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EYE

When her Violin Sings

Violin virtuoso N Rajam, 88, on reimagining the Carnatic violin in the Hindustani vocal tradition for seven decades

SCREEN

Inspired by Partition survivors, Imtiaz Ali's *Main Vaapas Aaunga* is a tribute to a generation that carried stories of home and loss



presents

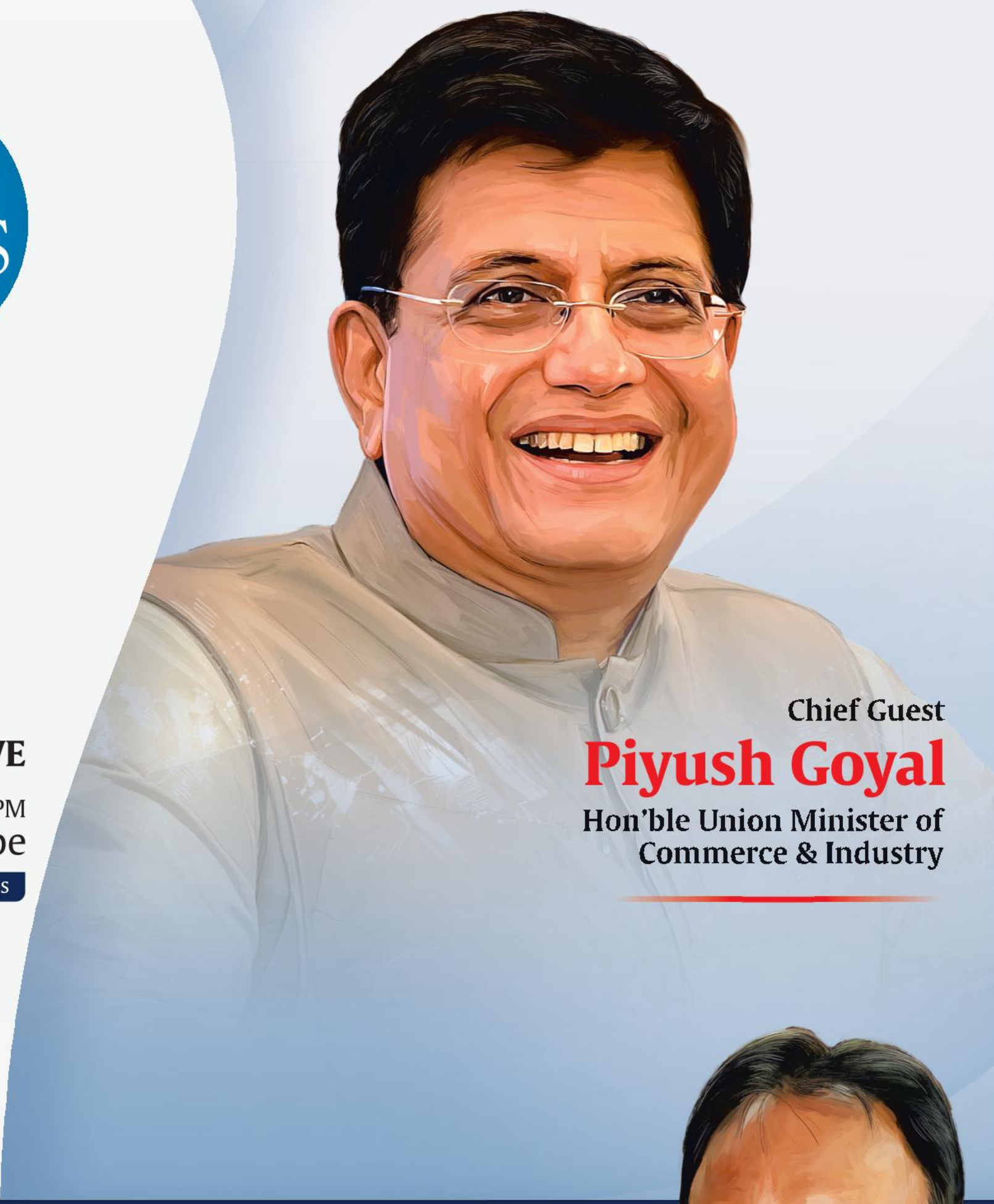


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Chief Guest

Piyush Goyal

Hon'ble Union Minister of
Commerce & Industry



Lifetime Achievement

Sanjiv Bajaj

Chairman & Managing Director
Bajaj Finserv

Banker of the Year

K Satyanarayana Raju

Former Managing Director & CEO
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IRAN DEMANDS ISRAEL WITHDRAWAL FROM LEBANON AS CONDITION FOR REGIONAL CEASEFIRE

US attacks Iranian sites after Tehran strikes Gulf neighbours

Trump: Tehran has less than 22% of its missiles left

Reuters
Dubai, Washington, June 6

US FORCES struck Iranian coastal radar sites on Saturday after shooting down drones launched by Iran toward the Strait of Hormuz, the US military said, in the latest escalation complicating efforts to end the war between the two countries.

The US military believes the four Iranian drones were targeting regional maritime traffic, a US official told *Reuters*. US Central Command said on X that the US then struck Iran's surveillance bases in Goruk and Qeshm Island, which are both on the Strait of Hormuz.

Iran's foreign ministry said the US action broke an April 8 ceasefire, adding that repeated such violations showed Washington had no intention of reducing tensions. It warned that the United States would bear responsibility for the consequences of its "illegal actions" and any further escalation.

Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps said it had attacked US bases in Kuwait and Bahrain in retaliation for US strikes and fired at four tankers trying to cross the strait without its permission. Kuwait's army said on Saturday it engaged seven ballistic missiles that entered the



Israeli troops gather on the border with Lebanon in northern Israel, on Saturday. AP

country's airspace early in the morning and passed over several residential areas, resulting in the fall of some debris. The army added that the Iranian attack caused material damage but no casualties. In Bahrain sirens sounded and residents were urged to seek shelter.

Kuwait and Bahrain condemned the strikes. Kuwait's foreign ministry described Iranian attacks, including the latest one on Saturday, as "blatant" aggression that threatened citizens, residents, and regional security, a ministry statement said.

Iran later said it had hit US bases in both countries with ballistic missiles but the US military said six missiles were intercepted and a seventh did not reach its target.

Iranian state media reported Mohsin Naqvi, the interior min-

ister of Pakistan, which has been mediating an end to the conflict, was on his way to Tehran on Saturday. A Pakistani source said Naqvi would carry a message from Pakistan to the Iranian Supreme Leader Mojtaba Khamenei.

US President Donald Trump is facing mounting domestic political pressure due to rising gas prices to bring the unpopular war to an end. He told *NBC* that while most of Iran's drone and missile manufacturing facilities had been destroyed.

"They have some missiles, they have some drones. I would say percentage wise, maybe 21%-22% of their missiles. It's a lot of missiles, but it's not what it was when we first attacked," Trump told *NBC News*. When asked why Iran's leaders were not more inclined to strike a deal, if they

are as desperate as he has portrayed them, Trump said: "Because they are strong. They're proud. There are things they never thought they'd be doing that they're going to have to do, they've got no choice, and it takes a little while."

Mohsen Rezaei, an adviser to Iran's supreme leader, told *CNN* on Friday that a peace deal hinged on the Trump administration unfreezing \$24 billion in Iranian assets, and warned that the US would "enter into a dark corridor" if it resumed attacks.

Iran has made a ceasefire between Israel and Hezbollah a condition for any peace deal with Washington. Hezbollah leader Naim Qassem this week rejected a US-brokered pact between Israel and the Lebanese government to halt the fighting in Lebanon.

Lebanese army officers among 9 killed in Israeli strikes despite ceasefire deal

Associated Press
Beirut, June 6

ISRAELI AIRSTRIKES on southern Lebanon on Saturday killed nine people including three members of the Lebanese military, the Lebanese army and state media said, days after the two sides reached a new ceasefire deal.

An airstrike on a vehicle on a road linking the city of Nabatiyeh with the town of Marjayoun killed a brigadier general, a captain and another soldier, the army said, without immediately releasing their names. Another airstrike on the southern village of Saksakiyah killed six people and wounded four, state-run *National News Agency* said.

"The continued, deliberate, and repeated Israeli aggression against Lebanon, its people and its army only strengthens our resolve, faith and determination," the army said.

It said Israel's attacks aim to thwart all efforts "to reach a solution that would restore stability, establish a comprehensive ceasefire and lead to the Israeli withdrawal from the occupied Lebanese territories."

Ukraine strikes St Petersburg again after Putin rejects talks

Associated Press
St Petersburg, June 6

RESIDENTS OF St Petersburg were told not to leave their homes after a large-scale Ukrainian drone attack targeted Russia's second-largest city Saturday morning, underscoring Kyiv's growing ability to hit deep inside Russia.

The attack came a day after Russian President Vladimir Putin refused an offer to meet his Ukrainian counterpart.

St Petersburg Governor Alexander Beglov said three people sustained minor injuries in the attack. He advised residents not to go outside and warned of possible disruptions to mobile internet service, while regional Governor Alexander Drozdenko said 141 drones were shot down over the surrounding Leningrad region in what he called an "unprecedented attack."

Russia's Defense Ministry said its air defenses shot down 376 Ukrainian drones.

"Last night, our drones covered a distance of about 1,000 kilometers to the St. Petersburg region—to the enemy navy's arsenals and a base in Kronstadt," Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy wrote on X, adding that drones also hit an oil depot in Russia's southern Krasnodar region.

The renewed attack on St. Petersburg is the latest embarrassing blow to Putin's efforts to cast the conflict as a distant event that doesn't affect Russian daily life.

A Ukrainian drone strike set ablaze an oil terminal in the city and hit a nearby naval base



A soldier reacts as an MRLS BM-21 "Grad" fires at Russian positions near Kostiantynivka, Donetsk region, Ukraine. AP

Wednesday, hours before the opening of the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum, Putin's annual showcase for investment.

Speaking at the forum, Putin said Thursday that Russia will strengthen its air defenses to counter recent Ukrainian drone attacks, which have reached deep inside his country and cast a cloud over the event in his hometown of St Petersburg.

Putin on Friday rejected a proposal by Zelenskyy for a face-to-face meeting on the 4-year-old conflict, saying he sees "no point" in it. Thursday's letter, the first public message Zelenskyy has written directly to Putin since Russia sent troops into Ukraine in 2022, was a sweeping critique of the Russian leader's 26 years in power, as well as some taunts about his age.

Responding to Putin's dismissal of the proposed meeting, Ukrainian Foreign Minister Andrii Sybiha said

E. EXPLAINED

Kyiv strikes deeper into Moscow

The strikes show Ukraine can hit deep inside Russia, embarrassing Putin and disrupting his image of distance from the war. Moscow's refusal to meet Zelenskyy suggests no diplomacy soon, while both sides lean harder on long-range attacks and air defenses in coming months.

Saturday that things would "only get worse for Russia."

"Failures will get more humiliating," he wrote on X, warning that there are "no safe places in Russia that can be exempt" from Ukrainian long-range attacks, and that the intensity of attacks "will continue to grow."

In Spain, Pope urges leaders to ease divisions, pursue peace

Reuters
Madrid, June 6

POPE LEO on Saturday urged global leaders to avoid dividing their electorates with "sterile simplifications" to gain popularity and called on them to listen to the world's cries for peace, in a forceful speech opening a week-long tour of Spain.

Leo, who has angered US President Donald Trump by criticising his anti-immigration policies and the Iran war, will meet homeless people in Madrid and migrants in the Canary Islands during a visit he has said he hopes will set an

example to the world about respecting "every human being."

"Today, the temptation to gain popularity by fanning the flames of polarization seems to have grown rather than diminished, and human dignity continues to be violated," Leo said in a speech before King Felipe VI at the Royal Palace in Madrid.

"I invite everyone to set aside the divisive and polarizing narratives of your societal reality and history, so as to overcome sterile simplifications through the fruitful appreciation of complexity," he added.

Technology was partly to blame for creating an environ-



Pope Leo XIV meets Spain's King Felipe VI, Queen Letizia, Princess Leonor and Infanta Sofia at Madrid's Royal Palace on Saturday. REUTERS

ment which magnifies prejudices and weakens critical thinking, Leo said. The world

was crying "from its depths for peace," he said.

He drew on Spain's history

as an example of peaceful cohabitation between religions and cultures, making reference to how Christians, Muslims and Jews cooperated during medieval times to enhance human knowledge by translating Arabic texts into Latin, Spanish and Hebrew at the School of Translators in Toledo.

"Your own history suggests that a culture of encounter, not confrontation, is what fosters stability and prosperity. In reality, the message of peace, which at present unfortunately strikes some as naïve and others as confrontational, is welcomed by those who do not shut them-

selves off in preconceived ideologies, but are rather open to the truth," he said.

Thousands lined the streets of central Madrid, some waving Vatican and Spanish flags under clear spring skies, as Leo toured in an open-air popemobile. Huge gatherings are expected in the coming days for the first visit to Spain by a pope since 2011.

During his June 6-12 trip, the first US head of the Catholic Church will also inaugurate a new tower in Barcelona's famed Sagrada Familia basilica and will meet survivors of sexual abuse by Catholic clergy, the Vatican said.

• BRIEFLY



Protesters gather outside a vote-counting centre in Seoul, after ballot shortages disrupted voting on Saturday. REUTERS

SOUTH KOREA

Thousands rally for election rerun after ballot shortage

MORE THAN 6,000 people protested on Friday night at a vote-counting centre in Seoul, demanding this week's local elections be repeated after a shortage of ballots prevented some people from voting, the *Yonhap* news agency reported. The crowd gathered at the SK Olympic Handball Stadium, where votes were counted from Wednesday's elections to pick mayors, provincial governors, county officers and members of local assemblies, Reuters witnesses said. People chanted and held up placards with the slogan "Election re-run!", along with national flags. REUTERS

NEW ZEALAND

US approves \$1.5bn maritime helicopter deal

THE US approved the \$1.5 billion sale of five Seahawk maritime helicopters to New Zealand. "The US Department of State has made a determination approving a possible Foreign Military Sale to the Government of New Zealand for MH-60R Multi-Mission Helicopters and," department said. AP

PAKISTAN

Security forces kill 2 terrorists in KPK province

SECURITY FORCES killed two terrorists during an operation in northwest Pakistan on Saturday, officials said. According to the officials, the operation was based on the reports about the presence of terrorists in the Akakhel, Madakhel, and Parakhel areas of Bara tehsil in Khyber district. PTI

Taiwan: Chinese coast guard, research ships spotted near key South China Sea islands

Reuters
Taipei, June 6

TAIWAN SAID on Saturday that a Chinese coast guard ship and a survey ship had carried out the first coordinated operation to "provoke" Taiwan, in waters around strategically located islands in the South China Sea.

The Taiwan-controlled Pratas Islands, a national park toward the northern end of the South China Sea and lightly defended by the coast guard, have emerged as a new pressure point in China's ongoing military and quasi-military operations around Taiwan in an effort to assert Beijing's sovereignty claims.

The islands between southern Taiwan and Hong Kong are seen by some security experts as vulnerable to Chinese attack due to their distance, more than 400 km, from Taiwan island.

Taiwan's coast guard said in a statement that along with a Chinese coast guard ship that had approached the Pratas on Friday, a Chinese oceanographic survey vessel approached the islands on Saturday.

"This is the first observed instance of Chinese coast guard and survey vessels acting in coordination to provoke Taiwan," it said. China's Taiwan Affairs Office did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

US adds \$38 mn for Ebola as CDC warns outbreak could match 2014

Reuters
Washington, June 6

THE UNITED STATES said on Friday it would provide an additional \$38 million for Ebola response efforts, as the CDC warned that without strong public health interventions the outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo could match or surpass the 2014-2016 West Africa crisis.

The additional funds bring the total committed by the US to more than \$200 million in direct funding, the State Department said in a statement.

The department, which did not detail how the money would be spent, said it was working closely with the US Centers for



A health worker disinfects an ambulance at the Mongwalu treatment in Congo on Saturday. AP

Disease Control and Prevention, as well as the DRC and Uganda to "mount a rapid and comprehensive response" to the outbreak. The CDC published three official scientific reports

on the outbreak on Friday, in part to marshal resources across the international community, said Dr. Satish Pillai, the incident manager for the agency's Ebola response.

The documents are the first such reports to be published since the World Health Organization declared an emergency of international concern on May 17 over the Bundibugyo strain of Ebola, for which there is no approved vaccine or treatment.

CDC model scenarios show that without strong public health interventions, the outbreak of the Bundibugyo strain of Ebola in the DRC could become as large as, or even larger than, the 2014-2016 West Africa outbreak, the agency said.

N Korea unveils new warship ahead of Xi visit

Seoul: North Korean leader Kim Jong Un observed sea trials of a new warship repaired after a failed launch last year and vowed to accelerate efforts to build a nuclear-armed navy, state media said Saturday, showcasing his expanding military capabilities ahead of a visit by Chinese leader Xi Jinping.

North Korea's official *Korean Central News Agency* said Kim visited the 5,000-ton destroyer Kang Kon on Thursday as it underwent capability tests. Photos released by the agency showed him accompanied by his teenage daughter, whom South Korean officials say may be named as his successor. AP

• CHINA'S HUMANOID ROBOT MAKERS SAY THEY HAVE THOUSANDS OF ORDERS, BUT EXPERTS WARN DEMAND STILL TRAILS THE COUNTRY'S PRODUCTION CAPACITY

China can build humanoids at scale; the hard part is finding enough buyers

Chan Ho-Him
Hong Kong, June 6

CHINESE-MADE humanoid robots are making waves with their ability to do backflips, direct traffic, and even make coffee as the companies developing them seek ways to expand and dominate the market.

Robot makers in China say they have thousands of orders from both the government and private businesses for humanoids that can do such things as sort parcels at postal centers, as the country finds ways to cope with an aging population and rising labor costs.

However, some experts believe demand for humanoids

lags the capacity to build them.

China and the United States dominate research for what Morgan Stanley estimates is a \$5 trillion humanoid robots market. By some measures, the US holds an upper hand in developing the artificial intelligence for such robots' high-level computing power, or "brains." But as the world's factory floor, China leads in mass production capacity, supplies of hardware and harvesting of data for training robots.

The Shanghai-based startup Matrix Robotics makes humanoid robots that employ AI. Its flagship humanoid robot, the "MATRIX-3," stands nearly 5.6 feet (1.7 meters) tall and is

equipped with hands able to make finely controlled movements. They are priced at around \$99,000 per unit.

Customers for the roughly 1,000 orders it has received include coffee chains and hotels, its founder and CEO Allan Zhang, who formerly worked for Tesla, said at a recent robotics expo in Macao.

So far, Matrix has made only a few hundred of the robots, though it said it will be capable of delivering 5,000 units within this year, depending on the number of orders.

EngineAI, a startup based in southern China's Shenzhen, says its full-sized humanoid robots could be used as security



Workers assemble a robot at the LY iTech Beijing Super Factory in the Beijing E-Town on the outskirts of the city. FILE

guards and museum guides. They also perform, with dancing and boxing.

A basic edition of its humanoid costs 180,000 yuan (\$26,600). "The next step will be

to move into more real-life scenarios," said Issac Li, EngineAI's head of brand and marketing.

Most humanoid robots are still performative rather than functional, falling short of working in messy, unpredictable environments, said Samm Sacks, a senior fellow at the New America think tank focused on Chinese technology.

"The use cases of these robots are still so limited," said Chibo Tang of the venture capital firm Gobi Partners, which invests in technology startups including robotics companies. "Without the demand and without that scale from the market, these companies are not able to really go into mass production."

China had more than 140 humanoid robot manufacturers and more than 330 models in 2025, according to the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology. Last year, the Chinese government even publicly warned about the risk of a bubble in the industry given the lagging state of commercialization and applications.

Corporate and academic labs are buying humanoid robots for research. And in China, many of the more than 2 billion yuan (\$295 million) worth of orders in 2025 came from state-owned enterprises for use in places such as power plants, data centers or for entertainment, Morgan Stanley said.

"The economics are tough: humanoid robots remain expensive to produce, fragile in operation, and dependent on highly structured environments to function," Sacks explained. There's "a long way to go to get to a level of functionality where people will actually feel comfortable having them in their homes providing care for elderly or children," she said.

The more viable commercial path will more likely be through industrial and logistics settings, Sacks said. But many factories in China and elsewhere already are equipped with non-humanoid robotic arms that perform repetitive functions and may not need humanoid robots. AP



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BUILD QUESTION BANK FOR NEET, JEE ETC

Plan on NTA table: Question setters may not know which test they are working for

Generate test from bank; goal: no one individual has access to full paper

Ritika Chopra
Mumbai, New Delhi, June 6

WEEKS AFTER the NEET-UG 2026 paper leak exposed vulnerabilities at the most confidential stage of the examination process, the National Testing Agency (NTA) is working on a fundamental redesign of how question papers are created. Key to this is delinking paper-setting from specific examinations altogether and moving towards what officials call a “zero-trust architecture,” one where the system trusts processes over individuals. Under this proposal, now under discussion within the gov-

ernment for next year’s exam, subject experts invited to frame questions would no longer know whether the questions they are setting are meant for NEET, JEE or any other examination conducted by the NTA.

Instead, their questions would be added to a large central repository from which exam papers would later be generated, significantly reducing the number of individuals with knowledge of the final paper.

The move follows the CBI’s investigation into the NEET-UG 2026 leak, which has so far resulted in the arrest of 13 people, including translators

»CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

FULL COVERAGE



● CONG SILENT, ITS ALLIES SUPPORT CJP’S PROTEST
● HOW POLICE ACCOMMODATED PROTESTERS

PAGE 7

Happening today

● LADAKH L-G V K SAXENA will travel to Mongolia to accompany the relics of two disciples of Lord Buddha from Ulaanbaatar to New Delhi. The relics were transferred to Mongolia on May 30 for a 10-day public exposition.

● FRENCH PRESIDENT Emmanuel Macron, British PM Keir Starmer and German Chancellor Friedrich Merz will hold talks with Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy in London.

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NATION



INDIA AND NEPAL VOW TO TAKE BILATERAL TIES TO NEW HEIGHTS P 8

VERIFY NATIONALITY OF 2,860 PEOPLE FOR THEIR DEPORTATION: DELHI TO DHAKA P 7

● NOW IN CUSTODY, SWARUP BISWAS DOMINATED TOLLYWOOD’S ADMINISTRATIVE POWER STRUCTURE FOR YEARS

Curtains down on TMC leader pulling all strings? Bengal film world thinks so

Sweetie Kumari
Kolkata, June 6

A STRUGGLING Tollywood needs a good hit. Now, it doesn’t have to look far for a script.

In the series of twists that have followed the West Bengal Assembly election results, police Thursday night swooped down on Trinamool Congress leader Swarup Biswas, the man who for the past decade has called the shots in the state’s film industry, deciding who gets work and who can’t,

wielding “bans” as his weapon. Biswas’s Facebook bio simply says “politician”, the one-word descriptor telling as much as it conceals about the clout enjoyed by the 51-year-old who never held any official position in the TMC but, for years, sat at the top of Tollywood’s administrative power structure as the President of the Federation of Cine Technicians & Workers of Eastern India (FCTWEI). After the results, as the chorus of

»CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

SETS 7-DAY DEADLINE, THREATENS TO WIDEN PROTESTS ACROSS COUNTRY

At first protest, CJP calls for Pradhan’s resignation

Opp parties back demand, BJP chief says some want to push youth towards ‘negative politics’

Drishti Jain, Pragynesh, Devansh Mittal, Alok Singh & Jatin Anand
New Delhi, June 6

HUNDREDS OF students, competitive exam aspirants and supporters gathered at Jantar Mantar in the Capital on Saturday in a protest led by the weeks-old online satirical platform Cockroach Janta Party (CJP), demanding the resignation of Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan over alleged irregularities in national examinations.

The protest led by CJP founder Abhijeet Dipke, who arrived from the United States in the morning, drew a largely young crowd and unfolded under heavy security. While it centred on the demand that Pradhan step down, Dipke also framed the agitation as a generational one, against the “politics of fear” and “communal politics”.

»CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



CJP founder Abhijeet Dipke with activist Sonam Wangchuk at Jantar Mantar, Saturday. PRAVEEN KHANNA

Business as Usual
By EP UNNY



OPINION PAGE 12
LET US TALK ABOUT EDUCATION

Minister isn’t running away... he’s taken steps to fix the problem: Rijiju

IDEA EXCHANGE
Abhinaya Harigovind
New Delhi, June 6

CALLING THE demand for the resignation of Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan over the NEET leak and the CBSE on-screen marking glitches “political,” Union Parliamen-



Union Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju at the Idea Exchange Friday. RENUKA PURI

tary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju said Friday that the Education

»CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

EYE

When her Violin Sings

Violin virtuoso N Rajam, 88, on reimagining the Carnatic violin in the Hindustani vocal tradition for seven decades

SCREEN

Inspired by Partition survivors, Imtiaz Ali’s *Main Vaapas Aaunga* is a tribute to a generation that carried stories of home and loss



Prime Minister Narendra Modi chairs a meeting of the Economic Advisory Council in New Delhi, Saturday. PTI

Sense in PM-EAC meeting: Moves to attract foreign funds can get \$70 billion

Siddharth Upasani
New Delhi, June 6

THE STEPS taken by the government and the Reserve Bank of India on Friday are likely to attract around \$70 billion in foreign funds, according to the discussions at the meeting of the Economic Advisory Council chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday.

While the Ministry of Finance did away with the tax on long-term and short-term capital gains as well as the withholding tax on investment by FIs in government bonds, the RBI made it easier for banks to mobilise foreign deposits and for PSUs to raise external commercial borrowings.

The inflow of a sizable por-

tion of foreign funds is contingent on the inclusion of government bonds in the Bloomberg Global Aggregate Bond Index. This is crucial to attracting passive investment flows; several global funds track the weight a certain country has in these bond indices, and invest accordingly. The inflows into the government debt market helps lower the interest paid by the Centre on its borrowings.

After the meeting, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who chaired the meeting said on social media platform X, “Deliberated on a wide range of issues relating to India’s economic transformation and long-term development priorities. Also shared perspectives on adding

»CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Cracks widen in Opp INDIA bloc, CPI(M), JMM call out Cong moves

Manoj CG
New Delhi, June 6

DAYS AFTER the DMK announced that it will skip a Congress-convened meeting of the INDIA bloc scheduled for June 8, fresh rifts have surfaced in the Opposition alliance, with the CPI(M) and the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) conveying their displeasure to the Congress leadership over its style of functioning.

While the JMM is upset with



Jharkhand CM Hemant Soren with Congress leaders Bhupesh Baghel and Ajay Sharma in Ranchi, Saturday. PTI

the Congress for “unilaterally” announcing a candidate for one of the two Rajya Sabha seats bound for elections from Jharkhand, the CPI(M) has conveyed its strong displeasure over attacks on former Kerala chief minister Pinarayi Vijayan by Congress leaders, including Leader of the Opposition (LoP) in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi, during their campaigns in the recently concluded Assembly elections.

»CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

PROJECT GLASSWING

Key cybersecurity agencies set to get access to Anthropic’s Mythos

Discussions on to provide AI model to largest IT services companies, too

Soumyarendra Barik
New Delhi, June 6

US ARTIFICIAL intelligence company Anthropic is extending access to its closely guarded cybersecurity initiative, Project Glasswing, to a select set of organisations in India, including

key government entities that are responsible for safeguarding cybersecurity across sectors like banking, telecom, and power, *The Indian Express* has learned.

Government agencies such as the Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C); Indian

»CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

E. EXPLAINED

Firewalling systems

AI model Mythos can detect critical software vulnerabilities. This matters for India as it shields vital infrastructure like banking and power, even as Anthropic battles the US Pentagon over boundaries of AI misuse.

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Main Hoon Na!



Swarup Biswas with TMC chief Mamata Banerjee. Biswas headed the Federation of Cine Technicians & Workers of Eastern India. FILE



Graduation ceremony

Indian Military Academy Commandant Lt Gen Nagendra Singh presents JNU degrees to cadets during the graduation ceremony of the Army Cadet College Wing in Dehradun on Saturday. PTI

In Kerala, Metro man Sreedharan’s Rs 60,000-cr solar rail plan gets going

Shaju Philip
Thiruvananthapuram, June 6

TAKING FORWARD Metro man E Sreedharan’s proposal for a high-speed rail corridor, the Congress government in Kerala has constituted an expert panel to study the project’s technical and financial feasibility, environmental impact, socio-economic benefits and implementation challenges.

Last week, Sreedharan submitted the DMRC’s interim report for the Kerala high-speed rail corridor between the state capital Thiruvananthapuram and Kannur in north Kerala.

The state government has decided to take forward the DMRC proposal after winding up all steps related to the SilverLine, or K-Rail, project of the previous CPI(M) regime. K-Rail had been fiercely opposed by the Congress when it was in the opposition.

In February this year, Sreedharan opened an office for the project in his hometown Ponnani in Malappuram district, towards which the previous CPI(M) regime had remained tepid.

The order issued by the transport department said the DMRC interim report would be examined by an expert committee comprising Transport Secretary, J Vinayan (railways), Dr C Veeramani (finance) and Sreedhar Radhakrishnan (environment). The order, issued on Friday, said the committee should submit its recommendations and remarks within three weeks.

The proposed Kerala High-Speed Rail (KHSR) is a 473.20-km double line from Thiruvananthapuram City (Poojapura) to Kannur (Mundayad) with 23 stations. The line will be fully elevated except for a 6.5-km

Govt to take forward DMRC proposal after winding up all steps related to SilverLine, or K-Rail — project of previous CPI(M) regime

tunnel stretch in Thiruvananthapuram city. It will connect all Kerala airports except Kannur, which will be linked through an exclusive 10-km road. The proposed travel time from Thiruvananthapuram to Kannur is 3 hours and 30 minutes.

The report said the system’s energy requirements would be met through a captive solar network, which would also sell surplus power to the Kerala State Electricity Board (KSEB). If implemented, it would become the world’s first green rail corridor, the report said.

The project cost is estimated at Rs 60,000 crore, of which Rs 36,000 crore will be met through equity contributions by the Centre and the state in a 51:49 ratio. The remaining Rs 24,000 crore is proposed to be raised through crowdfunding.

The report said the HSR line has been proposed on standard gauge because axle load can be reduced to 15 tonnes against 25 tonnes on broad gauge, substantially lowering investment and operational costs. It added that all advanced countries use standard gauge for high-speed operations, making future upgrades and innovations easier to adopt and helping India keep pace with global trends and move towards self-sufficiency.

The interim report said the trains would have a maximum design speed of 200 kmph, maximum operational speed of 180 kmph and average commercial speed of 140 kmph.

Senior IPS officer’s wife dies in elephant attack at family’s coffee estate

Express News Service
Bengaluru, June 6

THE WIFE of a senior IPS officer was killed in an elephant attack at the family’s coffee estate in Karnataka’s Kodagu district on Friday morning, bringing renewed focus on the continuing human-elephant conflict in the region.

Officials said that the incident occurred between 10 am and 10.15 am near Konanakatte village when Sandhya Achaya, 51, the wife of Sunil Achaya, had gone to inspect work at the estate near Titimati along with the estate manager and driver.

A wild elephant reportedly emerged unexpectedly and charged at the group. While the manager and driver managed to escape, Sandhya was caught in the attack and suffered severe injuries. She was immediately shifted to a nearby hospital but succumbed to her injuries during treatment, officials said.

“A case has been registered and an inquiry has been initiated into the incident. Forest department officials are also investigating the circumstances that led to the attack and the movement of the elephant in the area,” Bindu Mani, Kodagu Superintendent of Police, said.

Following the incident, Karnataka Chief Minister D K Shivakumar made a phone call to Sunil Achaya, who is serving in

a senior position in Delhi, and conveyed his condolences. Describing the incident as deeply tragic, Shivakumar expressed solidarity with the bereaved family and prayed for strength to help them cope with the loss.

He also said that he had instructed authorities to take necessary measures to prevent further incidents involving wild elephants in the region.

The latest fatality comes amid a series of elephant attacks reported from Kodagu this year. In March, 55-year-old Jalajakshi of Valnoor village in Kodagu was killed in a wild elephant attack near a forest-fringe area. The district has witnessed several such incidents in recent months, prompting protests by residents and farmers and renewed calls for measures to curb human-elephant conflict.

In response, the Forest Department has undertaken a range of mitigation measures, including the installation of rail barricades, construction of elephant-proof trenches, strengthening of solar fencing, deployment of elephant task force personnel, and efforts to capture identified problem elephants. However, residents and plantation owners continue to express concern over the frequent movement of elephants into coffee estates and human settlements bordering forest areas.

[FROM PAGE 1 | FULL REPORTS ON WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM]

CJP’s first protest

Addressing the crowd, Dipke set a deadline. He said that if Pradhan did not resign by 5 pm, the CJP would take its protest to cities across the country through the week, and return to Jantar Mantar the following Saturday.

At a press conference later in the day, CJP spokespersons said Pradhan should either resign or be dismissed within a week, failing which the movement would “spread throughout the country”. Pradhan has been under fire for a series of recent controversies, including the leak of the NEET-UG questions and the chaos and confusion over the on-screen marking system used in CBSE’s Class 12 exam.

“You can delete our post but you cannot erase us,” Dipke said, referring to the deletion of the party’s X account — it was officially withheld in India on May 21 — which he framed as an attempt to suppress the movement.

He said his mother cried more on his return than when he had left for the US, as she feared he would be arrested. “But this is not a fear that just my mother has. In this country, if any student or youth speaks on politics, speaks against this government, their mother fears they will be thrown behind bars,” he alleged.

“How long will we live in fear? Tell them, we are not scared,” he said. “The youth of the country will no longer fear, they will fight,” he said.

The day began hours earlier and several kilometres away, at the IGI Airport. Dipke, who flew in from the US, was met by senior police officers at Terminal 3 soon after clearing immigration.

Rather than have him approach the Parliament Street police station — where permission for a protest at Jantar Mantar is normally sought 24 hours in advance — police facilitated the clearance inside the airport itself to “avoid any chaos”, an official said.

Dipke was handed a permission letter allowing a single day’s protest at Jantar Mantar, between 10 am and 5 pm. He emerged at around 9.15 am holding a copy of B R Ambedkar’s *My Autobiography*. He told reporters waiting outside that the Education Minister “must resign”. He later headed to Jantar Mantar, where, by the time the demonstration gathered pace, the crowd had swelled to several hundreds — overwhelmingly young, with a scattering of older supporters and parents. Many wore cockroach masks and carried textbooks, posters and the national flag, in keeping with the organisers’ appeal.

Activist Sonam Wangchuk, who arrived at Jantar Mantar in the afternoon, described the gathering as “an appeal rather than a protest”, saying the movement sought dialogue, not confrontation. “In a respected democracy, we hope we do not

have to raise slogans to be heard,” he told the crowd, adding that the cooperation of the police was “a major achievement” and “a victory for India and even for the government”.

Wangchuk pressed for reforms beyond the immediate demand. “The foundation of a Viksit Bharat lies not in Delhi’s private schools but in schools located in villages,” he said. “The children of all elected representatives should study in government schools.”

He urged that the movement extend beyond exams to a systemic change across education and the environment, calling it “a beginning, not an end”, and appealing for it to be carried forward “with love and mutual respect.”

The protest remained largely peaceful, with participants offering flowers to police personnel, as the organisers had urged. There were brief moments of friction as small groups who raised “Jai Shri Ram” slogans attempted to enter the venue and were escorted out by police, but no major confrontation.

Addressing a press conference later, CJP spokesperson Ashutosh Ranka said their peaceful protest marked the beginning of a big movement. “The youth who were called anti-national, Pakistani... have proved that they are the youth of Gandhi and Ambedkar,” he said. “This is a platform for the youth. It is the voice of young people whose concerns have been ignored by the government and the system for years. Today, it has been

proved that the youth of this country are not silent,” he said.

Saurav Das, also a CJP spokesperson, said their supporters had gathered not only from Delhi, but also from Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Maharashtra, the Northeast, Bihar and Chhattisgarh. “Thousands of people joined the protest on the ground. But before this, 8 lakh people had signed a petition demanding Pradhan’s resignation,” he said, adding that the minister should either resign or be dismissed.

CPI leader Annie Raja and CPI-ML general secretary Dipankar Bhattacharya were among those present at the venue.

The protest also drew support from other Opposition leaders, including Shiv Sena (UBT) chief Uddhav Thackeray, Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav, AAP chief Arvind Kejriwal and NCP (SP) leader Rohit Pawar, several of whom backed the demand for accountability over exam irregularities.

Meanwhile, speaking in Ranchi, BJP chief Nitin Nabin said: “Those who want to push the youth of this country towards negative politics, I warn them that the youth of India will engage in positive politics”.

According to a PTI report, Nabin, in an apparent reference to Dipke, said: “Some people sitting abroad assume they can give directions to the youth of India... Today’s youth want to work towards nation-building and secure their future. But some forces are trying to make the country’s youth anti-establishment”.

Rijiju

Minister “is not running away” from the “mistake,” but has taken several steps “to fix the problem.”

Speaking at Idea Exchange at *The Indian Express* Friday, Rijiju responded to questions about the demand for Pradhan’s resignation and the anguish caused to lakhs of students forced to re-take the NEET on June 21 or those left in the lurch over the CBSE on-screen marking glitches.

Pradhan’s office was unavailable for comment.

When it was pointed out that the BJP had demanded the resignation of UPA Ministers over allegations of wrongdoing and wouldn’t it have done the same had it been in the Opposition now, Rijiju said: “There is a difference. If a

fraud is committed by the Minister or the Minister’s staff, then the Minister is responsible... in an autonomous body, if some trouble happens in that autonomous body, then the body is answerable for that.”

“The CBSE is an autonomous body. It is a wing of the government, specifically created for a purpose, for the students, exams; the NTA is there... these are bodies that are not directly monitored by the Minister day-to-day,” he added.

He said that when the BJP was in the Opposition 12 years ago, “every day or every month there was a scam, scandal, corruption charge against the Minister, Ministry and all.”

“In the last 12 years, there is no direct charge against any Minister or Minister’s staff for any taking of bribes, commission, or wrongdoing, or manipulation of the system to

benefit the Minister or Minister’s staff and family. When there is a direct link with the Minister then definitely you have to ask for the resignation of the concerned minister. So, the difference that I want to make is that our Ministers don’t run away from responsibility... (during) the Congress... like the then External Affairs Minister, the charge was against him directly. The first minister to resign during UPA-I was the External Affairs Minister... then subsequently, all those ministers who resigned... (there were) charges against the Minister or the Minister’s office. This (the exam leak) is not a fraud committed by the Education Minister,” Rijiju said.

Pradhan has said that he has taken “moral responsibility”, Rijiju said, and added: “I am very clear that in such cases Ministers should not run away.

Ministers should fix the problem. And that is what Dharmendra Pradhan ji is doing. He has taken numerous steps in the past month. I am confident that the steps taken and results — it will prevent future leaks and any deficiency that was there in the past will be fixed.”

Asked who, on the government’s side, should be held accountable, Rijiju said: “To build the confidence of the students and the system, the Chairman and the Secretary of the Board (CBSE) have been shifted; to demand the resignation of the Education Minister itself is political. The Education Minister has already said that as the head of the Ministry, he takes moral responsibility; the Education Minister is not running away from the error or mistake whoever has committed. He has rather taken it up as a challenge... to fix the problem.”

Plan on NTA table

and subject experts accused of leaking different sections of the question paper.

As reported by *The Indian Express* last week, the nature of the arrests points to the leak occurring during the first phase of the confidential operations (CO-NOPs), which is the highly restricted paper-setting and translation process introduced after the 2024 controversy.

The arrests of translators allegedly linked to the Physics, Chemistry and Biology sections of the exam prompted officials to re-examine the system’s long-standing assumption that trusted experts can safely be given access to complete sections of a paper.

“If the paper is compromised, then it is not a pen-and-paper problem. It is a problem of system design and structure,” a senior government official said. “We are trying to reduce human interface. There has to be a zero-trust architecture.”

Officials said the proposed model would fundamentally change the role of subject experts. Instead of being invited to set questions for specific examination, experts would contribute questions to a common question bank without being told where those questions would eventually be used.

“The domain expert should be examination-agnostic. He should not know whether the question is being set for NEET, JEE or any other examination. The objective is to ensure that no single individual has visibility of the final paper,” the official said.

According to officials, the agency is exploring the creation of a repository containing thousands of questions across subjects. The final paper would then be assembled from this pool using technology-assisted processes designed to maintain subject balance and difficulty levels.

“We can have a bank of

10,000 questions. The final paper can be built from that bank. Technology can help determine difficulty levels and question distribution. The idea is to minimise the number of eyes through which the paper passes,” the official said.

Translation, another area that came under scrutiny following the arrests in the 2026 leak case, may also undergo significant changes. The shift is likely to build on commitments already made by the NTA before the Supreme Court. In an affidavit filed earlier, the agency said it planned to use artificial intelligence for nearly 85 per cent of the translation process, with human experts carrying out the remaining review and validation.

