-45 days, restore hospital confidence, and enable genuine cashless treatment.

Second, CGHS rates must be revised annually through a transparent medical inflation index linked to NABH standards, and coverage should include modern therapies without arbitrary caps. Empanelment drives should target at least 1,000 additional hospitals in Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities.

Third, complete digital transformation is overdue. Auto-approval for high-compliance claims and penalties on clearing agencies for delays beyond 60 days would enforce accountability.

Fourth, all retirees should receive standardised CGHS cards with lifelong validity.

Finally, the government should consider a dedicated medical corpus for these beneficiaries and explore convergence with other schemes for hybrid coverage.

CGHS was envisioned as a model of dignified healthcare for public servants. Today, it risks becoming a symbol of bureaucratic indifference. The suffering of Air India retirees, exemplified by cases like Indresh Hospital in Dehradun, and the broader challenges within the scheme deserve national attention.

The media, civil society, and policymakers must push for reforms that place patients — especially senior citizens - at the centre. The government must act decisively to repair CGHS before more lives are compromised by avoidable administrative hurdles.

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Assam polls reveal India's hardening electoral politics



ANIL ANAND

High-intensity poll-eve rows, particularly involving corruption and sleaze allegations, are a known phenomenon in Indian electoral history. This has become more pronounced during the last decade, with even top leaders indulging in no-holds-barred personalised attacks, and allegations of corruption at high places becoming a familiar theme.

However, by and large, this has been a one-way traffic, with the ruling BJP-led National Democratic Alliance having the upper hand. The strategy of treating political rivals as enemies — also a relatively new concept in over seven decades of the country's democratic history — and fixing them using the might of statecraft, squarely to win elections, has become increasingly visible. By hook or by crook. This one-way traffic ran smoothly and effectively for the ruling dispensation until Pawan Khera, Chairman, Media & Publicity (Communication Department), AICC, broke the monotony with a set of serious corruption allegations targeting Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma and his wife.

As Khera chose an opportune moment - two days before campaigning for the Assembly elections was to end — to target Sarma, it naturally created a furore, with the latter baying for the former's blood and turning vituperative not only against Khera, but also the octogenarian Congress president, Mallikarjun Kharge, and Rahul Gandhi.

Ironically, at the state level, it is a showdown between two contrasting political models that have been at play on the national political horizon since 2014. The line-up has been "Hurricane Strategist vs Guarded Challenger", represented by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi, with Kharge repeatedly getting trapped in the crossfire.

A true reflection of this model came to the fore in the form of a duel between Sarma and Gaurav Gogoi — the incumbent Chief Minister spearheading the BJP campaign, and the Congress's CM hopeful. Khera's tirade against Sarma has not only taken the confrontation to the next level, with the only difference being that the Congress, instead of the BJP, was the "instigator" and the BJP the target this time around.

As Sarma frothed with anger after his no-holds-barred model — a replica of the BJP's national template — was jolted by an opponent trying to beat him at his own game, his frustration was visible when he burst into expletives targeting Kharge and Gandhi, apart from Khera.

Notwithstanding the fact that the reins of power during elections rest with the Election Commission of India, CM Sarma's public outbursts resulted in the Assam Police losing no time in landing at Khera's doorstep in Delhi, acting swiftly on an FIR filed overnight by Sarma's wife.

What did he say about Kharge? "Kaun hai Kharge? Pagal hai woh..."

What did he say about Khera while impliedly targeting Gandhi? Khera would spend his "last moments" in an Assam jail, as he declared the allegations against him and his wife to be "fabricated". "I would file a case against Khera first, then turn the others into 'peda' (sweets)," a remark ostensibly directed at Gandhi.

The backdrop to this conflict was Khera's allegations, levelled at a press conference at the AICC headquarters in Delhi, that Sarma's wife, Riniki Bhuyan Sarma, "holds multiple foreign passports and undisclosed overseas assets". The genesis of Khera's allegations lies in similar charges levelled earlier by Sarma against Gogoi, alleging his wife's "Pakistan links".

Interestingly, Sarma, a former Congressman, was once the blue-eyed boy of former Chief Minister Tarun Gogoi and a senior minister in his Cabinet before joining the BJP, after Gandhi had reportedly refused to entertain his claim to the Chief Minister's chair. Of course, Gaurav Gogoi is Tarun Gogoi's son.

Gaurav Gogoi, educated abroad, has gradually evolved into a mature politician and impressive parliamentarian before being appointed Assam Congress chief ahead of the Assembly elections. Unlike Himanta Biswa Sarma's aggressive political style, Gogoi has maintained a calm and calculated approach while carrying forward his father Tarun Gogoi's legacy.

He strengthened his position politically after winning the Jorhat Lok Sabha seat despite strong BJP opposition and Sarma's towering presence in Assam politics. The victory boosted Gogoi's confidence and established him as a serious challenger with Rahul Gandhi's backing.

How will these contrasting political models of rivalry manifest in the ongoing Assembly elections in Assam?

Surely, the stakes are much higher this time for both the BJP and the Congress than they were in the Lok Sabha polls. Assam has been the BJP's gateway to the North-East region, where it once had virtually no presence and where Sarma played an important role after defecting from the Congress, leading eventually to the fulfilment of his chief ministerial ambitions. It is equally important for both the BJP and Sarma that the party returns to power in order to retain its grip over the region, especially with an eye on the 2029 Lok Sabha elections.

Even at a personal level, Sarma has far more at stake this time than ever before. Leading the BJP to victory will not only help him retain the chief ministership but also add to his political clout. A defeat — that too at the hands of the Rahul Gandhi-Gaurav Gogoi combine, who have long been his principal targets — would considerably weaken his political standing and could raise serious questions about his future.

The Congress, meanwhile, has an opportunity to stage a comeback in its former citadel of North-Eastern India. A victory in Assam, the largest state in the region, would provide a significant boost to the party, which has been pushed into political oblivion in the area by the BJP, with Sarma playing a stellar role in settling scores with his erstwhile party and Gandhi.

A Congress victory under Gogoi, in the absence of his father, would be a major boost both for him personally and for the party. For Gogoi, it would be a landmark achievement if the Congress were to choose him as Chief Minister following an electoral victory.



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The Pioneer

From Frankenstein to AI: Why intelligence without understanding remains dangerous

PREM KUMAR KALRA
JYOTI KUMAR VERMA
RUPALI SATSANGI

In Frankenstein, Mary Shelley imagines a scientist who succeeds in animating lifeless matter, only to discover that creating life is not the same as creating understanding. Victor Frankenstein's creature can perceive, feel, and even reason, yet it remains tragically excluded from the moral and emotional fabric that gives meaning to intelligence. The experiment does not fail because of a lack of technical brilliance; it falters because the creator does not fully comprehend the nature of what he has brought into being. This enduring literary moment offers a powerful analogy for our present engagement with Artificial Intelligence: we have learned to build systems that can process, predict, and perform, but we are still far from creating systems that truly understand.

Since the foundational work of Alan Turing, the modelling of Data, Information, Knowledge, and Wisdom has driven the design of intelligent systems. Successive generations of AI research have introduced increasingly sophisticated tools for managing uncertainty, including certainty factors, Bayesian networks, fuzzy logic, Dempster-Shafer theory, computing with words, and belief-based reasoning.

The modelling of Data, Information, Knowledge, and Wisdom to address everyday and complex real-life challenges has evolved significantly since

Turing introduced the concept of a thinking machine. Turing theorised that to imitate an adult human mind, we must consider the first state of the mind, the education it has received, and other experiences it has undergone. His suggestion of creating a computational model of a child's mind and then "educating" it continues to echo in neural networks and hierarchical learning systems today.

Yet, limitations persist. Neural network models have advanced in architecture design, learning schemes, and evaluation metrics, but their learning mechanisms remain fundamentally mathematical optimisation processes and do not faithfully represent how the biological brain acquires and applies knowledge. The brain integrates data, prior knowledge, and accumulated wisdom simultaneously; current AI relies largely on data alone.

Equally significant is the neglect of quantum information processing. While quantum approaches have shown measurable advantages in learning efficiency and computational performance, they remain largely unexplored within mainstream AI architectures. If quantum effects indeed play a role in biological neural processing, this omission represents a major missed opportunity. Similarly, higher-order cognitive functions — consciousness, abstraction, moral reasoning, and contextual wisdom — are either absent or only superficially approximated. The result is systems that are efficient but not genuinely intelligent in the human sense.

To move forward, integrating quantum and neuromorphic computing becomes essential. The classical Church-Turing thesis, long regarded as the



oretical foundation of computation, is now increasingly questioned in light of quantum computing capabilities. Emerging evidence suggests that quantum systems may process information in ways that classical systems cannot efficiently simulate. If such processes are intrinsic to human cognition, then only quantum artificial intelligence may eventually match the brain's energy efficiency and noise tolerance.

A key opportunity lies in integrating these paradigms to develop brain-like structures capable of solving problems efficiently with minimal energy and limited data, while simultaneously providing concise explanations. Neuromorphic and brain-inspired computing emulate synaptic plasticity and energy-efficient processing observed in biological systems, while quantum computing offers exponential speed-ups in optimisation and pattern recognition. Together, they present a pathway to overcoming the limitations of current AI. Future AI systems must also be capable of explaining their reasoning. Transparency, account-

ability, and trust cannot emerge from opaque systems. This requires constructing cognitive frameworks modelled after human processes such as reasoning, memory, and decision-making. Integrating biology, psychology, and mathematics is essential for enhancing both traditional and quantum information-processing capabilities.

Incorporating models of mind, consciousness, and cognition is equally critical. Human learning integrates data, knowledge, and wisdom, whereas current AI relies primarily on data. Bridging this gap demands innovative approaches to reasoning and abstraction. It also requires a new skilling ecosystem that integrates computational thinking, biological intelligence, quantum literacy, and ethical reasoning.

Recent scholarship views AI not just as a computational tool but as a system involved in knowledge generation, making it essential to preserve human agency and critical thinking. The emerging "Einstein Test" goes beyond the Turing Test by assessing whether AI can produce genuine scientific discoveries rather than merely imitate human responses. However, despite their capabilities, current AI systems still lack true creativity, imagination, and causal reasoning. Addressing these challenges requires a structured convergence of four disciplines: biology, psychology, quantum science, mathematics, and data science. This integration is not additive but synergistic, opening possibilities such as quantum neuroinformatics, in which insights from brain science and quantum theory inform one another.

The way forward demands clear research pri-

orities: quantum-neural interfaces, cognitive architecture integration, energy-efficient learning, and ethics and value alignment. However, progress will require more than technical innovation. Educational institutions must cultivate researchers capable of working across disciplinary boundaries and questioning foundational assumptions.

The trajectory of AI development cannot rely solely on scaling existing architectures. Their dependence on massive data, their opacity, and their indifference to ethics reflect the absence of biological, cognitive, and quantum insights. The framework proposed here is not a single technology but a research philosophy — one that treats the human brain as a guide to constructing genuinely intelligent machines.

The convergence of biology, information science, quantum science, and data science offers the most promising path towards AI that is not only powerful, but also comprehensible, efficient, and aligned with human values. Realising this vision will require interdisciplinary collaboration, ethical responsibility, and a deep commitment to understanding human cognition — one of the greatest open challenges of our time.

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Order Order

HC: Can standing counsels file proceedings against State?

The Allahabad High Court has sought clarification from the Uttar Pradesh Government on whether additional Government advocates (AGAs) or standing counsel receiving retainerhip from the state can institute cases against the Government or its officers.

Justice Saurabh Lavania of the Lucknow bench of the High Court passed the order while hearing a contempt petition filed by Ashok Kumar Singh and 28 others alleging wilful disobedience of an order passed in 2025.

During the hearing, the court noted that advocate Sudhir Kumar Mishra, appearing for the petitioners, is an additional Government advocate.

The bench then sought a response from the legal remembrancer on the issue whether AGAs or standing counsel on state retainerhip are permitted to file proceedings against the state Government or its officers.

The matter has been posted for further hearing on May 18. (PTI)

FAMILY GETS LIFE TERM FOR KILLING COUPLE



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Ballia

A local court here has sentenced three members of a family to life imprisonment in connection with the 2017 murder of a young couple over their relationship, police said on Wednesday.

According to the prosecution, 23-year-old Ajit Gond and 20-year-old Khushboo Rai were shot dead by the girl's family members in Jethwar village under Pakri police station limits on the night of May 29.

Ajit, a resident of Khorli Pakad village under the Fefna police station, was friends with Prince Rai, brother of Khushboo, and frequently visited his house. During this period, Ajit and Khushboo became close, which allegedly led to opposition from her family.

After the couple were killed, Ajit's mother, Shaili Devi, then filed a complaint, and police registered a case under sections of the Indian Penal Code and relevant provisions of the SC/ST Act against Prince, his mother Nirmala Rai, sister Pinki Rai, and four others — Sugriv Ram, Prakash, Umesh Kumar Gond and Umesh Sharma.

SC allows TVK MLA to participate in floor test

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

The Supreme Court on Wednesday stayed the Madras High Court order which had restrained TVK MLA R Sreenivasa Sethupathi from participating in the floor test in the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly.

"This is atrocious to say the least. The High Court says the remedy is election petition but still entertains the Article 226 petition," a bench of Justices Vikram Nath, Sandeep Mehta and Vijay Bishnoi observed while hearing the plea.

Article 226 of the Constitution deals with power of High Courts to issue certain writs.

The Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK) Government in Tamil Nadu crossed a major hurdle on Wednesday, winning a confidence-boost-



ing trust vote by a 144:22 margin amid a walkout by the principal opposition party DMK and a divided AIADMK whose one faction supported the C Joseph Vijay-led Government.

While issuing notice on Sethupathi's plea challenging the High Court's May 12 interim order, the apex court also stayed the proceedings pending before the High Court in the matter.

"In the meantime, the



Not mandatory to go to temple to prove belief: SC

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

Observing that Hinduism is a way of life, the Supreme Court on Wednesday said it is not necessary for a Hindu to mandatorily go to a temple or perform a ritual in order to remain a Hindu and even lighting a lamp inside house is enough to prove one's belief.

The observation of a nine-judge constitution bench headed by Chief Justice Surya Kant came while hearing petitions related to discrimination against women at religious places, including the Sabarimala temple in Kerala, and on the ambit of religious

freedom practised by multiple faiths, including Dawoodi Bohras.

Justices BV Nagarathna, MM Sundresh, Ahsanuddin Amanullah, Aravind Kumar, Augustine George Masih, Prasanna B Varale, R Mahadevan and Joydalya Bagchi are also part of the nine-judge bench.

As the hearing commenced on 15th day of hearing, advocate Dr G Mohan Gopal, appearing for one of the intervenors submitted that there has been demand for social justice emerging from within religious communities.

"Hinduism was defined as a religious category. Thereafter, in 1966, it was



held that a Hindu is one who accepts the Vedas as the highest authority in all matters religion and philosophy. They never asked me. None of us ever said that.

"Now, I have the highest respect for the Vedas and

great admiration for it. But is it a fact that every person today classified as Hindu accepts the Vedas as the highest authority in all spiritual and philosophical matters?" he asked.

Responding to his submission, Justice Nagarathna said, "That is why Hinduism is called as a way of life. It is not necessary for a Hindu to mandatorily go to a temple or perform a ritual in order to remain a Hindu."

She said one need not be ritualistic and nobody can come in the way for people having their faith.

CJI also remarked, "Even if an individual lights a lamp inside his hut is enough to

prove his religion." The hearing is underway.

The top court had earlier observed that if individuals start questioning every religious practice or matters of religion before a constitutional court, then there will be hundreds of petitions and every religion will "break" due to this.

A five-judge Constitution bench had lifted a ban that prevented women between the ages of 10 and 50 from entering the Sabarimala Ayyappa temple in a 4:1 majority verdict in September 2018, ruling that the centuries-old Hindu religious practice was illegal and unconstitutional.

Medical association moves SC over NEET-UG paper leak

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

A medical association has moved the Supreme Court alleging "systemic failure" in the conduct of the NEET-UG 2026 exam for admissions in undergraduate medical courses and seeking reforms in the test system following the cancellation of the exam over irregularities.