Officials said the agency is now examining how that approach can be integrated into the broader redesign. The objective is not to eliminate human translators but to reduce the amount of time they spend handling sensitive material and limit their visibility of the final paper.

“AI can do the first transla-

tion. The human translator’s role should be limited to checking whether the meaning has been correctly conveyed,” the official said. “Even then, we want to ensure that translators are not necessarily aware of the specific examination for which the material is being prepared. They should be validating questions, not handling complete question papers.”

The push for structural reform comes as the NTA prepares for the NEET-UG re-test scheduled for June 21. Officials said some changes have already been introduced, including the use of a fresh set of subject experts. Discussions are also underway on strengthening the transportation and storage of printed papers after they leave the paper-setting stage.

“Some of the people arrested had been associated with the system for years,” the official said. “That is precisely why the system itself has to trust individuals less and processes more. There is an old question, ‘if the bodyguards themselves become the threat, who protects you?’

BJP briefly, said she had not got work for almost 10 years due to Swarup.

A small-time actor told *The Indian Express*: “If an actor, director or even a technician publicly criticised FCTWEI’s leadership, they wouldn’t just be hauled before the union, but face a quiet, devastating boycott.”

In November 2025, a movie made by film students struggled to get a release as the FCTWEI reportedly objected to federation-approved technicians not being hired for it. Among the several rules the FCTWEI was said to impose is that a filmmaker hire a given number of federation-approved technicians for their project, allegedly regardless of the film’s requirements.

Swarup, in turn, always claimed that the FCTWEI exists to fight for the interests of technicians and that his primary goal was their welfare.

Actor Sujoy Prasad Chatterjee said the “clean-up” needs to go deeper. “Swarup Biswas is just the tip of the iceberg. There are

people who worked with him to pollute the industry and those who sucked up to him.”

Accusing Swarup of causing “massive damage to the Bengali film industry”, actor Aritra Dutta Banik said that, to be fair, the TMC leader was a huge help to daily wage technicians employed in the film industry during Covid, when work came to a standstill. “But the volume of his crimes and wrongdoings is so high that bad far outweighs the good,” Banik said.

BJP leader and minister Dilip Ghosh has asked others to come forward. “Let people know how tyrannical they were and how much they abused power.”

Actor-turned-politician and BJP leader Locket Chatterjee assured that change would come now with the TMC out of power. Talking about her decision to sever ties with the TMC 12 years ago, Chatterjee said she paid a price for doing a press conference “on how Aroop and Swarup Biswas had finished the entertainment industry of Bengal”.

Mythos

Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In); National Critical Information Infrastructure Protection Centre (NCIIPC); and the Department of Telecommunications’ Digital Intelligence Platform (DIP) are among the state-owned entities that are understood to have received access to Anthropic’s advanced frontier AI model Mythos.

Anthropic is also said to have extended access to some cybersecurity-focused research institutions in India, while discussions are underway on providing Mythos Preview to dedicated cybersecurity and AI teams within some of the country’s largest IT services companies, a senior government official said on condition of anonymity.

This move comes as part of Anthropic’s announcement that it would expand Project Glasswing beyond its initial cohort of participants in the US and UK to more than 15 countries, including India.

Under the programme, vetted organisations are granted access to Claude Mythos Preview, an unreleased AI model that Anthropic says is capable of identifying critical software vulnerabilities at a level that could fundamentally alter the balance between cyber attackers and defenders. The company has so far restricted access to the model, citing concerns that its capabil-

ities could be misused if released publicly.

The official added that NCIIPC, which falls under the National Security Advisor in the Prime Minister’s Office, and CERT-In had requested access to Mythos to identify vulnerabilities within India’s critical infrastructure such as banking and power. *The Indian Express* had earlier reported that the Indian government was in conversations with Anthropic’s senior leadership in the US for assistance in gaining access to the model.

Anthropic did not respond to a request for comment.

“Following several weeks of close collaboration with our Project Glasswing partners, the security industry, open-source software maintainers, and the US government, we’re extending the partnership to approximately 150 new organisations. Each one will need to meet our security requirements before they gain access... The organisations in this new group are based in more than 15 countries, and most provide critical infrastructure to many more,” Anthropic said in a blog post.

The new entities with which it is planning to share Mythos Preview operate in industries such as power, water, healthcare, communications, and hardware, Anthropic said. And many of the new partners are vendors — companies or non-profits that maintain codebases that are relied upon by lots of other organisations around the world, including governments.

PM-EAC

more momentum to the reforms journey and ensuring ‘Ease of Living’ as well as ‘Ease of Doing Business’.”

According to a source, who did not wish to be named, while there wasn’t much concern around the West Asia crisis, a key discussion point revolved around the impact of El Nino and sub-par rainfall as forecast by the IMD. “How can India reduce its vulnerability due to the vagaries of the monsoon — this was also discussed,” the source said.

Economists are of the opinion that Friday’s decision to scrap the short-term and long-term capital gains tax on investments by FIIs in government bonds as well as the withholding tax they must pay on their interest income from these debt instruments, will likely accelerate the inclusion of Indian sovereign debt in the Bloomberg Global Aggregate Bond Index. This alone could result in \$20-25 billion inflows over the 10 months.

In recent years, government debt — the bonds it issues to borrow money from the market to cover its fiscal deficit, or the difference between its income and expenditure — has been added to multiple global bond indices. This began with JPMorgan adding India to its emerg-

ing market index beginning June 2024. Subsequently, Bloomberg included India in its Emerging Market Local Currency Index from January 2025 and FTSE Russell to a similar one from September 2025.

“Bloomberg index inclusion, I believe, is on the verge of happening,” a bond market participant told *The Indian Express*.

In mid-January, Bloomberg Index Services Ltd (BISL) had deferred the inclusion of Indian government bonds into its flagship global index, saying it will provide another update by mid-2026. “Overall, responses indicated broad support for the long-term trajectory of the Indian government bond market and for its potential eventual inclusion in global investment grade benchmarks,” BISL had said in a statement on January 13. “At the same time, a number of respondents highlighted important operational and market-infrastructure considerations that merit further evaluation...”

In addition to the removal of taxes on FIIs, Friday also saw the RBI announce several measures to boost foreign inflows, including a temporary concessional forex swap facility for PSUs for their External Commercial Borrowings and the revival of the wildly successful Foreign Currency Non-Resident (Bank) Deposits scheme of 2013, with the central bank bearing the full exchange rate hedging cost.

Opp bloc

CPI(M) general secretary M A Baby has written a strongly-worded letter to Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge to flag the issue. And in an unusual move, the CPI(M) has forwarded the letter to all the constituents of the bloc. “We have seen the letter. Although it is between the Congress and the CPI(M), we can only urge the Congress as the leader of the INDIA bloc to take everyone along to ensure cohesion and unity,” an Opposition leader said.

In his letter to Kharge, Baby said, “There was a systematic campaign by the Congress leadership during the Kerala Assembly elections, that the CPI(M) and the BJP have struck a deal. Further, it was alleged that the CPI(M)’s senior leader, Member of the Polit Bureau and then Chief Minister, Comrade Pinarayi Vijayan, had also struck a deal with Modi. The question was posed ‘Otherwise, why is it that he has not been interrogated or arrested by the Enforcement Directorate?’

“These were not stray remarks made in the heat of an election campaign, but were the centerpiece of your political campaign. Every national leader, Rahul Gandhi, Priyanka Gandhi, and yourself, made such allegations repeatedly,” the CPI(M) chief wrote.

Arguing that the CPI(M) has worked sincerely for the success of the Opposition alliance since its inception in June 2023 as a broad platform to fight the BJP, Baby said: “Strangely, now, the CPI(M) is accused of having a

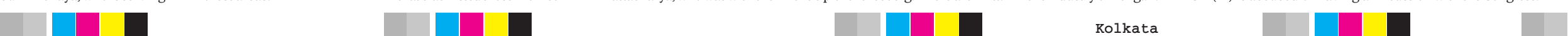
deal with the BJP. This is a canard which we cannot take lightly. This strikes at the very basis of the unity forged against the BJP.”

Baby also stated that Rahul Gandhi has repeatedly called for the ED’s action against Vijayan. “Can this be termed as an anti-BJP stance or is it a case of inviting the Modi government to take illegal punitive action against a fellow Opposition leader? Unless these matters are clarified, the very purpose of the INDIA bloc would be in question,” he said.

Baby said the CPI(M) felt the need to raise the issue in the context of the June 8 meeting, adding that “However, the CPI(M) will fully cooperate in Parliament with the INDIA bloc and other Opposition parties to put up a united fight against the authoritarian, communal, and anti-people policies of the Modi government.”

The JMM is equally upset with the Congress for announcing its candidate — AICC in charge of Kharge’s office Pranav Jha — for one of the two Rajya Sabha seats in the upcoming elections from Jharkhand.

The ruling JMM, led by Chief Minister Hemant Soren, wanted to field its candidates in both the seats from the state. The JMM-Congress alliance has the numbers to win both the seats. The JMM Saturday nominated former minister Baidyanath Ram as its candidate for one seat. On the second seat, JMM general secretary and spokesperson Supriyo Bhattacharya reportedly said that the final decision will be taken on it by the party leadership following a discussion with the Congress.



EXERCISE INTENDED FOR ‘ADMINISTRATIVE PURPOSES’

Govt orders survey of madrasas, says will help identify irregularities

Asks District Magistrates to submit report within July 5

Ravik Bhattacharya
Kolkata, June 6

AFTER MAKING singing of the national song, Vande Mataram, mandatory in madrasas across West Bengal on May 19, the Chief Minister Suwendu Adhikari-led government has ordered all District Magistrates to conduct a block-wise and municipality-wise survey of madrasas to “obtain authentic district-wise data” as well as “identify any irregularities or unlawful activities”, according to an order.

According to a June 5 order by the Principal Secretary, Department of Minority Affairs and Madrasah Education, to all District Magistrates, “The undersigned is directed to request you to undertake a block/municipality-wise survey for collection and compilation of updated information relating to Madrasah educational institutions functioning within your respective jurisdictions,

“The present exercise is intended for administrative purposes, with a view to enabling the Department to obtain authentic district-wise data regarding the nature, status, academic activities, infrastructural facilities, student composition and related particulars of such institutions...”

THE ORDER ON JUNE 5

including institutions that are affiliated, recognised, registered, aided, unaided, un-registered, community-managed, privately managed, or otherwise operating under different educational or administrative arrangements.”

The District Magistrates have been asked to submit a consolidated district report to the department on or before July 5, the order said.

The survey, as per the order, would cover government-recognised, aided as well as unrecognised, unaided, and privately run madrasas across the state.

The exercise is intended “for administrative purposes” and to map district-wise data of academic activities, composition of students and infrastructure, the order said.

“The present exercise is in-

tended for administrative purposes, with a view to enabling the Department to obtain authentic district-wise data regarding the nature, status, academic activities, infrastructural facilities, student composition and related particulars of such institutions for educational planning, child welfare measures and maintenance of educational records,” the order states.

“The exercise may also assist the Government in identifying any irregularities or unlawful activities, if found, and taking corrective measures,” the order said.

However, the order said that the institutions should be permitted to continue their academic activities during the present academic session.

“It is further clarified that the present exercise is confined

solely to the collection and verification of information for administrative purposes. No coercive/closure, or student-displacement related action shall be initiated on the basis of this communication as of now. The institutions concerned shall be permitted to continue their ongoing academic activities without disruption during the present academic session,” the order said.

Along with the directive, a format has been attached for recognised and unrecognised madrasas, which seeks information about its location, status of recognition, names of those in the management, details of students, teaching and non-teaching staff, whether residential or not, and the subjects or courses being taught.

There are around 614 government-recognised and aided madrasas in Bengal but no official estimate of the number of madrasas is available as they are run privately or through various boards and not attached with the state government.

Following the BJP government’s May 19 order making singing of Vande Mataram mandatory, a petition was filed in the Calcutta High Court on June 3, seeking that the order be quashed.

Amid TMC rebel crisis, Mamata pins hopes on INDIA help for firefighting

Atri Mitra
Kolkata, June 6

AMID THE raging discontent within the Trinamool Congress (TMC), the party supremo and former West Bengal chief minister, Mamata Banerjee, has been struggling to firm up a roadmap in a bid to bounce back as an Opposition leader in the state and at the national level.

As part of her efforts, Mamata is set to attend the Opposition INDIA bloc’s meeting scheduled for Monday in Delhi.

While TMC national general secretary Abhishek Banerjee reached Delhi Saturday, Mamata is scheduled to arrive in the national capital on Sunday. She will remain in Delhi till Tuesday.

According to TMC insiders, Mamata and Abhishek would attend the INDIA alliance meeting along with a few senior party MPs.

On Friday, Mamata effected a major organisational reshuffle in her party, packing it with her loyalists and party old-timers.

While retaining her nephew Abhishek as the national general secretary despite widespread criticism of his role in the Trinamool Congress’s debacle in the recent Bengal Assembly polls, she has appointed two joint national secretaries — Rajya Sabha MPs Derek O’Brien and Dola Sen — to assist him, signalling to the party rebels that decisions will be henceforth taken jointly and not unilaterally by Abhishek.

A senior TMC MP said, “Mamata Banerjee already understood that the main discontent in the party’s rank and file is against Abhishek Banerjee. Already, during her organisation reshuffle, Mamata gave space to other senior MPs like Derek O’Brien and Dola Sen to assist Abhishek. She is desperate now to regain her footing in the party as well as credibility on the national stage.”

Ahead of the INDIA bloc

As Mamata arrives in Delhi to attend Opp bloc June 8 meet, senior TMC leader says that she is desperate to regain footing in party as well as credibility on the national stage



TMC chief Mamata Banerjee may face another revolt in her parliamentary party with some MPs expected to defect. PTIFILE

meeting, the Congress, too, is keeping a close eye on the TMC crisis. TMC sources said Mamata was trying to meet Sonia Gandhi during her Delhi visit, but the Gandhi family has yet to confirm a meeting.

A senior Bengal Congress leadersaid, “When Mamata Banerjee was in the winning phase, she said whatever she wanted about the Congress. She also tried to snatch the leadership of the INDIA bloc from the Congress and criticised Rahul Gandhi. Now, she should not think that during her bad time, the Congress will go away. But we will not stand like a close friend either.”

Trinamool leaders maintained that divisions have surfaced among the rebel MLAs over the future role of the party chairperson. While the leader of the rebel party legislators, Ritabrata Banerjee, who was chosen as the Leader of the Opposition (LoP) in the state As-

sembly by about 60 TMC MLAs in defiance of the official party line, suggested that Mamata could remain as the “prodhnan poramorshodata (chief adviser)” in the party, some MLAs of his group have objected to this proposal.

“A leader is a completely different thing, the supreme — what everyone calls a guardian. ‘Prodhnan poramorshodata’ means someone who assists from the outside, superficially. If Mamata Banerjee is not kept as the supreme party leader, we will have to rethink this whole thing,” said rebel MLA Gulshan Mullick.

Sangeeta Roy Basunia, another rebel MLA, said, “Mamata Banerjee is our supreme leader and will remain so. She cannot be an adviser. She is our leader.”

At the same time, Mamata has doubled down on her attempts to regain support from the rebel TMC leaders. Sources said she is also trying to reach

out to the party’s Muslim MLAs, some of whom are reportedly uneasy about Ritabrata’s perceived closeness to the BJP.

Among a total of 80 TMC MLAs elected in the 2026 Assembly polls, 31 are Muslims, and the Ritabrata-led revolt seems to have split this bloc as well.

Several prominent Muslim MLAs — including Sabina Yeasmin, Javed Khan and Akhruzzaman — joined the rebel camp and assumed key positions in its legislative faction.

However, old-guard leader Firhad Hakim and some newer faces like Babar Ali declined to join the rebel camp. Mamata is trying to use these leaders to pacify the rebels.

But Mamata may face another revolt in her parliamentary party, with some party leaders expecting a similar rebellion among Lok Sabha MPs in the coming days. This has prompted speculation in political circles that while Mamata remains in Delhi for the INDIA bloc meeting, some TMC MPs may then approach the Lok Sabha Speaker to seek Abhishek’s removal as their parliamentary party leader.

A senior TMC MP claimed: “When news spread that the TMC legislative party may split, many leaders questioned how the rebel group organised the support of more than 52 MLAs. Ultimately, it went up to 60. Similarly, in the Lok Sabha, the TMC has 28 MPs. We need the support of 19 MPs to oust Abhishek Banerjee. You may see that support may cross 20 also. Many senior as well as first-time MPs and film personalities, close to Abhishek Banerjee, all are rebels now.”

‘Aim was to terrorise people’: CM on arms cache recovery from pond near TMC leader’s house in Sandeshkhali

Tanusree Bose
Kolkata, June 6

THE WEST Bengal STF Saturday recovered a massive cache of weapons of 17 weapons and 39 rounds of cartridges from a pond adjacent to the house of a TMC leader in Sandeshkhali in the North 24 Parganas district.

The STF conducted searches at the residence of TMC leader Robin Das and his brother Gopal, the surrounding areas, and a nearby pond. Both Robin and Gopal,

known to be close associates of arrested TMC strongman Shahjahan Sheikh, were not in the area.

“For years under the previous regime, such illegal weapons were stockpiled and used ruthlessly to terrorise common citizens,” CM Suwendu Adhikari said in a post on X. While the Bengal STF has yet to release an official statement, sources said six people have been arrested.

Along with the STF personnel, officials from the Sandeshkhali police station and central forces were at the scene.

Praising the police, Adhikari said on X, “On precise intelligence inputs, the Special Task Force (STF) conducted extensive raids across multiple locations near Sarberia Bazaar in Kumrakhali, Basanti, and Sandeshkhali areas. Forces have successfully seized a massive cache of illegal firearms and ammunition hidden away to disrupt peace.” “This culture of violence claimed the precious lives of numerous opposition party workers, particularly dedicated BJP Karyakartas, who stood up against tyranny. Those dark days are over.”

बैंक ऑफ़ इंडिया
Bank of India BOI
Relationship beyond Banking

BANK OF INDIA
ASSET RECOVERY DEPARTMENT
BARASAT ZONAL OFFICE
2nd Floor, DD-2, Salt Lake, Sector 1, Bidhan Nagar, Kolkata - 700064

E-AUCTION
TO BE HELD ON
09.07.2026

PUBLIC NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES MORTGAGED TO THE BANK

Whereas, the Authorized Officer of Bank of India under the Securitization & Reconstruction of Financial Assets & Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (54 of 2002) & in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(12) read with rules 8 & 9 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued Demand Notice, to borrowers and Authorized Officer has taken possession of the properties described herein below. Offers are invited by the Authorized Officer under sub-rule 5 & 6 of rule 8 of the said Act by holding e-auction on the date, place and time mentioned. Public at large and borrowers and guarantors in general are being informed hereby that E-auction under SARFAESI Act in respect of under noted properties will be conducted for sale on the terms & conditions presented in the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002 and to the following conditions for realization of the Debts due to the Bank.

Name & Address of Borrowers / Guarantors with Branch Name	DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPERTY	Secured debt / Amount due (In Rs.)	Date of Demand Notice & Date of Possession	Reserve Price (In Rs.) & Earnest Money Deposit (EMD, In Rs.)
BRANCH: SALT LAKE Borrower: ASIT BISWAS Co Borrower: MRS TRIPTI BISWAS Add: Vill - Hemantanagar, Talbanda, P.O. Jugbari PS. New Barrackpur, Kolkata - 700100	All that part and parcel of the property comprises of land and the G+1 storied building constructed thereon, covering an area 1 Cottahs 10 Chhataks 17 sq ft more or less being District North 24 Parganas, Thana: Ghola, Sub Registry Office- Barrackpore DR Barasat, under Bilkanda 2no Gram Panchayat, Mouza- Talbanda, JL No-28, Reg Sa No: 104, Khatian no 85, 661/740 and 661/741 no Dag Butted and Bounded by North: by land of Mr Surbala Mondal; South: 7ft 6 inch Road; East: by house of Mr Narayan Mondal; West: by house of Mr Kajal Thikadar. (Deed No: I-06997 of 2008, Mortgaged by: Mr Asit Biswas & Mrs Tripti Biswas.	Rs.26,37,152.85/- as on 04.06.2026 & further interest & charges thereon	31.01.2026 & 04.06.2026 (Symbolic Possession)	Rs.3050000/- & Rs.305000/-
BRANCH: BARANAGORE Borrower: MR. SWARUP BASAK & MRS. APARNA BASAK Add: 549 Netaji colony, 2nd floor, North 24 parganas.	Equitable Mortgage by depositing of Original Deed of Conveyance no - I-1506-06723/2023 Dtd: 28-06-2023 in the name of Mr. Swarup Basak and Mrs. Aparna Basak, comprises of residential Flat being No. C-2 on the Second Floor, on South- Western side, measuring about 300 Sq. Ft.Super Built Up area, consisting of One Bed Room, One Kitchen, One Toilet, in the building, lying and situated at Mouza- Nainan, J.L.No-8, situated at being E.P.No. 549, C.S. Plot No. 611(P), L.R. Dag No.1411, L.R. Khatian No. 549, District North 24 Parganas, within the ambit of Baranagar Municipality, Ward No. 22, Premises No. 549, Netaji Colony, Holding No. 549C-2, P.S.- Baranagar, A.D.S.R.O Cossipore, Dum Dum, Kolkata - 700090, West Bengal.	Rs.10,86,169.34/- as on 26.11.2025 & further interest & charges thereon	29.08.2025 & 26.11.2025 (Symbolic Possession)	Rs.820000/- & Rs.82000/-
BRANCH: UNNAYAN BHAWAN Borrower: OMAR MUKHTAR & RIIMPH BHATTACHARYA Add: 70 Rabindra Sarani, Chittaranjan Avenue, Kolkata - 700073	Residential Flat measuring 770 sq ft be the same a little more or less super built up area on Third Floor, being Flat on South-West Side of the (G+3), tiles floor containing 2 (Two) Bedrooms, 1 (One) Dining cum kitchen, 2 (Two) toilets, 1 (One) Balcony together with undivided proportionate share or interest or ownership of all that bastu land measuring 5 (Five) Cottahs 23 (Twenty Three) square feet more or less with RCC framed brick built four storied building, being Premises/Holding No- 30/59, Attapara Lane, P.S. Baranagar, Kolkata- 700050, Municipal Holding No-1746(O), Assessee No-120120201888, within Ward No-20, of the Baranagar Municipality, lying and situate at District North 24 Parganas, P.S. Baranagar, Touzi No-1298/2833, Mouja-Sinthee Nij, J.L.No-11, Revenue Survey No-9, Land Holding No-296, 274, 274A comprised in Khatian No. 450 & 459, appertaining to Dag Nos 104 & 131(P), L.R. Dag No-1073, L.R. Khatian No. - 1555, 1556, 1557, 1558, 1559 within the jurisdiction of the Additional District Sub-Registry Office Cossipore Dum Dum.	Rs.25,95,998.80/- as on 23.06.2025 & further interest & charges thereon	17.12.2024 & 23.06.2025 (Symbolic Possession)	Rs.2210000/- & Rs.221000/-
BRANCH: CHAKDAH MUNICIPALITY Borrower: BISWAS & SONS Add: Ghugia, Ward 12, Holding No 708, Near 51 No Rail Gate, Chakdah, Nadia	EQM of property consisting of land & Building situated at Mouza- laipur, JL No-20, LR Plot No-1036, RS Khatian, LR Khatian No-662 under Talia II No Gram Panchayet (Jyoti Market) unit name- Padasoa, PO- Chakdah, PS-Chakdah, Dist-Nadia, WB-741222 admeasuring 99.00 sq ft of land (Title Deed I-3460 of year 2011).	Rs.26,87,601.27/- as on 28/12/2023 & further interest & charges thereon	10/11/2023 & 28/12/2023 (Symbolic Possession)	Rs.4800000/- & Rs.480000/-
BRANCH: MASLANDPUR Borrower: DILIP KARMAKAR Add: 50 Chandicharan at Labangola PO- Charchat, PS- Swarnapurnag Nr Charchat Bridge N24 Pgs	All that part and parcel of the property situated at R.S & L.R Dag No-331, J.L.No-29, Re.Sa.No-3554, LR Khatian No-788 & 751, PS-Swarnapurnag, Mouza-Charchat Gram, Dist- North 24 Parganas (area 360 Sqft or 0.425 satak).	Rs.10,49,454.28/- as on 30/10/2018 & further interest & charges thereon	24/11/2017 & 31/10/2018 (Symbolic Possession)	Rs.1200000/- & Rs.120000/-
BRANCH: BARANAGORE Borrower: PRITHA CHAKRABORTY Add: 14 Shambhunath Das Lane, Baranagar, Sinthee	The land was registered in the name of Shri Sunil Kumar Agarwal & Smt Sarbani Agarwal vide gift deed no I-7012 dated 20.12.2007 & property allocated to Shri Sunil Kumar Agarwal & Smt Sarbani Agarwal vide possession letter dated 25.04.2015 as per notarial development agreements (Dated 28th march 2007 & 11th Dec 2009) owner's allocation part.	Rs.26,58,176.46/- as on 10/07/2023 & further interest & charges thereon	07/02/2023 & 10/07/2023 (Symbolic Possession)	Rs.1825000/- & Rs.182500/-
BRANCH: SALT LAKE Borrower: SIDDHARTHA KHATUA Co-Borrowers: MR AYAN KHATUA AND MRS GOLAPI KHATUA Add: Flat no. 202, Eastern side, Sanat Mansion, Jagadish Chandra Bedayabash Lane, Babur Danga more, Ward no. 03, PO Salkia, Howrah- 711106	A. Details of Land: All that piece and parcel of the Mokorari Mourashi Bastu land measuring more or less 5 Cottahs 0 Chittack 12 Sq. ft. more or less comprised within Holding No 3/1, Jagadish Chandra Bedayabash Lane, PS- Malipanchghora, Ward no.3, District- Howrah, Pin-711106 and holding 55/3/1, Sri Ram Dhang Road, Ward No 03, Howrah Municipal Corporation, PO- Salkia, PS Malipanchghara, Dist - Howrah, W.B., Pin 711106, with ground plus Six Storied Building standing upon the said land along with all easement and other rights attached thereto and the total amalgamated property is being butted and bounded by as follows- Boundary of the Land: North: 16 Ft wide J.C/B/B Lane; East: 3/1/1 & 3/1/2 & 3/3/1 J.C/B/B Lane; West: 55/5/3 Sri Ram Dhang Road; South: 6 Ft Wide Sri Ram Dhang Road. B. Details of Flat: All that part and parcel of the property comprises of a self contained residential Flat being No. 202, on the Second Floor, at the North-West side of the building, measuring 1560 ft. super built up area more or less consisting of 4 bed rooms, 1 drawing cum dining room, 1 kitchen, 2 toilets and one Veranda, lying and situated at Holding No 3/1, Jagadish Chandra Bedayabash Lane and 55/3/1 Sri Ram Dhang Road, both under Ward No 03, Howrah Municipal Corporation, PO - Salkia, Ps- Malipanchghara, Dist-Howrah, W.B., Pin-711106 of easement privileges, amenities, appurtenances attached thereto together with undivided proportion of share of land of the said premises, (Title Deed No. I-0502-01737/2018 in the name of Mr. Siddhartha Khataua and Mr. Ayan Khataua.	Rs.25,13,505.48/- as on 29.05.2026 & further interest & charges thereon	04.02.2026 & 29.05.2026 (Symbolic Possession)	Rs.3500000/- & Rs.350000/-
BRANCH: BARANAGORE Borrower: DEBASISH MONDAL Guarantor : RANAJYO MONDAL Add: 1/A/H/8 GOPAL CH BOSE LANE, SINTHEE SO, KOLKATA, WB- 700050	All that part and parcel of the property consisting of self contained residential flat in the name of Mr. Debasish Mondal & Mr. Ranajyo Mondal measuring an area of 771 Sq. Ft. on the 3rd floor (Western Side) being flat no. 7, on Bastu land measuring 2 Cottahs 12 Chittacks along with multi G+3 storied building, standing on C.S. Dag Nos. 1118 and 1119 under C.S. Khatian No. 409, R.S Dag No. 1119/1592 under R.S. Khatian No. 757, J.L. No. 9, R.S. No. 22, Touzi No. 173 at Mouza - Nawpara, within the municipal limit of Baranagar municipality, holding no. 752, under ward no. 17, situated and lying at 6/E, Nabin Chandra Das Road, Post Office- Nawpara, PS Baranagar, Kolkata - 700090, Dist. North 24 pgs, under A.D.S.R.Cossipore Dumdum.	Rs.19,52,068.41/- as on 05/05/2025 & further interest & charges thereon	19/02/2025 & 05/05/2025 (Symbolic Possession)	Rs.2010000/- & Rs.201000/-
BRANCH: BAGUIATI-TEGHARIA Borrower: MS. RAIMA BIBI & MR. SAHEB ALI MOLLA Add: PO-Purba Shankar Daha, Khasshakdaha Rajarhat Gopalpur, North 24 Parganas, West Bengal	All that part and parcel of the property consisting Flat being No. F4 on 2nd Floor, North Eastern Side, Super built-up Area about 490 Sq ft. more or less consisting of 2(Two) Bedrooms; 1(One) Kitchen & 1(One) Toilet in a G+3 Storied Building premise name "Alhamd Building" Situated at Mouza- Hatiara, J.L. No-14, Re Sa. No. 188, Touzi No-169, now 10, Parganas, Kalikata, comprised in C.S. Dag No-559, corresponding to R.S. & L.R. Dag No-611, under C.S. Khatian No. 505, corresponding to R.S. Khatian No. 818, Present L.R. Khatian No-2051, under A.D.S.R.O-Rajarhat-Newtown, Holding No-AS-369/BL-J08, Methopara, Hatiara, Post Office Hatiara, Police Station-Rajarhat then New Town now ECO Park, Kolkata-700157, North 24 Parganas, West Bengal. Deed of conveyance Number I-1501-09737/2022 dated 23.11.2022 in the name of Ms. Raima Bibi & Mr. Saheb Ali Molla. Boundaries of the Property: North: House of Golam Rasul, South: 3'3"-8" wide Common Passage, East: 4' +4' 8" Wide Common Passage(Methopara Hatiara), West: House of Golam Rabbani & Md. Javed. Boundaries of the Flat: North: Open to Sky, South: By Other Flat, East: Open to Sky, West: By Passage.	Rs.9,85,242.19/- as on 11.05.2026 & further interest & charges thereon	24/02/2026 & 11/05/2026 (Symbolic possession)	Rs.1300000/- & Rs.130000/-

TERMS & CONDITIONS:

(i) Auction sale / bidding would be only through "Online Electronic Bidding" process through the website <https://BAANKNET.com/>

(ii) **Date and time of Auction 09.07.2026 between 11.00 a.m. to 05.00 for all properties, followed by unlimited extensions of 10 minutes each, viz the auction process would run for 120 minutes in first stage and in case a valid bid is received in last 10 minutes, the auction would get extended by another 10 minutes. The process would continue until there are no valid bids during last 10 minutes. Auction would commence at one notch above Reserve Price, as mentioned above. Bidders shall improve their offers in multiples of Rs.10,000/- (Rupees Ten Thousand and only). Interested parties can inspect the properties at site on 22.06.2026 & 23.06.2026 between 11.00 a.m. and 04.00 p.m.**

(iii) **The intending bidders should register their names at portal <https://BAANKNET.com/> and get their User ID and password. Prospective bidders may find how to register for auction, mode of auction, and other processes to be followed on the above-mentioned link. Intending bidders may contact Mr. Abinash Sahu (+91-8249328547) for any query.**

(iv) **The above properties/assets shall be sold on "AS IS WHERE IS BASIS", "AS IS WHAT IS BASIS" and "WITHOUT ANY RECOURSE BASIS". The intending bidders should make their own enquiries regarding the encumbrances, title of property put on auction and claim/right/dues affecting the property, the time and cost involved in taking physical possession (for properties under symbolic possession) prior to submitting their bid. All the accrued statutory dues including property tax, energy charges etc shall be borne by the successful bidder. The Authorized Officer/Secured Creditor shall not be responsible in any way for any third party claims/right/dues and also for the delay, costs and/ or legal issues involved in taking physical possession (in case of properties under symbolic possession).**

(v) **Particulars specified in the schedule above have been stated to the best of the information of the Authorized Officer/Bank. Authorized Officer and / or Bank will not be answerable for any error, mis-statement or omission in this public notice.**

(vi) **The aforesaid properties shall not be sold below the Reserve Price mentioned above. Intending bidders are required to deposit the Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) stated above in the wallet provided on the E-BAANKNET. Details of the process for depositing EMD in the wallet can be found on the above-mentioned link.**

(vii) **The intending bidders should register themselves on the afore-mentioned portal well before the auction date, in any case no later than 09.07.2026 up to 5 pm.**

(viii) **The highest / successful bidder shall have to deposit 25% of the bid amount, including the EMD already paid immediately after acceptance of bid by the Authorized Officer in respect of the sale, failing which the EMD shall be forfeited. The highest bidder shall be declared to be the successful bidder/ purchaser of the properties mentioned herein provided always he is legally qualified to bid.**

(ix) **The balance 75% of the bid/purchase money shall be payable on or before 15th day (during banking hours) of confirmation of the sale by the Authorized Officer or such extended period as agreed upon in writing by solely at the discretion of the Authorized Officer. In case of default in payment by the successful bidder the amount already deposited by the bidder shall be forfeited and the Authorized Officer / Bank will be at liberty to cancel the auction and conduct fresh auction.**

(x) **On receipt of the entire sale consideration, the Authorized Officer shall issue the Sale Certificate in the name of bidder and the sale shall be considered complete thereafter and that the Bank shall entertain no claims.**

(xi) **The Authorized Officer is not bound to accept the highest bid or any or all bids and reserves the right to accept or reject any or all the bids without assigning any reason thereof and vary, modify and waive any condition of sale in his absolute discretion.**

(xii) **The successful bidder / purchaser would bear all the charges / fees payable for conveyance deed, taxes including Service Tax/TDS (As per Section 393 (1) table SNo 3(1) as per Income Tax Act 2025 for properties valued Rs.50 Lakhs & above) if any.**

(xiii) **This publication is also Thirty days' notice under Rule 8(6) of The security interest (Enforcement), Rules 2002 to the above borrowers / guarantors/mortgagors to the advance.**

(xiv) **For downloading further details, process compliance & terms & conditions, please visit: www.bankofindia.bank.in.**

Date : 06.06.2026
Place: Kolkata

Sd/- Authorized Officer
Bank of India



GURU GHASIDAS VISHWAVIDYALAYA

(A Central University established under the Central Universities Act, 2009, No.25 of 2009, With NAAC A")

KONI, BILASPUR-495 009 (C.G.) INDIA, Tel. +91-7752-260342, Fax +91-7752-260154

Ref. No. 363/Admission/Academic/26

ADMISSION NOTICE (2026-27)

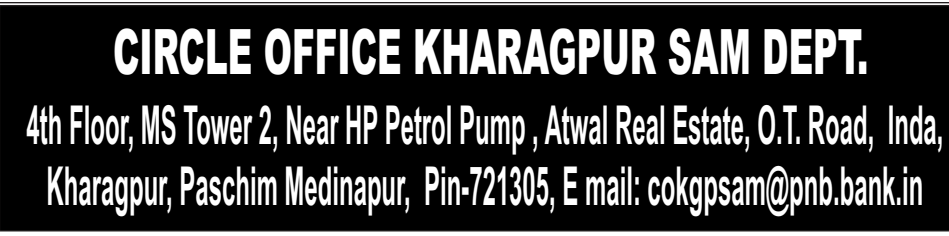
Bilaspur, Date-03.06.2026

Applications are invited in the prescribed form for the Admission of Working Professionals in following UG and PG programmes for Session 2026-27 in the School of Studies of Engineering and Technology, GGV, Bilaspur under AICTE Working Professional Scheme

Name of Programme	Branch	Department
M. Tech.	Structural Engineering	Civil Engineering
Executive M. Tech	AI & DS	Information Technology
B. Tech.	AI Engineering	Civil Engineering
B. Tech.	Mechanical Engineering	Mechanical Engineering
B. Tech.	Computer Science & Engineering	Computer Science & Engineering

The candidates fulfilling the eligibility criteria can apply for admission as per the details available on the University website <https://ggv.ac.in>. The last date for submission of application is 20/06/2026. The candidates are advised to refer the detailed notification working professionals available on university website before filling the application form.

Registrar



E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with Provision to Rule 8 (6) & 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 / Symbolic Possession of which has been taken by the authorized officer of the bank/secured creditor, will be sold on "As is Where is", "As is What is" and "Whatever there is" on the date as mentioned in the table herein below, for recovery of its dues due to the bank/ secured creditor from the respective borrower (s) and guarantors (s). The reserve price and the earnest money deposit will be as mentioned in the table below against the respective properties.

ANNEXURE-B SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTY

Sl. No.	A) Name of Branch B) Name of the Account C) Name & Address of the Borrower/ Guarantors Account	Description of the Immovable Properties Mortgaged/ Owner's name [Mortgagors of Property(ies)]	A) Date of Demand Notice u/s 13(2) of SARFAESI Act, 2002 B) Outstanding Amount C) Date of Possession u/s 13(4) of SARFAESI Act, 2002 D) Nature of Possession (Symbolic/ Physical/ Constructive)	A) Reserve Price B) EMD C) Bid Increase Amount	Date/ Time of E-Auction Details of the encumbrances known to the secured creditors
1.	A) Jamna (199600) B) Mr. Anowar Ali Khan (Account No. 199600NC0001397) C) Borrower: Mr. Anowar Ali Khan , S/o Mr. Raosan Ali Khan, Village & Post- Golegram, P.S. Debra Golegram, West Bengal - 721136 Guarantor: Mr. Mofikul Rahman Khan , S/o Mr. Safikul Rahman At- Mallarpur, Mundamari, P.O. Mundamari, Dist- Paschim Medinipur, West Bengal- 721144	Equitable Mortgage of Residential Property (incomplete house) situated at Mouza- Mallarpur, JL No. 41, HAL LR Khatian No. 155, LR Dag No. 17, P.O. Mundamari, P.S. Pingala, with in Kusumda Gram Panchayat, Dist. Paschim Medinipur, PIN 721144. Area 2.3 Dec. executed vide Gift Deed No. I-9484/2016 in the name of Anowar Ali Khan . Butted & Bounded By - North - Pond of Owner, South - Panchayat Road, East - Property of Owner & Road, West- Property of Owner	A) 13.11.2018 B) Rs. 18,45,746.75 (Rupees Eighteen Lakh Forty Five Thousand Seven Hundred Forty Six and Seventy Five Paise only) + further interest and costs C) 19.06.2019 D) Symbolic Possession	A) Rs. 5,80,000.00 B) Rs. 58,000.00 C) Rs. 10,000.00	23.06.2026 11.30 AM to 03.30 PM Not Known to Bank
2.	A) Madpur (320900) B) M/s Banerjee Fertilizer, Mr. Timir Baran Banerjee, Mr. Sisir Kumar Banerjee & Mrs. Nilima Banerjee (Account No. 32090008700001040 & 320900NC00082429) C) Borrower: M/s Banerjee Fertilizer, Prop. Timir Banerjee , S/o Late Anil Kumar Banerjee, Madpur, Paschim Medinipur-721149 Mr. Timir Banerjee , S/o Late Anil Kumar Banerjee, Mouza - Madpur (Golapati Hatapara), JL No. 385, Paparara 1, Kharagpur Local, Paschim Medinipur, West Bengal-721149 Mrs. Nilima Banerjee , W/o Timir Banerjee, Mouza - Madpur (Golapati Hatapara), JL No. 385, Paparara 1, Kharagpur Local, Paschim Medinipur, West Bengal-721149 Mr. Sisir Kumar Banerjee , S/o Late Anil Kumar Banerjee, 135, Ground Floor, Pocket 7, Sector 24, Rohini Rethala North West Delhi - 110085	Equitable Mortgage of land & building situated at Mouza- Madpur, Dist. Paschim Medinipur, A.D.S.R.O. Kharagpur, P.S. Kharagpur (Local), JL No. 385, Khatian No. RS 665, LR 876, Plot No. 671, Area 0.0675 acre / 63/4 Dec., Bastu land. The said property covered by title deed no. 1750/1998 dt. 22.04.1998 in the name of Sri Timir Baran Banerjee . Bound & Butted by - North: 4ft. Road, South: Sri Abhay Sarkar & Others, East: 8ft. Road, West: Sri Nirmal Das	A) 19.02.2025 B) Rs. 56,44,555.19 (Rupees Fifty Six Lakh Forty Four Thousand Five Hundred Fifty Five and Nineteen Paise only) + further interest and costs C) 25.04.2025 D) Symbolic Possession	A) Rs. 44,20,000.00 B) Rs. 4,42,000.00 C) Rs. 10,000.00	23.06.2026 11.30 AM to 03.30 PM Not Known to Bank
3.	A) Pakurseni (049410) B) Shri Barun Patra (A/c No. 049410NC00000311) C) Borrower & Mortgagor: Shri Barun Patra , Tentulia Bhujang, Pakurseni, P.O. Narayangarh, Paschim Medinipur- 721437	Equitable mortgage of land & building located at mouza- Pakurseni, J.L. No. 525, L.R. Khatian No. 2489, L.R. Plot No. 1792, Area-03 decimal, ADSR- Narayangarh in the name of Barun Patra , vide Deed no. I-05990/2023. Butted & Bounded By : North: 8 ft. Wide Road, South: Badal Patra, East: 8 ft. Wide Road, West: Susanta Ghorai	A) 08.09.2025 B) Rs. 25,15,928.83 (Rupees Twenty Five Lakh Fifteen Thousand Nine Hundred Twenty Eight and Eighty Three Paise only) + further interest and costs C) 28.11.2025 D) Symbolic Possession	A) Rs. 9,16,200.00 B) Rs. 91,620.00 C) Rs. 10,000.00	23.06.2026 11.30 AM to 03.30 PM Not Known to Bank
4.	A) Jamna (199600) B) Biswanath Mandal, Archana Mandal (A/c No. 199600NC00001616) C) Borrower: Mr. Biswanath Mandal , S/o Kartik Mandal, Vill. Darra, P.O. Birunia, P.S. Debra, Dist. Paschim Midnapur, Pin- 721124 Mortgagor: Mrs. Archana Mandal , W/o Biswanath Mandal, Vill. Darra, P.O. Birunia, P.S. Debra, Dist. Paschim Midnapur, Pin- 721124 Guarantor: Mr. Bholanath Har , S/o Mohan Har, Vill. Jamna, P.S. Pingla, Dist. Paschim Midnapur, Pin-721140	Equitable mortgage of land & building located at Mouza- Birunia, under P.S. Debra, Dist. Paschim Midnapur, Pin-721124, vide Gift deed no. 1850/2017 dt. 19.05.2017, J.L. No. 414, KH. No. 107 L.R. 24 HAL, Plot No. 48, Area 14.00 dec. Bastu in nature in the name of Archana Mandal , W/o Biswanath Mandal Butted & Bounded By : North: Vacant land of Tapan Mandal, South: 10ft. wide panchayat Road, East: H/o Bimal Patra, West: H/o Madan Patra	A) 20.09.2019 B) Rs. 16,96,953.00 (Rupees Sixteen Lakh Ninety Six Thousand Nine Hundred Fifty Three only) + further interest and costs C) 12.02.2020 D) Symbolic Possession	A) Rs. 11,67,000.00 B) Rs. 1,16,700.00 C) Rs. 10,000.00	23.06.2026 11.30 AM to 03.30 PM Not Known to Bank
5.	A) Belda PNB (121400) B) Debashish Das & Tapan Das (A/c No. 121400NC00101452) C) Borrower & Mortgagor: Mr. Debashish Das , S/o Ban Bihari Das, Vill. + Post- Kashimpur, P.S. Belda, Dist. Paschim Midnapur, Pin- 721424 Co-Borrower & Mortgagor: Mr. Tapan Das , S/o Ban Bihari Das, Vill. + Post- Kashimpur, P.S. Belda, Dist. Paschim Midnapur, Pin-721424	Equitable mortgage of land & building located at mouza- Kashimpur, under ADSR- Narayangarh P.S. Belda, Dist. Paschim Midnapur, J.L. No. 389, Kh. no. R.S. 104, 103, 95/1, 95/2, L.R. kh. no. 207, 208, plot no. 292, HAL kh. no.- 142, Area 4.00 dec. Bastu in nature vide gift deed no. 1823/2007 dt. 12.03.2007 in the name of Debashish Das & Tapan Das . Butted & Bounded By : North: Property of owner, South: Other Property of owner, East: Property of Arabinda Das, West: Property of Jhantu Das & Road	A) 13.04.2022 B) Rs. 8,98,620.00 (Rupees Eight Lakh Ninety Eight Thousand Six Hundred Twenty only) + further interest and costs C) 06.09.2022 D) Symbolic Possession	A) Rs. 17,20,000.00 B) Rs. 1,72,000.00 C) Rs. 10,000.00	23.06.2026 11.30 AM to 03.30 PM Not Known to Bank
6.	A) Jamna (199600) B) Mr. Dipankar Paine (A/c No. 199600NC00001528) C) Borrower: Sri Dipankar Paine , S/o Sri Sukhdeb Bihari Paine, At - Bhogpur, P.O. Balichak, P.S. Debra, Dist. Paschim Medinipur - 721124 Guarantor: Sri Sukhdeb Bihari Paine , S/o Sri Goshta Paine, At - Bhogpur, P.O. Balichak, P.S. Debra, Dist. Paschim Medinipur - 721124	Equitable Mortgage of Land & Building situated at Mouza- Bhogpur, P.S. Debra, Plot No. 37, Khatian No. 47-RS & 833 - HAL, JL No. 440, under Deed No. 808/2017, Area 02.00 Dec. (Bastu). Butted & Bounded By : North: Property of Bhabani Singha, South: Common Passage, East: Property of Basudeb Paine, West: Property of Rabi Paine	A) 20.09.2019 B) Rs. 18,34,349.00 (Rupees Eighteen Lakh Thirty Four Thousand Three Hundred Forty Nine only) + further interest and costs C) 27.01.2021 D) Symbolic Possession	A) Rs. 12,00,000.00 B) Rs. 1,20,000.00 C) Rs. 10,000.00	23.06.2026 11.30 AM to 03.30 PM Not Known to Bank
7.	A) Jamna (199600) B) Sk. Hasibul Rahaman (A/c No. 199600NC00001458) C) Borrower: Mr. Sk. Hasibul Rahaman , S/o Sk. Abdul Majid, at- Mohanpur, P.O. Mundumari, P.S. Pingla, Dist. Paschim Midnapore, PIN- 721140 Guarantor: Mrs. Salma Bibi , W/o Sk. Hasibul Rahaman, at- Mohanpur, P.O. Mundumari, P.S. Pingla, Dist. Paschim Midnapore, PIN- 721140	Residential Property at Vill. & Mouza- Mohanpur, JL No. 42, LR Khatian No. 32, HAL LR Khatian No. 449, LR Dag No. 276, P.O. Mundumari, P.S. Pingla, within Jamna GP, Dist. Paschim Medinipur- 721140 in the name of Sk. Hasibul Rahaman , executed vide RSD No. 1-558/2015 dated 24.02.2015, Area 4 Dec. Description of Adjoining Properties : - North : Nazrul Khan, South : Sk. Sabbir, East : Sk. Abdul Majid, West : Panchayat Road	A) 03.04.2019 B) Rs. 27,79,425.00 (Rupees Twenty Seven Lakh Seventy Nine Thousand Four Hundred Twenty Five only) + further interest and costs C) 20.06.2019 D) Symbolic Possession	A) Rs. 10,00,000.00 B) Rs. 1,00,000.00 C) Rs. 10,000.00	23.06.2026 11.30 AM to 03.30 PM Not Known to Bank
8.	A) Keshiary (232200) B) Manik Kumar Maity (A/c Nos. 23220008700007810, 232200EG00000209, 232200IL00000187, 1630008800036559) C) Borrower: Mr. Manik Kumar Maity , Vill. /P.O. Amda, Talbandh, P.S. Keshiary, Dist. Paschim Medinipur, Pin-721133 Guarantor: Mr. Shaktipada Das , Vill. /P.O. Amda, Talbandh, P.S. Keshiary, Dist. Paschim Medinipur, Pin-721133	Equitable Mortgage of Land & Building Situated at Mouza- Talband, Vill. Talband, P.O. Amda, A.D.S.R.O. Kharagpur, P.S.: Keshiary, Dist. Paschim Medinipur, PIN-721133. Vide Deed No. 3736, Dated 09.07.1999 executed in the name of Mr. Manik Kumar Maity , S/o Shyamapada Maity consisting of RS & LR Plot No. 273 & 274, JL No. 162, Kh No. 78/4 Modifies LR Khatian No. 78/4 bearing area 9.5 Dec. Total Area being 9.5 Dec. out of which converted to Bastu Boundaries : North: Shyamapada Maity, South: Road, East: Bhupati Maity, West: Road	A) 18.05.2023 B) Rs. 66,81,389.93 (Rupees Sixty Six Lakh Eighty One Thousand Three Hundred Eighty Nine and Ninety Three Paise only) + further interest and costs C) 13.12.2023 D) Symbolic Possession	A) Rs. 16,00,000.00 B) Rs. 1,60,000.00 C) Rs. 10,000.00	23.06.2026 11.30 AM to 03.30 PM Not Known to Bank
9.	A) Inda, Kharagpur (168710) B) Sujit Mahapatra, Proprietor of Dhan Bhandar & Sukesh Mahapatra (Proprietor of Maa Kali Bastralaya) (A/c Nos. 16874015003127, 16876015001774 & 168710NC00000653, 16874015000509) C) Borrower: M/s Dhan Bhandar (Proprietor- Sujit Mahapatra) , Village & Post- Makrampur Bazar, P.S. Narayangarh, District- Paschim Medinipur, Pin-721437 Proprietor: Mr. Sujit Mahapatra , S/o Sukesh Mahapatra, Village & Post- Rampura Bazar, P.S. Narayangarh, District- Paschim Medinipur, Pin-721437 Mortgagor cum Guarantor: Mr. Sukesh Mahapatra , S/o Bimalendu Mahapatra, Village & P.O. Makrampur Bazar, P.S. Narayangarh, District- Paschim Midnapur, Pin-721437 M/s Maa Kali Bastralaya, Proprietor- Sukesh Mahapatra , Village & Post- Makrampur Bazar, P.S. Narayangarh, District- Paschim Medinipur, Pin-721437	Equitable mortgage of land & building located at mouza- Gabindapur Brahmansasan, under P.S. Narayangarh, District- Paschim Medinipur, J.L. No. 254, & Mouza- Makrampur, J.L. No. 254, R.S. Khatian No. 1/15, L.R. khatian No. 118/2, HAL Khatian no. 199, Plot no. 19, R.S. Khatian No. 48, L.R. Khatian No. 163 & 52, Hal LR Khatian No. 404, Plot No. 13, Deed No. 6748 dated 22.12.2009, Deed No. 2381 dated 12.05.2009, Deed No. 1946 dated 02.04.2012, Area- 05 decimal bastu in Nature in the name of Sukesh Mahapatra . Butted & Bounded By : North: Property of Santanu & Atanu Mishra, South: House of Rima Mahapatra, East: NH 16, West: Vacant land of owner & Bablu Manna	Name of Account: Dhan Bhandar Account No. 16874015003127 A) 10.09.2025 B) Rs. 20,74,004.66 C) 20.11.2025 D) Symbolic Possession Name of Account: Sukesh Mahapatra Account Nos. 16876015001774 & 168710NC00000653 A) 20.11.2025 B) Rs. 27,75,029.56 C) 28.01.2026 D) Symbolic Possession Name of Account: Maa Kali Bastralaya Account No. 16874015000509 A) 20.11.2025 B) Rs. 47,74,679.00 C) 28.01.2026 D) Symbolic Possession TOTAL OUTSTANDING AMOUNT: Rs. 96,23,713.22 (Rupees Ninety Six Lakh Twenty Three Thousand Seven Hundred Thirteen and Paise Twenty Two only)	A) Rs. 1,15,33,500.00 B) Rs. 11,53,350.00 C) Rs. 10,000.00	23.06.2026 11.30 AM to 03.30 PM Not Known to Bank
10.	A) Jamna (199600) B) Mr. Ranjan Garu & Mrs. Anima Garu (A/c No. 199600NC00001139) C) Borrower: Mr. Ranjan Garu & Mrs. Anima Garu , Village- Gotgeria, P.O. Balichak, P.S. Debra, Dist. Paschim Medinipur, Jamna, Dist. Paschim Medinipur, West Bengal (721124)	Equitable Mortgage of property located at Mouza- Gourangapur under P.S. Debra, having JL No. 429, Khatian No. Hal: 46 & LR Khatian No. 202, Plot No. 110, Area- 03.25 Dec. (Bastu) in the name of Mrs. Anima Garu , W/o Shri Ranjan Garu. Bounded by : On the North: Vacant land of Swadesh Jana, On the South: Vacant land of Shyampada Shit, On the East: Panchayat Road, On the West: Vacant land of Supriya Sur	A) 27.08.2018 B) Rs. 24,01,894.00 (Rupees Twenty Four Lakh One Thousand Eight Hundred Ninety Four only) + further interest and costs C) 30.01.2019 D) Symbolic Possession	A) Rs. 27,90,000.00 B) Rs. 2,80,000.00 C) Rs. 10,000.00	23.06.2026 11.30 AM to 03.30 PM Not Known to Bank
11.	A) Kharagpur EOBC (168710) B) M/s Samanta Hardware, Prop. Lal Mohan Samanta (A/c No. 16874015000685) C) Borrower: M/s Samanta Hardware, Prop. Lal Mohan Samanta , Village- Safiabad, P.O. Matkatpur, P.S. Kharagpur (Local) Paschim Medinipur, Pin- 721305 Proprietor: Shri Lal Mohan Samanta , Village - Safiabad, P.O. Matkatpur, P.S. Kharagpur (Local) Paschim Medinipur, Pin - 721305 Guarantor & Mortgagor: Shri Nalini Ranjan Samanta Alias Kana Lal Samanta , S/o Gorachand Samanta, Village - Safiabad, P.O. Matkatpur, P.S. Kharagpur (Local) Paschim Medinipur, Pin- 721305	Equitable Mortgage of Land & Building situated at Mouza- Safiabad, JL No. 202, IR Khatian 242, Modified Khatian No. 292, Plot No. 72 having total area 0.0809 acre, under Kharagpur local police station, village Safiabad & P.O. Matkatpur, Dist. Paschim Medinipur, in the name of Nalini Ranjan Samanta Alias Kana Lal Samanta executed vide sale deed no. 2812 dated 22.05.2012. Butted & Bounded By : North: Sudhir Mahesh, South: Vendors Land & Land of Harendra Nath Mondal, East: 6 Feet Road, West: Vendors Land	A) 02.02.2016 B) Rs. 14,60,222.00 (Rupees Fourteen Lakh Sixty Thousand Two Hundred Twenty Two only) + further interest and costs C) 30.03.2017 D) Symbolic Possession	A) Rs. 16,00,000.00 B) Rs. 1,60,000.00 C) Rs. 10,000.00	23.06.2026 11.30 AM to 03.30 PM Not Known to Bank
12.	A) Jamna (199600) B) Sanjay Ghorai (A/c No. 199600NC00001670) C) Borrower: Sanjay Kumar Ghorai , S/o Narendra Nath Ghorai, Vill. Chakchandpal, P.O. Kalasbarh, P.S. Sabang, Dist. Paschim Medinipur, West Bengal - 721467	Equitable Mortgage of land & building located at Mouza- Chakchandpal under P.S. Sabang having JL No. 162, LR Khatian No. 418 & RS Khatian No. 122, Plot No. 54 Area- 07.00 Dec. (Bastu) & 57, Area- 04.00 Dec. (Bastu), vide Partition Deed No. 4617/1989 in the name of Mr. Sanjay Kumar Ghorai , S/o Narendra Nath Ghorai.	A) 05.07.2021 B) Rs. 17,81,052.00 (Rupees Seventeen Lakh Eighty One Thousand Fifty Two only) + further interest and costs C) 10.11.2021 D) Symbolic Possession	A) Rs. 11,70,000.00 B) Rs. 1,17,000.00 C) Rs. 10,000.00	23.06.2026 11.30 AM to 03.30 PM Not Known to Bank
13.	A) Hamirpur (118920) B) Santu Jana & Ram Pada Jana (A/c No. 1189210031426) C) Borrower: Mr. Santu Jana , S/o Rampada Jana, Vill. Thakurchak, Post- Balichak, P.S. Balichak, Dist. Paschim Midnapur, Pin- 721124 Co-Borrower & Mortgagor: Mr. Rampada Jana , S/o Lt. Kartik Chandra Jana, Vill. Thakurchak, Post- Balichak, P.S. Debra, Dist. Paschim Midnapur, Pin-721124	Equitable mortgage of land & building located at Mouza- Thakurchak, under P.S. Debra, having J.L. No. 427, Parcha kh. no. 94, L.R. KH. No. 198, plot no. 16, area 5.25 dec. Bastu in nature vide deed no. 4137/2011, dt. 02.11.2021, in the name of Rampada Jana , s/o Late Kartik Chandra Jana Butted & Bounded By : North: Krista Das, South: Road, East: Haripada Jana, West: Tara pada Jana	A) 11.10.2023 B) Rs. 9,97,992.00 (Rupees Nine Lakh Ninety Seven Thousand Nine Hundred Ninety Two only) + further interest and costs C) 18.03.2024 D) Symbolic Possession	A) Rs. 35,23,500.00 B) Rs. 3,52,400.00 C) Rs. 10,000.00	23.06.2026 11.30 AM to 03.30 PM Not Known to Bank
14.	A) Jamna (199600) B) Susanta Dey (A/c No. 199600NC00001412) C) Borrower: Mr. Susanta Dey , Vill. & P.O. Baitabbarh, P.S. Debra, Dist. Paschim Medinipur, Jamna, Dist. Midnapore, WB- 721140 Co-Borrower & Mortgagor: Smt. Radharani Dey , W/o Lakshmi Kanta Dey, at- Baitabbarh, P.O. Shyamchak, Dist. West Midnapore	Residential Property (Incomplete Residential Property) situated at Vill. 7 Mouza- Baitabbarh, JL No. 352, LR Khatian No. 13, HAL LR Khatian No. 78, LR Dag No. 6, P.O. Shyamchak, P.S. Debra within Debra 2 No. GP, Dist. Paschim Medinipur, PIN-721301 in the name of Mrs. Radha Rani Dey , executed vide Title Deed I-9415 dated 12.10.1988, Area 29 Dec. out of which 10 Dec. (Bastu). Boundaries : North: Property of the Owner, South: Pond, East: Property of Rabindra Nayyar, West: Property of Achinta Chakraborty	A) 16.11.2018 B) Rs. 27,89,525.00 (Rupees Twenty Seven Lakh Eighty Nine Thousand Five Hundred Twenty Five only) + further interest and costs C) 19.06.2019 D) Symbolic Possession	A) Rs. 4,90,000.00 B) Rs. 50,000.00 C) Rs. 10,000.00	23.06.2026 11.30 AM to 03.30 PM Not Known to Bank
15.	A) Nekurseni (148300) B) Mr. Swapan Kumar Dey (A/c No. 1483009300003045) C) Borrower & Mortgagor: Shri Swapan Kumar Dey , Dhanhalia, P.S. Dantan, District- Paschim Medinipur, West Bengal-721426	Equitable mortgage of land & Building located at mouza- Chaulia, P.S. Dantan, District- Paschim Medinipur, J.L. No. 88, Sabek Khatian No. 276/1, Sabek L.R. Khatian No. 1654, R.S. & L.R. Plot No. 1356, Appearing Computerized Khatian No. 2770, Area- 08 decimal, in the name of Swapan Kumar Dey , vide Deed no. 363/2010. Butted & Bounded By : North: Rekha Rani Das, South: Ratna Maity, East: Plot No. -2845, West: 8 ft. Dhala Road	A) 29.08.2025 B) Rs. 6,75,402.00 (Rupees Six Lakh Seventy Five Thousand Four Hundred Two only) + further interest and costs C) 25.11.2025 D) Symbolic Possession	A) Rs. 24,39,900.00 B) Rs. 2,43,990.00 C) Rs. 10,000.00	23.06.2026 11.30 AM to 03.30 PM Not Known to Bank

TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF E-AUCTION SALE

The sale shall be subject to the Terms & Conditions prescribed in the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002 and to the following further conditions:

- The auction sale will be "online through e-auction" portal (<https://baanknet.com>)
- The intending Bidders/ Purchasers are requested to register on portal (<https://baanknet.com>) using their email-id and mobile number. Further they are requested to upload requisite KYC documents. Once the KYC documents are verified by e Auction service provider (may take 2 working days) , the intending Bidders/ Purchasers has to transfer the EMD amount using online mode in his Global EMD wallet by 2 working days , the intending Bidders/ Purchasers has to transfer the EMD amount using online mode in his Global EMD wallet by **22.06.2026** before the e auction Date and Time in the portal. The registration, verification of KYC documents and transfer of EMD in Wallet must be completed well in advance, before auction.
- Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) amount as mentioned above shall be paid online through 3 mode i.e NEFT/ Cash/ Transfer (after generation of challan from (<https://baanknet.com>)) in in bidders Global EMD Wallet , NEFT transfer can be done from any Scheduled Commercial Bank Branch. Payment of EMD by any other mode and will be credited in bidders e-Wallet. Bidders, not depositing the required EMD online, will not be allowed to participate in the e-auction. The Earnest Money Deposited shall not bear any interest.
- Platform (<https://baanknet.com>) for e-Auction will be provided by e Auction service provider **M/s PSB Alliance Pvt. Ltd. having its Registered office at Unit 1, 3rd Floor, VIOS Commercial Tower, Near Wadala Truck Terminal, Wadala East. Mumbai-400037 (Helpdesk Number +91 8291220220, Email Id: support.BAANKNET@psballiance.com)**. The intending Bidders/ Purchasers are required to participate in the e-Auction process at e-Auction Service Provider's website <https://baanknet.com> This Service Provider will also provide online demonstration/ training on e-Auction in the portal.
- The Sale Notice containing the General Terms and Conditions of Sale is available/ published in the following websites/ web page portal.
 - <https://baanknet.com>
 - <https://www.pnbindia.bank.in>
- The intending participants of e-auction may download free of cost, copies of the Sale Notice, Terms & Conditions of e-auction, Help Manual on operational part of e-Auction related to this e-Auction from e-auction portal (<https://baanknet.com>).
- Bidder's e-Wallet should have sufficient balance (>=EMD amount) at the time of bidding.
- During the e-auction, bidders will be allowed to offer higher bid in inter-se bidding over and above the last bid quoted and the increase in the bid amount must be of increment amount mentioned. Ten minutes time will be allowed to bidders to quote successive higher bid and if no higher bid is offered by any bidder after the expiry of 10 minutes to the last highest bid, the e-auction shall be closed.
- It is the responsibility of intending Bidder(s) to properly read the Sale Notice, Terms & conditions of e-auction, Help Manual on operational part of e-Auction and follow them strictly.
- In case of any difficulty or need of assistance before or during e-Auction process, bidder may contact authorized representative of our e-Auction Service Provider **M/s PSB Alliance Pvt. Ltd.** Details of which are available on the <https://baanknet.com> portal.
- After finalization of e-Auction by the Authorized Officer, only successful bidder will be informed by our above referred service provider through SMS/ email. (On mobile no/ email address given by them/ registered with the service provider).
- The secured asset will not be sold below the reserve price.
- The successful bidder shall have to deposit 25% (twenty five percent) of the bid amount, less EMD amount deposited, on the same day or not later than the next working day and the remaining amount shall be paid within 15 days from the date of auction in the form of Banker's Cheque/ Demand Draft issued by a Scheduled Commercial Bank drawn in favour of "The Authorized Officer, Punjab National Bank". In case of failure to deposit the amounts as above within the stipulated time, the amount deposited by successful bidder will be forfeited to the Bank and Authorized Officer shall have the liberty to conduct a fresh auction/ sale of the property & the defaulting bidder shall not have any claim over the forfeited amount and the property.
- Payment of sale consideration by the successful bidder to the bank will be subject to TDS under Section 194- 1A of Income Tax Act 1961 and TDS is to be made by the successful bidder only at the time of deposit of remaining 75 % of the bid amount/ full deposit of BID amount.
- The Authorised Officer reserves the right to accept any or reject all bids, if not found acceptable or to postpone/ cancel/ adjourn/ discontinue or vary the terms of the auction at anytime without assigning any reason whatsoever and his decision in this regard shall be final.
- The sale certificate shall be issued in the favour of successful bidder on deposit of full bid amount as per the provisions of the act.
- The properties are being sold on "AS IS WHERE IS BASIS" and "AS IS WHAT IS BASIS" and "WHATEVER THERE IS BASIS".
- The particulars of Secured Assets specified in the Schedule hereinabove have been stated to the best of the information of the Authorised Officer, but the Authorised Officer shall not be answerable for any error, misstatement or omission in this proclamation.
- It shall be the responsibility of the bidders to inspect and satisfy themselves about the asset and specification before submitting the bid. The bidder inspect the property in consultation with the dealing official as per the details provide.
- All statutory dues/ attendant charges/ other dues including registration charges, stamp duty, taxes etc. shall have to be borne by the purchaser.
- The Authorized Officer or the Bank shall not be responsible for any charge, lien, encumbrances, or any other dues to the Government or anyone else in respect of properties (E-Auctioned) not known to the bank. The Intending Bidder is advised to make their own independent inquiries regarding the encumbrances on the property including statutory liabilities, arrears of property tax, electricity dues etc.
- The bidder should ensure proper internet connectivity, power back-up etc. The Bank shall not be liable for any disruption due to internet failure, power failure or technical reasons or reasons/ contingencies affecting the e-auctions.
- It is open to the Bank to appoint a representative and make self-bid and participate in the auction. For detailed term and conditions of the sale, please refer <https://baanknet.com> & <https://www.pnbindia.bank.in>.
- The sale shall be subject to the Terms & Conditions prescribed in the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002.
- The sale shall be done by the undersigned through e auction platform at the website <https://baanknet.com> on **23.06.2026 at 11.30 AM to 03.30 PM**

Date: 07.06.2026
Place: Circle Office, Kharagpur

Authorised Officer
Punjab National Bank, Secured Creditor, Circle Office, Kharagpur

STATUTORY 15/ 30 DAYS SALE NOTICE UNDER RULE 8(6) / 9(1) OF THE SARFAESI ACT, 2002

TMC govt left Bangla border open, changed Bengal demography: CM

Govt sets up cell to probe into 2019 CAA protest 'vandalism'

Tanusree Bose
Kolkata, June 6

LAUNCHING A scathing attack, Chief Minister Suvidya Adhikari on Saturday alleged that West Bengal's "demography has changed" because the previous Mamata Banerjee-led Trinamool Congress (TMC) regime kept "the Bangladesh border open for their vote bank" politics.

At a programme on 'Santanu consciousness and the awakening of Ram Rajya' in Kolkata, Adhikari referred to protests against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act in 2019, saying, "In the last few years, Bengal has suffered due to appeasement politics... law and order had deteriorated... In 2019 when the CAA was announced, there were atrocities across the state, starting from Murshidabad... the safety of our country was challenged."

"In the border, 600 km of land should have been given to the Border Security Force (BSF) by the previous government, but for their vote bank (politics), they kept the Bangladesh border open and today Bangladeshis infiltrators have changed the demography of Bengal. For Durga Puja, Kali Puja, Ram Navami and other Hindu festivals, people had to go to the High Court to seek permission to celebrate it. I have not yet completed a month since taking the oath (as chief minister) but change has already arrived... You all have given me the responsibility to stop all anti-social activities and I will fulfil the responsibility."

Earlier in the day, following a meeting at Nabanna, the Chief Minister directed West Bengal Director General of Po-

lice (DGP) to set up a special cell to investigate the destruction of public properties during the 2019 CAA protests. He said that the cost of damaged trains and other state assets will be recovered from the funds and properties of those who would be found responsible.

Sources said that the primary focus of the investigation would be districts where large-scale vandalism was reported, especially Murshidabad and parts of Howrah.

Sources said that with the new unit, the administration intends to track down those involved in arson, looting, and vandalism of trains and stations. The government will legally recover the cost of public property destruction from the accused, and might even attach or sell off properties, if necessary, sources said.

During his address, Adhikari said Bengal's youth should know how West Bengal came into existence.

“We got our Independence on August 15, 1947... freedom at midnight. Before that, there was a long struggle. The president of the Muslim League, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, demanded that the whole of Bengal be merged with Pakistan. Then the protest began. On April 4, 1947, Syama Prasad Mukherjee held the Hindu Mahasabha in Tarakeswar. He said this is a Hindu Bengali and Hindu homeland with a Hindu majority and we will not go to an Islamic country. Then Bengal was born.”

Describing Bengal as the nation's "cultural capital", Adhikari urged businesses to invest, saying that "political violence and appeasement politics are in the past".

Thanking the voters of Bhabanipur constituency, where he defeated Mamata Banerjee in the Assembly elections, Adhikari said, "In Bhabanipur, you all have done

wonders. The goons have fled, and those who are left, leave them to me... we will revive Bhabanipur."



Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw with CM Suvendu Adhikari at state secretariat, Saturday. PTI

After Vaishnaw meet, Suvendu: Rs 1 lakh-cr Rly projects for state

Atri Mitra
Kolkata, June 6

WEST BENGAL CM Suven-

After arriving in Kolkata, Vaishnaw took a Metro ride, reviewed various railway projects, and then travelled in an autorickshaw to meet Adhikari.

Addressing a joint press conference along with the CM at Nabanna, Vaishnaw underlined that “now you (Adhikari) can work. For so many years, development work was stopped here.”

Adhikari directed the District Magistrates to come up with a "calendar" indicating when land required for railway projects can be handed over to the Railways to avoid delay in implementation. He said that

with the cooperation of the central government, every corner of West Bengal will now be connected to the Railway map.

An investment plan of Rs 1 lakh crore was finalised at the meeting with Vaishnaw, the CM said. As part of the development plan, 102 stations in Bengal will be redeveloped as Amrit Bharat

Stations. Vaishnaw assured there will be no fund shortage for this project. It has also been decided that 538 flyovers and underpasses will be constructed across the state to ease traffic congestion, Adhikari said.

Accusing the previous TMC dispensation led by Mamata Banerjee of “non-cooperation” that has “deprived people of Bengal of railway facilities”, the CM said, “The state has now begun to reap benefits of the double-engine government. Approval has already been

granted for 61 new railway projects in the state. If these projects are implemented, there will be a revolutionary transformation in the railway connectivity system in both North

and South Bengal.”

He blamed the earlier TMC government for taking Centre-state relations to a "very difficult stage". "Just as we have provided land to the BSF to strengthen border security, we will similarly provide land to the Railways for projects across West Bengal," Adhikari said.

Vaishnaw also accused the previous TMC government of delaying several railway and Metro projects. Citing the Metro project in Chingrighata, he said that work on a key stretch was delayed due to court battles. "Projects valued at around Rs. 1.02 lakh crore have been pending implementation for a long time... You may recall the case of the metro project at Chingrighata, where the TMC government pursued legal challenges all the way to the Supreme Court," Vaishnaw said.

"The support of the state government, particularly in matters relating to land acquisition and clearances, will help us execute projects much faster," he said.



75
Azadi Ka
Amrit Mahotsav



सेंट्रल बैंक ऑफ इंडिया
Central Bank of India



1911 से सेंट्रल आपके लिए CENTRAL TO YOU SINCE 1911

BRANCH : JALPAIGURI

Sri Bainab Ghosh,
Son of Late Manash Ghosh
Resident of Gomosto Para, P.S. - Kotwali
P.O. & Dist- Jalpaiguri, West Bengal- 735101

Mrs. Ananya Sengupta Ghosh
W/o- Sri Bainab Ghosh,
Son of Late Manash Ghosh
Resident of Gomosto Para, P.S. - Kotwali
P.O. & Dist- Jalpaiguri, West Bengal- 735101

Sub: Demand Notice under Section 13(2) of the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest (SARFAESI) Act, 2002 TO THE BORROWER/GUARANTOR.

The undersigned holding the post of Chief Manager in his capacity of the Authorised Officer of Central Bank of India under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest, 2002 (hereinafter called the 'SARFAESI Act', for the sake of brevity) hereby issues this notice to you as follows:

You are aware that at your request, you have been granted by Central Bank of India (hereinafter called 'Bank', through its Jalpaiguri Branch, financial assistance as detailed columns 2 to 3 of Schedule Ahereto.

The said financial assistance was sanctioned, inter alia, against security interest created in favour of Bank by executing, inter alia, security documents in the manner as detailed/mentioned in **Schedule 'B'** along with details of property.

That you did not operate the account and did not repay the dues of bank as per the terms of sanction and consequently, your account was classified a **non performing asset w.e.f 18.02.2026** in accordance with the applicable guidelines issued by Reserve Bank of India from time to time. In spite of repeated requests by Bank, you have failed to repay the dues of bank.

The facility wise details of the amount due from you are mentioned in columns 4 to 9 of Schedule Ahereto. The total amount due against you being the sum total of all the amounts due under various financial facilities, as detailed in columns 4 to 9 of schedule A hereto, comes to Rs.12,96,110.29 (Rupees Twelve Lakhs Ninety Six Thousand One hundred Ten and Twenty Nine paise only) and you have defaulted in repayment of the entire said amount.

Therefore, you are hereby called upon under Section 13(2) of SARFAESI Act, to discharge your liabilities in full by paying the entire amount due being Rs.12,96,110.29 (Rupees Twelve Lakhs Ninety Six Thousand One hundred Ten and Twenty Nine paise only) with further interest at the applicable rate/s of interest mentioned in the Schedule A from the date of notice 21/05/2026 till the date of full and final payment along with incidental expenses, charges and costs recoverable from you as per terms of contract and/or as per law, within sixty days from the date of this notice.

If you fail to repay to the Bank the total dues which you have been called upon to pay here in above the Bank will exercise all or any of the rights available to it under the provisions of the SARFAESI Act read with the Rules framed thereunder.

You are also put on notice that in terms of Section 13(13), you are legally bound not to transfer the secured assets detailed in **Schedule 'B'**, by way of sale, or otherwise, without obtaining prior written consent of the bank.

Your attention is also drawn to Section 29 of SARFAESI Act which provides that any contravention of provisions of this SARFAESI Act amounts to an offence punishable with imprisonment up to one year or fine or both.

This notice of demand is issued without prejudice to and shall not be construed as waiver of any other rights or remedies which the bank has already exercised and/ or may exercise, including any legal action for recovery of the said dues and also for further demands for the sum that may be found /fall due and payable by you to us.

Your attention is drawn to the provisions of Section 13 (8) of the SARFAESI Act, 2002 in respect of time available to you to redeem the secured assets.

Schedule- 'A' Details of financial facilities sanctioned and availed AND the details of the amount due

Sl	
1	Type of financial facility sanctioned and availed – Cent Mortgage Rs. 25,50,000.00 Loan Account Number- 4006780052
2	Amount of the financial facility sanctioned – Rs. 25,50,000.00
3	Total amount of ledger balance outstanding on the date of notice- Rs. 12,41,930.29
4	The date up to which the interest has been charged in the ledger: 31/01/2026
5	Amount of interest EXCLUDING PENAL INTEREST, if any, from the date the interest was last charged in the ledger Rs. 53209.00 to the date of notice.
6	Rate of interest with periodicity of compounding at which amount in column (6) has been calculated- 11.20 %
7	Amount of penal interest charged without compounding from the date the penal interest was last charged up to date of notice – Rs. 971.00
8	Incidental expenses, charges, and costs, if any, as per law/terms of sanction-Nil
9	Total amount due up to the date of noticed Rs.12,96,110.29

Schedule- 'B'

(Details of Security Documents executed by the borrower)

Date and nature of document (mortgage deed/ deeds/ hypothecation deed/ deeds etc.) by which the assets mentioned in Column 1 of this table are secured. In case of equitable mortgage, give particulars of EM.

1	Original Title Deed No. I/4478 Dated.18/12/2015 (Executed by Sri Bainab Ghosh)
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Schedule- 'C'

(Detailed description of the secured asset/ Mortgaged Property/ Hypothecated Goods)

Immovable asset:

All that piece and parcel of land measuring about 0.04 acres comprised in R.S Khatian No. 17168 & 1370 corresponding to L. R. Khatian No. 3072 appertaining to R.S. Plot No. 2337 corresponding to L.R. Plot No. 2445, Mouza- Kharia, Sheet No. 26, JL No.7, P.S.-Kotwali, Dist- Jalpaiguri over which a two storied Pucca residential building of 500 square feet on each floor with Pucca roof on the ground Floor and tine shed on the first floor and which is butted and bounded by On the North : House of Manash Ghosh, On the South : House of Gopal Banik, On the East : 10 ft. wide Pucca Road, On the West : Land of Manash Ghosh

Movable asset

Detailed description of all Hypothecated movable assets-N/A

Date : 06.06.2026

Place: Jalpaiguri

Authorised Officer

Central Bank of India

GATI SHAKTI VISHWAVIDYALAYA

(A Central University under the Ministry of Railways, Government of India)
Lalbaug, Vadodara, Gujarat 390004

गति शक्ति विश्वविद्यालय

(रेल मंत्रालय, भारत सरकार के अधीन केन्द्रीय विश्वविद्यालय)
लालबाग, वडोदरा, गुजरात 390004



**गति शक्ति विश्वविद्यालय
गति शक्ति विश्वविद्यालय
Gati Shakti Vishwavidyalaya**



GSV/Acad/Admissions-2026
07.06.2026

ADMISSION NOTICE: AY 2026-27

Gati Shakti Vishwavidyalaya (GSV), Vadodara is a Central University established by an Act of Parliament vide Central Universities (Amendment) Act 2022. The University is sponsored by the Ministry of Railways, Govt. of India. Being a University of first-of-its-kind, GSV focuses on transport and logistics related education, multidisciplinary research and with a big mandate for executive training.

Applications are invited for admission to the following academic programmes across Engineering and Management disciplines for the AY 2026-27:

Discipline	Level	Program	Duration	No. of Seats	Entrance Test
Technology	Under-graduate (Regular Programs)	B.Tech. in Civil Engineering (Specialization: Rail Engineering)	4 Year	60	JEE (Main) 2026 Admission through JOSAA. Visit JOSAA website https://josaa.nic.in/ for details.
		B.Tech. in Electronics and Communication Engineering (Specialization: Rail Engineering)	4 Year	60	
		B.Tech. in Mechanical Engineering (Specialization: Rail Engineering)	4 Year	60	
		B.Tech. in Electrical Engineering (Specialization: Rail Engineering)	4 Year	60	
		B.Tech. in Artificial Intelligence & Data Science (Specialization: Transportation and Logistics)	4 Year	60	
		B.Tech. in Aviation Engineering	4 Year	40	
		B.Tech. in Maritime Engineering	4 Year	30	
Management	Post-Graduate (Regular Programs)	MBA (Logistics and Supply Chain Management)	2 Year	30	MBA (LSCM) - CUET-PG/ XAT / CAT / MAT
		MBA (Ports and Shipping Logistics)	2 Year	30	
Technology/ Management	Doctoral (Regular Programs)	Ph.D (Engineering / Management) with a focus on Transportation & Logistics			GSV Entrance Test

Executive Programs – Exclusively for Working Professionals					
Discipline	Level	Program	Duration	No. of Seats	Entrance Test
Technology	Post-Graduate	M.Tech (Intelligent Transport Systems)	3 Year	30	GSV Entrance Test
		M.Tech (Railway Engineering)	3 Year	30	
		M.Tech (Bridge and Tunnel Engineering)	3 Year	30	
		M.Tech (Roads and Highway Engineering)	3 Year	30	
Management	Post-Graduate	MBA (Logistics and Supply Chain Management)	2 Year	30	GSV Entrance Test
		MBA (Multi-modal Transportation)	2 Year	30	
		MBA (Metro Rail Management)	2 Year	30	
		MBA (Aviation and Operations Management)	2 Year	30	
		MBA (Infrastructure Asset Management)	2 Year	30	
		MBA (Digital Maritime)	2 Year	20	
Technology/ Management	Doctoral	Ph.D (Engineering / Management) with a focus on Transportation & Logistics (Exclusively for Working Professionals in Govt. / Industry / PSU, R&D organisations, Laboratories, Defence Forces, NGOs, and Banking / Finance Institutions)			GSV Entrance Test

For Post-Graduate and Doctoral Program, **Apply online at GSV Admission Portal: <https://gsvadm.samarth.edu.in>**
For Application procedure and detailed information, visit the University website: **<https://gsv.ac.in>**
Contact us at: **admissions@gsv.ac.in** for any admission related query / information

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

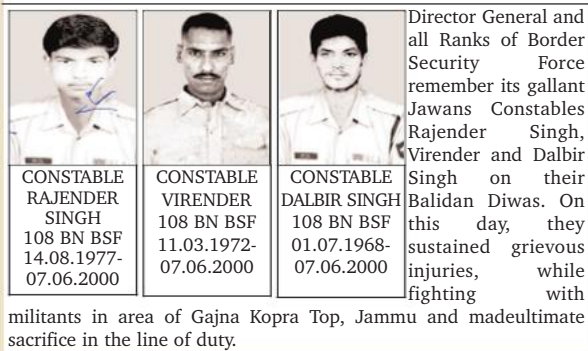
- The only University in India exclusively focused on transport and logistics education.
- **Excellent Placement Performance for B.Tech Graduates of the 2026 Batch**
- Multi-disciplinary programmes based on demand-driven curriculum addressing industry needs.
- Innovation Led & Industry Driven University with strong emphasis on industry connect.
- Collaborations with top Industry and Higher Education Institutes.
- Highly experiential and unique interdisciplinary pedagogical approach incorporating latest technologies.
- Financial support to Meritorious and needy students – (a) through GSV Financial Aid (upto 20% of students); (b) Corporate scholarships (Airbus, Siemens, CWC, Plasser, etc.).
- High-quality and experienced faculty with global exposure.
- Focus on 21st century skills: communication, critical thinking, innovation and design thinking.
- Project-based teaching-learning and well-structured internships at Indian Railway establishments and other sector-specific organizations.
- State of the art railways facilities and lab infrastructure.
- Excellent Hostel facilities for the UG students, female PG students, and PhD Research Scholars (for regular students only).
- Career Development Centre that enables professional development and career planning.