The NEET (UG) 2026 exam held on May 3 by the National Testing Agency (NTA) was cancelled on May 12 amid allegations of paper leak which is now being probed by the CBI.

The Federation of All India Medical Association (FAIMA), through lawyer Tanvi Dubey,



has moved the top court seeking a complete overhaul of the national testing framework, including the replacement of the NTA with a more robust and autonomous body.

The plea also referred to

news reports that "guess papers" circulating on encrypted platforms like WhatsApp and Telegram matched more than 100 questions from the actual exam paper. It urged the top court to direct the Government to

replace the NTA with a "technologically advanced and autonomous body" to restore the integrity of medical entrance exams.

FAIMA also asked the court to constitute a high-powered monitoring committee, chaired by a retired Supreme Court judge and including cybersecurity and forensic experts, to oversee the re-conduct of the 2026 exam.

The cancellation of the exam has left over 22 lakh medical aspirants and their families anxious about the next steps, including the fresh examination date, admit cards, examination centres and the counselling timeline.

SC to hear in July plea on killing of BJP workers in Bengal



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

The Supreme Court on Wednesday said it would hear in July a plea concerning the alleged killing of three BJP workers in West Bengal after the 2018 local bodies elections in the state.

"What remains in this matter now?" a bench of Justices Vikram Nath, Sandeep Mehta and Vijay Bishnoi asked senior advocate Gaurav Bhatia, who had filed the plea in 2018 and was also appearing for the brother of one of the deceased. Bhatia referred to the change in circumstances in the state. "Substantial change or sea change," the bench observed.

Suvendu Adhikari on May 9 took oath as West Bengal's first BJP chief minister.

The BJP secured 207 seats in the 294-member assembly, ending the TMC's 15-year rule in West Bengal in

the recently concluded assembly elections.

During the hearing, Bhatia urged the bench to post the plea for hearing in July to enable him to seek further instructions. "You should take a proactive step in ensuring that things move in the right direction," the bench observed and posted the plea for hearing in July.

While hearing the matter on February 17, the top court asked the petitioner why he had not approached the Calcutta High Court with his grievance. Bhatia had said three ghastly murders that took place in West Bengal were brought to the notice of the apex court.

He had argued that 19 murders, which were political in nature, took place in the state at that time and the brother and family members of one of the deceased were receiving death threats from some influential persons.

SC agrees to hear plea on minimum attendance in law colleges

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

The Supreme Court on Wednesday agreed to hear a plea challenging the Delhi High Court verdict which had said that no law college or university can bar students from appearing in examinations due to a lack of minimum attendance.

A bench of Justices Vikram Nath, Sandeep Mehta and Vijay Bishnoi observed that if such a position were to be accepted, the hostels of the National Law University and law colleges could become "just boarding and lodging facilities".

The top court, however, refused to stay the High



Court's November 3 verdict and said it would hear the matter and decide it.

The bench sought responses from the Bar Council of India (BCI) and others on the plea challenging the High Court's verdict, which had also asked the BCI to re-

evaluate the mandatory attendance norms.

The High Court had said it was of the strong view that attendance norms for education in general and legal education in particular cannot be made so stringent that they lead to mental

trauma, let alone the death of a student.

It had delivered the judgment while disposing of a suo motu petition, initiated by the Supreme Court and transferred to the High Court, in relation to the death of law student Sushant Rohilla by suicide in 2016 after allegedly being barred from sitting for the semester exams due to lack of requisite attendance.

Rohilla, a third-year law student, had hanged himself at his home here on August 10, 2016, after his college allegedly barred him from sitting for the semester exams due to lack of requisite attendance. He left behind a note, saying he

was a failure and did not wish to live. The High Court had directed that it would be mandatory for all educational institutions and universities to constitute grievance redressal committees (GRCs) in terms of the University Grants Commission Regulations, 2023.

Observing that GRCs were for safeguarding the interests of students, including their mental health, it had directed the UGC to initiate consultations and consider amending the UGC regulations.

"The BCI shall undertake a re-evaluation of the mandatory attendance norms for the three-year and five-year LLB courses in India....," it had said.

Can't let entire generation be ruined by obscene content on mobiles: Delhi HC

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

The Delhi High Court on Wednesday asked Google and Apple to strictly act against the dissemination of obscene pornographic content through mobile applications hosted on their online platforms, remarking that it cannot permit an entire generation to be "ruined".

A bench of Chief Justice D K Upadhyaya and Justice Tejas Karia said in the present legal framework, the social media intermediaries have to play the "most vital role" and they should act against the dissemina-



tion of pornographic content not only upon receiving a complaint but even at the time of uploading by exercising due diligence.

It also asked the Centre's Indian Computer Emergency Response Team to check

the dissemination of such content. The court was hearing a PIL by Rubika Thapa against the hosting of mobile applications offering vulgar and pornographic content on platforms run by Google and Apple.

Rani Kapur moves SC to restrain Priya Kapur

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

The Supreme Court has agreed to hear on May 14 an application filed by late industrialist Sunjay Kapur's mother Rani Kapur seeking a direction to restrain his wife Priya Kapur and others from interfering with the functioning of the 'RK Family Trust' during the pendency of mediation proceedings.

The apex court had on May 7 appointed former Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud to act as a mediator in the dispute between the 80-year-old Rani Kapur and Priya Kapur over the family trust.

The matter was mentioned on Tuesday before a bench of Justices JB Pardiwala and Ujjal Bhuyan.

"Looks like we have entered into an arena where Mahabharata will look very small," the bench had orally observed while listing the application for hearing on May 14.



In her fresh application, Rani Kapur has alleged that Priya Kapur and others were attempting to assume control over some companies and assets linked to the disputed family estate.

The application also raised an apprehension that attempts may be made to alienate or transfer the assets during the pendency of mediation proceedings.

Rani Kapur has sought a direction to

restrain Priya Kapur and others from interfering with the functioning of the trust and some companies linked to the family estate during the pendency of mediation proceedings.

On May 7, the top court said the parties should participate in the mediation proceedings with an open mind.

"We make one request to all the parties before us that they may not make any statements in public and may not go on social media. This being a family matter, the endeavour on their part should be to get the disputes resolved at the earliest and put an end to the entire matter," the bench had said.

It had said it would be in the interest of one and all if they were able to resolve the entire matter before the mediator otherwise this was going to be a long drawn litigation.

The bench had made clear that this mediation was confined to the present matter.

SC quashes case against Kolkata hospital

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

The Supreme Court has quashed a criminal complaint against a Kolkata-based hospital and its chairman, saying that billing discrepancies and service-related grievances are primarily civil in nature and do not constitute criminal offences.

A bench comprising Justice Pamiidhantam Sri Narasimha and Justice Alok Aradhe, in a judgement delivered on Tuesday, set aside a 2023 order of the Calcutta High Court, which had suggested that a prima facie criminal case was made out against the Narayana Multispecialty Hospital at Barasat in West Bengal.

The case stemmed from a complaint filed by a man whose mother was treated for a fractured femur at the hospital in 2021. The com-



plainant alleged that the hospital intentionally charged ₹2,500 for an HRCT test that was never performed and failed to provide medical records promptly.

An HRCT (high-resolution computed tomography) scan is a specialised imaging test that provides highly detailed, cross-sectional, 3D images of lungs and chest tissue.

He further alleged that hospital staff behaved improperly and issued threats when questioned.

On the basis of these allegations, a magisterial court had issued notices against

the hospital, its chairman, and staff under Sections 406 (criminal breach of trust), 420 (cheating), and 120B (criminal conspiracy) of the IPC, along with provisions of the West Bengal Clinical Establishments Act, 2017.

The hospital maintained that the HRCT test was initially proposed but later deemed unnecessary by doctors and said once the error was identified, a revised bill was issued. The top court held that the essential "foundational ingredients" of criminal offences alleged against the hospital were missing.

It said for the commission of offence of cheating, there must be a "dishonest intention" from the very beginning.

In this case, the billing discrepancy appeared to be an "inadvertence" rather than a fraudulent plot, especially since the hospital proactively offered a refund.

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Withdrawal of funds to be automated: EPFO

Retirement fund body EPFO will soon automate the process for settling final provident fund withdrawal claims, fast-tracking the money transfer to the applicant's bank accounts, a top official said on Wednesday. The Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) has more than seven crore members.

At present, partial or advance withdrawal claims of up to ₹5 lakh are settled through auto mode, and the deadline for the auto-settlement mode is three days from filing the claim.

Speaking at the ASSOCHAM's National Seminar on New Labour Codes, Central Provident Fund Commissioner, EPFO, Ramesh Krishnamurthi, said, "We are also going to initiate, as far as feasible, auto-settlement for now... which was (available) only for advances. Now we are going in for auto-settlement of final withdrawals." He further added that the EPFO is going in for auto-settlement and auto-transfer of provident fund accounts in case a member shifts employers.

India, Chile review progress of trade pact talks

India and Chile, a South American nation, on Wednesday reviewed the progress of negotiations for the proposed free trade agreement and discussed modalities for its early conclusion, an official statement said.

Chilean Foreign Affairs Minister Francisco Perez Mackenna held meetings with Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal and Commerce Secretary Rajesh Agrawal here. The Chilean minister is leading a delegation here. "Apart from discussing the modalities for early conclusion of Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA), the interactions also covered a broad range of issues relating to trade facilitation, market access, investment promotion and strengthening institutional economic engagement between the two countries," the commerce ministry said. Both sides also deliberated upon ways to enhance collaboration in sectors such as critical minerals, renewable energy, agri-business, infrastructure, pharmaceuticals, digital services, logistics and advanced manufacturing.

The Pioneer

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BUSINESS11

AI could add \$500b to India's economy by 2030: Study

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ New Delhi

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has the potential to contribute over \$500 billion (about ₹47.81 lakh crore) to India's economy by 2030, according to a new joint study by IBM and IndiaAI, a MeitY initiative. The report, titled "From Promise to Power: How AI Is Redefining India's Economic Future", surveyed 1,500 Indian executives from a range of industries and organisations, covering various leadership levels, including CXOs. The study was supplemented by a pulse survey of 405 Indian executives. The report revealed that 80

per cent of Indian business leaders surveyed believe AI investments will directly influence the nation's GDP growth. "AI could contribute more than \$500 billion to India's economy by 2030, positioning the country among the world's most dynamic AI-driven economies. Few countries are stepping into the AI era with India's mix of scale, digital muscle, and ambition," the report said. Around 73 per cent of Indian executives believe the country will be a leading AI nation by 2030-a bet built on a vast market, a pioneering digital public infrastructure, and the world's largest IT services workforce, according

to the report. However, the research also highlighted a critical "inflection gap", with 72 per cent of surveyed organisations acknowledging they currently lag behind their global peers in AI adop-

Information Technology (MeitY) Secretary S Krishnan said India is no longer just participating in the global AI conversation but helping shape it. "Our vision is clear. AI must evolve as an extension of our people's aspirations, driving inclusive growth and national progress. Guided by our vision of Viksit Bharat, we are advancing a human-centric approach to AI rooted in trust, ethics, and national sovereignty," he said. The study identified significant barriers to AI readiness. About 77 per cent of respondents cited a lack of accessible, affordable and secure cloud infrastructure as a major hurdle, while 57

per cent outlined uneven data quality. Furthermore, a growing skills gap also poses challenges. Currently, only about 30 per cent of employees possess the level of AI literacy that businesses require. To meet future demands, respondents indicate this figure must rise to nearly 57 per cent by 2030, translating to a need for a talent pool of over 350 million AI-literate professionals in the country, as per the report. Sandip Patel, Managing Director of IBM India & South Asia, noted that AI could become one of the most powerful growth engines for the Indian economy.

Govt hikes paddy MSP by ₹72 to ₹2,441/qtl; sunflower seed sees steepest rise at ₹622

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ New Delhi

The Government on Wednesday announced a hike in the Minimum Support Price (MSP) for paddy by ₹72 to ₹2,441 per quintal for the 2026-27 kharif marketing season, while steeper increases for pulses, oilseeds and cotton aimed at reducing import dependency and encouraging crop diversification.

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA), chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, approved MSPs for 14 kharif crops ahead of sowing, which typically begins in June with the onset of the southwest monsoon.

For paddy, the MSP for common and A-grade varieties stands at ₹2,441 and ₹2,461 per quintal, respectively for 2026-27 kharif marketing season (September-October). The MSP for cotton (medium staple) has been raised by ₹557 to ₹8,267 per quintal, while the long staple variety will fetch ₹8,667 per quintal—the second-highest absolute increase among all crops.

The highest absolute increase, however, has been recommended for sunflower seed at ₹622 per quintal, taking its MSP to ₹8,343 per quintal. Nigerseed (up ₹515 to ₹10,052/qtl) and sesame (up ₹500 to ₹10,346/qtl) also received significant increases. Among other oilseeds, soyabean (yellow) was raised by

₹380 to ₹5,708 per quintal and groundnut by ₹254 to ₹5,517 per quintal.

In pulses, tur (arhar) MSP was raised by ₹450 to ₹8,450 per quintal, urad by ₹400 to ₹8,200 per quintal, while moong saw a marginal increase of ₹12 to ₹8,780 per quintal. For other cereals, jowar (hybrid) MSP has been fixed at ₹4,023 per quintal (up ₹324), with the Maldandi variety at ₹4,073 per quintal.

Bajra has been raised by ₹125 to ₹2,900 per quintal, ragi by ₹319 to ₹5,205 per quintal, and maize by ₹10 to ₹2,410 per quintal.

Briefing reporters, Information and Broadcasting Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said the MSPs have been fixed to ensure remunerative prices for farmers and are at least 50 per cent above the cost of production across all 14 crops.

The margins are estimated to be highest for moong (61 per cent), followed by bajra and maize (56 per cent each) and tur/arhar (54 per cent).

Govt approves incentive for coal gasification projects with outlay of ₹37,500 crore

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ New Delhi

The Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved a ₹37,500-crore incentive scheme to promote coal gasification projects, aimed at boosting clean energy production and reducing dependence on forex-guzzling imports of LNG, urea, and methanol, while insulating the country from global price volatility and supply chain disruptions.

The Union Cabinet under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Narendra Modi approved the scheme for

promotion of surface coal/lignite gasification projects with a financial outlay of ₹37,500 crore, an official

statement said. "An outlay of ₹37,500 crore has been kept for this scheme, and there will be an investment of

Stock markets snap four days of losses; end marginally higher

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Mumbai

Benchmark equity indices Sensex and Nifty ended marginally higher on Wednesday, snapping their four-day losing streak, as elevated crude oil prices and persistent geopolitical uncertainties restricted the upside.

The 30-share BSE Sensex rose 49.74 points, or 0.07 per cent, to settle at 74,608.98. During the day, the index touched a high of 75,191.57 and a low of 74,134.48, gyrating 1,057.09 points.

The 50-share NSE edged higher by 33.05 points or 0.14 per cent to end at 23,412.60. From the Sensex constituents, Asian Paints, Tata Steel, Adani Ports, Bharat Electronics, Bharti Airtel and Larsen & Toubro were among the winners. Mahindra & Mahindra, Infosys, Tata Consultancy Services, Sun Pharma and Tech Mahindra were among the biggest laggards.

Brent crude, the global oil benchmark,

Top Gainers	%	Top Losers	%
Asian Paints	4.48	M&M	-2.07
Tata Steel	3.63	Power Grid	-1.52
Bharat Electronics	2.93	Infosys	-1.51
Adani Ports	2.79	TCS	-1.21
Bharti Airtel	1.78	Sun Pharma	-1.16

fell 0.5 per cent to \$107.27 per barrel. Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth ₹1,959.39 crore on Tuesday, according to exchange

Gold soars by ₹8,550, silver by ₹20,500 after import duty hike

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ New Delhi

Gold prices soared by ₹8,550 to a little over ₹1.65 lakh per 10 grams in the local market here on Wednesday after the Government increased the import duty on precious metals to 15 per cent.