SALUTE THE SOLDIER

BORDER SECURITY FORCE

**HEAD CONSTABLE HARI SINGH, PMG 79 BN BSF
18.07.1949-07.06.1984**

Director General and all Ranks of Border Security Force remember its gallant Jawan Head Constable Hari Singh on his Balidan Diwas. On 04th June 1984, he sustained grievous bullet injuries while fighting militants in Amritsar, Punjab. He fought bravely but later succumbed to his injuries at General hospital, Amritsar on 07th June 1984. His sacrifice and gallant action have been aptly recognized by GOI by awarding him with PMG (Posthumously).



After Firhad's exit, govt notice to KMC asks why board should not be dissolved

Kolkata: The West Bengal government has asked the KMC to explain why its board should not be dissolved, issuing a show-cause notice after senior TMC leader Firhad Hakim resigned as mayor on Friday.

The Urban Development and Municipal Affairs Department served a show-cause notice on the KMC under provisions of the Kolkata Municipal Corporation Act, 1980, directing it to explain within three days why action should not be initiated against the civic body.

In the notice, BJP government contended KMC was failing to discharge its obligations towards residents and that the mayor's resignation could adversely affect its functioning. Officials said copies of the notice were sent to municipal commissioner, municipal secretary and other authorities concerned. PTI



Spell of relief

A spell of shower brings relief amid scorching heat in Kolkata, Saturday. EXPRESS

THE IMD has forecast heavy rain-fall, accompanied by thunderstorms and lightning, in parts of West Bengal over the next seven days.

KOLKATA MAY see brief but intense spells of rain, particularly during the afternoon and evening.

HEAVY RAIN warning issued for

Darjeeling, Kalimpong, Jalpaiguri, Alipurdwar and Cooch Behar districts from June 7 onward.

IN HOWRAH, Hooghly North & South 24 Parganas, thunderstorms accompanied by lightning, winds reaching 40-50 kmph are likely in coming days.

Bhargar blast: NIA gets 14-day custody of TMC ex-MLA Saokat

Tanusrree Bose

Kolkata, June 6

A SPECIAL court Saturday granted the NIA 14-day custody of former TMC MLA Saokat Molla arrested in on Friday connection with the Bhargar bomb blast case.

The Kolkata City Sessions Court has also ordered that the mobile phones of the other accused can be sent for forensic testing to investigate any communications that may have taken place between Saokat and the other accused.

The NIA produced Saokat at the court amid tight security Saturday morning.

Appearing for Saokat Molla, Advocate Suman Das submitted, "The case was started on the basis of one Asadul Mondal's statement saying he heard a blast and informed the local police station. The FIR was against unknown persons; some accused were arrested. During the bomb blast he [Saokat] was an MLA with Z plus security so it is not possible to do such a thing."

He said, "In NIA's report it is just stated he was arrested and mobile seized and sent for forensic. He is not connected with the blast, he was at his residence which was miles away and had no information regarding the blast."

On the other hand, the NIA counsel Shyamal Ghosh submitted, "Three persons arrested; one in police custody and two in judicial custody. Molla was arrested yesterday. At this early stage we require him for investigation. The persons making the bomb and the



NIA officials escort TMC former MLA Saokat Molla who was produced before a court in Kolkata, Saturday. PARTHA PAUL

involvement of this person [Saokat] is there. He was very much involved, and the accused have followed the instructions of the accused. We have seized the mobile phones for investigation; also the pen drive has been recovered. Molla is an influential person... if he is released he will tamper with evidence and also try to influence witnesses."

The NIA had been tracking Saokat for a long time in connection with the Bhargar blast case, and he was officially declared an absconder two days ago. There are allegations that Saokat had planned to flee to Bangladesh during this period. He was spotted near Chonakhali, close to the International Border in the South 24 Parganas district.

Local residents recognised him and began protesting, forcing Saokat to turn his car around. Later on Friday night, he was arrested from the Ruby

area. Sources claim he was on his way to the NIA office to surrender when he was intercepted and arrested along the route by NIA officers.

Early on Saturday, protesters raised slogans against Saokat Molla outside the NIA office in New Town. Many were spotted with fish and eggs in their hands, while some were seen dancing to a song with the lyrics 'machh chor' (fish thief).

Meanwhile, some BJP workers also staged protests against Saokat on the court premises.

On Saturday afternoon, chaos ensued when the NIA vehicle carrying Saokat left the court to take the accused for a medical examination at a Bidhannagar hospital. Upon spotting the NIA vehicle, the protesters chased it and some started banging on the car windows. Meanwhile, slogans of "chor, chor" (thief) were raised as officials escorted Saokat under heavy police security.

पंजाब नैशनल बैंक (भारत सरकार का उपक्रम)			pnbpunjab national bank (Govt. of India Undertaking)		E-AUCTION SALE NOTICE	
ARMB : NORTH 24 PARGANAS 48-A, Jessore Road, Barasat (Near Seth Pukur), West Bengal, Pin - 700 124, Ph. : 033 2584 4169, E-mail : cs8291@pnb.bank.in						
PUBLIC NOTICE FOR E-AUCTION SALE OF IMMOVABLE / MOVABLE PROPERTIES						
E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest act 2002 read with provision to Rule 8(b) & 9(1) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002.						
Notice is hereby given to the public in general and particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described immovable properties Mortgaged / Charged to the Punjab National Bank (Secured Creditor), the possession (Physical / Constructive mentioned against each property) of which has been taken by the Authorized Officer of Punjab National Bank, will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is" on below mentioned dates, for recovery of under mentioned dues & further interest, charges and costs etc. due to Punjab National Bank from the Borrowers and Guarantors as detailed below. The Reserve Price and Earnest money Deposit (EMD) amount for each property has been furnished below.						
The Sale will be done by the undersigned through e-auction platform provided at the Web Portal (https://baanknet.com). The General Public is invited to bid either personally or by duly authorised agent.						
Last Date of Submission of EMD and Documents : 23.06.2026 upto 4.00 P.M.						
EMD to be deposited BAANKNET Portal : https://baanknet.com						
Contact Details of Authorised Officer : Deepak Kumar Sah, Mobile : 98846 77251, e-mail : cs8291@pnb.bank.in						
Sl. No.	a) Name & Address of the Borrower / Guarantors b) Name of the Branch c) Property ID	Location and Details of the Property	Outstanding Dues as per 13(2) Notice for which Property is being sold	a) Reserve Price (in Lakh) b) EMD (in Lakh) c) Bid Multiplier (in Lakh)	a) Date & Time of E-auction b) Detail of Encumbrances	
1.	a) M/s. Popular Hatchery & Nursing Point Md. Sariful Alam Md. Anowar Hossain b) Branch : ARMB - North 24 Parganas c) PUNBABA40455758	All that piece and parcel Equitable mortgage of Land & two storied building bearing Deed No. 668 dated 12.03.1977. Deed No. 1323 dated 21.07.1997. Deed No. 771 dated 13.03.1977 & Deed No. 856 dated 19.05.1981 at Mouza - Palltaganda, J.L. No. 40, Touzi No. 146 RS No. 309, Dag No. 152-153 & 156, Khatian No. 38 & 336, Hal Khatian No. 85 under Fali Belaghata Gram Panchayat, P.S. - Barasat, North 24 Parganas. The Property is situated on 16 Ft. wide Panchyat Road, standing in the name of Md. Anowar Hossain & Md. Faruk Hossain, S/o. Lal Mohammad Mondal, Area 22 Decimal. (Under Symbolic Possession)	Rs. 33,41,422.72 with further interest and expenses w.e.f. 31.01.2013	a) Rs. 31.43 Lakh b) Rs. 3.15 Lakh c) Rs. 0.20 Lakh	a) 23.06.2026 From 11:00 A.M. to 04:00 P.M. b) Not known to Bank	
2.	a) Medmark Pharma Division Mr. Dipankar Mitra Sri Ujjwal Kanti Bhaumik b) Branch : ARMB - North 24 Parganas c) PUNBABA40479086	All that piece and parcel Flat No. 101 on the 1st floor of the building No. 32 Type B having super build up area of 639 Sq.ft. more or less together with undivided proportionate share of land together with common facilities easement general common area situated at B. T. Road, Mouza - Panihati Bhowanaipur and Sukchar Dag No. 1007/1541, Khatian No. 529/6 within Panihati Municipality in Ward No. 3, Holding No. 29 F (new) Panihati, P.S. - Khardah, Dist - North 24 Parganas commonly known as Peerless Nagar Vide Deed No. 5156/2007 dated 07.056.2007. In the name of Ujjwal Kanti Bhaumik. (Under Symbolic Possession)	Rs. 38,40,584.63 with further interest and charges w.e.f. 01.10.2021	a) Rs. 21.02 Lakh b) Rs. 2.11 Lakh c) Rs. 0.20 Lakh	a) 23.06.2026 From 11:00 A.M. to 04:00 P.M. b) Not known to Bank	
3.	a) Samir Golder Guarantor : Pinki Golder b) Branch : ARMB - North 24 Parganas c) PUNBABA40422653	All that piece and parcel of Bastu Land with building thereon measuring about 2.475 Satak lying and situated, Mouza - Tantraneora, J.L. No. 93, RS Khatian 1298, LR khatian 3242, 3416, New Own LR Khatian 9606, 9607 (as per Mutation Certificate dated 23.09.2016) RS & LR Dag No. 3678 under the local Jurisdiction of Ward No. 19 of Basirhat Municipality, P.S. & ADSR - Basirhat vide Sale Deed No. 151105188 for the year 2015 registered in Book No. 1, CD Volume No. 1511-2015, Page from 31863 to 31883 at ADSRO - Basirhat. The Property is butted and bounded by : North - Property of Dipak Mukherjee, South - Property of Anjali Mukherjee, East - Property of Seller, West - 6 Ft. wide Tantra Neora New Road. The Property is in the name of (1) Samir Golder (2) Pinki Golder. (Under Symbolic Possession)	Rs. 14,36,851.75 Plus Interest and expenses w.e.f. 01.08.2021	a) Rs. 14.58 Lakh b) Rs. 1.46 Lakh c) Rs. 0.10 Lakh	a) 23.06.2026 From 11:00 A.M. to 04:00 P.M. b) Not known to Bank	
4.	a) M/s. Bidyadhari Feed Centre Motyafeaque Ahmed Faruk Ahamed b) Branch : ARMB - North 24 Parganas c) PUNBABA40482622	All that piece and parcel of Equitable Mortgage of Land and Building RCC structure, in the name of Motyafeaque Ahmad, S/o. Late Firoj Ahmad at Mouza - Alghara, P.S. - Haroa, J.L. No. 54, Hal Touzi No. 586, 616, LR Khatian No. 562/1, LR Dag No. 479, 481, 478, 480. Total area of Land 19 Decimal Bastu Land vide Deed No. 5860 of the year 1996 registered at ADSRO - Deganga, Book No. 1, Vol No. 104, Page No. from 95 to 104 & Parcha No. 1504061, dated 19.03.2009. Property is butted & bounded on the : North - by boundary wall & there after single storied building of Fakir Ali, South - by boundary & there after single storied building of other, East - by boundary wall & there after vacant land of Jogi Ahamed, West - by common passage & there after single storied building of Wazed Ali. (Under Symbolic Possession)	Rs. 27,41,175.88 with further interest and charges w.e.f. 01.08.2021	a) Rs. 29.91 Lakh b) Rs. 3.00 Lakh c) Rs. 0.20 Lakh	a) 23.06.2026 From 11:00 A.M. to 04:00 P.M. b) Not known to Bank	
5.	a) M/s. M. P. Fish Suppliers Manirul Molla Moshhed Hossain Toddes Hossain b) Branch : ARMB - North 24 Parganas c) PUNBABA4035767202	Property I : All that piece and parcel of two storied residential building of area measuring GF-463.5 Sq.ft., FF-590.33 Sq.ft. & stair head area 154.43 Sq.ft. On 04 Decimal (as per Parcha) Bastu land situated at Mouza - Baganati, J.L. No. 25, Touzi No. 587/616, LR Dag No. 91, 97, LR Khatian No. 718, Hal Khatian No. 23 within the limit of Sonapukur GP. P.O. + P.S. - Haroa, Dist - North 24 Parganas, Pin-743 425, Deed No. I-1440 of 2000. Property in the name of Manirul Molla. Property II : Equitable mortgage of Vacant Land lying & situated at Mouza - Baganati, P.O. + P.S. - Haroa, Dist - North 24 Parganas, Pin - 743 425, J.L. No. 25, Touzi No. 23, RS & LR Dag No. 197, LR Dag No. 819 under Sonapukur Gram Panchayat, Dist - North 24 Parganas vide Land 07 Decimal Deed No. I-1350 of 2015 & Property is in the name of Manirul Molla. The Property is bounded : On the North-Property of Mohiuddin Molla, On the South - by Property of Julfikar, On the East - Property of Motalab Molla & on the West - 8 ft wide Road. (Under Symbolic Possession)	Rs. 38,40,584.00 with further interest and expenses w.e.f. 08.07.2019	Property I : a) Rs. 15.70 Lakh b) Rs. 1.57 Lakh c) Rs. 0.10 Lakh Property II : a) Rs. 3.87 Lakh b) Rs. 0.39 Lakh c) Rs. 0.10 Lakh	a) 23.06.2026 From 11:00 A.M. to 04:00 P.M. b) Not known to Bank	
6.	a) M/s. New Mehnaz Enterprises Duraiya Begum Guarantor : Akram Ahmed (Since Deceased) Legal Heir b) Branch : ARMB - North 24 Parganas c) PUNBABA4038501002 & PUNBABA4038501001	Property I : All that piece and parcel of Land with shop room thereon measuring 2 Satak lying & situated at Mouza - Haroa, J.L. No. 65, Re. Sa. No. 114, Touzi No. 36, Sabek Khatian 07, Hal Krishi khatian 429, Old Dag No. 313, New Dag No. 313/399 & 313/400 (as per Parcha) New Own LR khatian 407 (as per percha) under the local jurisdiction of Haroa GP+PS - Haroa, Dist - North 24 Pargana vide Sale Deed No. 7875 year 1968 recorded in Book No. 01, Volume No. 86, Pages from 132 to 133 at ADSRO - Deganga. The Property is in the name of Akram Ahmed. The Property is butted & bounded by : North - Property of Kaji Rounok, South - Market Road, East - Pucca Road, West - School & Godown. Property II : All that Pice and Parcel of dokan & hat land measuring 6 Decimal, lying & situated at Mouza - Haroa, J.L. No. 65, Touzi No. 11, Old Khatian No. 166, New LR Khatian No. 407, LR Dag No. 281, 319, 327, 332, 336, 337, 338, 341, 339/359, 319/362, 321/410 (as per Deed & Parcha) under the local jurisdiction of Haroa GP, P.S. - Haroa, Dist - 24 Parganas North vide Sale Deed No. 4563 of the year 1979 recorded in Book No. 1, Volume No. 66, Pages from 93 to 95 at ADSRO - Deganga. The Property is in the name of Akram Ahmed. (Under Symbolic Possession)	Rs. 51,11,389.71 with further interest and expenses w.e.f. 01.06.2023	Property I : a) Rs. 9.26 Lakh b) Rs. 0.93 Lakh c) Rs. 0.10 Lakh Property II : a) Rs. 3.79 Lakh b) Rs. 0.38 Lakh c) Rs. 0.10 Lakh	a) 23.06.2026 From 11:00 A.M. to 04:00 P.M. b) Not known to Bank	
7.	a) M/s. Loke Nath Hossierey Mr. Amal Banik Mr. Sankar Sarkar b) Branch : ARMB - North 24 Parganas c) PUNBABA40470749	All that piece and parcel of Land and single stories building situated at Mouza - Sekenderpur, J.L. No. 35, Touzi No. 13, Dag No. 2075, 2102, 2104, 2129, 2136, 2482, 2520, 2523, 1791, 1792, Khatian No. 1024, P.O. + P.S. - Haringhata, Pin - 741 257, Kastodanga 1 No. Gram Panchayat. Total area of Land 405 Decimal. Property in the name of Mr. Sankar Sarkar by Sale Deed No. I-3870 of 1984. Bounded by : On the North : Panchayat Road, On the South : Single storied building of Haripada Sarkar, O the East : Agriculture land, On the West - Single Storied building of Nibas Sarkar (Under Symbolic Possession)	Rs. 55,87,649.07 with further interest and expenses w.e.f. 08.07.2019	a) Rs. 83.58 Lakh b) Rs. 8.36 Lakh c) Rs. 0.50 Lakh	a) 23.06.2026 From 11:00 A.M. to 04:00 P.M. b) Not known to Bank	
8.	a) Sh. Dilip Sarkar Smt. Sutapa Sarkar (Co-Borrower) b) Branch : ARMB - North 24 Parganas c) PUNB61654898642	All that piece and parcel of Equitable Mortgage of Land and building in respect of the plot of land measuring 3.068 Decimal, lying and situated at Mouza - Mirzapur, J.L. No. 41 under Police Station - Basirhat, Dist - North 24 Parganas of LR Khatian No. Dag no. 538 & 555, ADSR - Basirhat. The Deed No. being I-3784 for the year 2007. Property owned by Mr. Mihir Biswas, S/o. Debidas Biswas. (Under Symbolic Possession)	Rs. 28,94,054.60 with further interest and expenses w.e.f. 01.10.2021	a) Rs. 59.09 Lakh b) Rs. 6.00 Lakh c) Rs. 0.50 Lakh	a) 23.06.2026 From 11:00 A.M. to 04:00 P.M. b) Not known to Bank	
9.	a) M/s. Mondal Enterprise Ashiruddin Mondal Sri Asiruddin Mondal b) Branch : ARMB - North 24 Parganas c) PUNBABA4032874801	All that piece and parcel of Land and Building situated at Holding / Premises No. 3954, Baraberia Santoshpur Road, Kolkata - 700 121 P.S. - Amdanga, Dist - North 24 Parganas, P.O. Mouza - Baraberia, Berabariga Gram Panchayat, Re. Sa. No. 230, J.L. No. 72, Sabek Touzi No. 146, Hal 3, C.S. Khatian No. 91, RS / LR Dag No. 3899, Bastu Land, measuring an area of 5 Cottah with one stories pucca building on the said land, in the name of Asiruddin Mondal by virtue of Gift Deed No. 150106677 of the year 2016, which is butted and bounded by : On the North - 30 ft wide Santoshpur Road, On the South - L/O Md. Ahd (Ayed) Ali, On the East : L/O Md. Ahd (Ayed) Ali, On the West : L/O Md Ahd (Ayed) Ali. (Under Symbolic Possession)	Rs. 22,71,091.00 with further interest and expenses w.e.f. 01.04.2018	a) Rs. 15.07 Lakh b) Rs. 1.51 Lakh c) Rs. 0.10 Lakh	a) 23.06.2026 From 11:00 A.M. to 04:00 P.M. b) Not known to Bank	
10.	a) Mrs. Manjura Khatun Bibi Md. Mazahar Ali b) Branch : ARMB - North 24 Parganas c) PUNBABA40344000	All that piece and parcel of Equitable Mortgage of Land and Building there on situated at Mouza - Chandipur, LR Khatian No. 1565, RS & LR Dag No. 86 under Baduria Police Station, Area of Land 10 Decimal Bastu Land out of total 12 Decimal total land vide Gift Deed No. 10410 of the year 2014 registered at Baduria ADSRO, Recorded in Book No. 1, Vol No. 22 at Page No. 7376 to 7392. Property is in the name of Md. Mazahar Ali. Property is butted and bounded by : North by - Padma River, South by - Property of Md. Mazed Ali, East by - 12 Ft. wide Common Passage, West by - Property of Md. Mazed Ali. (Under Symbolic Possession)	Rs. 28,74,962.79 with further interest and expenses w.e.f. 31.05.2025	a) Rs. 30.62 Lakh b) Rs. 3.07 Lakh c) Rs. 0.25 Lakh	a) 23.06.2026 From 11:00 A.M. to 04:00 P.M. b) Not known to Bank	
11.	a) M/s. Rajib Dairy Farm Samsur Rahman Mondal Sri Abdul Sattar Mondal Sri Rabin Adhikary b) Branch : ARMB - North 24 Parganas c) PUNBABA40389333, PUNB4C849221813 & PUNB4C849226912	Property I : All the part & parcel of Land & Building situated at Mouza- Ghoshpur, P.S. - Baduria, Dist - North 24 Pgs, J.L. No. 1, total area of land measuring 27 Decimal i.e. measuring 13-12 decimal in Dag No. 498 appertaining to RS Khatian No. 1125, LR Khatian No. Kri 1268 and the rest 13-12 Decimal in Dag No. 498 appertaining to RS Kh No. 1125, LR Khatian No. Kri 1263, 1264, situated within Dakshin Chatra Gram Panchayat registered vide Sale Deed No. I-00238 for the year 2005. Property owned by Md. Abdul Sattar Mondal. Property II : All the part & parcel of Land situated at Mouza - Ghoshpur, P.S. - Baduria, Dist - North 24 Parganas, J.L. No. 1 measuring 15 Decimal (alongwith building measuring 400 Sq.ft.) in RS & LR Dag No. 538 appertaining to RS Khatian No. 840, LR Khatian No. 840, LR Khatian No. Kri 852, RS & LR Dag No. 176, measuring 41 Decimal situated within Chatra Gram Panchayat. Registered vide Sale Deed No. I-08630 for the year 2008. Property owned by Samsur Rahman Mondal. (Under Symbolic Possession)	Rs. 46,24,128.52 with further interest and expenses w.e.f. 08.08.2017	Property I : a) Rs. 40.19 Lakh b) Rs. 4.02 Lakh Property II : a) Rs. 20.40 Lakh b) Rs. 2.04 Lakh c) Rs. 0.20 Lakh Property III : a) Rs. 12.20 Lakh b) Rs. 1.22 Lakh c) Rs. 0.10 Lakh	a) 23.06.2026 From 11:00 A.M. to 04:00 P.M. b) Not known to Bank	
12.	a) Sk. Momen Guarantor : Sekh Mahasin b) Branch : ARMB - North 24 Parganas c) PUNB3T55265101501 & PUNBABA40343080	Property I : All that piece & parcel of Bastu (vide BLLRO conversion Certificate Case Vo. CN/2021/1513/3-08/01/2021, Land with Building thereon measuring about 8 Satak lying & situated at Mouza - Samla, J.L. No. 55, Re. Sa. No. 114, Touzi No. 23, RS Khatian No. 81, LR Khatian No. 421/1, LR Own Khatian No. 892, RS & LR Dag No. 394 under the local jurisdiction of P.S. - Haroa, Dist - North 24 Parganas, vide Gift Deed No. 151004334 for the year 2022 recorded in Book No. 01, Volume No. 1510-2022, Pages from 107642 to 107654 at ADSRO - Deganga. Boundaries : North - Property of Bhasker Sekh, South - Property of Chatter Sekh, East - Property of Aktar Sekh, West - Property of other Dag. (under Symbolic Possession) Property II : All that piece & parcel of Dokan & Hat Land measuring 4 Satak, lying & situated at Mouza - Samla, J.L. No. 55, Touzi No. 23, Old Khatian No. 442/1, new own LR Khatian No. 735 (in the name of Momen Sekh as per mutation certificate), RS & LR Dag No. 128 (area of land 3 Satak) & 135 (area of land 1 Satak) under the local jurisdiction of P.S. - Haroa, Dist - North 24 Parganas, vide Gift Deed Bo. 00513 of the year 2015, recorded in Book No. 1, CD Volume No. 02, Pages from 3151 to 3163 at ADSRO - Deganga. Boundaries : North - Property of Sekh Ajij, South - Property of Sekh Illias, East - Property of Sekh Mosaraf, West - Property of Sekh Mohidullah. (under Symbolic Possession)	Rs. 8,67,360.00 & Rs. 23,85,543.50 with further interest and expenses w.e.f. 01.09.2022	Property I : a) Rs. 24.86 Lakh b) Rs. 2.49 Lakh c) Rs. 0.20 Lakh Property II : a) Rs. 18.29 Lakh b) Rs. 1.83 Lakh c) Rs. 0.10 Lakh	a) 23.06.2026 From 11:00 A.M. to 04:00 P.M. b) Not known to Bank	
13.	a) M/s. Terra Art Centre Sri Malay Dutta Smt. Rupali Dutta Now Rupali Deb Sri Chandan Dutta Sri Kisholoy Dutta b) Branch : ARMB - North 24 Parganas c) PUNB0MALOYDUTTA0	All that part and parcel of Bastu Land & Building there on measuring land about 1 Katha 6 Chittack 36 Sq.ft. along with approx. 247 ft. structure, lying and situated at Mouza - Hridaypur, Paraganas - Anowarpur, Touzi No. 146, J.L. No. 41, Re. Sa. No. 242, Sabek Khatian No. 252, RS Khatian No. 852, LR Khatian No. 356, New own LR Khatian No. 307/1 (as per Mutation Certificate, in the name of Kisholoy Dutta), 1278/1 (as per Mutation Certificate in the name of Chandan Dutta), 1428/1 (as per Mutation Certificate in the name of Moloy Dutta) 783/1 (as per Mutation Certificate in the name of Arati Dutta), RS Dag No. 270, LR Dag No. 958, marked as Plot No. A delineated in sketch map annexed with Deed, under local jurisdiction of Holding No. 44, Hartinath Sen Road, Ward No. 6 of Barasat Municipality, vide Deed of Partition bearing No. 07150 for the year 2003, recorded in Book No. 220, Pages from 237 to 262 at ADSRO - Barasat. The A marked property is in the name of (1) Arati Dutta, (2) Chandan Dutta (3) Malay Dutta (4) Kisholoy Dutta (under Symbolic Possession)	Rs. 77,23,094.36 with further interest and expenses w.e.f. 01.10.2021	a) Rs. 7.05 Lakh b) Rs. 0.71 Lakh c) Rs. 0.10 Lakh	a) 23.06.2026 From 11:00 A.M. to 04:00 P.M. b) Not known to Bank	
TERMS AND CONDITIONS						
The Sale shall be subject to the Terms & Conditions prescribed in the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002 and to the following further Conditions :						
1. The properties are being sold on "AS IS WHERE IS BASIS" and "AS IS WHAT IS BASIS" and "WHATEVER THERE IS BASIS"						
2. The particulars of Secured Assets specified in the Schedule hereinabove have been stated to the best of the information of the Authorised Officer, but the Authorised Officer shall not be answerable for any error, misstatement or omission in this proclamation.						
3. The Sale will be done by the undersigned through e-auction platform provided at the Website https://baanknet.com						
4. For detailed term and conditions of the sale, please refer https://baanknet.com & www.pnbindia.in						
5. Bank shall not be liable for any kind of statutory dues against the property. Buyers shall be solely responsible for payment of any kind of taxes.						
Date : 07.06.2026 Place : Barasat			Sd/- Dipak Kumar Sah, Authorised Officer Punjab National Bank			

Congress silent, its allies support CJP’s protest

Asad Rehman
New Delhi, June 6

AS THE ‘Cockroach Janta Party’ on Saturday gave the Centre a seven-day deadline to remove Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, Opposition parties, except the Congress, welcomed the protest at Jantar Mantar, saying it was an expression of frustration of the youth of the country.

Congress leaders maintained a measured silence, with insiders saying that the party suspects CJP was backed by AAP and will take a “wait and watch” approach.

Senior Congress leaders said the party was suspicious of CJP’s social media presence and how it was given so much time on TV debates and the permission to hold a protest in the Capital.

In a post on X, Congress Social Media & Digital Platforms chairperson Supriya Shrinete, without naming the CJP, said the party stands firmly with the Gen Z. “The Congress party has been at the forefront – championing the causes of Gen Z. Ensuring they are heard, amplifying their voices, addressing their concerns, and fighting relentlessly to protect their future. In the last one month alone, NSUI and the Indian Youth Congress have organised over 50 protests across the country against the NEET paper leak scandal and the CBSE marking mess.”

Listing out a number of times Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi, was stopped from meeting victims of a tragedy or visiting sensitive places, Shrinete said in such a scenario, if someone is easily allowed to protest – questions are bound to arise.

Congress allies like SP, TMC, Shiv Sena (UBT), RJD, CPI(M) and CPIM, however, welcomed the protest.

TMC deputy leader in the Rajya Sabha, Sagarika Ghose, told *The Indian Express* that

TMC supports the movement being led by angry youth and it was a reality check for the government. “There have been paper leaks every year. Children have killed themselves; yet there is no accountability,” said Ghose.

“The RJD and our leader Tejashwi Yadav has been protesting against the government on the issue of paper leaks. In democracy, everyone has a right to protest,” said RJD spokesperson Mrityunjay Tiwari.

SP Lok Sabha MP Rajeev Rai said it was a “warning” for the government. “The youth have come out against paper leaks and that should make the government introspect. In the 1970s, we saw the JP movement and now we are saying this. The government should take note of the people’s anger.”

Shiv Sena chief Uddhav Thackeray said “cockroaches shouldn’t be underestimated” and this is the warning given by the agitation at Jantar Mantar. “Those whom we call the destiny-makers and future of the country — thousands of young people — have come out on the streets in the scorching heat, carrying their pain and worries about their future,” he said.

AAP leader Arvind Kejriwal said that the protest is an expression of anger and frustration experienced by the youth. “Rather than terming them anti-national, Modi government should address their issues. AAP supports their demands. The PM must sack the education minister immediately,” he said.

CPI(M) Liberation general secretary Dipankar Bhattacharya, who joined the protest at Jantar Mantar, said, “...Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan must resign and be held accountable for the continuing education crisis.”

Requesting anonymity, a CPI(M) MP said any movement should be welcomed.

Some forces pushing youth towards negative politics, says BJP chief

Press Trust of India
Ranchi, June 6

BJP PRESIDENT Nitin Nabin on Saturday alleged that some forces were trying to push the country’s youths towards “negative politics”.

In an apparent reference to ‘Cockroach Janta Party’ (CJP) founder Abhijeet Dipke, he said, “Some people sitting abroad assume they can give directions to the youths of India.”

“Today’s youths want to work towards nation-building and secure their future. But some forces are trying to make the country’s youths anti-establishment,” Nabin said during an interaction in Ranchi.

The BJP chief is currently on a two-day visit to Jharkhand.

“Those who want to push the youths of this country towards negative politics, I warn them

that the youths of India will choose positive politics,” he said. People have the right to oppose, but within democratic norms, he said.

He said the country’s youths are known for innovation and creation.

“Because of their dedication, hard work and efforts, around two lakh startups have come up. The country aims to become a global IT hub,” he said.

“The anti-establishment campaigns we witnessed in our neighbouring countries can never be for the country’s youths, who will work in a disciplined manner to build the nation,” Nabin said.

Some people sitting abroad think they can give direction to the youths of India, but the youths are not going to become a puppet in the hands of a few people, the BJP chief said.

Verify nationality of 2,860 for deportation: Delhi to Dhaka

Shubhajit Roy
New Delhi, June 6

AS THE bordering states of West Bengal and Assam intensify their crackdown on illegal immigrants from Bangladesh, the Indian government has requested the neighbouring country to verify the nationality of 2,860 people so that they can be sent back.

This assumes significance at a time when hundreds of Bangladeshi immigrants, who are reported to have entered India illegally, have flocked to the borders in the recent weeks, as reported by *The Indian Express*. This movement of people has been fuelled by the announcement of the newly elected BJP government in West Bengal, led by Chief Minister Suwendu Adhikari, that it will follow the “detect, delete and deport” policy; the government has so far detained about 400 undocumented Bangladeshi immigrants in its detention centres.

This is also an outcome of the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) exercise in the state, which has led to a panic among the immigrants in the border state.

Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said, “We have requested Bangladesh to verify the nationality of over 2,860 people whom we think are Bangladeshi nationals, and they are staying here in India. We are yet to get a response on this matter.” Addressing the weekly media briefing Friday, Jaiswal said: “All foreign nationals in India, if they are here illegally, including from Bangladesh... we have laws to deal with them, and they’ll be dealt with accordingly.”

“As far as deportation of these people is concerned, there is a bilateral mechanism in place... We refer these cases to Bangladeshi side for them to verify the nationality, and once it is verified, we take forward the deportation process.”

“We have several or many of these requests, which are still pending with the Bangladeshi side, and we hope and expect that they’ll be expedited as soon as possible so that the deportation of people who are illegally staying in India can be taken forward in a smooth and efficient manner,” Jaiswal said.

Officials said they have been

E. EXPLAINED

The Diplomatic Challenge

The diplomatic challenge for India is to navigate the issue of deporting illegal Bangladeshi nationals as the BJP has won the two bordering states of West Bengal and Assam on the poll plank of deporting illegal immigration from the neighbouring country. The Bangladesh border guards have not been taking the immigrants back since they too need to verify their nationality. Dhaka, meanwhile, has expressed concern over “push in attempts”, insisting that any return should be through formal, legal channels.

raising this issue with the Bangladeshi side for the past several years. In early May, Delhi had raised the issue of illegal immigrants with Dhaka and expressed hope that it will expedite nationality verification

for smooth repatriation. The development came days after the BJP swept the West Bengal Assembly elections.

A day after the poll results, Bangladesh Foreign Minister Khalilur Rahman was quoted in the ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party’s official Facebook page as saying that Dhaka will take action if “push-in” incidents occur amid the change of power in the bordering state.

Officials said the issue of illegal migration from Bangladesh to India is being discussed at several bilateral meetings between the two countries, including at the home secretary level.

India and Bangladesh have put in place mechanisms, including a Coordinated Border Management Plan, to address problems arising from illegal border crossing, reduce the scope for incidents on the border and enhance cooperation between the border guarding forces of the two countries. The two sides are also cooperating in undertaking fencing of the vulnerable patches with a view to prevent criminal activities and illegal movements along the border, officials said.

AHEAD OF MONSOON IN HIMACHAL PRADESH To cut landslide risks, NHAI installs slope drain pipe system on Kalka-Shimla stretch

Saurabh Parashar
Shimla, June 6

IN A major effort to reduce landslide incidents ahead of the monsoon season, the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has introduced a slope drainage pipe system at 83 vulnerable points along the 85 km-long Kalka-Shimla NH-5, one of the most landslide-prone road corridors in Himachal Pradesh. The intervention, which is nearing completion, forms part of the ongoing slope stabilisation project being carried out between Parwanoo and Kaithlighat. Officials said the drainage system was conceived after slope protection measures undertaken earlier failed to fully address the problem of rainwater runoff during intense monsoon spells.

The drainage system involves construction of small water collection points at the top of hillsides. These collection points are connected to a network of pipes and cement-lined drains that channel rainwater directly to the bottom of the slope. The objective is to prevent water from flowing freely over the slope surface, which often triggers soil erosion, damages protective structures and leads to landslides.

“The initial slope protection work primarily consisted of green mesh netting, standard drilling and anchoring, most of which was completed last year. Subsequently, experts from IIT Bombay and IIT Ropar, who have been advising NHAI on slope stabilisation measures, recommended the installation of drainage pipes as an additional safety measure for better

Network installed across 83 points on recommendations of IIT experts



The drainage pipe network on Kaithlighat-Kandaghat section of the Kalka-Shimla national highway. SAURABH PARASHAR

protection of the slopes and to minimise landslide risks,” Yogesh Verma, Site Engineer for the Kaithlighat-Dhali section of NH-5, told *The Indian Express*.

Officials said the idea emerged after the 2025 monsoon exposed limitations in the existing protection system. Although netting and anchoring had been completed at several sites, heavy rainfall caused large volumes of water to flow down the slopes, resulting in slope failures and damage to mesh structures, anchors and retaining measures.

“During the 2025 monsoon, water flowing from the hilltops to the valley in large quantities damaged some of the protected slopes. Experts observed that uncontrolled surface runoff was a key reason behind these failures. The drainage pipe system was subsequently recommen-

ded to divert rainwater in a controlled manner,” said sources associated with the project.

NHAI project director (Kalka-Shimla) Anand Dahiya said the system has already shown encouraging results during recent pre-monsoon showers. “As the pre-monsoon rain began, we observed positive outcomes at sites where the drainage system has been installed. Cement-lined drains ranging from one to three feet in width have been constructed along both sides of the protected slopes. These drains are connected to plastic pipes that carry water safely to the bottom, reducing pressure on the slope surface,” Dahiya said.

He said highly vulnerable stretches, including Parwanoo-Chakki Mod, Solan-Datyar and Kandaghat-Kaithlighat, were

prioritised in the first phase of the project. “The drainage system is now being incorporated as an integral part of slope protection works being executed at all 83 identified sites between Kalka and Shimla,” Dahiya said.

The drainage initiative complements the broader slope stabilisation programme launched by NHAI for the first time on the Kalka-Shimla highway. The project covers 83 vulnerable locations, including 81 hill-side slopes and two valley-side sites at Chakki Mod and Datyar. The works involve green mesh netting, soil nailing, drilling, anchoring and vegetation-based stabilisation measures aimed at preserving the natural landscape while reducing landslide risks.

The project represents a departure from the earlier shotcrete technique, under which concrete was sprayed directly onto hill slopes. While effective in controlling slope failures, the method left behind large barren concrete surfaces, particularly visible along the Solan bypass.

The Kalka-Shimla highway has witnessed repeated disruptions during monsoon seasons. More than 128 landslides were recorded along the route in 2019 and 2023 alone, leading to prolonged road blockages and significant economic losses.

According to NHAI estimates, natural disasters caused losses of nearly Rs 200 crore on national highway projects in Himachal Pradesh between January 2021 and July 2025. This includes losses of Rs 26.86 crore on the Parwanoo-Solan section of NH-5 and around Rs 171 crore on the Mandi-Palampur-Kiratpur highway corridor.

• BRIEFLY



At the accident site in Punjab’s Ferozepur on Saturday. PTI

PUNJAB

9 killed as truck rams vehicle in Ferozepur, ex gratia announced

NINE PEOPLE, including four women and a minor girl, were killed and 18 others injured when a pick-up vehicle they were travelling in collided with a truck near Janga Wala Mour on the Ferozepur-Fazilka road on Saturday. Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed grief over the incident and announced an ex-gratia of Rs 2 lakh from the Prime Minister National Relief Fund (PMNRF) for the next of kin of each deceased and Rs 50,000 for injured. As many as 32 persons, including women and children, were going from Jalalabad to Beas in Amritsar to immerse the ashes of a relative in the Beas river, when their vehicle met with an accident. ENS

Kota priest hacked to death in monastery

A PRIEST in Rajasthan’s Kota district was murdered after unidentified assailants allegedly stormed a monastery late Friday night and repeatedly stabbed him while he was asleep. The killing of 35-year-old Devanand Maharaj of the Chandresal Math triggered protests by religious leaders. ASP Subhash Chandra said the attack took place around midnight at the Chandresal Math. Mahant Devanand Maharaj, head of the Mayapuri Akhada who had been living at the Math for the past four years, was found critically injured in a pool of blood. He was rushed to the hospital, where he died during treatment. ENS

Kerala school students suffer food poisoning

KERALA AGRICULTURE Minister T Siddique said Saturday that as many as 121 students of an aided school in Wayanad were found to be suffering from food poisoning with 78 of them under treatment in various hospitals. The minister told reporters that students of Mar Baselios Aided Upper Primary School at Koilady in Wayanad district were found to be suffering from fever, chills and diarrhea due to food poisoning. He said that samples of the food provided at the school and the water from its wells have been sent for testing and once the results come, the source of the food poisoning can be found. PTI

Singapore blocks online posts attacking Indians

Press Trust of India
Singapore, June 6

THE SINGAPORE government on Saturday ordered three social media platforms to block access to 14 posts, likely originating from China, which targeted the Indian community and “undermine” the country’s “model of multiculturalism”.

The police have issued disabling directions under the Online Criminal Harms Act to block access to the posts on YouTube, Facebook and X, the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) said.