Silver prices jumped by ₹20,500 to ₹2,97,500 per kg in Delhi markets from ₹2,77,000 per kg (inclusive of all taxes) on the previous day, according to the All India Sarafa Association.

Gold of 99.9 per cent purity increased by ₹8,550, or over 5 per cent, to ₹1,65,350 per 10 grams (inclusive of all taxes) from the previous close of ₹1,56,800 per 10 grams.

The Government on Wednesday sharply hiked import duty on gold and silver to 15 per cent from 6 per cent earlier to discourage purchase and trim non-essential imports in the backdrop of a

ballooning import bill amid the West Asia crisis.

Also, import duty on platinum has been raised to 15.4 per cent from 6.4 per cent. Consequential changes have also been made to other

items such as gold/silver dore, coins, findings, etc. The new duties are effective from Wednesday.

The duty hike follows Prime Minister Narendra Modi's clarion call for curbs on gold purchases, along with other austerity measures, to reduce avoidable foreign-exchange expenditure.

Local traders said the actual impact of the higher levy would play out over the coming days once the increased duty begins reflecting in purchase bills.

"The recent hike in India's gold import duty is likely to raise local prices and temporarily dampen physical demand. However, investors should not view this as a

reason to panic. Gold continues to hold its appeal as a safe-haven asset, particularly in times of global uncertainty and domestic currency pressures," Hareesh V, Head of Commodity Research, Geojit Investments Ltd, said.

A weak rupee also inflated the prices of precious metals, analysts said. The rupee dropped to a low of 95.80 against the US dollar amid concerns over forex outflows and high crude oil prices.

India is the world's second-largest consumer of precious metals, and prices have rallied in recent months amid an unabated rise in demand, including for investment purposes. Gold is

India's second-largest commodity import after crude oil, and rising purchases have added to foreign-exchange outflows, pressuring the rupee to record lows.

The Gem & Jewellery Export Promotion Council cautioned that raising gold import duty does not curb imports but inflates prices.

Jewellery retailers stated that imposing quantitative restrictions on gold and silver imports, rather than raising import duties, would be a more effective way to curb the country's current account deficit.

Brent crude traded above the \$107 per barrel level in global markets on Wednesday.

DRI, Customs officers to intensify vigil on gold smuggling post import duty hike

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ New Delhi

The revenue intelligence and customs officers are likely to intensify surveillance and step up vigil on international borders to check possible gold smuggling after the sharp hike in customs duty on the yellow metal to 15 per cent on Wednesday, officials said.

The tax officers will step up monitoring of land and coastal infiltration routes, domestic handlers acting as distribution nodes, organised carrier networks, and foreign national-based syndicates to deter syndicates from exploiting the gold market.

"The idea is to disrupt the supply chain and intercept

gold smuggling syndicate and cross border cartels. Intelligence driven surveillance and enforcement will be key in tackling the challenge of gold smuggling," an official told PTI.

Effective May 13, import duty on gold and silver has been increased from 6 per cent to 15 per cent and that on platinum has been raised from 6.4 per cent to 15.4 per cent. Consequential changes have also been made to

other items such as gold/silver dore, coins, findings, etc. Although import duty does not have a direct co-relation with smuggling, it is perceived that higher duties lead to spurt in grey market activity.

Gold's cultural, economic and social significance, along with high liquidity and value, has fuelled smuggling over the years.

Global uncertainties, geopolitical tensions and high inflation amplifies international gold demand, thereby increasing smuggling.

Smuggling of the precious metal is mostly concentrated in the states of Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat and West Bengal, officials said.

Gold, silver imports from Dubai may rise after duty hike: GTRI

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ New Delhi

The significant increase in the import duty on gold and silver from 6 per cent to 15 per cent may lead to an increase in imports from Dubai through the free trade agreement route, think tank GTRI said on Wednesday.

It said that the duty hike also sharply changes the economics of precious metal imports routed through the United Arab Emirates under the India-UAE Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA).

India had allowed imports of gold from Dubai at tariffs one percentage point below the normal Most-Favoured-Nation (MFN) rate through a Tariff Rate Quota (TRQ) system.

The quota began at 120 tonnes annually in 2022 and is set to rise to 200 tonnes by 2027, nearly one-fourth of India's yearly gold imports.

"With the new MFN tariff structure taking effective duties to 15 per cent, gold imported under the UAE quota would enter at 14 per cent. The widening tariff gap could encourage greater routing of global bullion through

Dubai, even though the UAE is not a miner of gold or silver," the Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI) said. Under the CEPA, India had also agreed to gradually reduce import duties on silver from 10 per cent to zero over a ten-year period beginning in May 2022. The concessional tariff on silver imports from the UAE currently stands at 7 per cent. "With India now raising the general tariff to 15 per cent, the duty gap has widened to 8 per centage points, creating a major arbitrage opportunity for imports routed through Dubai. That margin is scheduled to widen further each year until CEPA tariffs fall to zero by 2031," GTRI Founder Ajay Srivastava said.

Rupee crashes to record 95.80 against USD

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ Mumbai

The rupee on Wednesday slipped to an all-time low of 95.80 against the US dollar, and settled at 95.67 near its record closing low level, as the cumulative strain of elevated crude prices and West Asia geopolitical concerns offset hopes of lower demand for the US dollar due to import curbs.

Forex traders said possible RBI intervention and duty-led compression of gold imports helped moderate further weakness for the USD/INR pair, but the rupee was pressured by the trajectory of crude and the West Asia situation.

The rupee has become the worst-performing currency in Asia for the year, registering a loss of over 6 per cent so far this year, as elevated crude oil prices, a strong dollar and concerns regarding the West Asia crisis weighed on investor sentiments, traders said.

At the interbank foreign exchange market, the rupee opened at 95.52, registering a gain of 16 paise from its previous all-time closing low. In a highly volatile trade, the USD/INR pair witnessed an intra-day high of 95.51 and a low of 95.80 against the greenback before settling at 95.67 (provisional), up 1 paise from its previous close.

The rupee depreciated 40 paise to close at a fresh all-time low of 95.68 against the US dollar on Tuesday.

"On the rupee, USD/INR around 95.60 reflects the cumulative strain of elevated

Date	Rate (₹ per US \$)	Change
6 May	94.22	+27p
7 May	94.49	+69p
8 May	94.49	-27p
11 May	95.28	-79p
12 May	95.68	-40p
13 May	95.67*	+01p

crude prices and the West Asia geopolitical premium. Active RBI intervention and the duty-led compression of gold imports should help moderate further weakness. The path of the rupee from here will be shaped less by gold and more by the trajectory of crude and the West Asia situation," Anindya Banerjee, Head of Commodity and Currency Research, Kotak Securities, said.

Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading at 98.51, up 0.22 per cent.

"We expect the rupee to trade with a negative bias amid rising crude oil prices, concerns over inflation and geopolitical tensions between the US and Iran. However, any intervention by the RBI may support the rupee at lower levels. USD/INR spot price is expected to trade in a range of 95.45 to 96.15," Anuj Choudhary, Research analyst at Mirae Asset ShareKhan, said.

Western leaders to learn from Modi’s consistent focus on environment



On Monday 18 May, the world's most popular politician will visit Norway. India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi will be received by King Harald, promote Indian business, meet with the Indian diaspora and attend an India-Nordic prime ministers' meeting.

The Nordic prime ministers should listen carefully. They have a lot to learn from their Indian counterpart. Whilst Nordic prime ministers barely enjoy a domestic approval rating of 30 per cent, Modi stands at around 70 per cent in the polls. No leader in any major country is nearly as popular at home as Modi. Modi has been in power in India for more than twelve years.

Should he choose to stand again, all the signs suggest he will be re-elected. A distant dream for European leaders. His success can be attrib-

uted to rapid economic development, a winning ideology, the world's strongest political party and his own life story. Modi's background is almost unique in a world where almost all heads of state come from the upper middle class. Modi's parents owned three stalls where they sold tea at the railway station in Vadnagar, a tiny provincial town that hardly any Indians have heard of.

He has no one to thank for his career but himself – and the Hindu nationalist movement. He is an Indian Einar Gerhardsen – self-taught, an organiser. Einar was Norway's former prime minister. He is fortunate to be leading a rapidly developing India, and he himself is a strong driving force behind that growth. The Indian economy is currently growing at seven per cent, faster than China's and far outpacing any other major economy.

Growth is uneven, and there is a wide gap between the richest and poorest States in India. India lacks the highly educated workforce that China has. There is still too much bureaucracy, and India



has not managed to develop any major export industry for the global market.

But at current growth rates, India's economy will quadruple by 2050. India will then be the world's second-largest economy, rivalling the US. I have travelled to almost every State in India and see signs of development everywhere – new, modern airports; better roads leading to the most remote corners of

the country; the world's largest solar park under construction in Gujarat; and the world's largest solar-wind-hydro power plant in Andhra Pradesh. Modi is the guarantor of green growth. India is now the world's third-largest producer of solar and wind energy; no one should be surprised if they overtake the US and take second place. Last year, coal emissions in India fell for the first time. Western

leaders can learn a great deal from Modi's consistent green message.

I attend many conferences where Modi is the keynote speaker. Modi almost never talks about global climate negotiations or emissions.

He asks no one to make sacrifices for the environment. The message is that India can lift 1.5 billion people out of poverty through green growth. There is no longer a

choice between the economy and the environment. Even if secular parties were to win the next election, India's ideology will remain Hindu nationalism. Hindu nationalism is India's answer to the question that all non-Western countries have faced since the Industrial Revolution.

How to modernise without becoming like the West? Japan was the first to untangle that knot – becoming ultra-modern, yet remaining deeply Japanese. Korea is now richer than Japan and a major exporter of Korean culture and music.

China anchors its modernity in its own roots – in Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism. The BJP is currently the world's largest political party, with over 100 million members. The party has dedicated activists in every single constituency across northern and central India. The party has achieved something truly unique and unprecedented in India: the BJP enjoys the same level of support amongst high-caste, low-caste and untouchable communities. It has the support of both India's bil-

lionaires and tribal peoples in the country's remotest corners. Among Western analysts, it has become something of a pastime to find fault with the BJP. The critics are right in saying that the BJP stands for the unification of Hindus. But there is little evidence to suggest that there have been more conflicts between Muslims and Hindus under the BJP.

There was more violence and more pogroms when the Congress Party was in power. Millions of Muslims are crossing into India from neighbouring countries; hardly any Muslims are fleeing the other way. But the BJP's insistence that Islam and Christianity are foreign religions, and that Muslim invasions in the Middle Ages and British colonialism can be equated, creates a sense of insecurity among many Muslims.

Many of the BJP's proposals are common sense – such as the idea that there should not be a separate marriage law under which Muslim men can divorce more easily than other men. But in the emergence of a new, strong India rooted in Hindu dharma, the

real test will be whether the BJP can also find room to include the world's largest minority: the two hundred million Muslims in India. India is the only large, poor former British colony to have chosen a democratic model.

This is not down to the British. If it were to their credit, as they often claim, surely Pakistan, Myanmar and the Gulf monarchies would also be democracies. India is democratic because democracy is deeply rooted in Indian culture and tradition. In a world where Norway needs new allies for a rules-based international order and Norwegian business needs new horizons, we have much to gain from closer ties with India. But this requires us to be willing to listen, not just to lecture. Then countless win-win opportunities could open up.

The author is a Norwegian diplomat and has also served in the Norwegian Government as Minister of International Development and Minister of the Environment, and as Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations. He was also Executive Director of the UN Environment Programme from 2016 to 2018.

Israeli drone strikes hit highway south of Beirut, killing 8, including 2 children



ASSOCIATED PRESS ■ BEIRUT

Israeli drones struck three vehicles on the main highway south of Beirut Wednesday, killing eight

people, including a woman and her two children, the Lebanese Health Ministry said. The Israeli military said it struck Hezbollah infrastructure in several areas in south-

ern Lebanon, hours after telling residents of six southern villages to evacuate. Lebanon and Israel are scheduled to hold another round of direct talks in

Washington on Thursday as the Trump administration pushes for a breakthrough between the two neighbours that have been at a state of war since Israel was created in 1948.

The Health Ministry confirmed in a statement the three strikes, but didn't detail the number of people in each vehicle. Two of Wednesday's drone attacks hit a highway linking Beirut with the southern port city of Sidon, while a third, reported the state-run National news agency, struck the town of Saadiyat, near the busy freeway.

A fourth strike on Sidon's northern entrance happened in the early afternoon, hitting a car, according to state media. An Associated Press photographer saw the bodies of three people killed

in two of the strikes near the coastal towns of Barja and Jiyeh. In southern Lebanon, Israeli airstrikes were reported in different towns and villages while Hezbollah claimed launching more attacks on Israel as both sides keep exchanging fire despite a US-brokered ceasefire that went into effect on April 17. The latest Israel-Hezbollah war started on March 2, when the Lebanese militant group fired rockets into northern Israel two days after the United States and Israel attacked Iran.

Lebanese Health Minister Rakan Nassereddine told reporters Tuesday that since the ceasefire went into effect, 380 people have been killed and 1,122 have been wounded. That brings the toll since the war began to 2,882 killed and 8,786 wounded.

Pak PM Shehbaz to visit China

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ Islamabad

Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif will undertake

a three-day official visit to China from May 23, the Government announced, amid growing strategic engagement between the

two all-weather allies. During the visit from May 23-26, the prime minister will also attend a business-to-business (B2B) forum on May 24.

Aadhar Housing Finance Ltd.
Corporate Office: Office Nos. 501 & 503, 5th Floor, Lightbridge, Saki Vihar Road, Andheri East, Mumbai Suburban (District), Maharashtra – 400072
Guna Branch: P. H. No. - 75, Building 1st Floor, in front of Hero Showroom, Near ICICI Bank, Mahaveerpura, AB Road, Guna - District - Guna-473001 (Madhya Pradesh)



POSSESSION NOTICE Appendix IV (for immovable property)

Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorized Officer of **Aadhar Housing Finance Limited (AHFL)** under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002, Demand Notice(s) issued by the Authorised Officer of the company to the Borrower(s) / Guarantor(s) mentioned herein below to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within **60 days** from the date of receipt of the said notice. The borrower having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrower(s) / Guarantor(s) and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under Sub-Section (4) of the Section 13 of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the Security Interest Enforcement rules, 2002. The borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets. The borrower in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of AHFL for an amount as mentioned herein under with interest thereon.

S. N.	Name of the Borrower(s)/Co-Borrower(s) (Name of the Branch)	Description of Secured Asset (Immovable Property)	Demand Notice Date & Amount	Date of Possession
1	(Loan Code No. 05810000288 & 05810000618 / Guna Branch) Ashish Arora (Borrower) Surendrakumar Arora & Pramila Arora (Co-Borrowers)	All that part & parcel of property bearing, House No. 36, Ward No. 21, Block No. 11, Guna, Madhya Pradesh. Boundaries: East-Way, West-Way, North - Gali, Then House of Kripa Shankar Shrivastav, South - House of Bhanwarlal Haricharan	12-04-2025 & ₹ 16,40,174/-	11-05-2026

Place : Madhya Pradesh
Date : 14.05.2026

Authorised Officer
Aadhar Housing Finance Limited

ICICI Home Finance
Corporate Office: ICICI HFC Tower, JB Nagar, Andheri Kurla Road, Andheri East, Mumbai - 400059
Branch Office: Ambika Arcade, 2nd Floor, Z-19, Zone 1, M.P. Nagar, Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh - 462001
Branch Office: 1st Floor, Office No.1, Triyam Heights, Opp. Axis Bank, A.B. Road, Guna- 473001

Registered Office: ICICI Bank Towers, Bandra-Kurla Complex, Bandra (East), Mumbai - 400051

SYMBOLIC POSSESSION NOTICE

Whereas

The undersigned being the Authorized Officer of ICICI Home Finance Company Limited under the Securitisation, Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of the powers conferred under section 13 (12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) rules 2002, issued demand notices upon the borrowers mentioned below, to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

As the borrower failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules on the below-mentioned dates. The borrower in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of ICICI Home Finance Company Limited.

The Borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower/ Co-Borrower/ Loan Account Number	Description of property/ Date of Possession	Date of Demand Notice Amount in Demand Notice (Rs.)	Name of Branch
1.	Mohammad Mazhar (Borrower), Abdul Gaffar (Co-Borrower), Foiz Mazhar (Co-Borrower), House No. 24 4 Gulam Mehboob Masjid Chowki Talayya Huzur Bhopal Bhopal 462001 Madhya Pradesh, LHBHP00001470647	Property- 1: Flat S-1, Second Floor, Sulaman Manjil, House No. 51, Gulab Mahmood Road, Near Gulam Masjid, Ward No. 22, Talaiya, Tehsil Huzur, District Bhopal 462001 Madhya Pradesh, Bounded By: North- Open. South- Common Corridor. East- Open to Sky. West- Common Corridor. Property- 2: Flat G-1, Ground Floor, Sulaman Manjil, House No. 51, Gulab Mahmood Road, Near Gulam Masjid Ward No. 22, Talaiya, Tehsil Huzur, District Bhopal 462001 Madhya Pradesh, Bounded By: North- Property of Abdul Holeem. South- Road. East- Property of Banne Miya. West- Flat No. G-2	10-02-2026 Rs. 88,58,377/-	Bhopal
2.	Jaydeep Jha (Borrower), Momta Bai (Co-Borrower), Khatik Mohalla Cantt Guna Guna Guna- 473001 Madhya Pradesh, LHHG00001629169	Plot No. 33 and Plot No.34, P.H. No. 02, Ward No.20, Uveyon on, 255/15/2/1/2, Shukla Colony, Kushmod, Tehsil and A District. Gun 01 Madhya Prade Bounded By- North By: Part of Plot No 34, South By: Plot No.32, East By: 20R Road, West By: Plot No. 43 & 44/ Date of Possession- 08-May-2026	10-02-2026 Rs. 27,57,170/-	Guna
3.	Shriballabh Kushwah (Borrower), Vinita Kushwah (Co-Borrower), Ward No. 22 Vinhyanchal Colony Guna Guna-473001 Madhya Pradesh, LHGUN00001598310	Part of Survey No. 315/min-2, Ward No. 07, Old P. H. N. 61, Edaghwadi, Piproda Road, District Guna 1 Madhya Pradesh Bounded By- North By: Plot of Deepak Gaud, South By: I and of Rinku, East By: Road 15ft, West By: I and of Vimla Bai/ Date of Possession- 08-May-2026	16-02-2026 Rs. 8,27,215.04/-	Guna
4.	Shriballabh Kushwah (Borrower), Vinita Kushwah (Co-Borrower), Ward No. 22 Vinhyanchal Colony Guna Guna-473001 Madhya Pradesh, LHGUN00001598311	Part of Survey No. 315/min-2, Ward No. 07, Old P.H. N. 61, Edaghwadi, Piproda Road, District Guna 1 Madhya Pradesh Bounded By- North By: Plot of Deepak Gaud, South By: I and of Rinku, East By: Road 15ft, West By: I and of Vimla Bai/ Date of Possession- 08-May-2026	16-02-2026 Rs. 3,89,290/-	Guna
5.	Shriballabh Kushwah (Borrower), Vinita Kushwah (Co-Borrower), Ward No. 22 Vinhyanchal Colony Guna Guna-473001 Madhya Pradesh, LHGUN00001598312	Part of Survey No. 315/min-2, Ward No. 07, Old P.H.N. 61, Edaghwadi, Piproda Road, District Guna 1 Madhya Pradesh Bounded By- North By: Plot of Deepak Gaud, South By: I and of Rinku, East By: Road 15ft, West By: I and pf Vimla Bai/ Date of Possession- 08-May-2026	16-02-2026 Rs. 29,113/-	Guna

The above-mentioned borrower(s)/ guarantor(s) are hereby given a 30 day notice to repay the amount, else the mortgaged properties will be sold on the expiry of 30 days from the date of publication of this Notice, as per the provisions under the Rules 8 and 9 of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002.

Date : May 14, 2026
Place: Bhopal, Guna

Authorized Officer
ICICI Home Finance Company Limited

US freezes new Medicare enrolments for hospice, home health agencies

ALI SWENSON ■ New York

The Trump administration said on Wednesday it is expanding its sweeping fraud-busting initiative in federal health programs with a nationwide six-month freeze on any new Medicare enrolments by hospice and home health agencies.



CMS Administrator Dr Mehmet Oz

The moratorium will temporarily stop all new providers in these categories from signing up for reimbursement from Medicare, the federal insurance program for older adults across the country, the Centres for Medicare and Medicaid Services said in a news release.

“We’ve seen systemic and deeply troubling fraud in the hospice and home health space, with bad actors exploiting some of our most vulnerable Medicare patients and stealing money from the American taxpayer,” CMS Administrator Dr Mehmet Oz said in a statement.

“Today we’re shutting the door on fraud-preventing new bad actors from entering Medicare while we aggressively identify, investigate, and remove those already exploiting them.”

The move is related to efforts by Vice President JD Vance’s anti-fraud task force, set up by Republican President Donald Trump to crack down on potential misuse of public funds. It comes as people across the

United States have raised concerns about rising health costs and barriers to access, sometimes from the federal government’s own actions. New work requirements in Medicaid, for example, are expected to strain hospitals around the country and result in millions of enrollees losing their health coverage.

Several alleged fraud schemes have been prosecuted in the hospice and home health care categories, and states have acknowledged that it is a legitimate concern.

The administration contends this freeze and other actions it is taking will help prevent potential fraud in Medicaid and Medicare and preserve funding and resources for people most in need. Under the six-month pause, existing hospice and home health care providers will continue to operate as usual.

आम सूचना

(मूल विक्रय पत्र दिनांक-18/06/2020 भुखण्ड क्रमांक-65 सागर ग्रीन हिल्स दोमखेड़ा ओपाल के गुन होने संबंधी)

सर्वनाथपुर का सुचित किया जाता है श्री विदेश प्रताप सिंह आओ श्री अवधेश प्रताप सिंह निवासी अमन क्रमांक-65 सागर ग्रीन हिल्स दोमखेड़ा ओपाल में जेरे पक्षकार युको बैंक शाखा इबीबनग ओपाल में उनके स्वयं आधिपत्य के भुखण्ड/मकान नंबर 65 सागर ग्रीन हिल्स दोमखेड़ा ओपाल को त्याग की प्रतिज्ञा के प्रयोजन से सार्वजनिक वेंचक कर उक्त भुखण्ड/मकान का मूल विक्रय पत्र दिनांक-20/10/2023 पंजीयन क्रमांक MP059702023A12489602 एवं पूर्व मूल विक्रय पत्र दिनांक-18/06/2020 प्रमाण MP059702020A1297737 में जेरे पक्षकार बैंक में निक्षेप किये जे जेरे पक्षकार बैंक की शाखा के दिनांक के दोटान फाईल में दस्तावेज एक स्थान में दुसरे स्थान पर रखने में उक्त भुखण्ड/मकान का पूर्व मूल विक्रय पत्र दिनांक-18/06/2020 क्रमांक- MP059702020A1297737 कही गुन हो गया है अतःविशेष प्रकार के वार की उक्त मूल विक्रय पत्र जेरे पक्षकार की शाखा में नही मिल रहा है अतः जेरे पक्षकार बैंक की शाखा से कोई व्यक्ति गलती से अथवा जानबूझकर उठाकर ले गया है जेरे पक्षकार को भय है कि उक्त मूल विक्रय पत्र का दुरुपयोग कर कोई व्यक्ति जेरे पक्षकार बैंक अथवा जेरे पक्षकार बैंक के शाखा श्री विदेश प्रताप सिंह का अड़ित कर सकता है।

अतः सर्व शाखाएँ एवं व्यक्ति विशेष को सुचित किया जाता है कि उपरोक्त वर्णित भुखण्ड के पूर्व मूल विक्रय पत्र दिनांक-18/06/2020 के आधार पर किसी अन्य व्यक्ति से कोई अथवाहात न करे अन्यथा होने वाले परिणामों के लिए जेरे पक्षकार बैंक अथवा जेरे पक्षकार बैंक की शाखा श्री विदेश प्रताप सिंह उत्तरदायी नहीं होने साथ ही सुचित किया जाता है कि यदि उक्त मूल विक्रय पत्र दिनांक-18/06/2020 किसी को प्राप्त हो तो वह जेरे जेरे पक्षकार बैंक को सौंप दे अथवा जेरे फोन नंबर पर सुचित करें।

ओपाल अग्रदीप
दिनांक 17.03.2026 सुनील राय
अधिकृत

कार्यालय- सोनियार गाम, आई.टी. 72, अमरावती
मोराव कॉलोनी, विहार साकेत नगर ओपाल ज.प्र.

Can Fin Homes Ltd
(Sponsor: CANARA BANK)

Branch: B-202, FIRST FLOOR, INDRA NAGAR, MANDIDEEP, 462046
Ph: 07480 - 401340, 7625079225 Email: mandideep@canfinhomes.com
Website: www.canfinhomes.com CIN No - L85110KA1987LC008699

APPENDIX- IV-A [See proviso to rule 9 (1)]

Sale Notice for sale of immovable properties

Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 9 (1) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002

NOTICE is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower (s) and Guarantor (s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, the **constructive/physical possession** of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of Can Fin Homes Ltd., Mandideep Branch, will be sold by holding e-auction on "As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is" on **29-05-2026** for recovery of **Rs. 35,55,995/- (Rupees Thirty five lakhs fifty five thousand nine hundred ninety five only)** due to Can Fin Homes Ltd. from **Mrs Brijesh Tiwari and Mrs Pratibha Tiwari (Borrowers)**, as on **13-05-2026** together with further interest and other charges thereon. The reserve price will be **Rs. 13,00,000/- (Rupees Thirteen Lakhs)** and the earnest money deposit will be **Rs.1,30,000/- (Rupees One Lakh Thirty Thousand Only)**

DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY

Plot No 63, Bhavya City Phase -II, Village Sarakiya, Tehsil Goharganj, District Raisen, M.P. - 464990 with Plot admeasuring area 538.97 sq ft. Plot Boundaries- North - Plot No-64, South-Colony Road, East- Plot No-82, West - Colony Road

Encumbrance: Nil

The detailed terms and conditions of the sale are provided in the official website of Can Fin Homes Ltd., (<https://www.canfinhomes.com/SearchAuction.aspx>), Link for participating in e-auction : www.bankauctionwizard.com

Date : 13-05-2026
Place : Mandideep

(Sd/-) Authorised Officer
Canfin Homes Ltd.

Russian ship sinks near Spain, nuke spill feared

ASSOCIATED PRESS
■ Madrid

A Russian ship that sank in the Mediterranean after its engine room exploded may have been carrying pieces for nuclear reactors used in submarines, a Spanish Government document shows.

The Ursa Major sank on December 23, 2024 between Spain and Algeria while allegedly on a journey from St Petersburg to Russia's eastern Vladivostok.

Two crew members were lost while 14 other people were saved by Spanish rescue craft. It has emerged that the Ursa Major's Russian captain told Spanish port authorities following his



rescue that the vessel was carrying parts for nuclear reactors suitable for use in submarines. In a written response to opposition law-

makers, the Spanish Government wrote that the ship's captain "confessed" that the ship was carrying "components for two nuclear reactors similar to those used in submarines." The response was included in a document registered by the Spanish parliament on February 23 and reported by CNN on Tuesday. The document has since been seen by *The Associated Press*.

At the time of the sinking, the Russian state-owned ship owner, Oboronlogistika, said that the Ursa Major was sabotaged. It said three powerful explosions damaged the boat just above the water line in what the company described as a "terrorist attack." Oboronlogistika was established under Russia's defence ministry and placed under US and European Union sanctions for its ties to Russia's military.

Pak receives \$1.3 bn loan from IMF: Central bank



SAJJAD HUSSAIN
■ Islamabad

Pakistan has received \$1.3 billion from the International Monetary Fund under two separate ongoing financing arrangements, the central bank said on Wednesday.

Funding was secured on Tuesday through separate International Monetary Fund (IMF) programmes, split between the Extended Fund Facility (EFF) and the Resilience and Sustainability Facility (RSF), aiming to stabilise Pakistan's external payments and help it fight climate-related hazards.

According to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP), the IMF had approved the disbursement of USD 1.1bn under the EFF and around \$ 220 million under the RSF. This is the part of the fund agreed in September 2024 to provide \$7 billion over a period of 37 months under EFF, while it decided to provide \$1.4 billion under RSF.

"The IMF Executive Board completed the third review under the EFF in its meeting held on May 8 and approved the disbursement of Special Drawing Rights (SDR) 760 million for Pakistan," the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) said in a post on X. "Furthermore, the IMF Executive Board has also approved the disbursement of the second tranche of SDR 154 million under the Resilience and Sustainability Facility (RSF)," it said. "Accordingly, SBP has received SDR 914 million (equivalent to about \$1.3 billion) under the EFF and RSF on May 12 from the IMF," it said. The bank noted the amount will update the country's foreign exchange reserves for the week ending May 15. Last week, the executive board of the IMF agreed to provide Pakistan with about USD 1 billion under the EFF and about \$210 million under the RSF.

10,000 foreign students, including Indians, probed for OPT fraud

SAGAR KULKARNI
■ Washington

The US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) said it has identified 10,000 foreign students, including several from India, who claim to be working for highly suspect employers by misusing the Optional Practical Training (OPT) component of their visas.

OPT allows foreign nationals who enter the United States on a student visa to work in the US for 12, or in some cases 24, months. It also allows students to transition to an H-



1B visa sponsored by employers.

Addressing a press conference on Tuesday, acting Director of ICE Todd Lyons said the OPT component of the student visa programme has "become a

magnet for fraud" and has been the subject of many investigations by the Department of Homeland Security.

"We've encountered cases involving espionage, biological threats, intellectual property theft, visa and employment fraud, and even scams targeting elderly Americans, all perpetrated by individuals abusing their status as students," Lyons said.

"Our nation will not tolerate security threats originating from the foreign student programme," Lyons said. (PTI)

Charles to present UK Govt agenda as Starmer faces pressure

DANICA KIRKA/PAN PYLAS
■ London

King Charles III on Wednesday will deliver the British Government's legislative programme for the coming year to lawmakers with all the pomp and historic trappings that accompany the ceremonial opening of Parliament.

The question is whether Prime Minister Keir Starmer will be around to implement it and, even if he remains in post, whether he will have the authority to push his proposals through. The embattled prime minister has been urged to set a



timetable for his departure by more than a fifth of the Labour Party's lawmakers in the House of Commons.

Some junior ministers have quit the Government in protest, but no one has yet challenged Starmer directly. Early on Wednesday, Health Secretary Wes Streeting, who

Over 100 Russian drones target Ukraine

HANNA ARHIROVA/
BARRY HATTON
■ Kyiv

More than 100 Russian drones targeted areas of Ukraine on Wednesday, President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said, hours after another barrage of missiles killed at least eight people. "Russia continues its strikes and is doing so brazenly — deliberately targeting our railway infrastructure and civilian sites in our cities," Zelenskyy said in a post on X.

The overnight strikes targeted Ukraine's residential and railway infrastructure in the central Dnipro and northeastern Kharkiv regions, port infrastructure in the southern Odesa region, and energy facilities in the central Poltava region, according to Zelenskyy. On Tuesday, he said, 14 regions came under attack throughout the day.

"It is important to support Ukraine and not remain silent about Russia's war. Every time the war disappears from the top of the news, it encourages Russia to become even more savage," Zelenskyy said, in an apparent reference to world attention being gripped by the Iran war. Moscow's attacks on its neighbour are unrelenting, even as Ukraine is emboldened by its recent military accomplishments and as US President Donald Trump and Russian President Vladimir Putin claim — without providing evidence — that the war could be approaching the end. Trump said on Tuesday that he believes Moscow and Kyiv will soon reach a deal to end fighting.

"The end of the war in Ukraine, I really think, is getting very close," Trump told reporters as he departed

the White House for a summit in Beijing. "Believe it or not, it's getting closer."