Seventy-five per cent of Singapore’s over six million population are of Chinese descent, 15 per cent are Malay, and between seven to nine per cent are of Indian origin. The rest are of other international origins. The direction requires the platforms to “take all reasonable steps to disable access by Singapore users to these posts”, it added.

Second Minister for Home Affairs Edwin Tong told reporters at a community event on Saturday that “from what we

know so far, the content originated from overseas”.

Probe into the problematic content in these posts had revealed that it likely originated from a China-based platform and was subsequently shared by other platforms and websites, as per a *Channel News Asia* report on Saturday. “These videos attack our multiracial society and they try to divide people based on race. This, however, is not who we are. Every community in Singapore here is valued and everyone has an equal place,” it quoted Tong as saying.

Tong said the government does not tolerate any narratives that undermine Singapore’s racial harmony, “especially when propagated by foreigners”. In a statement, the MHA said Singapore firmly opposes “nativism and xenophobia”.

The social media posts claim that Singapore is displaying anxiety over its cultural identity and ethnic politics. Such narratives started circulating online in the Chinese information space in May, the MHA said.

A ‘thank-you’, and a word of caution from Sonam Wangchuk

Drishti Jain
New Delhi, June 6

AT A protest aimed at the government, education reform activist Sonam Wangchuk thanked the state for letting the agitation proceed.

Addressing the CJP’s demonstration over examination irregularities at Jantar Mantar on Saturday, Wangchuk, while credited the state, called it “a major achievement” and “a victory for India and even for the government”.

The government, he noted, had not stopped the protest. “We hope going forward also this government allows such creative, constructive expressions,” he added.

With hundreds of students and elderly supporters present,

Wangchuk said, “I would call this an appeal rather than a protest. We are not fond of protests... we have come to make an appeal. In a respectful democracy, we hope we do not have to raise slogans to be heard.”

Education, he said, was “the first requirement,” and the system needed correction so that students in both cities and villages received justice.

The movement, he hoped, would not “remain limited to examinations alone” but lead to systemic reforms. “The foundation of a ‘Viksit Bharat’ lies not in Delhi’s private schools but in schools located in villages,” he said, adding that children of all elected representatives should study in government schools.

How police avoided confrontation, accommodated protesters

Alok Singh, Pragynesh & Sakshi Chand
New Delhi, June 6

SENIOR DELHI Police officers had instructed their personnel to avoid confrontation with the young protesters expected to gather in support of the Cockroach Janata Party (CJP) on Saturday, *The Indian Express* has learnt. This accommodating approach of the Delhi Police was evident right from when Abhijeet Dipke landed at the IGI Airport to when the protest ended at Jantar Mantar.

IGI Airport

Around 7.30 am, Dipke arrived at the Airport from the US via London. After clearing immigration, he was stopped by Delhi Police officers, who asked about his plans.

Originally, Dipke had planned to go to the Parliament Street police station to obtain

permission for the protest. However, as such requests usually have to be made at least 24 hours in advance, it was apprehended that he might not be granted permission.

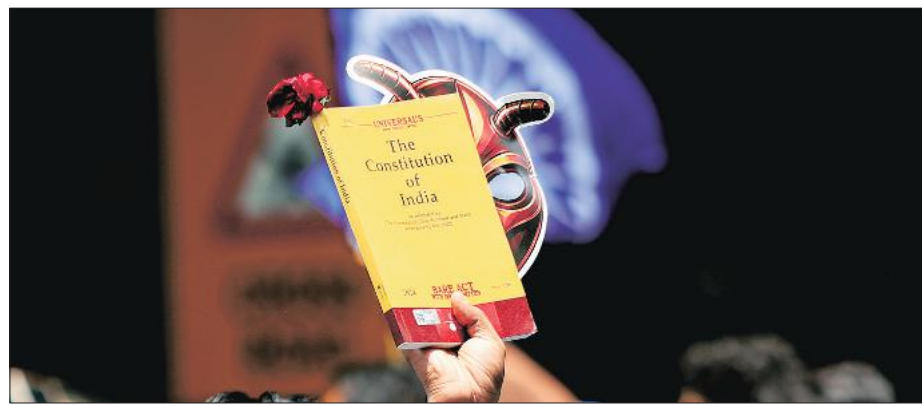
The police, however, facilitated the process to “avoid any chaos” at the police station.

Inside the airport, DCP (IGI Airport) Vichitra Veer handed Dipke a permission letter allowing him to proceed to Jantar Mantar and hold a one-day protest. The move was unusual.

Gate 16

Outside Gate 16 at the airport, elaborate security arrangements had been made. DCP (Vigilance) Ankit Singh and DCP (South West) Amit Goel supervised arrangements.

Barricades separated media personnel and supporters from passengers leaving via the gate, though members of Dipke’s core team, including Ashutosh



At Jantar Mantar on Saturday. PRAVEEN KHANNA

Ranka, were allowed to wait alongside police personnel to receive him.

There was a delay for about 30 minutes as Dipke sought to board his cab from the VIP lane. The airport staff initially did not allow the vehicle to enter the VIP lane.

After intervention by police officers and approval from officials of GMR Group – which operates and manages the IGI Airport – three taxis carrying Dipke and his associates were allowed into the lane.

Before departing, CJP members presented Dipke with

a copy of Dr B R Ambedkar’s autobiography. Speaking briefly to mediapersons, he said, “The Education Minister must resign... five students have died by suicide...”

He then boarded his cab and left for Jantar Mantar. From the cab, he addressed his supporters

on Instagram Live, urging them to ensure that the group’s “first protest” remained peaceful.

Jantar Mantar

From the airport to Jantar Mantar, multiple barricades had been erected and Delhi Police, CRPF and other paramilitary personnel deployed to manage traffic and maintain order. Around 2,000 police personnel were deployed in New Delhi district alone.

The district was divided into 12 zones, each headed by a DCP-rank officer. At the protest site, delay in Dipke’s arrival became a point of discussion between CJP leader Saurav Das and police personnel. Sources said officers tracked the location of his vehicle and worked to ensure that he reached the venue without further delay.

After Dipke arrived, the crowd swelled but the proceedings remained peaceful.

Celebratory firing death: Bihar BJP MLA convicted

New Delhi: A Delhi court Saturday convicted Bihar BJP MLA Raju Kumar Singh of culpable homicide in a celebratory firing death case inside his farmhouse in south Delhi's Fatehpur Beri on New Year's Eve in 2018. The firing had led to the death of a 45-year-old woman.

Special Judge Vishal Gogne of Rouse Avenue Court in his June 6 judgment convicted Singh under Section 304 (II) (culpable homicide not amounting to murder) of the IPC and Section 30 of the Arms Act (punishment for contravention of licence or rule). On June 9, arguments on the sentence will be heard by the court.

During a New Year's eve gathering at his farmhouse at Ambedkar Colony's Rose Farm, Singh had fired gunshots in the air, which hit a woman, Archana Gupta. She later died in a hospital. A complaint was filed by her husband. The prosecution examined 33 witnesses of which seven were eyewitnesses. **ENS**

Officers more loyal to establishment than Constitution: Allahabad HC

Court quashes proceedings in Gangsters Act FIR

Bhupendra Pandey
Lucknow, June 6

POINTING TO serious lapses in invoking the Gangsters Act in a case against five members of a Ghaziabad-based family, the Allahabad High Court has observed that officers, barring a few, are more loyal to the ruling establishment than to the Constitution since their transfers, postings, and promotions are used as instruments of political patronage rather than merit-based governance.

Maintaining that the state apparatus must remain answerable to the law and to the Constitution and not to the ruling establishment, the single bench of

Justice Vinod Diwakar observed that "field officers, acutely conscious of the transfer-posting economy, calibrate their conduct to satisfy their political superiors" and those "perceived as loyalists are rewarded with preferred postings".

Quashing the trial proceedings pending in the additional sessions judge's court in the case filed under the Uttar Pradesh Gangsters and Anti-Social Activities (Prevention) Act at the Nandgram police station in Ghaziabad in 2023, the bench in its June 3 order said, "Many times, FIRs are registered or suppressed with ulterior motives, and preventive detention provisions are invoked arbitrarily, at the whims of officers. Judicial orders are complied with in form but defeated in substance."

In the case, one of the accused — a woman — remained in jail for more than two-and-a-half-months, the court was told.

Two FIRs were lodged in 2022 against the family over financial transactions in connection with the purchase of land. The accused had issued cheques in favour of the complainant and faced charges of cheating and forgery. Police and administration invoked the Gangsters Act against them a year later.

After going through the chargesheet, the court said not a single "avertment has been made against three of the accused sent to jail which could satisfy the ingredients of the Gangsters Act". "The accused may have committed offences of cheating and forgery, however, the same does not amount to, and cannot be construed as, running an organised gang," the court ruled.

"There is no material on record which could establish the use of violence, intimidation, coercion, or any other means with the object of disturbing public order or of gaining any

undue temporal or pecuniary advantage," it stated.

The court added, "Uttar Pradesh, by virtue of its demographic magnitude and political significance, has historically been a crucible of political hegemony, driven by the feudal mindset of politicians and bureaucrats...The administrative machinery of the State has, over successive regimes, been susceptible to deep political penetration."

"This court has no hesitation in observing that urban Commissionerates, lucrative districts while those demonstrating independence are transferred punitively to inconsequential assignments, a well-known fact."

"A considerable section of the officer cadre treats the rule of law not as a constitutional obligation but as an operational convenience. Encounter killings, selective crackdowns, and targeted use of the Gangsters

Act against inconvenient individuals have periodically attracted judicial notice," the bench observed.

Citing the brutal killing of eight policemen in an ambush by gangster Vikas Dubey in Kanpur in 2021, the bench said "the police officer, who was entrusted with the supervision of the entire operation in the massacre was, upon conclusion of departmental enquiry, visited with nothing more than a formal caution".

"With deep constitutional concern, this Court concludes the Home Secretary, as the senior-most bureaucratic authority in the Home Department, occupies a pivotal position in this ecosystem. Certain officers who rose to the post of Home Secretary have, in practice, served as conduits for self-serving interests. The Home Department must independently evaluate the suitability and operational effectiveness of its officers..." it said.



At present, 16 Mumbai gymkhanas stand on Collector-owned land that was leased out by the erstwhile colonial administration during the 19th and early 20th centuries. GANESH SHIRSHEKAR

Mumbai gymkhanas on govt land told to accept Collector on boards, binding orders

Pratip Acharya
Mumbai, June 6

IN RECENT meetings with administrators of Mumbai's 16 gymkhanas standing on government-owned land, the Maharashtra government has proposed a significantly greater role for itself in the functioning of the clubs as a condition for future lease renewals, including a seat for the District Collector on their management committees, making the collector's recommendations binding on the clubs, and allowing government use of gymkhana premises for public programmes and emergencies, *The Indian Express* has learnt.

The proposals, which have figured prominently in recent consultations between the collector's office and gymkhana administrators, would mark a significant shift in the relationship between the state and some of Mumbai's oldest sporting institutions. Officials familiar with the discussions said the government has indicated that these conditions would form the basis of future lease renewals for clubs occupying public land.

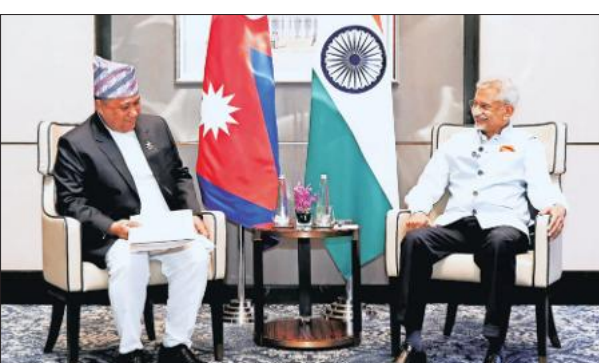
At present, 16 Mumbai gymkhanas stand on Collector-owned land that was leased out by the erstwhile colonial administration during the 19th and early 20th centuries. While the leases of several prominent institutions, including Bombay Gymkhana, Islam Gymkhana, Parsee Gymkhana and Hindu Gymkhana, have expired and are awaiting renewal, others are

due to expire in coming years.

Among the key conditions proposed by the government is the induction of the district Collector as an ex-officio member of the management board of every gymkhana. The framework states that recommendations made by the District Collector would be binding on gymkhanas and clubs. The Collector would also be empowered to recommend at least five individuals annually for permanent membership or conversion of service memberships into permanent memberships. The proposals provide for the government to hold official programmes and public events on gymkhana premises for up to five days every calendar year. In addition, the state would reserve the right to use the land during elections, natural disasters and other emergencies requiring public use of the premises. According to a report by the Observer Research Foundation, gymkhanas and elite clubs occupy 664 acres — nearly one-fifth of Mumbai's total 3,780 acres of open space.

Another major change relates to events and revenue. Under the proposed framework, gymkhanas would be permitted to host sporting events for a maximum of 45 days annually, subject to prior intimation to the District Collector. They would also be required to pay a licence fee ranging between Rs 50,000 and Rs 1.5 lakh per day for hosting events.

FULL REPORT ON
WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM



External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and Nepal Foreign Minister Shisir Khanal during a meeting in New Delhi on Saturday. PTI

India, Nepal vow to take bilateral ties to new heights

Subhajit Roy
New Delhi, June 6

INDIA AND Nepal completed the internal processes to enforce the mutual legal assistance pact to tackle "cross-border crimes", as the visiting Foreign Minister of Nepal Shisir Khanal met External Affairs minister S Jaishankar on Saturday.

The two sides also made progress in the sectors of health, UPI, innovation and startups. Khanal's visit comes days after the chief of Nepal's ruling RSP, Rabi Lamichhane, met the Indian leadership in Delhi. After the bilateral meeting, Jaishankar posted on X, "A pleasure to meet FM Shisir Khanal of Nepal and his delegation today. A detailed discussion on our unique partnership, including on development cooperation, connectivity, energy, especially hydropower development, education, health, capacity building, digital, culture and sports."

The MEA released an official statement: "Both Ministers welcomed the completion of internal processes for entry into force of the India-Nepal Mutual Legal Assistance Agreement in Criminal Matters (MLAA). This Agreement will benefit the people of India and Nepal by providing an institutional legal framework to enhance the effectiveness of investigation, prosecution and judicial proceedings relating to cross-border crimes." The min-

isters vowed to take the bilateral ties to "new heights" while reviewing the full spectrum of the relations, covering development cooperation, connectivity, trade and transit, energy, and people-to-people ties, the MEA said.

The Nepalese Foreign Minister also met National Security Advisor Ajit Doval. After the bilateral talks, Jaishankar handed over 72 health facilities and 12 cultural heritage sector projects, completed under India's post-2015 'Earthquake Reconstruction Assistance' to Nepal, to the visiting Foreign Minister. The ministers jointly launched the Peer-to-Peer (P2P) linkage between Unified Payments Interface (UPI) of India and National Payments Interface (NPI) of Nepal for facilitating cross-border personal remittances.

The MEA said the ministers witnessed the signing of MoU between Digital India Bhashini and Kathmandu University for co-creating National Digital Infrastructure for "Voice First" Language Translation platform. This is the first official visit by the Nepalese Foreign minister after the new government led by PM Balendra Shah assumed office in March this year.

"Nepal is a priority partner of India under its 'Neighbourhood First' policy and the visit reinforced the tradition of regular high-level exchanges between the two close and friendly neighbours..." the MEA said.

Funds for women's businesses spent on household needs, finds NRLM review

Harikishan Sharma
New Delhi, June 6

A GOVERNMENT-COMMISSIONED evaluation of central rural sector schemes, including the Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana-National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM), has found that most self-help groups (SHGs) for women did not start income-generating businesses with the funds provided.

Instead, the revolving fund of Rs 20,000-Rs 30,000 offered per group as part of the Centre's flagship programme to involve poor rural women into SHGs and train them for small enterprises was often spent on household expenses, according to the report submitted to the Rural Development Ministry.

The study is significant given that the Finance Ministry last year directed that no centrally funded scheme will be extended beyond March 31, 2026, unless it undergoes a third-party evaluation. This review will therefore decide whether and how the DAY-NRLM will continue in the 16th Finance Commission cycle beginning in April 2026. The evaluation was undertaken by Sambodhi Research and Communication Pvt Ltd, a think tank engaged by NITI Aayog's Development Monitoring and Evaluation Office (DMEO) for the purpose.

Sambodhi, in an email to *The Indian Express*, said the official DAY-NRLM/RBI guidelines specify that "SHG-linked financial support may serve multiple purposes, including social needs, housing repair, sanitation, healthcare-related expenditure and other activities that contribute to household resilience".

The report titled 'Evaluation of Centrally Sponsored Schemes in Package 5-Rural Development Sector' also flags that there was pressure on officials to form SHGs quickly to meet targets, even in villages where business opportunities

Officials pressured to form SHGs for women quickly under DAY-NRLM scheme to meet targets, says report



Those SHG members who took bank loans often used them for building houses, toilets, medical purposes, says the report. FILE

were limited.

"Only a small proportion of SHGs have initiated group-level enterprises, and nearly half did so without accessing loans. This is primarily driven by the pressure to form SHGs after the PIP [Participatory Identification of the Poor] exercise to meet targets, despite a significant disconnect between SHG formation and the availability of viable business opportunities in rural areas," the report notes.

According to the report, many SHG members are reluctant to take loans because there is no assured market for the products made through group enterprises.

"Due to this uncertainty, they fear being unable to repay the loan, discouraging them from borrowing," says the report. As a result, "the RF (Revolving Fund) is often equally distributed among members and utilised to meet their immediate consumption needs."

Those SHG members who took bank loans often used them for building houses, toilets, medical purposes etc,

the report shows.

Access to other financial support under the scheme was also low: fewer than half the respondents received the Community Investment Fund (CIF), only 42% accessed bank loans, and less than 4% received the Community Enterprise Fund (CEF) meant for larger ventures.

While access to RF was reported by 74.6% of respondents in 13 states, just 49.9% of respondents reported receiving the CIF, 41.8% had access to bank loans, and only 3.8% reported access to the CEF.

"This was primarily due to limited on-ground support from VOs [village organisations], CRPs [community resource persons], and CLFs [cluster-level federations] coupled with the fact that only 15% of the SHGs had initiated group enterprise activity," noted the report.

"The uptake of bank loans/cash credit limit was even lower due to fear of loan defaults, as SHG members perceived weak market demand for their products," the report

CJI faces questions on dissent in UK; Indian Mission calls it indecorous

Express News Service
New Delhi, June 6

AT A lecture on artificial intelligence by CJI Surya Kant on Thursday at the University of London, a member of the audience posed questions about dissent in India, and was told by the anchor that the query is off topic.

Videos of the interactive session at the end of the lecture, shared online showed a woman saying, "his Lordship made some very important points, I think, about the Indian track record of protecting democracy in the context of AI. We now hear from a number of legal observers within the country as well as internationally that there's a great deal of concern about growing hostility to dissent within India. And it does

seem that this hostility is somewhat reflected in His Lordship's recent very well publicised..."

The anchor intervened before the query was complete and said "with all due respect, I am so sorry mam. I would not be able to take up that question since the topic is concerning artificial intelligence and international law. I am sorry."

As the questioner persisted, the anchor responded, "I am extremely sorry. We have to cut you off". Another clip of the event showed a different attendee shouting "...Give us some respect please".

On Friday, the Indian High Commission in London responded to the developments and said in a statement, "on 04 June 2026, Hon'ble Chief Justice of India attended an event at the University of London,

Birkbeck, at the invitation of the organizers, to deliver a lecture on Artificial Intelligence and International Law... a lively discussion followed his address. Thereafter, a certain individual tried to disrupt the event. Such indecorous audience behavior is unacceptable and inconsistent with respectful engagement that should govern public discourse. Differences of opinion are a natural part of a democratic society. However, they must be expressed in a manner that is civil and respectful."

On May 16, the CJI while pulling up a lawyer who had filed a petition on senior designation, something the petitioner himself was aspiring for, had said "there are already parasites of society who attack the system and you want to join



CJI Justice Surya Kant speaks at the International Conference on Arbitrating Indo-UK Commercial Disputes, in London on Friday. PTI

hands with them? There are youngsters like cockroaches, they don't get any employment, they don't have any place in the profession. Some of them become media, some of them become social media, some of

them become RTI activists, some of them become other activists, and they start attacking everyone...And you people file contempt petitions!"

As the comments led to outrage, the CJI said he was "mis-

quoted".

"I am pained to read how a section of the media has misquoted my oral observations made during the hearing of a frivolous case yesterday. What I had specifically criticised were those who have entered professions like the Bar (legal profession) with the aid of fake and bogus degrees. Similar persons have sneaked into the media, social media, and other noble professions as well, and hence, they are like parasites. It is totally baseless to suggest that I criticised the youth of our nation. Not only am I proud of our present and future human resource, but every youth of India inspires me. It is not an exaggeration to say that Indian youth have great regard and respect for me, and I too see them as the pillars of a developed

India", he said.

Meanwhile, in another interactive session with students at the Queen Mary University of London on Friday, the CJI, while responding to a query on the role of the judiciary in maintaining public trust in constitutional democracy, said "public trust is never simply given to an institution" but "is earned, continuously, through transparency, consistency, and the courage to be self-correcting."

He added "judicial strength does not come from the appearance of infallibility. Institutions grow stronger when they remain open to learning and correction. In a constitutional democracy, the judiciary is the last line of accountability, but it must itself be accountable to the Constitution and to the people it serves".

JP Nadda hits back at Kharge for 'hiding health data' allegations

New Delhi: Union Health Minister J P Nadda hit out at Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Saturday, saying that "public health is too important to be reduced to political rhetoric" after Kharge alleged the BJP government was hiding NFHS-6 data and advertising "Sabka Saath" and "Amrit Kaal".

"Shri Khargeji's half-knowledge is dangerous. Public health is too important to be reduced to political rhetoric. Selective reading may serve politics, but facts serve the nation," Nadda said in a post on X, adding that NFHS-6 data demonstrates the transformation of India's health ecosystem. **ENS**



BRIDGE

The problem posed to you last week was dealt in OKBridge a few years back. The top spot is seven clubs but it is not the easiest of contracts to reach. Dealer: North Vulnerable: Both

NORTH		SOUTH	
♠ A K 9 7 4 3		♠ J 6 2	
♥ A 8		♥ K 10 2	
♦ A K 6		♦ 10	
♣ Q 8		♣ A K J 10 9 4	
WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
	1♠	pass	2♣
pass	2NT	pass	3♣
pass	4♣	pass	4NT
pass	5♦	pass	5♥
pass	5♣	pass	5NT
pass	6♦	pass	7♣
pass	pass	pass	

West plays the queen of diamonds. Plan the play. West led the queen of diamonds. Declarer won in dummy and paused. What could go wrong? If spades were no worse than 3-1, he could draw trumps, go to the ace of spades, discard a spade on a diamond honour, and ruff out the spade suit. Only 4-0 spades will defeat the contract, and for sure East doesn't have a spade void, or he would have doubled for spade lead. So declarer, perhaps a bit tired from the long auction, drew trumps and went to dummy in spades, planning to set up spades. The contract was now down one, because he needed two spade ruffs and had only one entry back to dummy (the ace of hearts).

THE WEST HAND: ♠♥♦♣ QJ76 ♦QJ753 ♣7632

THE EAST HAND: ♠Q10176 ♥9543 ♦9843 ♣5

Declarer looked at the four hands and suddenly shook his head, saying, "What a blind spot. All I had to do was ruff a heart in dummy!" Dealer: West Vulnerable: Both

NORTH		EAST	
♠ 7 2		♠ J	
♥ A 9 4		♥ 10 6 5	
♦ A J 8 3		♦ K 10 9 7 4 2	
♣ K 7 5 4		♣ A 9 6	
WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
pass	pass	2D♦	2S♠
pass	3NT	pass	4S♣
pass	pass	pass	

You are East. Declarer wins the queen of diamonds. Declarer wins the trick in the dummy and leads a trump to West's ace. West returns the two of clubs to your ace. What next?

• SUNDAY CROSSWORD

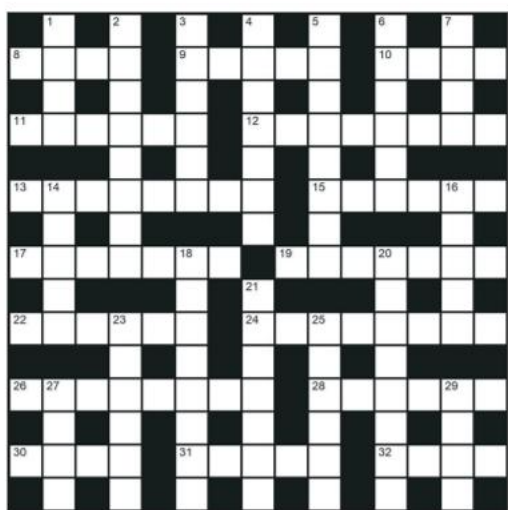
QUICK CLUES

ACROSS

- 8. Roman goddess (4)
- 9. Arabian spirit (5)
- 10. Part of verb to be (4)
- 11. Layers of rocks, atmosphere etc. ? (6)
- 12. Shed (8)
- 13. Helpfully or serviceably (8)
- 15. Snub (6)
- 17. Addition, appendix or appendage (7)
- 19. Cut or lopped (7)
- 22. Indian religious leader (6)
- 24. Anarchy (8)
- 26. Progressively worse (8)
- 28. Card game (6)
- 30. Cigarette end (4)
- 31. Slowly, musically (5)
- 32. Nobleman (4)

DOWN

- 1. Cooking fat (4)
- 2. French stew (3-2-3)
- 3. Whitlow (6)
- 4. Opposite word (7)
- 5. Academic teacher (8)
- 6. Soak up (6)
- 7. _ _ up : enthuses or elates? (4)
- 14. Hindu holy man (5)
- 16. Escapes from danger (5)
- 18. Collarbone (8)
- 20. Many (8)
- 21. Ashes competitor ? (7)
- 23. European river - sometimes "blue" (6)
- 25. Informal chat (6)



- 27. Aware of (4)
- 29. Blood and guts (4)

CRYPTIC CLUES

ACROSS

- 8. Yucatan native is allowed to answer (4)
- 9. In favour of attempt to do without (5)
- 10. Hebrew month the Spanish find in middle of July (4)
- 11. Knot-tying a regular thing at this Scottish border village! (6)
- 12. Non-treat participants keep chattering (6,2)
- 13. Bound to succeed as is evident (8)
- 15. Descend to the

- warehouse (6)
- 17. Smear with special cloth torn apart (7)
- 19. May I canter? Sure! (7)
- 22. Make an enlargement of an explosion (4,2)
- 24. O.K., so there's nothing left of this (3,5)
- 26. Helping to prepare spuds on Sunday? Great! (8)
- 28. Examined in depth a cause of complaint (1-5)
- 30. Bale out if you can ! (4)
- 31. Dirty looks making one reel back to a point (5)
- 32. Birds seen when

SOLUTIONS TO 2584 **QUICK CLUES ACROSS:** 1 Abubble, 5 Tapster, 10 Juba, 11 Traitorous, 12 Speechless, 13 Naps, 14 Hindustan, 17 Fleck, 19 Stack, 20 Catherine, 23 Flee, 25 Heartthrob, 28 Indecisive, 29 Thar, 30 Isotope, 31 Athlete **DOWN:** 2 Blueprint, 3 Blare, 4 Latches, 6 Artist, 7 Strangler, 8 Equip, 9 Wane, 15 Decrement, 16 Aka, 18 Consonant, 21 Hottest, 22 Shrimp, 24 Lungs, 26 As is, 27 Hotel **CRYPTIC CLUES ACROSS:** 1 Adding, 5 Offered, 10 Snub, 11 Wrist-watch, 12 Escalators, 13 Tret, 14 Bumblebee, 17 Forge, 19 Askew, 20 Spokesman, 23 Flee, 25 Neck-to-knee, 28 Santa Maria, 29 Fief, 30 Peering, 31 Estrade **DOWN:** 2 Dinosaurs, 3 Libya, 4 New wave, 6 Fetish, 7 Exactions, 8 Emcee, 9 Tiro, 15 Beefeater, 16 ESP, 18 Grapeseed, 21 Kit-bags, 22 Gnomon, 24 Lease, 26 Carl, 27 Kafir

2585

another rises (4)

DOWN

- 1. Piano music for two (4)
- 2. Street encircling an article with the villain in the capital (8)
- 3. Old apartment with key acquired recently (2,4)
- 4. Geraint turned to stone (7)
- 5. One of Shakespeare's two detached houses (8)
- 6. Double about to get lawyer back ? Take another look at it (6)
- 7. Victor gets a fond embrace and love (4)
- 14. Apple of the (teacher's) eye (5)
- 16. Put in the balance (5)
- 18. Leap from an island getting Spanish encouragement (8)
- 20. Closely follow a method to dwindle (4,4)
- 21. Vehicle works with Masefield's lines (7)
- 23. Laundress, perhaps, used to be female (6)
- 25. Lieutenant carrying bladed tools is most careless (6)
- 27. Gangs require a doctor qualified in surgery (4)
- 29. English idea of heaven is a way to chill beer (4)

IF IT'S YOUR BIRTHDAY

SUNDAY JUNE 7: This year exciting changes will bring you increased personal freedom. Seek out new opportunities and be ready to act fast. Expect to travel.

MONDAY JUNE 8: This is a year of service for you, probably service to family. Take care of yourself so you can be a help to those who turn to you for guidance.

TUESDAY JUNE 9: This is a year of teaching and learning. Renew your spiritual or religious beliefs. Explore philosophies that give you a better self-awareness.

WEDNESDAY JUNE 10: This year you will reap the benefits of all your hard work. Expect power and leadership. You'll be busy with major decisions. Promotions, kudos and awards will put you in the spotlight.

THURSDAY JUNE 11: This is the final year of a nine-year cycle. Take inventory of your life. Do some internal and external house-cleaning. Commune with nature. Focus on being more compassionate, loving and generous.

FRIDAY JUNE 12: This is a year of fresh beginnings and major changes. Be ready to take action and define your goals. What you do now will bring great benefits in the future. Prepare for leadership.

SATURDAY JUNE 13: This is a slower paced year. Take time to rejuvenate your energy. Focus on business and personal relationships. Concentrate on your needs and what brings you happiness.

• YOUR WEEK AHEAD



ARIES (MAR 21 - APR 20): Pay attention to what you say and do today because this is a mildly accident-prone day. Family discussions and efforts to tackle home repairs will go well. You might decide to shop and spend money to do a bang-up job. This Week: Home and family are happy.



TAURUS (APR 21 - MAY 21): You have a lot of energy to talk to friends and groups today. You might get excited about discussing future goals with someone. Keep an eye on your money and possessions. This Week: You're warm and enthusiastic with everyone.



GEMINI (MAY 22 - JUNE 21): People notice you today and some know personal details about your private life. Your daily routine might be interrupted today. This Week: Explore moneymaking ideas. You're hot.



CANCER (JUNE 22 - JULY 23): Travel plans, publishing, the media, medicine and the law might bring excitement. An unexpected hitch might occur. Share your ideas with others today. Talking to someone will make you feel good. This Week: You feel warm and generous to your world.



LEO (JULY 24 - AUG 23): Keep an eye on your money and assets today. Discussions with authority figures will go well because you look informed and proactive. This Week: This is a feel-good week. Lucky you.



VIRGO (AUG 24 - SEP 23): Be prepared to cooperate with others today, which is not a demanding thing. Discussions about travel, the media and publishing might interest you. Authority figures might catch you off guard. This Week: Time with friends and groups is rewarding.



LIBRA (SEP 24 - OCT 23): Your work routine might be interrupted today by travel plans or dealing with foreign interests. Discussions with bosses and authority figures will go well. You'll have no trouble defending your interests. This Week: You make a fabulous impression on everyone!



SCORPIO (OCT 24 - NOV 23): This is a fun-loving day! Nevertheless, it's a mildly accident-prone day for your kids. Plans might change today. Discussions with partners and close friends will be lively and vigorous. This Week: Excellent for travel, publishing, medicine and the law.



SAGITTARIUS (NOV 24 - DEC 22): Be patient with partners, spouses and close friends to avoid reactions to something unexpected. This is a good day to make improvements where you live. This Week: Money might come to you.



CAPRICORN (DEC 23 - JAN 20): This is a fast-paced, busy day! Stay on your toes, because your plans might suddenly change. Spouses, partners and close friends have your back. This Week: Happy connections with others.



AQUARIUS (JAN 21 - FEB 19): Double-check money transactions, because something might be off. You're happy to spend money to make home improvements. You might see ways to boost your earnings as well. This Week: Job and health improvements!



PISCES (FEB 20 - MAR 20): Today you have lots of mental energy and eagerness to chat with others. Prepare for sudden changes to plans. Keep your eyes open and stay flexible. This Week: Romance and fun times abound.

JUMBLED WORDS

Given below are four jumbled words. Solve the jumbles to make proper words and move them to the respective circles below. Select the letters in the shaded circles and jumble them to get the answer for the given quip.

A _ _ _ _ _ clings to his own _ _ _ _ _ and avoids internationalism. -

Salvatore Quasimodo (4,,9)

ROEPA

●●●●●

HIDOT

●●●●●

RTAETT

●●●●●

AIUDNP

●●●●●

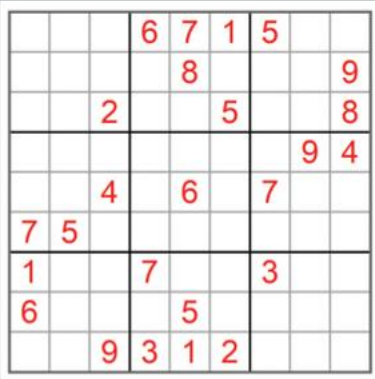
ANSWER: A poet clings to his own tradition and avoids internationalism.

Salvatore Quasimodo

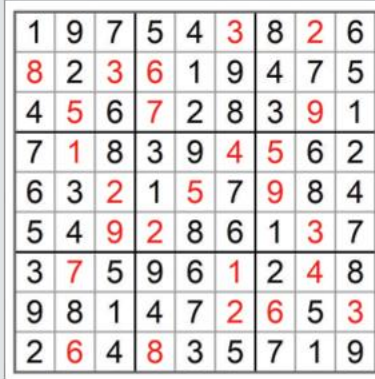
SUDOKU 6342

DIFFICULTY LEVEL 5s INSTRUCTIONS
To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from 1 to 9 must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

DIFFICULTY LEVEL
1s = Very easy; 2s = Easy; 3s = Medium; 4s = Hard; 5s = Very Hard; 6s = Genius



SOLUTION SUDOKU 6341



ਪੰਜਾਬ ਨੈਸ਼ਨਲ ਬੈਂਕ

(भारत सरकार का उपग्रह)

pnb

punjab national bank

(Govt. of India Undertaking)

CIRCLE OFFICE : SAM - PASCHIM MIDNAPORE

BE - 1, Bidhan Nagar East, Rly. Station Road

Midnapore, Pin - 721 101, W.B.

Tel. : 97714 91203

Mail Id : copaschimsam@pnb.bank.in

E-AUCTION DATED 17.07.2026

Annexure - B

SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES

E-auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 under the provision of Rule 8(6) read with 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 / symbolic possession of which has been taken by the Authorized Officer of the Bank / Secured creditor, will be sold on "As is where is", "As is What is" and "Whatever there is" on the date as mentioned in the table herein below, for recovery of its dues due to the Bank/ Secured Creditor from the respective Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s). The reserve price and the earnest money deposit will be as mentioned in the table below against the respective properties.

SCHEDULE OF THE SECURED ASSETS					
Sl. No.	Name of the Branch Name of the Account Name & Address of the Borrower / Guarantors Account	Description of the Immovable Properties Mortgaged / Owner's Name (Mortgagors of Property(ies))	A) Dt. of Demand Notice U/s. 13(2) of SARFAESI Act, 2002 B) Outstanding Amount C) Possession Date U/s. 13(4) of Sarfesi Act 2002 D) Nature of Possession Symbolic / Physical / Constructive	A) Reserve Price (Rs. in Lakhs) B) EMD (Rs. in Lakhs) C) Bid Increase Amount (Rs. in Lakhs)	Date / Time of E-auction Details of the Encumbrances known to the Secured Creditors
1.	Jhargram (Sol ID : 018320) Rakesh Kumar Sahoo (Borrower / Mortgagor), S/o. Jaduram Sahoo Rakesh Kumar Sahoo (Borrower / Mortgagor), S/o. Jaduram Sahoo, Radhanagar, P.O. - Sevayatan, P.S. - Jhargram, Dist - Jhargram, West Bengal, Pin - 721 150. A/c. Nos. : 018320NC00001497 & 01832093000000064	Equitable Mortgage covering all that part and parcel of the immovable properties consisting of Land and Building situated at Dist + P.S.- Jhargram, Mouza - Tentuldanga, J.L. No. 389, Khatian No. 83/1, LR Khatian No. 460, LR Plot No. 25/71, Area - 11 Decimal converted Bastu under Sale Deed No. I-1752/ 2021 at A.D.S.R. - Jhargram, Dist - Jhargram. Owner : Rakesh Kumar Sahoo, S/o. Jaduram Sahoo. Property is Surrounded by : North - Vacant Land of Bhabesh Mahata, South - Vacant Land Of Khilish Jal, East - 30 Ft. wide Jhargram-Dherua PWD Road, West- Vacant Land of Tapan Jal. Coordinates of the Property : Lat : 22.470336, Long : 87.009495 (Property under Symbolic Possession)	A) 19.03.2026 B) Rs. 29,14,772.76 (Rupees Twenty Nine Lakhs Fourteen Thousand Seven Hundred Seventy Two and Paise Seventy Six only) plus interest from 01.03.2026 plus Penal Charges Less Recovery if any and other charges & expenses C) 25.05.2026 D) Symbolic Possession	A) Rs. 31,18,849.00 B) Rs. 3.12 Lakhs C) Rs. 0.10 Lakh	17.07.2026 From 11.00 A.M. to 4.00 P.M. Not known to Bank

:- TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF E-AUCTION SALE :-

The sale shall be subject to the Terms & Conditions prescribed in the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002 and to the following further conditions :

- The sale shall be subject to the Terms & Conditions prescribed in the SecurityInterest (Enforcement) Rules 2002 and to the following further conditions.The auction sale will be "online through e-auction" portal <https://baanknet.com>
- The Intending Bidders / Purchasers are requested to register on portal (<https://baanknet.com>) using their email-id and mobile number. The process of eKYC is to be done through Digilocker. Once the e-KYC is done, the intending Bidders / Purchasers may transfer the EMD amount to their e-Wallet using online payment or challan mode. The EMD amount has to be linked with property before the EMDEnd Date and time in the portal. The registration, verification of eKYC, transfer of EMD in wallet and linking of wallet amount to Property must be completed well inadvance, before EMD End date time / auction.
- Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) amount as mentioned above deposited in e-Wallet, shall be linked with property. Bidders, not linking the required EMD online before EMD end date time, will not be allowed to participate in the e-auction. The Earnest Money Deposited shall not bear any interest.
- Platform (<https://baanknet.com>) for e-Auction will be provided by e Auction serviceprovider M/s. PSB Alliance Pvt. Ltd. having its Registered office at Unit 1, 3rd Floor, VIOS Commercial Tower, Near Wadala Truck Terminal, Wadalia East, Mumbai - 400 037 (Helpdesk Number +91 82912 20220, Email Id : support.BAANKNET@psballiance.com). The intending Bidders / Purchasers are requested to participate in the e-Auction process at e-Auction Service Provider's website <https://baanknet.com> This Service Provider will also provide online demonstration / training on e-Auction on the portal.
- The Sale Notice containing the General Terms and Conditions of Sale is available/ published in the following websites/ web page portal. (1) <https://baanknet.com> (2) www.pnbindia.in
- The intending participants of e-auction may download free of cost, copies of the Sale Notice, Terms & Conditions of e-auction, Help Manual on operational part of e-Auction related to this e-Auction from e-auction portal (<https://baanknet.com>).
- Bidder's e-Wallet should have sufficient balance (>=EMD amount) at the time of bidding.
- During the e-auction, bidders will be allowed to offer higher bid in inter-se bidding over and above the last bid quoted and the increase in the bid amount must be of increment amount mentioned. Two minutes time will be allowed to bidders to quote successive higher bid and if no higher bid is offered by any bidder after the expiry of five minutes to the last highest bid, the e-auction shall be closed.
- It is the responsibility of intending Bidder(s) to properly read the Sale Notice, Terms & conditions of e-auction, Help Manual on operational part of e-Auction and followthem strictly.
- In case of any difficulty or need of assistance before or during e-Auction process, bidder may contact authorized representative of our e-Auction Service Provider M/s. PSB Alliance Pvt. Ltd. details of which are available on the <https://baanknet.com> Portal.
- After finalization of e-Auction by the Authorized Officer, only successful bidder will be informed by above referred service provider through SMS / email. (On mobile no / email address given by them) registered with the service provider).
- The secured asset will not be sold below the reserve price.
- The successful bidder shall have to deposit 25% (twenty five percent) of the bid amount, less EMD amount deposited, on the same day or not later than the next working day and the remaining amount shall be paid within 15 days from the dateof auction by way of Transfer / NEFT / RTGS / in the form of Banker's Cheque / Demand Draft issued by a Scheduled Commercial Bank drawn in favor of "The Authorized Officer, Punjab National Bank, A/c (Name of the A/c.) Payable at (Place). In case of failure to deposit the amount as above within the stipulated time, the amount deposited by successful bidder will be forfeited to the Bank and Authorized Officer shall have the liberty to conduct a fresh auction / sale of the property & the defaulting bidder shall not have any claim over the forfeited amountand the property.
- Payment of sale consideration by the successful bidder to the bank will be subject to TDS under Section 194- 1A of Income Tax Act 1961 and TDS is to be paid by the successful bidder only at the time of deposit of remaining 75% of the bid amount / full deposit of BID amount.
- The Authorised Officer reserves the right to accept any or reject all bids, if nofound acceptable or to postpone / cancel / adjourn / discontinue or vary the terms of the auction at any time without assigning any reason whatsoever and his decisionin this regard shall be final.
- The sale certificate shall be issued in the favour of successful bidder on deposit of full bid amount as per the provisions of the act.
- The properties are being sold on "AS IS WHERE IS BASIS" and "AS IS WHAT ISBASIS" and "WHATEVER THERE IS BASIS".
- The particulars of Secured Assets specified in the Schedule hereinabove havebeen stated to the best of the information of the Authorised Officer, but the Authorised Officer shall not be answerable for any error, misstatement or omissionin this proclamation.
- It shall be the responsibility of the bidders to inspect and satisfy themselves about the asset and specification before submitting the bid. The bidder inspects the property in consultation with the dealing official as per the details provide.
- All statutory dues/attendant charges / other dues including registration charges, stamp duty, taxes etc. shall have to be borne by the purchaser.
- The Authorized Officer or the Bank shall not be responsible for any charge, lien, encumbrances, or any other dues to the Government or anyone else in respect of properties (E-Auctioned) not known to the bank. The Intending Bidder is advised to make their own independent inquiries regarding the encumbrances on the property including statutory liabilities, arrears of property tax, electricity dues etc.
- The bidder should ensure proper internet connectivity, power back-up etc. The Bank shall not be liable for any disruption due to internet failure, power failure or technical reasons or reasons / contingencies affecting the e-auctions.
- It is open to the Bank to appoint a representative and make self bid and participatein the auction.
- For detailed term and conditions of the sale, please refer <https://baanknet.com> & www.pnbindia.in.