Putin said in a speech last weekend that his invasion of Ukraine is possibly "coming to an end."

Neither leader elaborated on what persuaded them about the possibility of peace in Europe's longest conflict since World War II.

Mass protests in Argentina over Milei's university funding cuts

ALMUDENA CALATRAVA
■ Buenos Aires

Tens of thousands of Argentines flooded the streets of major cities nationwide on Tuesday to protest funding cuts by libertarian President Javier Milei to the public university system that represents a near-universal point of pride in this crisis-prone country. Vast crowds in downtown Buenos Aires marched toward the Government headquarters to

denounce budget shortfalls eroding the financial foundation of the country's higher education. Argentina's public university system, a cornerstone of its well-educated workforce cherished by its large middle class, has been tuition-free since 1949 and produced five Nobel Prize laureates. Congress passed a law last year to fund universities' operational costs and raise teacher salaries in line with high inflation.

**केनरा बँक Canara Bank**
Regional office -1st Floor, Sai Baba Complex, Near
GOA Building, Phool Bagh, Gwalior Ph. 0751-2423126

**E-AUCTION
SALE NOTICE**

Appendix-IV-A {See prevision to rule 8(6)}
SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES
E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with provision to Rule 8 (6) of The Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002. Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower (s) and Guarantor (s) that the below described Immovable property mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, the Symbolic/ Physical possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer the Canara Bank (Secured Creditor) will be sold on "AS IS WHERE IS BASIS, AS IS WHAT IS BASIS" & WHAT EVER THERE IS" on **29.05.2026 & 29.06.2026** for recovery of bank dues to the Canara Bank (Secured Creditor)

Name of Branch Name and address of the Borrower & Guarantors	Outstanding Amt. Auction Date	Description of Properties & Name of Property Owner	Reserve Price EMD Amt. Bid Increment Amt.
Branch : Canara Bank Bina Branch, Ph.: 80905-90026, E-mail : cb2383@canarabank.com			
Borrower- Ashok Kumar S/o Kashi Ram Add: R/o House No. 476, Ganesh Khalipha Marg, Ballabh Nagar Ward Sagar, Sagar, Sagar City, Madhya Pradesh - 470002 Co-Borrower- Smt. Beveerane Add: R/o House No. 476, Ganesh Khalipha Marg, Ballabh Nagar Ward Sagar, Sagar, Sagar City, Madhya Pradesh - 470002	Rs. 22,31,030.76/- +Interest & other Charges Auction Date 29-05-2026 (SYMBOLIC)	Emt of Residential House Situated at Plot No. 93, Part of Khasra No. 466/1/4/2/9, Ph No. 51, Gandhi Ward No. 19, Bina, Sagar, (M.P). Boundaries: East: Others Land, West: Road Colony 18' Wide, North: Plot No. 92, South: Plot No 94.	Rs. 7,92,000/- Rs. 79,200/- Rs. 10,000/-
Branch : Canara Bank, Niwari Ph.: 9716821430, Email: cb5921@canarabank.com			
Borrower -M/s Shri Radhe Construction Add: Ward No.9 Purani Sabji Mandi Niwari (M.P) Proprietor:- Mayank Khare S/o Om Prakash Khare Add: Village –Beejour, Niwari (M.P.)	Rs. 11,80,775.89/- +Interest & other Charges Auction Date 29-05-2026 (SYMBOLIC)	Emt of Land & Building Khasra No.2208/1/ ka New Number 2208/1/1/1 Area-30x40=1200 Sq Ft Situated At Village Niwari Ward No.06 Ahilyabai Ward Patwari Halka No.45 Dist Niwari (M.P) Boundaries: North: Plot of Man Singh, East: Land of Mr Hardayal, South: Aam Rasta, West: House of Ramesh Ahirwar	Rs. 12,15,000/- Rs. 1,21,500/- Rs. 10,000/-
Branch : Canara Bank, Khurai Ph.: 9039883050, Email: cb4257@canarabank.com			
Borrower - Ms Radhe Krishna Motors Prop. Mohit Parihar S/o Chandrbhan Singh Add: Between Old Hemant Takiyas, To Ambedkar Murti Tegore Ward Khurai Sagar, Khurai (M.P.)-470117 Proprietor: Mohit Parihar S/o Chandrbhan Singh Add: Village Jerai Tehsil Khurai Dist Sagar -470115 Guarantor: Sh.Chandra Bhan Singh S/o Udaybahn Singh Add: 72, School Gali Villa Jerai Khurai Dist-Sagar (M.P)	Rs. 1,05,76,503.03/- +Interest & other Charges Auction Date 29-05-2026 (SYMBOLIC)	Emt of Property Situated At Village Jerai Phalka Ni 15 Khas No 67/1/2 Circle Narioli The Sagar Land Area-86080 Sq. Ft., Boundaries: North: Land of Rajpoot Ji, East: Road, South: Road, West: Land of Rajpoot Ji	Rs. 97,11,000/- Rs. 9,71,100/- Rs. 10,000/-
Branch : Canara Bank, Sagar-2, Ph.: 97135-16112, E-mail : cb17880@canarabank.com			
Borrower -Sh. Sachanand Panjwani S/o Somandas Panjwani Add: Opp Primary School, Sindhi Camp Subash Nagar, Sagar (M.P.)-470002 Guarantor -Smt. Anita Panjwani Add: Sindhi Camp Subash Nagar, Sagar (M.P.)-470002	Rs. 21,33,945.18/- +Interest & other Charges Auction Date 29-05-2026 (SYMBOLIC)	Emt of Land and Building Situated At House No-466/6, Behind God Primary School, Sindhi Colony, Sant Kunwar Ram Ward, Sagar (M.P.)- 470001, Area: 1250 Sqft. Boundaries: North: CC Road, East: House of Bhagwan Das, South: Lane, West: House of Vijay	Rs.18,67,500/- Rs. 1,86,750/- Rs. 10,000/-
Branch : Canara Bank, BINA, Ph. 80905-90026, E-mail : cb2383@canarabank.com			
Borrower: M/s Shriram Computer Prop. Sh. Anand Soni, S/o Ramsvarup Soni Add - Kachcha Road Old No. 3, School Bina, (M.P.)-470113 Prioprietor - Sh. Anand Soni S/o Ramsvarup Soni Add: 351, Veer Savarkar Ward, Bina-470113 Guarantor & Mortgagor – Sh. Ramsvarup Soni S/o Babulal Soni Add: Veer Savarkar Ward, Bina-470113	Rs. 13,44,843.27/- +Interest & other Charges Auction Date 29-05-2026 (SYMBOLIC)	Emt of Land And Building Situated At Survey No. 419/2 (Old) After Mutation 419/11, Veer Savarkar Ward, Bina, Area 800 Sq Ft. Boundaries: North: Land of Seller, East: Road South: Land of Seller, West: Land of Seller	Rs. 11,21,000/- Rs. 1,12,100/- Rs. 10,000/-
Branch : Canara Bank, Sagar Branch, Ph. 9424751945, E-mail : cb0297@canarabank.com			
Borrower - Shri Amit Kumar Gupta S/o Sundar Lal Gupta Add- Deendayal Nagar, Post-Gambhiriya Sagar, Dist. Sagar, (M.P.) - 470004. Co-Borrower - Smt. Bharti Gupta W/o Amit Kumar Gupta Add- Deendayal Nagar, Post-Gambhiriya Sagar, Dist. Sagar, (M.P.) - 470004.	Rs. 16,87,730/- +Interest & other Charges Auction Date 29-06-2026 (SYMBOLIC)	Emt of Land Having The Extent of Site 750 Sqft. Situated at Mouja Gambhiriya, Patwari Halka No. 76, Ward No. 4, Khasra No-417, nagar Palika Makroniya, District- Sagar, (M.P.) -470004. Boundaries: East: Land of Dashrath Patel, West: Road, North: Land of Satyendra Saini South: Land of Seller	Rs. 14,92,000/- Rs. 1,49,200/- Rs. 10,000/-
Branch : Canara Bank, Tikamgarh, Gwalior, Mob.: 9939785183, Email: cb4145@canarabank.com			
Borrower - Khajrana Construction Company Prop. Gaurav Dixit S/o B.P. Dixit, Add: Chitransh Nagar Colony Near Collectrate, Taluk Jataira, Tikamgarh, (M.P.)-472001, (Proprietorship Firm) Prop. Gaurav Dixit S/o B.P. Dixit Add: Chitransh Nagar Colony Jhansi Road Tikamgarh, Madhya Pradesh - 472001. Guarantor/Mortgagor: Ramkumari Dixit W/o Bhuvneshwar Prashad Dixit Add: Chitransh Colony, Near Collectorate, Tikamgarh, Madhya Pradesh- 472001.	Rs. 21,56,504.71/- +Interest & other Charges Auction Date 29-06-2026 (SYMBOLIC)	Emt of Land & Building Having The Extent of Site 1200 Sqft., Situated At Khasra No. 679/2/Min-3, Chitransh Nagar Colony, Village-Kunwarpura, Halka No. 09, Tehsil & District Tikamgarh, (M.P) Boundaries: East: 20 Foot Wide Road, West: Plot of Ritesh Jain, North: House of Hanmantri, South: Plot of Santosh	Rs. 28,80,000/- Rs. 2,88,000/- Rs. 10,000/-
Branch : Canara Bank, Tikamgarh, Gwalior, Mob.: 9939785183, Email: cb4145@canarabank.com			
Borrower - 1. Sidhi Vinayak Construction Proprietor Bhuvaneshwar Prasad Dixit Add: Chitransh Nagar Colony Near Collectrate, Tikamgarh, Madhya Pradesh472001, (Proprietorship Firm) 2. Bhuvaneshwar Prasad Dixit S/o Jagdeesh Prasad Dixit Add: Ro Chitransh Nagar Colony Tikamgarh, Madhya Pradesh 472001, (Proprietor) Guarantor/Mortgagor: Gaurav Dixit S/o B.P. Dixit Add: Chitransh Nagar Colony Jhansi Road Tikamgarh, Madhya Pradesh- 472001.	Rs. 18,19,017.90/- +Interest & other Charges Auction Date 29-06-2026 (SYMBOLIC)	EMT of Land & Building having the extent of site 110.59 sq Meter, situated at Khasra No. 684/Min-1, Digoda Naka to Kuwarpura Marge, Village Kuwarpura, Tehsil/District- Tikamgarh, M.P. Parameter of Plot East- 40 Foot wide, West- 40 foot Wide, North- 29.75 foot wide, South- 29.75 Foot wide. Boundaries: East: Foola Devi's Plot, West: 20 foot wide Road, North: Plot of Shivram Dangli, South: Plot of Anita Dangli	Rs. 16,00,000/- Rs. 1,60,000/- Rs. 10,000/-

Date & Time of E-Auction: 29.05.2026 & 29.06.2026, 01:00 PM to 02:00 PM (With Unlimited Extension of 5 Minutes Duration Each)
Other Terms and conditions : (1) The Property will be sold in "AS IS WHERE IS" condition including encumbrances, if any. (There are no encumbrances to the knowledge of the Bank. For details of encumbrances, contact the undersigned before deposit of the Earnest Money Deposit referred to in Clause 9(d) below). Auction/ bidding shall be only through " Online Electronic Bidding" through the **website: http://baanknet.in** Bidders are advised to go through the website for details terms before taking part in the e-auction sale proceedings. (2) The Property will be sold only for a price above the Reserve Price. (3) The property can be inspected with prior Appointment with Authorised Officer, on any working day between 3.00 PM to 5.00 PM before **28.05.2026 & 28.06.2026**. (4) The intending bidders should register their names at portal <http://baanknet.in> and get their User ID and password free of cost. (5) Prospective bidder may avail online training on E-auction from the service provider M/s PSB Alliance (baanknet),Mr. Dharmesh asher, Contact No. 98922-19848, E-mail: support_baanknet@psballiance.com and avp.projectmanager_2@psballiance.com though the **website: http://baanknet.in** EMD deposited by the unsuccessful bidder shall be refunded to them. The EMD shall not carry any interest. (6) Auction would commence at Reserve Price, as mentioned above. Bidders shall improve their offers in multiples of Rs. 10,000. The bidder who submits the highest bid (above the Reserve price) on closure of 'Online' auction shall be declared as successful bidder. Sale shall be confirmed in favour of the successful bidder, subject to confirmation of the same by the secured creditor. (7) The Successful bidder shall deposit 25% of the sale price (inclusive of EMD already paid), immediately on declaring him/her as the successful bidder and the balance within 15 days from the date of confirmation of sale by the secured creditor, if the successful bidder fails to pay the sale price, the deposit made by him shall be forfeited by the Authorised Officer without any notice and property shall forthwith be put up for sale again. (8) For sale proceeds of Rs. 50 Lac (Rupees fifty Lac) and above, the successful bidder will have to deduct TDS at the rate 1% on the Sale proceeds and submit the original receipt of TDS certificate to the Bank. (9) All charges for conveyance, stamp Duty / GST registration charges etc, as Applicable and any curl, revenue/dues to any local authority aull be burnt by the successful bidder only. (10) Authorised Officer reserves the right to postpone/cancel or vary the terms and conditions of the e-auction without assigning any reason thereof. (11) In case there are bidders who do have access to the Internet but interested in participating the e-auction, they can approach concerned Regional office or any branch who, as a facilitating centre, shall make necessary arrangements. (12) EMD Amount of 10% of the Reserve Price is to be deposited in E-Wallet after successful Registration of Ebkray Website by way of Net Banking/Debit Cards/Challan or before **28.05.2026 & 28.06.2026**. After Successfully transferred the EMD Amount in E-Wallet, Bidder can participate in the In Eligible properties. For further details contact Recovery & Legal Section, Canara Bank Regional office, Gwalior **Mob.: 9981898987**

Place: Gwalior Date : 13/05/2026 AUTHORISED OFFICER CANARA BANK

Open Society Foundations commit \$30M to groups fighting antisemitism, anti-Muslim hate

JAMES POLLARD ■ New York

Open Society Foundations, the family philanthropy founded by hedge fund billionaire George Soros, is putting \$30 million toward groups fighting antisemitism and anti-Muslim hate over the next three years.

The major human rights funder pledged Wednesday to strengthen interfaith partnerships and protect those facing heightened threats in response to the rising levels of hate against both Jewish and Muslim communities, coinciding with the Israel-Hamas war and the current fragile ceasefire.

Last year saw the highest level of deadly violence against Jews worldwide in



over three decades, according to an annual study released last month by Tel Aviv University, including the December shooting at a Hanukkah celebration in Australia. Meanwhile, anti-Muslim rhetoric has intensi-

fied against the backdrop of the Iran war, with one congressional Republican saying Muslims "don't belong in American society."

"The deep injustices occurring in the Middle East are fuelling indiscriminate preju-

dice, dehumanisation, and violence directed against both Muslims and Jews," Open Society Foundations President Binaifer Nowrojee said in a statement. "Entire communities cannot be targeted simply because of their religion. Bigotry and intolerance in any form must be called out and confronted."

The announcement marks the foundations' most visible campaign since last fall's reports that the US Department of Justice was considering possible charges against Open Society Foundations. President Donald Trump specifically named Soros as he ordered the FBI to crack down on what he called "left-wing terrorism" - an accusation that

OSF has denied in statements emphasizing their mission to strengthen democracy.

Alex Soros, who took over leadership of his father's foundations in late 2022, noted that "discrimination and hate" aren't abstract concepts for him as the son of a Holocaust survivor and husband to a Muslim American. The foundation added that George Soros, who holds significant influence as a liberal megadonor with vast financial investments and philanthropic ties, is frequently targeted by conservative conspiracy theories that twist those powerful connections into antisemitic tropes about behind-the-scenes puppet masters.

Modi’s call for economic patriotism – rationale



Lawrence Wong, Prime Minister of Singapore, instructed delegates of a conference to ‘avoid business suits’ and wear white shirts, they complied. This was in 2016, when Wong was the Minister for National Development focusing on urban sustainability. There was no West Asia crisis then, he was just making citizens ‘responsible’ for ensuring sustainability. Cut to the present, when PM Modi makes similar requests especially during the West Asian crisis there is a meltdown... Some resorted to rumours like India has ceased importing, India refused to accept LNG consignment from Russia and a major lockdown is imminent etc.

When crude oil prices surge from \$70 to over \$125 a barrel in a matter of weeks, when the world’s most critical energy chokepoint goes dark, and when India’s \$207 billion annual import bill in gold and oil starts bleeding foreign exchange reserves at a rate of roughly \$5 billion a month, as head of government PM Modi had two options — impose mandatory austerity or appeal to citizens’ sense of duty. PM Modi chose the second option.

He made seven specific appeals: avoid buying gold for a year; postpone non-essential foreign travel and destination weddings; revive work-from-home practices; use metro rail, carpool, and electric vehicles; cut edible oil consumption by 10 per cent; reduce chemical fertiliser use by 50 per cent; and participate in virtual meetings instead of in-person ones. Critics immediately collected their ammunition of rumours, supporters called it statecraft while reality says it is responsible governance.

The World Accepted Change — India Should Too

The backdrop to Modi’s speech is a global energy emergency unlike anything since the 1973 oil crisis. Since February 2026, when US and Israeli military operations against Iran triggered the closure of the Strait of Hormuz, roughly 20 per cent of the world’s oil has been disrupted — what the International Energy Agency characterised as the “largest supply disruption in the history of the global oil market.” Brent crude, which traded at around \$62-70 per barrel for much of FY 2025-26, surged past \$100 almost immediately, touched a record \$166 per barrel on March 19, and has since stabilised above \$125.

Eighty-two countries have responded with emergency energy measures. Fourteen have mandated work-from-home in non-essential sectors. Eight have capped air conditioning temperatures in public buildings at 24-26°C. Six have shut schools and universities or restricted their hours. More than fifteen have introduced fuel rationing, speed limits, odd-even vehicle rules, or private vehicle curbs. Over twenty have launched national energy conservation campaigns.

The specific measures paint a stark picture of global urgency: South Korea has asked citizens to run washing machines and vacuum cleaners only on weekends. Sri Lanka declared Wednesdays a national holiday to conserve fuel. Germany reintroduced car-free Sundays. Italy mandated a minimum AC temperature of 27°C in all public buildings. France banned short domestic flights. Bangladesh ordered shopping malls to close by 7 PM. India, by contrast, has implemented no mandatory restrictions so far.

But what Modi is doing now is just ‘Demand Side Management’. Any expert on energy and water will endorse this strategy.

Golden Advice

Of all Modi’s appeals, the call to stop buying gold is economically significant. PM Modi’s declaration — “In the national interest, we must resolve not to purchase gold for a year” is a



balance-of-payments responsibility given to 1.4 billion people.

India’s gold import bill rose to nearly \$72 billion in 2025-26 — almost double the \$35 billion recorded in 2022-23. Combined with crude oil imports of approximately \$135 billion, these two commodities alone account for \$207 billion of India’s annual import bill, putting persistent pressure on the current account deficit (CAD). India’s CAD had already expanded to \$13.2 billion, equivalent to 1.3 per cent of GDP in the December quarter of 2025, before the full force of the oil price shock hit.

The arithmetic of restraint is compelling. Even halving gold imports from \$72 billion to \$36 billion would reduce India’s current account deficit from approximately 2 per cent of GDP to 1 per cent — a reduction that would ease pressure on the rupee, lower import costs for everything from crude oil to electronics, and reduce the RBI’s burden of forex intervention.

How ridiculous that opposition voices have drawn parallels to Jawaharlal Nehru and Indira Gandhi, who made similar appeals against gold buying in earlier eras. There is no comparison whatsoever. Nehru’s and Indira’s appeals came during periods of domestic economic mismanagement and forex crises created by their own policies, including the oil bonds burden,

which left massive unbooked debt for Modi government to clear even in peacetime. The current crisis is externally triggered — a geopolitical war has shuttered the world’s most critical energy corridor. The cause is categorically different. Let that sink in.

India’s Foresight

The NDA government is agile — excise duties on petrol and diesel were reduced by ₹10 per litre in March, and export duties on diesel and aviation fuel were raised to protect domestic supply. India diversified its crude sourcing to around 40 countries by March 2026 and began increasing purchases from Russia as Middle Eastern supplies grew uncertain. Domestic refineries were operating at above-rated capacity. These are supply-side interventions. Modi’s appeal targets the demand side — which is where India’s vulnerability rests.

India had 32.71 million outbound travellers in 2025, while foreign tourist arrivals remained at just 9.02 million — a ratio of more than three to one, representing a significant net forex outflow from tourism alone. Foreign exchange earnings from tourism reportedly declined by 6.6 per cent during the year, further widening the gap. A 25 per cent voluntary reduction in foreign holidays would not merely save forex; it would redirect spending into the domestic economy, supporting Indian tourism,

hospitality, and services sectors during a period of global uncertainty.

Work From Home: Small Office Home Office (SOHO)

Even a 5-10 per cent reduction in urban fuel consumption across India’s top ten cities would translate into millions of fewer litres of imported crude burned weekly. A worker commuting roughly 30 kilometres daily through Bengaluru traffic in a petrol vehicle consumes approximately 2 to 2.5 litres of fuel per working day — amounting to nearly ₹5,000 monthly on petrol alone. MoveInSync’s 2025 India on Wheels report found that Bengaluru’s average one-way commute had risen from 54 minutes in 2024 to 63 minutes in 2025. These are not productivity outcomes - they are productivity losses.

Every litre burned in peak-hour urban traffic is a litre imported against a weakening rupee at \$125+ per barrel.

Modi’s push for EV adoption and metro usage, urban air quality — already among the worst in the world in cities like Delhi, Mumbai, and Lucknow — would see measurable improvement. India has already surpassed its renewable energy targets ahead of schedule; integrating work-from-home (WFH) and EV adoption into the national energy story would accelerate the transition from fossil fuel import dependence toward domestic energy generation.

The Convoy Question: Leading by Example

Government convoys central and state consume fuel at a scale that is not invisible to citizens. Prime Minister has sharply reduced the size of his official convoy, days after calling for austerity measures and urging citizens to cut down on the use of fuel driven vehicles.

The downsized convoy was deployed during the Prime Minister’s recent visits to Gujarat and Assam. Officials were directed to incorporate electric vehicles into his convoy wherever feasible, without making fresh purchases.

Following PM Modi’s decision, the union home minister and defence minister have also taken steps to reduce

their convoy to less than half for conservative fuel use.

Chief Ministers of Uttar Pradesh, Delhi, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra have reduced their convoy to 50 per cent and encouraged officials to adopt work-from-home arrangements and virtual meetings wherever possible and appealed to people to increase the use of public transport, cycling and electric vehicles. All departments are directed to prioritise carpooling and public transport while reducing the number of vehicles used for official purposes.

Patriotism in Contemporary World

“Patriotism is not just about dying for the country. Living for the country and fulfilling our duties to the country is also patriotism.” Modi’s words were not a slogan — they were a reframing of civic responsibility for a crisis that does not announce itself with guns or missiles. The West Asia war is not India’s war. But its economic consequences are landing in the Indian terrain.

A 3 percent saving on crude consumption equals \$5 billion saved — one month of war-related forex pressure eased. A 25 per cent reduction in foreign holidays equals another \$10 billion. A 15 per cent cut in gold imports equals yet another \$10 billion. Taken together, “voluntary civilian restraint” across these three categories alone could delay economy-wide fuel price hikes by approximately five months — protecting millions of Indians from a cost-of-living pain that no government subsidy could provide. This ask of Modi is not a sacrifice. It is indeed a leverage — small individual actions, multiplied by 1.4 billion people, producing macroeconomic outcomes that no single policy instrument can match.

The case for compliance with Modi’s appeals is not built on patriotism alone. The benefits of such a collective national response could be transformational for our country. No Indian felt the heat so far. That’s the coolest point to note.

The writer is a distinguished fellow at the India Foundation.

CM Himanta pays tribute to Lokapriya Gopinath Bordoloi at his memorial

TONY DAS
■ Dispur

After taking oath as the Chief Minister of Assam for a second term, Chief Minister Dr Himanta Biswa Sarma on Wednesday began his first official programme with a visit to Nabagraha Shantisthal at Silpukhuri in Guwahati.

He lit ceremonial lamps and laid floral wreaths at the statue and memorial of Bharat Ratna Lokapriya Gopinath Bordoloi and paid his solemn tributes.

Speaking to the media,

Chief Minister Dr Sarma described Bharat Ratna Lokapriya Gopinath Bordoloi as the architect of modern Assam. He said Lokapriya Bordoloi dedicated his entire life to safeguarding and developing Assam.

“The Government is committed to the twin goals of protection and development. Referring to Lokapriya Bordoloi’s role before and after India’s independence, Dr Sarma said he worked tirelessly for the welfare and advancement of Assam and the Assamese people,” Sarma said.



Joint Indian Army and SDRF Flood Relief Exercise at Jorhat



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Guwahati

In a significant step towards strengthening disaster preparedness and inter-agency coordination ahead of the monsoon season, Red Shield Gunners under Spear Corps, in coordination with SDRF, Jorhat, conducted Exercise Jal Raksha III, a joint flood relief training exercise, on Wednesday.

The training was aimed at enhancing the collective response capability of all participating agencies in the event of flood-related emergencies, which remain a recurring challenge in the region. The exercise focused on improving coordination, communication, and operational readiness during rescue and relief operations.

During the training, personnel were familiarised with flood relief procedures, rescue drills, casualty evacuation techniques and the effective employ-

DURING THE TRAINING, PERSONNEL WERE FAMILIARISED WITH FLOOD RELIEF PROCEDURES, RESCUE DRILLS

ment of available resources during disaster situations. The training also emphasised the importance of timely response, joint planning and seamless coordination between the Indian Army and civil disaster response agencies.

The joint effort reflected a whole-of-government approach towards disaster management. Such joint initiatives play a vital role in enhancing preparedness and building mutual confidence among response agencies.

The event reaffirmed the ethos of Nation First and highlighted the Indian Army’s continued role in assisting civil authorities during humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations.

CREDAI shifts NATCON 2026 to India

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

In response to Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s appeal to prioritise national interest amid the evolving geopolitical situation in West Asia, the Confederation of Real Estate Associations of Developers’ India (CREDAI) has decided to shift the 23rd edition of its flagship convention, NATCON 2026, from Amsterdam to India.

The decision reflects CREDAI’s commitment to the Prime Minister’s vision of placing the “Nation First” and supporting India’s economic resilience during a period of global uncertainty. The event, expected to draw over 1,000 industry stakeholders, will now boost India’s hospitality sector, local businesses, and tourism.

Commenting on the decision, Shekhar Patel, President, CREDAI, said, “At a time when the Prime

Minister has called upon citizens and industries to act responsibly and prioritise national interest amid the evolving geopolitical situation, CREDAI believes it is important for the real estate sector, as one of the country’s largest employment-generating industries, to align with this vision and demonstrate collective responsibility during this important time for the nation.”

“While preparations for NATCON had been underway for over six months and the industry was fully prepared to travel to Amsterdam this August, CREDAI felt it was important to take cognisance of the Prime Minister’s appeal and the prevailing national sentiment. By deciding to host NATCON in India this year, we are supporting domestic economic activity while also reinforcing our commitment to the nation’s growth and economic resilience,” Patel said.

IIM Jammu launches industry integrated eBBA degree

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

The Indian Institute of Management Jammu launched a four-year job-ready and industry-oriented eBBA (honours) programme in collaboration with the Accenture Centre of Advanced Studies.

TalentSprint and IIM Jammu announce a strategic partnership, designed to combine academic rigour with real world industry relevance for the undergraduate level. Anurag Bansal, Managing Director, said, “Technology is fundamentally changing



how organisations create value, and the skills required to lead in this environment are evolving rapidly.

This collaboration with

IIM Jammu reflects our shared commitment to reimagine management education by combining business acumen with tech-

nology led thinking.

Professor BS Sahay, Director, IIM Jammu, said, “At IIM Jammu, we are committed to redefining management education through meaningful collaboration with industry leaders. This partnership with TalentSprint brings together academic excellence and real world relevance. Our eBBA (Honours) degree programme is designed to develop graduates who are conceptually strong, technologically aware, professionally agile and well prepared to create impact from the early stages of their careers.”

DAILY SUDOKU

5 9 2 8 8 6 7 6 8 3 2 3 8 4 2 8 6 5 2 7 4 5 1

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

HOW TO SOLVE IT

Sudoku is a logic puzzle where you fill a 9x9 grid so that numbers 1 to 9 appear once in every row, column, and 3x3 box, using elimination and logical deduction- no maths involved.

SOLUTION (13.5.26)

ACROSS

DOWN

DOUBLE CROSSWORD THURSDAY | MAY 14, 2026

ACROSS

DOWN

BRIEFLY

Real Betis returns to Champions League after 20 years



Real Betis is back in the Champions League after a 20-year absence. The Spanish club beat Elche 2-1 at home in the Spanish league on Tuesday to seal fifth place and the final Champions League spot. Betis last played in the Champions League in the 2005-06 season, when it finished third in its group behind Liverpool and Chelsea. With two rounds remaining, Manuel Pellegrini's Betis opened a seven-point gap to sixth-place Celta Vigo, which earlier Tuesday lost 3-2 to Levante at home. Cucho Hernandez put Betis ahead in the ninth minute and Pablo Fornals scored the winner in the 68th after Hector Fort had equalized for Elche shortly before halftime. Elche, which played a man down from the 49th after Leo Petrot was sent off, stayed close to the relegation zone. Levante moved to 16th place with its win over Vigo. Also on Tuesday, fourth-place Atletico Madrid won 2-1 at 11th-place Osasuna with goals from Ademola Lookman and Alexander Sorloth. Atletico's Marcos Llorente was sent off in the 79th. (AP)

Ronaldo, Portugal get another shot at WC glory

ANNE M PETERSON ■ Lisbon

At 41, Cristiano Ronaldo realistically gets only one more shot at a World Cup trophy to cap an already illustrious career. A five-time Ballon d'Or winner, Ronaldo has more international goals than any other men's player, with 143 in 226 matches for Portugal. He was slowed by a hamstring injury earlier this year with his club team, Al Nassr in the Saudi Pro League, and did not play for Portugal in a friendly against the United States in Atlanta on April 1. Should he be named to the World Cup squad — and there's no reason to believe he won't unless he's injured — Ronaldo will play on American soil for the first time since a 2014 preseason friendly with Real Madrid against Manchester United in Michigan. Ronaldo, along with his great rival Lionel Messi of Argentina, could become the first men to play in six World Cups. Ronaldo told CNN in November that this one "definitely" would be his last World Cup. Portugal is considered the top team in Group K, which includes Colombia, Uzbekistan and Congo. While Portugal is ranked



number 5, the team got a wake-up call in qualification with a 2-0 loss to Ireland last November, notable because Ronaldo was sent off with a red card for elbowing a defender. He was banned for the next game — Portugal rebounded with a 9-1 victory over Armenia to seal its World Cup spot — but escaped more severe punishment.

This will be Portugal's ninth World Cup. The team finished in third in 1966 and fourth in 2006 - when Ronaldo made his World Cup debut. In the 2022 edition, Portugal reached the quarterfinals, only to be upset by Morocco 1-0. Ronaldo came in as a substitute in the 51st minute. Roberto Martinez has been coach since 2023. The team is loaded with talent, including Manchester United's Bruno Fernandes and versatile young midfielder Joao Neves, who plays for Paris Saint-Germain. The team was rocked last year by the death of Diogo Jota, killed in a car crash shortly after Portugal won the Nations League final. Portugal opens against Congo on June 17 in Houston.