Date : 06.06.2026
Place : Paschim Midnapore

Sd/- Md. Waize Ansari, Authorised Officer
Punjab National Bank

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER

RURAL WORKS CIRCLE : SUNABEDA

email- serwsbd2003@yahoo.com

25001/326/2627

Letter No. 2630

Date: 04.06.2026

1st Corrigendum

In continuation to this office order No.2572, Dated.03.06.2026 and Bid Identification No. CCERWCSBD-Online-05/2026-27 invited vide this office Notice No.2093, Dtd.08.05.2026, the partial modification of NCB has been made as follows:-

- Availability of Tender online for bidding Extended up to Dtd. 24.06.2026 at 5.00 PM
- Last Date and Time of seeking tender clarification if any on or before Dtd. 23.06.2026 up to 2.00 PM
- Date & Time of opening of tender (Technical Bid) on Dtd. 25.06.2026 at 11.00 AM.
- Date & Time of opening of tender (Price Bid) Will be intimated later

All other terms and conditions will remain unaltered.

Sd/-

Chief Construction Engineer,
Rural Works Circle, Sunabeda
OIPR-25001/25182/1/26-27/0031

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER

RURAL WORKS CIRCLE : SUNABEDA

email- serwsbd2003@yahoo.com

25001/326/2627

Letter No. 2606

Date: 04.06.2026

1st Corrigendum

In continuation to this office order No.2572, Dated.03.06.2026 and Bid Identification No. CCERWCSBD-Online-17/2026-27 invited vide this office Notice No.2321, Dtd.15.05.2026, the partial modification of NCB has been made as follows:-

- Availability of Tender online for bidding Extended up to Dtd. 24.06.2026 at 5.00 PM
- Last Date and Time of seeking tender clarification if any on or before Dtd. 23.06.2026 up to 2.00 PM
- Date & Time of opening of tender (Technical Bid) on Dtd. 25.06.2026 at 11.00 AM.
- Date & Time of opening of tender (Price Bid) Will be intimated later

All other terms and conditions will remain unaltered.

Sd/-

Chief Construction Engineer,
Rural Works Circle, Sunabeda
OIPR-25001/25182/1/26-27/0031

গয়েষ্ট বেঙ্গল গ্রামীণ ব্যাঙ্ক

গয়েষ্ট বেঙ্গল গ্রামীণ ব্যাঙ্ক

গয়েষ্ট বেঙ্গল গ্রামীণ ব্যাঙ্ক

গয়েষ্ট বেঙ্গল গ্রামীণ ব্যাঙ্ক

West Bengal Gramin Bank

West Bengal Gramin Bank

West Bengal Gramin Bank

West Bengal Gramin Bank

BMC House, NH -34 Chuanpur Po Chaltia, Berhampore, Dist.- Murshidabad, West Bengal 742407, India Website: www.wbgb.bank.in

TENDER NOTICE

Ref. NO: WBGB/HO/GSAD/1659/2026-27 Dated 06/06/2026,

Tender Notice for Supply, Delivery, Embedding, Installation, Commissioning & Maintenance of BIS Certified Class "BB" TRTL Gold Safes and Class "A" TRTL Cash Safes with Standard Time Lock Arrangement at Various Branches of West Bengal Gramin Bank issued by West Bengal Gramin Bank, Head Office. For details, please visit Bank's website <https://wbgb.bank.in> under Notice and Tender section.

GENERAL MANAGER

গয়েষ্ট বেঙ্গল গ্রামীণ ব্যাঙ্ক

গয়েষ্ট বেঙ্গল গ্রামীণ ব্যাঙ্ক

গয়েষ্ট বেঙ্গল গ্রামীণ ব্যাঙ্ক

গয়েষ্ট বেঙ্গল গ্রামীণ ব্যাঙ্ক

West Bengal Gramin Bank

West Bengal Gramin Bank

West Bengal Gramin Bank

West Bengal Gramin Bank

BMC House, NH -34 Chuanpur Po Chaltia, Berhampore, Dist.- Murshidabad, West Bengal 742407, India Website: www.wbgb.bank.in

TENDER NOTICE

West Bengal Gramin Bank invites applications from experienced, reputed, technically competent and financially sound Architects, Interior Consultants, Electrical Contractors and Furniture/Furnishing Contractors for empanelment with the Bank for execution of various infrastructure development, furnishing, renovation, modernization, electrical and allied works at its Branches, Offices and other establishments. Interested applicants may download the detailed Empanelment Notice (Ref. No. WBGB/HO/GSAD/1662/2026-27 dated 06.06.2026) containing eligibility criteria and other terms & conditions from the Bank's website www.wbgb.bank.in.

GENERAL MANAGER

indianexpress.com

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For the Indian Intelligent.

The Indian EXPRESS

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Kolkata



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या पर विश्वविद्यालय अनुदान आयोग का एक अंतर-विश्वविद्यालय केंद्र)

University Centre of University Grants Commission on Electronic Media)

र, अरुणा आसफ अली मार्ग, नई दिल्ली-110067 (भारत)

Aruna Asaf Ali Marg, New Delhi-110067 (India) / Ph: 011-24126418/19

NOTICE INVITING e-TENDER
(through <https://fireps.gov.in>)

CE/C-III/SC Construction Organisation, S.C.Railway, Secunderabad, respectively, invites e-tender on behalf of the President of India for the following works:

S.No.: 01 NIT No. : 30-CAO- C-SC-2026 Date: 30/05/2026 Name of work: SCR Construction Organization: Katapadi-Tirupati Doubling – Proposed construction of SSE/Works, SSE/P.Way, SSE/S&T, ADEN, ADEE/TRD offices and Rest house of Track machine staff in between Katpadi and Tirupati stations. **Estimated Cost(₹):** 7,92,62,201.29 **EMD (₹):** 15,85,300/- **Completion Period: 12 (Twelve) Months Date of Opening: 26.06.2026 15:00hrs.**

S.No.: 02 NIT No. : 31-CAO- C-SC-2026 Date: 30/05/2026 Name of work: SCR Construction Organization: Gudur-Renigunta Tripling – Construction of SSE/Works, SSE/P.Way, SSE/S&T, SSE/TRD ADEE/TRD office buildings in between Gudur and Renigunta stations and Officers Rest house at Gudur station. **Estimated Cost (₹):** 9,29,76,324.64 **EMD (₹):** 18,59,500/- **Completion Period: 12 (Twelve) Months Date of Opening: 26.06.2026 15:00hrs.**

S.No.: 03 NIT No. : 32-CAO- C-SC-2026 Date: 30/05/2026 Name of work: SCR Construction Organization: Guntakal Division - Gudur-Renigunta –Tirupati Doubling-Proposed construction of platform No.6&7, Extension of Platform No. 4 &5, VIP siding platform under Non interlocked working period of Renigunta yard and construction of C&W office building at Renigunta station. **Estimated Cost (₹):** 8,66,20,806.04 **EMD (₹):** 17,32,400/- **Completion Period: 12 (Twelve) Months Date of Opening: 26.06.2026 15:00hrs.**

i) For bid document and other details, please login to website <https://ireps.gov.in>.

ii) Tenderers can submit their offers online during tender submission period which is the Fifteen days period prior to closing of tender.

iii) Tenderers should watch for any corrigenda (issued online only) up to the date of commencement of the tender submission period.

**Chief Administrative Officer,
A413 Const., Secunderabad**

**For further tender conditions / details and for downloading the tender documents,
Please visit website at
<https://www.ireps.gov.in> or
www.scr.indianrailways.gov.in**

CHANGE OF NAME
I, MADHUR JHAWAR S/O OM
PRAKASH JHAWAR, resident of
10/2A, Alipore Park Place, Kolkata: 7
700027, do hereby declare that I
have changed my name from
MADHUR JHAWAR to MADHURRR
JHAAVAR and henceforth I shall
be known as **MADHURRR**
JHAAVAR in all purpose, vide
Affidavit No: AN 405104, sworn
before Ld. 1st Class Judicial
Magistrate, Alipore on 5th June,
2026. **MADHURRR JHAAVAR** and
MADHUR JHAWAR both are
same and One Identical Person.

Legal Notice

We 1. Sri Sukhendhi Das and 2. Smt. Bina Das (both residing at 1, Gholar Ghat Road, P.O. & P.S. Parnaseer, Kolkata-700060) and 3. Sri Debashish Sasmal and 4. Smt. Suparna Sasmal (both residing at 389/2F, Upen Barjee Road, P.O. & P.S. Parnaseer, Kolkata-700060) purchased land situated in Mouza Gopaulpur [Plot No. 101] under the Kolkata Block (J.L.No. 2746) in the year 2021 via registered sale deeds (Deed Nos. 7519/21, 7520/21, and 7521/21). We purchased this land from Late Nabakumar Mondal as the Power of Attorney holder appointed by the five daughters of the late Ankur Chandra Mandal (Power of Attorney Deed No. 01016/2011). Now we have applied for the mutation of the said land (Case Nos. MN/2026/16/3611, MN/2026/16/3612, MN/2026/16/3613, and MN/2026/16/3614, respectively). If any person has any objection regarding this matter, please submit it within one month from the date of this advertisement to the Kolkata L.R.O. office, 10, L.R.O. Bldg., 10, CMC Building, Room No. 128, 5, S.N. Banerjee Road, Kolkata-700033 or via email (plrostatn@gmail.com).

NAME CHANGE

"IMPORTANT"

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GREATER VISAKHAPATNAM MUNICIPAL CORPORATION
 Tender Notice No: 16/2026-27(SEW-II)/EE (PW-MDW)DB. Dt: 04-06-2026
 Number of works - 03 Works, Value of work Rs.3,22,41,603.00
 Starting Date: 04-06-2026, Ending Date: 19-06-2026.
 Note: Further details at <http://www.tender.aapeprocurement.gov.in>
 O/o. the EE-II Cell No. 99480 95518 Sd/- Commissioner, GVMC

ਪੰਜਾਬ ਨੈਸ਼ਨਲ ਬੈਂਕ (ਮਾਨਤਾ ਸੰਭਾਲ ਕੇ ਉਭਰੇਗਾ)		 pnb (Govt. of India Undertaking)		ARMB : SOUTH 24 PARGANAS Amtala Road, Near Padmapukur More P.O. - Baruiapur, Kolkata - 700 144 E-mail : cs8319@pnb.bank.in		E-AUCTION DATED 23.06.2026				
SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES										
E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8(b) & 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 Symbolic Possession of which has been taken by the Authorized Officer of the Bank / Secured Creditor, will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is" on the date as mentioned in the table herein below, for recovery of its dues due to the Bank / Secured Creditor from the respective Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s).										
The Reserve Price and the Earnest Money Deposit will be as mentioned in the table below against the respective properties. The Sale will be done by the undersigned through e-auction platform i.e. https://baanknet.com provided their link at the Web Portal (https://baanknet.com). The General Public is invited to bid either personally or by duly authorised agent.										
Sl. No.	Name of the Branch Name of the Account Name & Addresses of the Borrowers / Guarantors Account	Description of the Immovable Properties Mortgaged / Owner's Name [Mortgagors of Property (ies)]	a) Date of Demand Notice b) Outstanding Amount as per Demand Notice (Plus further accrued interest, charges, expenses less recovery if any) c) Possession Date d) Nature of Possession e) Dealing Official	a) Reserve Price b) EMD (Last Date of EMD) c) Bid Increase Amount d) Date / Time of E-Auction e) Encumbrance if any						
1.	Branch : ARMB - South 24 Parganas (831900) M/s. T. Enterprises Borrower : M/s. T. Enterprises, Proprietor : Mr. Tarun Mahish, S/o. Mr. Birendra Nath Mahish Vill + P.O. - Jafarpur, P.S. - Falta, Dist - 24 Parganas (South), Pin - 743 513. Mr. Tarun Mahish, S/o. Mr. Birendra Nath Mahish Mr. Krishna Sarkar, S/o. Bomodu Sarkar Both are at : Vill + P.O. - Jafarpur, P.S. - Falta, Dist - South 24 Parganas, Pin - 743 513. A/c. Nos. : 1254250021216 (CC) Property ID : PUNBABA40459287	All that piece and parcel of Land & Building measuring at Mouza - Jafarpur, J.L. No. 125, 74, RS Khatian No. 12, Dag No. 2594. Area of Land 07 Satak, P.S. - Falta, Dist. - South 24 Pargana, owned by Mr. Tarun Mahish, S/o. Mr. Birendra Nath Mahish as per Deed No. 1047/2009 Dated 31.08.2009.	a) 07.04.2018 b) Rs. 31,47,348. 92 plus further interest & Charges as applicable c) 21.07.2018 (Symbolic) d) Symbolic Possession e) Mehboob Hossain Baidya, Sr. Manager Mob. : 90930 17798	a) Rs. 11.50 Lakhs b) Rs. 1.15 Lakhs (23.06.2026) c) Rs. 0.12 Lakh d) 23.06.2026 From 11.00 A.M. to 4.00 P.M. e) Not known to Bank						
2.	Branch : ARMB - South 24 Parganas (831900) Bishnupada Nath Bishnupada Nath, S/o. Pannala Nath Vill - Malta 2 No. Bazar (Ghoshpara Near Life Line X Ray Clinic Opposite Mosque), Canning Town, P.O. + P.S. - Canning, South 24 Parganas, West Bengal, Pin - 743 329 A/c. Nos. : 21896016000046 & 21897011000074 Property ID : PUNBS24PGNBISHNU	All Part and Parcel of Equitable Mortgage of Land and Constructed residential / Commercial building bearing RS Dag No. 3970, LR Khatian No. 1237, J.L. No. 75, Touzi No. 2692/2834 having total area 3.336 Decimal P.S. - Canning and property is located opposite to Mosque Near X-Ray Clinic, Ghosh Para Matla 2 No. Bazar Canning Town, P.O. + P.S. - Canning, South 24 Parganas and property is standing in the name of Bishnupada Nath vide Regd. Deed No. 7754/2013. The Property Surrounded : By North - 8 Ft. Kacha Metal Road, By South - Vacant Land, By East - Gobindnath and Hiram Pramanik and 6 ft Road, By West - Plot Owner.	a) 08.03.2023 b) Rs. 27,83,694.90 plus further interest & Charges as applicable c) 22.05.2023 (Symbolic) d) Symbolic Possession e) Avinash Singh, Manager Mob. : 97304 26710	a) Rs. 61.74 Lakhs b) Rs. 6.18 Lakhs (23.06.2026) c) Rs. 0.62 Lakh d) 23.06.2026 From 11.00 A.M. to 4.00 P.M. e) Not known to Bank						
3.	Branch : ARMB - South 24 Parganas (831900) Mayukh Pharmacy Mayukh Pharmacy Proprietor : Mrs. Krishna Gharami, W/o. Manoranjan Gharami Ward No. 0009, Thumba Chowrangee, Hasnabad, P.O. - Taki, P.S. - Barasat, Dist - North 24 Parganas, West Bengal, Pin - 743 429. Mrs. Krishna Gharami (Proprietor), W/o. Manoranjan Gharami Ward No. 0009, Thumba Chowrangee, Hasnabad, P.O. - Taki, P.S. - Barasat, Dist - North 24 Parganas, West Bengal, Pin - 743 429. Also at : Ramtala Apartment, Holding No. 296/1, Napara Kalibari Road, Barasat, Dist - North 24 Parganas, Pin - 700 125. A/c. Nos. : 172520NC00000376 and 0122208700001247 Property ID : PUNB1Y355802531	Equitable mortgage of residential flat being No. 2C/1 situated in the middle east side of the 3rd floor consisting of 02 Bedrooms, 01 Drawing cum Dining, 01 Kitchen, 02 Toilets and 01 Balcony measuring Super built up area 1115 Sq.ft. at Ramala Apartment lying and situated at Holding No. 296/1, Napara Kalibari Road under Ward No. 11 of Barasat Municipality, P.S. - Barasat, North 24 Parganas, West Bengal, Pin- 700 125 contained in being Deed No.151904748 for the year 2023, in the name of Mrs. Krishan Gharami which is duly registered in the office of A.D.S.R.O. - Kadambari, District - North 24 Parganas, and recorded in the Book No. 1, Vol No. 1519-2023, Pages from 109451 to 109482. Property butted and bounded by : North - Land of Gobinda Chandra Dey and others, Ghosh Babu and Others, South - 25' wide Napara Kalibari Road and Land of Tapan Batyabai and Others, East - Land of Bimal Podder and Tapan Batyabai and Others, West - 6'-0" wide passage and land of Gobinda Chandra Dey and Others.	a) 09.04.2025 b) Rs. 26,30,524.25 plus further interest & Charges as applicable c) 21.06.2025 (Symbolic) d) Symbolic Possession e) Avinash Singh Manager Mob. : 97304 26710	a) Rs. 32.34 Lakhs b) Rs. 3.24 Lakhs (23.06.2026) c) Rs. 0.33 Lakh d) 23.06.2026 From 11.00 A.M. to 4.00 P.M. e) Not known to Bank						
4.	Branch : ARMB - South 24 Parganas (831900) M/s. Maa Laxmi Enterprise M/s. Maa Laxmi Enterprise Proprietor : Smt. Manika Kar Hait Premises No. 96, Ward No. 16, Ramdhan Bose Road, Paschatyapa Para More, Aghore Sarani, P.O. + P.S. - Rajpur South 24 Parganas, West Bengal, Pin - 700 149. Smt. Manika Kar Hait, W/o. Sri Prashanta Hait Shri Prashant Hait, S/o. Sri Haru Hait Both are at : Pearl Apartment, Block - A, Flat No. B1, 3rd Floor, 27, Jaday Sarkar Road, Haritaki Tala More, Baikantapur, Rajpur, Sonarpur, South 24 Parganas, West Bengal, Pin - 700 149. A/c. Nos. : 0151208700000839 & 015120JY000000051 Property ID : PUNB7FE79256271	Equitable Mortgage of all that piece and parcel of Bastu Land measuring more or less 2 Cottahs 5 Chittacks and 19 Sq.ft. together with three storied residential building standing thereon measuring more or less 2997 Sq.ft. lying and situated at Mouza - Rajpur, J.L. No. 55, Touzi No. 250, comprised in RS & LR Dag No. 2126, 2127 appertaining to RA More, RS Khatian No. 782, Khanda Khatian No. 1976, corresponding to New LR Khatian Nos. 968, 1245, Ward No. 16, being Municipal Holding No. 96, Ramdhan Basu Road, within the limits of Rajpur-Sonarpur Municipality, Assessment No. 1104302130112,								

The proof of the pudding is...



ACROSS THE AISLE
BY P CHIDAMBARAM

AS A lawyer, I understand that if two honourable judges speak for the Court, it is the Supreme Court of India (SC) which speaks. The Supreme Court is a Constitutional court, it is also the final appellate court, it has original jurisdiction in some matters, it has superintendence over all courts, it can review and overrule its own judgments, it can take up a cause *suo motu*, it has the power to constitute a Special Investigation Team (SIT) or a Commission, it has the power to refer a matter for investigation to a police agency, it can refer a civil or commercial dispute to mediation or arbitration, it can transfer a matter from the jurisdiction of a High Court to the jurisdiction of another High Court, it can pronounce a man and a woman divorced, it has the power to punish a person for contempt of court, its interpretation of the Constitution of India is the final word, and it has the power to pass any order to “do complete justice”. It is said that the SC is the most powerful court in the world.

Universal adult suffrage

Among its vast powers, one stands out.

In *State of Madras vs V G Row*, the Supreme Court described itself as the *sentinel qui vive*—a watchful guardian of the Constitution. What does the Constitution say about elections?

● Article 324 vests in the Election Commission of India (ECI) the superintendence, direction and control of the preparation of the electoral rolls for,...and the conduct of all elections to, Parliament and the Legislature of every State.

● Article 326 prescribes that elections to the House of the People and the Legislative Assemblies of States shall be on the basis of adult suffrage (“The right to vote is a constitutional right.” — SC).

There is no conflict between the two Articles. The ECI is constitutionally obligated to prepare the electoral rolls *including* every adult in India. Obviously, there are other other qualifications, like citizenship and residence, imposed by the Constitution, the Citizenship Act, 1955 and the Representation of the People Act, 1950. Each of the laws prescribes an *authority* and a *procedure* to determine whether a person satisfies the qualifications under the law.

The fundamental basis of universal *adult franchise* is **inclusion**. **Exclusion** from the electoral rolls is an exception and must follow a laid-down procedure and a decision in writing that is subject to judicial review.

Interesting observations

In the course of the judgment in *Association for Democratic Reforms vs Election Commission* dated May 27, 2026 (in the context of the SIR exercise in Bihar), the Supreme Court observed:

The Supreme Court judgment noted that the outcome of the SIR exercise in Bihar was the net deletion of approximately 47,00,000 names from the electoral roll of 2003. Six persons out of every 100 adults in Bihar were excluded from the final electoral roll

● The commission decided to treat the 2003 electoral roll, with 01-01-2003 as the qualifying date, as probative evidence of eligibility, unless rebutted. Any person not included in the 2003 roll must produce one or more prescribed documents to establish his/her eligibility as an elector [In *Inderjit Barua (1985)* and *Lal Babu Hussein (1995)* the SC had affirmed that names included in the electoral roll are entitled to the presumption of citizenship].

● Upon scrutiny, where the eligibility of any person is found to be doubtful, the ERO/AERO is mandated to issue a show-cause notice setting out the grounds for the proposed exclusion and rendering a reasoned and speaking order. Any person aggrieved by a decision of the ERO shall be entitled to prefer an appeal before the District Magistrate under S.24(a) of the RP Act, 1969. A second appeal may be filed under S. 24(b) before the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) of the state.

● The Commission, in the course of preparing or revising electoral rolls, is undoubtedly empowered to examine questions bearing upon citizenship (“a limited enquiry” — SC)...Importantly, the entirety of this exercise remains amenable to judicial review.

The judgment noted that the outcome of the SIR exercise in Bihar was the *net deletion* of approximately 47,00,000 names from the electoral roll of 2003. *Six persons out of every 100 adults in Bihar were excluded from the final electoral roll.*

Proof of the pudding

Even before the judgment was delivered

in the Bihar SIR case, the SIR exercise was started and completed in West Bengal. Many lakh names were deleted. There was an SC-mandated judicial review by *ad hoc* judicial officers. According to the data released by the ECI and reports based on official figures from the West Bengal SIR exercise were:
First phase: removed on account of death, duplicate entries, shifted, absent, etc. 63.66 lakh
Deleted after summary review mainly on account of ‘logical discrepancies’: 27.16 lakh
Total deletions: 90.83 lakh

Appeals filed to *ad hoc* judicial officers: 25 lakh (approx)
Appeals heard and disposed of (until May 14, 2026): 6,581
Appeals accepted and names reinstated in the rolls: 4,043
Percentage of success 61.43%

West Bengal was the only state where an SC-mandated process of *judicial* review of the deletions was undertaken. Not in Bihar. Juxtapose the judgment and the results of the judicial review. If we apply the success rate of the West Bengal sample (61.43 per cent) to the deleted names in Bihar (47,00,000), it is a fair conclusion that approximately 28,87,210 persons — who did not vote — would be entitled to be reinstated in the Bihar electoral roll.

The conclusion exposes the hollowness of the ECI’s claims and the inaccuracy, unreliability and lack of credibility of the SIR exercise. After ECI’s blessings, will democracy survive?

Let us talk about education



FIFTH COLUMN
BY TAVLEEN SINGH

IT IS astonishing that it has become fashionable to talk about education. For the wrong reasons maybe, but at least we are discussing the most undiscussed and, in my view, the most vital reform that India needs. So far, all talk has been about NEET and leaked papers and the venality that has been revealed in the CBSE exam system. Desperate young students have been driven to suicide because of these corrupt practices. This alone should shame those responsible. So, when the noise and drama of these events die, please, please let us continue talking about the rot in our education system.

Maybe this time we will talk about it a little longer because of India’s newest political party making leaked papers their first cause. By the time you read this, the leader of the Cockroach Janata Party should have landed in Delhi and probably been arrested before he manages to hold a protest rally at Jantar Mantar. It is my fervent hope that even if the protest fails, the cause that he claims has brought him back home will not be forgotten. There must be accountability and heads must roll. He has demanded the resignation of Dharmendra Pradhan, and if this man had any self-respect, he would have already resigned, but this will solve nothing.

The rot goes deep and has spread from the top to the very bottom. The reason why our political leaders and high officials never send their children to government schools is because they know that they have built schools that offer not real learning but barest literacy. When Indian children from Tamil Nadu and Himachal competed in the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) in 2009, they came second last. In this exam, 15-year-olds were tested for their skills in reading, mathematics and science. Alarm bells should have gone off across India but if our babus have one superpower, it is knowing how to keep bad news from reaching the ears of their political masters.

We did not need an international test to establish that schools run by the Indian state are abysmal. If four prime ministers have had one thing in common, it is their neglect of education. Jawaharlal Nehru built the IITs but appeared not to notice that the only children able to get into them were from upper caste, middle class families. He also did not notice that on his watch was created a higher education system that was so tightly controlled by the government that it killed all chances of excellence or research. One reason is meddlesome officials. If there is to be reform, then it should start with the abolition of the University Grants Commission. It is an unneeded busybody that gives officials unneeded power.

Before writing this piece, I had a chat with Michel Danino who knows from the inside how the system works. He worked in the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) and recently got into trouble with the Supreme Court for telling the truth about corruption in the judiciary in a school textbook. When I asked him what were the three most important reforms that needed to be made in the school system, he said that for a start, instead of students being treated as a ‘passive sponge’, they need to be encouraged to participate. In other words, less rote learning.

The second reform he recommends is the setting up of proper teacher training institutes. And third, that there be investment in school infrastructure. Government schools lack such basic things as libraries, playgrounds, clean water and toilets. I have visited village schools in many states and seen some that are just empty sheds. So, I could not agree more. The irony is that the one reform that has been made is for teachers to be paid hefty salaries. These are sometimes ten times higher than the paltry salaries teachers earn in the thousands of private schools that have sprouted across rural India.

It is heartbreaking to think of how disadvantaged Indian children will be when they go out into a world where the competition could be AI children. Already, we have ‘graduates’ who cannot find jobs because they have left college without being able to articulate an idea or solve a simple equation. It has been said more than once that the problem in India is not unemployment but unemployability.

In 2013, when I was a passionate Modi-*bhakt* and hoped with all my heart that he would be able to bring the changes India so desperately needs, I was once summoned to meet him. He was still Chief Minister of Gujarat but knew in his heart that when the general election came the following year, he would be prime minister. He asked me what I felt were the things that most urgently needed to be done. And, I said he needed to rectify the mistakes that Congress prime ministers had made, which was to neglect education and healthcare.

We talked uninterrupted for more than an hour at the end, of which I was convinced that I had made my point. Clearly, I had not or by now we should have seen a revolutionary improvement in government schools that are in states governed by BJP chief ministers. Today that includes all major Hindi-belt states, Maharashtra and now West Bengal. Will the Cockroach noises bring some urgency? It is my sincerest hope that this will happen.

Patriarchy & the mother-in-law trope in India



AUDREY DMELLO

THE DOMINATING mother-in-law occupies a prominent place in India’s social imagination. She is the villain of television serials, the subject of jokes, and a recurring character in domestic violence cases. Giribala Singh’s comments about Twisha Sharma’s personal life — policing her body, sexuality, and behaviour — have reinforced the trope. There is an uncomfortable paradox at the heart of this stereotype: The mother-in-law who was once a young bride herself, subjected to control, humiliation, and violence, later inflicts the same on her daughters-in-law.

The television serial *Kyunki Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi* popularised the constant battle between the *saas* (mother-in-law) and the *bahu* (daughter-in-law). While often exaggerated for entertainment, these narratives reflect tensions present in many households where women are pitted against one another as rivals competing for authority.

Real-life cases reveal a more troubling reality. In prosecutions involving dowry deaths and domestic violence, mothers-in-law frequently appear as accused. National crime data shows complaints often involve female relatives, too.

Public discourse treats this as evidence that women are “women’s worst enemies”. Such explanations obscure the larger patriarchal structure that produces such conflict. Women did not design the dowry system, create patrilocal marriage, or establish inheritance structures — systems that favour men. Yet women become agents through which these systems are maintained. Daughters/sisters, however loved, are taught to obey their fathers/brothers. Wives, however independent, are expected to defer to husbands. As women, their value rests on the extent to which they sacrifice for their male family members.

In a patriarchal society, women are subtly, but consistently, socialised and trained to police one another. *Saas over bahu*. *Jethani* (elder sister-in-law) over *devrani* (younger sister-in-law), *nanand* (husband’s sister) over the *bhabhi* (brother’s wife). The resentment is not personal rivalry but structural conditioning. It starts when little girls see female relationships steeped in jealousy, competition, and backbiting. They grow up believing that female relationships are fragile and shallow. When a paternal grandmother insults her mother, leaving her mother feeling isolated, the girl learns that women don’t stand together.

Marriage involves a woman leaving her natal home and moving into her husband’s family. Traditionally, she enters the household with little power, expected to serve elders, perform domestic labour, and conform to family expectations. A woman’s social status improves with age, particularly after she becomes the mother of sons. The son becomes her source of security, influence, and identity in a society where women’s access to property, income, and independent social status remains constrained. When the son marries, the daughter-in-law enters a structure in which authority has already been hard-won by older women. The arrival of a daughter-in-law is perceived as a threat to that authority and emotional security.

Turkish feminist scholar Deniz Kandiyoti described this phenomenon as the “patriarchal bargain”. Women, oppressed by a system, participate in sustaining it because compliance offers social rewards and resistance carries significant costs. Thus, the abusive mother-in-law is not an exception to patriarchy but one of its products. Patriarchy does not survive solely because men enforce it. It survives because its values become internalised and reproduced within families. Women are its most effective gatekeepers. A young woman’s clothing is scrutinised not by her father but by her grandmother. Her movements are restricted not by her husband but by her mother-in-law. Her choices about work, marriage, or motherhood are questioned by other women long before any man voices an objection. This is what makes patriarchy so resilient.

A revolution to dismantle patriarchy is possible when women stop seeing each other as rivals and start recognising each other as allies in the struggle for dignity, freedom, and equality.

The writer is the director of Majlis, a legal centre for women & children

How an IMD discovery in 1920s changed monsoon forecasts



HISTORY HEADLINE
BY AMITABH SINHA

THE EL NIÑO phenomenon is fairly well known in India, thanks to widespread discussion in the media in connection with its impact on the Indian monsoon. El Niño Southern Oscillation, or ENSO, is a large-scale ocean-atmosphere interaction playing out in the Pacific Ocean region that happens to be the biggest cause of year-on-year variations in global climate. It has profound impacts on weather events everywhere, including the Indian monsoon.

What is much less known is that this global phenomenon, at least the atmospheric component of this ocean-atmosphere interaction, was first discovered by the India Meteorological Department (IMD) in the early 1920s. It was British mathematician Sir Gilbert Walker, working as head of IMD, a position that was at that time described as Director General of Observatories, who had noticed the sea-saw behaviour of air pressure between the east and west Pacific Ocean, something that became known as the Southern Oscillation, or SO.

While working to develop a reliable forecast model for the Indian monsoon, Walker, who had a nearly 21-year tenure at IMD from 1904 to 1924, had decided to look at external influences, having realised that the monsoon was not an isolated phenomenon over the Indian region. Meticulously going through all the weather observation data that used to be collected at the time, Walker noticed three large systems, two in the Pacific and one in the Atlantic Ocean, in which the atmospheric pressures periodically oscillated between being very high



Sir Gilbert Walker, who headed IMD, found that the Southern Oscillation could have an impact on the Indian monsoon

and very low at the opposite ends. The Southern Oscillation was so named because it was relatively south of the other two, which were called the North Atlantic Oscillation and North Pacific Oscillation.

He found the Southern Oscillation to be the most persistent and also the most likely to have an impact on the Indian monsoon.

Decades later, Norwegian-American meteorologist Jacob Bjerknes linked the Southern Oscillation to the periodic warming and cooling of the equatorial Pacific Ocean, or El Niño. Natives of the western coastline of South America, in the countries of Peru and Ecuador, were aware of this periodic change in sea surface temperatures for centuries. But it was Bjerknes who showed in the late 1960s that the two processes, the ocean phenomenon of El Niño and the atmospheric phenomenon of Southern Oscillation, formed a feedback loop in which one reinforced the other.

This discovery gave the scientists their first understanding of this complete process. El Niño and La Niña, the two opposite phases of ENSO, are now known to in-

What the witch couldn’t eat



SHE SAID
BY AARUSHEE SHUKLA

Then, in 2006, Jeevika came. A self-help group was forming in her village. She would have to save five rupees a week. She did not have five rupees. Another woman told her, “Take out a fistful from the rice you cook each day and save it. That will be enough.”

She started going to the group. She started talking. Slowly and gradually, the group became a safe space for her, a solace from the daily beatings. She took a loan of Rs 4,000 when her daughter needed money for school admission. She brought the money home. Her husband went quiet. “He felt that I, too, could do something,” she says. “That I can bring money.” The beatings stopped, not because he reformed, but because his idea of her as powerless had been broken.

MGNREGA came to her in 2015. The contrast with casual farm labour was stark. Three hours of work in the morning, ranging from soil cutting and tree planting, with the payment done in cash, not kind, with a group of forty women who laughed and divided tasks and made the work feel less of a chore. “We worked,” she says, “even without being educated”.

For a woman who had spent years believing that the lack of education explained everything, this experience was a recalibration. She learned something else, too: she had rights. If work was not provided within 15 days of a demand, she was entitled to an unemployment allowance. That the state could owe her something was new information, and she filed it carefully in her mind.

In 2018, when the work stopped coming, she used it. Four hundred women, seventeen panchayats, one courtyard, one demand. The BDO ran. The work came back. “I felt proud,” she says. This is what pride looks like when it has been earned. The pride of a woman who was told a witch would eat her if she went to school, who saved five rupees and a fistful of rice at a time, who stood in a government courtyard with hundreds of others, watching the men run.

Anju now works at a Haldiram’s factory. Twelve hours a day, making a meagre Rs 400. She does not know about the Union Budget this year, or the proposal to replace MGNREGA with the VB-G RAM G, or the debate about shifting the pro-

gramme from demand-driven to supply-driven. She has not had time to meet anyone or get information since she started at the factory. When told that MGNREGA had been effectively discontinued, she went quiet.

This is the silence policymakers should sit with and deconstruct. The shift from a demand-driven to a supply-driven employment is, in the language of policy, a technical adjustment. On the ground, it means that women like Anju, who learned slowly and at great cost that they had the right to demand work, no longer have that right. The legal entitlement that gave her the language for the gherao, the grounds to stand in that courtyard and shout, is quietly being retired.

MGNREGA was not perfect. But for Anju, it was three hours in the morning, cash in hand, forty women laughing in a field, and the knowledge that if the work didn’t come, the state owed her an answer.

Aarushee Shukla is PhD scholar at JNU

Editor (Planning & Projects) Shalini Langer curates the fortnightly ‘She Said’ column



JUNE 11-JULY 19

48 TEAMS, 16 CITIES, 3 COUNTRIES

The 2026 FIFA World Cup, spread across the United States, Mexico, and Canada, is the biggest the sport has ever staged. There are the personalities — the players and powerbrokers who have shaped the four years since Qatar. There is the geography — Mexico and the United States have hosted this tournament before — and the nostalgia — of what happened on those pitches. And in this edition, there are some things happening for the first time.

How the Mexican Wave took over the sporting world

The first instance of sighting a Mexican wave is still under debate, but it was at the 1986 edition in Mexico where the world got to witness it

ILLUSTRATION: SUVAJIT DEY



Shivani Naik
June 6

WHEN YOU say, in Wave theory lie the underpinnings of Optics, you might in a tiny chance, be talking of Foundational Physics. Mostly, you would be thinking of football though.

In June of 2026 with the FIFA World Cup 10 days away, the optics of how the Mexican Wave, came to acquire that name, tend to be resented by Americans who in a show of defiance, call it just the 'Wave'. The Canadians, expectedly follow.

At the heart of this consternation is its provenance — something American football University and franchise cheerleaders, and attendees of the 1984 LA Olympics and even a Vancouver hockey team, bicker over, amongst themselves.

The Mexicans simply rose in unison with hands raised, and sat down after a moment of un-self conscious grinning smiles, as the wave moved, and then sat down promptly back in the 1986 World Cup that they hosted solely. Television broadcasts beamed the stadium phenomenon across the world — and the human crest and trough that needed no rehearsals, acquired the gleeful

name of a 'Mexican Wave' — now intertwined into history of the 1986 edition. It became a constant source of me-first-moanings by Americans, grudging their southern neighbours becoming eponymous with sport's most organically happy-making cultural schtick.

The many happy hands of ordinary fans being second in fame, perhaps only to Hand of God. The intellectualisation happened much later. Physicist Tamas Visksek's team at Eotvos Lorand University in Hungary even published in Nature in 2002, calculating the wave travels at 12 metres per second, has an average width of 15 seats, needs a critical mass of 30 people going up at the same time, and tends to roll clockwise 75% of times. Crowd behaviour was minutely studied for how it was similar to other excitable disturbances in nature.

Fans at Monterrey or Estadio Azteca in 1986 — not all Mexicans either, mind — would've scarcely known that joining in a wave for a lark, would trigger so many Americans for the next 40 years. From British newspapers like *Guardian* in early Aughties to a digital interactive podcast host of *The Athletic*, would in all seriousness, ask the question: Is

Most times, the Mexican wave's got nothing to do with what's happening on the football field, and can even signify boredom. There were only so many matches at 1986, where Maradona could feature.

Mexican Wave really Mexican? And expect authentication.

It might look like synchronized art on TV, but the Mexican Wave is the most free-range of fan activities, and runs on the T-Shirt scribble of Stay Excited and Wait Your Turn.

Most times, it's got nothing to do with what's happening on the football field, and can even signify boredom of fans. There were only so many matches at 1986 Mexico, where Maradona could feature in. So a Mexican Wave, at least offered something to do while nothing of note happened. But the non-North American, English speaking sporting world happily adopted the *haiku* if not magnum opus of the Mexican Wave. In Italy, Portugal, Spain, they dubbed it La Ola (ola is wave).

Things have come to a head this summer as Mexico and USA are lumped together as hosts.

Old wounds have reopened.