Colombia Attacking midfielder James Rodriguez joined Minnesota United in Major League Soccer this season in an effort to get playing time ahead of the World Cup. Rodriguez is the team's captain and most celebrated player. He was the Golden Boot winner at the 2014 World Cup with six goals, besting Germany's Thomas Mueller with five. Rodriguez has 31 goals for Colombia. This is Colombia's seventh World Cup. It missed out in 2022. The team's best finish was

reaching the quarterfinals in 2014 before falling to host Brazil. Ranked number 13 and coached by Argentinian Nestor Lorenzo, Colombia opens against Uzbekistan on June 17 in Mexico City. Uzbekistan, ranked number 50, is making its first-ever World Cup appearance. Uzbekistan had a team under the old Soviet Union but put together a new one after independence to compete internationally. Known as the White Wolves, the team is coached by Italian Fabio Cannavaro, who was only named to the post this past October after previous coach Timur Kapadze secured the nation's World Cup berth in the third round of Asian qualifiers. Cannavaro was captain of the Italian team that won the 2006 World Cup. Eldor Shomurodov is Uzbekistan's captain, with 44 goals over 90 appearances. He currently plays for Turkish club Istanbul Basaksehir. Congo The only time Congo played in the World Cup was in 1974, when the nation was known as Zaïre. It became the first sub-Saharan African team to qualify for a World Cup. (AP)

Scheffler is looking to end streak of runner-up finishes with PGA Championship repeat

DOUG FERGUSON ■ Newtown Square

Scottie Scheffler is the defending champion at the PGA Championship and feeling like a bridesmaid over the last month. Runner-up to Rory McIlroy at the Masters. Playoff loss to Matt Fitzpatrick at the RBC Heritage. Runner-up (by six shots) to Cameron Young at Doral.

"Last week my wife was like, Hey, Scottie. You're like the first guy in PGA Tour history to have three solo runner-ups in a row." I'm like, Yeah, it's probably because the guy that was playing that good figured out a way to win one of those," Scheffler said on Tuesday.

It hasn't put much of a dent in his confidence going into the second major of the year. Scheffler is fierce when it comes to competition, hates losing even in friendly matches with his caddie and still has come to appreciate that winning isn't always easy. He has a firm hold on the number 1 world ranking — he is approaching three straight years at the top of golf — despite not winning since his season debut in the



California desert. "You know you're playing good golf, and you'd love to get some wins," he said. "Finishing second hurts, but I think when you reflect and you're looking at things to work on, there's a lot less to clean up when you're finishing second than there is when you're finishing 30th."

Not that he has a lot of experience with the latter — Scheffler hasn't finished 30th or worse since August 2024. To end that run of silver medal this week at Aronimink would allow him to join Brooks Koepka (2018, 19) and Tiger Woods (1999-00 and 2006-07) as the only players to win back-to-back in the PGA Championship in

stroke play. In his way is a course has plenty of room off the tee and little room for error when it comes to hitting the correct spot on the large, severely contoured greens. He also faces the strongest field of the four majors, with 98 of the top 100 in the world, which includes the last three players to beat him - McIlroy (number 2), Young (number 3) and Fitzpatrick (number 4). McIlroy came up to Aronimink two weeks ago for a peek at the course he had not played since the BMW Championship in 2018, when it was so soft and mushy from rain that the event couldn't finish until Monday.

Tiger Woods' prescription drug records will be handed over to prosecutors in Florida DUI case

DAVID FISCHER ■ Stuart (US)

Tiger Woods' prescription drug records will be handed over to prosecutors following his March arrest in Florida on suspicion of driving under the influence, a judge ruled.

Judge Darren Steele approved an agreement between Woods' defence attorney and prosecutors following a four-minute hearing in Martin County circuit court, just north of Palm Beach County on Tuesday.

Prosecutors had issued a subpoena seeking copies of all prescription medication records for the legendary golfer at a Palm Beach pharmacy from the start of the year through the end of March. Defense attorney Doug Duncan had previously argued that Woods has a constitutional right to privacy when it comes to his prescription medications, but he acknowledged during the hearing that the right is not absolute and that pros-



ecutors could make a compelling argument for why they were needed. Meanwhile, prosecutors agreed to Duncan's request for a protective order limiting the release of records only to prosecutors, law enforcement officers, state experts and Woods' defense team. Bob Jarvis, a law professor at Nova Southeastern University who is not connected to the case, said the agreement and the judge's approval seems normal for DUI case, particularly one that involves drugs instead of alcohol. Florida law con-

siders a driver with a blood-alcohol content of 0.08 per cent or higher to be impaired, but there's no clear, measurable standard to determine impairment for other drugs. That means prosecutors will have to use field sobriety tests, officer testimony and other evidence to convince jurors beyond a reasonable doubt that Woods was impaired. Jarvis said there's no indication so far that Woods is receiving special treatment, either more harsh or more lenient, because of his celebrity status.



OFFICE OF THE MUNICIPAL CORPORATION, BHOPAL

Water Work Department

4th Floor, BMC Head Office, Tulsī Nagar, Bhopal

NOTICE INVITING e-TENDER

Online tenders are being invited for the following works. The bidder can obtained detailed information and tender documents on website <http://mptenders.gov.in>.
Corrigendum for this NIT shall not be issued separately in newspapers. Corrigendum regarding correction can be seen on the website <http://mptenders.gov.in>

S. No.	NIT No.	Tender ID	Details of Work	Estimated Cost (INR)	Earnest Money (EMD)	Bid Submission End Date
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	50/T/Sec/EE/ W.W.D./2026-27 First Call	2026_UAD_507061_1	Providing Laying jointing and Commissioning of HDPE and D.I. Pipe line at Atal Nehru Nagar OHT Network Area Under Zone 16, Bhopal	3,96,85,568.00	1,90,428.00	12.06.2026

Executive Engineer (WWD)

Municipal Corporation, Bhopal

T.N. 175/026/027



बैंक ऑफ महाराष्ट्र
Bank of Maharashtra
भारत सरकार का उपक्रम

JABALPUR ZONAL OFFICE, WRIGHT TOWN, JABALPUR PH: 0761-2480065,67,68

PUBLIC NOTICE FOR SALE

E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8 (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower/s and Guarantor/s that the below described immovable properties mortgaged/charged to the Bank of Maharashtra, the possession of which have been taken by the Authorised Officer of Bank of Maharashtra, will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is" & "WITHOUT RECOURSE BASIS" on **16.06.2026**, for recovery of the balance due to the Bank of Maharashtra from the Borrower (s) and Guarantor(s) as mentioned in the table. Details of the Borrower/s and Guarantor/s, amount due, Short description of the immovable property and encumbrances known thereon, possession type, reserve price and the earnest money deposit are also given as under-

Name & Address of Borrower / Guarantor	Outstanding Dues for Recovery of which Property are being sold	Description of properties	Type of Possession	Reserve Price EMD Amount Bid Increase Amount
1) Branch - Asset Recovery Branch, Jabalpur Borrowers Mr. Ashutosh Upadhyay, Add: H.No.2014, Kiran Kuti, Vijaynagar, Jabalpur - 482001	Rs.18618136/- (Rupees One Crore Eighty Six Lakh Eighteen Thousand One hundred Thirty Six only plus applicable interest and penal interest thereon+ Others Charge w.e.f. 30.05.2024	(A) Residential plot bearing plot no 25-A on Diverted Khasara No. 17/3 situated at Amkhhera S.No. PC No. 22/24, PH no.80(new), Ward no.74, RI Circle Maharajpur Tehsil Panagar and Dist Jabalpur owned by Mr. Ashutosh Upadhyay Area 1250 Sqft. (B) Freehold residential plot bearing plot no 25 on Diverted Khasara No. 17/3 situated at Amkhhera S.No.4 P C No. 22/24, PH no.80(new), Ward no.74, RI Circle Maharajpur Tehsil Panagar and Dist Jabalpur owned by Mr. Ashutosh Upadhyay Area 1150 Sqft. © Freehold residential plot bearing plot no 24 on Diverted Khasara No. 17/3 situated at Amkhhera S.No.4 P C No. 22/24, PH no.80(new), Ward no.74, R I Circle Maharajpur Tehsil Panagar and Dist Jabalpur owned by Mr. Ashutosh Upadhyay Area 1000 Sqft.	Physical Physical Physical	Rs. 20,81,000/- Rs. 2,08,100/- Rs. 10000/- Rs. 19,15,000/- Rs. 1,91,500/- Rs. 10000/- Rs. 16,65,000/- Rs. 1,66,500/- Rs. 10000/-
2) Branch: Asset Recovery Branch, Jabalpur 1. M/s. Nava Bharat Press (Bhopal) Pvt. Ltd. Add.- 3, Indira Press Complex, Ramgopal Maheshwari Marg, M.P. Nagar Zone -1, Bhopal (M.P) Pin. 462011 2. Smt. Brij Maheshwari w/o Shri. Prafulla Maheshwari , 3. Shri. Sumit Maheshwari s/o Shri. Prafulla Maheshwari, 4. Shri. Sanjeev Maheshwari s/o Shri. Prafulla Maheshwari 5. Shri. Sandeep Maheshwari s/o Shri. Prafulla Maheshwari All Reside at - E- 3/22, Arera Colony Bhopal (M.P) Pin. 462016 6. Shri. Prafulla Maheshwari s/o Shri. Ramgopal Maheshwari (Deceased) – Through his Legal Heirs(LR's):LR's: (A) Shri. Sumit Maheshwari s/o Late. Shri. Prafulla Maheshwari (B) Shri. Sandeep Maheshwari s/o Late. Shri. Prafulla Maheshwari (C) Shri. Sanjeev Maheshwari s/o Late. Shri. Prafulla Maheshwari, (D) Smt. Brij Maheshwari w/o Shri. Prafulla Maheshwari All Reside at - E- 3/22, Arera Colony Bhopal (M.P) Pin. 462016 7. P.K. Maheshwari (HUF) – Through his Coparceners: Residing at - E-3/22, Arera Colony Bhopal (M.P) Pin. 462016	Rs.18,04,26,202.73 + Interest @ BPLR+2% (@14%) per annum with quarterly/ Monthly rests with effect from 01.02.2007 & Other Charges etc thereon	Plot 118 to 124, on Plot No 785 (Old no 42) in Mouja Shubhas Nagar, N.B. 773, Area 14035 Sq feet and construction thereon, Diversion Sheet no 155-C (Marhatal), Near Motor Stand (OLD) Teen Patli Road, Napier Town, Ward No 28 (City), Swami Dayanand Saraswati Marg, Jabalpur (M.P) Pin 482002	Physical Possession (11707 Sq. Ft.) Remained area under Symbolic Possession	Rs.22,49,10,000/- Rs.2,24,91,000/- Rs.10000.00
3) Branch: Asset Recovery Branch, Jabalpur 1. Smt. Poonam Jat Shri Sanjay Jat Shri. Sanjay Jat s/o Shri. Subhash Chandra Jat H.No. 1313, Maharshi Arvind ward, Kanjar Mohalla, Near Bai ka Bagicha, Jabalpur (M.P) Pin 482002, Guarantor: Smt. Poonam Jat w/o Shri. Sanjay Jat H.No. 1313, Maharshi Arvind ward, Kanjar Mohalla, Near Bai ka Bagicha, Jabalpur (M.P) Pin 482002	Rs.69.65,478/- (Rupees Sixty Nine Lakhs Sixty Five Thousand Four Hundred Seventy Eight only + unapplid interest + penal interest @ 2.00% p.a. + other charges / expenses w.e.f. 30.07.2021	All piece and parcel of property at Mouza Bhartipur, N.B 130, PC No.29, Div Sheet No.96, House no.58/4, Plot no.120/1, Maharshi Arvind Ward no.53, The & Dist.Jabalpur.	Physical	Rs. 5771000/- Rs. 577100/- Rs.10000.00
4) Branch: Asset Recovery Branch, Jabalpur Shri Amit Khampariya Shri Amit Khampariya,234/4 Durga colony, Sanjeevni Nagar, Garha, Jabalpur	Rs.30651458/- (Rupees Three Crore Six Lakh Fifty one Thousand Four Hundred Fifty Eight only) (Ledger Bal: Rs.29652141.62/- + unapplid interest Rs.943821/-+ penalty of Rs.55495/-)+ Unapplid Interest @ 11.95% p.a. with monthly rate w.e.f. 31.07.2024 + penal interest and other charges / expenses till realization	Diverted open plot situated at Khamariya N.B 581 (New), PH no.74 (New 50), at present P.H.No. 00137, R.N.M. Khamariya, Div. Kh. No.527, 528,529,530,531,532/1, Tehsil & Dist. Jabalpur area admeasuring 3.269 Hect.	Physical	Rs. 23160000/- Rs. 2316000/- Rs.10000.00
5) Branch: Karmeta Shri Gourishankar Patel, Mr. Kapil Patel Shri Gourishankar Patel, Mr. Kapil Patel,Vill: Mohas, Post: Balkhadu, Jabalpur-482002	Rs.2498302/- (Rupees Twenty Four Lakh Ninety Eight Thousand Three Hundred Two Only) plus unapplid interest@ 11.45% , p.a at monthly rest and penal interest thereon + Others Charge w.e.f. 16.10.2025	Land & Building situated at Khasra no 218/1, 219/2 at Mouza Mohas, N.B No. 657, PC.No.70, Post: Balkhadu, Katangi road, Tehsil-Panagar, Jabalpur admeasuring area 25.500 sq.ft.	Symbolic	Rs. 15158000/- Rs. 1515800/- Rs.10000.00
6) Branch: Panna Road Satna M/s Deepak Oil Mill Proprietor –Shri Deepak Agrawal Katra Bazar, Galla Mandi, Mailhar	Rs.4592351/- (Forty five Lakh Ninety Two Thousand Three Hundred Fifty One only) (Ledger Balance Rs.4445609/-+ unapplid Interest Rs.131196/-@ 11.55% p.a at monthly rest + penal interest thereon and other charges and expenses w.e.f 27.02.2025)	All those pieces & parcel of property with construction & fixture there being & lying at Maouza Hardua Kala PHN No. 42, Dist. Mailhar, Arazi No. 75/1/2/1 Area 0.0940 Hect, Arzi No. 77/1/2/2/1 Area0.0170 Hec, Arzi No. 76/1/3/2 Area0.0650 Hec, Arzi No.76/1/2/1 Area0.0300 Hec, Arzi No. 76/1/1/1 0.056 Hect. situated at Gram Harduakala, Patwari Halka Hardua Kala, Sardar V B Patel, Ward No. 04, Mailhar, District, M.P. Total Area= 28192 Sq.ft	Symbolic	Rs. 65100000/- Rs. 6510000/- Rs.10000.00
7) Branch: Katni Shri Roshan Pyasi Roshan Kumar Pyasi S/o Shri Rameshwar Prasad Pyasi MES Colony, Hemu Kalani Ward, Murwara, Katni- 483442	Rs.1662695.00 /- + unapplid interest Rs. 53230 /-+ penalty of Rs.74.00/-+ Charges Rs 354/-Total dues: Rs.19,16,353.00 /- (Rupees, Nineteen Lakhs Sixteen Thousand Three Hundred fifty three only) + Unapplid Interest @ 8.70% p.a. with monthly rate w.e.f. 17/06/2025 + penal interest and other charges / expenses till realization	All those piece and parcel of property situated at Khasra No-71/1, PH No-34, Plot No- B-44, at RNM-Pahadi Village- Imaliya, Tehsil- Katni, District- Katni. Plot Area admeasuring 1000 Sq.Ft(92.93 Sq Mtrs),Built up area Ground Floor 900 Sq Ft	Physical	Rs. 1122000/- Rs. 112200/- Rs.10000.00
8) Branch: Katni Shri Gopendra Pyasi Gopendra Pyasi S/o Shri Rameshwar Prasad Pyasi MES Colony, Hemu Kalani Ward, Murwara, Katni- 483442	Rs. 18,47,043.00 /- + unapplid interest Rs. 62259 /-+ penalty of Rs.96.00/-+ Charges Rs 354/-Total dues:Rs. 19,09,752.00 /- (Rupees, Nineteen Lakhs Nine Thousand Seven Hundred fifty two only) + Unapplid Interest @ 8.35% p.a. with monthly rate w.e.f. 17/06/2025 + penal interest and other charges / expenses till realization	All those piece and parcel of property situated at Khasra No-71/1, PH No-34, Plot No- B-43, at RNM-Pahadi Village- Imaliya, Tehsil- Katni, District- Katni. Plot Area admeasuring 1000 Sq.Ft(92.93 Sq Mtrs),Built up area Ground Floor 900 Sq Ft	Physical	Rs. 1122000/- Rs. 112200/- Rs.10000.00
9) Branch: Benikheda Mr. Indur Kumar Thakur Borrower: Mr. Indur Kumar Thakur, 1450/171/A, Chandan Colony Ganganagar, Gupta Kirana Store Ke Paas Garha, Jabalpur	Rs.1608763/- (Rupees Sixteen Lakh Eight Thousand Seven Hundred Sixty Three only) plus applicable unapplid interest + penal interest thereon and other charges and expenses w.e.f 18.02.2025	All those pieces & parcel of property with construction & fixture there being & lying at Mouza-Garha, diverted plot no.16, part of khasra no. 80/1/2,NB 599, PH no. 28/33,New 6 Garha, RIC Garha Tehsil- Gorakhpur, Dist: Jabalpur ,admeasuring 700 sq.ft.	Symbolic	Rs. 945000/- Rs. 94500/- Rs.10000/-

Inspection of Properties by bidder: 11.06.2026 to 12.06.2026 between 11:00 am. and 4:00 pm
Last Date & Time for Submission of Bid application/KYC documents/EMD etc. 16.06.2026 up to 11.00 a.m.
Date & time of E-auction with auto extention for 10 minutes- 16.06.2026 between 12.00 a.m. and 4.00 p.m.

The auction sale will be On-line E-Auction / Bidding through website <https://baanknet.com>, email: support.baanknet@psb.alliance.com. **Mob. - 8291220220** The intending Bidders / Purchasers are requested to register on portal using their mobile number and email id. Please take note that the registration and KYC approval etc take 2-3 working days. For detail terms and conditions of sale please refer to the link provided in <https://bankofmaharashtra.bank.in/asset-for-sales-search> and <https://baanknet.com>. Also prospective bidders may contact the authorized officials **Contact details: Incharge Recovery Jabalpur Shri Onkar Kumar (Zonal Manager) - 9823296164, Shri Nikhil S Patil (DZM) - 7387211200, Shri Bhushan Mohite (CM Recovery - Z.O.) - 9923257090, Dr. Ravikumar Verma (Sr. Manager) (9300955688) & Shri Hariom Trivedi (CM & Authorised Officer) - 9405719723**
Note - The sales are subject to the order/outcome of any case pending/tilid if any before Court/Tribunal

Date: 14/05/2026

Sale Notice to Borrower/Guarantors/Legal Heirs(LR's):/Coparceners
The above shall be treated as Notice of 15/30days w/ 9(1) of security Interest (Enforcement) Rule, 2002

Authorised Officer, Bank of Maharashtra

SRH coach lauds GT's brilliant bowling show



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ Ahmedabad

Sunrisers Hyderabad head coach Daniel Vettori accepted that a “formidable” Gujarat Titans completely outplayed them with their “brilliant” bowling performance in an IPL match here.

After half-centuries from Sai Sudharsan (61) and Washington Sundar (50) pushed GT to 168 for 5, pace duo of Mohammed Siraj (1/11) and Kagiso Rabada (3/28) wreaked havoc in the power-play before Jason Holder (3/20) and Prasidh Krishna (2/23) joined the party to bundle out SRH for 86 on a



seaming surface on Tuesday night. The 82-run loss was SRH's biggest IPL loss in terms of runs.

“Really good performance by GT, they put us under a lot of pressure with the ball and then the opening pair set it up so well. We were satisfied at the halfway mark, we knew we are coming up against their bowling line up. Five

seamers plus Rashid (Khan) is always going to be challenging,” Vettori said at the post match press conference.

“We didn't get the start we wanted and they were able to capitalise and their bowling was brilliant.

“They (GT) are a formidable team and they definitely have their own style and they can adapt to when they need to.

They played the conditions exceptionally well. They are well suited in these conditions. Mainly for us it was coming against their bowling line-up and they were very impressive tonight,” he added.

The former New Zealand left-arm spinner said they didn't get the start they wanted while chasing the

target on seam-friendly conditions.

“169 we thought we had a chance but I don't put any blame on the batting unit, they have been exceptional this year. Every team is the IPL are going to have small blips once in a while and our's was tonight and I don't see any reason why we can't bounce back.”

He praised his bowling unit but said GT pacers were completely brilliant. We don't expect our bowling unit to be perfect. It is difficult bowling in the IPL in these conditions. To restrict them to 170 was a very good job.

GT left-arm spinner Sai Kishore praised Rabada and Siraj for their lethal display in the powerplay.

“Siraj and Rabada have been hitting their lengths very well and that's the advantage of having proper Test match bowlers in your line-up. We have been ably led by Shubman Gill and Ashish Nehra,” he said.

PBKS look to arrest slide against MI

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ Dharamshala

Punjab Kings will need to plug gaping holes in the bowling and fielding department as they look to stop their free-fall in the business end of the Indian Premier League against an already eliminated Mumbai Indians here on Thursday.

After bossing the first half of the tournament, Punjab Kings have lost four games in a row and now find themselves in a precarious position in the race for play-offs.

They need to win at least two of their remaining games to secure a place in the top four. It was not so long ago that they were the only unbeaten team in the tournament but such is the nature of the format and the IPL that fortunes can swing either way rather quickly.

As captain Shreyas Iyer pointed out after the loss to Delhi



Capitals, Punjab Kings only have themselves to blame for being in a difficult spot.

The in-form batting unit masked the frailties in the bowling department in the first half of the tournament but more recently, even posting an above par score, by Iyer's own admission, has not been enough against Delhi Capitals.

ICC Test Rankings: Bumrah maintains top spot



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Dubai

India's pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah maintained his pole position among Test bowlers in the latest ICC rankings published on Wednesday. Yashasvi Jaiswal and Shubman Gill were placed 8th and 9th among the batters respectively with former England Test skipper Joe Root leading the charts with 880 points.

Jaiswal has 750 points and Gill, who has climbed a spot, has accumulated 730 points. Harry Brook is second in the list followed by Travis Head and Steve Smith respectively.

It must be noted that India is yet to play any of their WTC matches in 2026 having last played against South Africa at home in the month of November.

In the bowlers' list, Bumrah is still leading the charts with 879 points while the next best Indian is Mohammed Siraj placed 12th. Ravindra Jadeja and Kuldeep Yadav are currently placed 14th and 15th respectively.

Australia's Mitchell Starc and Test captain Pat Cummins have gained to spot to second and fourth place respectively, while New Zealand's Matt Henry also leapfrogged to third spot.

IPL play-offs race: GT and RCB on course for top-two finish

BHARAT SHARMA ■ New Delhi

A late revival by the likes of Chennai Super Kings and Kolkata Knight Riders means there are as many as eight teams in contention for the four play-off berths with 10 days left for the league stage to wind up in the Indian Premier League.

Defending champions Royal Challengers Bengaluru and the consistent Gujarat Titans were expected to make the play-offs before the start of the tournament. Now, SunRisers Hyderabad too are a part of the leading pack after making a slow start to the competition.

What has been most unexpected is the rapid slide of Punjab Kings, who have lost four games in a row to be precariously placed after dominating the first half of the league. Mumbai Indians and Lucknow Super Giants are the two teams which have been eliminated. PTI looks at the qualifying scenarios for the eight teams in contention.

Royal Challengers Bengaluru:

The Rajat Patidar-led side has managed to retain the consistency that resulted in its first ever IPL title last year following a rather long wait.

They play KKR on Wednesday night and a win would ensure that they have one foot in the play-offs. RCB would need another win to secure a last four spot with 18 points being the safer number compared to 16. Only Mumbai Indians qualified with 16 points last season.

With 14 points from seven wins in 11 games, RCB have the best net



run rate among the teams in contention. After KKR, they play Punjab Kings and SunRisers Hyderabad in their last two league fixtures.

Punjab Kings:

Poor bowling and fielding have resulted in four straight losses for Punjab Kings who remain in the top four owing to their stellar run in the first half of IPL.

Thanks to their in form line-up, their net run rate remains healthy and two wins out of their remaining three games against

Mumbai Indians, RCB and SRH should be enough to advance in the competition.

They have 13 points from 11 matches with one point coming from a washout against KKR. The game against Mumbai Indians in Dharamshala is a must win one for them, else they will be under enormous pressure going into the final two matches.

Gujarat Titans:

Since their debut in 2022, Gujarat Titans have not made the play-offs only once. With a bowling line up firing on all cylinders and a solid top three, the Shubman Gill-led side is on course to secure a top two qualification.

They have 16 points from eight wins in 12 games, almost sealing a play-off berth. Their last two matches are against KKR and Chennai Super Kings.

Sunrisers Hyderabad:

With six wins in their last eight games, SRH is another team that seems to be peaking at the right time. The belligerent batting line-up has done the job and has been supported well by bowlers led by Pat Cummins.

They are on 14 points with two games to go against CSK and RCB. SRH would need at least two more points if not four to make

the play-offs with their net run rate of 0.031 also in their favour. Their fifth loss in 12 games came against Gujarat Titans on Tuesday night.

Chennai Super Kings:

Having lost their first three games, CSK bounced back with six wins in their last eight matches. They would back themselves to collect two points against Lucknow Super Giants on May 15 before taking on SRH and Gujarat Titans in their final two league games.

Only 18 points will ensure qualification with teams in contention



playing each other over the course of the next 10 days, leaving CSK to win all their remaining games.

Kolkata Knight Riders:

The Ajinkya Rahane-led team had a disastrous first half but managed to stay alive with wins in last four games after losing six in a row.

They still have a game in hand compared to other teams and can reach a maximum of 17 points which may be enough for qualification. KKR are playing their last three games at home.

Rajasthan Royals:

Despite the individual brilliance of Vaibhav Sooryavanshi and Dhruv Jurel, Royals have failed to find consistency. They started with four wins on the trot but lost their way after that, losing five of their last seven games. Bowling has been an issue for them just like Punjab Kings. With 12 points from 11 games, Royals too need to win at least a couple of games out of three and hope the other results go their way.

They face Delhi Capitals, Lucknow Super Giants and Mumbai Indians in their remaining games, something that would give them added confidence considering the performance of those opposition teams.

Delhi Capitals:

Delhi's hopes hang by a thread though the Axar Patel-led side has already started planning for the next season. Despite the win over Punjab Kings, they have too much to do to make the play-offs. They sit on 10 points from 12 games and can reach a maximum of 14 points. Even wins with big margins may not be enough. (PTI)

Gyaneshwari bags 2 medals at Asian Senior

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ Gandhinagar

India's Gyaneshwari Yadav bagged a double by winning silver and bronze medals in the 53kg category at the 2026 Asian Senior Weightlifting Championships here on Wednesday.

Gyaneshwari won a silver in the snatch section and then an overall bronze medal in the event with a combined lift of 194kg. The gold medal in the category was claimed



by Jinlan Zhao of China with a total lift of 216kg, while the silver went to Vietnam's Hoai Huong Nguyen with a total of 195kg. Komal Kohar had opened India's medal count, winning a bronze in the women's 48kg on Monday.

The championships, which started on Monday at the Mahatma Mandir & Exhibition Centre features 178 lifters from 28 Asian nations and two Commonwealth countries and serves as a qualifying event for the 2026 Commonwealth Games.

Cummins fined for slow over rate

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Ahmedabad

Sunrisers Hyderabad skipper Pat Cummins has been fined for maintaining a slow over rate in the game against Gujarat Titans in an IPL match here.

Cummins was penalised ₹12 lakh. “As this was his team's first offence of the season under Article 2.22 of the IPL's Code of Conduct, which pertains to minimum over-rate offences, Cummins was fined INR 12 lakhs,” the IPL said in a statement.



SRH suffered a crushing 82-run loss against GT at the Narendra Modi Stadium on Tuesday night. Chasing GT's 168 for five, SRH were bundled out for a paltry 86 in 14.5 overs.

Zoravar Singh out of India's Asian Games shooting squad



AJAI MASAND ■ New Delhi

Asia's No. 1 and world No. 6 trap shooter Zoravar Singh Sandhu has been left out of the proposed Indian shotgun contingent for this year's Asian Games despite the fact that the veteran shooter is one of top trap shooter in the country and clinched a bronze medal at the prestigious World Championships last year. Zoravar endured a dip in form during the National Championships and domestic selection trials — events he was required to compete in despite being on a relentless international schedule in preparation for the World Championships and World Cup Finals.

Those underwhelming scores in the national trials ultimately cost him a place in the Asian Games-bound squad, even though he was ranked world No. 4 barely a month ago.

Zoravar has urged the National Rifle Association of India (NRAI) to “review” its decision, pointing out that he has registered the best international scores among Indian trap shooters over the last six months.

The federation, however, has maintained that it will “strictly go by the selection policy put in place one or one-and-a-half years ago”.

The proposed men's trap team — which NRAI secretary-general Pawankumar Singh said is “99 per cent” likely to remain unchanged — features Kynan Chenai, Ahvar Rizvi and Shapath Bhardwaj for the continental showpiece to be held in Aichi’s Nagoya from September 19 to October 4.

Zoravar, 47, became only the third Indian trap shooter to win a medal at the World Championships when he clinched bronze in Athens in October last year. (PTI)

Mohun Bagan's ex-chief Tutu Bose dies at 79

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ Kolkata

Former Mohun Bagan President Swapan Sadhan Bose, fondly known as “Tutu Babu” in Kolkata's Maidan circles, has died after suffering a cardiac arrest. He was 79.

Bose is survived by his sons Srinjay and Soumik. Srinjay is the current Mohun Bagan secretary. Bose, one of the most influential figures in Indian football administration, had been undergoing treatment at a private hospital here for multiple health complications. He died around 11.45 pm on Tuesday, according to family sources.

His mortal remains will be kept at the Mohun Bagan club tent on Wednesday for fans and sports lovers to pay their last respects. The crema-



tion will take place at 4.30 pm later in the day.

“It is with deepest sorrow that we announce the passing of Tutu Bose. He was the best father and grandfather one could ever have, a remarkable administrator, and the strongest pillar of support for everyone around him. A true banyan tree in our lives,” his grandson Arinjoy Bose posted on Facebook.

Bose played a defining role in shaping Mohun Bagan in the modern era.

Patience, simplicity worked on a sticky wicket: Kagiso Rabada

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ Ahmedabad

Following the example set by Sunrisers Hyderabad bowlers and sticking to Test-match lines and lengths with patience and simplicity worked in his favour, said Gujarat Titans pacer Kagiso Rabada after their massive win here on Tuesday.

Gujarat Titans rose to the No. 1 spot in the IPL 2026 points table with an 82-run hammering of the Sunrisers Hyderabad in their clash here on Tuesday.

With Kagiso Rabada returning 3/28, Jason Holder claiming 3/20 and Mohammed Siraj taking 1/11, the visitors were shot out for 86 in 14.5 overs in reply to Gujarat Titans' 168 for five.

“Season in, season out, all you try to do is do the best you can. I have been backed



and it has been clear what my role has been: leave everything out for the team. Rhythm is everything,” Rabada told the broadcaster after the match.

“100 per cent,” he replied when asked if Test match length was the right approach with the ball.

“They showed how to bowl on it and we tried to follow suit. Wicket got a little more sticky and patience and simplicity worked,” he added.

Talking about his bowling partnerships with the other pacers, Rabada said understanding the nature of the

pitch becomes imperative for their success.

“(It is) about bowling as much as I can but also preserving myself to be match ready. Need to find a way to somehow click, (it is) just about finding out the kind of pitch we are playing on and bowling accordingly,” he said.

“We each have our own natural attributes, and it is about seeing how much you can extract, without looking too far ahead. If your strength is not working out, then you can look at something else,” the Proteas pacer added.

Gujarat Titans skipper Shubman Gill said his side does not believe in playing a particular brand of cricket but prefers adapting to the conditions on offer.