The American contention is it dates back to 1981. For some, the time-stamp is a University of Washington Homecoming (American) football game on October 31, where Husky "Yell Leader" Rob Weller and marching band director Bill Bissell, invented the choreographed sequence. A rival claimant in glorious American anti-trust fashion seething at monopolies, is "Krazy" George Henderson, who pins the origins at an Oakland vs. New York baseball game on October 15.

{ NOSTALGIA }

NBA of early 80s, ice hockey of late 70s, opening ceremony of the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics all stake claim to being the first time, fuelling a debate that might never be satisfactorily solved. When *Guardian* asked this question two decades ago, fan-sightings of the Wave, went back to an obscure basketball

scene from Teen Wolf circa 1984 as well as the Brazil vs France Olympics football final at Pasadena the same year. From dubious cave carvings to appropriations from Plato's Meno, the name Mexican Wave is not allowed to settle — which by definition is what a wave ought to do.

Coca Cola at some point put out a spot to get USA's Hispanic community to sip its bubbled sugar-water by using the Mexican wave — because — Duh! — the wave was Mexican.

Mexicans seemed to have simply transported it from their domestic games in the industrial city of Monterrey, from 1970s, though football across Latin America recalls seeing the wave at their own stadia, and not fussing much about how it all started. You wouldn't be able to pinpoint it in a stadium even today in 2026.

The wave, however, can be a tricky judgment on the quality of football on offer. If the game in front was interesting, wholesale stadium capacities wouldn't be glancing left to get ready to jump and throw their hands in the air, and see the merriment in it all. The Mexican Wave tends to be a sort of non-hostile gleeful defiance. Even in the US. At Michigan football games, waves would

take off precisely after crusty administrators would rumble into the microphone to desist from starting the tide.

When it reached the MCG in Australia, and the wave was broken because the snobs and 'Members' refused to join in, the rest of the stadium would boo the suits. It was banned because rowdies would fling bottles in the name of the wave, but Adam Gilchrist couldn't resist joining in, just when it was banned. The beauty of Mexican Waves in 1986 was anybody could start it, and nobody could stop it.

Mexico only hosted 1986 because original hosts, Colombia backed out after 1982. Then an earthquake a year before the World Cup led to destruction in Mexico City. By the time the jamboree arrived, Mexicans and those who wound up there from all over the world, would've simply latched onto a joyous outlet to join in the fun. All those hands up in the air, a mass cheekiness on show, would no doubt have inspired the Almighty Cheekiness of Maradona and his divine hand. Coordinated or not, the Mexican Wave came on TV — and travelled like strains of merry mariachi musicians; the Americans left in the wake of the wave.

FIFA's price gamble has made World Cup a rich man's game

Dynamic pricing, a resale marketplace and 15% commission on both ends — the business of football's biggest event

Shashank Nair
June 6

THE FACT that the global body of football would capitalise on a World Cup being held on North American soil was never in doubt. But it is the varying layers of costs, added across different mediums, that have turned the 2026 World Cup across the USA, Mexico and Canada into an event where the best matches have simply become unaffordable to a significant group of fans.

At the heart of this is dynamic pricing. For long, events have priced their tickets at a set value. People have purchased those tickets at that value and, based on demand, sold them at higher prices on secondary platforms and made a profit. Dynamic pricing essentially attempts to remove that secondary retail market by basing ticket prices on demand and supply.

Dynamic pricing is a part of everyday life. The Rapido bike you book works on the same principle. The cost of a ride goes up during the rainy season or peak traffic, but drops during lunch hour. Sometimes the customer benefits, sometimes the service provider benefits — but the middleman marketplace benefits all the time. What FIFA did, though, was to create a marketplace for reselling tickets, and then decided to charge 15% from both the seller and the buyer, ensuring that regardless of demand or supply, they profit.

"An authorized resale market enables the seller to control the exchange and charge commissions and is the seller's best revenue-maximizing mechanism. That is the core economic logic behind FIFA's resale platform," Pnina Feldman, an associate professor from the Darden School of Business at the University of Virginia, told ESPN.

According to Ticketdata.com, the cheapest ticket available was for a Cape Verde vs Saudi Arabia Group H fixture at the Reliant Stadium, with prices hovering around the \$160-170 mark. But the issue with dynamic pricing emerges with the bigger games. The World Cup final, initially priced at \$6,730 for the top category, has now risen to over \$10,990 in the latest sales. "We

have to look at the market — we are in the market in which entertainment is the most developed in the world. So we have to apply market rates," FIFA president Gianni Infantino said.

The justification is that where there is demand, FIFA must strive to earn the topmost dollar. It has also led to variance in prices. Group stage tickets cost anywhere between \$60 and \$620. According to the Associated Press, the number of \$60 tickets for each game is likely to be in the hundreds, not thousands — accounting for roughly 1.6% of total available seats.

There is a disagreement between FIFA and fans over who should be present at a big-ticket World Cup match. Dynamic pricing favours fans willing to pay astronomical amounts for better games while relegating those who cannot afford them to watching less in-demand fixtures. It has led to skyrocketing prices for top level games and a serious lack of demand for certain group stage matches.

FIFA has been accused of trying to offload tickets for these low-turnout games by selling large quantities to unofficial resale websites. According to the Telegraph, blocks of seats appeared on SeatGeek for \$200, well below the \$700 valuation on FIFA's own resale marketplace. In some cases, as many as 18 blocks of seats were available on the site, which is inconsistent with normal reseller behaviour and points to a mass dumping of cheap inventory into the market. "Official price cuts could trigger refund demands or consumer-protection headaches from fans who already bought at higher prices. Instead FIFA keeps official prices high, avoids admitting the market-clearing price is lower, and moves unsold inventory through third-party resale platforms," said Florian Ederer, an economics professor from Boston University.



FIFA prez Gianni Infantino. REUTERS

{ INDIA VS AFGHANISTAN }

Gill, Rahul tons put Afghans to sword on Day 1

Lalith Kalidas
New Chandigarh, June 6

BY THE time Zia Ur Rahman and Azmatullah Omarzai skimmed through their first overs of the day against Yashasvi Jaiswal and KL Rahul, it was amply clear that the pitch and the seamers could not have startled the Indian openers.

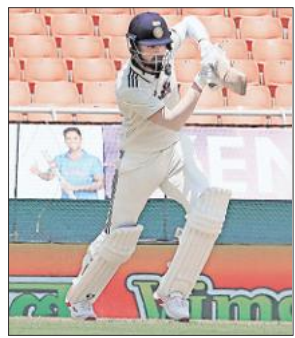
Playing a Test match in the burning June heat at a new northern venue is a relatively new experience for the Indian unit, too. But the feeling of facing Test thoroughbreds for days is much more stifling for Afghanistan. An unhelpful bowling surface, though, isn't a new feeling for Rahman and his teammates.

Adjusting to the surface after losing the toss at the New PCA Stadium on Saturday, Afghanistan had exhausted reserves of an entire XI, sapped limbs, sloppy palms and uninspired minds. The visitors were soon teleported back in time. Back to 2018, when a classic desi batting

order gatecrashed their red-letter day in Bengaluru. Shubman Gill's group matched them on execution and buried the Afghans under a greater volume of runs, with 368 for three in 85 overs, on the opening day.

The template followed from what made the transition briefly seem a lot smoother in England last year, a stoic Rahul century (100), a controlled ton from captain Gill (103 not out), a composed 81 from No. 3 Sai Sudharsan and the return of a free-spirited Rishabh Pant. Englishman Richard Pybus had travelled the world coaching teams before the Afghanistan job. A visit to Kabul before his first assignment as head coach in the one-off Test was a revelation for the 61-year-old.

There was little that his bowlers could do when a black soil pitch replicated that concrete feeling. Only the lack of outright pace and bounce could have disrupted the top-order now. The opening few overs sug-



KL Rahul scored a 100 on Day 1 of the Test. KAMLESHWAR SINGH

gested minimal carry, as the seamers' deliveries fell well short of the keeper. Despite their conspicuous handicap on speeds, Rahman and Omarzai stuck to their lengths, forcing Rahul and Jaiswal to assess and reassess their options early against the uneven bounce.

And when an opportunity arose in the shape of an outside edge in the 11th over from Rahman, Hashmatullah Shahidi

was overly cautious to spend a review, the heat clearly taking its toll. A spill at gully off Jaiswal wouldn't hurt as much; the left-hander poked one around his hips to the keeper on 24 in the 12th over. After struggling to sync his feet and wrists on the backfoot through the opening hour, Rahul deftly grew into his strokes on the leg-side.

The scoring picked up immediately post lunch when Rahul chip-charged Kharote for a four and backed it up with a proper meaty cut off the next delivery. The freshly appointed vice-captain was still resigned from scoring behind Sudharsan, who returned a better account of himself.

His iffy tendencies to hang back to even considerably fuller lengths were partially tested by the spinners, though none bore adequate venom. Sudharsan (81) would eventually fall caught behind, the grip characteristically turning over the handle on a full-blooded drive

on an overpitched ball from pacer Mohammed Saleem.

Even Rahul's meticulous knock wore off a ball after a century that lacked its usual off-side colour, holing out to cover. The senior opener's lapses after checkpoints have somewhat formed a trend, falling exactly on 100 on his last three Test centuries, twice off deliveries succeeding the milestone.

The evening handover was flawless as Gill and Pant were batting as if they had locked in for training on one of those cement slabs. Gill breezed to his sixth century in 15 innings as captain in only 138 balls.

The statement knock was, however, reserved for Pant. He clasped offie Abdul Malik with three thumping sixes in an over, nearly a third of the entire count he gathered during the IPL summer.

BRIEF SCORES: India 368 for three in 85 overs (Gill 103, Rahul 100, Sudharsan 81, Saleem 2/67) vs Afghanistan

Nitin Sharma
New Chandigarh, June 6

ON HIS way to the Maharaja Yadavindra Singh PCA Stadium in Mullanpur on Saturday morning, Khial Mohammad told his cab driver something worth remembering. Afghanistan, he said, stands very little chance against India. But the players will give their best. They always do.

Mohammad had come alone. Of the 2,000-odd fans inside the ground, he was the only one waving an Afghanistan flag, standing in the harsh summer sun in the Harbhajan Singh pavilion. By afternoon, four other Afghan fans had trickled in to other parts of the ground. Until then, it was just him.

He had reasons to be there beyond the match. Two of the players on the field are old friends. Nangeyalia Kharote, who made his Test debut on Saturday, is from Baghlan province. Zia Ur Rahman Sharifi is from Khost. Mohammad knows both



Khial Mohammad in Mullanpur on Saturday. EXPRESS PHOTO

from the junior cricket circuit back home.

A Kabul native, Mohammad has been studying at a private university near Chandigarh since 2022, when his father sent him to India for his MBA. His younger brother Mufjeeb Rehman still plays in the junior circuit in Afghanistan. Cricket runs in the family conversation, if not quite the family profession.

Mohammad played cricket himself through his teenage years before his father sent him to Chandigarh. Over the years he

has followed Afghanistan to different venues across India.

He has watched his country's cricket grow from a distance, province by province. Nangarhar gave them Rashid Khan. Khost gave them Rahmanullah Gurbaz. Paktia gave them Mohammad Nabi. The grounds back home are mostly college or open fields, the pitches concrete slabs. "India has helped Afghanistan a lot, providing them the home venue," he says. "Afghanistan has only played 12 Tests in 26 years. But the team will make a name in Test cricket too, like in ODIs and T20Is."

And he became a Virat Kohli fan in 2012, after the 183 against Pakistan in the Asia Cup. Afghanistan does not yet have an international stadium, though a 100-acre sports complex is coming up in Kabul. Mohammad has a wish. "Every Afghan fan hopes to see Virat Kohli play in Kabul someday," he says. He plans to meet Kharote and Sharifi after the day's play.

INDIA'S T20I SQUAD ANNOUNCEMENT

The Iyer story: From two & half years of rejection to national team captaincy

The Mumbai man built one of the strongest leadership CVs in Indian T20 cricket, leading KKR to 2024 IPL title and PBKS to 2025 IPL final

Sriram Veera
Mumbai, June 6

INDIA HAVE won two T20 World Cups since Shreyas Iyer last played a T20 international. He watched both from outside, not in disgrace, not after a public falling out, but in a kind of administrative limbo that Indian cricket occasionally inflicts on players it cannot quite place. Now, in a sudden turn of events, Iyer has not just been recalled to the side but also named T20 captain, replacing the World T20-winning skipper Suryakumar Yadav.

In those two and a half years, Iyer built what may be the strongest leadership CV in Indian T20 cricket. He led Kolkata Knight Riders to their third IPL title in 2024, finishing top of the table and winning the final by eight wickets. "I personally felt I didn't get the recognition I wanted after winning the IPL," he said. "But at the end of the day, as long as you have self-integrity and you keep doing the right things when no one is watching, that is more important." He didn't name anyone.

Then KKR didn't retain him. "It was part of the conversation, but wasn't completely in the mix," he told GQ India. He moved to Punjab Kings and took them to the final in 2025 for the first time in eleven years. In IPL 2026 he scored his unbeaten IPL century, an unbeaten 101 in a must-win match against Lucknow Super Giants, reaching it with a six. He is the only player to have captained three different IPL franchises to a final. In 101 matches as captain his win percentage stands at 54.45. At KKR in 2022, Pat Cummins, then Australia's Test captain, played under him and said publicly: "Wherever Shreyas wants to bowl me, I am happy."

When Punjab paid Rs 26.75 crore at the 2025 auction, Ricky Ponting, who has worked with Iyer across three stints at Delhi Capitals, KKR and Punjab Kings, explained the decision simply: "We wanted the best possible Indian captain. We got our man." On Iyer's swagger at the crease he was equally direct: "He walked out with a certain amount of swagger about him because he's confident. He knows if he does his little things right, then he can't fail." After the IPL 2026 century he described the dressing room effect: "The moment he stands in front of the group and speaks, not a single eyeball leaves a single word he says."

The short-ball vulnerability had followed Iyer for years. He knew it. "People said I would never fix my short-ball problem," he told JioStar during IPL 2026. "That triggered me. I wanted to prove them wrong." When his BCCI central contract was withdrawn, he told his KKR coach Chandrakant Pandit simply: "Sir, I'll prove it." The

“We wanted the best possible Indian captain. We got our man. He walked out with a certain amount of swagger about him because he’s confident. He knows if he does his little things right, then he can’t fail”

RICKY PONTING,
ON WHY PBKS WENT FOR IYER

change he describes is specific: "Earlier, I would just take a single or try to keep the ball down. But now my mindset has changed. If I see a short ball in my zone, I am going to hit it for a six." Behind it were 50 overs and over 300 balls in a single practice session, facing real bowlers to build what he calls clarity of movement.

The day before a match in IPL 2026, Iyer pulled Nehal Wadhwa aside. "Tu khel bindaas, pressure lena mera kaam hai," he told him, you play freely, it's my job to take the pressure. "He enjoys the pressure, that's why you can see it in his batting," Wadhwa told reporters. In IPL 2025, with Punjab chasing history against Mumbai Indians, Shashank Singh was run out attempting a casual single at a critical moment and publicly scolded by his captain. Then Iyer hit an unbeaten 87 to take the team into the final and took Shashank out for dinner. "I deserve it. Shreyas should have slapped me," Shashank told The Indian Express. "But later, he took me out for dinner." Standards held, relationship preserved.

The questions about Iyer are not about character but about context. He will walk in as captain without those foundations, to players who know him by reputation more than by habit. A franchise dressing room is built over months, on shared history and accumulated trust. An international one asks him to start again.

India's number four has been a revolving door since he was last in contention. His instinct for a match situation, when to anchor, when to accelerate, is precisely what that position has been missing. The England tour in July, five T20Is followed by three ODIs, gives him time to build what IPL franchises handed him gradually. When his central contract was withdrawn, he told his coach he would prove it. When the selectors looked elsewhere for two and a half years, he went quiet and fixed what needed fixing. No Indian T20 captain has arrived with a franchise record this extensive, or with this much time spent quietly earning it.



Shreyas Iyer has been knocking on the national T20I squad for the past two years with good performances in the IPL . FILE/EXPRESS

Mission 2028: Selectors shift from reputations to promise

Shankar Narayan
Mumbai, June 6

LESS THAN three months after lifting the T20 World Cup, India have already begun turning the page. The squads announced for the Ireland and England series on Saturday reflected a sweeping reset rather than minor tinkering — a World Cup-winning captain discarded, a 15-year-old fast-tracked into the senior setup and a new leadership group entrusted with taking the team into its next cycle.

The contrast with the squad that lifted the T20 World Cup is striking. Of the 15 players selected for that tournament, only 10 feature in the squad for Ireland and England. Suryakumar Yadav, who captained India to the title, has been dropped entirely. So too have Hardik Pandya, Rinku Singh and Kuldeep Yadav.

In their place come a new captain in Shreyas Iyer, a new vice-captain in Tilak Varma, teen sensation Vaibhav Sooryavanshi and a crop of new names that includes Prince Yadav, Ravi Bishnoi and Nitish Kumar Reddy.

Jasprit Bumrah has not been selected for these tours, but has been picked for the Asian Games in Japan in September. Chairman of selectors Ajit Agarkar admitted that the decision to move on from Surya was not easy.

"It's a tough one, having just won the World Cup... Partly his (Surya's) own form, but also looking at the next two-year cycle or a little bit more than two years now till the next World Cup. We thought this was the best way forward," Agarkar said in the press conference on Saturday.

The decision marks a remarkable turnaround for Surya, who was at the centre of celebrations when India lifted the trophy in March, but now finds himself out of the T20 setup.

While the leadership



Vaibhav Sooryavanshi was picked after a stellar IPL season. REUTERS

change has grabbed the headlines, the promotion of Tilak Varma to vice-captaincy perhaps offers a bigger clue to India's long-term thinking. The left-hander is only 23, but is already a key member of India's white-ball plans. By making him the deputy at such a young age, the selectors have signalled that he will be central to India's plans for the next T20 cycle.

The most eye-catching addition, though, is Sooryavanshi. The 15-year-old became one of the stories of IPL 2026 with his fearless batting and now finds himself in the senior national team. Agarkar suggested the teenager had made selection unavoidable.

"He's almost forced us to pick him with how well he's played. I know his age and how early he is in his career. But we can all see what kind of talent he has," he said.

For Sooryavanshi, the call-up caps a rise that has been almost unprecedented in Indian cricket. The teenager made his first-class debut in January 2024 and will now rub shoulders with international stars. Alongside Sooryavanshi, uncapped pacer Prince Yadav represents another example of domestic and IPL performances being rewarded.

"We saw him (Prince) in the Vijay Hazare Trophy and he looked impressive. He can move the ball, bowls towards the end of the innings. He kind

of fits everything in white-ball cricket," Agarkar said.

If Sooryavanshi's selection points towards the future, Pandya's omission underlines how quickly things can change in T20 cricket. The all-rounder was India's vice-captain when they won the 2024 T20 World Cup and one of the team's most influential players, but now finds himself outside the squad as selectors explore alternative options.

"Hardik is one of our best white-ball players. It gives us also an opportunity to give someone like Nitish Reddy a few opportunities with T20 cricket. So, there will be a little bit of a separation with regards to T20. But the main objective is to see if he (Pandya) can start playing well and stay healthy with 50-over cricket," Agarkar said. There are notable continuities, too. Abhishek Sharma, Sanju Samson, Ishan Kishan, Shivam Dube, Axar Patel, Varun Chakravarty, Arshdeep Singh, Mohammed Siraj and Washington Sundar all remain part of the setup. Yet the overall message from Saturday's selections was unmistakable. India haven't merely replaced one captain with another. They have broadened the player pool, invested in youth and started the process of building towards the next T20 World Cup.

The Surya era is over; the Iyer era has begun.

• Notable omissions



HARDIK PANDYA: Selectors wanted senior all-rounder fit and ready for 2027 ODI World Cup, hence decided to pick Nitish Kumar Reddy instead for T20Is.



RINKU SINGH: Problem of plenty again worked to his detriment. With Vaibhav Sooryavanshi's emergence and a crowded middle-order, finisher lost his spot.



KULDEEP YADAV: Wrist spinner had an indifferent IPL season with 10 wickets and economy rate of 10.29, leading to axe.

SQUADS FOR IRELAND AND ENGLAND SERIES: Shreyas Iyer (C), Abhishek Sharma, Sanju Samson (WK), Ishan Kishan (WK), Shivam Dube, Tilak Varma (VC), Nitish Reddy, Axar Patel, Washington Sundar, Varun CV, Ravi Bishnoi, Mohd. Siraj, Harshit Rana, Arshdeep Singh, Prince Yadav, Vaibhav Sooryavanshi.

SQUAD FOR 2026 ASIAN GAMES: Shreyas Iyer (C), Abhishek Sharma, Sanju Samson (WK), Ishan Kishan (WK), Shivam Dube, Tilak Varma (VC), Nitish Reddy, Axar Patel, Washington Sundar, Varun CV, Ravi Bishnoi, Jasprit Bumrah, Harshit Rana, Arshdeep Singh, Vaibhav Sooryavanshi.

• BRIEFLY



Mirra Andreeva defeated Maja Chwalinska in the final. AP

Mirra Andreeva claims her maiden Grand Slam despite jittery start

MIRRA ANDREEVA became the youngest French Open champion in over three decades on Saturday as she swept aside surprise finalist Maja Chwalinska 6-3 6-2 on a blustery Court Philippe Chatrier, where the Pole seemed frozen by the magnitude of the occasion. The 19-year-old Russian, the youngest Roland Garros women's singles winner since Monica Seles won her third straight title in 1992 aged 18, overcame a jittery start to claim her maiden Grand Slam crown, growing in authority as the match wore on while Chwalinska struggled to settle on the big stage. The world number 114, who will rise to 21st in the world rankings on Monday, had captivated Roland Garros with her tactical intelligence and fearless variety in a nine-match winning run that began in qualifying but the magic deserted her in the final despite the support of Polish fans. REUTERS

India win SAFF women's c'ships, defeat B'desh

INDIA CLINCHED the SAFF Women's Championships football title for the sixth time and first after seven years with a dominant 3-1 win over Bangladesh in the summit clash on Saturday. Pyari Xaxa (42nd), Sanfida Nongrum (46th) and Lynda Kom Serto (82nd) scored the goals for India, while Ritu Porna Chakma (45+2) pulled one back for Bangladesh who were defending the title. The hosts had beaten the same opponents 3-0 in the group stage. After the win, stalwart Grace Dangmei announced her international retirement. PTI

India thrash Japan to clinch U-18 Asia Cup

ASHISH PURTI struck a fine hat-trick as a dominant India defeated hosts Japan 4-1 in the final to lift the men's Under-18 hockey Asia Cup title on Friday. Purti scored in the 2nd, 28th and 34th minutes while captain Ketan Kushwaha (30th) also found the back of the net as India produced a commanding display against the home team. Numada Gaku scored Japan's lone goal of the contest in the 52nd minute. Earlier, India defeated Pakistan in the semis to reach final. Purti was adjudged player of the match. PTI

Iraq's striker questioned for hours in US

IRAQ'S WORLD Cup striker, Aymen Hussein, was held and questioned for nearly seven hours at Chicago's O'Hare airport after arriving with the squad early on Saturday, an Iraqi sporting official said. Hussein was allowed in, but the team's photographer was barred from entering US. REUTERS

1500m national record holder suspended

WOMEN'S 1500M national record holder KM Deeksha, Cricketer Bhupen Lalwani, weightlifter Ajith Narayana, who had won two bronzes in the recent Asian Championships in Gandhinagar, and wrestler Sahil Jaglan, who took part in Asian Games trials a few days ago, were among several athletes handed provisional suspension by the NADA for failing dope tests on Saturday. One of the few cricketers to have been caught for doping, Lalwani has represented Mumbai and Chhattisgarh in domestic cricket. PTI

Minakshi leads India boxing squad at WC

WORLD NO. 1 Minakshi and seasoned campaigner Deepak will spearhead India's challenge at the World Boxing Cup 2026 (Stage 2), scheduled to take place in Guiyang, China, from June 15 to 21. This is a second-string Indian team comprising boxers who finished as runners-up in the recently concluded Commonwealth Games and Asian Games trials. India currently stands third globally in terms of overall top 10 ranked athletes, including a second-place position in the women's category and fourth in the men's. PTI

Antonelli takes pole position at Monaco GP

KIMI ANTONELLI mastered one of Formula 1's most intense challenges to take pole position for Formula 1's Monaco Grand Prix and bolster his credentials as the title favorite. Antonelli saved his best for last to beat Max Verstappen by just 0.043 of a second to extend Mercedes' streak. AP

• STUNNING COMEBACK

The night Praggnanandhaa won Norway Chess on Carlsen's home turf

Amit Kamath
Oslo, June 6

THE SILENCE of Oslo's Deichman Bjørvika, the biggest public library in Norway, was shattered late on Friday evening by spontaneous applause that rang out from the fourth floor and reverberated till the ground floor. For the past two weeks, the Deichman has been even quieter than you would expect a library to be. It's hosting the Norway Chess tournament after all and silence is non-negotiable. So much so, that at various times, volunteers have had to rush to the children's playing area in the library to request parents to quieten their boisterous kids.

Late on Friday evening, no one was bothering to hush anyone. R Praggnanandhaa, newly minted Norway Chess cham-

pion, had just walked into one of the three broadcast studios and the 50 or so people who were waiting for him to autograph their chess boards broke into a well-deserved applause. The Indian grandmaster had won one of the strongest invitational tournaments on the calendar after a remarkable run in the second half of the 10-round tournament. He won his final four games on the trot, clawing back after being last in the standings. In 14 editions of Norway Chess, Praggnanandhaa became the first Indian to win the event on Magnus Carlsen's home turf.

Even an hour after the win, fans refused to leave without an autograph or a selfie. Chessboards held aloft, kids well past their bedtimes stood patiently for the 20-year-old to sign them. Their parents were on their toes too, cellphone cameras ready to

snap away as soon as Pragg posed with their children.

In his media commitments after the win, Praggnanandhaa mentioned more than once that he was ravenously hungry and had not spoken to his family since his phone had been left behind in his hotel room. But despite those twin urges, to talk to his family and to grab a bite, he patiently obliged everyone who had hung back for him.

Asked about being a role model at 20, he had said: "I don't think too much about it. I just do what I do, which is play chess. But wherever there is a kid coming to me to get an autograph, I try to do my best. When I started, this is how it was, you look up to someone and start playing the game."

At some stage in the night, officials announced over the PA



R Praggnanandhaa was mobbed by fans after his win. NORWAY CHESS

system that the library was officially shut. But the crowd wouldn't relent. The boards for Praggnanandhaa to sign kept coming at him. He occasionally paused only to look at someone's cellphone for a photo. Over

the years, he's perfected the art of signing a chessboard in the blink of an eye. But even at that pace, he was struggling to make a dent into the wave after wave of requests that kept coming.

For the past two weeks, a

Even an hour after the win, fans refused to leave without an autograph or a selfie. Chessboards held aloft, kids well past their bedtimes stood patiently for him to sign them.

steady stream of Indian-origin kids and their parents have made their way to Deichman Bjørvika for similar pursuits. They cornered Praggnanandhaa and the other Indian players with autograph requests as they walked the 50-metre-long zebra crossing that separates the playing hall from their hotel. They've beseeched players for selfies at the entrance of the Deichman.

Some have handed them hand-made greeting cards.

The other Indian players, world champion D Gukesh, Koneru Humpy and Divya Deshmukh, all three of whom had finished at the bottom of the standings in their sections, had long retreated to their hotel rooms when Pragg was making his way through the crowd.

When Praggnanandhaa decided to leave as well, there was a cavalcade of his fans riding with him down two floors on the narrow escalators, shouting congratulations in more than one language. Some kids made futile attempts to ride escalators going the other way just to catch up. Between acknowledging the wishes while going down the escalator, Praggnanandhaa had his mind on chess, not the adulation. He talked shop with his second Vaibhav Suri. His mind

was on the bishop a3 that he had allowed from his opponent Keymer.

Both times he got off the escalator, he was stopped again by fans with more requests. Finally, when he got out to the pavement and waited for the signal to turn green, he was surrounded by fans again, many of whom spilled over onto the busy street as they clamoured for one final piece of him.

A kid who had been in lockstep with Pragg from the time he left the broadcast studios stepped up at the signal. He wanted to know about the best opening reply to an opponent's e4. "e5 is the best," said Pragg with a warm smile. He might have grown into his position as a role model, but he is still most comfortable talking chess.

(The writer is in Oslo at the invitation of Norway Chess)



Memory as a companion

Inspired by Partition survivors, Imtiaz Ali’s *Main Vaapas Aaunga* is a tribute to a generation that carried stories of home and loss

With a pinch of salt and a sip of tequila



Suanshu Khurana

IN PRESENT-DAY Varanasi, where the overlapping strains of temple bells, the *azaan* and folk and classical traditions are increasingly filtered through hardened ideas of identity and belonging, a not-so-distant memory of shehnai maestro Ustad Bismillah Khan in a musical dialogue with a young BHU professor and violinist N Rajam almost 40 years ago, still evokes the cultural memory of a city somewhat receding from us. A city untouched by modern politics and held together by diverse cultural and musical traditions; the famed Ganga-Jamuni *tehzeeb* that once imbued into music, language and the fabric of daily life.

The texture of that time is captured in a grainy video recording from the '80s available on YouTube, where one sees Rajam play Maithili poet Vidyapati's *Piya mora baalak* (My beloved is a mere boy), on the banks of the Ganga. It is the anguish of a young bride mourning her wedding to a child with no scope of companionship and no place for desire played in Pliu, a fluid raga with longing at the heart of it.

For Rajam, born and raised in a Tamil-speaking family in Chennai, this was her ode to the writing and composition of the 15th-century poet/composer still revered in the Purvanchali belt. Khan and tabla giant Pt Kishan Maharaj, sitting on either side of her, listened in sheer delight as Rajam, bent over her violin, took a deep dive into the popular folk piece. But her violin did more than just render a beloved melody. It echoed the quintessential Banarasi *lehja*, the unhurried grace of its cadence, in turn becoming inseparable from the city she had come to call home then. Khan is heard saying '*wah*' at regular intervals. He joins her with his shehnai, extending the melodic thread. Khan had heard her play a solo at the university and was struck by the evocative nature of the young violinist's music. That is when he decided to collaborate with her.

"Though he was from a generation above me, Khan *saab* probably saw that what I was trying to do with the violin was in some ways similar to what he had already done with the shehnai. He had been playing khayal on the shehnai for years by then," says Rajam, about the wind instrument that was associated with weddings, temples and folk music until Khan put it on the proscenium. "Playing with him, where he would just close his eyes listen, will remain memorable for me," says 88-year-old Rajam.

Khan's version of Banaras was always at the centre of his affections. He considered it responsible for his music. In Rajam's playing, he, perhaps, heard his Banaras, which surfaced in the tenderness of every glide, pause and the delicate tonal shifts. This violin could sing. And Rajam's brilliance lay in transforming the sound of the violin by adapting the technique of a European instrument, which she learned through the grammar of Carnatic music, to the demands of Hindustani vocal music. The result was a complete reimagination of the violin with a *gayaki ang* (the vocal style), which hadn't been heard on the instrument before. Because no violinist had done this before her. Rajam's effortlessness only revealed just how much labour lay beneath the process.

In Rajam's hands, for over seven decades now, the violin has never sounded external to the Hindustani tradition. From complex classical ragas to thumris and kajris, she has absorbed them all into the medium. "Although the violin has been in practice in the south for about 300 years with a highly sophisticated technique, that technique was not sufficient for reproducing Hindustani vocal music on the instrument. I had to work very hard and do a lot of research. Even for a short phrase, I would struggle for months to get it right. The music was not just a reproduction of the existing ocean of Hindustani music; it needed to have life," says Rajam in a conversation with *The Indian Express* a day after her lifelong reimagination of the violin won her a Padma Vibhushan, the second highest civilian honour, last month. She was awarded the Padma Shri in 1984 and a Padma Bhushan in 2004. "This award is a culmination of my life's work," says Rajam.

In the '80s, eminent musicologist and critic Mohan Nadkarni wrote of her, "As a soloist, she has come to be acclaimed as the first virtuoso to succeed in adapting *khayal gayaki* on the violin... What adds to her distinction is that she has contributed significantly to the field of musicological history and research".

AS WE walk into Rajam's Hiranandani Complex apartment in Thane, away from Mumbai's usual rush and restlessness a few months before her Delhi visit, she hurries into the kitchen, her South cotton sari *pallu* tucked at her waist. From the living room, Rajam can be seen bent over a small aluminium *kadhai*, frying crisp bhajias as they crackle in hot oil, while moving quickly between the stove and the counter to prepare cups of freshly brewed filter coffee. She refuses all help and soon brings out the food and coffee herself. "You've come to my home for the first time," says Rajam, checking mid-interview if our coffee is "good enough".

Be it a cup of filter coffee or a phrase of music, Rajam's instinct has always been to refine further. It also comes from developing a discipline in learning music under the tutelage of her taskmaster father and violinist



WHEN HER VIOLIN SINGS

Violin virtuoso N Rajam, 88, who was awarded the Padma Vibhushan last month, on reimaging the Carnatic violin in the Hindustani vocal tradition for seven decades, her artistic kinship with Ustad Bismillah Khan and a lifelong bond with Banaras



N Rajam's brilliance lay in adapting the technique of a European instrument, learned through the grammar of Carnatic music to the demands of Hindustani vocal music

STRING THEORY (Clockwise from top) N Rajam; with granddaughters Nandini and Ragini; with Ustad Bismillah Khan; with Kathak exponent Sitara Devi; being awarded the Padma Vibhushan from President Droupadi Murmu

Vidwan A Narayana Iyer since she was three. "He was a teacher par excellence. He knew how to get young children to learn. He taught a distinctive bowing and fingering technique to mimic the emotive pull of vocal classical music in the Carnatic system," says Rajam, who was taught the same technique as her older brother and prominent violinist TM Krishnan.

"He was extremely strict and would not let my friends come home; there was no question of watching movies, no film songs on the radio. *Prashn hi nahi tha bahar khelne ka* (There was no question of playing outside)," says Rajam in remarkably Sanskritised Hindi, shaped by living in Banaras for decades and a degree in Sanskrit. "My mother would argue with him and ask him to stop torturing the children. There was no exposure to the outside world. I only knew how to play the violin," says Rajam, who auditioned for radio when she was nine and



began playing professionally soon after.

When musicians visited Rajam's home in Chennai, the children were expected to perform for them. Among those who visited was MS Subbulakshmi, who was struck by what she heard from the young Rajam. In 1951,

Rajam was just 13 when she accompanied Subbulakshmi on a tour of Delhi and cities around, carefully following the Carnatic great's vocal contours while holding her own. "It felt like touring with my mother. She was very loving," says Rajam.

At 14, Rajam finished school ahead of schedule, having skipped a class due to her academic abilities. She was a year short of eligibility to join college and appear for intermediate examinations. Banaras Hindu University (BHU), at the time, allowed women students to study privately and appear for the examination. Determined that she continue her education and not sit idle, her father decided that she take up the option of Banaras, a decision that would shape the rest of her life. "My father also admired Hindustani music, especially due to his kinship with Pt Vishnu Digambar Paluskar. So he was quite excited that I was going to learn it," says Rajam.

When Rajam visited Banaras, she carried her violin and a letter of introduction from renowned violinist Parur Sundaram Iyer for Hindustani vocalist and Gwalior gharana giant Pt Omkarnath Thakur, also the first dean of the music faculty at BHU. She played Thakur's recording from one of his 78RPMs for him, one that she had heard and could not forget, the nuanced vocalisations staying with her. "When I played his piece to him, he was very impressed," says Rajam. It was mainly because Rajam was not playing the usual *gatkari* style of violin modelled on sitar and sarod, in which a musician emphasises on the characteristics of the raga's fixed composition. She was playing the way Thakur was singing, with the nuances of vocal music intact in her violin's luscious tone. Fascinated, Thakur decided to teach her. What emerged here was a style of playing that broke new ground. In about three to four years, Rajam began to play in national programmes. She even accompanied Thakur in his Hindustani programmes, a unique privilege as only sarangi and harmonium players usually accompanied serious khayal artistes. "He was a loving fatherly figure but there were times when I would be a little scared of him. He would say, '*Kyun? Main koi sher hoon?*' (Why? Am I a lion?). Then we would laugh," says Rajam.

By this time, Rajam's family had moved to Mumbai. She mainly travelled to Banaras to either learn or for her examinations. While at home, she would either practice or teach other girls in the neighbourhood to help her family's financial situation. "I liked performing too. But I really enjoyed teaching. I still do. I feel like one among these kids," says Rajam. Around the time she finished her graduation, a violin teacher's position opened up at BHU. Two years later, she joined as a lecturer at the age of 21 in 1959 and spent the next 40 years teaching at the university's music department and in the city she still recalls with fondness. She finished her Master's in Sanskrit followed by a PhD with her thesis centred on a comparative study of Hindustani classical and Carnatic music.

As is the case with most innovations, Rajam's playing also found criticism and was not embraced by everyone. In fact some critics and purists argued that her style was more of an intrusion of Carnatic ideas into a Hindustani idiom which had its own vocabulary and aesthetics. But if one looks plainly, it seems to be about a deeper unease of north and south Indian traditions seen as different entities.

"It was a very *suljha huya* technique that most people were easily drawn to it. Some did oppose and criticise but I think somewhere in their hearts, even they knew. I never bothered me, though. I was just too immersed and too sure of my art. I knew what I was doing; no one else was," says Rajam, who married TS Subramaniam, grandson of Indian activist FG Natesa Iyer, one of the pioneers of Tamil drama and cinema.

Rajam retired from BHU in 1999 but by then she had already trained her daughter Sangeetha and granddaughters Nandini and Ragini, who often play together. Both brought out an 11-track original album titled *Taraana* (Universal Music), which was produced by Grammy-nominated Nick Patrick and where the two went on to blend Hindustani music with contemporary orchestrations.

"I am not a doting grandmother when I teach. Daily practice was a must and I have been quite strict with them," says Rajam, who, along with her daughter Sangeetha, has also established a *gurukul* on the outskirts of Tamil Nadu. She feels institutional training still is unable to produce great artistes.

"When Bismillah Khan *saab* had heard me, he said that if I was a product of the university, '*phir toh man gaye*'. I later told him that I learned under my father and then under Pt Omkarnath Thakur. The *gurukul* system is what can bring out the best in a musician through focussed understanding of an art form. This *gurukul* is how I want to give back, where kids can come and learn for free," says Rajam, who also teaches online and few other students. She, however, is still unaware of AI, algorithms and the concept of machine learning.

Her schedule for the next few months is choc-a-bloc with concerts. At 88, Rajam shows little sign of slowing down. She says there is much to discover still and draw from. "One has learned just about a fistful," says Rajam. As for the city of Varanasi — the thread that runs in her life, in her music as well as this conversation — it may have changed in more ways than one today. But once upon a time, a chance encounter with its musical traditions, its porousness, its sense of freedom within inherited divisions, is what changed Rajam's destiny. And in time, that of the violin.



DOWN IN JUNGLELAND

BY RANJIT LAL

AUTHOR, ENVIRONMENTALIST
AND BIRDWATCHER



THE INVINCIBLE
A bush cockroach

The Secret Life of Cockroaches

Cockroaches will consume just about anything – book binding, skin flakes, cellulose and, occasionally, even sips of beer

WHEN I first spotted them, snuggled together on the wall romantically, making no attempt to scuttle away as cockroaches are wont to, I was surprised. Like a time-honoured voyeur, I moved in for a closer look and immediately wished I hadn't. The larger partner, was eating the smaller one alive. As if to prove its point, it wrrenched off the head of its victim and dragged the rest of it away. Oh well, I thought, cockroaches and cockroach heads can live for several hours and weeks, decapitated, or so I had read. Also, they can withstand nuclear radiation 15 times as much as we can, run at an equivalent of 200 mph, withstand pressures up to 900 times their body weight and squeeze their bodies into infinitesimal cracks. They can live without food for a month, without air for 45 minutes and without water for three days. They have also been accused of snacking on soft earwax, nibbling at the eyelashes of sleeping children and investigating toenails for tasty what — toe jam?

They are scavengers largely and will eat just about anything — book binding, leftovers, skin flakes, cellulose and love to indulge themselves with sips of beer. They will leave a characteristic unpleasant, unhealthy odour behind, which can cause children to get asthmatic attacks. Some, however, have more refined taste.

Recovering from surgery years ago in a government hospital in Mumbai, I was in the ICU, the left side of my chest raw and stitched up in three places. A tube poking out of my side voiding some disgusting fluid — not a prepossessing prospect. Ah, but then there was lunch to look forward to: a ward boy turned up with a *thali* laden with rice, dal, vegetables, papad and dahi. And also, carefully circling the rim of the *thali* a gigantic mahogany coloured cockroach, its feelers waving as if it were a Michelin-starred chef taking in whiffs of exotic spices. I pointed it out, and the ward boy casually flicked it off with a finger, and said, “*Khao* (eat).” On the floor, the roach probably made for the unemptied sloshing bedpan lying under the bed for a refreshing pint.

Thankfully, of the over 4,500 species of cockroaches in the world, only 30 deign to timeshare with us. Of these, the big four are the American cockroach, obviously XXL on its diet of discarded hamburgers, cheeseburgers and hot dogs; the German cockroach (small scuttler); the Australian and the Asian, not surprisingly considered the dirtiest. And given good baby-care facilities, a pair can produce 2 to 3 million babies every two years, not to mention have babies in space. Some lay eggs and some give birth to live young.

Their tough shiny exoskeletons are wax covered and they are built like tanks. Swat a roach and it might flip upside down and wave its legs around weakly — ah you think, job done. Not quite, hours later, it's still alive and when you flip it over again, it will, with as much dignity as possible, move away to a safer location. Needless to say they are mostly impervious to pesticides.

Most household roaches live in the bathroom or kitchen, scouting around at night, and will flee when the lights are switched on. But some *dadas* may fly in from the dark and scare the bejesus out of you as they thump down in the pool of light cast by your reading lamp.

All this seems to build up our case for their total extermination, no matter how. But most species live on forest floors and many are quite beautiful. Even the household roach is a handsome dude, with its lacquer-like mahogany finish. More than that, however, they perform a vital function in the forest. Being scavengers, they eat the dead and decaying and in doing so, free the nitrogen trapped in those bodies via their poop. This liberated poop nitrogen is vital for the health and well-being of plants, trees and the entire forest that would die without it.

Though they do not bite or sting, most people are either horrified by or petrified of roaches. But they have their aficionados also — in Japan, there's a zoo where 'cockroach petting sessions' are held twice a week, and cockroach races have been organised in many countries around the world. The Chinese, of course, believe they have medicinal qualities and in Thailand, they are considered a protein-rich snack when sautéed, deep fried, broiled or boiled: crisp on the outside, succulent on the inside. You can also enjoy a cup of cockroach tea.

Other creatures too, like lizards, snap them up and there's a particularly unpleasant wasp that will anaesthetise a roach, drag it to its lair and lay an egg on it. Its larvae will then have a 24-hour supply of fresh cockroach meat to thrive on.

Long ago, as an idiot schoolboy, I once kept cockroaches in my pocket and would palm them off to girls in order to gross them out and show how 'macho' I was. Of course, it did, but frankly, that's not the best way to get girlfriends. Another time, when the kitchen was suddenly overwhelmed with a teeming influx of cockroach babies, I made myself a cup of coffee... There were tiny brown things on the rim of the mug, which I took to being coffee powder. 'Not so,' my niece said gleefully, 'those are cockroach babies. You just had a coffee cockroachie.' I've had to stop having coffee (for other reasons) but am very careful when I sprinkle cocoa powder over my vanilla ice-cream or make crumbly chocolate brownies.



LIFE INK
(Clockwise from left) Sketches from *The Life of Mario 1949*; *Mario Mascot*

A Nation built on Pen & Paper

EP Unny

THE MARIO Miranda we celebrate on his birth centenary remains the most recognisable stylist among Indian cartoonists. He could have readily abandoned his birthright as a cartoonist, the right to sign his art work. His drawing stands out in any scale anywhere — as public art to single column print, on pub walls to the coffee mug.

When you revisit this comic artist today, should you admire in silence his characteristic body of work and move on or pause to ask a question or two? Mario himself preferred conversation over silence, so here we go. Are there chinks in the stylised armour? Did this trademark drawing style just materialise like the Big Bang? Overnight out of nowhere? It obviously didn't. There is a pre-story and you will find it in the diaries the cartoonist kept. Three of them — from the years 1949, 1950 and 1951 — have been published.

The 1949 diary is special. According to his friend, chronicler and curator Gerard da Cunha, that was when the compulsive doodler entered a keen phase of honing “his cartoonist skills with his low key, gentle humour.”

You find here the early signs of the Mario mark his fans' love. He turns 23 that year. He is living in what he calls a cubicle in Holland House in Colaba. He came to Bombay to join JJ School of Arts, where he spent one day and switched to St. Xavier's college to study English literature. He was relatively new to English, which he began learning as a school-goer in Bengaluru. The language helped when he eventually found work in English publications where he had to write pithy cartoon captions. A memorable one-liner is from the boss in his business cartoon, “I don't want to make money. I want to make more money.” And it was sheer fun to watch the cartoonist step out of English and back to present an array of characters with names as strangely Indianised as Rajani Nimbupani, Bundaldass and Moonswamy.

Mario grew up in pre-liberation Goa, speaking Portuguese and Konkani. Back in 1949, he wrote his diary in Portuguese. A surprise in its abundantly illustrated pages is the absence of the strikingly visual Bombay; no sign of the grand, detailed cityscapes he went on to master. Not unusual for the city dweller who finds little time to stand back and stare. You see only interiors, tight frames as in our early parallel cinema, where Mario is hanging out with friends in restaurants, cafes, ice cream parlours and cinema foyers, the last most frequented, often for two shows in a day.

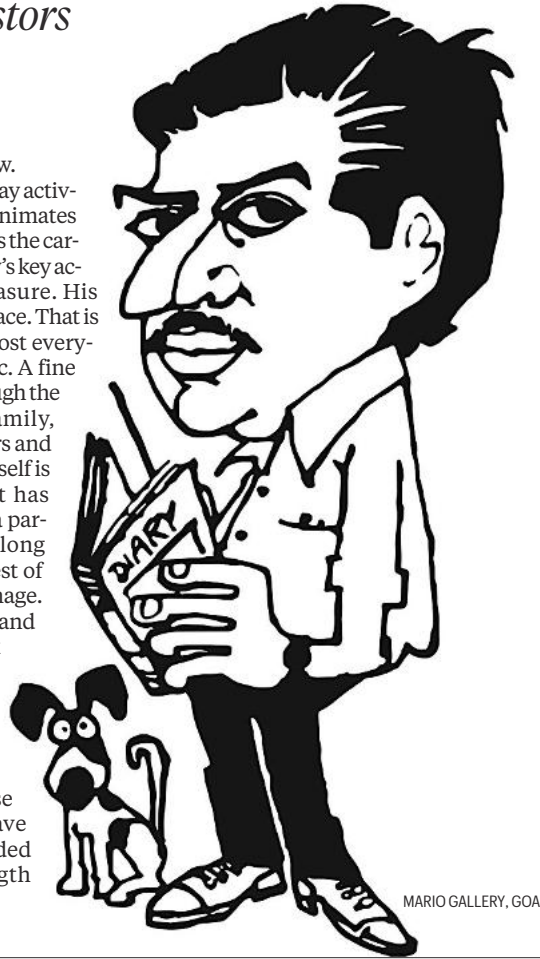
Mario's day begins early with mass at the church and ends, closer to exams, at the study table with piles of text books waiting to be mugged up. All through, the young man is seldom alone. Not even during study time. On the cluttered desk, you can't miss his bleary-eyed cat staying up to keep him company. More cats, dogs and a bulbul show up when he is back in Goa, which is as often as he can. That is when his sketch pen flies. Animals and birds go on to become a vital presence in his oeuvre that stretches occasionally to accommodate the accidental drop of ink that is

ANIMALS AND BIRDS GO ON TO BECOME A VITAL PRESENCE IN HIS OEUVRÉ THAT EXPANDS TO INCLUDE THE ACCIDENTAL DROP OF INK THAT IS QUICKLY CONVERTED INTO A CROW

quickly converted into a crow.

Mario notes down everyday activities like any diarist. What animates the mundane, minimal text is the cartoonish illustration of the day's key activity, drawn for sheer pleasure. His comic cornea is already in place. That is how he sees the world. Almost everything he depicts turns comic. A fine thread of mockery runs through the pages needling friends, family, neighbours, teachers, pastors and pundits. The chronicler himself is no less a target. The artist has started drawing himself as a participant — big nose, extra-long stride, as awkward as the rest of his friends on extended teenage. Under no pressure to ideate and think up clever prose, cook up a plot or structure the narration, Mario's pages turn with ease and before you know it, you are done with the book.

It is then that you realise that what you have encountered is an unintended surprise — a book-length graphic memoir.



MARIO GALLERY, GOA

The baker, the priest and other stories

It was not about the landmarks but a bustling world of familiar neighbourhood faces

Anusree KC

DRESSED IN his long checkered T-shirt and Bermuda shorts, the *poder* (baker) cycles through the narrow lanes of the small town. He begins his journey early in the morning, a little after the crack of dawn — before the rush of the day begins — carrying freshly baked pao in the blue tarp-covered carrier on the back of his bicycle. He presses the familiar horn attached to the steel handle of his old-school bicycle. And stops at a doorstep even before the bicycle comes to a halt. He props it on its stand and honks twice, to announce his arrival. But it's not just his arrival, it is the arrival of a new day.

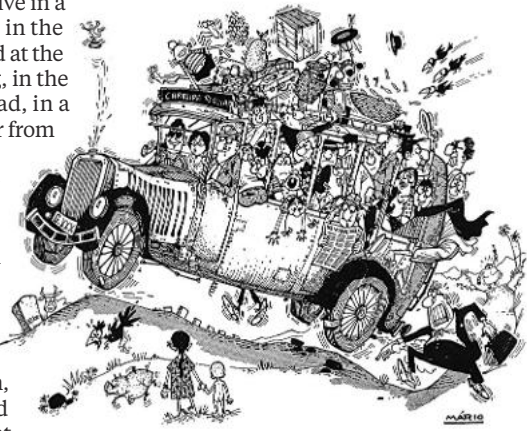
Goa has always had its own way of waking up. Slowly, taking its own sweet time. Before all the hustle begins in the city, the villages and the smaller towns are a place where the morning does not arrive in a rush. It arrives in fragments — in the splash of a bucket being emptied at the gate after the morning cleaning, in the smell of the freshly baked bread, in a neighbour calling out to another from behind a half-open window.

That is the Goa Mario Miranda knew and drew.

Born in Loutolim in 1926, Mario did not turn Goan life into postcard scenery. He turned it into a crowd. The frames of his sketches filled with *poders*, fisherwomen, tavern regulars, market women, priests, porters, children and gossiping neighbours, all caught



PHOTOS: MARIO GALLERY, GOA



THE INSIDE EYE
Procession by Mario Miranda; (left) Village Bus

in a state of motion. He had an eye for the kind of details that most people overlooked — the tilt of a head, the roundness of a belly, the careful way a woman balances a basket on her head, the tired swagger of a man with a drink in hand. Nobody stands still for long in his world. Everyone is doing something.

In Mario's drawing, Goa is more than just a destination. The humour in his lines comes from familiarity. These are not invented figures but people one has seen in the market in Margao, on a village road in Saligao, at the counter of an old tavern in Panaji or outside a chapel after the Sunday Mass.

The *poder* is one of those recurring

presences in the Goan life. He is not glamorous. The blue tarp covering the bread carrier flaps lightly in the wind and the lanes seem to recognise his passage.

Mario's drawings bring to life the authority the fisherwoman holds. She walks door to door, in her satin dress, carrying a bamboo basket on her head, hawking out, “*Bai, nuste zai go?* (Lady, do you want fish?).” She is efficient. She struts unhurriedly, in the way only people who know their worth can. And a fisherwoman never forgets her customer. Fish in Goa is about livelihood, bargaining, taste, smell, argument and memory.

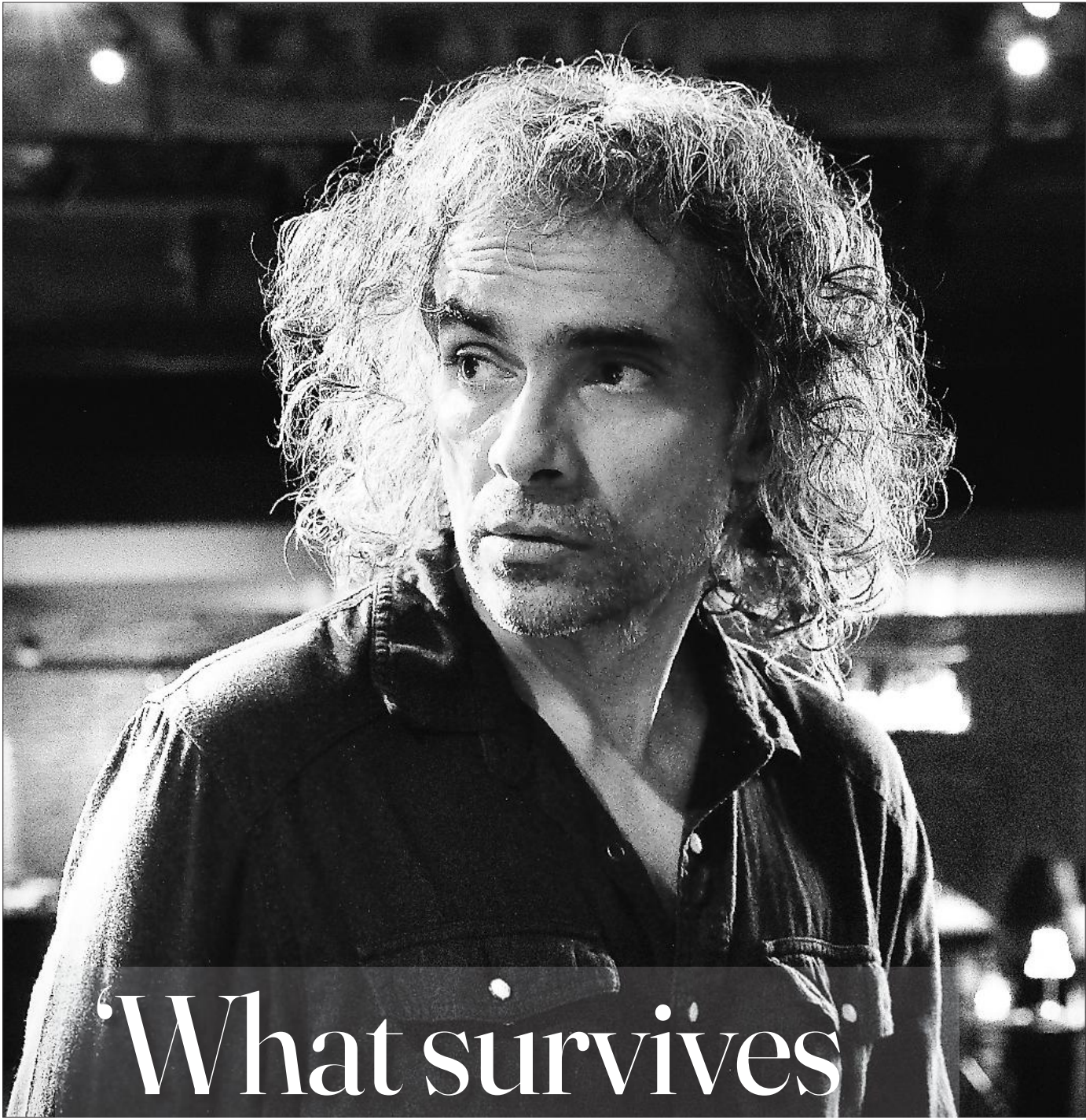
This is what makes Mario's Goa feel intimate. He did not separate women from the scene or tuck them into the edges. They occupied the frame fully, with the same assurance as men. His market women stand with their hands on their hips, their mouths mid-sentence, their bodies turned towards the business of living. The tavern men are equally vivid, their faces round with time, drink and their expression full of opinion. Nobody is idealised. Nobody is reduced. Everyone is observed with affection and a clear eye.

Goa has often been described from the outside through its beaches, churches and old Portuguese houses but the real texture of a place can be found in its people. That is why the way Mario looked at Goa mattered. His frames were often full and brimming — a reminder that Goan life is full of noise, neighbours, rituals, small economies, habit and improvisation. That is why his work endures. For those who grew up in Goa, his art often feels less like illustration and more recognition. A person can look at a Mario sketch and find a cousin, an aunt, a man who always sits on the same bar stool and a fisherwoman who knows every household on her route. His art does not merely resemble the people of Goa. It remembers them.

Inspired by conversations with Partition survivors, Imtiaz Ali's *Main Vaapas Aaunga* is a tribute to a generation that carried memories of home, loss and love over decades

Alaka Sahani

AN ELDERLY Partition survivor once shared with filmmaker Imtiaz Ali his memory of a girl who frequented his father's shop and how much he admired her. After almost seven decades, he still remembers her fondly. Another Partition survivor, recalls the writer-filmmaker, once wrote about a man who used to cross their street at a certain time and how she would wait on her balcony to catch a glimpse of him. "There is something precious in the feelings of love that you carry in your heart all your life. This kind of warmth and memory is your constant



What survives TRAGEDY is often LOVE'

companion that gives you refuge, shelter and joy all your life," says Ali. His new film, *Main Vaapas Aaunga*, he adds, is based on such stories.

It was during his visits to Punjab while filming *Amar Singh Chamkila* (2024) and other films before it, that Ali had met several survivors of the Partition who, even after 78 years, held on to memories of their life before the divide. In spite of the tragedy and the strife, it was the pleasant memories of that period that they still recalled — their friends, old homes, pieces of furniture, playthings and the people they had loved. "Sometimes the elderly struggled with memory issues, they forgot the names of their own children but they didn't forget the infatuations from their early days," he says.

Love has been a leitmotif in all of Ali's films, from his debut feature *Socha Na Tha* (2005) to *Jab We Met* (2007), *Love Aaj Kal* (2009) and *Tamasha* (2015). It has contributed in cementing his reputation as a storyteller who presents a fascinating look at contemporary romance as well as its inherent conflicts. Yet, he often packs in something more than just romance — the journey of self-discovery that the lead characters go through in (*Jab We Met*) or love beyond social constructs (*Rockstar*, 2011).

"Through *Main Vaapas Aaunga*, I wanted to convey the feelings of the generation that is passing away. In fact, I was in a rush to make this film so that some of them



could watch it, so that we can communicate to them that we feel you and we are trying to understand what it would have been for you to have lived this whole life carrying the tenderness of your early romances," says Ali who grew up in Patna and Jamshedpur before moving to Delhi to study at Hindu College.

Main Vaapas Aaunga, that hits theatres on June 12, reunites Ali with singer-actor Diljit Dosanjh after the much-acclaimed *Amar Singh Chamkila* and marks the director's first collaboration with actor Naseer-

JOURNEY TO THE SELF
(Clockwise from top) Imtiaz Ali; stills from *Jab We Met*; *Main Vaapas Aaunga*; *Amar Singh Chamkila*

uddin Shah. After essaying the character of controversial Punjabi folk singer Chamkila on screen, Dosanjh now plays Nirvair, grandson of Shah's character, who is suffering from Alzheimer's and wishes to visit his hometown across the border. "It's a fascinating experience to work with the same actor in such different roles. Every time I look at the edit and watch Diljit's performance, I realise what a pure actor he is," says Ali. For him, bringing together Shah and Dosanjh was a major experiment. "While Naseer is one of the most trained and accomplished actors of India, Diljit is one of the most instinctive actors. Their scenes, perhaps the highlights of the movie, worked because both of them have respect for each other. Naseer had liked Chamkila's biopic, which is why he was keen to work with Diljit and me," says Ali.

Shah plays a dementia patient in the

play, *The Father* (written by French playwright Florian Zeller), but Ali says after casting him, he consciously avoided seeing it because he did not want it to influence his directorial process.

The fresh pairing of actors Vedang Raina and Sharvari has already created a buzz. Since Shah's character of a Partition survivor is 95 in the movie, he would be around 18 at the time of Partition. When the film time travels to that period, Raina plays Shah's younger self and Sharvari appears as his love interest Jiya. "What I really admired about Vedang is that he does not pretend-act. He is always real for the moment. Shravari has natural spunk and grace which were crucial for the character of Jiya." Raina, who debuted in Zoya Akhtar's *The Archies* (2023), was cast alongside Alia Bhatt in *Jigra* (2024) while Sharvari after making her acting debut in *Bunty Aur*

Babli 2 (2021) has acted in *Munjya* (2024).

Ali encouraged both the actors to feel, discover moments organically, rather than go by what was written. Sharvari recalls, "He taught me to trust emotional truth and surrender fully to the character's inner world. With my character in *Main Vaapas Aaunga*, what I found beautiful was that even though she belongs to another era, her emotions feel incredibly contemporary and relatable. Imtiaz sir never approached her as just a period character. For him, she was a person first, with desires, fears, tenderness and strength."

Raina, who has always found Ali's movies to be personal and emotionally honest, shares that the director never forces a performance. "He observes people and silences so beautifully that sometimes the most important direction from him would come in just one simple sentence. He asked me not to 'play the period' but to play the person. He said emotions never change with time and that love, longing, rebellion and heartbreak all remain the same. It's just the world around the character that changes. That really helped me simplify my approach," shares Raina.

During his career spanning two decades, Ali has built a cinematic repertoire that is known as much for their emotional richness as for exquisite music. He has once again teamed up with lyricist Irshad Kamil and composer AR Rahman for his latest. "Irshad and I go a long way and we have *betakallufi* (informality) with each other. He does not mind saying something to me,



which he knows I won't like and vice versa. Because I am so informal with him, I keep telling him 'Achha hai Irshad but it's not of Sahir Ludhianvi level (It's good but doesn't match the level of Sahir Ludhianvi)' or, 'Achha hai but Ghalib likhte kya isko (It's good but would Ghalib have written this)'. I say this just to harass him and egg him on."

Usually, Ali has conversations about a proposed film separately with Rahman and Irshad during the initial days of its production. "We approach music through different ways. It's only after talking to both of them separately for a while that the three of us sit and start working together. With Rahman, the best thing is there is no procedure. It can start anywhere and can go anywhere," says the director.

Though Sriram Raghavan's *Ikkis*, another cross-border tale told across a dual timeline that released in January, was not a commercial success, Ali believes statistics can't predict a film's fate at the box-office. "People during the late 80s believed that action was working and love stories were not. Then released *Maine Pyar Kiya* (1989), and everybody and their uncles watched it 20 times. Rules are made for the convenience of some people who try to find some calculation retrospectively on the success and failures of films. The success or failure of one particular film is not a checkbox or a refusal to its whole category of films," says Ali. "Filmmaking is not a product of marketing. Filmmaking is a product of art."

All in the Family

As a new season of *Gullak* releases, its actors discuss the show's evolution, their on-set vibe and why the characters' everyday struggles resonate with viewers

Alaka Sahani

FOR OVER five seasons now, the audience of the series *Gullak* has been privy to the Mishra family celebrating the small joys of life as well as navigating disagreements and disappointments. With its new season dropping on SonyLIV on Friday, Jameel Khan, who plays Santosh, the head of the Mishra family, ruminates on the journey. "When we look back, we look so different from Season 1. Emotionally, there is more maturity and sensitivity towards family values." The relationship between the parents, Shanti and Santosh, has deepened, while the dynamic between them and their sons, Anand and Aman, has evolved. "As human beings we change. The characters are more mature now," says Geetanjali Kulkarni, who plays the role of Shanti.

This evolution, however, extends beyond the fictional family to the actors themselves. Harsh Mayar, who plays Aman, has grown up on the show, which premiered in June 2019. "In the first Season, I was playing a 15-year-old even though I was 22. I had to work on my voice and body language to match my char-

acter's age," he shares. What has helped him deliver a convincing portrayal of Aman as he goes through teenage troubles and discovers what he wants to pursue in life is the close-knit environment of the set and bond he shares with his co-actors. "As actors, we are given a lot of space. We keep improvising," Khan says, "When I look at old reels and footage, the growth of Harsh is heartening."

There is a noticeable change in this season as the character of Anand Mishra aka Annu, which was previously essayed by Vaibhav Raj Gupta, is now being played by Anant Joshi. Even though Joshi is a new addition to the ensemble, he has been quite familiar with the world of *Gullak*. "I used to watch the show and always admired it. To now play a much-loved character in it is quite surreal," says Joshi, who has acted in films such as *Kathal* (2023) and *12th Fail* (2023).

Since he had worked with Mayar and Kulkarni previously, the rapport with them also helped him in stepping in to play this well-established character. Mayar calls Joshi's decision to play Annu courageous. "It is not easy to fill someone else's shoes," says Mayar, who played the lead in *I Am Kalam* (2011). Kulkarni adds that bonding with Joshi came



naturally, while Khan found it fascinating to respond to the energy the actor brought to the role.

The much-loved character of Bittu Ki Mummy — a nosy and noisy neighbour — played by Sunita Rajwar (of *Santosh* and *Panchayat* fame) has become a part of this household over the seasons. Describing her character as the 'Joker in a pack of cards', Rajwar says, "From being a neighbour to getting emotionally attached to the family, it has been a great journey. My character is annoying but has many shades and that has helped me grow

STAYING CONNECTED
(Above) The cast from Season 5 of *Gullak*; a still from the series

as an actor."

Kulkarni, a National School of Drama graduate with an impressive body of work in theatre and films, credits "extensive rehearsals" for their "effortless" performances and "improvisation" on the sets. She recounts how a popular car-parking sequence from Season 4 was the result of improvisation. "When Jameel and Harsh created that scene when they were parking an imaginary car, I had never imagined that it would happen on screen. I looked at them with amazement even though my character reacts differently on screen," says Kulkarni, who is part of the just-released film *Maa Behen* and the series *Khauf* (2025).

What has struck a chord with the audience, believe the actors, is the relatability of the characters, situations and the story. The show highlights the everyday experiences and concerns of middle-class Indian families. "In some episode or another, people find something they connect with," says Kulkarni. Khan, who features in *Gangs of Wasseypur* (2012) and *Tiger Zinda Hai* (2017), shares how the series is picked by families and friends when they want to watch something together. "The love from the audience is very genuine. People are emotionally attached to it," says Mayar.

The Mishras may be fictional, but their evolution feels authentic since they reflect the experiences of common Indian families. The actors, however, have certain things to convey to their characters. "I will ask Shanti to take it easy," says Kulkarni, while Rajwar does not want her character to change, "I love all the quirkiness Bittu ki Mummy has."

Khan wants to assure Santosh that: "Keep it going. It is working." Mayar loves his character and wants Aman to know "Bahut pyaara aadmi hai (He is a lovable person)". Joshi would egg his character on to "take more risks since he has a protective family".



SLICE OF LIFE

BY SUVIR SARAN

CHEF, AUTHOR, EDUCATOR
AND WORLD TRAVELLER



TAHA AHMAD

EVERYWHERE CAN BE LUCKNOW
In an age of noise, the city remains a song

A City that Blooms

Before religion, before language, before caste, before politics, Lucknow knew there was humanity

SOME CITIES impress you. Some cities entertain you. Some cities feed you. And then there are the rare cities that educate your soul. Lucknow is one of them. It does not shout its greatness. It does not market itself into magnificence. It does not demand admiration. It simply lives its values. And in a century increasingly addicted to division, that may be the most radical act of all.

My first lessons about Lucknow came not from the city itself but from my grandmother. Dadi came from Kurwar, a town not far from Lucknow and carried Awadh in her heart long after she had left its soil. From her, I heard stories of courtesy, compassion, conversation and coexistence. Stories of a place where faith was cherished but humanity was sacred.

Long before scholars coined phrases and politicians discovered slogans, Dadi spoke of what we now call *Ganga-Jamuni tehzeeb*. To her, it was simply life. Lucknow had understood something profound. Before religion, before language, before caste, before politics, there is humanity. The city was practising this philosophy long before it was written into poems, speeches or manifestos. Today, when much of the world seems determined to shrink itself into smaller and smaller certainties, Lucknow remains gloriously expansive.

During a recent visit, I encountered that conversation again in the remarkable SP Singh, founder of Lucknow Public School and Lucknow Public College of Professional Studies, Member of Parliament from Pratapgarh, and an educational visionary of modern Uttar Pradesh. Here is a man who emerged from a village in India carrying a dream large enough to transform a region. Tens of thousands of students now pass annually through institutions shaped by his vision. Entire generations have been given opportunity because one villager dared to imagine beyond circumstance. There are people who inherit privilege. There are people who create possibility. Singh belongs firmly to the latter category. And yet what stayed with me was not merely the scale of his achievement but the spirit of his table.

The finest arbi I have eaten in years. A lauki ka raita of such delicacy and depth that it could have been served in any grand dining room in the world. Simple food. Soulful food. Lucknow food. Because here, elegance is not dependent upon extravagance. Grace needs no gilding.

Then there was Vijay Mishra. How does one describe a man who moves through languages the way great musicians move through ragas? One moment he is quoting Shelley and Shakespeare in impeccable English, and the next he is invoking Ghalib, Zauq, and centuries of Urdu wisdom. Moments later, he is singing bhajans composed in devotion to Maa Sharda. Not performing. Not showing off. Simply being. His mind is a meeting place. His conversation is a crossroads. During a drive through Lucknow, I realised I was not merely travelling through a city. I was travelling through centuries of accumulated wisdom.

As I departed for the airport, Vijay sent me a poem. “*Aastha vishwas pushpiti ho raha hai, Prem ka aakash surabhit ho raha hai*.” Faith and trust are blooming into flower. The sky of love is filling with fragrance.

I have rarely encountered a more beautiful description of Lucknow itself. Because this city blooms where others harden, it perfumes where others polarise and it invites here others isolate.

I stayed at Saraca, the heritage hotel once known as Lebuva, owned by my friend Abdullah, a son of Lucknow whose impeccable taste reflects the refinement of the city itself. At Aazrak, Chef Mohsin serves Awadhi cuisine that deserves international acclaim. Every meal felt like memory played with precision. Every dish felt like history translated into flavour. Yet what moved me most was learning that Chef Mohsin descends from a lineage of cooks, who prepared food for the courts of Nawab Wajid Ali Shah. One tastes that history. One feels it. The food arrives carrying centuries.

But what fascinates me is that Lucknow’s greatness is not confined to royal kitchens. Its genius resides equally in family homes. In vegetarian tables. In humble recipes. In everyday hospitality. Because food here is not simply nourishment. It is philosophy. It is diplomacy. It is memory.

It is love made edible. Perhaps, that is why UNESCO recognised Lucknow as a Creative City of Gastronomy. The honour is not really about recipes. It is about relationships. The cuisine reflects the culture that created it. And Lucknow’s culture remains one of the finest arguments ever made for coexistence.

Today, the world finds itself standing at a crossroads. Everywhere there is noise. Everywhere there is suspicion. In an age of walls, Lucknow remains a door. In an age of noise, it remains a song. In an age of division, it remains a prayer. And what a magnificent prayer it is.

Heena Khandelwal

WALK INTO any bar in Mumbai, Delhi or Bengaluru on a Friday night and you will find twenty-somethings nursing a Paloma or Picante, debating the provenance of a single malt, listening intently as the bartender explains where a particular ingredient has been sourced from or how the cocktail was clarified. They are not, contrary to a persistent global narrative, abstaining. They are drinking, just not the way their parents did.

“People are definitely drinking. If anything, they are drinking better. They are not drinking to get drunk anymore. There’s a shift towards moderation and responsibility,” says Riyaz Amlani, managing director, Impresario Entertainment Hospitality, whose restaurants and bars cater extensively to younger consumers.

The idea that an entire generation has turned its back on alcohol has been circulating in international media for several years now and more recently in India, bolstered by studies in the West combined with the rising health consciousness and the popularity of sober-curious lifestyles. But the data, even globally, is more nuanced.

According to IWSR’s Bevtrac survey, which tracked more than 26,000 people across 15 global markets, including India, alcohol participation among Gen Z rose from 60 per cent in April 2023 to 70 per cent in March 2025. In India, the experts point out, the story is ‘how’ they drink, and not ‘whether’ they drink.

Pooja Bhatia, a PR professional in Mumbai, says when she started drinking it was Jägermeister bombs and tequila shots. “But now I like Paloma, Picante or tequila on the rocks,” she says. She drinks two or three times a week, though she’s been trying to cut back to once. The reason? “I hate hangovers. I hate my productivity taking a dip. It disrupts my health goals,” says Bhatia, adding “And if I am spending Rs 1,500 on a drink, it should have a story, good ingredients and top-notch liquor.”

Nikhil Agarwal, 47, one of India’s leading experts on wine and spirits, who is also in the business of their imports, has watched this shift with both professional interest and a certain generational perspective. “Wine has become a very popular category among Gen Z. In white spirits, tequila and gin are clearly leading. People are happy to pay Rs 7,000-Rs 9,000 for a bottle of tequila, around Rs 1,000 for a cocktail, upwards of Rs 2,000 for a bottle of wine,” says Agarwal, who is bullish about the growth of the segment in India for good reason. “Even if just 3 per cent of India’s population is consuming premium alcohol, that’s roughly 43 million people. That’s more than the population of Australia,” he adds.

The India market, by most accounts, is where the global spirits industry is now pinning considerable hope, and which is why we see new launches, from global leaders as well as by emerging names within the country. “India remains the only market with all three indicators — consumer sentiment, recalled volume and recalled spend — in positive territory, as upper-middle-class consumers continue to drink and spend more,” an IWSR report quoted Richard Halstead, COO Consumer Insights. Diageo, which acquired United Spirits in 2013, today operates one of the largest portfolios in the country. They have 100 million new legal drinking age (LDA) consumers added every year.

“India represents a unique combination



A pinch of salt, a sip of TEQUILA

While global surveys suggests Gen Z is drinking less, in India they are not anti-alcohol, they are anti-excess

of scale and long-term opportunity. That is why we often describe it as the consumer market of the next decade,” says Ruchira Jaitly, chief marketing officer, Diageo India, pointing to a structural shift in the nature of that growth. “The most important shift we have seen is the move from a purely volume-led to a value and experience-led model.”

For Satyavarapu Nikitha, a brand marketing professional in her 20s, from Bengaluru, her first drink was a cocktail. Today, she drinks about once a month. “When I go out, I like to try new cocktails, but it is usually just a sip or two,” she says. Her friends, who all are Gen Z, “like getting a good high, but

NEW WINE IN NEW BOTTLES
Many global spirit companies see India as a consumer market for the next decade

not passing out. That is not the goal.”

It is a phrase you hear with remarkable consistency across this generation. For Chirag Kajale, who runs a creator agency in Mumbai, drinking is woven into the social fabric of his week but not in a way previous generations would recognise.

“My friends and I have a ritual: We meet every Monday, drink and just talk.” On days when he and his friends want to step out, they gravitate toward tap bars like Doolally Taproom. For him, the point is connection, not consumption. “Alcohol is a great social agent, it opens doors. I’ve built some meaningful relationships over drinks and those

Painting the Big Day

Live artists are now finding a place at weddings to document the oddities and novelties of the moment

Anusree KC

A NEWLY-MARRIED couple are at their reception. In the background are floral decorations and guests milling about. Someone steers them toward an easel they have not noticed all night. “Oh my god,” the bride says; the groom laughs. He is at a loss for words. On the easel is a painting of them, mid-*pheras*.

An artist has been working on it all evening, observing the wedding ceremony, the guests, the family, the couple. Through the aunties rearranging the flower centrepieces, through the uncles who wandered over, squinted at the half-finished canvas and announced, “I think the nose is a little off”, through the children who came in waves. The artist stood through all of it, brush moving, unbothered, coaxing two faces out of white canvas.

Live wedding painting is slowly becoming one of the most sought-after additions at Indian weddings. Before finding its way to a *mandap* or a beach venue, it was an already doing the rounds in the US, the UK and Europe. It arrived in India the way most trends do now: through Instagram.

Smriti Goswami, a 29-year-old self-taught artist based in Goa, stumbled upon videos from international wedding markets during the pandemic. She did her first live wedding painting for her best friend in 2023, for free, and used the footage to build her brand, Art by Simmo. That reel reached 29 million views on Instagram. In her first year, she was booked for seven weddings.



But getting there was not simple. “Live wedding painting is a challenge. You have to complete the work in four or five hours, which normally takes three to four days. There are people constantly talking around you and you have to indulge them. You cannot work in isolation,” says Goswami. Such skill, she says, needs practice.

Aashi Jain learned it the hard way. The 28-year-old Fine Arts graduate from Delhi College of Art, soon realised that disco lighting is a painter’s nightmare, that acrylic dries faster on humid nights and random guests will insist you paint them too. She now carries her own lights and in winter, she brings a hairdryer.



LIFE IN COLOUR
(Clockwise from above) A wedding portrait by Aashi Jain; a couple with their caricature drawn by Suraj Shah; live wedding artists Varsha Nair and her husband Vivek Wagh

This trend is finding its way even in smaller towns. Animesh Saorav from Hazaribagh, Jharkhand, says his first live wedding was a swirl of panic. But four years on, he’s mastered the art of improvisation. “It’s not for people who have just started their career in art,” says the 30-year-old.

But everywhere the process follows a similar pattern. Artists arrive two to three hours earlier, they paint a background on the canvas and wait for the moment. Often, the moment to be painted is decided beforehand. It could be the first dance, exchanging the garlands or the *phas*. They photograph the moment and then start painting. Acrylic is used as it dries faster and because the painting has to be delivered the same night. Some couples even request to add their family members, both deceased and alive, or their pets to the portrait. These artists charge anywhere upwards of Rs 1 lakh.

But caricaturists at weddings operate at a completely different pace. Suraj Shah, 27, who is finishing his BFA at Delhi College of Art, can illustrate a couple in 10 minutes, a solo portrait in five and 30 faces in three hours. It’s about reading the room, says Sha-

connections have helped me professionally.”

Rakshay Dhariwal, founder and managing director of Maya Pistola Agavepura and PCO, pushes back on the idea that global trends translate neatly to India. “Gen Z is far more experimental. For millennials, drinking was often the default way to socialise. But Gen Z do a lot more. They will meet for coffee, play sports like pickleball, or go out. Drinking is just one part of a larger social mix.”

Debashish Shyam, co-founder of Ardent Alcobev, which produces the single malt Dram Bell, identifies the same distinction with a phrase that neatly captures the generation’s ethos: “They’re not anti-alcohol. They’re anti-excess.”

The format of drinking has also shifted. Sakshee Bhatia, 24, a publicist in Mumbai, prefers gin like Sector Hibiscus & Peach or a black label whiskey if drinking with family. Even with friends, she prefers drinks at

IT’S NOT UNCOMMON TO SEE TWENTY-SOMETHINGS DEBATING THE PROVENANCE OF A SINGLE MALT OR KNOW WHERE AN INGREDIENT COMES FROM. GEN Zs ARE DRINKING, ALRIGHT, JUST NOT THE WAY THEIR PARENTS DID

home than out. “It feels safer, no one has to worry about driving, and everyone’s in one place,” she says, adding that the narrative around her generation amuses her a bit. “I find it funny when people say Gen Z isn’t drinking. I do know people who don’t drink, but I also know plenty who definitely do and are holding the fort for the rest of us,” she says.

Meanwhile, Sreehari TK, 25, a data analyst from Kerala who started on whisky in college, has consciously pulled back. “I am focusing on building a good physique. I go to the gym and follow a diet,” says TK, who now drinks once or twice a month. His story is held up by those who argue Gen Z is moderating, and he is. But even his benchmark has quietly risen: his preferred drink is Signature Rare Aged Whisky on casual days, and for a special occasion, he’ll go up to a Jack Daniel’s.

Agarwal credits the infrastructure that has grown up around them — the craft cocktail bar, the wine list, the bartender who explains his ingredients — for fundamentally changing what drinking means for this cohort. “People are only now starting to explore wine and cocktails. And this isn’t limited to metros — step outside Mumbai and Delhi, and you’ll see young people in cities like Nagpur going out for cocktails.”

Dhariwal also points to a clear shift in behaviour. “Earlier, you’d play drinking games and finish drinks quickly. Today, they’d rather stay tipsy, pace themselves, and prolong the experience. You might even see higher overall consumption across an evening, but through low alcohol cocktails rather than quick, strong drinks.”

Pooja Bhatia — spending Rs 4,000-5,000 on three cocktails in a single evening, carrying Liquid IV party electrolytes to a concert in case she wants energy without the alcohol, heading to Bare or Bombay Canteen rather than a club because the music in clubs makes her drink more than she wants to — is the clearest portrait of what this shift looks like from the inside.

She is not drinking less. She is drinking on her own terms.

shank Mishra, 23, a caricature artist from Lucknow. “While talking, I visualise things and make the cartoon accordingly. Like depicting the wife as someone dominant, so when they see it, they understand the underlying dynamics.”

Varsha Nair and her husband Vivek Wagh, both 35, started out with commission paintings. “We started speed painting to understand whether this is something that can be done within a time frame,” Varsha recalls. The duo has also worked for celebrity weddings, including actor and influencer Prajakta Koli and actor Keerthy Suresh.

The game is in the surprise, the unexpected, the humour, the reading between the brush strokes. Bengaluru-based Ahana Kumar, who got married in December last year says, “Photos are on everybody’s phone. I just wanted something that captured the moment more beautifully.” Her advice to anyone considering it is, “Don’t bargain with them. You can’t put a value on the amount of effort they put in.” If uncertainty is the truth about marriage, live paintings put the creative spin to the beginning of this walk down the aisle.